Mechthild of Magdeburg

THE FLOWING LIGHT OF THE GODHEAD

THE CLASSICS OF WESTERN SPIRITUALITY

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THE FLOWING LIGHT OF THE GODHEAD

TRANSLATED AND INTRODUCED BY

FRANK TOBIN

PREFACE BY

MARGOT SCHMIDT

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Cover art: MOTHER PLACID DEMPSEY, a Benedictine nun of the Abbey of Regina Laudis in Bethlehem, Connecticut, is a sculptress and painter. Of the cover illustration for this Classics volume, Mother Placid says, "It takes its inspiration from Christ's words to Mechthild that she was to be a witness to the 'light of my divinity flowing into all hearts that live without guile.' Mechthild was eminent among these witnesses in the fullness with which her heart knew and lived this experience and from which she wrote of it. Yet, it seemed good to create an image that would 'witness' in its way to all hearts who have lived and continue to live this same reality. The cover image then portrays these hidden lights who fill our world with the unseen radiance of God's light."

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Author of the Preface

MARGOT SCHMIDT is director of the Research Center of Medieval Spirituality, Asceticism and Mystics at the Catholic University of Eichstatt in Germany. Since 1985, she has served as editor of the collection of medieval texts and studies entitled Mystik in Geschichte and Gegenwart: Texte and Untersuchungen. In that series, she produced the first two volumes: she edited and translated the work of Rudolf of Biberach, De VII itinera aeternitatis, into German; the other is a volume of papers read at the Conference Theologia Mystica at Weingarten in November 1986. As of January 1998, the series contains fifteen volumes. She has written extensively on women mystics, especially Mechthild of Magdeburg, Hildegard of Bingen, Mechthild of Hackeborn and Margaret Ebner.

Joseph P Fisher, S.J.
and
Bob Reardon
in memoriam

FOREWORD

In completing this translation of Mechthild of Magdeburg's Flowing Light of the Godhead, I have incurred a debt of gratitude to many. First, I would like to thank the publishers Max Niemeyer Verlag for their kind permission to use as the basis of my translation their excellent recent critical text and notes, the lifelong work of the Germanist Hans Neumann. Also, my debt to Margot Schmidt is manifold. The profound knowledge she has transmitted in her scholarship has affected my understanding of Mechthild in ways both palpable and impalpable. More particularly, she generously sent me her excellent translation into modern German of The Flowing Light of the Godhead and the accompanying notes even before publication. The opportunity to compare her renderings with mine saved me from many a misstep. Finally, I wish to thank her for contributing the preface to this volume. My thanks are also due to GertrudJaron Lewis for her support and encouragement, to Bernard McGinn for his thoughtful suggestions, and to Patricia Beckman for her willingness to engage in a lively E-mail dialogue that resulted in several improvements. Lastly, as in the case of several of my previous academic endeavors, Bob Reardon's meticulous scrutiny of the entire manuscript has been invaluable. I can only wish that the finished product does some justice to the help I have receivedand to Mechthild.

PREFACE

It is with great pleasure that I respond to Frank Tobin's request that I provide a preface for his fine English translation. In his introduction to the text he offers an initial orientation to this rich but difficult book and addresses important themes. To complement his remarks on Mechthild's book as an expression of mysticism, I would like to examine a theme-certainly of central importancenot touched upon there: the human and divine heart.

Mechthild's book is a phenomenon that should not be viewed in isolation-as one mystical document among all the documents of mysticism. Rather, it is the expression of a basic human drive that comes to the surface, sometimes more, sometimes less. To these basic human drives we can reckon hunger, love, sex, and a yearning for God. This last-mentioned drive appears to have been so smothered by the others that today we scarcely still perceive it as a basic drive. And yet, the testimony of the mystics teaches us that the human person in its capacity for God (capax Dei) soars above all other recognized drives and surpasses them in a marvelous and terrifying way, once we have been awakened by the spark of God's spirit or God's love. In the face of this bursting forth of a passion for God, everything else suddenly retreats. An important characteristic of this passion for God is that it irrevocably prevents us from falling back into an all too vapid and tame existence. The passion for God powerfully pushes aside all merely worldly concerns in order to appropriate our entire vitality and our life, in all its aspects, for itself. What thereby occurs is that we become separated and detached from all that is familiar, so that we might give ourself over with total commitment to the demands of what is eternal.

Out of this interplay of personal experience of God, and an interior command to proclaim and teach, arose the driving forces and goals of mystical literature which took form in confessional, didactic, and admonitory writings. These texts, which articulated the most intimate relationships between God and the human person, or inspired elucidations of salvation history, were fashioned by a consciousness of self that is unique. What Mechthild has preserved in writing The Flowing Light of the Godhead eloquently bears witness to this passion for God.

In essence Mechthild of Magdeburg's book, The Flowing Light of the Godhead, is nothing other than the moving story of God's heart and the human heart, and of Lucifer's cunning attempts to interfere with the ties that join them. Understandably these levels, completely unequal in their power, unleash a highly dramatic life or death struggle. Reeling between exhilarating raptures and collisions with unyielding earthly reality, Mechthild is wrenched this way and that between her incomprehensible experiences of God on the one hand and, on the other, the uncertainty and terror of entering into a state of defenselessness and peril because of her writing. In this state of uncertainty she receives support from her confessor. Through him she received the legitimacy of her mission "to write this book out of God's heart and mouth" (IV 2). In another passage, in response to the astonishment of some people at her unusual disclosures, she claims legitimation from God: "If seven years ago, God had not offered support to my heart with special favor, I would still be silent and would never have written this" (111 1). Similarly, the close of Book Six, probably the work of an editor, formulates it thus: "The writing in this book flowed out of the living Godhead into Sister Mechthild's heart and has been as faithfully set down here as it was given by God out of her heart" (VI 43).

Her mystical understanding under the spell of immediate experiences takes on the intermediary function of supporting the human person and strengthening the church. Regarding her mission of proclamation she perceives the words of Christ: "Truly, I say to you, in this book my heart's blood is written" (V 34). This way of speaking alludes to her own existential giving of herself in her writing to the last drop of blood.

The heart is the principle and center of one's life as a person. It is also the place "where the human being in its own source borders on the mystery of God.'" According to Karl Rahner heart is a primal word in the sense that it does not derive from some other word. It does not denote the physiological heart muscle as such but rather the original center of the physical-spiritual person before any differentiation into body and soul. This center of the person is in its essence open to other persons and to God. These meanings should be noted when Mechthild speaks of the human heart, but also when she speaks of the heart of God and Lucifer's heart.

1. The Heart of God

Experiencing God becomes in the case of Mechthild a vital mutual interaction between the heart of God and the human heart in which, surprisingly, longing lies in God's heart:

(Soul:) "Lord, you are constantly lovesick for me.
That you have clearly shown personally.
You have written me into your book of the Godhead;
You have painted me in your humanity;
You have buried me in your heart...
Ah, allow me, my dear One, to pour balsam upon you."
(God:) "O One dear to my heart, where shall you find the balm?"
(Soul:) "O Lord, I was going to tear the heart of my soul in two and intended to put you in it." (III 2)

What is new in Mechthild is that the old motif of Christ as Physician is not limited to its traditional meaning of redemption and salvation of the soul, but rather becomes an expression of the unio mystica, in which the lovesick soul receives her fulfillment through Christ, the Physician (as in VII 58). And in the passage quoted just above we see the motif completely reversed. The Lord is lovesick for the soul and she, with complete emotional commitment, wants to be his physician! Eros forces not only the soul under its yoke, but God himself, because he created man out of love and had his Son become man to redeem him. From this Mechthild draws the conclusion: "This same nature forces God to greet us...with holy intimacy" (IV 14). This statement finds its place in the tradition of those who speak of God's indwelling in the heart,' of his nearness in speaking to us, of elevation to the point of ecstasy, and declare categorically that God by his grace can do this at any time. This intimacy with God is only a foretaste of the everlasting union of God and humanity which Mechthild vividly portrays as a personal happening:

There eye reflects eye,
There spirit flows in spirit,
There hand touches hand,
There mouth speaks to mouth,
And there heart greets heart. (IV 14)

So intense at times is the assimilation of the human heart to the divine heart, as it leaves all earthly things behind, that the soul proclaims: "Lord, because I have no earthly treasure, I do not have an earthly heart either. For you, Lord, are my treasure, just as you are also my heart; and you alone are my good" (IV 7).

In spite of the sublimity of the union of God and humanity in the assimilation of heart by heart, the overwhelming power of God encounters only weakness in the human heart: "Whoever were to give himself over to the ecstasy that comes from God... would enter into such great delight and such holy knowledge that no heart would be able to bear it" (V 29).

Advanced in age, Mechthild, looking back in Book Six, reflects on the attraction and tension existing between human and divine hearts in order to clarify that, though the first step is always God attracting and the divine heart enticing, there can be no progress without a reaction of the human heart. Mechthild portrays as a love game how the divine heart goes about wooing.

> When God sees fit to let his divine heart shine forth in love toward the very blessed soul so intensely that a small spark alights on the cold soul and she receives so much that the heart of this person begins to glow, his soul to melt, and his eyes to flow, then our Lord would like to make an earthly person so heavenly that one actually wants to follow, love, and see God in him. And the person's senses say: "No, I can be of much use in external matters." And it is especially cloistered people who say this when they are being especially clever. (VI 13)

Mechthild is here criticizing the neglect of interior religious training, which begins with the perceptivity and formation of the heart. In an allegory about the divine fire that is supposed to express something about the greatness and power of God to act, she suddenly breaks off and stammers:

Whoever wishes to speak more about this,
Let him prostrate himself in this fire
And see and taste how the Godhead flows,
How humanity pours,
How the Holy Spirit wrestles,
And vanquishes many a heart,
Forcing it to love God intensely. (VI 29)

The central focal point is always the heart which conquers and binds together what is divine and what is human. Indeed, on the basis of her experience of God she lays claim to kinship with God. She herself originates spiritually from the heart of the Father, corporeally from the heart of the Son, and has been purified by the Spirit of both. Thus elevated through divine grace Mechthild considers herself to be vitally subsumed into the life of the Trinity and she calls out to the Trinity:

Lord, heavenly Father, you are my heart.
Lord Jesus Christ, you are my body.
Lord Holy Spirit, you are my breath. (V 6)

It is as if the pulse of the three divine Persons, expanding mysteriously from heart to heart, was beating in her.

Theologically speaking, this image of physical oneness links characteristics specific to each Person of the Trinity with the fact that the human person to its very core is directed essentially to God. The creative energy of the human heart reacts to the unfathomable power of the Father Creator. The incarnation of the Son becomes the formative, molding power of earthly life, even of the body itself. From the power of the Holy Spirit as the Giver of Life the whole human person breathes and itself acts as inspired. Among the many and often difficult images for the Trinity in Mechthild's writings this one, in its compactness and profundity with respect to our close kinship with God, is the one that expresses most powerfully the evidence for the Trinity in the human person and for its transference into the human person. A life based on this excludes in its very nature a feeling of emptiness and homelessness. On the contrary, it makes the human heart secure. For God has placed it "in his glowing heart," where he, eternally craving for love, "neither increases nor decreases," but remains "as he always was" (14). This is yet another confirmation that eros lies within God himself.

2. The Goal of the Human Heart

Mechthild's basic assertion about the human heart is its insatiable longing for God. It comes to the fore as the infinite relationship reveals itself. Humans as finite beings reach out toward the infinite being of God. And the goal, for Mechthild, is attained in a vital infinite relationship of heights and depths which is stirred by intense emotions. It is only to pure longing that God reveals himself and says:

When I shine, you shall glow.
When I flow, you shall become wet.

When you sigh, you draw my divine heart into you....
...a blissful abiding prevails between us. (II 6)

The state existing between the divine and the human heart is described as a "blissful abiding," a blessed waiting for the other whose fulfillment presupposes leaving everything of this earth behind. Driven by its intense desire to live fully, the soul responds in strong, emotionally-charged words that nevertheless in their refinement show reserve:

Lord, then I shall persevere in hunger and thirst
In pursuing and in pleasure
Till that playful hour
When from your divine mouth
The chosen words shall flow
That are heard by no one
But the soul alone
That has stripped itself of the earth
And puts her ear next to your mouth.
She, indeed, grasps the treasure of love!

The soul that has experienced many raptures and blissful ecstasies suffers all the more when God withdraws his presence, and longing increases.4 Longing rises to the paradox that in spite of all the levels of rapture and union with God-and beyond them-the goal is far from attained; and that the highest stage in this life ultimately remains that of hungering and thirsting for God. This blessed longing is the final attitude to be assumed by the human heart. The end of a love dialogue blurts this out like a cry for help:

> I have such a hunger for the heavenly Father that I forget all cares. And I so thirst for his Son that it removes from me all earthly desires. And I have such a passionate need for the Spirit of them both that it goes beyond the wisdom of the Father, which I cannot grasp; and beyond the Son's suffering, which I cannot bear; and beyond the consolation of the Holy Spirit, which I cannot receive.
>
> Whoever becomes entangled in longing such as this must forever hang blessedly fettered in God. (111 3)

This antithetical paradox is the linguistic equivalent of an inscrutable, lofty stage of experiencing God. Thus she says: "Yearning love causes a pure heart much sweet anguish" (111 24). For the soul's wish to attain the vision of and union with God remains unfulfilled on this earth in spite of any foretaste and all the heart-rending laments:

> O Lord, if it could ever happen to me that I might gaze upon you as my heart desires and hold you in my arms, then the divine pleasures of your love would needs permeate my soul to the degree possible for people on earth. What I would be willing to suffer thereafter has never been seen by human eyes. Indeed, a thousand deaths were too little.... If you, Lord, can bear it, let me long pursue you in yearning. (111 23)

At the end of her life in Helfta, in the context of a meditation on the seven penitential psalms in which she reflects on death, she writes:

> If we were to think of this hour often, all our pride would sink to the ground, as he [God] shall then reveal his glorious countenance to us. Then my soul shall have its favorite pastime. What I now painfully long for can never happen on earth as my heart would wish it. (VII 35)

What remains in the heart to the end is the strength to yearn longingly. Hence she begs her Lord in the same passage to "cover me with the mantle of your long-cherished desire."

3. The Power and Impotence of the Heart

Up to now we have seen that it is only by accepting God's love that the soul is empowered because in opening itself to the unfathomable ground of God, the imperilment of one's own heart is exposed. It is primarily the superior power of God's love which causes inexpressible suffering: "Bright love of playful flood ...causes [the heart] to die without death" (111 13). The agonies of this love are compared in detail with the passion of Christ, with the result that devotion to the passion turns into a mysticism of suffering in which pain loses its bitter quality as one concentrates on following Christ and on his suffering as redemption and reparation-all the more so when the heart itself is affected:

She is pierced in the side by a blind man
With a sweet spear of innocent love.
From her heart flows forth many a holy teaching. (III 10)[5]

5 Cf. also my detailed study of this theme: "`Frau Pein, ihr seid mein nachstes Kleid.' Zur Leidensmystik im Fliefenden Licht der Gottheit der Mechthild von Magdeburg," Die dunkle Nacht der Sinne, ed. Gotthart Fuchs (Dusseldorf, 1989), 63-107.

The power and authority of this teaching here does not derive from book-learning. Rather, her "teaching" flows forth from the capacity of her heart for suffering, which God has totally consigned to himself. This remains a mystery to the speculative intellect. For this reason she later distances herself from her theologically-schooled fellow nuns in Helfta.6 Earthly wisdom is contrasted with supernatural, heavenly wisdom. Its preeminence is stressed further by a vision of Christ in VI 24. In a vision Mechthild sees the bloody wound in the heart of Jesus and is instructed that divine blood had to be shed if we were to be saved.

> All suffering and humiliation are just a knocking at the gate of heaven up to the time when my heart's blood poured onto this earth. Only then was heaven opened. (VI 24)'

This vision explains that the blood from the heart of Christ, taken as his whole suffering during the passion, calls out for all times on behalf of humankind, because of its own weakness, to the mercy of the Father. In this redemptive suffering all human suffering is subsumed. Christ does not free Mechthild from her suffering, but rather strengthens her in her imitation of him as a kind of overflowing of love, as suffering in reparation with the promise of final glory, of which she experiences a foretaste as the assurance of future glory. From the tension caused by this yearning hope, strength of heart increases and can thus say: "Lovely love with guileless gift blots out the surly heart's complaint" (III 13).

According to Mechthild's words, an unsuspectedly strong power grows in the heart so that "a person retains a heart alien to all earthly things, so alien that, if a person loses earthly things, his heart becomes buoyant and his soul unfettered" (VI 4).

Expanding on such a high degree of detachment-one is reminded of the teaching of Meister Eckhart-she continues:

> No one possesses the whole of heaven in his heart but he alone who has removed himself from all consolation and all favors in this world....And yet God cannot restrain himself-and we cannot do without it-from giving us his abundance and his favor. (VI 20)

Despite all her joy in suffering, and in view of human frailty, her trust in God's mercy carries the day. It is so great that even human weakness, when it is the only possibility, is brought before God's countenance and serves even in this form as a song of praise:

The impotence of the heart rings in song so beautifully
before God
That God loves the notes
That sing deep in the heart....
Then God's sweet gift shall flow into their hearts. (VII 36)

There are, however, opposing powers constantly at work that can distract the human heart from its destiny, and can pull it down and entangle it in purely finite goals. Suggestions whispered by the devil (under the seductive guise of total surrender as a sign of holiness), where it is a question of keeping within bounds and of being chaste, cannot shake a heart that has been steeled in suffering and thus possesses the power of discernment. In a dialogue with the devil, in response to his suggestions, she says:

> If I were to tell everyone the secrets of my heart, things would be quite nice for me in the short term. But then you would intently strive to make the fun end badly. You would do this so that I might fall into doubt, sadness, unbelief, impurity, and thereafter into everlasting anguish. Another reason you are doing this is so that I might imagine that you come to me thus because I am so holy. (IV 2)

Out of the same certainty of her heart she responds:

In every movement of my heart,
In every bit of knowledge of my senses,
And in the whole nobility of my soul,
I could never find anything else
But that it is diabolical that one commit a sin. (V 16)

For out of Lucifer flows "ceaselessly from his fiery heart.. .all sin and shame." She likewise recognizes that suffering "is born of Lucifer's heart" (IV 12). And the deepest pit of hell, duplicity, "is begotten in Lucifer's heart" (11 26). She fights on against all these destructive powers. Her chief concern is peace of heart, but not at any price. The "holiest peace of heart... comes from keeping one's integrity in all that one does" (V 22). Truth comes before any fraudulent peace. Because Mechthild takes no pride in her being divinely favored and admits that she displays self-effacement again and again in spite of her experiences of God, she says:

I dare not, alas, claim credit
For everything that I say about love.
It is God, rather, who is thereby reaching out
To all those chosen in his heart. (IV 19)

When Mechthild speaks here of chosen hearts as a parallel or allusion to the chosen "noble hearts" of courtly poetry, which foster courtly love in a special way in a culture of the heart, then the nobility which she claims for the soul derives, for her, from a divine origin. This is perceived in the depths of the heart when all of one's own activity there ceases. She only speaks of it with great reserve: "Divine sweetness is enjoyed in the solitude of the heart" (VI 2).

The solitude or desert wilderness of the heart points, by way of an image, to the inaccessible, secluded location of a doublefaceted experience of God. Terrifying in his infinite remoteness, emptiness, and immensity, God outdoes himself by bringing joy through his nearness. Thus she says: "Mary Magdalene, I live with you in the desert wilderness, because all things are foreign to me except God alone" (11 24).' Nearness of God surpasses all human consolation, leaving it far behind. God alone suffices. And yet words fail her in her blessed state:

The voice of love and the melody of the heart must be left
unrendered,
For they can be captured by no merely human hand! (II 25)

Ultimately Mechthild forswears happiness with God for the sake of more genuine praise, wishing nothing more for herself. And thus, beset by the terrors of the dark night of God's remoteness and bereft of all consolation amid attacks of disbelief, she experiences how suddenly, as though through a miracle, bitter "gall has become honey for the palate of my soul" (IV 12) .9 In this highly dramatized dialogue of declaration and response Mechthild anticipates succinctly the central themes of the Spanish mysticism of Teresa of Avila and John of the Cross. Repeatedly she speaks of the various degrees of purification as a precondition for grasping God more profoundly, as the fruit of a higher level of love, in the same way as does Richard of St. Victor: "God bestows vision in proportion to love."

The final purification in the night of the senses and the intellect is described tersely and penetratingly in VI 12, asJohn of the Cross will develop it later in detail in the night canticles of his poetic theology. Thus Mechthild is an early classic witness for the human heart struggling with the love of God that consumes everything and demands all human energies. She experiences this struggle and all its consequences, be it the increase in her own capacity for suffering as the noblest form of praise and gratitude, or in courageously speaking prophetically to her times.

Because of the demanding nature of its language and content, it is consequently a great service Frank Tobin has performed in making this profound book accessible in its totality to the English-speaking world, for the first time with a solid edition of the original as the textual base. A commanding and fascinating female figure of the thirteenth century is thereby given the opportunity to speak. Alongside the manifestly intimate character of her writing, and going beyond what has relevance for her personal life, she assigns to her book a public function. Everything was done solely "for God's honor" and "for the book's teaching."

KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS

1. The abbreviations used for the books of the Bible follow the practice of the New American Bible.

II. Other frequently cited works are abbreviated as follows:

FL: Mechthild of Magdeburg's Flowing Light of the Godhead.

Lux div.: The Lux divinitatis, the Latin version of the FL. This can be found in Revelationes Gertrudianae ac Mechtildianae. 1875-77. Ed. Solesmes Monks (Louis Paquelin). 2 Vols. Poitiers and Paris: Oudin, 1875, 1877. Vol. 2: Sororis Mechtildis Lux divinitatis. 423-643.

Morel: Offenbarungen der Schwester Mechthild von Magdeburg oder Das flief3ende Licht der Gottheit. Aus der einzigen Handschrift des Stiftes Einsiedeln. Ed. Gall Morel. Regensburg, 1869. Reprinted, Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1963, 1976, 1980. (This was the only edition of the FL available until 1990.)

N I and N IL Das flief3ende Licht der Gottheit. Nach der Eindsiedler Handschrift in kritischem Vergleich mit der gesamten Uberlieferung. Ed. Hans Neumann. Munich: Artemis. Vol. 1 (1990): Text. The book, chapter, and line (s) in the FL being referred to are given, followed by N I plus the page number in Vol. 1; e.g., V 34, 41-43; N 1 68. Vol. 2 (1993): Untersuchungen (Investigations). References to Neumann's notes given by the text they refer to, followed by N II plus the page number in Vol. 2; e.g., note to I 28, 5; N 11 19.

Neumann 1964: "Beitrage zur Textgeschichte des `FlieBenden Lichts der Gottheit' and zur Lebensgeschichte Mechthilds von Magdeburg." In Altdeutsche and altniederlandiche Mystik. Ed. Kurt Ruh. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1964. 175-239.

Schmidt: Mechthild von Magdeburg. Das flief3ende Licht der Gottheit. Zweite, neubearbeitete Ubersetzung mit Einfuhrung and Kommentar von Margot Schmidt. Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt: Frommann-Holzboog, 1995. References are to the page preceded, where appropriate, by the note number; e.g., note 292, p. 397.

INTRODUCTION

1. The Beguines

Mechthild of Magdeburg (c. 1208-c. 1282/94), the author of The Flowing Light of the Godhead offered here in translation, lived most of her life as a beguine; and even though it would be taking matters to extremes to claim a type of spirituality specific to beguines,' a brief examination of their way of life, ideals, and the social situation in which the movement arose, flourished, and declined can contribute much to our understanding and appreciation of her book.z Beguines were women who led lives of voluntary poverty, chastity, and religious devotion withoutjoining an approved religious order. The movement began in the larger towns of the Low Countries during the twelfth century and spread south as far as Cologne and Strassburg, and also to the German-speaking East. It flourished from about 1220 to 1318 and gradually died out because of widespread ecclesiastical opposition. In Mechthild's time in Germany beguines usually lived in a communal house, sustaining themselves through support from their families, gifts, and work. Typical forms of work were nursing, weaving, spinning, embroidery, preparing the dead for burial, and housework for others.

The reasons motivating women to undertake this way of life seem to be the same as those contributing to the founding of the Franciscan and Dominican orders about the same time: the wish to return to the ideals of early Christianity and imitate more closely the lives of the apostles. Beguines strove to be unworldly while living in the world. Spending much time in prayer, both communal and private, attending mass and other church services, frequenting the sacraments, practicing moderate asceticism, and performing menial work, with nothing to call their own-not even themselves-they desired only to find favor with their divine Bridegroom and sought to elevate those around them more by leading exemplary apostolic Christian lives than by teaching.

Beguine houses usually fell under the jurisdiction of the local parish priest, but because of the similarities in mode of life and ideals beguines were often drawn into close contact with nearby Franciscan or Dominican communities. In contrast to earlier religious orders, they, like the beguines, settled in towns in order to carry out their apostolic work. From the beginning the beguines met with criticism from some quarters because they belonged to no ecclesiastically approved order and, hence, supervision over them was minimal. Also, because many beguine communities were developing into centers of mysticism and were providing northern Europe with its first mystical writings in the vernacular, questions of religious orthodoxy among them soon arose. This opposition to the beguines and the reasons for it are worth noting because the atmosphere thus created provides an essential part of the context in which Mechthild was writing. In composing her book Mechthild was faced with addressing the following two questions: What gave her, a woman with no formal education or special training in theology and belonging to no approved order, the right to speak out on theological matters and to criticize sharply the clergy, even its most prominent members? And by whose authority did she write, or why should she have expected her words to be taken seriously?

Though opposition to the beguines was in evidence from the beginning among those who viewed all change with suspicion, early papal pronouncements encouraged the movement. Pope Honorius III expressed approval of communities of pious women of northern continental Europe, and Pope Gregory IX's bull Gloriam virginalem extended papal protection to the "chaste virgins of Teutonia," which probably meant both those in Germany and those in the German-speaking parts of the Low Coun tries. Soon, however, those voicing criticism gained strength. Besides the misgivings arising from beguines not being members of an approved order, they were often accused of hypocrisy and laziness because, it was said, they lived on alms and refused to work. There were also charges that false piety cloaked lives of gross sensuality.

In the course of the thirteenth century several synods in Germany dealt with matters relating to beguines and passed decrees that forbade their wandering about and required them to live in communal houses, to work to support themselves, and to obey their parish priests; at two synods held late in Mechthild's life or shortly afterward (Trier, 1277, and Eichstatt, 1284) beguines were warned against the preaching of false doctrine. Of special interest for our purposes is a synod held in Magdeburg in 1261, when Mechthild was well along in her writing and parts of her book were no doubt already in circulation.' The synod, presided over by Archbishop Rupert, declared that beguines should, like other parishioners, obey their parish priests or be excommunicated.'

Not until well after Mechthild's death, however, did the forces opposed to beguines carry the day and deal serious blows to the vitality of the movement. In 1312 the Council of Vienne called for an inquisitional investigation of beguines and beghards-

their male counterparts-in Germany. It also decreed that beguine communities were to be dissolved and that such organizations should be permanently forbidden, but it left open the possibility for truly faithful women to live lives of penance and humility in common. Because of the decrees of the Council of Vienne and the inconsistent policies of the popes toward beguines, the movement declined, though some communities continued in the Low Countries and the Rhineland until quite recently. During the early decades of the fourteenth century most beguine communities in Germany resolved their precarious position by embracing the rule of an established order (Franciscan, Dominican, or Cistercian) and lived much as they had before, but under the guidance and supervision that these orders provided.

2. Mechthild's Life

The few facts we have about Mechthild's life come from her own writings, from the Latin translation of the FL (the Lux divinitatis), and from the forewords to them written anonymously. Scholars have generally accepted this information as trustworthy, and from it the following picture emerges.' Mechthild was born about 1208 into a noble family. Just what level of nobility, however, is a matter of conjecture and dispute. Schmidt places the family home within the archdiocese of Magdeburg.' Neumann describes her birthplace as the western Middlemarch.' The most convincing evidence for her being well born is the obvious familiarity her book shows with life in the castle and with courtly culture, especially courtly literature. Mechthild makes the point more than once that she is unlearned; that is, that she knows little Latin and has had no formal training in theology, which might invest her words with religious authority; but much of her writing shows a detailed knowledge of both the forms and content of the literature of the German high courtly period drawing to a close during her youth.

At the age of twelve, she tells us, she was "greeted" by the Holy Spirit-her expression for a special outpouring of divine favorand this continued daily for over three decades, well into the time when she was writing the FL. About 1230, as a young woman in her early twenties, she left the comforts of home to take up the life of a beguine in the not-too-distant town of Magdeburg, where she knew but one person; and even this one friendship she considered a spiritual liability, since she feared that, because of it, God might withdraw the spiritual divine love and contempt of the world that she sought (IV 2).

About 1250, in her forties, she revealed the extraordinary spiritual favors she has been experiencing to her confessor, probably the Dominican Heinrich of Halle. He urged her to continue her present way of life in cheerful confidence, and he commanded her to write the book "out of God's heart and mouth" (IV2).$ During the next ten years Mechthild completed the first five books of the FL, after which she may have originally considered her task com pleted. However, sometime during the following ten years (1260-70) she wrote Book VI, and still later composed Book VII.

Concerning the external details of Mechthild's life as a beguine in Magdeburg we know very little. We assume she lived in a house of beguines, and there is some evidence that she was, for a time, the superior of the community. She suffered through periods of sickness and reacted strongly to criticism of and threats against her book. She may have left Magdeburg occasionally because of sickness or hostility and returned to her relatives. But it is clear that she could count many supporters as well as detractors. The Lux divinitatis, the Latin translation of the first six books of the FL, reports that Baldwin, Mechthild's brother, was accepted into the Dominican order because of the merits of his sister.' Indeed, it was from the Order of Preachers, which she frequently singles out for special praise, that she seems to have derived much of her support.

It was in the Cistercian community at Helfta, however, that Mechthild spent her final years and wrote the seventh and final book of the FL. Under the guidance of its second abbess, Gertrud of Hackeborn (1250-91), Helfta was becoming known for its piety and learning. Here Mechthild retreated about 1270. There are signs that she felt ill at ease in this new environment, surrounded by women of whom many had enjoyed an education far superior to hers and could read and write Latin. This gave them direct access to the spiritual and theological traditions that Mechthild could only learn of secondhand. And yet these same nuns esteemed her and sought out her advice in spiritual matters (VII 21).

Two of these nuns themselves produced mystical texts that show clearly the influence of the FL. The first of these, The Book of Special Grace (Liber specialis gratiae), written down by two nuns after 1291, contains the revelations of Mechthild of Hackeborn (+1298 or 1299), sister of the aforementioned abbess. In the second book, known as The Herald of Divine Love (Legatus divinae pietatis), Gertrud of Helfta, "the Great" (+1301 or 1302), wrote an account of her interior life. Because these writings were in Latin, they enjoyed a wider readership than the FL and continued to be influential long after Mechthild of Magdeburg's vernacular work had disappeared, aside from anonymous bits that were here and there subsumed into manuals of piety. Here at Helfta, feeble and blind, which necessitated that she dictate the final chapters of Book VII, Mechthild finished out her life. The year of her death is uncertain-either about 1282 or about 1294.

3. The Flowing Light of the Godhead: a History of the Text

Since a manuscript of the FL was discovered in 1861 and became an object of scholarly investigation, the relationship of the text, as we have it, to the original document that Mechthild actually authored has been the object of much serious scholarship and debate. Understanding the problems and the degree to which they have been resolved is important for an intelligent reading of the text. The matter is perhaps best approached chronologically.

Mechthild originally wrote her book in Middle Low German, whereby Middle refers to the period in which the language was spoken and written-roughly 1050-1450-and Low refers to its geographical range-northern Germany.10 This original version has been lost, and there seems to be little hope of its recovery. Concerning this lost version, scholars have raised the question of how great a part Heinrich of Halle, Mechthild's confessor and spiritual advisor, played in its genesis. Heinrich, identified as lector" at the Dominican house in Ruppin after 1261 and member of the new Dominican community in Halle after about 1270, edited the first six books of the FL. He preceded Mechthild in death and seems to have had no influence on Book VII. Early scholarship gave him an important role in the genesis of Mechthild's book, claiming that he had altered greatly the content, style, and order of the text. More recently, Neumann has produced convincing evidence to show that Heinrich's influence on Mechthild's writing was minimal: that he confined himself to dividing the text into chapters while respecting Mechthild both as a person chosen by God to receive and impart special spiritual favors and as a talented writer. Some have suggested that Hein rich may have occasionally influenced the wording of sections dealing with difficult theological matters, where an orthodox formulation was a primary concern.' In general, however, there is now prevailing agreement that Heinrich let Mechthild's text speak for itself. And Neumann thinks there is good reason to believe that Mechthild herself participated in the editing process." just who is responsible for the chapter headings (which in the version we have are, with some inconsistencies, listed both at the beginning of each book and placed at the beginning of each chapter) is difficult to say. Because they differ in style from the rest of the text, they are probably not the work of Mechthild herself. Because they are at times misleading or less than apt, it is unlikely that they are Heinrich's doing. The headings of Book VII, because they differ markedly in style from those of the earlier books, must be attributed to sources other than the writer of the chapter headings of the first six books. Possibly they are the work of nuns at Helfta.

Books I through VI of the FL were translated into Latin, probably by two or more Dominicans in Halle shortly after Mechthild's death but, in any case, before 1298. The translators were apparently unaware of Book VII, composed at Helfta. This Latin version, the Lux divinitatis, changes the original order of the text, grouping material according to subject matter. The translators have toned down Mechthild's criticism of the clergy and some of her erotic imagery, and they occasionally offer an interpretation rather than a translation of a phrase or a sentence in the original. Otherwise, they demonstrate a solid understanding of the text and competence in translating it. The Latin translation is helpful in determining the meaning of Mechthild's occasionally obscure phrasing and serves as a welcome aid in correcting obvious corruptions in the vernacular version we possess.

What, then, in the absence of the original, is the nature of this surviving vernacular version, and what is its relationship to Mechthild's text? Somehow, a copy of Mechthild's work in the original Middle Low German14 fell into the hands of a secular priest in Basel named Heinrich of Nordlingen, confessor and spiritual advisor in many convents nearby. He supported mystical spirituality, was in contact with the Dominican John Tattler and possibly with Henry Suso as well, and corresponded with several mystically favored nuns. As we learn from a letter he wrote to the Dominican nun Margaret Ebner, to whom he is sending a copy of the FL, he was greatly moved by Mechthild's writing but, coming as he did from Bavaria and having worked first in Franconia and then in Swiss Basel, he found the German so strange that he realized it would have to be recast in Middle High German, the language of the German-speaking South, if it were to be read in that region with profit. Whether Heinrich did much of the translating himself or whether he delegated it to others in his circle in Basel, the task took two years. It is upon this version, existing in only one complete manuscript (ms E), discovered in 1861 in the library of the Benedictine monastery in Einsiedeln, Switzerland, that we must rely for access to Mechthild's lost original.

How close is this Middle High German version to the FL as it left Mechthild's hands? And is it possible to reconstruct the original from this version? To begin with the second question: Because the language of the area around Magdeburg was unstable at the time-admitting influences from several German dialects and forming no consistent internal linguistic unity-and hence, from the point of view of the present, unpredictable, scholars have never seriously considered attempting a full-scale reconstruction. This being said and despite Heinrich of Nordlingen's bafflement, one should not exaggerate the dissimilarities between these forms of medieval German. They are not different languages but rather different dialects of the same basic language and share to a large extent the same vocabulary. Most of the differences are in spelling and sound, the consequences

of the second consonant shift. This and Mechthild's frequent use of rhyme enables philologists to ascertain the probable original forms of many words. Thus, though ms E must remain the basis for constructing a critical text-and one that must remain Middle High German-this is no cause for despair. As Neumann in his early study of ms E reassures us, the version originating in Basel shows that great pains were taken to render its source accurately." The translators were aided, he maintains, by the nature of Mechthild's language and thought, which transcends dialect and geography. Mechthild's modes of expression are often taken from the knightly-courtly world. The ideals and concepts of this world, drawn from a class culture spread throughout Europe, changed very little when transferred from a north German to a south German dialect. Neumann considers it an overstatement to call the Basel version a translation of its source. It is, rather, merely a "transplanting" or "transferring.""

Until quite recently all work on Mechthild and all translations of the FL were based on an edition of ms E done by Gall Morel, the Benedictine librarian at Einsiedeln, and completed in 1869. This edition was reprinted three times (1963, 1976, and 1980) despite its many shortcomings. The desperate lack of a critical edition was finally ended with the publication of Hans Neumann's edition in 1990 (Vol. 1: Text) and 1993 (Vol. 2: Investigations), brought to completion by Gisela Vollmann-Profe. Neumann corrected the many misreadings of Morel's edition and made other emendations based on manuscripts containing fragments of the FL found since the publication of the Morel edition, on comparisons with the Lux divinitatis, and on the wealth of scholarship on Mechthild that has appeared during the past 130 years, to which Neumann himself is, perhaps, the foremost contributor." The translation presented here is the first in English based on the new critical edition.

4. The Flowing Light of the Godhead as literature

The FL has often been described as a unique document with no obvious antecedents or descendants whose singularity defeats all attempts to categorize it. The frequent medieval term for similar texts is revelationes (revelations) ; but if we take the term seriously, or a related description sometimes applied to it in German: Visionsbuch or Visionenbuch (visionary book or book of visions), we seem to be excluding much of the content of the FL from our definition. Many chapters deal with revelatory material only by the widest stretch of the imagination." Mechthild's first direct description of something she says she experienced in a vision (as opposed to ecstasy) does not occur until 11 3. Thus, categorization of her book remains a problem.

Compared to other mystical and religious writings in the vernacular, Mechthild's efforts are remarkable for how literary they are. Mechthild is not alone in turning her experiences into literature. One might well have to admit, for example, that Hadewijch writes more consistently at a high poetic level. What distinguishes Mechthild's book from the others is the variety of genres-literary as well as those less literary in nature-that she employs in formulating her thoughts. Most visionary writers of her time and in the generations after her seem to be passive in formulating their experiences. They wish simply and unadornedly to report what they have seen and heard, risking no changes that might contaminate the experience. Mechthild, on the contrary, seems to consider the experience as raw material that needs to be reflected upon, formed, and fashioned before it can become part of her book.

In her search for suitable forms she ranges far and wide, employing most genres available to an author of her time. Their number and variety are remarkable. Among the studies devoted to this, that of Wolfgang Mohr has been the best received.' His list spans the spectrum, from the genres and sub-genres of courtly literature to forms originating in folk culture and, of course, many forms drawn from religious sources. Simplifying Mohr's list, one can note the following major forms in the FL: 1. Religious genres: the vision," hymn, sermon, spiritual instruction and tract, prayer, liturgy, litany, and prophetic literature. 2. Courtly genres: courtly-love poetry, allegorical dialogue, dialogue between the lovers, the messenger's song (Botenlied), and the exchange (Wechsel). 3. Other genres: autobiography, drama, epigrammatic poetry and wisdom literature, anecdote, letter, parody, nursery rhyme, and polemics.

While it would be rash to assume on the part of Mechthild in the case of each chapter a conscious effort to exploit a well-established genre, the presence of a wealth of traditional forms, which is the distinguishing characteristic of the FL, can hardly be accidental. Intentionally or not, Mechthild, through her extensive absorption of the many kinds of writing to which she was exposed, wrote a book whose paradoxical nature is that its unity consists, in part, in its diversity of forms.

Mechthild's imagery is rich and varied. As reflected in the book's divinely received title, images of flowing and light abound. Flowing is often an outpouring from God, and dazzling light radiates forth from God and the angels, surrounding the souls of the blessed. Other images point ahead to Meister Eckhart; for example, her play with iht (something) and niht (nothing), or her mention of the wiiestenunge (the desert). She takes her metaphors from simple things, such as wine, a sphere, the dew, or a mountain.

In her visions Mechthild is able to create a vivid chart of supernatural geography: heaven (111 1), hell (111 21), purgatory (11 8), and paradise (VII 57). She puts upon a stage before us the drama of the end of time, as the forces of good and evil enter their final struggle (IV 27). Through lively dialogue she makes the devils come alive (IV 2 and VII 39). It is this cosmic dimension of many of her visions that distinguishes Mechthild from the women visionaries to follow, who confine themselves to reporting visionary experiences of a personal and private world. Mechthild, too, describes many visions private and intimate in nature. She is, however, also able to put before our eyes scenes of great significance for the history of salvation; and she paints such scenes from a privileged point of view.

Besides allegorical dialogues, such as ones between Love and the soul (I 2 and 11 24) and between the soul and the senses (I 44), Mechthild, in the tradition of the bestiary, creates an allegorical animal that represents the truly spiritual person (IV 18). She also creates an allegorical house in which she dwells (VII 48), an allegorical convent (VII 36), and the allegorical crown Christ shall wear in heaven after the LastJudgment (VII 1). Especially striking in her depictions, whether meant literally or metaphorically, is the strong sense of order she evokes and how she expresses the worth of someone-whether angel, saint, or damned soul-by the place she assigns each in the space she creates.

5. The Flowing Light of the Godhead as an Expression of Mysticism

One could argue that the above heading is misleading if the following remarks are intended to address the religious content of the FL in its totality, and not just certain parts that are by general consensus mystical. Certainly there are sections of the book in which the subject matter and its treatment are so lacking in mystical dimensions that the term cannot be appropriately applied to the book as a whole. Consider, for example, the chapters in which Mechthild offers practical advice to religious superiors (VI 1) and canons (VI 2), or the chapter, enlightened perhaps at the time but an embarrassment to a present-day admirer of Mechthild, in which she counsels how one should conduct oneself in dealing with Jews (IV 11). In spite of this justifiable objection, I would like to retain the term because, once the term is understood as it is intended, I think it well describes the spirit in which the FL was composed.

If one thinks, as I do, that a most unfortunate aspect of many studies on mysticism has been the focus on it as an experience, and if one then chooses, with Bernard McGinn, the working definition of mysticism as a direct or immediate consciousness or awareness of the presence of God, then the term mystical seems apt to describe the whole FL.21 It is Mechthild's conviction that she has been favored with a special consciousness of God's presence that permeates the book and authorizes her. Without it she could not be its author. Without it she would have no authority to write about spiritual matters, whether the longing the divine Lover and the beloved soul feel for each other or a vision depicting the torments of the damned. As her description of God's greeting makes clear (1 2), this heightened awareness of God's presence is not and cannot be a lasting or constant state. Its impact, however, creates in Mechthild the ever-present conviction that she is divinely empowered to teach and to criticize; and this conviction informs not only the lyrical descriptions of her moments of special favor and the writing down of her visions, but every last bit of the book, even, or especially, when Mechthild finds writing a burden from which she would gladly be released.

Mechthild develops no system of theology or spiritual teaching of her own that one can easily summarize, though she does express a few thoughts that have a ring of originality. Her strengths lie elsewhere-in her ability to describe lyrically the relationship of God and the soul, or to depict vividly the heavenly heights or the infernal depths. Because, however, the FL is divided into so many discrete books and chapters with no immediately recognizable principle of organization, a brief presentation of some of her characteristic thoughts or themes is offered here to provide initial orientation.

Love is the force that compels Mechthild to write, and love is what determines the hierarchy of values in her world. Especially in the early books Mechthild's way of describing love is strongly lyrical. Chapters 1 and 2 of Book I are two of her poetically best compositions. They both set the lyrical tone and introduce us to the dominant theme of divine love-both God's love for the soul and the soul's for God. While God's favor cannot be earned or effected by human actions, one can remove the obstacles to God's action in the soul by getting beyond oneself (iuberkommen) and by having become nothing (ze nihte worden, I 2).

In I 1 Mechthild creates a dialogue between Love and the soul to illustrate how the soul is to empty herself. The soul complains that Love has taken everything from her: childhood, youth, wealth, friends, relatives, honor, and even health, consuming her flesh and blood. Love counters by listing what the soul has received in return: heavenly freedom, virtue, spiritual riches, knowledge; and she has been purified and drawn into God. When the soul continues to complain, Love offers

itself to her and the soul feels abundantly recompensed.

In Chapter 2 Mechthild presents us with a poetically charged description of the divine "greeting," which she first experienced in her twelfth year and which, at the time of her writing IV 2, had continued for more than thirty-one years. So overwhelming has this experience been that it has made even major venial sins impossible. Here, at the outset of her book, she tries to recreate this defining experience of God's favor in words and to describe the heights to which this greeting lets her soar. These first two chapters set the tone for the lyricism of love that continues intermittently throughout.

Mechthild conceives of God, the object of her love, in various ways. God is the Emperor of the universe and is vitally present in creation, being "all things in all things" (11 19). God is three persons in one nature, with a rich interior life whose intimate conversations Mechthild is allowed to overhear (111 9). Most frequently, however, God appears as the human Lover and divine Bridegroom, passionately seeking spiritual union with the soul. To express the mutual love binding God and the soul, Mechthild often relies on two traditions: the lyric poetry of courtly love and the Song of Solomon. (Bernard of Clairvaux's treatment of this biblical text in his masterpiece on mystical love, the Sermons on the Song of Songs, reached Mechthild at least secondhand and unmistakably influenced her.) If mysticism implies union of the soul with God, then we must recognize that for Mechthild, as for her two principal sources, love's union consists as much or more in the yearning the lovers feel and express for each other as in fulfillment and oneness achieved. For the mystical beloved on earth, separation is as essential to love as union.

For Mechthild, two important qualities of the soul's love for God are that it should be bound and knowing love. Unbound love dwells in the senses and has not climbed to the soul. Unbound love is changeable and can lead to false love, as with David and Solomon. They did not sink beneath all creatures, nor were they wounded by love's power. Bound love transcends the senses and denies the body its will. In it the soul listens for the divine voice, sees the divine light, and seeks the divine will. Whoever is touched by bound love cannot fall into serious sin (11 24).

The soul's love for God must also be based on knowledge, but this seems to be personal knowledge of the divine Lover rather than the knowledge of the schools. Through the divine greeting Mechthild has this knowledge, and upon it her love rests secure. It cannot be taken from her by the "blind holy ones who love and do not know" (I 2). In I 21 Mechthild elaborates on the nature of the love she has sought and found:

Love without knowledge is as darkness to the wise soul.
Knowledge without its fruition she likens to the pains of hell.
Fruition short of death she cannot lament enough.

Love, knowledge, fruition, and death. We grasp the first three terms easily, but how are we to understand death? Mechthild's medieval audience would have had no difficulty understanding her. Love and death are linked both in religious and courtly traditions, and Mechthild several times exploits the interplay between these concepts already bound together in her cultural and spiritual environment. In a tradition going back to Paul, Christians are exhorted to die to themselves and to the world in order to rise again with and in Christ.22 Certainly such Pauline thoughts would occur to Mechthild's audience when she says: "Nothing tastes good to me but God alone; I am wondrously dead" (IV 12). Later Christian writers, for example Richard of St. Victor, with whose thought Mechthild was familiar, also speak of love of God causing a kind of death in the soul.23

In courtly literature the closeness of love and death is a frequent theme. It is in the guise of a minnesinger that Mechthild presents herself when she writes:

I would willingly die of love
If it could happen to me. (II 2)

And again, this time drawing both on spiritual and courtly traditions: "I long to love him to the death, boundlessly and without ceasing. Be happy, my soul, for your Life has died for love of you. Love him so fiercely that you could die for him" (I 28).

Nowhere in medieval literature, however, is the bond between love and death so pivotal as in the story of Tristan and Isolde. In Gottfried of Strassburg's unsurpassed version, the prologue announces it as an underlying motif, using an oxymoron to express the paradox at the center of the lovers' all-enveloping love: "its dear life, its sorrowful death, its dear death, its sorrowful life."24And when Tristan is told that the love potion that is causing his all-consuming love for Isolde will be the

death of him, he replies that "it has poisoned me most sweetly.... If my adorable Isolde were to go on being the death of me in this fashion I would woo death everlasting!"25 In their ecstasy of love they die, losing all sense of self, so lost are they in their union. It is this paradoxical meaning of death that Mechthild conjures up when she exclaims: "In this greeting I want to die living" (I 2). And it is again a Liebestod she has in mind when she says: "Love's death, a sweet distress" (1 30). Toward her life's end, longing for physical death and union with her Lover in heaven, she begs that she "might die of love in love" (VII 21).

The vehemence of her passion is often expressed in erotic images. In the dance with her Lover the soul hopes to "leap with abandon" before she comes "into the bed of love" where she shall "refresh" herself with her Lover. She wants to drink "undiluted wine" and go to her Lover as a "full-grown bride." When she enters the secret chamber, our Lord bids her: "Take off your clothes." For

Nothing shall come between them:
Then a blessed stillness
That both desire comes over them.
He surrenders himself to her,
And she surrenders herself to him. (I 44)

We should be well aware, however, that Mechthild is far from confusing or commingling spiritual love with physical love. Such a thought readily occurs to us, steeped as we are in popular psychology. Mechthild makes it quite clear, however, that only the soul that has left everything and gone "beyond the influences of the flesh" is ready for the dance and the bridal bed. And the clothes she is commanded to strip from her are the virtues with which she has adorned herself (I 44). Mechthild's passion is a spiritual passion. The searing images of physical passion are just that: images.

Despite Mechthild's resolute commitment to spiritual love, her attitude toward her body is not simply one of grim opposition. True, she has her soul call her body a murderer (I 2), but one must note carefully the context of her remark. Having left the confines of her physical body to spend an idyllic hour in spiritual bliss within the Trinity, the soul returns, as well she must, to the harsh reality of her uneasy partnership with the body. Mechthild laces her description of their reunion with humor. Both are out of sorts, grumbling and reproaching each other. Humor is possible for Mechthild precisely because body and soul are not pitted against each other as equals in deadly combat. The soul that truly desires to soar in spiritual realms cannot be held captive by the body but is free to go to her Lover.

Ultimately, body and soul will be partners forever, completely reconciled. Later in life, when thoughts of death become more frequent, Mechthild imagines how she will speak to her body on the last day. Addressing it as her beloved, healed of all its woes, she invites it to rise up and receive its reward. In the past the soul depended on the body. In heaven the roles shall be reversed (VI 35).

As the book continues, we notice changes in tone and emphasis. Lyrical effusions of love's yearning and its fulfillment in rapturous greeting grow less frequent. More consideration is given to practical rules of a holy life, to criticism of the clergy, and to visions both cosmic and private. But her perception of her relationship to her divine Lover changes as well. The importanceand perhaps the frequency-of the greeting diminishes. In its place we find Mechthild speaking of "sinking humility" and "estrangement," ideas that she now views as essential to this relationship. In two chapters especially (IV 12 and V 4), she articulates the change in her situation and attitude.

If Mechthild had in the past concentrated her lyricism on celebrating the blissful heights of love, sinking humility allows her to explore and value another dimension of divine love. It "chases" the soul "up into heaven and drags her down again into the abyss." Only in experiencing all aspects of God's love can the soul attain maturity: "When she has thus ascended to those heights possible for her while she is still attached to the body and has sunk to the deepest point that she can find, then she is fully grown in virtue and holiness." Not only does the soul accept this "deepest point" as an integral part of her life, but she actively seeks it and "retreats from what God does to her out of love." Sinking humility compels her to compare herself to all other creatures and to conclude that every one of them is better than she. Finally, it brings her to the lowest spot "where she can go no further: under Lucifer's tail." Here she would ever remain to God's honor and be "adorned with the suffering of long waiting" as her only reward (V 4).

Paired with sinking humility is estrangement, which Mechthild describes for us in detail (IV 12). After the soul has rejected all earthly joys and comforts, God answers her wish to forgo spiritual elevation and leaves her among those in purgatory and

among the damned. Asked by our Lord how long she wishes to remain there, the soul begs to be allowed to sink further. Soul and body, bereft of God's palpable presence, enter total darkness. Here the soul is assailed by doubts about the divine origin of all the favors previously experienced: If they had been from God, why would he now forsake her? The soul remains steadfast, relying on the memory of these favors. There follows "constant estrangement from God" that completely envelops the soul. Earlier the soul regarded God's absence as "anguish beyond human dying / And beyond the torments of hell" (II 2). Now she accepts and embraces it eagerly: "Welcome, very blessed Estrangement." In a transvaluation of values incomprehensible to reason and categorized as an abnormality by human science, the soul rejoices in its desolation, finding that "gall has become honey for the palate of my soul." When God wishes to cool the ardor of his love in her, the soul consents, but only "in such a way that it is good for you and not for me." To estrangement is added pain, but this only increases the soul's joy: "the deeper I sink, / The sweeter I drink" (IV 12).

This enigmatic disposition of the soul does not, however, seem to be the end of Mechthild's spiritual odyssey. As she continues to write, thoughts of union with God while on earth-even the paradoxical union through estrangement-recede and are replaced by a longing for death with its uninterrupted and everlasting union; and estrangement from God is not the last "divine favor" she is asked to accept. Since she has already renounced the world and God's affection, what, one might ask, remains for her to accomplish?

The last book of the FL, coupled with the circumstances in which its author wrote it, furnishes insights into what might be seen as Mechthild's final accomplishment. Her renunciation of God's favor and acceptance of estrangement from him were heroic; and that is, perhaps, precisely why this cannot be seen as the ideal and final disposition intended for the soul. In welcoming estrangement Mechthild is still the great soul whose interior life holds center stage in her own mind. At Helfta she is then required to give up much of what had been special about her and accept being ordinary. She must submit to the usual problems of advanced age and the blows to her basic human dignity this involves. Though she was willing throughout her life to seek and accept advice from those she respected, one can only conclude from her writings that she was fiercely and proudly independent. Yet she seeks admittance to the convent at Helfta and submits to its discipline. Though she feels some uneasiness there, both at being less educated than many of the sisters and at their tendency to regard her as a holy relic," she does her best to fit in and fulfill the community's expectations of her.27 Infirm and close to the death she so longs for, she sees in a vision how the saints and devils gather for her final struggle and triumph. But it is not to be. She recovers and must accept living onweak, blind, and with nothing to look forward to but ordinary banal human suffering (VII 63).

Renouncing God's favors and rejoicing at estrangement from him had been a noble gesture because it was done freely and with full human vigor. Now she has no choice but to accept her demeaning dependence on others. She must renounce herself and "let go," as the mystics urge, but not in some special sense limited to God's special friends. Rather, she, the visionary, the ecstatic, God's special messenger to Holy Christianity, must relinquish control over herself, as those must do who are feeble and helpless.

To the extent that one dare judge in such matters, it seems that she was equal to the challenge of accepting her very ordinary human lot. In the next-to-last chapter she composes a prayer, poignant in its directness and simplicity, which expresses her acknowledgment of her helplessness and her reaction to it. She thanks God that he has taken everything from her-her ability to provide food and clothing for herself, her eyesight, the use of her hands, her strength-thus forcing her to rely on others to take care of her basic needs. She has nothing left to give but her gratitude, as she humbly accepts the help of others. God has even stripped from her the "strength of my heart," and she thanks him for serving her "with the hearts of others" (VII 64). Love, knowledge, fruition, death she had written years before (1 21). It is perhaps a changed and deepened understanding of all that this entails which informs the concluding parts of The Flowing Light of the Godhead.

6. A Note on the Translation

Translations are by nature inferior to the originals. This is especially true concerning texts with such literary richness as the FL possesses. It is incumbent upon the translator both to set priorities and to explain, when possible, what the translation fails to accomplish. In a text such as the FL, which exploits the devices and conventions of literature but which, in fact, is trying to achieve a supra-literary goal, I have felt compelled to make content-the sense of what Mechthild is saying-the primary concern, even when this involves failing to reproduce adequately the form into which Mechthild casts her meaning. I have occasionally added some explanatory notes regarding literary forms and devices to help the reader become aware of what the translation has failed to accomplish. One pervasive aspect of Mechthild's style, however, which I have not been able to approximate in the

translation, needs a more elaborate explanation than can be achieved in notes to individual passages. This is her peculiar conception and use of a literary region between prose and verse.

As the critical edition points out, Morel's edition, by how it made the text appear on the page, divided Mechthild's writing sharply into prose and verse, as though she were following the tra dition of prosimetrum, as found, say, in Boethius's Consolations of Philosophy.28 Actually, Mechthild's style is much more differentiated, and she delights especially in transitional forms between prose and verse. The device she employs to create this diversity is colon rhyme; that is, units shorter than a sentence that are bound together by rhyme. Sometimes this device is used loosely and spread out over a section of text in such a way that it is scarcely noticeable. Frequently then, at the close of a chapter, Mechthild will intensify its use, so that it occurs almost without interruption over several lines of text. Before illustrating this through examples, we must also examine Mechthild's concept of rhyme, because it is quite foreign to modern sensibilities. More frequent than rhyme as it is normally understood-as the correspondence of vowel and consonant sounds at the end of a word (can-man; token-broken) - are occurrences of assonance or vowel rhyme, where only the vowels correspond (can-fat; token-over) .29The following examples with their translations are offered to clarify:

II 15:

Swelch mensche wirt zu einer *stunt*	Whoever at some point
von warer minne reht *wunt*,	Is seriously wounded by true love
der wirt niemer me wol *gesunt*,	Will never become healthy again,
er enkússe noch den selben *munt*,	Unless he kisses the same mouth
von dem sin sel ist worden *wunt*.	By which his soul was wounded.

I 10:

Swelch moensch die welt *úbersiget*	Whoever conquers the world
und sime lichamen allen unnútzen willen *benimet*	And takes from his body all useless desires,
und den túvel *úberwindet*	And overcomes the devil,
das ist die sele, die got *minnet*.	This is the soul that loves God.
Tuot ir die welt einen *stos*,	If the world gives her a shove,
da von lidet si kleine *not;*	She does not suffer much.
tuot ir das fleisch einen *wank*,	If the flesh gives her a jolt,
da von wirt der geist nút *krank*;	The spirit will not get sick from it.
tuot ir der túvel einen *bik*,	If the devil gives her a push,
des ahtet die sele aber *niht*.	The soul pays no heed.
Si *minnet*	She loves
und si *minnet*	And she loves (keep on loving),
und si kan anders nit *beginnen*.	and she does not know how to do otherwise.

IV 26:

Ein bruoder in der predier orden der was so sere beswert mit einem guoten ambachte in der gehorsami, als vil maniger ist, das im entgieng sein jugentlichú *maht* und *verlor* sine menlichen *kraft; doch* tet er es mit guotem willen. Do bat ich únsern *herren*, das er sine gnade da zuo woelte *keren*. Únser herre wisete mir und *sprach:* "Ich horte und *sach* alsus alle die arbeit, die er *lidet* und das er *liset* und *schribet*, das sol alles von minnen *singen* min lop vor minem ewigen *gesinde* alsus: grosser got, ewig, kreftig wunderlich, alleluia; und ich wil sin hovbet *ufhaben* und alle sine maht sterken als ich dir *habe* getan, nit alleine von nature, mere ovch sere von *gnaden*."

A brother in the Order of Preachers was so weighed down by an important office accepted under obedience—as happens to many—that his youthful vigor was drained from him and he lost his natural strength; yet he still carried on with good intentions. So I begged our Lord that he might turn his favor in that direction. Our Lord instructed me and said: "I have heard and seen all the distress he is suffering, and what he reads and writes. All this shall become the following song of love praising me before my eternal court: Great God, eternal, mighty, marvelous, alleluia. And I shall lift up his head and increase all his might, just as I have done for you—not just by nature, but rather even more by grace."

These three examples give the reader some idea of the diverse ways in which Mechthild employs different kinds of rhyme. The first example approximates closely a modern conception of rhyming verse, and the content is appropriate to the lyric form as well. The second example shows a predominance of assonance or vowel rhyme with an occurrence of conventional rhyme and an example of identical rhyme (minnet-minnet) thrown in for good measure. Again the linguistic structure and the content seem closer to verse than prose. In such cases I have, as here, usually cast the passage into verse-like lines without attempting to recreate the rhyme or assonance of the original. In like manner, I have not been overly concerned to reproduce the rhythms of the original, which are, in any case, most often irregular.

The third example contains a type of writing quite frequent in the FL. The passage begins as straight prose with no adornment of rhyme or assonance. The content, too, seems best suited to be expressed in prose. Then assonance sets in, punctuating the text at irregular intervals but in no way providing a verse-like structure for the whole. I have generally translated such passages into English prose. Also, following the practice of the critical edition and Schmidt in her translation, I have rendered several passages arguably more verse-like than prose-like in the original as prose. Hence, in such cases, there is no indication in the translation of this aspect of the original.

A few other matters regarding the translation need mentioning. Though generally of high quality, Mechthild's writing is uneven, and there are passages in the FL that could be improved upon. I have courageously resisted the temptation to improve her phrasing; neither have I altered anything aside from adding notes for the sake of clarity, unless the lack of clarity was rooted in syntactical differences in the languages themselves.

At times Mechthild's striving for rhyme or assonance seems to affect content negatively. So be it. I mention it here only because the reader has no way of knowing, especially in those passages rendered as prose, that rhyme or assonance may be affecting content. Sometimes, though rarely, an image will sound strange to the modern ear. The word nostrils is indeed uncommon in lyric poetry, but Mechthild uses it (IV 3). And when the divine Lover invites his beloved to sing to him, Mechthild has her reply: "Alas, my dear Lover, I am hoarse in the throat of my chastity" (11 25). But most of her images are appealing across the ages.

Another troubling area is the wide disparity in the amount of vocabulary-especially in the case of descriptive adjectives-available to Mechthild and to her translator into modern English. Mechthild had a relatively poor language at her disposal compared to the rich diversity and capacity for differentiating available in English. Should one always use the same English word to translate a Middle High German word? The answer is obviously that one should not, and I have not done so because it makes Mechthild's language seem primitive, which it certainly is not, though there is often an attractive naive simplicity about it, as there often is in the language of the best lyric poets. There are no rules that guarantee the right choice of words in translating. One can only try, as best one can, to get inside the world of the author and, from that perspective, choose what

seems to be the nearest equivalent.

A few specific matters: 1. I have almost always used she and her as pronouns when they refer to the soul. I have not done so because soul is feminine in German and thus requires feminine pronouns in that language. Consistency would then demand that one treat similarly all feminine nouns, such as snake, keg, or sickness. My justification is, rather, that for Mechthild the soul is the bride of Christ, so that even in instances in which it or its might seem equally appropriate-or even more so than feminine pronouns, I have stuck with she and her. Only when pronouns refer to Christ's soul have I used the neuter pronoun. 2. Geistlich (spiritual) is frequently used by Mechthild to refer to persons who are religious in the sense that they are members of the clergy, of a religious order, or beguines. When this is not clear from the text, I have added an explanatory note. 3. Mechthild uses heilige/helige cristanheit (Holy Christianity) to refer to the whole Christian community on earth, and it could justifiably be translated simply as the church, as conceived of by a loyal and enthusiastic daughter thereof. I have decided to translate it literally because of the freshness of Mechthild's term for the modern reader and because of the additional baggage the term church has acquired since Mechthild's time. 4. Finally, in the chapter headings that are phrases and not sentences, retreating from literalness, I have not translated the Von (concerning, about, of) with which they almost all begin.

I have found translating Mechthild more difficult than other authors I have tried my hand at (Eckhart, Suso, Hartmann of Aue), but it has also been more rewarding. The act of translating forces one to ponder Mechthild's words meditatively. One approaches more closely that frame of mind in which the author intended that her words be read than when one is dissecting the text with purely scholarly intentions. Though I have not yet read Mechthild's book nine times, as its Foreword admonishes us to do, I am close. Each prolonged encounter with Mechthild's text has resulted in my esteeming her more. Her book has much to offer if one reads it in a contemplative and receptive spirit.

NOTES TO THE INTRODUCTION

1. This is the convincing conclusion reached by Ursula Peters, Religiose Erfahrung als literarisches Faktum, Zur Vorgeschichte and Genese frauenmystischer Texte des 13. and 14.Jahrhunderts (Tubingen: Niemeyer, 1988), 41-100.

2. For more on beguines, see E.W.McDonnell, The Beguines and Beghards in Medieval Culture, with Special Emphasis on the Belgian Scene (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1954) ; Herbert Grundmann, Religiose Bewegungen im Mittelalter, 2d ed. (Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1961), also now in English: Religious Movements in the Middle Ages (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1995) ; and Robert E. Lerner, The Heresy of the Free Spirit in the Later Middle Ages (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972). The material presented here is taken from these sources.

3. It would seem safe to conclude that Mechthild's writings were already being read by some outside her immediate circle from what she writes in 11 26.

4. McDonnell, 508.

5. The most important section of the FL for biographical information is IV 2. I have also relied heavily on Neumann 1964; and Neumann, "Mechthild von Magdeburg," Die deutsche Literatur des Mittelalters: Verfasserlexikon, 2d ed. Kurt Ruh (Berlin: de Gruyter), Vol. 6 (1987) 260-70. Ursula Peters, Religiose Erfahrung, 53-67 and 1 16-29, is deeply skeptical about the factuality of almost anything presented as fact in the FL and in all other similar religious texts. Though her views have not won general acceptance, they bear consideration.

6. Schmidt, X.

7. Neumann, Verfasserlexikon, 260.

8. Peters, Religiose Erfahrung, 116-29, doubts that the confessor played a central role in the book's inception and considers the meeting with the confessor and his command to write to be a literary topos Mechthild employs to rid herself of the charge of arrogance in undertaking to write such a book as the FL. Because of the evident joy with which Mechthild often writes, one is certainly justified in questioning whether her confessor's command was crucial to her decision to write. Securing her confessor's approval, however, would certainly be a prudent thing to do if she was to claim that the book "comes from God and does not have its origins in human thought" (IV 2).

9. The Lux divinitatis also speaks of Baldwin's fine upbringing, which strengthens the general assumption that the family was of the aristocracy; and it reports that Baldwin became a subprior and enjoyed a reputation for virtue and knowledge. See Book IV, note 44 below.

10. Especially in the lyrical passages there are words coming from a less northern dialect called Middle German, a bit removed from Low German.

11. A lector was a Dominican, who, after finishing the basic course of studies required of all Dominican priests, had been chosen to complete additional studies in theology and was engaged in the instruction of younger Dominicans.

12. Schmidt in a few of the explanatory notes accompanying her translation states her conviction that this or that phrase or sentence was probably formulated by Heinrich. Hans Urs von Balthasar, in notes he contributed to Schmidt's earlier translation of the FL (Einsiedeln, Zurich, Cologne: Benziger, 1955) also points out several formulations he thinks might well have been the work of Heinrich.

13. Neumann 1964, 218-19.

14. Not, Neumann (1964, 176) says, the original text, but a Middle Low German version that had already undergone some changes.

15. Neumann, "Problemata Mechtildiana," Zeitschrift fur deutsches Altertum and deutsche Literatur 82 (1948-50), 160.

16. Neumann, "Problemata," 172. The two words Neumann contrasts are ubersetzen (translating) and umsetzen (transferring

or transplanting).

17. For a survey of this scholarship, see Frank Tobin, Mechthild von Magdeburg: A Medieval Mystic in Modern Eyes (Columbia, South Carolina: Camden House, 1995).

18. We are speaking from the point of view of the literary scholar, of course. Mechthild might well have countered that the entire content of the book was a special revelation by God.

19. Wolfgang Mohr, "Darbietungsformen der Mystik bei Mechthild von Magdeburg," Marchen, Mythos, Dichtung: Festschrift zum 90. Geburtstag Friedrich von der Leyens, ed. Hugo Kuhn and Kurt Schier (Munich: Beck, 1963), 375-99.

20. It seems legitimate to consider the vision, as it occurs in the FL, more as a form drawn from tradition than as the reporting of raw experience because, first, Mechthild's visions have been reflected upon and crafted, and, second, she draws upon the traditions of the vision coming from, among other sources, the Book of Daniel, Paul, and the Book of Revelation, as is pointed out in the notes.

21. Bernard McGinn, The Foundations of Mysticism (NewYork: Crossroad, 1992), xiii-xx. The most troubling term in this definition, for McGinn as well, is direct or immediate. For our present purposes we can avoid difficulties by weakening it to something like heightened or intensified.

22. See, for example, Romans 6:1-11 and Colossians 3:20.

23. Schmidt, note 44, p. 356, and note 90, pp. 363-64.

24. Gottfried of Strassburg, Tristan, trans. A.T.Hatto (NewYork: Penguin, 1967), 42.

25. Tristan, 206.

26. At least this can be reasonably concluded from the first paragraph of VII 21.

27. The increase in imagery from and references to convent life in Book VII is quite evident.

28. N I, XXII-XXIII.

29. Mechthild also employs other kinds of rhyme that offend against modern taste, such as impure rhyme, identical rhyme, and cases where a rhyme occurs in an accented syllable of one word and in an unaccented syllable of the other word.

THE FLOWING LIGHT OF THE GODHEAD

PROLOGUE TO THE LUX DIVINITATIS[1]

Prologue of Brother Heinrich, Lector, of the Order of Preaching Brothers'

We read in the Book of Judges (4:4-5) that the holy woman Deborah, the wife of Lappidoth, full of the spirit of prophecy, was accustomed to set up her tent under a palm tree in the hills of Ephraim, residing there as a solitary to devote herself to God alone. Israel, God's people, would go up to her seeking judgment in all matters. Likewise, the Fourth Book of Kings (2 Kgs 22: 14-20) relates that Huldah, a prophetess living in Jerusalem, enlightened by the Holy Spirit as to the hidden judgment of God, informed the holy king Josiah about the coming scourges threatening the people. This just and pious king had sent priests and levites to her so that the holy woman might seek the Lord's guidance and pray on his behalf regarding the imminent misfortunes. Certainly there were at the time high priests of the seed of Aaron and other kinds of priests and levites learned in the law and of high moral integrity; yet, in spite of this, the Holy Spirit did not divulge his secret counsels to them. Rather, for these times he revealed them to these holy women of the weak sex, as he saw fit.

Quite often, in fact, almighty God has chosen what is weak in the world to confound what is stronger for its good. Therefore, let no one wonder or, lacking trust, fall into disbelief if God in the time of grace renews his marvels. He, who in the time of the law of Moses mercifully saw fit to perform similar works, now reveals his mysteries to the fragile sex. Because the people of Israel believed Deborah's prophecy, they won freedom from oppression and victory over their enemies. Also, a king, a religious man, was found worthy to gain solace and mercy through the prayer and advice of the prophetess Huldah. So, too, shall all who write or read this book, if they approach it with pious intent, attain an increase in solace and spiritual grace, as the Lord promises them in the book itself.

This writing must be read in a pious spirit, however. It must be understood, as is the case with other holy writings, in a wholesome manner and in good faith. In this way the reader will find nothing scandalous or offensive in it, and the writing itself will not be subjected to any perverse claim of falsehood. Its author is the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; it treats Christ and the church, as well as Satan and his body.' Its manner of proceeding is both historical and mystical; its purpose is the ordering of the present life, the useful calling to mind of things past, and the prophetic disclosure of things to come. The sincere devotion and dove-like simplicity of the woman through whom this writing was made public should completely suffice to guarantee the truth of what the pious faithful are asked to believe. From childhood she led a pure and innocent life. In her youth, at the urging of the Lord, she left everything she stood to gain and became an exile in a foreign land, leading a life of voluntary poverty. Finally, after many tribulations and at an advanced age, she was received into the community of holy sisters at Helfta. She lived there for twelve years and, as is confirmed by their testimony,' she flourished in the perfection of all virtues. She especially practiced charity, humility, long-suffering, and meekness. Raised up above all things by contemplation and made a sharer of divine illuminations and revelations, she was worthy to perceive from the Lord through her prophetic spirit numerous intimate divine mysteries concerning things past, present, and to come. Now, having been received by the Bridegroom of virgins, this holy virgin enjoys fully him whom she loved and whose wondrous love adorned his beloved with many marvels.

The revelations and visions that almighty God has deigned to disclose to his elect are founded upon and have their origin in the directness of their faith. Their purity of mind demands and expects them. The holiness of their life authenticates and corroborates them. For celestial secrets lie open to such people, and their testimony is greeted with belief by the hearts of those who hear them.

For this reason, before beginning this book, which is written in a primitive tongue and contains certain marvelous and previously unknown mysteries, I thought it worthwhile to point out beforehand a bit about the holiness of the person to whom these things have been revealed by heaven, so that the marvels mentioned in word might have the support of deeds more marvelous. For who shall describe for us more vividly the perfection of the elect than those very ones in whom and through whom God carries out his works? And who could have made known to the church more beneficially or better the perfection of Paul than Paul himself? In like manner, this holy one made public what the divine Spirit had wrought in her and with her, and proclaims his praise and glory.'

LATIN FOREWORD WITH TABLE OF CONTENTS AND MIDDLE HIGH GERMAN TRANSLATION[1]

In the year of our Lord 1250 and for almost fifteen years thereafter this book was revealed2 in German by the Lord through grace to a certain beguine who was a holy virgin in body and spirit. In humble simplicity, in the poverty of exile, weighed down by scorn, and in heavenly contemplation, as is made clear in this writing, she served the Lord with great devotion for more than forty years, following perfectly the footsteps of the brothers of the Order of Preachers. Always progressing day by day, she continually became better. It was compiled' by a brother of the aforementioned order and contains many good things, as is noted in these titles:

On the Trinity: 11 3; 111 9; IV 12 and 14; V 26

On Christ: 11 3; IV 14; V 23 and 27

On Our Lady: 1 22; 11 3; V 23

On the Nine Orders of Angels: 1 6; 111 1; V 1

On the Special Excellence of Certain Saints: IV 20, 22, and 23

On the Evilness of Demons: 11 24; IV 2 and 17; V 1; V 29

On the Dignity of a Human Being: I 44; IV 14

On Rapture and the Separation of the Soul from the Flesh: I 5

On the Description of Heaven: III 1

On the Description of Hell: 111 21

On the Many Kinds of Purgatory: 11 8; 111 15 and 17; V 14 and 15

On Many Virtues and Vices: I 22 and 25; 111 7 and 14; IV 4; and on Charity Especially: 111 13

On the Order of Preachers at the End of the World at the Time of the Antichrist: IV 27

And on many things unheard of that you shall understand if you read this book nine times in faith, humility, and devotion.' Here is prophecy about the past, present, and future. Here also is the Song of the Three Persons: V 26.

[Middle High German translation:]

In the year 1250 after God's birth and for the fifteen years thereafter this book was revealed in German by God to a sister. She was a holy virgin both in body and in spirit. She served God devotedly in humble simplicity, in the poverty of exile, in heavenly contemplation, and weighed down by scorn, for more than forty years, and followed steadfastly and completely the light and the teaching of the Order of Preachers, and went forward from day to day and improved herself daily. But a brother of the same order gathered together and wrote this book; and much good is contained in this book on many subjects, as is noted in this list. You should read it through nine times in faith, humility, and devotion.

Book I

One Should Receive This Book Eagerly, For It Is God Himself Who Speaks the Words'

This book I hereby send as a messenger to all religious people both the bad and the good; for if the pillars fall,' the building cannot remain standing; and it signifies me alone and proclaims in praiseworthy fashion my intimacy. All who wish to understand this book should read it nine times.

This Book Is Called a Flowing Light of the Godhead

"Ah, Lord God, who made this book?"

"I made it in my powerlessness, for I cannot restrain myself as to my gifts."4

"Well then, Lord, what shall the title of the book be, which is to your glory alone?"

"It shall be called a flowing light of my Godhead into all hearts that live free of hypocrisy."

1. How Love and the Queen Spoke to Each Other'

The soul came to Love, greeted her with great deference, and said:

"God greet you, Lady Love."

"May God reward you, Mistress and Queen."

"Lady Love, you are indeed perfect."

"Mistress and Queen, that is why I am above all things."

"Lady Love, you struggled many a year before you forced the exalted Trinity to pour itself utterly into the humble virginal womb of Mary."

"Mistress and Queen, that was to your honor and benefit."

"Lady Love, you have now come here to me and have taken from me everything I ever gained on earth."

"Mistress and Queen, you have made a happy exchange."

"Lady Love, you have taken from me my childhood."

"Mistress and Queen, in its place I have given you heavenly freedom."

"Lady Love, you have taken from me all my youth."

"Mistress and Queen, in its place I have given you many a holy virtue."

"Lady Love, you have taken from me possessions, friends, and relatives."

"Come now, Mistress and Queen, that is a petty complaint."

"Lady Love, you have taken from me the world, worldly honor, and all earthly riches."

"Mistress and Queen, I shall make that up to you in one hour with the Holy Spirit on earth, just as you wish it."

"Lady Love, you have brought me to such a pass that my body is racked by a strange weakness."

"Mistress and Queen, in exchange I have given you much sublime knowledge."

"Lady Love, you have devoured my flesh and my blood."

"Mistress and Queen, you have thereby been purified and drawn into God."

"Lady Love, you are a robber; for this as well shall you make reparation."

"Mistress and Queen, then take me."

"Lady Love, now you have recompensed me a hundredfold on earth."

"Mistress and Queen, in addition you may demand God and all his kingdom.

2. Concerning Three Persons and Three Gifts'

God's true greeting, coming from the heavenly flood out of the spring of the flowing Trinity, has such force that it takes away all the body's strength and reveals the soul to herself, so that she sees herself resembling the saints, and she takes on a divine radiance. Then the soul leaves the body, taking all her power, wisdom, love, and longing. Just the tiniest bit of her life force remains with the body as in a sweet sleep.' Then she sees one complete God in three Persons and knows the three Persons in one God undivided.

He greets her in courtly language that one does not hear in this kitchen, clothes her in the garments that one fittingly wears in a palace, and surrenders himself into her power. Then she can wish for and ask whatever she wants. It is granted her and she is enlightened. What she is not enlightened about is the first cause of the Three Persons.' Then he draws her further to a secret place. There she is not permitted to beg on anyone's behalf or ask, because all alone with her he wants to play a game that the body does not know, nor the peasants at their plows, nor knights at their tournaments, nor his lovely mother, Mary-not even she may play it there. Then she soars further to a blissful place of which I neither will nor can speak. It is too difficult; I do not dare, for I am a very sinful person. Yet when infinite God brings the unfathomable soul to the heights, she loses sight of the earth in her astonishment and is not aware of ever having been on earth. Just when the game is at its best, one has to leave it.

Then God in full vigor speaks: "Young Miss, you must go down." She shudders and laments" her banishment. She says: "Lord, you have raised me up" so high here that I shall not be able to praise you in any fitting degree when in my body. Rather, I shall suffer as an outcast and shall struggle against the body." And he says:

“Oh, dear dove,[12]
Your voice is string music to my ears.
Your words are spices for my mouth.
Your longings are the lavishness of my gift.”

She says: "Dear Lord, it has to be as the master of the house13 commands." And she sighs with all her might, which awakens the body.14

Then the body speaks: "Well, woman, just where have you been? You come back so love-struck, lovely, and vibrant, free and witty. Your carrying on has cost me my appetite, sense of smell, color, and all my strength."

She says: "Shut up, murderer! Quit your bellyaching. I'll always be on my guard with you around. That my enemy has been wounded-what do we care about that? It makes me glad."

This is a greeting that has many streams. It pours forth from the flowing God into the poor, parched soul unceasingly with new knowledge, in new contemplation, and in the special enjoyment of the new presence. 0 sweet God, inwardly on fire, outwardly blossoming, now that you have given this to the least," I would like to experience the life that you have given to your

greatest. For that I would be willing to endure suffering even longer.

No one is able or is permitted to receive this greeting unless one has gone beyond oneself and has become nothing. In this greeting I want to die living." This the blind saints cannot ruin for me. They are the ones who love and do not know."

3. The Handmaids of the Soul and the Blow of Love18

All holy Christian virtues are the handmaids of the soul. The sweet listlessness of the soul complains to Love of her troubles:

"Well then, dearest Maiden, for a long time now you have been my chambermaid. Now tell me, where is all this leading? You have hunted me, trapped me, bound me, and wounded me so deeply that I shall never be healthy again. You have meted out to me many a cudgel blow. Tell me, am I ever going to recover from you? If I were not going to be killed by your hand, it would be better for me never to have known you."19

Love: "That I hunted you was my fancy.
That I captured you was my desire.
That I bound you made me happy.
When I wounded you, you were joined to me.
When I cudgel you, I take you into my power.
I drove God the almighty from heaven,
Took his human life,
And returned him to his Father in honor.
How do you, vile worm, expect to survive before me?"

The Soul: "Speak, my Empress, I fear a small secret medicine
God has often given to me that I might thrive even in your presence."

Love: "If one does not want the prisoners dead,
One gives them water and bread.
The medicine that God has often given you

Is nothing other than a brief return to human life.
But when your Easter Day comes
And your body receives the death blow,
Then I'll embrace you tightly
And permeate you utterly,
And I'll steal you from your body
And give you to your Lover."

The Soul: "O Love, this letter I have written out of your mouth.
Now give me, Lady, your seal."

Love: "Whoever has succeeded in loving God more than self
Knows well where to get the seal.
It lies between the two of us."

The Soul speaks:
"Be silent, dear one, and speak no more.
Dearest of all maidens, let all creatures, myself included,
Bow down before you.
Tell my Lover that his bed is made ready.
And that I am weak with longing for him."

If this letter is too long, this is the reason: I was on the meadow where I found flowers of all kinds. This is a sweet lament: Who dies of love shall be buried in God.

4. The Soul's, journey to Court During Which God Reveals Himself

When the needy soul comes to the court, she is judicious and refined. She gazes at her God in high spirits. Oh, how tenderly is she welcomed there! She remains silent, longing boundlessly for his praise. With great longing he reveals to her his divine heart. It resembles red gold burning in a great fire of coals. He places her into his glowing heart. When the exalted Sovereign and the little waif thus embrace and are united as water and wine, she turns to nothing and is transported out of herself.20 When she has no strength left, he is as lovesick for her as he always was; for he neither increases nor decreases. Then she says:

"Lord, you are my lover,
My desire,
My flowing fount,
My sun;
And I am your reflection."

This is the journey to court of a loving soul that cannot exist without God.

5. The Torment and the Praise of the Soul21

My body is in great torment, my soul is in sublime bliss; for she has both gazed upon and embraced her Lover in her arms. He causes her, poor wretch, torment. When he draws her up, she flows. She cannot hold herself in check until he brings her within himself. She would like to speak but cannot, so utterly has she been enmeshed in sublime union with the awe-inspiring Trinity. Then he leaves her for a short while, that she might feel longing. She desires his praise but does not know how to find it as she would like. She would even want him to send her into hell that he might be praised beyond measure by all creatures.22 She looks at him and says to him, "Lord, give me your blessing." He looks at her, draws her up again, and gives her a greeting23 that the body cannot express.

Then the body speaks to the soul:

"Where have you been?
I can't take it anymore."

And the soul says:

"Quiet, you are a fool.
I want to be with my Lover,
Even if it means you would perish.
I am his joy, he is my torment."

This is her torment. May she never recover!
May you take this torment upon yourself as well,
And may you never escape it!

6. The Nine Choirs: How They Sing24

Now hear,25 my Beloved; listen with spiritual ears. Thus do the nine choirs sing:

We praise you, Lord, that you sought us in your humility.
We praise you, Lord, that you have kept us in your mercy.
We praise you, Lord, that you have glorified us in your humiliation.
We praise you, Lord, that you have provided for us in your generosity.
We praise you, Lord, that you have arranged us in rank in your wisdom.
We praise you, Lord, that you have shielded us with your might.
We praise you, Lord, that you have sanctified us with your nobility.
We praise you, Lord, that you have instructed us in your intimacy.
We praise you, Lord, that you have elevated us in your love.

7. God's Curse in Eight Things

I curse you:
May your body die.
May your words perish.
May your eyes close.
May your heart dissolve.
May your soul rise up.
May your body remain.
May your human faculties perish.
May your spirit stand in the presence of the Holy Trinity!

8. The Most Lowly Praises God in Ten Things

O you burning Mountain.
O you chosen Sun.
O you full Moon.
O you bottomless Well.
O you unscalable Height.

O you Brightness without measure.
O Wisdom without ground.
O Mercy without restraint.
O Might without opposition.
O Crown of all honors!
The most lowly person you ever created praises you.

9. With Three Things You Dwell on the Heights

Those who are on fire in true love and build on the firm ground of truth and bear abundant fruit for a blessed end-they dwell on the heights.

Explanation: This is about the Seraphim.

10. Who Loves God Triumphs over Three Things

Whoever conquers the world,
And takes from his body all useless desires,
And overcomes the devil,
This is the soul that loves God.
If the world gives her a shove,
She does not suffer much.
If the flesh gives her a jolt,
The spirit will not get sick from it.
If the devil gives her a push,
The soul pays no heed.
She loves
And keeps on loving,
And she does not know how to do otherwise.

11. Four Battle for God

O dove free of gall.[26]
O maiden free of blemish.
O knight free of wounds.
O liegeman free of hesitation.
These are the four whom God can count on in battle.

12. The Soul Praises GodforFive Things"

O Emperor of all honors.
O Crown of all sovereigns.
O Wisdom of all the learned.
O Giver of all gifts.
O Deliverer of all imprisonments.

13. How God Comes to the Soul

I come to my beloved as the dew upon the flower.[28]

14. How the Soul Receives and Praises God

Ah, joyous sight!
Ah, lovely greeting!
Ah, dear embrace!
Lord, the wonder of you has overwhelmed me.
Your grace has crushed me.
O you lofty Crag.
You are so nicely honeycombed.
In you no one can rest but doves and nightingales.

15. How God Receives the Soul

Welcome, my precious dove.
You have flown so keenly over the earth
That your feathers reach to heaven.

16. God Likens the Soul to Four Things

You taste like a grape.
Your fragrance is like balsam.[29]
Your radiance is like the sun.
You are an enhancement of my most sublime love.

17. The Soul Praises God About Five Things

O you pouring God in your gift!
O you flowing God in your love!
O you burning God in your desire!
O you melting God in the union with your beloved!
O you resting God on my breasts![30]
Without you I cannot exist.

18. God Likens the Soul to Five Things

O you beautiful rose among the thorns!
O you fluttering bee in the honey!
O you unblemished dove in your being!
O you beautiful sun in your radiance!
O you full moon in the firmament!
I cannot turn away from you.

19. God Caresses the Soul in Six Ways

You are my softest pillow,
My most lovely bed,
My most intimate repose,
My deepest longing,
My most sublime glory.
You are an allurement to my Godhead,
A thirst for my humanity,
A stream for my burning.

20. The Soul Praises God in Return in Six Ways

You are my resplendent mountain,
A feast for my eyes,
A loss of myself,
A tempest in my heart,
A defeat and retreat of my power,
My surest protection.[31]

21. Of Knowledge and Enjoyment

Love without knowledge is as darkness to the wise soul.[32]
Knowledge without its fruition she likens to the pains of hell.
Fruition short of death she cannot lament enough.

22. St. Mary's Message and How One Virtue Follows Another. How the Soul Was Made in theJubilus33 of the Trinity, and How St. Mary Nursed All the Saints and Nurses Them Still

The sweet dew of the eternal Trinity gushed forth from the fountain of the everlasting Godhead into the flower of the chosen maid; and the fruit of this flower is an immortal God and a mortal man and a living hope of eternal life. And our Redeemer

became a Bridegroom. The bride became exhilarated at the sight of his noble countenance:

Under this immense force she loses herself.
In this most dazzling light she becomes blind in herself.
And in this utter blindness she sees most clearly.
In this pure clarity she is both dead and living.

The longer she is dead, the more blissfully she lives.[34]
The more blissfully she lives, the more she experiences.[35]
The less she becomes, the more flows to her.
The more she fears,…[36]
The richer she becomes, the poorer she is.
The deeper she dwells,[37] the more she expands.
…, the more forbearing she is.
The deeper her wounds become, the more violently she struggles.

The more loving God is to her, the higher she soars.
The more radiantly she shines in the reflected effulgence of the Godhead, the closer she approaches him.
The more she labors, the more contentedly she rests.
…, the more she grasps.
The more quiet her silence, the louder she calls.
…, the greater the marvels she works with his strength in proportion to her power.

The more his desire grows, the more extravagant their wedding celebration becomes.
The narrower the bed of love becomes, the more intense are the embraces.
The sweeter the kisses on the mouth become, the more lovingly they gaze at each other.
The greater the distress in which they part, the more he bestows upon her.

The more she consumes, the more she has.
The more humbly she takes her leave, the sooner she returns.
The more ardent she remains, the sooner she bursts into flame.
The more she burns, the more beautifully she glows.
The more God's praise is spread abroad, the greater her desire becomes.

Tell me, where did our Redeemer become the Bridegroom?

In the jubilus of the Holy Trinity. When God could no longer contain himself, he created the soul and, in his immense love, gave himself to her as her own.3S

"What are you made of, Soul, that you ascend so high above all creatures, mingle with the Holy Trinity, and yet remain whole in yourself?"

"You have brought up the question of my origin. I shall tell you honestly: I was made by love in that very place." For that reason no creature is able to give comfort to my noble nature or to open it up except love alone."

"Holy Mary, dear Lady, you are the mother of this wonder. When did this happen to you?"

"When our Father's jubilus was saddened by Adam's fall, so that he had to become angry, the Eternal Wisdom of the

almighty Godhead intercepted the anger together with me. The Father chose me for his bride-that he might have something to love; for his darling bride, the noble soul, was dead. The Son chose me to be his mother, and the Holy Spirit received me as his beloved. Then I alone was the bride of the Holy Trinity and mother of orphans, and I brought them before God's eyes so that they might not all sink down, though some did. When I was thus the mother of many a banished child, my breasts became so full of the pure, spotless milk of true, generous mercy that I suckled the prophets and sages, even before I was born. Afterward, in my childhood, I suckled Jesus; later, in my youth, I suckled God's bride, Holy Christianity, under the cross when I was so desolate and wretched, as the sword of the physical suffering of Jesus cut spiritually into my soul."

Both his wounds and her breasts were open.
The wounds poured forth.
The breasts flowed.
The soul was invigorated and completely restored
As he poured the sparkling red wine
Into her red mouth.[40]

As she was thus born and made healthy out of the open wounds, she was like a child, and very young. If she was going to recover completely after her death and birth, God's mother was going to have to be her mother and her nurse. This was and is as it should be, since God is her rightful father and she is his rightful bride. She resembles him in all parts.

"Lady, in your old age you suckled the holy apostles with your motherly instruction and with your powerful prayer, that God might reveal his honor and your will through them. Lady, thus did you suckle then and suckle still the hearts of martyrs with strong faith, the ears of confessors with holy protection, the virgins with your chastity, widows with constancy, married people with kindness, and sinners with patient hope."

"Lady, us, too, you must suckle, for your breasts are still so full that they are not likely to dry up. If you no longer wanted to suckle, the milk would cause you much pain. For truly, I have seen your breasts so full that seven streams pour out at one time from one breast over my body and over my soul. In that hour you relieve me of a labor that no friend of God can bear without inner suffering. In this same manner, you shall go on suckling until the last day. Then you shall become dry, for then God's children-and your children-will be weaned and fully grown for eternal life. Ah, then we shall know and see with inexpressible joy the milk and even the breasts themselves41 thatJesus so often kissed."42

23. You Should Ask That God Love You Passionately, Often, and Long; Then You Shall Become Pure, Beautiful, and Holy43

Ah, Lord, love me passionately, love me often, and love me long. For the more passionately you love me, the purer I shall become. The more often you love me, the more beautiful I shall become. The longer you love me, the holier I shall become here on earth.

24. How God Responds to the Soul

That I love you passionately comes from my nature, for I am love itself. That I love you often comes from my desire, for I desire to be loved passionately. That I love you long comes from my being eternal, for I am without an end and without a beginning.

25. The Way to Suffer Pain Willingly for God's Sake

God guides his chosen children along strange paths. This is a strange path and a noble path and a holy path that God himself trod: that a human being, though free of sin and guilt, suffer pain. Upon this path the soul that aches for God is joyful, for by nature she is joyful to her Lord, who suffered much pain because of his good deeds. Our dear Lord, the heavenly Father, delivered up his most beloved Son to be tormented by the heathens and martyred by the Jews despite his innocence. Now the time has come when some people, who have the appearance of being religious, torment the bodies of God's children and martyr their spirits. For he wants them to resemble his beloved Son who was tormented in body and soul.

26. The Path upon Which the Soul Draws the Senses and Is Free of Suffering of the Heart

It is a rarely traveled and lofty path upon which the devoted soul makes its way and guides the senses as one with sight guides a blind person. On this path the soul is free and lives without inner suffering, for she wants nothing but what her Lord wants, who arranges everything for the best.

27. How You Become Worthy of This Path and Keep to It and Become Perfect

Three things make a person worthy of this path-that one recognize it and enter upon it: first, that one submit to God relinquishing all human control, and that one piously hold on to God's grace and willingly keep it by being forgiving in all things as far as is possible for a human will. The second thing keeping a person on this path is that one welcome all things except for sin alone. The third thing keeping a person on this path is that one do all things equally for God's honor. Thus I think relieving my most basic need counts as much in God's sight as if I were in the highest state of contemplation that a human being can attain. Why? If I do it out of love in order to give honor to God, it is all one and the same. But when I sin, I am not on this path.

28. Love Shall Be Deadly, Boundless, and Unceasing; This Is the Folly ofFools

I delight in loving him who loves me, and I long to love him to the death, boundlessly, and without ceasing. Be happy, my soul, for your Life has died for love of you." Love him so fiercely that you could die for him. Thus you burn ever more without ever being extinguished as a living flame in the vast fire of high majesty.

Thus you become full of the fire of love.
This makes you here utterly happy.

You can no longer teach me anything.
I cannot turn away from love.
I must be its captive.
Otherwise, I cannot go on living.
Where it dwells, there I must remain,
Both in death and in life.[45]
This is the folly of fools
Who live free of anguish.

29. The Beauty of the Bridegroom and How the Bride Should Follow Him in Twenty-Three Steps of the Cross` 6

Look at me, my bride.' See how beautiful are my eyes, how comely is my mouth, how on fire is my heart, how agile are my hands, and how swift are my feet. So, follow me! You shall be martyred with me, betrayed in jealousy, hunted in ambush, taken prisoner in hate, bound in obedience, your eyes covered so that one will not tell you the truth, slapped by the rage of the world, brought to trial in confession, struck blows by penance, sent to Herod in derision, stripped naked by abandonment, scourged by poverty, crowned with trials, spat upon by disgrace, bearing your cross in the hatred of sin, crucified in voluntary withdrawal from all things, nailed to the cross by the holy virtues, wounded by love, dying on the cross in holy constancy, pierced in your heart by constant union, taken down from the cross in true victory over all your enemies, buried in oblivion, arisen from the dead in a holy end, and drawn up into heaven in God's breath.

30. The Seven Hours`

Matins:	Love in abundance, a sweet delight.[49]
Prime:	Love’s longing, a sweet burden.
Terce:	Love’s pleasure, a sweet thirst.
Sext:	Love’s feeling, a sweet cooling.
Nones:	Love’s death, a sweet distress.
Vespers:	Love’s flowing, a sweet pouring.
Compline:	Love’s rest, a sweet joy.[50]

31. You Should Ignore Scorn

I was deeply scorned, and our Lord said: "Do not be much surprised. Since the precious unguent jar was utterly rejected and spat upon, what is going to happen to the vinegar jar, which has nothing of value about it?"

32. You Should Ignore Honors, Suffering, and Possessions. Be Sad After Sinning

If someone offers you honor, you should be ashamed.
If someone makes you suffer, you should be glad.
If someone does you a favor, you should be afraid.
If you commit a sin against me, you should be sad in your heart.
If you cannot feel sadness, then consider how greatly and how long
I was saddened for your sake.

33. Concerning Food, Consolation, and Love

My soul spoke thus to her Lover:

"Lord, your generosity is food for my body wonderfully.
Your mercy is consolation for my soul especially.
Your love is repose for my being eternally."

34. In Suffering You Should Be a Lamb, a Turtledove, and a Bride

You are my lamb in your suffering;
You are my turtledove in your sighing;
You are my bride in your waiting.

35. The Desert Has Twelve Things

You should love nothingness.
You should flee somethingness.[51]
You should stand alone

And should go to no one.
You should not be excessively busy[52]
And be free of all things.
You should release captives
And subdue the free.
You should restore the sick
And yet should have nothing yourself.
You should drink the water of suffering
And ignite the fire of love with the kindling of virtue:
Then you are living in the true desert.

36. Concerning Malice, Good Works, and Concerning a Marvel"

With the malice of your enemies shall you be adorned.
With the virtues of your heart shall you be glorified.
With your good works shall you be crowned.
With our mutual love shall you be raised on high.
With my delightful marvel shall you be made holy.

37. The Soul Responds to God Saying She Is Unworthy of These Favors

O dearly Loved One, in undeserved humiliation I take delight.
Virtues of the heart are my desire.
Good works, alas, I do not have.
Our mutual love I sully.
Of your beautiful marvel I am utterly unworthy.

38. God Boasts That the Soul Has Overcome Four Sins

In heaven God boasts about the soul on earth that loves him and says:

"Look, how she who has wounded me comes ascending.
She has cast from her the ape of the world.
She has overcome the bear of wantonness.
She has trod the lion of pride underfoot.

She has torn apart the jaws of the wolf of lust
And, like the hunted stag, comes running to me, the spring.
Like an eagle she rises out of the depths to the heights."[54]

39. God Asks the Soul What She Is Bringing

"You rush restlessly about in your love.
What do you bring me, my queen?"

40. She Replies: Something That Is Better than Seven Things

"Lord, I am bringing you my precious stone.
It is greater than the mountains.
It is wider than the world,
Deeper than the sea,
Higher than the clouds,
Brighter than the sun,
More numerous than the stars.
It weighs more than the whole earth."

41. God Asks in Praise What the Precious Stone Is Called

"O image of my divinity,
Glorified by my humanity,
Adorned with the Holy Spirit:
Tell me, what is your precious stone called?"

42. The Precious Stone Is Called Heart's Delight

"Lord, it is called my heart's delight,
Which I have taken back from the world,
Retained for myself,
And denied to all creatures.
But now I can carry it no further.
Lord, where shall I put it?"

43. Put Your Delight into the Trinity

“The delight of your heart
You shall put nowhere else but into my divine heart
And onto my human breast.
There alone shall you be consoled
And kissed by my Spirit.”

44. The Sevenfold Path of Love, the Three Garments of the Bride, and the Dance

“Ah, loving Soul, do you wish to know what your path shall be?”
“Yes, dear Holy Spirit, instruct me.”
“When you have passed beyond the need of sorrow
and beyond the pain of confession
and beyond the travail of penance
and beyond the love of the world
and beyond the temptations of the devil
and beyond the influences of the flesh
and beyond cursed self-will

that thrusts many a soul backward with such force that she never achieves genuine love; and when you have struck down all your many foes, then you are so weary that you say: `Fair youth, I long for you. Where shall I find you?' And the youth says:

‘I hear a voice;
It speaks its piece on love.
I have courted her many a day,
But the voice never addressed me.
Now I am moved;
I must hurry to her!
She is the one who bears anguish
And love joined together.’”

In the sweet dew of the morning-this is the cloistered inwardness that first enters the soul-her chamberlains, the five senses, speak thus:

"Lady, you should dress yourself."

"Dear ones, where am I supposed to be going?"

"We have definitely heard it whispered about that the prince intends to come to you in the dew and in the delightful song of the birds. Alas, lady, do not tarry!"

Then she puts on the slip of soft humility, so humble that it cannot bear anything underneath it. Over it comes a white dress of spotless chastity, so pure that it cannot bear anything in thought, word, or touch that might soil it. Then she puts on the cloak of her good name, which she has gilded with all the virtues. She enters into the woods, the company of holy people. There sings day and night the sweetest of the nightingales, the well-modulated union with God; and she hears many a sweet voice of birds, holy knowledge.55 And still the young man did not come. So she sends out messengers because she is eager to dance. She sent for the faith of Abraham and the longing of the prophets and the chaste humility of our Lady, St. Mary, and all the holy virtues of our Lord Jesus Christ and all the excellence of his chosen ones. Then a splendid dance of praise takes place.

The young man finally comes and says to her: "Young lady, my chosen ones have shown off their dancing to you. Just as artfully should you now follow their lead."

She says:
"I cannot dance, Lord, unless you lead me.
If you want me to leap with abandon,
You must intone the song.
Then I shall leap into love,
From love into knowledge,
From knowledge into enjoyment,
And from enjoyment beyond all human sensations.
There I want to remain, yet want also to circle higher still."[56]

And the young man has to sing thus:
"Through me into you
And through you from me."

[The soul:] "Willingly with you,
Woefully from you."[57]

The young man speaks: "Young lady, you have done very well in this dance of praise. You shall have your way with the Son of the virgin, for you are delightfully weary. Come at noontime to the shade of the spring, into the bed of love. There in the coolness you shall refresh yourself with him."

The young lady says:
"Oh, Lord, that is too much
That she be your partner in love
Who has no love in her,
Unless she is moved by you."

Then the soul speaks to the senses, who are her chamberlains: "Now for a while I am weary of the dance. Leave me; I must go and refresh myself."

And the senses say to the soul: "Lady, if you wish to find refreshing coolness in the love tears of Mary Magdalene, they would certainly soothe you."

[Soul:] "Be still, my lords, you do not understand at all what I mean. Let me be on my own. For a time I want to drink undiluted wine."

[Senses:] "Lady, in the chastity of virgins great love is ready."

"That may be, but it isn't the noblest thing about me."

"In the blood of the martyrs you can cool yourself very well."

"I have been martyred so many times that I can't go there now."

"In the counsel of confessors the pure happily dwell."

"I shall always need counsel about what to do and what not to do; and yet I can't go there just now."

"In the wisdom of the apostles you will find much security."

"I have wisdom with me here. This shall always guide me to choose for the best."

"Lady, the angels are radiant and of love's color. If you wish to refresh yourself, rise up to them."

"The angels' bliss pains me in my love if I am not gazing upon their Lord and my Bridegroom."

"Then refresh yourself in the holy austere life that God granted to John the Baptist."

"The suffering I'm ready to bear, and yet the force of love transcends all austerity."

"Lady, if you want to refresh yourself in love, bow down to the small Child in the lap of the eternal virgin; and taste and see how the Joy of the angels sucked the unnatural milk."58

"That is child's love, that one suckle and rock a baby. I am a full-grown bride. I want to go to my Lover."

[Senses:] "Oh, Lady, if you go there,
We shall go completely blind.
The Godhead is so blazing hot,
As you well know,
That all the fire and all the glowing embers
That make the heavens and all the saints glow and burn
Have flowed out from his divine breath
And from his human mouth
According to the plan of the Holy Spirit.
How can you stay there even for an hour?"

[Soul:] "A fish in water does not drown.
A bird in the air does not plummet.
Gold in fire does not perish.
Rather, it gets its purity and its radiant color there.
God has created all creatures to live according to their nature.
How, then, am I to resist my nature?
I must go from all things to God,
Who is my Father by nature,

My Brother by his humanity,
My Bridegroom by love,
And I his bride from all eternity.
Don't you believe I feel him intensely?[59]
He can both burn powerfully and cool consolingly.
Now do not be overly sad.
You shall yet instruct me.
When I return, I shall certainly need your advice;
For the earth is full of snares."

Then the bride of all delights goes to the Fairest of lovers in the secret chamber of the invisible Godhead. There she finds the bed and the abode of love prepared by God in a manner beyond what is human. Our Lord speaks:

"Stay, Lady Soul."
"What do you bid me, Lord?"
"Take off your clothes."
"Lord, what will happen to me then?"
"Lady Soul, you are so utterly formed to my nature[60]
That not the slightest thing can be between you and me.
Never was an angel so glorious
That to him was granted for one hour
What is given to you for eternity.

And so you must cast off from you
Both fear and shame and all external virtues.
Rather, those alone that you carry within yourself
Shall you foster forever.
These are your noble longing
And your boundless desire.
These I shall fulfill forever
With my limitless lavishness."

"Lord, now I am a naked soul
And you in yourself are a well-adorned God.
Our shared lot is eternal life
Without death."

Then a blessed stillness
That both desire comes over them.
He surrenders himself to her,
And she surrenders herself to him.
What happens to her then—she knows—
And that is fine with me.[61]
But this cannot last long.
When two lovers meet secretly,
They must often part from one another inseparably.[62]

Dear friend of God, I have written for you this path of love. May God infuse it into your heart! Amen.

45. The Eight Days in Which What the Prophets Longed For Was Accomplished53

This is a day of longing and blessed joy
in the Annunciation of Christ.
This is a day of peace and dear tenderness
in the Birth of Christ.
This is a day of charity and blessed communion,
Maundy Thursday.
This is a day of generosity and heartfelt love,
Good Friday.
This is a day of might and happy joy,
the Resurrection.
This is a day of faith and the pain of separation,
the Ascension.
This is a day of truth and burning consolation,
Pentecost.
This is a day of justice and the hour of truth,
the Last Judgment.
This is a week whose seven days we should celebrate with constancy.
The eighth day our Lord wants to celebrate on the last day with us all.

46. The Diverse Adornments of the Bride; How She Comes to Her Bridegroom; and How the Retinue Is Composed, Which Is Ninefold

The bride is clothed with the sun and has trodden the moon underfoot, and she is crowned with union.64 She has a chaplain; this is fear. He has in his hand a golden rod; this is wisdom. The chaplain is clothed with the blood of the lamb and is crowned with honor; and wisdom is clothed with contentment and crowned with eternity. The bride has four bridesmaids. The first is

love, who leads the bride. She is clothed with chasteness and is crowned with dignity. The second is humility, who holds the bride. She is clothed with lowliness and is crowned with eminence. The third bridesmaid is sorrow. She is clothed with small grapes65 and is crowned with joy. The fourth bridesmaid is mercy. She is clothed with unguents" and is crowned with bliss. These two carry the coat of the bride, which is her holy reputation.

She has a bishop, which is faith. He brings the bride before the bridegroom. The bishop is clothed in precious stones and is crowned with the Holy Spirit. The bishop has two knights. The one is might and is clothed with battle and is crowned with victory. The other is daring and is clothed with boldness and crowned with all blessedness.

She has a chamberlain. That is watchfulness. He is clothed with constancy and is crowned with persistence. He carries a light before the bride and from behind her train. The light is understanding. It is clothed with insight and is crowned with generosity. The train is a holy conscience. It is clothed with good intention and is crowned with God's approval. She has a cupbearer, which is longing. He is clothed with desire and is crowned with peace. She has a minstrel who is amiability. His harp is intimacy. He is clothed with favor and crowned with help.

The bride has five kingdoms. The first are her eyes. They are founded in tears and adorned with restraint. The second are thoughts. They are founded in struggle and are adorned with good counsel. The third is speaking. It is founded in usefulness and is adorned with trust. The fourth is hearing. It is founded in the word of God and is adorned with consolation. The fifth is touch. It is founded in strength and is adorned with noble habit. These five kingdoms have an overseer. This is guilt. He is clothed with confession and crowned with penance. She has a judge. He is clothed with discipline and crowned with patience.

The bride has a beast of burden. This is the body. It is bridled with worthlessness: contempt is its fodder and its stable is confession. The pack it carries is innocence. The bride has a crimson silk cloth, which is hope. It is clothed with truth and crowned with song. She has a palm in her hand, which is victory over sin. In her other hand she has a canister that is full of longing and love. This she wants to bring to her Lover. She is wearing a hat of peacock feathers, which are her good name on earth and high honor in heaven. She follows a path, which is meekness. This is clothed with honey and crowned with safety.

And she sings:
“Chosen Lover, I long for you.
You take and give me many a heartache.
I have from you, besides, invisible suffering.
If you, Lord, command,
I shall be freed from myself.”

And he speaks:
“Dearest love, think of the hour
When you may grasp the full treasure.
Do not let the time seem too long.
After all, I hold you constantly
Embraced in my arms.”

Then our Lord says to his chosen bride:
“Come, my beloved, come. You shall be crowned.”[67]

And he gives her a crown of truth that no one may wear but religious people." On the crown one sees four virtues: wisdom and sorrow, longing and perseverance. May God give us all this crown! Amen.

Book II

1. Love Brings Elevation to the Soul, Not Inhuman Toil; That Comes from Self-Will

The elevation of the soul comes about in love, and the glory of the body comes about in holy Christian baptism. There is no elevation beyond that of love, and outside Christianity there is no glory. For this reason they make great fools of themselves who imagine that they are scaling the heights with loathsome, inhuman toils,' even though their hearts are full of rancor. They are entirely lacking in holy, humble virtues that guide the soul to God. False holiness likes to hide where self-will holds sway in a heart.

2. Two Songs of Love of Him Who Was Seen in Love

I would willingly die of love
If it could happen to me.
Him whom I love I have seen
With my beaming eyes
Present in my soul.
Any bride who has offered a dwelling place
To her love has no need to go far.
Love cannot easily disappear
Where the maiden oft pursues the young man.
His noble nature is quite ready to receive
Her eagerly and place her close to his heart.
This is easily missed by foolish people
Who are not willing to seek out the lover.

O noble Eagle, O sweet Lamb, O flaming Glow, set me on fire!
How long must I be so dry?
An hour is much too hard for me,
A day is like a thousand years
When you are of a mind
To be far away from me.
If it were to last eight days,
I would rather go down to hell—

I'm there already—
Rather than that God be away from the loving soul.
That is anguish beyond human dying
And beyond the torments of hell. Believe me!
The nightingale must ever sing,
For by nature it voices only melodies of love.
If that were taken from her, she would be dead.
Alas, great Lord, be mindful of my anguish!

The Holy Spirit said to the soul: "Ah, noble maiden, make ready; your Lover is about to come." This startled her, and she was inwardly glad and said: "Oh, dear messenger, if it would only happen! I am so worthless and so utterly faithless that I can never find rest apart from my Lover. Whenever I find that my love for him is growing cold I am utterly in torment, but resolve to follow him in sorrow."

The messenger said: "You must tidy up and wash. Prepare the bed and scatter flowers."

The lonely soul said:

"When I tidy up, I must be ashamed.
When I wash, I must weep.
When I prepare the bed, I must hope.
When I break off flowers, I must love.
When my Lord comes, I take leave of myself;
For he brings me so many sweet strains with his strings
That it stops all impulses of my flesh.
And his strings are so full of all sweetness
That with his airs he relieves me of all interior suffering."

3. The Tongue of the Godhead, the Light of Truth, the Four Rays of God Shining into the Nine Choirs, the Trinity, and St. Mary

The great tongue of the Godhead has spoken many a mighty word to me. I took them in with the feeble ears of my lowliness; and the brightest of lights opened up to the eyes of my soul. In it I saw the indescribable order and recognized the inexpressible glory, the incomprehensible marvel, the special intimacy with separation,' complete fulfillment, the greatest concentration in knowledge, bliss with interruption' in proportion to the capacities of the faculties, unadulterated joy in the common union, and the ever vibrant life in eternity as it is now and ever shall be.

There also four beams were visible that shot forth continuously from the crossbow of the Holy Trinity from the divine throne through the nine choirs.} There is no one, however rich or poor, whom the beam does not strike lovingly. The beam of the Godhead shoots incomprehensible light through them. Loving humanity greets them in fraternal company. The Holy Spirit touches them with the flood of the marvelous abundance of eternal bliss. Undivided God feeds them with the shimmer of his glorious countenance and fills them with the joyful breath of his flowing mouth. They glide effortlessly, as birds in the air do when not moving their wings, and they fly wherever they want, body and soul, and yet they remain separate in their own order.

The Godhead rings,
Humanity sings,
The Holy Spirit plucks the harp of the heavens
So that all strings resound
That are strung in love.

Also visible was that same glorious vessel in which Christ dwelt in body and soul for nine months, as she shall always remain, but as yet without the great adornment that the heavenly Father shall give to the bodies of the blessed on the last day. Our Lady will be without it as long as the earth floats on the sea. One saw how beautifully our Lady stood at the throne to the left hand of the heavenly Father, revealed in all her maidenly being; and how her human body is bathed and formed in the noble light of the soul of our Lady; and how her lovely uncovered breasts are so full of sweet milk that drops flow forth in honor of the heavenly Father and as a favor to humankind, so that man might be perfect above all creatures. The noble princes, the archangels, are so utterly amazed that other princes, who are human, have ascended above them, that it is praiseworthy that evidence of our perfection is there.'

On the right hand of our Lord stands Jesus, our Redeemer, with his open wounds bloody and unbandaged, ready to prevail over the Father's justice that severely threatens many a sinner. As long as sinning continues on earth, Christ's wounds shall be open: bloody, but not painful. But after judgment Christ shall put on such a garment as has never been seen, unless God revealed it, but this did not happen. Then the sweet wounds shall heal, as though a rose petal had been placed on the spot of the wound. One will then see the scars turned bright red-love's color; and they will never fade. Then the uncreated God shall make new all his creatures, so new that they can never grow old.

Now my German fails me; I do not know Latin. If there is something of merit here, it is not my doing; for there never was a dog so nasty that it would not come if its master coaxed it with a white breakfast roll.

4. The Poor Girl, the Mass ofJohn the Baptist, the Transformation of the Host into the Lamb, the Beauty of the Angels, Four

How useful it is for a person to have good will, even though she cannot perform good works. This was revealed by our Lord to a poor girl when she could not go to mass because unfortunately she was not well enough for his service. Thus did she speak to God: "Alas, my dear Lord, am I going to be without mass today?"

While she was in this state of longing, God took away all her earthly senses and brought her miraculously into a beautiful church. She found no one inside. She thought to herself: Oh, you poor lazy thing, you've come too late. That you got up just now isn't going to do you any good here. Then she saw a young man come in carrying a bunch of white flowers. He spread them beneath the tower and went away.' Then another youth came carrying a bunch of violets, which he spread in the middle of the church. Then a third youth came carrying a bunch of roses, which he spread decorously before the altar of our Lady. Then a fourth came carrying a bunch of white lilies and spread them in the choir.' When they had done this, they bowed reverently and went away. These youths were so noble and so beautiful to behold that, if a person could really see them, human bodily suffering could never be so great that all the suffering would not disappear. Then two school boys in white garments entered carrying two lights. They placed them on the altar. Then they withdrew properly and remained in the choir.

Then a fairly tall man came in, quite gaunt but not old. His clothes were so tattered that arms and legs showed through. He carried a white lamb on his breast and two cruets$ in his grasp. He went to the altar, placed the lamb on it, and bowed lovingly toward it. This was John the Baptist, who was going to sing the mass. Then a young man entered, quite delicate in his bearing, carrying an eagle on his breast. That was John the Evangelist. Then a simple man, St. Peter, entered. Then a strapping young man entered carrying a bunch of vestments, which the three men put on. Then a great throng came in. It was the mighty court of heaven that filled the church so full that the poor girl could not find a place where she might remain.

So she went back and stood beneath the tower, where she found a group of people dressed in white who did not have any hair. Instead, they wore simple crowns on their heads. These were those people who had not lived according to the law. They lack the ornament of hair, which is good works. How, then, did they get into heaven? By sorrow and good will at the hour of death. Farther away she saw people more beautiful, clothed in violet-colored garments. They were adorned with the lovely hair of virtue and crowned with God's law. She found people more beautiful still who were clothed in rose-colored garments. They wore the beautiful symbol of widows and the crown of freely chosen chastity.

The poor girl was wretchedly clothed and was physically ill. She was not able to remain in any of the three groups. So she went and stood in front of the choir and looked in to where our dear Lady was standing on the highest level. St. Catherine, Cecilia, bishops, martyrs, angels, and a large number of virgins were there. The poor thing looked at this imposing throng and then looked at herself. Did she dare stay there in her wretched condition? Suddenly she was wearing a deep red mantle woven out of love in proportion to the ardor of her faculties for God and all good things. The mantle was decorated with gold and also with a song that went: "I would willingly die of love.'" She saw that she was like a noble maiden and wore on her head a garland of splendid gold. On it was inscribed another song that went:

His eyes into my eyes,
His heart into my heart,
His soul into my soul
Untiringly enclosed.

And her countenance resembled that of the angels. "Alas, foul puddle that I am, what is happening to me? Unfortunately I am not nearly as blessed as I saw myself there."

All who were in the choir looked at her with a friendly smile. Our Lady motioned to her that she should stand above Catherine. She went and stood next to our dear Lady, for it could indeed rarely happen that she might address and behold God's mother: "Oh, dear and noble Lady!" She considered it a great favor that the lowly crow might stand next to the turtledove. All who were in the choir were clothed in radiant gold and enveloped in soaring bliss, brighter than the sun.

Then the mass began thus: Let us all rejoice in the Lord." As often as our Lady was mentioned, she genuflected," while the others just bowed, because God had given her the greatest honor. Then the wretched girl who had come to mass said: "Oh, Lady, may I receive the body of God since there are no dangers here?" The mother of God said: "Certainly, dear child, make your confession." Then the queen of heaven signaled to John the Evangelist. He went out and heard the confession of the sinful

girl. She asked him to tell her how long she would live. John said: "I am not permitted to tell you. God does not want me to. For if it were to be a long time, you might in your great sadness fall into deep depression. But if the time were to be short, you might in the sadness of your heart fall into a desire to live a long time."

Then John went to read the gospel, the Liber generationis.12 The poor girl said to our Lady: "Should I make an offering?" Our Lady said: "Yes, if you do not intend to take it back from him again." The poor girl said: "Dear Lady, you must give me this favor from God." Our Lady said: "Then take this golden penny your self-will-and offer it to my glorious Son in all things." With good manners and in holy fear the little maid took the large penny. She examined what image had been struck on the penny. On it was Christ being taken down from the cross. On the back was the whole court of heaven with the nine choirs and God's throne above. Then the voice of God spoke to her: "If you are offering me this penny with the intention of never taking it back again, then I will take you down from the cross and take you to me into my kingdom."

After that, the same priest, who had been ordained by the Holy Spirit in his mother's womb,13 celebrated a low mass. When he took the white host in his hands, the lamb, which was standing on the altar, got up and, at the words under the signs of his hand,14 joined itself to the host and the host to the lamb in such a way that I no longer saw the host, but only a bleeding lamb hanging from a red cross. It looked at us with such sweet eyes that I shall never, ever forget it. Then the poor girl begged our Lady thus: "Dear Mother, ask your glorious Son that he deign to give himself to me, wretched though I be." And she saw that a radiant beam shined forth from the mouth of our Lady onto the altar and touched the lamb with her prayer, so that God himself spoke out of the lamb: "Mother, I shall willingly put myself in the place you desire." The poor girl approached the altar with great love and an open soul. St. John took the white lamb with its red wounds and placed it between her teeth in her mouth. Then the pure lamb lay down onto its own image in her stable15 and began to suckle from her heart with its sweet mouth. The more it suckled, the more she gave it.

[Now the person to whom this happened is dead and gone beyond. May God help us that we might behold her in the company of the angels.] 16

5. A Song of the Soul About Five Things, and How God Is a Garment of the Soul and the Soul of God

You shine into my soul
Like the sun against gold.
When I may rest in you, Lord,
My joy is rich.
You clothe yourself with my soul
And you are her most intimate garment.[17]
That there must be a parting between them—
Never have I experienced greater heartache!
If you were to love me more intensely,

I would certainly pass away
To where I could love you as I wish unceasingly.
Now I have sung to you
And yet to no avail.
Were you to sing to me,
I would have to succeed.

6. God's Singing Response in the Soul in Five Things

[God:] When I shine, you shall glow.
When I flow, you shall become wet.
When you sigh, you draw my divine heart into you.
When you weep in longing for me, I take you in my arms.
But when you love, we two become one being.[18]
And when we two are one being,
Then we can never be parted.
Rather, a blissful abiding
Prevails between us.

[Soul:] Lord, then I shall persevere in hunger and thirst
In pursuing and in pleasure
Till that playful[19] hour
When from your divine mouth
The chosen words shall flow
That are heard by no one
But the soul alone
That has stripped itself of the earth
And puts her ear next to your mouth.
She, indeed, grasps the treasure of love!

7. In Suffering Praise God; Then He Will Appear to You. The Two Golden Chalices of Suffering and Consolation

I, sinful, lazy creature, was supposed to pray once; and God acted as though he did not want to give me any kind of favor. I wanted to give myself over to deep sadness because of the weakness of my flesh, which seemed to me to be an obstacle to spiritual pleasure. "No!" said my soul. "Keep in mind all his faithfulness and praise your Lord thus: `Gloria in excelsis deo. '"20

As I thus praised, a great light appeared to my soul, and in this light God revealed himself in great majesty and indescribable brightness. Our Lord held two golden chalices in his hands that were both full of living wine. In his left hand was the red wine of suffering, and in his right hand the white wine of sublime consolation. Then our Lord spoke: "Blessed are those who drink this red wine. Although I give both out of divine love, the white wine is nobler in itself; but noblest of all are those who drink both the white and the red."

8. Of Purgatory; a Person Freed a Thousand Souls from It with the Tears of Love

A person should pray very simply and with great intensity to God in heaven for the poor souls. Once God showed her21 the horrible purifying fire and the kinds of torment in it as varied as the sins punished there. This person's spirit was so fiercely moved that she embraced the whole of purgatory in her arms. She carried on caringly and pleaded lovingly. Then God spoke from heaven: "Stop that now! Don't inflict pain on yourself! You are making it too hard for yourself." The spirit lamented: "Alas, dear Lord, then free some of them!" Our Lord said: "How many of them do you want?" The spirit said: "Lord, as many as I am able to make reparation for in your goodness." Our Lord said: "Then take a thousand and lead them wherever you wish." Then, black, fiery, slimy, burning, bloody, stinking they rose out of the suffering. Again the person's spirit spoke: "Alas, my dear Lord, what is going to happen to these poor ones now? With such disfigurement they can never enter your kingdom." Then God inclined himself exceedingly low beneath his nobility and said something that serves to give much comfort to us sinners: "You should bathe them in the tears of love that now flow from the eyes of your body." Then there appeared a large round lake. They arose in unison and bathed in love, bright as the sun. The person's spirit felt indescribable joy and said: "Praised be you, dear Lord, by all creatures forever. Now they are suited for you in your kingdom." Then our Lord bowed to them from on high and placed the crown of love on them, which had freed them from thence, and he said: "You shall wear this crown forever so that all those in my kingdom might know that you were redeemed by tears of love nine years before your allotted time."

9. God Praises His Bride in Five Things

You are a light of the world.
You are a crown of virgins.
You are a salve of the wounded.
You are a pledge among the false.
You are a bride of the Holy Trinity.

10. The Bride Praises God in Return in Five Things

You are a light in all lights.
You are a flower above all crowns.
You are a salve on all wounds.
You are an unwavering pledge free of falsity.
You are an innkeeper in all hostelries.

11. Seven Kinds of Love for God

True love of God has seven approaches.
Cheerful love leads the way.
Fearing love takes on the task.
Strong love can accomplish much.
Loving love receives no honor.
Wise love has knowledge.

Free love lives without heartache.
Powerful love is forever happy.

12. Seven Kinds of Perfection

Willingly without honor,
Willingly unfeared,
Willingly alone,
Willingly quiet,
Willingly below,
Willingly high,
Willingly common to all.

13. Between God and the Soul There Should Be Love

Between God and you there should always be love.
Between earthly things and you there should be dread and fear.
Between sin and you there should be enmity and strife.
Between the kingdom of heaven and you there should be constant
hope.

14. Where Bitterness, Low Spirits, Sickness, Terror, Sensitivity, Distress, Forsakenness, and Inconsolability Come From`22

Bitterness of heart comes from humanity.[23]
Low spirits of the body come from the flesh alone.
Agility of spirit comes from the nobility of the soul.
Terror in the face of punishment comes from guilt.
Sickness of the body comes from nature.
Distress of loneliness comes from fickleness.
Infrequent consolation comes from restlessness.

15. How One Wounded by Love Is Restored to Health

Whoever at some point
Is seriously wounded by true love
Will never become healthy again

Unless he kisses that same mouth
By which his soul was wounded.[24]

16. The Seven Gifts of a Brother

The soul is boundless in her longing,
On fire in her loving,
Amiable in her bearing,
A mirror of the world,
Small in her greatness,
Reliable in helping,
Recollected in God.

17. How God Woos the Soul and Makes Her Wise in His Love25

Thus does God woo the guileless soul and make her wise in his love:

“Ah, precious dove, your feet are red,
Your feathers are smooth,
Your mouth is well-formed,
Your eyes are beautiful,
Your head is refined,
Your bearing is attractive,
Your flight is bold,
And you sink ever all too swiftly back to earth.”

18. How the Soul Interprets God's Wooing in Eight Things

“Lord, my feet are stained with the blood of your true redemptive act.
My feathers have been smoothed in your noble choosing.
My mouth has been formed by the Holy Spirit.
My eyes are brightened in your fiery light.
My head is ennobled by your constant protection.
My bearing is attractive because of your generous gift.
My flight is made bold by your restless exhilaration.
My sinking back to earth comes from your being united with my body.[26]
The greater the freedom you give me, the longer shall I soar in you.”

19. How Knowledge and the Soul Converse and How the Latter Says That She Is Threefold. Of the Three Heavens

Knowledge speaks first:

"O loving Soul, I have beheld you.
You are quite wondrously lovely.
A light was given me that I might look upon you.
Otherwise, it never would have been my fortune.
There is a threeness about you.
You can indeed be God's image:
You are a virile vassal in battle.
You are a finely attired maiden in your Lord's presence in the palace.
You are an eager bride in your bed of love with God.[27]
Loving Soul, in your battle you are armed with immense might
And with such great concentration of your faculties
That neither all the forces of the world

Nor all the aid of your flesh
Nor all the troops of the devil
Nor all the power of hell
Can bring you down from God's favor.
No one can boast of that any more.[28]
You constantly defend yourself with flowers.
Your sword is the noble rose, Jesus Christ.
That is how you defend yourself.
Your shield is the white lily, Mary.
It does not do them a bit of good
That they attack you.
Rather, they thereby enhance your beauty
And increase immeasurably in you God's honor.

All who are pure and fight to the end
Shall receive ample recompense from the Emperor.
O overwhelmed[29] Soul, what is your honor like
In the palace of the Holy Trinity, when you stand
Before your Lord so attractively adorned?"

"Lady Knowledge, you are wiser than I am.
Why are you asking me this?"

"Lady Soul, God has chosen you before all things.
You are my mistress and my queen."[30]

"Lady Knowledge, I was born noble and free.
I cannot be dishonored
Because of whom alone I love.
And so I shall bring it about
That the Holy Trinity loves, cherishes, and honors me,
And everything in heaven and on earth
Shall forever be subject to me.
If I let love have power over me,
Giving it room,

So that it can bind me to holy patience
And so that my guilt may not increase,
Then it will lead me to noble meekness,
That I may be ready for all good things;
And it will yoke me to strict obedience,
That I shall become lovingly subject
To God and all creatures."

"Mistress Bride, would you say a word to me
About the ineffable intimacy that exists between God and you?"

"Lady Knowledge, that I shall not do.
Brides may not tell everything they experience.
Holy contemplation and precious enjoyment
You shall learn about from me.
My privileged experience of God must always be hidden
From you and from all creatures except for myself."

"Lady Soul, your marvelous visions and lofty words
That you have seen and heard in God—
If you move me to divulge just a little,
Then I shall cast the light of the Emperor
Into a dark and dank stable.
Cattle eat their straw contentedly.

But there are some who seem to be God's children
And yet thrust about like unfettered cattle
In the dark stable and say:
'What is the point of such swindle?
It was thought up by self-will
And carried out in fake holiness.'"

"Lady Knowledge, one finds it written
That St. Paul was taken up into the third heaven.[31]
This never would have happened to him
If he had remained Saul.
If he had found the truth
In the first and second heaven,
He would never have climbed to the third."

"Lady Soul, there is a heaven
Which the devil made with his alluring false cunning.
There thoughts wander about with sad feelings,
And the soul remains completely unmoved
Because she does not find love corresponding to her nature.
The soul remains unconsoled there
And the simple faculties are deceived.[32]
In this heaven the devil reveals himself

As a radiant angel,
Even like God himself as to his five wounds.
Simple Soul, watch out!
The second heaven was created
By the longing of the senses
And by the first stage of love.
In this heaven there is no light;
The soul does not see God there.
Rather, she tastes an indescribable sweetness
That permeates all her members.
She hears as well a voice speaking of certain things

That she really wants,
For she is still joined to her earthly senses.
If she at this stage has not attained profound humility,
The devil brings his light there.[33]
What then happens is not from God.
But if she has perfect humility,
The soul shall travel on to the third heaven
Where the true light is given to her."

Then the senses say:
"Our lady, the soul, has slept since childhood.
Now she has awakened in the light of open love."
In this light she looks around herself to discover
Who that is who reveals himself to her,

And what that is that one is saying to her.
Thus does she see truly and understand
How God is all things in all things.

[Soul:] "Now I shall put aside all my cares
And go with St. Paul into the third heaven
If God in his love will beat down my sinful body."

This third heaven is vaulted, ordered, and illumined brightly with the Three Persons.34

20. How Sister Hildegund Is Adorned in Heaven with Three Mantles, with Seven Crowns, and How the Nine Choirs Praise Her

On the feast of the holy virgin St. Barbara, Sister Hildegund received her glory. God revealed this to a lame dog who is as yet licking its wounds in wretchedness.35 It happened thus while I was at prayer. I do not know whether heaven descended to me or I was drawn into the blissful house of God. There stood Hildegund before the throne of the heavenly Father, adorned as a new bride that the king had brought home. She had three mantles draped over her and wore on her head seven crowns, and the nine choirs offered her special praise. When I looked at her, I recognized her in all the gifts that she had received from God. I was eager to speak with her and, in order to remain longer with her in this blissful state, I asked her: "Tell me, where did you get that rosecolored mantle?"

Hildegund said: "I was a martyr in fiery love, so much so that often my heart's blood poured forth over my head."

Then I asked her further: "Where did you get this golden mantle that shines so splendidly?"

She said: "From the example of good works."

I said: "Where did you get this flowering white mantle?"

She replied: "From the overwhelming36 love, which I kept secretly in my soul and in my senses."

These were the seven crowns: the crown of constancy, the crown of holy faith, the crown of fidelity, the crown of generous mercy, the crown of holy understanding, the crown of love, and the crown of virginity.

Then I asked further: "Dear Sister, where is your crown of humility that is so becoming to religious persons?"

She answered: "I do not have it especially, nor did I ever attain it just enough that God took away pride with it."

These seven crowns are all specially adorned with a garland of the dignity of pure noble chastity. The nine choirs praise her for nine virtues thus:

“We praise you for your sorrow,
For your good will,
For your truth,
For your wisdom,
For your sweet grieving,
For your voluntary poverty,
For your strength,
For your justice.”

The Seraphim praise her thus, for they are her equals: "We praise you for your love, God's Queen."

The Thrones praise her thus: "We praise the bridegroom because of the beauty of the bride."

I asked her about many things which I shall now pass over in silence.
Though the kingdom of heaven is colored by love,
The kingdom of earth is, alas, quite changeable
For me and for many a person
Who never was taken up to heaven
Where one shall behold the truth.

21. If You Would Behold the Mountain, You Should Have Seven Thing.'

I saw a mountain—
That took place very quickly,
For the body cannot endure
The soul’s being there for an hour.
At its base the mountain was white, like clouds,
And high up at the summit, fiery bright as the sun.

Its end and its beginning
I could not find at all.
Inside, it playfully sparkled
And flowed golden in boundless love.

I spoke:
“Lord, blessed are the eyes
That shall forever gaze upon this surging of love
And grasp this wonder.
I can never describe it.”

The mountain spoke:
“The eyes that are to see me thus
Must be graced by seven things; otherwise,
They can never experience it.
These are: Slow to borrow, quick to pay back,
To hold back nothing for yourself,
To be kind in the face of hatred,
To be loving in the face of cruelty,
To be pure as to guilt
And ready for all one might receive.”

22. How Contemplation Asks the Loving Soul About the Seraphim and the Least of Men

"Lady Soul, would you rather be an angel of the order of Seraphim or a human being with body and soul in the lowest choir of angels?""

The Soul to Contemplation: "Lady Contemplation, you have certainly noticed that the Seraphim angels are exalted princes and that they are one love and one fire and one breath and one light with God."

Contemplation to the Soul: "Lady Soul, you have certainly noticed that the angels are simple persons and that they do not praise God nor love him nor know him beyond the limits of their nature. The least of human beings can catch up with them by Christian belief, sorrow, longing, and good will. It's just that the human soul cannot burn as intensely in the Godhead."

The Soul to Contemplation: "Lady Contemplation, you have certainly noticed that the Seraphim angels are God's children and yet his servants as well. The least soul is a daughter of the Father and a sister of the Son and a friend of the Holy Spirit and, indeed, a bride of the Holy Trinity. When the game is over, then let one see how the scales tip-the noblest angel, Jesus Christ, who soars above the Seraphim, who is undivided with his Father. Him shall I, the least of souls, take in my arms, eat him and drink him, and have my way with him. This can never happen to the angels. No matter how high he dwells above me, his Godhead shall never be so distant that I cannot constantly entwine my limbs with him; and so I shall never cool off. What, then, do I care what the angels experience?"

23. How Love Questions and Instructs Dull Souls and Would Like to Bring Them to Their Lover and Begins to Speak; and How the Dull Soul Responds

"Alas, foolish Soul, where are you, or what is your dwelling like, and what are you living for? Where can you find rest since you do not love your vibrant God more than your own will or beyond all your might?"

"Let me sleep. I don't know what you are talking about."

"One certainly has to wake the queen when the king intends to come."

"I am a member of a religious order. I fast, keep vigils, am free of serious sin; I am bound enough."

"What good does it do to bind an empty vessel if the wine still runs out? One has to fill it with the stones of external hardship and the ashes of transitoriness."

"I dwell in the comfort of my relatives and my dear religious friends. Besides, how can I enjoy loving someone I don't know?"

"What? You don't know how to recognize the Lord who has been spoken of so lovingly to you so often? You are more concerned about that mongrel body of yours than about Jesus, your sweet Lord; and so you are never going to win honor in his eyes."

"I live by my own will. That is what I like to do."

"If you want to render God genuine loyalty, for his love you should follow his spirit."

"I rest in the vigor of my body."

"You should be ashamed of yourself today in God's sight, that you call yourself a religious and yet busy yourself the whole time with your body."

"How am I supposed to stay well if I take on the burdens you involve?"

"Oh, traitor! He who made the soul so noble that she feasts on nothing but God-he will not let your body perish."

"You are rebuking me severely. If I knew where he was, I could yet change my ways."

"If you wish to dwell with him in noble freedom, you first have to clear bad habits out of this dwelling."

"If I knew what was best, I would choose the best."

"Alas! That many a man who is wise in learning and by natural good sense does not risk putting himself completely in the power of naked love! Rather, it is the simple and pure who seek God alone in all their actions to whom God, given his nature, must favorably incline."

"I imagined that, having entered religious life, I had climbed high enough."

"What good does it do to put fine clothes on a sleeping man and set gourmet food before him? As long as he is asleep, he can't eat anyway. Ah, my love, let me awaken you."

"Well then, tell me where his dwelling is."

"There is no other Lord that dwells in all his castles at the same time but him alone. He lives in the peace of holy affection and whispers to his beloved in the narrow confines of the soul. He also embraces her in the noble comfort of his love. He greets her with his loving eyes when they earnestly gaze at one another with love. He kisses her passionately with his divine mouth. You are happy, more than happy in this most glorious hour. He caresses her, as well he can, on the bed of love. Then she rises to the heights of bliss and to the most exquisite pain when she becomes truly intimate with him. Ah, dear Soul, let yourself be loved and don't fiercely fend it off."

"Who are those who defend themselves fiercely?"

"Those who pester others and themselves with their own spitefulness. Now I shall tell you who he is. He is the loftiest of all pinnacles, and this same loftiest of all pinnacles bent down into the deepest of all valleys, and this deepest of all valleys ascended onto the highest of all pinnacles. 0 dull Soul, look all around you and open your blind eyes."

"If he has climbed down from the highest pinnacle for love of me and given himself along with all creatures to me totally, and if he does not now intend to withdraw his goodness from me, then I might well be ever ashamed in his sight that I was never quite willing to give up my worthless copper in return for his precious gold. Alas, where have I been, poor blind me, that I have lived so long without strong love? With it I can indeed conquer all my troubles in spite of all my enemies. Poor wretch, although I have missed much that is good, I shall nevertheless still go out from all things and into God. 0 Love, will you still receive me?"

"Yes, I shall. God has never denied himself to anyone. This is an equal balance: If you want to have love, you must leave love."

24. How the Loving Soul Joins the Company of God and His Chosen Dear Ones and Shall Be Equal to All the Saints. How the Devil and the Soul Talk to Each Other

Oh, Lord Jesus Christ, that you suffered despite your guiltlessness gives me consolation, for in all that I suffer I am guilty; and your salvific death keeps my memory of you alive, and your immaculate blood has coursed through my soul.

Mary, dear Mother, I stand next to you under the cross with all my Christian faith, and the sword of holy sorrow cuts through my soul39 because so many of those who have the appearance of religious persons" are so unreliable.

John the Baptist, I was taken prisoner with you because the treacherous slut of deceitfulness killed the word of God in my mouth.'

John the Evangelist, I fell asleep with you in tender love on the breast of Jesus Christ, and then I saw and heard there such glorious marvels that my body often took leave of itself.42

Peter, I have been crucified with you because things never go right for me as a human being, and spiritually I am often in pain for the praise of Jesus Christ.

Paul, I was miraculously caught up with you" and saw such a house that nothing has ever surprised me as much as the fact that I have been able since then to remain a living person. When I recall that the heavenly Father is the blessed chalice-bearer there and Jesus the chalice, the Holy Spirit the unadulterated wine, and how the whole Trinity is the full chalice and love the mistress in charge of the wine cellar, then, God knows, I would be happy indeed if love would invite me into the house. But for now I am happy to drink gall here. Ah, dear Jesus, reward all those lovingly who have here poured out bitterness for me to drink, for they have made me rich in divine favors. I received a chalice filled with gall that was so powerful that it utterly permeated my body and soul. And so I offered special prayers to God for the pourer, that he would pour out for him celestial wine. And indeed, he did so, saying: "Noble Maiden, be of good cheer. The magnitude of my wonder shall come over you. Lions shall fear you. Bears shall accept your dominion over them. Wolves shall flee you. The lamb shall be your companion." I am certain of this and, up until now it has turned out that I have had to drain many a chalice of gall because, alas, the devil still has many a one among religious people willing to pour it out. They are so full of poison that they cannot drink it all up by themselves, but must pour it out maliciously for God's children.

Stephen, I kneel next to you in front ofJewish hearts under the sharp stones, for they fall upon me large and small." Those who appear to be good people stone me from the back and run away and do not want me to know anything about its having befallen me because of them: but God saw it.

Lawrence, I was bound next to you for more than twenty years on a horrible gridiron, but God preserved me unburned and freed me more than seven years ago.

Martin, I live with you in obscurity and God's true love martyred me beyond all adversity.

Dominic, my dear Father, I have something in common with you because I have desired many a day that the sinful blood of my heart might flow beneath the feet of disbelieving heretics.

Catherine, I go with you into battle because the lords of hell want to bring me down. One of them came to me splendorous as the radiance of the sun so that I might know that he was an angel. He was carrying a shining book and said:

"Go ahead and take this kiss of peace,45 when you cannot make it to mass."

The soul spoke with deliberate prudence: "He who has no peace himself, cannot bestow peace on me."

He went away and transformed himself and returned looking like a very wretched, sickly man whose guts were falling out and said: "Oh, you are so holy. Heal me."

The soul spoke again: "He who is himself sick cannot heal anyone."

"It is written: Who can do it better should help the other."

"It is also written: One should not help anyone against God."

"What one does for good is not against God."

"If there is nothing good about something, no one can achieve something good in its regard. You have an everlasting sickness.46 If you want to recover, go and show yourself to a priest or a bishop or an archbishop or the pope.47 I have no

power except that of being able to sin." The he replied in rage: "That I will never do!"

Then he became like black smoke and comported himself indecently and disappeared. But I am not afraid of him.4S

Mary Magdalene, I live with you in the desert wilderness, because all things are foreign to me except God alone.

Lord heavenly Father, between you and me there goes unceasingly an imperceptible breath in which I come to know and see many marvels and inexpressible things. Unfortunately, they do me little good because I am such a worthless vessel that cannot endure your slightest spark. Unbound love dwells in the senses because it is still mixed in such a way with earthly things that a person can cry out: "Love is in grace, distant in the senses and has, alas, not yet climbed atop the soul." Many people have fallen because their soul remained unwounded.49 Solomon and David received the Holy Spirit in their human senses, but when the senses changed, they fell into false love. God knows, their soul had not sunk into the lowest depths beneath all creatures nor was it wounded by the powerful part of love, for he who never tasted the best wine often whoops it up the most. Bound love dwells in the soul and transcends human senses and concedes the body nothing it wants.50 It is restrained and very calm. It lowers its wings and listens for the inexpressible voice and gazes into the incomprehensible light and works with great desire to achieve the will of its Lord. If the body can still flap its wings, the soul can never reach the heights that are attainable for human beings. In this bound love the wounded soul becomes rich and her external senses very poor because the more riches God finds in her, the deeper she humbly lowers herself because of the true nobility of her love. I cannot imagine a person bound by the deepest stirrings of powerful love falling into serious sin; for the soul is bound, she has to love. May God thus bind us all!

25. The Lament of the Loving Soul; How God Protects Her and Withdraws His Gift from Her Concerning Wisdom, How the Soul Asks God How She Is and Where He Is. Concerning the Orchard, Flowers, and the Song of the Virgins

“Oh, you treasure beyond reckoning in your abundance!
Oh, you incomprehensible marvel in your variety!
Oh, you infinite glory in the power of your nobility!
How painfully I long for you
When you want to spare me;
This all creatures would not be able to express to you fully
If they were to lament on my behalf;
For I suffer inhuman anguish.
Human death I would find more pleasant.

I seek you with my thoughts
As a maiden secretly does her lover.
I shall fall terribly sick from this,
For I am bound to you.
The bond is stronger than I am,
Thus I cannot become free of love.
I cry out to you in great longing,
A lonely voice;
I hope for your coming with heavy heart,
I cannot rest, I am on fire,

Unquenchable in your burning love.
I pursue you with all my might.
If I had the strength of a giant
And if I got onto your trail,
Still I would quickly lose your tracks.
Please, my Love, run not so far ahead of me
And tarry a while in love,
So that I can catch you.

Please, Lord, just as you have taken from me all things that I have from you,
Leave me, at least, through grace that same gift
That you have given to dogs through their nature—
That I might be loyal to you in my misery,
Free of all discontent.
This I do indeed desire
More than I yearn for heaven."

"My dear Dove, now listen to me!
My divine wisdom is so utterly upon you
That I direct all my gifts to you,
As much as your frail body can bear.
Your secret sighs shall reach me.
Your heart's anguish can compel me.

Your sweet pursuit shall so exhaust me
That I shall yearn to cool myself
In your limpid soul,
To which I have been bound.
The sighs and tremors of your wounded heart
Have driven out my justice from you.
That suits you quite well, as it does me:

I cannot be without you.
No matter how far we are apart,
We can still never be really separated.
No matter how softly I caress you,
I inflict immense pain on your poor body.
If I were to surrender myself to you continuously, as you desire,
I would lose my delightful dwelling place on earth within you,
For a thousand bodies cannot fully satisfy the longings of a soul in love.
And so, the higher the love, the holier the martyr."

"O Lord, you pamper to excess my dank prison,
In which I drink the water of the world and eat in great misery
The ash cake of my frailty,
And am wounded to the death
By the beam of your fiery love.
Now you leave me, Lord, lying in my misery,
My wounds untended, in great torment."

"Queen dear to my heart,
Must you always be so impatient?
When I wound you most deeply,
I immediately apply salve most tenderly.
The abundance of my riches is yours alone,
And even over me shall you hold sway.
You are very dear to my heart.
If you have the scales, I have the gold.
All that you have done for my sake, renounced, or suffered,
I shall balance off completely and shall give myself to you forever
Expecting nothing in return, just as you will."

"Lord, two things I ask you;
In your kindness instruct me:
When my eyes weep in loneliness,
And my mouth remains mute in its simplicity,
And my tongue is constricted in affliction,
And my senses ask me again and again
What is wrong with me,
Then, Lord, everything in me is directed toward you.
When my flesh wastes away,
My blood dries up, my bones torture me,

My veins contract,
And my heart melts out of love for you,
And my soul roars
With the bellowings of a hungry lion,
Tell me, dearest One,
What will it be like for me then,
And where will you be?"[51]

"You are like a new bride
Whose one and only lover has slipped away as she slept.
She had entrusted him with all her love
And simply cannot endure his parting from her for one hour.
When she then awakens, she can only have as much of him
As she can carry in her thoughts.
That is the source of all her lament.
As long as his bride has not been delivered to his house,
She must often be apart from her young man.
I come to you at my pleasure, when I will.
If you are patient and calm,
And hide your cares where you can,

Then the power of love shall grow in you.
Now let me tell you where I shall then be:
I am in myself in all places and in all things,
As I always have been eternally,
And I shall be waiting for you in the orchard of love
And shall pluck for you the flowers of sweet union[52]
And shall make a bed for you out of the soft grass of holy knowledge,
And the bright sun of my eternal Godhead
Shall make you radiant with the secret wonder of my attractiveness—
A bit of which you have intimately revealed—[53]

And I shall bend down for you the towering tree of my Holy Trinity.
Then you shall pick the green, white, and red apples of my succulent humanity,[54]
And the shadow of my Holy Spirit shall protect you
From all earthly sadness.
Then you will have no thought of your heartache.
When you embrace the tree,
I shall teach you the song of the virgins—
The melody, the words, the dulcet sounds,
Which those cannot understand in the least

Who have led unchaste lives.
Still they shall receive sweet compensation.[55]
Beloved, begin the song and let me hear how well you sing."

"Alas, my dear Lover, I am hoarse in the throat of my chastity,
But the sugar of your sweet kindness
Has let my voice resound, so that I can now sing thus:
Lord, your blood and mine are one, untainted.
Your love and mine are one, inseparable.
Your garment and mine are one, immaculate.
Your mouth and mine are one, unkissed.
Your breast and mine are one, not caressed
By any man but you alone."[56]

These are the words of the song.
The voice of love and the melody of the heart must be left unrendered,
For they can be captured by no merely human hand!

26. About This Book and the Writers of This Book

I was warned against writing this book.
People said:
If one did not watch out,
It could be burned.
So I did as I used to do as a child.
When I was sad, I always had to pray.
I bowed to my Lover and said: "Alas, Lord,
Now I am saddened all because of your honor.[57]
If I am going to receive no comfort from you now,
Then you led me astray,
Because you are the one who told me to write it."

At once God revealed himself to my joyless soul, held this book in his right hand, and said:

"My dear One, do not be overly troubled.
No one can burn the truth.
For someone to take this book out of my hand,
He must be mightier than I.
The book is threefold

And portrays me alone.
The parchment that encloses it indicates my pure, white, just humanity
That for your sake suffered death.
The words symbolize my marvelous Godhead.
It flows continuously
Into your soul from my divine mouth.
The sound of the words is a sign of my living spirit
And through it achieves genuine truth.
Now, examine all these words—
How admirably do they proclaim my personal secrets!
So have no doubts about yourself!"

"Ah, Lord, if I were a learned religious man,[58]
And if you had performed this unique great miracle using him,
You would receive everlasting honor for it.
But how is one supposed to believe
That you have built a golden house on filthy ooze
And really live in it with your mother, with all creatures, and with your heavenly court?
Lord, earthly wisdom will not be able to find you there."

"Daughter, many a wise man, because of negligence
On a big highway, has lost his precious gold
With which he was hoping to go to a famous school.
Someone is going to find it.
By nature I have acted accordingly many a day.
Wherever I bestowed special favors,
I always sought out the lowest, most insignificant, and most unknown place for them.
The highest mountains on earth cannot receive the revelations of my favors

Because the course of my Holy Spirit flows by nature downhill.
One finds many a professor learned in scripture who actually is a fool in my eyes.
And I'll tell you something else:
It is a great honor for me with regard to them, and it very much strengthens Holy Christianity
That the unlearned mouth, aided by my Holy Spirit, teaches the learned tongue."[59]

"Alas, Lord, I sigh, desire,
And beg on behalf of your writers
Who write this book after me,[60]
That you see fit to give them, too, as a reward
A favor that has never been bestowed on human beings.
Lord, your gifts are a thousand times more numerous
Than your creatures who might receive them."

Our Lord said:

"They have written it in gold letters.
All these words shall appear written on their outermost garments, forever visible in my kingdom
In heavenly shining gold above all their adornment,
Because to love freely must always be the highest value for people."

As our Lord was speaking these words to me, I saw glorious truth in its eternal excellence.

O Lord, I beg that you preserve
This book from the eyes of evil cunning,
For this has come among us from hell.
It was never taken from heaven;
It was begotten in Lucifer's heart
And was born of spiritual pride
And was puffed up in hate
And has grown so large in powerful rage
That it imagines that no virtue is its equal.

So must God's children perish
And allow themselves to be oppressed in degradation
If they want to receive the highest honors with Jesus.
A holy watchfulness we must keep about ourselves at all times
To preserve ourselves from shortcomings.
A loving watchfulness we should have toward our fellow Christians
When they blunder, that we say to them only
That which bespeaks our good intentions toward them.
This can keep us from much wasted speech. Amen.

Book III

1. Of Heaven and the Nine Choirs and Who Is Supposed to Fill the Breach.' Of the Throne of the Apostles and St. Mary and on Which Christ Sits. Of the Reward of Preachers, Martyrs, and Virgins, and of the Unbaptized Children2

The soul spoke thus to its longing: "I beg you, go off and see where my Lover is, and tell him I want to love."

Then longing went quickly off, for it is by nature swift, and reached the heights and called out: "Great Lord, open up and let me in."

The Master of the house said:

"What is it you want that you are making such a fuss?"

"Lord, I report to you that my lady cannot live much longer in her present condition. But if you were to flow, then she could swim. A fish cannot remain alive and stay fresh long on the sand."

"Go on back. I'm not going to let you in unless you bring me the hungry soul that I desire more than anything else."

The messenger returned and the soul heard about her Lord's wish. Oh, how she trembled with love! She rose up with a deft movement and in pleasureful flight. Very soon two angels came to meet her. God sent them to her out of tender love. They said to her: "Lady Soul, what are you doing way up here? You are still clothed with dark earth."

She replied:

"Ye lords, be completely quiet about that
And see that you extend to me a better greeting.
I am going loving.
The closer you sink to earth,
The more you hide your celestial splendor;
And the higher I climb, the brighter I shine."

Then they took the soul between them and with light hearts led her forth. Then the soul first gazed upon the land of the angels where she is known and meets with no ill will, and heaven opened up before her.

She stood there, her heart melting, looked upon her Lover and said: "0 Lord, when I look upon you, I have to praise you for your astonishing wisdom. Where have I come to? Am I now lost in you? I cannot even remember earth or any of my interior sufferings. On earth, when I caught sight of you, I used to wish to complain to you about many things. Now, Lord, the sight of you has struck me down. You have elevated me utterly beyond my worth."

Then she knelt down and thanked him for his favors and, taking her crown from her head, put it on the rose-colored scars on his feet and begged that she might come closer to him. He took her in his divine arms and laid his fatherly hand on her breast and looked her in the face. Well, was she kissed at all?4 In the kiss she was drawn up to the most sublime heights above all the angel choirs. The least truth that I saw and heard and understood there was incomparably more than the loftiest wisdom ever uttered here on earth. I saw there things never heard before, my confessors tell me, for I am ignorant of reading or writing. And now I fear God if I keep silent, but I fear uncomprehending people if I write. Dear people, what can I do about it that this happens to me and that it has often happened? In humble simplicity, in lonely poverty, and in demeaning shame did God show me his wonders.

There I saw the creation and order of God's house, which he himself built with his mouth.' In it he put what was most dear that he had made with his hands. The creation of the house is called heaven; the choirs in it are called kingdom. Hence one says kingdom of heaven. The kingdom of heaven has a boundary as to where it is placed, but as to its being a boundary will never

be found. Heaven goes around the choirs, and between heaven and the lovely choirs the worldly sinners are placed, always equal in height to the choirs, that they better themselves and convert. The choirs are so delicate, holy, and marvelous that no one can enter without chastity, love, and renunciation of all things. For they were all holy who fell from there, and accordingly they must also be holy who enter. All newly baptized and children up to six years fill the breach not higher than to the sixth choir. Then up to the Seraphim those virgins shall fill the breach who defiled themselves by their childish disposition, but never did so in deed, and who cleansed themselves afterward in confession. Still, they cannot recover from it completely since they have lost their purity. Those who are pure spiritual virgins shall after the last judgment fill the breach above the Seraphim, from where Lucifer and those closest to him were cast out. Lucifer committed at one and the same time three mortal sins: hatred, pride, and greed. These caused the choir to tumble into the eternal abyss as fast as one can say "alleluia. Then the whole kingdom was struck with terror and all the pillars of the kingdom of heaven shook. Then some of the others fell as well.'

The desolation' is as yet empty and bare. No one is there, and it is utterly pure in itself and sparkles with delight to God's honor. Above the desolation is God's throne vaulted with God's strength in blossoming, shining, fiery brightness, and it descends to the heaven opposite the Cherubim, so that God's throne and heaven are one glorious house; and the desolation and the nine choirs are enclosed within it. Above God's throne there is nothing but God, God, God. God infinitely great. Above on the throne one sees the mirror of the Godhead, the likeness of Humanity, the light of the Holy Spirit, and one understands how these three are one God and how they fit together into one. I am able to say no more about this.

John the Baptist will fill Lucifer's breach and will possess his honor in the sweet desolation above the Seraphim, and all pure spiritual virgins together with him. They are all destined for this desolation.

On the throne is our Lady, St. Mary, who shall not fill a breach; for with her Child she has healed the wounds of all men who accepted grace and could and willed to preserve it. Her Son is God and she a goddess. No one can be compared to her. The apostles dwell closest of all to God on the throne and have the empty places among the Seraphim as their reward according to how pure they are. John the Baptist is also a prince at the throne. Angels dwell no higher than the Seraphim. Those above will all be human beings. The holy martyrs and God's preachers and spiritual lovers enter into the choirs even though they are not virgins. Indeed, they enter gloriously into the Cherubim!

There without asking I saw the reward of preachers as it shall come about. Their chairs are wondrous, their reward is special. The front legs of the chairs are two burning lights. They signify true love, holy example, and faithful intent. The backs of the chairs are so pleasantly free and sweet in delightful repose-more than one can express-in contrast to the strict obedience to which they were subjected here. Their feet are adorned with various kinds of precious stones, so beautiful that I would truly be filled with joy to receive such magnificence as a crown. This they have because of the exertion required of their feet on earth. 0 ye preachers, how unwillingly now do you move your tongues and so grudgingly incline your ears to the mouth of the sinner! I saw in God's presence that in the kingdom of heaven it shall happen that breath shall shine forth from your mouths which will ascend from the choirs to the throne and will praise the heavenly Father for the wisdom that he placed on your tongues; and it will greet the Son for his glorious company, for he was a preacher himself; and it will thank the Holy Spirit for his grace, for he is Master of all gifts.

Then God's preachers, the holy martyrs, and the loving virgins shall stand up, for the highest honor is given them in the form of special garments, delightful song, and marvelous garlands, which they wear to God's honor. The virgins' garments are white as lilies. The preachers' garments are fiery, bright as the sun. The martyrs' garments are glowing rose-colored because they suffered with Jesus a bloody death. The virgins' garland is many colored; the crown of the martyrs is large, catching the eye. The preachers' garland is made entirely of flowers. These are the words of God through which they have come into great honor here. Thus does this throng of three blessed bands go merrily forth into the presence of the Trinity, dancing finely in a circle. Then toward them a threefold stream flows out playfully from God, filling their minds and hearts so that they sing the truth effortlessly with joy, as God had entrusted it to them.

The preachers sing thus: "0 chosen Lord, we have followed your generous kindness in voluntary poverty and have gathered together your straying sheep whom your hired shepherds let go off the right path."

The martyrs sing thus: "Lord, your innocent blood has made our death full, so that we are sharers in your suffering."9

The blessed, who now live so blissfully in heaven hovering weightlessly, are all suffused with light and are permeated with love flowing through them and are united in one will, and yet they do not have the dignity that attaches to their glorious chairs."

They rest in God's strength and flow in bliss, keeping themselves in God's breath, as does the air in the sun. But after the last day, when God shall hold his festive dinner, one shall seat the brides opposite their Bridegroom and thus shall love come to love, body to soul, and they shall possess full power in eternal glory.

O you charming Lamb and delightful Youth, Jesus, Child of the heavenly Father, when you then rise and pass through all the choirs waving lovingly to the virgins, they shall follow you filled with praise to that most overwhelming place of which I can say no more to anyone. How they shall then entertain themselves with you and devour your love's desire-that is such intimate sweetness and intense oneness-that I know nothing equal to it.

The widows shall follow as well in heartfelt yearning and will be utterly fulfilled in sweet contemplation when they shall see how the Lamb joins the virgins. Married people, too, shall look on lovingly in the measure possible to them according to their nobility, for the more one satisfies oneself with earthly things here, the less heavenly bliss shall be left over for us there.

The choirs each have a special light illuminating them and heaven has its own as well. The light is so extraordinarily glorious that I cannot and may not describe it. Many a dignity has been bestowed by God on the choirs and on heaven, and I can say a word or two about each-about as much as the honey a bee might carry off on its feet from a full hive.

In the first choir[11] bliss is the most exalted among all the gifts they have.
In the second choir it is meekness.
In the third choir it is charm.
In the fourth it is sweetness.
In the fifth it is cheerfulness.
In the sixth it is noble fragrance.
In the seventh it is abundance.
In the eighth dignity.
In the ninth burning with love.
In the sweet desolation[12] it is pure holiness.

The most exalted thing on the throne is mighty honor and strong dominion. Towering above everything that was ever in heaven is a sense of wonder. The most sublime thing is that they may behold that which is now happening and shall happen forever. Ah, the grand expanse and sweet eternity and the keen power to see into all things and the special intimacy that unceasingly exists between God and each individual soul is of such overwhelming tenderness that even if I had the wisdom of all mankind and the voices of all the angels, I would be incapable of describing it.

Unbaptized children less than five years old dwell in their own special honor, which God from his kingdom has provided for them. They do not have the qualities of someone thirty years old because they were not Christians with Christ." They do not have a crown; God cannot reward them for anything. And yet he has granted them in his goodness that they live in great comfort. The highest thing they possess is an abundance of favors. They sing thus:

“We praise him who created us,
But whom we have never seen.
If we were suffering pain,
We would forever lament;
But, as it is, we are doing quite well.”

Now some people might be surprised how I, a sinful person, can undertake to write such a description. I tell you in utter truth: If seven years ago, God had not offered support to my heart with special favor, I would still be silent and would never have written this. Now, because of God's goodness, no harm has come to me from it. This is because of the obvious lowliness I reflect-which is so clearly manifest to my soul-and the nobility of favors that are contained in God's true gift. Indeed, the higher the soul has climbed, the less praise one should give to the body in word and deed. One should also not complain about the troubles one sees, for he14 is by nature a coward. Rather, one should treat him like an old pensioner who can no longer serve at court, and so one gives him alms purely for the love of God. This is truly of practical value. The nobler the dog, the tighter the collar!"

Well, dear Lord, I commend this description to your generous goodness and ask, my dear One, with sighing heart, with weeping eyes, and with desolate soul that no Pharisee may ever read it. And I ask, in addition, dear Lord, that your children find that meaning in the text which you, Lord, in authentic truth have given it."

2. How the Soul Praises God and God the Soul for Seven Things. Of Balsam and Waiting

"0 sweet Jesus, most handsome Image, unconcealed to my exiled soul in distress and in love! In love I praise you through yourself in distress and in love in union with all creatures; I yearn to do this above all things.

Lord, you are the sun for all eyes;
You are the delight of all ears;
You are the voice of all words;
You are the force behind all piety;
You are the teaching of all wisdom;
You are the life of all that lives;
You are the ordering of all that is."

Then God praised the loving soul in fine words. He took great delight in doing so:

"You are a light to my eyes;
You are a lyre to my ears;
You are a voice for my words;

You are a projection of my piety;
You are an honor to my piety;
You are a life living in me;
You are a praise in my being."

"Lord, you are constantly lovesick for me.
That you have clearly shown personally.
You have written me into your book of the Godhead;
You have painted me in your humanity;
You have buried me in your side, in your hands and feet.
Ah, allow me, dear One, to pour balsam upon you."

"0 One dear to my heart, where shall you find the balm?"

"0 Lord, I was going to tear the heart of my soul in two and intended to put you in it."

"You could never give me a more soothing balsam than to let me unceasingly lie weightlessly in your soul."

"Lord, if you were to take me home with you, I would be your physician forever."

"Yes, I want that.
Still, my solicitude bids you wait;
My love bids you labor;
My patience bids you keep silent;
My concern bids you suffer poverty;
My dishonor bids you bear up;
My sufficiency bids you refrain from complaint;
My victory bids you pursue to the end all virtues;
My goal bids you endure many things;
For this you shall have glory when I remove your heavy burden."

3. A Lament That the Soul Is a Maidservant for the Love of God

"0 Lord, what a poor and forsaken soul it is that here on earth is a maidservant for love of you. Oh, who shall help me lament what pain she suffers? For she herself has no idea what it is that she is renouncing!"

"Mistress Bride," in the Book of Love you say to your Lover that he should flee from you.18 Tell me urgently, Lady, what caused you to do this? For I would rather die, if I might do so in pure love, than in darkened wisdom bid God depart from me. If I may play intimately with my Lover, there is no need for wisdom to teach me about separation. But when I busy myself with other things with my five senses, then I willingly accept its bringing me holy moderation."19

[The bride speaks:] "Listen to me, dear Playmate! I was pleasantly half drunk with love; this is why I speak tenderly from the senses. But whenever I become utterly inebriated, I cannot even think of my body; for love commands me. What she wants has to be. And what God hopes for I boldly undertake. If he takes my life, my soul belongs to him. If you wish to go with me into the wine cellar, it is going to cost you. If you have a thousand marks, you will use it up in an hour. If you drink the wine undiluted, you spend more than you have, and the innkeeper cannot fill your glass to the brim. Then you shall become poor and naked and despised by all those who prefer to enjoy the ooze rather than squander their hoard in the lofty wine cellar. You must also endure the envy of those who go with you into the wine cellar. Oh, how much will they often despise you because they will not risk the great expense! They want to mix water with their wine."

"Dear Mistress Bride, I shall willingly consume everything I have in the tavern. Let me be pulled through the coals of love and be struck with the firebrands of humiliation, so that I might very often enter the blessed wine cellar. This I gladly choose because regarding love I cannot lose. And so he who tortures and despises me actually pours out for me the innkeeper's wine that he himself drank. From that wine I shall become so drunk that I shall truly become so subordinate to all creatures that it seems to me, given my human lowliness and the baseness I have taken on, that no one has ever so wronged me as to have committed some sin against me, wretch that I am. Therefore, I cannot take revenge on my enemies for my sufferings, even though I well know that they may not break God's commandment in their treatment of me."

"Dear Playmate, if it happens that they close the wine cellar, then you will have to go out onto the road hungry, poor, naked, and so despised that you have no Christian sustenance left except faith. If you can then still love, you shall never go to ruin."

"Mistress Bride, I have such a hunger for the heavenly Father that I forget all cares. And I so thirst for his Son that it removes from me all earthly desires. And I have such a need for the Spirit of them both that it goes beyond the wisdom of the Father, which I cannot grasp; and beyond the Son's suffering, which I cannot bear; and beyond the consolation of the Holy Spirit, which I cannot receive."

Whoever becomes entangled in longing such as this must forever hang blessedly fettered in God.

4. How Our Lady St. Mary Can Sin and How Not, the Holy Spirit Teaches This

O Mary, glorious Empress, God's Mother and my Lady! I was asked concerning you whether you were able to sin like other humans when you were on this sinful earth. Now the Holy Spirit, who knows fully all your secrets, has instructed me, Lady, that you were able to sin; for you had been created a full human being in your complete feminine nature and in full virginity. There was no deficiency in your nature, and that makes your lifelong chastity noble and precious in God's eyes.

But, Lady, noble Goddess above all pure humans, you were also able not to sin. This you had not from yourself, for the heavenly Father watched over your childhood with the foresight of his having chosen you long before, and the Holy Spirit bound your youth with the fullness of his fresh love, and Jesus so passed through your body as the dew through a flower that your chastity was never touched. And the power of the Holy Trinity had so pervaded your nature that it did not dare, nor could it, experience all-too-human stirrings. And the eternal wisdom of the almighty Godhead gave you, Lady, a shadow in which you kept your human life so that you could suffer pain, despite not sinning, and so that your thriving humanity would not perish under the sun of the powerful Godhead. In this shadow you carried Jesus in human fashion and, as his mother, raised him. However, Lady, in the message from the Father,20 in the conception from the Holy Spirit, and in the birth of the Son, Lady, the fire of the Godhead and the light of the Holy Spirit and the wisdom of the Son were so great in you that you could hardly notice the shadow. God knows, Lady, later you would turn wretchedly cold in poverty, in trials, and in heartache. In spite of this, in your heart you continued to burn brightly in good works from that fire which burns in itself unaided without a beginning. This, Lady, pierced your walls with light and drove all darkness from your house.

5. How the Soul Complains That She Hears No Mass Nor Hours21 and How God Praises Her in Ten Things

Thus did a forsaken soul complain when God excluded her from his ecstatic love and loved her by means of great suffering: "Alas, how sulkingly does a rich man bear it when after glorious wealth he is led into great poverty!"

And she says: "Oh, Lord, now I am extremely destitute in my sickly body and am so miserable in my soul which is so lacking in spiritual order that no one recites the hours of the office in my presence and no one celebrates holy mass for me!"

The loving Mouth spoke, the Mouth that wounded my soul so terribly with his sublime words that I never received worthily:

“You are the feelings of love in my desire.
You are a sweet cooling for my breast.
You are a passionate kiss for my mouth.
You are a blissful joy of my discovery.
I am in you
And you are in me.
We could not be closer,
For we two have flowed into one
And have been poured into one mold.
Thus shall we remain forever content.”

"Ah, dear One, how intimately you speak to me. And yet I never dare think upon these words in joy. For I constantly notice with anguish the stench of that dead mongrel, my body; and others of my enemies are always assailing me; and I, Lord, when I consider the matter, have no idea how things shall turn out for me in the end. What is more, just beholding you I lose all awareness of suffering. Thus, Lord, have you taken me from myself and have stealthily entered into me. What you then promised me, may it happen and may it result in your praise."

Our Lord answers thus:

“Downward I reach,
Widely I roam,
Upward I yearn,
Long I wait.

"Again I must teach you: Noble maidens pay a high price for their good breeding. They must maintain restraint in all their suffering and must often tremble before their governess. So it is with my brides on earth as to their bodies. On earth I was oppressively enclosed for love of you, and my raging enemies bore my death in their hands before my very eyes, and in shame I suffered dire poverty. In all this I trusted my Father's infinite goodness. Direct your spirit accordingly."

6. If You Would Follow God Rightly, You Should Have Seven Things

Whoever wants to follow God in faithful toil should not stand quietly. He should often rouse himself. He should consider what he was in sin, how he is now in virtue, and what can yet become of him if he falls. He should lament and praise and pray day and night. When the faithful bride awakens, she thinks of her lover. If she cannot possess him then, she begins to weep. Alas, how often this happens spiritually to God's brides!

7. Concerning Seven Obvious Enemies of Our Happiness That Cause Seven Kinds of Harm

Aimless activity is a very harmful trait for us. Bad habits harm us everywhere. Earthly desires blot out in us the holy word of God. Base strife because of self-will brings about in us many a harmful murder. Enmity in our heart drives out the Holy Spirit. An angry temperament robs us of God's intimacy. False holiness can never win out. Pure love of God can never perish. If we are not willing to leave these enemies, they will take from us more than heaven; for if we live holy lives here, it is a pre-heavenly existence. But if we allow these enemies their deceits and their power over us, they rob us of the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, and they extinguish for us the true light of the genuine love of God. They also blind our eyes to holy understanding

and lead us thus blinded into the seven capital sins. Where else does that path lead but to the eternal abyss?

8. Seven Things That All Priests Should Have

The heavenly Father told me seven things that every priest of God should have and said: "They should be innocent in their persons, and the accoutrements for saying mass should be perfect. If there is any doubt about it, one should refrain from it22 and not do it. They should lay aside all fear from themselves and should forget the Jewish law and should eat my Lamb alive and should drink his blood sighing. Thus they can rightly call to mind his great passion. But if he has some personal guilt, then my children eat the Bread of Heaven and Judas goes to hell.21 And if the accoutrements for mass are not perfect, then God's table stands empty and the children's food is taken from them. But if they come into danger of death because of their age, it is better for them that they spill their own blood than his.

9. Concerning the Beginning of All Things That God Created out of Love

O Father of all goodness, I, an unworthy person, thank you for the faithful caring by which you have drawn me out of myself into your wondrous self in such a way that I have heard you in your whole Trinity and have witnessed the exalted decisions that took place before our time when you, Lord, were enclosed within yourself alone and your indescribable bliss was shared by no one. The Three Persons sent forth beautifully the beams of light in unison, each of them illumined by the other while remaining utterly one. The Father was adorned in his Person with the robust character of omnipotence; the Son was equal to the Father in infinite wisdom; and the Holy Spirit was equal to them both in full generosity.

Then the Holy Spirit in his superabundance played for the Father, plucking the Holy Trinity," and said to him: "Lord, dear Father, I shall give you out of yourself generous advice. We no longer wish to go on thus, not bearing fruit. We shall have a created kingdom and you shall form the angels in my image so that they are one spirit with me. For, dear Father, that alone is true joy, that in great love and infinite happiness one gather them in your sight."

The Father said: "You are one spirit with me. What you suggest and want is to my liking."

When the angel was created-you well know how it happened: If the angels' fall had been avoided, man would still have had to be created. The Holy Spirit shared his generosity with the angels, so that they serve us and are happy at the blessedness of us all.

Then the eternal Son spoke with great refinement: "Dear Father, my nature shall also bear fruit. Now that we want to undertake wondrous things, let us make man in my image. Even though I foresee great tragedy, I still shall love man forever."

The Father said: "Son, a powerful desire stirs in my divine breast as well, and I swell in love alone. We shall become fruitful so that we shall be loved in return, and so that our glory in some small way shall be recognized. I shall make a bride for myself who shall greet me with her mouth and wound me with her beauty. Only then does love really begin."

Then the Holy Spirit spoke to the Father: "Yes, dear Father, I shall deliver the bride to your bed."

And the Son spoke: "Father, you well know I shall yet die for love. Still, we want to begin these things joyfully in great holiness."

Then the Holy Trinity bent down to the creation of all things and created us body and soul in infinite love. Adam and Eve were formed and given a noble nature according to the eternal Son, who was born of the Father without a beginning. Then the Son shared with Adam his heavenly wisdom and his earthly power so that he possessed true knowledge and holy understanding in perfect love, and that he might command all earthly creatures. This is now rare indeed for us.

From the goodness of his heart God gave Adam a refined, noble, and delicate lady-that was Eve-and bestowed upon her the loving excellent moderation that his Son possesses to his Father's honor. Their bodies were to be pure, for God created for them no shameful members; and they were clothed with angels' garments. Their children were to be gotten in sacred love just as the rays of the sun play upon the water, though the water remains intact. But when they ate the forbidden food, they became shamefully deformed in their bodies, as is still evident in us. If the Holy Trinity had created us so hideous, we could never be ashamed of our being because of its noble nature.

The heavenly Father bestowed his divine love on the soul and said: "I am the God of gods; you are the goddess of all creatures, and I give you my solemn assurance25 that I shall never reject you. If you do not yourself lose your way, my angels shall serve you forever. I shall give you my Holy Spirit as a chamberlain, so that you may not unknowingly fall into any serious sin. And I give you free will in abundance. Dearest Love above all loves, be prudently on your guard. You shall obey a small commandment, so that you will remember that I am your God."

The unblemished sustenance that God promised them in paradise was supposed to remain in great holiness in their bodies. But when they had eaten the disgusting food that did not agree with their pure bodies, they became so filled with poison that they lost the purity of the angels and forgot their virginal chastity. Then for many a year the soul cried out in great darkness for her Lover. Her voice filled with misery, she cried: "0 Lord, dear One, where has your most delectable love gone? How bitterly have you called your wife and queen a whore! That is the meaning of the prophets .21 0 great Lord, how can you bear this endless distress and do not give the death to our death? If only you were to be born. But, Lord, since all your deeds are perfect, so is your wrath."

Then another council convened in the Holy Trinity. The eternal Father said: "I regret my work. I gave my Holy Trinity such an admirable bride that the highest angels were to be her servants. Indeed, if Lucifer had retained his honor, she would have been his goddess, for to her alone was given the bridal bed. She decided not to remain in my likeness. Now she is ugly and hideously deformed. Who might accept this filth?"

But look! The eternal Son then knelt before his Father and said: "Dear Father, I shall be the one. If you will give me your blessing, I shall take bloody humanity upon myself. I shall anoint man's wounds with the blood of my innocence and shall bind all man's sores with the cloth of wretched disgrace until my end; and I shall, dearest Father, atone to you for human guilt by means of a human death."

Then the Holy Spirit said to the Father: "0 almighty God, we shall form a splendid procession and shall go forth unchanged in great glory down from these heights. I was formerly, after all, Mary's chamberlain."

The Father then bowed to the wills of them both with great love and said to the Holy Spirit: "You shall carry my light before my dear Son into all the hearts that he shall move with my words. And, Son, you shall take up your cross. I shall traverse with you all your paths and I shall give you a pure virgin as your mother so that you might the more gloriously bear up under inglorious humanity."

Then in great joy the grand procession came down to the temple of Solomon.2' There almighty God would be sheltered for nine months.

10. The Passion That the Loving Soul Has from God, and How She Rises and Ascends into Heaven28

The loving soul betrays her true love in sighing for God.
She is sold in holy grief for his love.
She is sought with the host of many tears for her dear Lord,
Whom she likes so well.
She is captured in the first experience
When God kisses her in sweet union.
She is assailed with many a holy thought
That she not waver when she mortifies her flesh.
She is bound by the power of the Holy Spirit,
And her bliss is indeed manifold.

She is slapped with the great powerlessness
Of not being able to enjoy without interruption eternal light.
She is brought to judgment trembling with shame
Because God so often avoids her
Because of the stains of her sins.
She responds to all things in a holy manner
And cannot bear to treat anyone shamefully.
She is beaten at her trial
When the devils try her spiritually.
She is sent to Herod
When she recognizes herself to be worthless and unworthy
And despises herself with the great army of her thoughts.
She is delivered up to Pilate again

When she has to concern herself with earthly affairs.
She is buffeted and beaten with severe blows
When she must return to her body.
She is stripped of all things
When God clothes her with the silk of fair love.
She is delightfully crowned with manifold faithfulness
When she desires that God no longer reward her for all her woes,
Except to promote in the highest God's honor.
She is ridiculed in holy simplicity[29]
When she is completely dissolved into God
That she forgets all earthly wisdom.
One kneels before her in great shame
When in delicate humility she puts herself under the feet of all creatures.

Her eyes are bound with her body's baseness
Because she is so utterly imprisoned in its darkness.
She carries her cross on a sweet path
When she truly surrenders herself to God in all sufferings.
Her head is struck with a reed
When one compares her great holiness to a fool.
With the hammer of the chase of love[30] she is nailed so fast to the cross
That all creatures are not able to call her back again.
She suffers terrible thirst on the cross of love as well,
For she would like to drink the pure wine of all God's children.
But they all come thronging and offer her gall.
Her body is killed in living love

When her spirit is raised aloft above all human senses.
After this death she descends into hell with her might
And consoles the dejected souls with her prayer about God's goodness
Without her body's knowing it.
She is pierced in the side by a blind man
With a sweet spear of innocent love.
From her heart flows forth many a holy teaching.
She hangs on the cross of sublime love,
High in the air of the Holy Spirit,
Facing the eternal sun of the living Godhead,
So that she becomes completely dry and bare of all earthly things.

Then in a holy ending she is taken from her cross
And speaks: “Father, receive my spirit; now everything is perfect.”
She is interred in a sealed grave of deep humility,
When she becomes ever aware of being the most unworthy of all creatures.
She also rises joyfully on an Easter Day
After she has enjoyed a lament of love
With her Lover on the narrow bridal bed.
Then she consoles her disciples and Mary early in the morning
When she receives from God true assurance
That God has blotted out all her sins
Because of her love and sorrow.
She comes again to her disciples with the door shut
When she often repeats for her five senses the holy teaching of God.
Then she goes forth from the Jerusalem of Holy Christianity
With many a virtuous throng when the body becomes sad,

Which with its whole being in all its baseness would like to follow its own will.
And she says: “I am your master.
You shall follow me and obey in all things.
If I were not going to my Father,
You would remain as fools.”
She also ascends into heaven
When God takes from her all earthly things in holy transformation.
She is received in a white cloud of holy protection
When she ascends in love and joyfully comes back again, free of all trouble.
Then the angels return and console the men of Galilee
When we call to mind God’s chosen friends and their holy example.

This passion is suffered by every soul that in holy moderation of all her activity is truly permeated by genuine love of God.

11. Between God and the Loving Soul All Things Are Beautiful

When the loving soul gazes into the eternal mirror, she says: "Lord, between you and me all things are beautiful; and between the devil and his bride, the damned soul, all things are hideous and horrible indeed. When she remembers dear Jesus, she shudders and all her hellish suffering begins anew."

12. You Should Praise, Thank, Desire, and Beg. Concerning the Lantern and the Light

Oh, dear Lord, how poor I then was when I was not able either to remember all these words nor pray nor love! Yet I strove toward you with my forsaken senses and spoke thus: "Oh, dear Lord, by what means shall I now glorify you?"

And you said to the most worthless person you ever created:

“You should praise me for my faithful protection.
You should thank me for my generous gifts.
You should desire my holy wonder.
You should beg for a good end.”

Then the soul asked in reverence: "Dearest, what wonder should I desire?" This I must continue writing, weeping all the while. May God help me, the poorest of humans, that I remain in Jesus!

My Lover then spoke thus: "I shall place the light onto the lantern, and for all those whose eyes look upon the light a special beam shall shine from the light into the eye of their knowledge."

The soul then asked with great submissiveness but without fear: "Dearest, what is the lantern supposed to be?"

Our Lord said: "I am the light and your breast is the lantern."

13. Sixteen Kinds of Love

Lavish love arising from holy mercy drives out empty honor and evil sickness.

True love arising from divine wisdom brings satisfaction and drives out contemptible lust.

Humble love arising from holy simplicity alone conquers pride and brings the soul forcefully into holy knowledge.

Constant love arising from good manners cannot engage in duplicity.

Grand love arising from a bold deed finds for itself good counsel in all things.

Love that has discovered God's intimacy effortlessly blinds the earth.

Bound love of holy habit never rests, yet lives with ease within itself.

Permeating love arising from great overflowing lies completely at rest and finds all things bitter but God alone.

Love that calls out from noble impatience is never silent and has happily forgotten all guilt.

Love that understands God's teaching is quick to incline to a child.

Beautiful love in its exalted power rejuvenates the soul, though the body become old.

Lovely love with guileless gift blots out the surly heart's complaint.

Powerful love of rich delicacies has the sweetest pleasure in God.

Hidden love turns precious treasure from good will into holy deed.

Bright love of playful flood causes the soul sweet distress. It causes her to die without death.

Stormy love arising from great power-that is something no one can grasp.

14. Concerning False Virtues; Whoever Dwells Therein Lives in Lies

I have a teacher; it is the Holy Spirit. He teaches me very gently what he wants. Other things he withholds from me. He speaks thus:

Wisdom without grounding in the Holy Spirit turns in the end into a mountain of arrogance.

Peace without the bond of the Holy Spirit very soon becomes empty frenzy.

Humility without the fire of love ends in open hypocrisy.

Justice without the depth of God's humility immediately turns into fierce hatred.

Poverty with constant cupidity is in itself sinful prodigality.

Dreadful fear caused by real guilt brings repulsive impatience.

Right-seeming conduct with wolfish intent is quickly seen through by the wise.

Holy desire out of full integrity is attained by no one without great effort.

A good life without adversity becomes lazy in pursuing useful things.

Presumptuous virtue without God's gift will be struck down by pride.

Lofty promises not kept by deed are duplicity counseled by the devil.

Sweet consolation without true security of the soul and approval of the Holy Spirit leads in the end to a miserable death.

Great patience without inclining one's heart to God is secret guilt, for all who are not sustained by God's truth in all things shall in great shame slip away from God eternal.

Love that does not have humility as its mother and holy fear as its father is orphaned from all virtues.

15. You Should Approach God's Table with Eight Virtues. By Ransom a Person Released Seventy Thousand Souls from Ghastly Purgatory, Which Is of Many Kinds

O you terribly foolish beguines, how can you be so insolent that you do not tremble before our almighty judge, since you so frequently receive the Body of God out of blind habit. Though I am the least among you, I must feel shame, blush, and tremble.

On a certain holy day I was so troubled that I did not dare receive him, because I was ashamed of my best piety in his eyes. So I asked my very dear One that he deign show me his honor in this matter. He said: "Truly, if you go before me in humble sorrow and holy fear, I shall follow you as the high waters follow the deep millstream. But if you come to me with the blossoming yearning of flowing love, I must go to meet you and caress you with my divine nature as my one and only queen."

I have to make my presence known if I am truly to be able to bring about God's goodness. And that" really does not hold me back any more than it impairs an oven to shove in a full load of white rolls. And so I went to God's table in a noble throng. They watched over me with much concern, but also exposed me to much harsh treatment:

Truth was cross with me.
Fear scolded me.
Shame scourged me.
Sorrow condemned me.
Yearning pulled me.
Love led me.
Christian faith shielded me.
Pure intention in all good things prepared me.
And all my good works sounded alarm over me.
Mighty God received me.
His pure humanity united itself to me.
His Holy Spirit consoled me.

Then I said: "Lord, now you are mine, for you have been given to me today especially in the passage where it says: `A boy is given to us.," Now, Lord, I desire your praise and not my advantage, that today your glorious body might come as consolation to the poor souls.' You are truly mine. Now, Lord, you shall be today a ransom for those imprisoned."

Then she received such power that with his strength she led him, and they came to as grim a place as ever was seen by human eye-a horrifying bath, a mixture of fire and pitch, of muck, smoke, and stench. A thick dark fog was drawn over it like a black hat. The souls were lying in it like toads in filth. Their form was like that of humans, and yet they were spirits and had about them a similarity to the devil. They boiled and roasted all together. They screamed and suffered countless torments because of their flesh, which had plunged them so deep. Flesh had blinded their spirit. This caused them to boil the most. The

spirit of the person spoke: "0 Lord, how many are there of these poor beings? You are my real price of ransom. You simply must show mercy."

Our Lord said: "They go beyond human numbering and you cannot comprehend their number as long as your flesh has an earthly share of you. They were all broken vessels and while on earth neglected the spiritual life. They are from all walks of life and from all lands."

Then the human spirit asked: "Alas, dear Lord, where are the hermits? I don't see any of them here."

Our Lord answered: "They sinned in secret. Now they are alone at the bottom, bound together with the devils."

Then the soul of the person became very sad and prostrated herself at the feet of our very dear Lord and yearned powerfully and toiled lovingly and said: "Very dear One, you know full well what I desire."

Our Lord said: "It was right for you to bring me here. I shall not let them go unremembered."

Around them stood an immense throng of devils that tended them in the accursed bath. They also were beyond my reckoning. They rubbed them, washed them, ate them, and were sated; and they struck them with fiery scourges. The spirit of the person spoke to them thus: "Listen, you devourers of sin, look upon this ransom. Is it not of such value that you will be satisfied with it?"

At that they all shuddered, quaking in ghastly shame, and said: "Yes, just lead them away. However wretched we may be, we have to speak the truth to you."

Then our Lord from his divine heart fulfilled a delightful wish for the poor souls. In great joy and love they arose. The stranger soul said: "Alas, very dear Lord, where shall they go now?"

He said: "I shall bring them to a mountain covered with flowers. There they shall find more happiness than I know how to express."

Then our Lord served them and was their chamberlain and their very dear companion. Our Lord told me that there were seventy thousand of them. The soul then asked how long their torment had lasted. Our Lord said: "They have been separated from their bodies for thirty years, and for ten more years they would have been in torment, had not such a precious ransom been offered for them."

The devils fled from them and did not dare accept it. "Dear One," said the soul, "how long shall they be here?"

Our Lord answered and said: "As long as seems good to us."

16. After a Gift There Follows a Scourge and After Disgrace Honor

The soul reminded our Lord of his earlier words thus: "Lord, you said there is no gift on earth that does not have a scourge connected with it. You said this to me with your own mouth and have afterward many a time carried through on it with respect to me. You also told me more than six years ago that religious people3" would hold me in great contempt. This they are still doing persistently and have done it viciously at times. Is that, Lord, the wonder I am supposed to long for?"

Our Lord answered and said: "My Father gave me power over his truth and the craft of his holiness; afterward he subjected me to numerous humiliations. Still later he gave me great honor and infinite dignity. In this same way do I wish to give my Holy Trinity to you."

17. The Purgatory of a Religious Person, His Five Kinds of Help out of the Torment, and the Nobility of the Order of Preachers

I also saw a religious man suffering. During his life I had a high opinion of him. For three months I prayed for his soul with anguished heart, that it might never happen that I might have to look upon his distress until the evening of the last day.

When he gave up his spirit, he was immediately shown to me in the prayer I was saying for the poor souls. I saw him alone, and he was not able to show me his suffering. He was pale in a white mist. I asked: "Alas, why did you not go to heaven?"

He answered me in obscure speech, ruefully ashamed and weeping all the while as he read from a book. All the words were screaming at him with all the books that he had ever read chiming in. He said: "In my life on earth I was too fond of ideas, words, and deeds."

Two dragons were lying at his feet and sucked out of him all the consolation that he was supposed to receive from Holy Christianity in return for meager obedience, since he for no reason wanted to live according to his own will rather than according to the determinations of his superiors. I asked him: "Where are the enemies who are supposed to torment you?"

He answered: "Because of the dignity of my order no devil was ever able to touch me. I had a great struggle with my body, and I wanted to achieve a certain thing that would have been very harmful if I had been successful. Because of this God did not let me live any longer. I am burning within myself; my own will must torment me."

I asked: "Alas, tell me, how can anyone help you?"

He said: "If a person were to offer up a hundred venias,'S twelve disciplines," and many tears with a sorrowful heart from pure eyes every day for a year, that would be a penance for me. And one should say masses for me. Alas, tell virgins' and priests that they should pray for me. The end of my torment I do not want to describe for you because I do not want to sadden my brothers" with it. Now, leave me!"

Then he took on the likeness of the devil, burned, and became mute toward me.

18. A Knight's Battle in Full Armor Against Sensual Desires

I prayed for a person, as I was bid, that God might free him from those desires of the body that occur without sin for the reason that an evil will does not cause them. But our Lord said: "Stop such talk! Would it please you if there were a knight fully armed, with noble prowess, true manliness, and able hands who had nothing to do, neglected his lord's honor, and lost his rich recompense and the ringing of worthy praise that is the due both of the lord and the knight of the realm? Another thing: if there were a liegeman without armor who never came to battle because he lacked the equipment-if such a person would then take part in a tournament of princes, he would promptly lose his life." For this reason I have to spare people who are so prone to fall. I let such people do battle with children so that they win a garland of flowers as a reward."

19. Two Kinds of Poor People: Those Who Are Cheerfully Poor and Those Who Are Unhappily So

I have seen two kinds of poor people. The ones are cheerfully poor and are always in fear that they will receive too much of this poor earth. The others are involuntarily and quite unhappily poor, and they constantly run around in great anxiety that nothing on this poor earth will ever be theirs. Our Lord commented on this and said: "The unhappily poor are within my justice, for if they had an abundance of earthly things, they would not care to return my love with love nor to know me to the benefit of their holiness. And so I must win them by being very hard on them. To those who are cheerfully poor I give more than they dare desire, but I cannot bear the dust on them that comes from their excessively weighing themselves down with earthly things; and I desire that their hearts remain ever open to me and that I might, unimpeded and unceasingly, illumine them and shine through them and they in turn into mine."

20. The Five Prophets Who Illumine This Book

Our Lord promised me he wanted to illumine this book with five lights:

Moses' great intimacy," his holy efforts, special humiliation, which he suffered through no fault of his own, his glorious won ders, his joyful teaching, and the intimate conversations that he was chosen frequently to have face to face with God eternal 12 on the high mountain-all these things should be a light; and God has granted and shall continue to grant that I should go forth with a light and cheerful step under his protection through all the evil scheming of my enemies, free of all shame arising through my own fault, just as Moses did with his friends through the Red Sea. And Pharaoh and his friends shall not pursue us very far. Alas, how they were drowned in this sea! Alas, have mercy, dear Lord, that our enemies be converted.

King David is the second light in this book with his psalter, in which he instructs us, laments, begs, admonishes, and praises God.

Solomon's words illumine-but not his deeds, for he is himself darkened-from the book of songs,"3 where the bride is found to be so drunkenly bold and the bridegroom says to her so passionately: "You are so exquisitely beautiful, my Darling, and there is no flaw in

Jeremiah illumines also for his part when he speaks of the intimate secrets of our Lady45; for God told me that he possessed pure chastity, the most perfect love, and that he bore great torment in Christian faith, which he never saw with his fleshly eyes.

Daniel, too, illumines with marvelous wisdom. God, in his grace, gave him food for soul and body in the midst of all his enemies." The same thing happened to me, unworthy though I be, in my distress. This my enemies have noticed a bit and cannot tolerate it, and so they inflict much suffering on me.

21. Hell: How It Has Three Parts; How Lucifer and Sixteen Kinds of People Are Tormented; There Is No Help for Them. Lucifer's Garment47

I have seen a city,[48]
Its name is eternal hate.
It was built in the deepest abyss
From all kinds of stones of huge capital sins.
Pride was the first stone,
As is manifest in the case of Lucifer.

Disobedience, base greed, gluttony, lust—
These were four very heavy stones
Which our father Adam sent here.
Anger, duplicity, and murder—
These three stones Cain brought with him.
Lying, betrayal, despair of God, and rendering oneself lifeless:
With these four stones poor Judas murdered himself.
The sin of Sodom and false piety:
These are the essential cornerstones laid out for the structure.
The place was built many years ago.
Woe to all those who send their helpers there.
The more they send in advance,
The greater the shame with which they shall be received
When they themselves follow.

This place is so perverted that the highest are consigned to the lowest and basest place. Lucifer sits bound by his guilt in the deepest abyss. There flows forth unceasingly out of his fiery heart and out of his mouth all the sins, torments, sickness, and shame in which hell, purgatory, and the earth are so wretchedly entangled. In the bottommost part of hell the fire, gloom, stench, shuddering, and all kinds of intense pain are the greatest. It is there that Christians are placed according to their deeds. In the middle part of hell the suffering is more moderate. There the Jews are ranked according to their works. In the topmost part of hell the various kinds of pains are the least severe, and there the heathens are ranked according to their works. The heathens lament thus:

“Oh woe! If we had had a law,
We would not be suffering eternally such pain.”

The Jews lament as well:

“Alas! If we had obeyed God according to the teachings of Moses,
We would not be so terribly damned.”

The Christians lament even more, that they have lost great honor through their own evil will, though Christ had chosen them for himself with great love. In great anguish they constantly behold Lucifer and, naked with all their guilt, they are forced to parade publicly before him. Alas, how ignominiously they are received by him! He greets them grimly and speaks bitterly:

"O you cursed along with me,
What joys do you expect here?
You certainly never heard good spoken of me.
How could you then enjoy yourselves nicely?"

Then, first of all, he grabs the proud one and thrusts him under his tail and says: "I have not sunk so deep that I shall not lord it over you."

All the Sodomites pass down his throat and live in his belly. Whenever he draws a breath, they slide into his belly. But when he coughs, they are expelled again.

The false saints he puts upon his lap, kisses them hideously, and says: "You are my equals. I, too, was enveloped in false holiness; all of you are similarly duped."

Unceasingly he gnaws the usurer and rebukes him for never having been moved by mercy.

The robber he robs himself and hands him over to his henchmen to be chased and beaten mercilessly.

The thief is strung up by the feet to serve in hell as a beacon, but the damned do not see the better for it.

Those who were unchaste together on earth have to lie bound in like manner before Lucifer; but if such a one comes there alone, the devil is his partner.

The unbelieving teachers sit at Lucifer's feet so that they might look at their impure god directly. He also holds disputations with them that they might be humiliated.

The miser he eats, for he always wanted more. When he has swallowed him, he forces him out again by the tail.

Murderers must stand before him bloody and must receive fiery sword thrusts from the devil.

Those who here gave themselves over to fierce hatred must there serve as a smelling pot, ever hanging before his nose.

Those who here so keenly ate and drank to excess must there stand before Lucifer in unending hunger and eat glowing stones. Their drink is sulphur and pitch. There everything is sour instead of sweet. We see there what we have done here.

The slothful person is weighed down with all kinds of pain.

The hot-tempered is beaten there with whips of fire.

The bitterly poor minstrel who with high spirit41 can excite to sinful frivolity weeps in hell more tears than all the water contained in the sea.

I saw beneath Lucifer the ground of hell-a hard black pebblestone that shall bear the structure forever. Though hell has neither bottom nor boundary, it has as to ordering both depth and end.

How hell roars
And moans within itself.
And how the devils brawl
With the souls, and how these
Boil and roast,
And how they swim and wade
In the stink and swamp
In the vermin and foul puddle;
And how they bathe in the sulphur and pitch—
Neither they themselves nor all creatures can fully describe it.

When I had seen this misery without my own doing but rather as a gift from God, I was so wretchedly in pain from the stink and the unearthly heat that I could neither sit up nor walk and was without the use of my five senses for three days, like someone struck by thunder.'" My soul, however, suffered no distress since that malady that is called eternal death had not brought it there. But if it were possible that a pure soul could be among them, that would be for them eternal light and a great consolation. For the innocent soul must of its nature ever radiate and shine since she is born painlessly out of the eternal light.' But if she takes on the likeness of the devil, she loses her beautiful light. Is it possible in eternal hell that any consolation at all might come to the damned from prayer and from alms? I never heard that. They are constantly in such a grim state of mind that they feel loathing toward anything good.

After the last day, Lucifer shall put on a new garment that has spontaneously come about out of the manure of all filthy sins that he was ever able to suggest to men or angels. For he is the primary vessel of all sin. Then he is released, but his grimness and fierceness are so much a part of all the souls and all the devils that one is aware of his presence everywhere. At times he will swell up enormously and his muzzle shall open very wide. Then in a single breath he shall devour Christians, Jews, and heathens. Still, they shall have their full reward in his belly and their special feast. Woe then to soul and body! What a human mouth is able to say about it here is nothing at all compared to the indescribable anguish taking place there. For in truth I cannot bear to think about it for as long as it takes to say "Hail, Mary." Alas, so horrible is it there!

At the top hell has a head that is hideous and has on it numerous fierce eyes which shoot forth flames and envelop the poor souls that dwell in the anteroom from which God took Adam and others of our fathers. This is now the worst purgatory that a sinner can enter. There I saw bishops, high officials, and great lords in longlasting anguish with countless sufferings. All who came there God had barely spared from everlasting hell.52 I found no one there who at the end had made a pure confession with his fleshly mouth. When because of the nature of dying their outer senses had been taken from them, the body lay still-though the soul and body still had a common will. When they had left behind earthly darkness, God gave them true knowledge in secret. Oh, how narrow there is the path to the kingdom of heaven! The union of body and soul, not yet separated, spoke thus: "True God, grant me pardon; I sincerely regret my sins!" This is a brief hour in which God has secretly saved many a soul that to all appearances had been lost. I never saw a case where this happened to a person who had not done something good with a well-intentioned will. The devils lead the stained souls from their bodies to purgatory because the pure angels cannot touch them as long as they are not radiant with a brightness similar to theirs. However, a soul can have the aid of friends on earth that prevents the devils from ever attacking the soul. But if she is very guilty, she must nevertheless suffer other torments. All this she can better endure if the devils are not able to grab her and constantly ridicule her.

When our holy fathers went down to hell, what they brought with them was true hope in the Christian faith with the holy love of God and very many humble virtues and faithful striving. Although they went to hell, they had been prepared for heaven. Nothing in hell could daunt them. What they brought with them that kept them from burning was love. This shall burn everlastingly in all the children of God; otherwise, they shall never reach heaven. This God has so ordained: What we take along with us we have to eat and drink there." But the procrastinators, who leave here without having done penance for great sins,54 can never, short of being damned, suffer as terribly as they do before the mouth of hell. There at all times the breath of Lucifer shoots forth with all torments and permeates them so torturously that the poor wretches are just as utterly congealed in the flames and in the various kinds of savagery as the much blessed fathers were united in the sweet knowledge that God loved them. Of women there I saw only exalted ladies who here love all kinds of sins just as their husband lords do.

Hell also has a mouth at the top that remains ever open. All who enter into the mouth are never delivered from eternal death.

22. Of God's Mercy, His Concern, andJustice

I have heard and seen such boundless mercy from God that I said:

"Lord, how can this happen?
After all, your justice is equal to your mercy.
How is it that your goodness is so great?"

Then our Lord spoke a sincere word thus:
"I say to you by my divine faithfulness
That there are more Christians who from the mouth[55] enter the kingdom of heaven
Than there are who enter everlasting hell.
Justice has, indeed, its continual power.

Whatever is brought before it indicating guilt
Is never taken away by me from it.
Before all else, however, I want to come to the troubled soul as a Father[56]
If I have heard anything clearly good about her.
This arises from the great concern that I have for my children."

The soul said:

"Ah, my very dear Love, would you describe to me this concern
So that your pleasure and my desire might be united?"

Our Lord said:

"Now hear of my concern:
My goodness and my generosity,
My faithfulness and my mercy
Press me so urgently
That I let them flow over the mountains of pride
And over the valleys of humility
And over the bushes of confusion
And over the smooth paths of purity.
And my goodness actually presses me more insistently than an evil man is pressed
By his malicious disposition,
And yet my justice is even greater than the malice of all the devils."

The soul said:

"Lord, your justice corresponds quite well with the living truth,
So that it gives me boundless joy without suffering of the heart.
Wherever it tends,
Truth is always joyful."

23. The Intensity of Yearning Takes Away Words; God Cannot Do Without Virgins; God's Countenance, His Embrace, and His Joy Overcome a Thousand Deaths'

Whoever has burned in the powerful fire of love cannot endure abruptly cooling off through any kind of sin.

"Ah, dear Lover, when shall you yearn for what I yearn for?" Thus did a lonely soul speak.

Her dear One responded to her and spoke as though he did not know what she wanted: "What are you yearning for?"

She said in response: "Lord, the urgency of my desire has taken from me the ability to speak my thoughts."

He said: "Virgins do not know how to woo well because their modesty is by its nature refined."

She complained: "Alas, Lord, you certainly have been away from me much too long. If I could only win you, Lord, with magic, so that you could find rest only in me-ah, that would be a loving! Then you would have to beg that I behave sensibly."

Then he answered thus, saying: "0 you spotless Dove, now grant me that I might spare you. The earth cannot yet do without you."

She said: "0 Lord, if it could ever happen to me that I might gaze upon you as my heart desires and hold you in my arms, then the divine pleasures of your love would needs permeate my soul to the degree possible for people on earth. What I would be willing to suffer thereafter has never been seen by human eyes. Indeed, a thousand deaths were too little. Such, Lord, is my painful longing for you! For now I shall remain steadfast in my faithfulness. If you, Lord, can bear it, let me long pursue you in yearning. I know well, Lord, that the beginnings of desire for me will begin to stir in you. 1158

24. Two Kinds of Spiritsfrom God and from the DevilAre Offered to Two Kinds of Religious People. The Seven Kinds of Love

Now I want to write you about a true spiritual sister and about a worldly beguine. They dispute with each other thus: The spiritual sister speaks from the true light of the Holy Spirit, free from interior suffering; but the worldly beguine speaks from her flesh in Lucifer's spirit with dreadful effort.

There are two kinds of religious people on this earth, to whom two kinds of spirits are offered. God offers his Holy Spirit to pure spirits who live here in a faithful holy attitude with their whole being. Here two pure natures meet: the hot fire of the Godhead and the flowing wax of the loving soul. If a pure wick of constant humility is there, a beautiful light shall burn by which one shall see far. 0 loving Soul, you shall become so rich that no one can make you poor-and yet you are the poorest of all! Humility makes one rich and well-brought-up; good habits make one noble and well-bred. Love makes one beautiful and praiseworthy." Being scorned exalts one aloft in God. Mark this well, spiritual Sister, and let no one drive you away from your good habits. Then shall you remain holy.

The devil, too, offers his spirit to the spirits who are ready to do the worst with hatred and with arrogant rapacity. They do not know what good things love brings. They become so poor from mean hatred and from the devil's grimness that it would be impossible for them to find or follow God's love.

Faithful love raises constant praise to God.
Yearning love causes a pure heart much sweet anguish.
Searching love belongs to herself alone.
Knowing love shares itself with all creatures.
Clamoring love is still mixed with sadness.
Silent love enjoys effortless pleasure.
Ah, the body knows nothing of what love does in stillness.
Pure love finds rest in God alone
Because the two of them have a single will,
And no creature is important enough to disturb them.

Knowledge has written this out of the eternal book:
Gold is often made very impure by copper.
Duplicity and empty honor do the same.
They erode all virtues from a person's soul.
The base soul is so attracted to transitory things
That she has never been shaken by love.
In her God has never spoken lovingly.
Alas, for her this life is total night.

Book IV

1. Pure Virgins Should Have Five Things

If you want to enhance virginity, which God has so glorified that for love of you he became the Son of a virgin just think what that means!-then you should be humbly silent and lovingly suffer distress and throughout all your days and in all situations practice virginal modesty. This will make your chastity thrive. 0 virgin, what God wants to give you then! He wants to be your handsome young man and wants to lead you in the heavenly dance. 0 wretched lame dog that I am, I would also shuffle along with you. Consider how I mean that: The number of pure virgins is small.

2. This Book Has Come from God; the Soul Praises Herself for Many Things; She Is Given Two Angels and Two Evil Devils. With Twelve Virtues She Does Battle Against the Flesh

All the days of my life before I began this book and before a single word of it had come into my soul, I was one of the most naive persons ever to be in religious life. I knew nothing about the devil's malice; I was unaware of the frailty of the world; the duplicity of people in religious life was also unknown to me. I have to speak to God's honor and for the sake of the book's teaching: I, unworthy sinner, was greeted by the Holy Spirit in my twelfth year, while I was alone, with such an outpouring that I could never, ever after that endure letting myself be led into a clear venial sin. This precious greeting occurred every day and lovingly spoiled for me all worldly sweetness, and it is still increasing day by day. This happened over thirty-one years. About God I knew nothing more than what the Christian faith teaches and I strove with constancy to keep my heart pure. God himself is my witness that I never in will or desire asked him to give me these things that are written in this book. Also, I never imagined that such things could happen to a human being. As long as I was with my relatives and my friends, to whom I was always the favorite, I had no knowledge of these things. Long before this I had had the desire to be despised through no fault of my own. Then for the sake of God's love I moved to a town where no one was my friend except for one person. I was afraid that because of him holy contempt and God's pure love would be withdrawn from me. But God nowhere abandoned me and let me experience such delightful sweetness, such holy knowledge, and such incomprehensible wonders that I found little enjoyment in earthly things.

Then for the first time my spirit was brought up through prayer between heaven and the air. I saw with the eyes of my soul in heavenly bliss the beautiful humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ, and I recognized in his sublime countenance the Holy Trinity-the eternity of the Father, the suffering of the Son, the sweetness of the Holy Spirit. Then I saw an angel, to whom I was entrusted through baptism, and my devil. Our Lord said:

“I shall take this angel from you
And shall give you two others instead.
They shall take care of you in these wonders.”

When the soul looked at the two angels, oh, how completely was she unnerved in humble impotence, and she prostrated herself at the feet of our Lord, thanking him and urgently protesting that she was quite unworthy that princes such as this should be her chamberlains. One of the angels was from the Seraphim, and he is an igniter of love and a holy beacon for tender souls. The other angel was from the Cherubim; he is a keeper of the gifts and orders wisdom in the loving soul.

Then our Lord allowed two devils to come forth.
They were exalted masters, taken from Lucifer’s school,
And had seldom come out.

When the soul looked upon the terribly hideous devils, she shivered a little, commended herself to our Lord, and quite freely accepted them. The one devil is a deceiver with beautiful angelic garments. Oh, what a lot of false cunning he presented to me at first! Once during mass he came down from on high and said: "I am so beautiful; don't you want to worship me?"

The soul replied: "God alone shall one worship in all good things and in all distress!"

He said: "Don't you want to look up and see who I am?" Then in the lower air he displayed a beautiful sham radiance, which has seduced many a heretic, and said: "In the throne room upon this seat you alone shall be the most exalted virgin, with me the fairest youth next to you."

But she replied: "A person would not be wise to take the worst when he could easily achieve the best."

He said: "Since you do not want to surrender yourself to meyou are so holy and so humble-then I shall worship you."

She said: "No grace shall be given to you because you worship a foul cesspool."

Then he showed her the five wounds painted on his feet and hands and said: "Now you well see who I am. If you will live according to my advice, I shall give you great honor. You should tell people about this special favor; then much good would come of it."

She said-and his idle talk annoyed her greatly; nevertheless, she listened to it freely so that she might become more shrewd"You are telling me that you are God. Well then, tell me, who is that who is the Son of the living God now here in the true priest's hands?" He then wanted to depart, and she said: "By the almighty God, I admonish you that you now listen to me: I well know your intentions. If I were to tell everyone the secrets of my heart, things would be quite nice for me in the short term. But then you would intently strive to make the fun end badly. You would do this so that I might fall into doubt, sadness, unbelief, impurity, and thereafter into everlasting anguish. Another reason you are doing this is so that I might imagine that you come to me thus because I am so holy. Ha! You old archdeceiver, as long as God stands by me, all your efforts are for naught."

Then he cried out: "A plague on your magic; just let me get away from you. I'll never bother you again!"

The second devil who was assigned to me was a troublemaker and a master of concealed lewdness. However, God forbade him ever to come to me himself. Instead, he sent perverted evil people to me as his messengers who spoil good things for me and take what they can of my honor by their words. He also strives for this: where good people are together and are talking idly in a lewd manner, this cannot help but trouble poor me. Up to then that had never happened to me.

One night I was at prayer before my first sleep. This same devil came passing through the air and took a close look at the sinful earth. He was huge like a giant. He had a short tail and a crooked nose. His head was large like a tub. Out of his mouth fiery sparks came flying covered with black flame. He laughed with cunning malice and a horrible raucous voice. The soul asked him why he was laughing, what he was looking for, and what he was up to.

He answered and said: "I am glad, indeed, since I may not torment you myself, that I find so many who look like angels and are happy to torment you for me." Then he continued: "I am the chamberlain of religious persons and I look for two kinds of weakness in them that will separate them from God in an instant. One is concealed or secret impurity. Whenever a person in religious life seeks the comfort of the flesh without real necessity and in all his five senses, they become impure; that is, crass and lazy; and true love of God grows cold. The other is hidden hatred in open discord. This is a very useful sin for me. Wherever I find it unrepented overnight, there is a win for me, for it is the foundation of long-lasting malice and the loss of all holiness."

Then the soul said: "Since by your nature you have absolutely nothing good about you, how can it be that you can give a morally profitable explanation of your evil?"

And he replied: "Wherever I turn, God has me so firmly in his hands that I cannot do anything except what he directs me."

I, unhappy person, in my early childhood committed such a great sin that, if I had remained without repentance and without confession, I would have to have stayed in purgatory for ten years. But now, dear Lord, when I die, I shall cheerfully suffer torment there for love of you. I am saying this not from reason; love bids me say it.' When I entered religious life and took leave of the world, I looked at my body. It was fully armed against my poor soul with great fullness of strong power and with the energy of a complete nature. I saw full well that it was my enemy, and I also saw if I were going to escape eternal death, I would have to strike it down; conflict was inevitable. I also looked at my soul's weapon. This was the glorious passion of our Lord Jesus Christ. With this I defended myself. I had to remain constantly in great fear and throughout my youth had to deliver great defensive blows against my body. These were sighing, weeping, confessing, fasting, keeping vigils, scourging with rods, and constant adoration. These were the weapons of my soul by means of which I so completely conquered the body that in twenty years the time never came that I was not weary, weak, and sick-mostly from repentance and suffering, but also from holy longing and spiritual toil and, in addition, many a difficult day of sickness from my nature. There was also the violent force of love, which pressed me so intensely with these marvels that I did not dare remain silent about it. Still, because of my naivete, I had much to suffer. I said: "Ah, kind God, what do you see in me? You know quite well that I am a fool, a human being sinful

and needy in body and soul. You should be giving these things to wise people; then you would be able to receive praise."

Then our Lord got very angry with little me and asked me for my judgment:

"Now tell me, are you mine or not?"
"Certainly, Lord, that is what I long for from you."
"Shall I then not do with you what I want?"
"Yes, Dearest to my heart, gladly; even if I should thus become nothing."

Then our Lord said: "You shall obey and trust me in these matters, and you shall also become sick for a long time, and I shall take care of you myself; and everything that you need for body and soul I shall give you."

Then, a wretch trembling in humble confusion, I went to my confessor, told him the whole story, and begged for his advice. He said I should boldly go forward with a light heart; God, who had been leading me, would certainly preserve me. Then he gave me a command that often makes me ashamed and causes me to weep because my utter unworthiness is obvious to my eyes; that is, he commanded me, a frail woman, to write this book out of God's heart and mouth. And so this book has come lovingly from God and does not have its origins in human thought.

3. Sinners Fall Away from God, of Three Gifts of Wisdom; of the Stone; of the Praise of the Virgin Who Is Christianity2

Just as one soothes a dear child, so does one spank a nasty one. Just so does our Lord act, saying: "Whoever has nothing good about him shall never enter my kingdom; and whoever cannot be made full by transitory things shall be satisfied with hunger for eternity. And woe to him who has goods that stick to his heart and who wants to set himself above other people. He shall slip away from me into the bottomless valley."

To this, holy knowledge replies that God has given us three different gifts in true wisdom from which we should take our fill and by which we should preserve ourselves from all injury.

The first is priestly wisdom and Christian teaching, as God revealed them to me in great glory. With the true eyes of my knowledge, effortlessly and in sweet bliss, I saw a stone that was like a well-shaped mountain and that had grown out of itself and had taken on the beauty of all kinds of colors and gave off the strong fragrance of precious heavenly spices. I asked the very delightful stone who it was, and it spoke thus: "I am Jesus.'" Then I went out of myself in love4 and leaned my head on it. I saw that outside it was shut off from all darkness and was filled inside with eternal light.

Upon the stone there stood the most beautiful of virgins that was ever seen aside from our dear Lady St. Mary, but she is her playmate. Her feet are adorned with a stone called jasper. This stone has such great power that it drives out base cupidity from the feet of its desire.' It also bestows pure fragrance and stimulates holy hunger. It drives all darkness from one's eyes. This pre cious stone is Christian faith. The virgin stood on two feet. The one is the bond, the other is the loosening of holy power.' All Christian believing priests have these. She carries in her right hand a chalice filled with red wine, which she drinks alone in untold bliss. The angels never get a taste of it. The wine is the blood of the eternal Son, which fills her spirit so full that she gives us many a sweet teaching. In her left hand she wields a fiery sword that is full of golden cymbals hanging from it that sound so sweet that everyone must approach her who strives toward the Holy Trinity. I asked the virgin why it was that she carried the sword in her left hand and the chalice in her right hand. She said: "I am supposed to threaten because on the last day of each human being God shall strike his blow. I am also supposed to give away his blood with my right hand, just as Christ is turned to his Father in glory.'"

She also has great strength in her hands with which she draws all to herself who choose God and casts off from herself as well all who deliver themselves over to the devil. Ah, she has such a fair countenance. I look at her with ever increasing joy. Unguent flows from her throat; this is mercy, salve for sin. In her mouth she has golden teeth with which she chews the celestial junipers. These are the sayings of the prophets. From her tongue drips honey that the bustling bees, the holy apostles, have sucked from the sweetest wild flowers. She wears on her mouth blossoming roses and her nose is adorned with sweet violets.' She wears on her brow verdant white lilies.' This means she is a mother to widows, a dear friend to married people and a glory to all virgins. Her eyes sparkle full of delight, just as the sparkling sun prods on before it the pale green dawn. And just as her eyes are threefold and yet one, so it is with the Holy Trinity. The white refers to the Father, the green to the Son, the

radiant sun to the Holy Spirit." When they gaze at one another from their hearts, no greater joy can ever come about. This virgin also wears on her head a crown that is wrought from red gold. That is lofty counsel and holy action which one has from holy teachers. This crown is like a fortress with battlements before which lies a great pitiful army, and they have a terribly disloyal lord-that is the devil and his fol lowers-who is a treasonous wretch. Within the crown resides a praiseworthy army in full power with abundant defenses. They have a loyal Lord; that is Jesus our Redeemer. He constantly directs the defense of those under attack and leads the exhausted to the wine cellar.

In the crown there is a threefold horn"; in it the hardy shall dwell who are devoted to great love. They have to be the archers and sentries if the weakest are to survive. In the crown there is also a tower. The blessed who shall live there do not often need to enter the fray, but no one can climb up to it unless his complete earthly will has been taken from him by love. The crown has on the top of its battlements a great number of costly precious stones. These are those who have now gone from here to heaven. Inside in the heart of the virgin I saw a living spring flowing forth. Heathen children, all leprous and blind, were being brought there. Above this spring stood a deeply spiritual man. No one but him could reach into it. This wasJohn the Baptist. He bathed the children in the spring that they might become seeing and radiantly healthy. I asked the virgin who she was. She said: "I am she whom you love so well, and I am your playmate. I am Holy Christianity and we both have the same Bridegroom." This is the virgin of blessed priests who so often gaze upon her with love.

The second wisdom comes from our natural faculties by means of which one can do both: lose and win. In this wisdom resides a throng of perverse lay persons and false priests and cunning religious." Never does a person become so holy that he learns how to guard against these three completely. So vicious are they that they pervert everything that is good. No one becomes spiritual from this gifts" unless he also is a fool for the sake of God's love. For pure holy simplicity is the mother of true divine wisdom. What good does it do that a refined gentleman has a lot of money and yet buys nothing but hunger, thirst, long-lasting disgrace, and eternal interior torment as well?

The third wisdom comes from grace and orders all of God's gifts. It never becomes so abundant that it dare compare itself to the lowest creatures. Their distress never saddens it; rather, it rejoices only in God's will. Also, it cannot bear that a single virtue remain locked outside its door.

4. Two Dissimilar Paths: the First Descends into Hell; the Second Ascends to Heaven14

Abundance of transitory things is a capricious guest;
Holy poverty offers before God a precious burden.

Vanity reflects not on its destructiveness;
Constancy is fully laden with all virtues.

Folly is comfortable only with itself;
Wisdom is never satisfied with what it learns.

Anger brings utter darkness into the soul;
Holy meekness is assured of every grace.

Pride always wants to be the best;
Humility can never rest, but must offer its service to all creatures.

Empty honor is before God deaf and blind;
Undeserved disgrace sanctifies all children of God.

Deceit has a most fair appearance;
Perfection is despised by the high and mighty.

Cupidity always has a loud mouth;
Blessed moderation has a delightful foundation.

Sloth misses abundant treasure;
Holy diligence does not overly seek out its own comfort.

Disloyalty always gives bad advice;
Full loyalty never omits a good deed.

True spirituality never avenges itself on anyone;
The uncultivated heart always seeks to break the peace.

Genuine devotion cannot do evil;
Evil will is subordinate to no one.

Malice by nature is grounded in evil;
Divine grace has a lovely countenance and a sweet mouth.

Worldly hearts like to be honored;
A spiritual soul always wants to go elsewhere.

Hidden cruelty has a plain mouth;
Open kindliness discovers God's treasure.

Deceitful concern is hate's neighbor;
Holy mercy alone shall stand with God.

A lie appears outwardly beautiful and inwardly hideous;
This is why it receives a friendly welcome from its companions.

Truth is rejected because it is little esteemed;
Hence all who love it must suffer many a humiliation with Jesus.

Hate rages unceasingly;
Love burns without injuring; it is free of all torment.

Evil disfavor hates God's generosity;
A pure heart full of love rejoices at everyone's happiness.

Malicious gossip feels shame neither before people nor God,
Who, after all, hears and sees all things.

Despair is a horrible fall;
True hope preserves it all.

False consolation will never be happy;
True guilt saddens it[15] so.

After our dear Lord had revealed this to me, he then said: "He who considers how good I am always holds himself fast on me." To that end help us, Lord, for the sake of your own honor!

5. Our Sin, Future Fall, Earthly Being, the Kingdom of Heaven. God's Gifts Should Be Clearly Before Our Eyes

Lord, my guilt through which I have lost you stands before my eyes like an immense mountain and has created an exten sive darkness between you and me, and an eternal distance of you, alas, from me! Ah, Love above all loves, draw me back into you!

But, Lord, a future fall's stands before my eyes like a fiery dragon mouth that at any time would like to devour me. Ah, my only Good, now help me that I might flow spotless into you!

Lord, my earthly being stands before my eyes like a parched field on which little of value has grown. 0 dear Jesus Christ, send me the sweet rain of your humanity and the warm sun of your living Godhead and the gentle dew of your Holy Spirit, that I might lament my heart's suffering.

Lord, your eternal kingdom stands open before my eyes like the most splendid wedding feast and the greatest celebration

and the longest banquet. Alas, my Darling, there you shall forever draw your love-craving bride to your embrace.

Lord, your whole gift that I have received from you appears to my eyes like a wretched box on the ears, because your most sublime gift here makes me seem so worthless. Thus does God who gives it all speak:

"Your mountain shall dissolve in love;
Your enemies shall gain no part of you;
Your field has been penetrated by the warm sun;
And your fruit has nevertheless remained unspoiled;
And in my kingdom you shall be a new bride;

And there I shall give you a delicious kiss on the mouth,
That my entire Godhead shall soar through your soul;
And my threefold eyes shall forever sparkle unceasingly in your twofold heart.
So where is your grieving now?
Even if you pray for a thousand years,
I would not grant you a single sigh."

6. Being Chosen by God Cannot Hurt Anyone; True Repentance Earns Remission and God's Grace, and Frees from Purgatory

A despondent person asked me to pray for him, which I did with fear and special concern. God heard me with his gaze, with his words, and with his true voice, saying: "There is no lamb so white or so pure that it cannot be vanquished by wolves; yet no one can deter my determinations. I have made this clear to him in three ways. First, I was merciful in regard to his guilt. Second, I have given him my grace. Third, I have never allowed untrustworthy people to exercise any power over him."

Then I lamented for him thus: "Lord, he still has great fears that you have not completely forgiven him his guilt."

Thus did God reply: "That would be impossible. Whoever is sorry for his sins I forgive. Those who repent with deep compunction I grant my grace; and whoever so repents them that he would sacrifice his life before he would ever do it again and remains constant in this shall not be condemned to any punishment after this life because of his guilt, unless he commits real venial sins and is found unrepentant of them.

7. How a Free Soul Speaks to God in Total Love

Lord, because I was subservient to all creatures, you have drawn me up above all things to yourself; and, Lord, because I have no earthly treasure, I do not have an earthly heart either. For you, Lord, are my treasure, just as you are also my heart; and you alone are my good, but I am capricious in all things.

8. Concerning God's Body, Which a Sick Person Vomits Up, and Concerning Power

That a sick person who is vomiting may not receive the Body of God-I was so naive about this that I did not know how to figure it out completely by my own powers of thinking and my own faith, because one can lose God only by sinning. So my soul asked our Lord in the union of love what the truth of the matter was. Our Lord gave this reply: "You are right. One can only lose me by sinning, but one's body can lose my body through sickness." In these words I saw in the Holy Trinity this explanation: Whenever we receive God's Body, the Godhead unites itself to our innocent soul and God's humanity mixes itself with our hideous body, and thus does the Holy Spirit make his dwelling in our faith. This blessed union we should preserve with great care.

9. Four Kinds of Offerings to Priests

Then our Lord said to me that priests should receive offerings from four things and from nothing else: from the altar; from bringing God's Body to the sick-but the sick person should give an offering for the last anointing according to his means and

according to what he thinks is good; from the field" he should take what one wants to give him. A priest should not determine and should not demand, because what a sick person has given he should receive only as a favor and not as something rightfully his."

10. Concerning the Offerings of Laypersons According to Their Means

Laypersons who give an offering should keep themselves from evil parsimony when giving, as much as the priest should preserve himself from greedy cupidity. This is very important for both of us because the layperson should give his offering with great love and a cheerful soul into God's generous hand. The priest should take it in humble fear and quaking heart from God's hands and should in all his actions return it to God in a praiseworthy manner; for earthly goods are like slaves when one receives them, but they are like the freeborn when one gives them away.

11. Four Things Concerning How Christians Should Conduct Themselves in Dealing with Jews

Then God taught me how Christians should conduct themselves toward Jews. One should not observe their law. One should not reside with them. One should not even spend the night in their dwelling. One should buy and sell from them without acting too friendly and without cunning or greed.

12. How a Bride Who Is United with God Rejects Consolation from All Creatures Except for That from God Alone, and How She Sinks into Pain

So speaks God's bride who has taken her rest in the sealed treasury of the holy complete Trinity: "Oh, get up and depart from me, all you creatures! You cause me pain and you are not able to console me."

The creatures say: "Why?"

The bride says: "My Love left me as I slept, as I was resting in oneness with him.""

"Can't this beautiful world and all the good it contains console you?"

"No, I see the snake of deceit and how treacherous cunning slithers into all the pleasures of this world. I also see the hook of lust in the carcass of base sweetness with which she catches many."

"Can the kingdom of heaven console you at all?"

"No, in itself it would be dead if the living God were not there."

"Well then, Lady Bride, can't the saints console you?"

"No, if they were to be separated from the living God flowing through them, they would weep more bitterly than I; for they have ascended above me and dwell deeper in God."

"Can God's Son ever console you?"

"Yes, I certainly ask him when we stroll through the flowers of holy knowledge, and I beg him full of longing that he open up for me the playful flood flowing in the Holy Trinity from which alone the soul lives.

If I am to be consoled in proportion to my nobility,
God’s breath must draw me effortlessly into itself,
For the sparkling sun of the living Godhead
Shines through the bright water of cheerful humanity,

And the sweet pleasure of the Holy Spirit
Who proceeds from them both
Has taken from me everything
That dwells beneath the Godhead.
Nothing tastes good to me but God alone;
I am wondrously dead.
I am freely willing to give up this taste
So that he be wonderfully praised.
For when I, a worthless human being, cannot praise God with my powers,
I send all creatures to court
And bid them that they praise God for me

With all their wisdom,
With all their love,
With all their beauty,
And with all their longing,
Just as they were created by God in innocence,
And also with all their voices
As they now sing.
When I look upon this great praising,
I feel no pain.

"I cannot endure that a single consolation touch me except my Lover. I love my earthly friends in the company of heaven and I love my enemies in holy aching for their happiness. God has enough of everything; caressing souls is the only thing he cannot get enough of."

After this marvel and this consolation had been going on for eight years, God wanted to console me way beyond what was due to my soul's nobility. "No, dear Lord, do not elevate me so much," said the unworthy soul. "It's much too good for me in the lowest part; for your honor's sake I am quite happy always to remain there."

Then the poor wretch sank down among those suspended 21 and among the damned souls, and she thought this was too good. After that our Lord pursued her as he does those who experience the lowest kind ofjoy,21 for God shines beautifully into all according to the degree of holiness they achieved here in love and according to how noble in virtues they became. St. John says: "We shall see God as he is."22 This is true. But the sun shines according to the weather. There are different kinds of weather on earth under the sun, and in like manner there are different kinds of dwellings in heaven. Hence, he is to me as I can bear him and see him.

Then our Lord said: "How long do you want to be here?"

The bride said: "Oh, leave me, dear Lord, and let me sink further for your honor."

After this both soul and body entered into such a great darkness that I lost knowledge and light, and I knew nothing of God's intimacies. Even blessed love went off on its own. The soul said: "Where are you now, Lady Trust? I now want to entrust to you the duties of love, and you must preserve God's honor in me."

Then this chambermaid took charge of her lady in such a holy spirit of suffering and cheerful patience that I was living without a care. But then disbelief came and enveloped me completely in such great darkness and screamed at me in such great rage that I shuddered at its voice. It said: "If this favor had been from God, he would not have so utterly forsaken you."

The soul said: "Where are you now, Lady Constancy? Command true faith to come to me!"

Then the Father of heaven said to the soul: "Remember what you experienced and what you saw while there was nothing between me and you."

And the Son said: "Remember what your body suffered from my pain."

This is what the Holy Spirit said: "Remember what you wrote."

Then both body and soul answered with the constancy of true faith: "As I have believed, loved, enjoyed, and known, so shall I go forth from here unshaken."

After this came constant estrangement from God and enveloped the soul so completely that the blessed soul said: "Welcome, very blessed Estrangement. Fortunate I am that I was born-that you, Lady, shall now be my chambermaid, for you bring me unusual joy and incomprehensible marvels and unbearable delight as well. But, Lord, you should take delight from me and let me have estrangement from you. Ah, how good I feel, darling God, that I may bear it because love is changeable. How it comes to me I dare not say; only that gall has become honey for the palate of my soul."

Then I desired that all creatures might praise our Lord with the Te deum laudamus.23 But they did not want to do this and turned their backs on me. Then the soul became happy beyond all bounds, and herself said: "That you now despise me and turn your backs on me-look, I'm glad. This praises our Lord immeasurably. Now his honor is accomplished through me, for now God is strangely with me, now his estrangement from me is more welcome to me than he is himself." The soul knew full well that God would console her even in great estrangement. She said: "Remember, Lord, who I am and avoid me."

Our Lord said to her: "Grant me this: that I might cool the heat of my Godhead, the longing of my humanity, and the pleasure of my Holy Spirit in you."

To this she replied: "Yes, Lord, but in such a way that it is only good for you and not for me."

After this the bride entered such a great darkness that her body sweated and writhed in painful cramping. The pain was asked by someone2" to be a messenger to God for her. She said: "Lady Pain, this I bid you: that you release me now, for you are now the most important thing about me."

Then pain arose from the soul and the body like a gloomy shine and ascended to God with judicious intent and called out in a loud voice: "Lord, you know well what I want."

Our Lord went to meet her before the door of the kingdom, saying: "Welcome, Lady Pain, you are the garment I wore next to my skin on earth and the whole world's contempt was my finest mantle. Despite how much I loved you there, you are not entering here. Rather, to the virgin who is willing to do two things I shall give two things. She should constantly prove herself well-bred and prudent. Then shall she help you be her messenger, and then shall I give her my embrace and union with my heart."

Then pain said this: "Lord, I make many blessed and yet am not blessed myself, and I consume many a holy body and yet myself am evil, and I lead many to heaven and yet do not enter it myself."

To this our Lord responded: "Pain, you were not born from the kingdom of heaven; therefore, you may not enter it. Rather, you were born from Lucifer's heart; there you shall return and shall dwell with him eternally."

Ah, blessed Estrangement from God, how bound I am to you in love! You strengthen my will in pain and make pleasant for me the difficult long wait in this miserable body. By whatever means I make myself more your companion, the more intensely and wondrously God falls over me. 0 Lord, in the depths of pure humility I cannot sink away from you; alas, in pride I easily stray away from you!

But the deeper I sink,

The sweeter I drink.

13. The Text of This Book Is Seen, Heard, and Felt in All Members

I do not know how to write, nor can I, unless I see with the eyes of my soul and hear with the ears of my eternal spirit and feel in all the parts of my body the power of the Holy Spirit.

14. Of the Holy Trinity, of the Birth and the Name of Jesus Christ, and of Human Nobility

I saw and still see three Persons in the eternal heights before God's Son was conceived in the body of St. Mary. They were then known and seen by all the holy angels in their distinctness, in their completeness, in their name, and in how the Three were one God. No matter how good the angels' eyes were, they saw neither bone nor flesh nor color nor the glorious name Jesus. This was miraculously hidden from them in the breast of the eternal Father. They called the Father the uncreated eternal God, the Son wisdom with no beginning, the Spirit of them both they called right knowledge of truth. The fiery angels of the highest order, who are suspended opposite the loving Godhead in the breath of the whole Trinity, served and were witness to the blissful decision when God became man. Gabriel brought only the name down at the Annunciation. He was entrusted with neither bone nor flesh nor blood. The Second Person-that was always the eternal Son. Although he had not yet assumed human nature, he had always been ours but had not been given to us before Gabriel brought the message. If this same Second Person had been flesh, for the sake of redeeming us, before the Annunciation, then it would have to be a beginning; but this never took place.2' This same Second Person had become one nature with Adam's humanity before he debased himself in sin. Although Adam's nature was broken and changed and his inheritance lost forever, God never gave up on him. Hence we were and still are able to return. God has kept his noble loving nature intact. Hence he cannot withhold himself. God immediately cast Lucifer from himself into the eternal prison, but he pursued Adam, asked him where he was, and brought him back to the path. Lucifer had only a single nature in God. When he destroyed it, he could not return.

Man has a complete nature in the Holy Trinity, and God saw fit to fashion it with his own divine hands. When his holy efforts on our behalf went for naught, he was forced back within himself by a threefold delight. For this reason he wanted to restore us with his own feet and his own hands so that we would have great oneness with him. If man had remained in paradise, God would have been immediately visible to him, would have greeted his soul and refreshed his body. Thus did I see God come from heaven to paradise, like a great angel.

Also, this same nature forces God to greet us with knowledge and with holy intimacy to the extent that we are prepared through holy virtues and true innocence. When I reflect that divine nature now includes bone and flesh, body and soul, then I become elated in great joy, far beyond what I am worth. But angels are to some degree formed according to the Holy Trinity, but they are pure spirits. The soul alone with its flesh is mistress of the house in heaven, sits next to the eternal Master of the house, and is most like him. There eye reflects in eye, there spirit flows in spirit, there hand touches hand, there mouth speaks to mouth, and there heart greets heart. Thus does the Lord and Master honor the mistress at his side. But the princes and the vassals-these are the holy angels-these the Master keeps in full view. All service and all praise the angels engage in are offered totally to the mistress as well as to the Master. Our vassals rank in nobility according to how rich in holy virtues we are on earth.26

15. Genuine Pure Love Has Four Things; If You Surrender Yourself to God, God Will Also Surrender Himself to You

Genuine pure love of God has four things about it that never rest. The first is growing desire, the second is flowing suffering, the third: burning sensation in soul and body, the fourth: constant union bound to great vigilance. No one can achieve this unless one enters into a full exchange with God, such that you give God everything that is yours, both inwardly and outwardly, and he truly gives you everything that is his inwardly and outwardly.

When the hour of bliss has passed when God gave his most sublime consolation to the loving soul, ah, then the beloved is so content that she considers everything good that estranged souls feel as pain. If you are then cross, you might well fear that the devil has anointed you.

16. Great Love Has More than Ten Parts and of Two Kinds of Complaint

Great love gets its nature from this: It does not flow with tears; rather, it burns in the great fire of heaven. Within this it flows forth most lavishly and yet remains within itself in utter calm. It climbs up closest to God yet remains utterly interior to itself. It grasps the most and keeps the least.

"0 most blessed love, where are those who know you?"

"They are totally consumed in the fire of the Holy Trinity; they do not dwell in themselves. These blessed ones can never fall into mortal sin."

"Why?"

"They are so completely permeated with and absorbed in God; the more they are tempted, the stronger they become."

"Why?"

"The longer they are here in the struggle and keep on loving, the more noble does God seem to them and the more frail and wretched they seem to themselves."

"Why?"

"The holier the love, the greater the fear; and the more consolation, the more constant the fear. But the loving soul cannot cravenly fear; she fears nobly."

There are two things that I cannot condemn enough: the first, that God's kindness is so forgotten in the world; the second, that those in religious life are so imperfect. Because of this many a fall must occur, for the perfect have never fallen.

17. Concerning a Lady Who Liked Being at Court; Concerning Her Devil Who Recommended to Her Seven Kinds of Evil

A lady had retreated from the world" and yet still wanted to serve at court. I prayed for her with all my might, both day and night, for I saw that the damage to her was so great that, if she remained there, she would woefully become the devil's companion upon her death. Why? Because she loved her importance there to excess and did not strive for God's honor. Rather, she gave herself over to idle courtly manners and kept her eyes focused on the prestige of her lord and lady.

After this a huge devil came-fiery, bloody, black, with claws, with horns,28 and with glassy eyes. It came and stood before me. But I was not afraid of it. I just blessed myself and went to sleep. Then it trundled over me like a sack full of water and tormented me so much that I sought relief from our Lord. A white angel came to my aid. It was from the fourth choir of angels and was the guardian angel of this same lady. I asked him who this enemy was and why he was assailing me.

Ah, then the lovely angel said in a heavenly voice: "He is one of the most malicious devils that hell can muster. His task is to bind up with ruinous love the hearts of the pure who really do want to be good, and he is tormenting you because you are trying to push him away from this lady."

"Alas, is he going to torment me for a long time?"

"No, God shall soon show his mercy."

After this the devil came again and shot fiery rays at me that inflicted hellish pain on me in body and soul.

I said: "Do everything to me that God allows you."

At this the devil was weakened and said: "Since you humbly submit yourself to this suffering, I am losing all my power."

The soul said: "By the living God, I admonish you to tell me your name and what your business with this lady is."

"My name-ha! That I shall not tell you because that would do me too much harm."

"You must, by the last judgment!"

"I am fostering in her fierce arrogance, deceitful cunning, and powerful lust; and I fend off from her all mercy. My name is Raging Anger that destroys spiritual hearts."

18. A Spiritual Person Resembles an Animal in Thirty Things as to His Nature29

Thus does a despondent soul lament and speak forlornly to her Lover: "Ah, Lord, for a long time I have desired two things that have not yet been granted me. The first is a faithful spiritual life. Alas, Dearest to my heart, that has all been left undone.

The second is a holy end. I am so looking forward to it that I am losing my doleful earnestness."

To this our Lord replied by showing me a frail, insignificant little animal and saying: "Look, you are like this tiny animal."

Then I saw how the animal was brought forth on an island in the sea out of the slime that had separated from the sea between the hot sun and the water in such a way that the sun was the animal's father, the sea its mother, and the slime its matter.

Thus was Adam created by God's power on earth out of weak matter. The animal signifies true spiritual people. When a person receives a spiritual spirit, he is begotten by the burning Godhead and is conceived in his mother, God's humanity. The matter he is made of is the Holy Spirit, who rubs out his sinful nature in all respects. The animal grows toward the warm sun. So does a spiritual person who has received" God's Spirit. This is such noble seed; it sprouts and grows till the blessed person's end.

This animal does not eat. Rather, it has a large tail that is full of honey. This it sucks on every day. It also has a golden beard that rings so delightfully when it is sucking that its sweet voice and cheerful sound echo playfully in its heart; and its body is nourished by drinking the sweet honey. This tail is the death of holy people, which they cheerfully and prudently keep before their eyes in their good works and constant practice of virtue, and they joyfully practice faithfulness in patient waiting. The golden beard is God's noble love that chimes through the loving heart into the noble soul. Fortunate is he to have become a human being who ever really experiences this!

This animal has at times a natural desire to drink from the sea because of a misguided sense of thirst. It cannot regain its health unless it voids and gives back the bitter seawater. Thus it is with us sinners: when we drink of the foul puddle of the world and make use of the baseness of our flesh according to the counsels of the evil spirit, we poison ourselves with our selves. If we ever want to survive, we have to leave ourselves and give back what we owe to the world.

This animal has big ears. They are exposed to the heavens, and it listens for the song of birds. It flees vicious animals and fears the snakes of the earth. This, indeed, is also what the loving soul does. It constantly flees evil company and detests false wisdom, and its ears are wide open to hear God's wisdom.

This animal has a noble temperament. It cannot remain in the sea when animals do their mating dance and the water is raging. It loves chastity and hurries up the highest mountain that it knows, and it picks out the most beautiful tree and climbs it with cheerful effort and clasps the lofty trunk; and so does it rest with great pleasure in lofty freedom. This is what the loving soul does. She finds vanity bitter and flees urgently what is merely passing that flows onward like water. She also knows how to work with great virtues and holy efforts on the highest mountain in the beautiful kingdom of heaven. Effortlessly, she climbs further into grace upon the fairest tree of the Holy Godhead. There she embraces the loftiest trunk and is herself embraced by the Holy Trinity.

This animal has two sharp horns with which it defends its body with such intelligence that it goes free among all the animals. 0 loving Soul, this you well understand. You drive the devil away from you through God's intelligence and you live in holy purity, free of all sin.

This animal has two beautiful human eyes that pour forth tears toward the beautiful mountain where it would like to be again. Ah, loving Soul, how fair are the eyes of your knowledge, for you have gazed into the eternal mirror and your sweet tears are ready to fall from love. And yet you willingly endure the bitterness of the sea of sin.

This animal has a soft mouth and a pure tongue, but it does not have teeth. It can neither snarl nor bite. The loving person also has a useful mouth; he eagerly teaches and instructs at all times. His tongue is far from and closed to all harmful words. He, too, has no teeth for biting. He willingly consoles those who are sad. There is also no viciousness in him except against sin and derision of God. Indeed, nothing hurts him as much as this. The mouth of this animal is wide open on top and small at the bottom. The large part of our mouth is the unrestrained praise that we should offer to God in the company of all creatures in all our actions and in all things at all times. The lower part of our mouth is all too ready to speak about the sinful earth. Woe to all empty phrases! What shall become of the impostor saints who fraudulently nourish their sinful bodies with gifts meant for holy people and comport themselves as though they gained complete knowledge of God's holy truth? May God in his trustworthiness, who alone has loved the truth, preserve his innocent friends from them!

This animal is swift of foot and has no voice. It is quiet by nature. The soul in rapture has this same nature: at the height of

love she is both swift and at rest.

This animal's skin and hair are of a common color, and is faded and ugly to behold. No one hunts it for its present beauty. But after its death, when other animals rot, its skin becomes so ennobled and its hair so richly beautiful that all the most prominent people that can get it wear its coat rather than the finest sable. The peace, useful habits, and holy teachings of people striving for perfection receive, alas, little notice during their lifetime; but after their death, whenever we sinners come into need and we then remember how holy their lives were and how solicitously they warned us, as sinners we feel shame that we kept our distance from them. And so their life becomes a beautiful sable that in its full beauty we sinners keep before our eyes and in our hearts. And yet during their life, we always fear for our worthless copper, so that we willfully neglect reaching out for refined gold.

This animal's flesh is eaten on Friday. It does not die unless it is beaten to death by the waves of the sea. The lives of holy people consist only of Fridays, for they constantly fast because of sin and do not eat forbidden foods; rather, they live in a godlike manner. The great stormy swells of tempestuous love make them die to all things and live in God alone. Indeed, all things are not really theirs except as shared with God in love. Thus does their love have the valuable power of praising God in all things.

This animal's bones are the skeleton of a noble fish.' From it one can fashion beautiful jewels that noble persons wear in honor. What a precious jewel is a holy body full of love and free from sin! God shows us this through the example of his dearest friends when we discover the true signs in them. In his holy friends God has given us many a valuable jewel. If we do not praise him for this, we cannot become one with the saints, whom one here elevates from the earth.32

This animal's name is, in German: Valuable for Everything.33 Fortunate is he that he ever became man who has this name before God.

19. The Task of Blessed Love Is Manifold

O blessed Love,
This has always been your task, and still is:

To bind together God and the human soul.
That shall be your task forever.

Greetings, my Lady, and take care
That I do not complain about you to my Lord.
If he intends to be away from me too long,
I would freeze too much.
Keep that from happening, Lady of my heart and Queen.
You have seduced me in God
So that I am blissfully bound.

O Love, Lady, help me
That I may die in his arms which now embrace me.
But still, willingly shall I suffer the pain of death
In my sinful body.

Love, you have ever more the greatest power of all the virtues;
For this I shall ever thank God. You free me from many a heartache.
I no longer have any virtue;
He serves me with his virtues.
That I ever could do anything good separated from my Lord:

That would be more difficult for me than death.
I dare not, alas, claim credit
For everything that I say about love.
It is God, rather, who is thereby reaching out
To all those chosen in his heart.

Those to whom this is addressed shall indeed know:
Love makes empty hearts full.
But when we are full of wrangling and discontent,
The game of love is completely closed to us.

Good night, Love. I'm off to bed, alleluia!

20. The Six Virtues of St. Dominic

On the feast of St. Dominic I prayed to our Lord for the whole Order of Preachers. Our dear Lord deigned to come to me himself and he brought along St. Dominic whom, if I dare say it, I love above all the saints.

Our Lord said: "My son Dominic had four things about him while on earth that all priors should have about them. He loved his fellow Dominicans so much that he could never bear to trouble them with things arising from some whim of his own. The second is that he often improved the food to help and show affection for his brethren, so that the young brothers might not think back on the world and so that the older ones might not succumb on the way. The third is that in holy wisdom he provided for them the model for being moderate, for the sake of God, in their whole being, in all their customs, and in all their wants. The fourth is that he was so merciful that he never wanted to burden his dear brethren with any kind of penance that the order did not require for wrongdoing."

And our Lord continued: "I shall mention two more things. Whenever Dominic laughed, he did so with true delight of the Holy Spirit. But when he wept, he wept with such sincerity that first and foremost among his desires he always put his brethren before my eyes and, in addition, with all his strength, Holy Christianity." Before this I did not know that any laughing could be free of frivolity and not wrong.

21. Sixteen Reasons Why the Order of Preachers Is Dear to God'

After this our dear Lord said: "I love two things in the Order of Preachers so much that my divine heart unceasingly smiles upon it. The first is the holiness of their life; the second is their great value for the church. In addition, they greet my Holy Trinity with seven things. These are: deep sighs, sincere weeping, intense longing, strict discipline, distressful exile, genuine humility, and joyous love."

Our Lord spoke again: "They also glorify my three names externally in seven ways: with hymns of praise, with sincere preaching, with correct remission," by lovingly consoling, with friendly help, by being models of holiness. They are also a wholesome bond of Christian faith."

In addition, our darling Lord said: "The alms they give to the poor for love of me are so holy that the sins of the poor people who receive them are reduced and, then too, the devil is not able to remain where their gifts are being eaten. This is because of the holiness of their pleasing poverty."

Ah, eternal spring of the Godhead, out of which I and all things flowed, I, unworthy creature, praise you with everything that is below you that, in spite of everything, Lord, I have been consoled by you. Amen.

22. Brother Heinrich's Fourfold Crown and of the Dignity of St. Dominic3e

In the Order of Preachers a brother died on the solemn feast of Easter after he had preached, sung mass, and had given people the holy body of our Lord. And when he had taken care of all his duties, he had himself anointed and departed toward nightfall. After he was buried, a certain person37 went to where his dead body was and greeted both soul and body. She did this regularly upon the death of religious people. There God celebrated in her soul a divine feast, and his soul was shown to

her in God's embrace in great glory. She saw clearly that his glory was not yet complete, and she asked our Lord how long he was going to remain like that and whether he had suffered at all in purgatory. Our Lord said: "He shall remain like this for a week."" That is, seven days and seven nights. He had rested himself on God's breast in untold bliss of spiritual fervor that he had not experienced on earth. Very quickly had he come there without suffering,just as a mother takes up her dear child out of the ashes onto her lap. He said: "Tell my sister39 I shall console her with God in fourteen days." It happened. She died fourteen nights later.

Then he invited me to his feast, where he was going to receive his glory. The whole heavenly army prepared for it and joined together in a beautiful procession. St. Dominic came with a whole throng. They were all preachers, and they all wore the golden crowns of those who died in the order, crowns that differed in value according to how holy they had been in the order. St. Dominic brought a shining crown toward Brother Heinrich that sparkled as beautifully as the sun at its brightest. He gave it to him as a reward from God, because he had followed his holy example in the Dominican order.

St. Dominic is indescribably more beautiful than the others because he receives a special honor from each brother as a reward. I saw him especially well clothed because of three qualities. He wears a white garment of innate purity; in addition, a green garment of growing wisdom of God, and also a red garment decorated with clasps because he had suffered spiritual martyrdom. They carry a military standard displaying the order's honor, one that no one else carries. A fine banner precedes them that all follow who on earth have lived according to their teaching.

Our Lord sat in his omnipotence and crowned this brother with three kinds of honors. They were: simple obedience, voluntary poverty, constant humiliation. Brother Heinrich thanked our Lord thus: "I thank you, Lord, that you found me, preserved me, and received me." He then bowed to our Lord and turned to his brothers. St. Dominic said: "Welcome, dear son, now enter into the glory of your Lord, alleluia!"

That I might experience this favor and might see this was especially due to my being lonely for the love of God and to being constantly treated with malicious contempt by the friends of God.

23. About the Burial of St. John the Evangelist40

I actually saw the body of St. John the Evangelist with the eyes of my unworthy soul. He lies unburied in great bliss above all corruptible things beneath the creation of the eternal kingdom." His body has now taken on so much of divine eternity that it glows like a fiery crystal. He lies there so lovely in his human form, as though his spirit had fallen asleep in the midst of a heavenly rapture. His eyebrows are still brown; his eyes are closed and he is lying on his back. Beneath, above, and all around him everything is bright, and every seven hours the holy angels come to his body with a song of praise that goes like this: "Holy, pure, simple, wise, and dear to God's heart." The song has a sweeter melody than the sound of a thousand strings or harps. Between his body and the creation of the kingdom of heaven exists only a thin wall, like the membrane of an egg, and yet it is forever tough, so that no body is able to pass through it until the last day.

24. How God Receives the Souls in Heaven; How He Crowns Three Kinds of People; How He Greets, Adorns, Praises, and Thanks Them

The kingdom of heaven has many beautiful gates and yet it has none. The many doors are the glorious different rewards with which God receives each soul, and all of heaven opens up for God's lovely bride. God descends through all the choirs toward the soul, and the whole heavenly host follows him with everything beautiful in proportion to what she may receive as her reward. Thus does the soul joyfully leave purgatory or her exile on earth. Many a fair angel follows her as well. At the gates of heaven the two lovers meet-God and the soul. The noble look with which he receives her and the holy reflection of his splendor that she receives from him have such power in her that she can never again think of what has caused her harm or interior sorrow.

The usual crown of the kingdom is placed upon her head at the gate; that is God's will. With it he leads her in with honor. That is why it is called the crown of the kingdom. That sinner who was evil to the end and to whom God then sends sorrow receives no other honor as his reward. God crowns three kinds of people with his fatherly hands: virgins, widows, and married people. Just as he receives them with all praise, so does he then crown them. Widows and married people are crowned by our Lord as he sits in almighty glory. But for the virgins he rises and crowns them, standing like the son of an

emperor. He greets them inwardly with his living Godhead; he honors them outwardly with his almighty humanity; he adorns them with the generosity of the Holy Spirit; he also rewards them everlastingly according to rank with the whole Trinity in his kingdom for all that which they bring along. He thanks them all individually for coming, and they praise God fervently that he saved them from eternal death.

25. How We Are Now Present in Heaven, Purgatory, and Hell

We are now present in heaven. Just as we are now on earth clothed with virtues and adorned and permeated with holy love of God, so are we now visible to all the blessed, and they praise God and rejoice because of us, as though we were now with them there. They do not see in advance what is happening to us, but they do see that we are growing in nobility, increasing in splendor, and ascending to the heights. This is what is happening hour after hour to the blessed who are still on earth. Because of it the joy of the saints and angels increases. Alas! If we sink into great venial sins, our fair heavenly radiance is extinguished. Then the angels beseech and the saints beg our dear Lord that we turn back and become pure again.

We are also present in purgatory as soon as we have earned it on earth. This pains all those who are there, but they cannot help us because they are themselves burning in such torment. There are many poor souls in this purgatory with such guilt that they cannot know whether they are ever going to be redeemed." Why? Because they never wanted to confess with their fleshly mouth. We have seen how they may be saved in a different chapter.4"

The sinner's presence is also manifest in hell. God's mercy follows him. Hence they are there today, and tomorrow they are the angels' companions.

Thus does our presence go in and out of heaven, purgatory, and wretched hell according to where our own free will seeks to align itself.

26. God Consoles the Depressed Brother Baldwin'

A brother in the Order of Preachers was so weighed down by an important office accepted under obedience-as happens to many-that his youthful vigor was drained from him and he lost his natural strength; yet he still carried on with good intentions. So I begged our Lord that he might turn his favor in that direction. Our Lord instructed me and said: "I have heard and seen all the distress he is suffering, and what he reads and writes. All this shall become the following song of love praising me before my eternal court: Great God, eternal, mighty, marvelous, alleluia. And I shall lift up his head and increase all his might, just as I have done for you-not just by nature, but rather even more by grace."

27. Concerning the End of the Order of Preachers and the Antichrist; Concerning Enoch and Elias

The Order of Preachers was under severe attack from false teachers and, in addition, from many greedy sinners. So I prayed to our dear Lord that he might protect in them his own honor. God said: "As long as I want to keep them, no one can destroy them."

I asked: "0 dear Lord, will the order exist until the end of the world?"

Our Lord said: "Yes, they shall continue until the end of the world. But another kind of people shall come." They shall then instruct these people who then come so that they shall be wiser, mightier, and poorer in earthly needs, and made more fervent by the Holy Spirit because of the wretched ill fortune that is approaching for Holy Christianity."

Then I saw these people, their garb, their manner of life, and that there were a great number of them. They had no more than two garments; the undergarment is white and the outer garment red, signifying the pure humanity of our Lord and his holy death. Their hair and their beards were let grow as long as they would. Their belt is fashioned of woven material from an olive tree signifying holy mercy, which they bring to misguided Christianity. They all go barefoot, but in regions where it freezes they wear red shoes with white laces but no stockings. They wash their faces in summer with water, even in the woods, but not in winter, for they have no dwellings of their own. They are strangers in all places and suffer much distress. They have neither house nor home, and neither silver nor gold stored anywhere. Each of them walks with a white staff colored red. The staff has a curved upper part that is a span long and made of ivory. The ivory means they should be chaste and pure in all things. The

staff is white and red; thereby they call to mind Christ's death. Into one side of the staff is carved the passion of our Lord; on the other side his ascension into heaven. They must keep this staff with them in all places, when eating or sleeping, praying or preaching, celebrating mass or hearing confessions. And when they put the staff aside, they must stick it into the ground before their eyes, so that they might constantly behold the passion of Christ.

When their journey is thirty leagues long and they must go to be of help or out of necessity, so may the two of theme take along a donkey they may sometimes ride. In such cases they may not carry their staff at their side but must carry it upright in front of them in their hand as God's cross. They must ride this lowly animal so that they might resemble God in humility. Also, their feet shall cause them such pain that they cannot complete the whole distance. But they may not wear shoes any longer than from All Saints until the day on which St. Peter became pope.47 They shall ask no one for breeches or other clothing, but when no one offers them bread, they should humbly ask for it and should eat and drink with the common people all the food that is given them with the exception of meat. Also, they should not fast any more than Christian law already commands, and they should find such shelter that they might pray and sleep under a separate roof away from other people.

As people come to recognize and acknowledge their holy way of life, they will be so improved because of it that they shall give them willingly what they need in great love. They should also not dwell under the same roof with any widow. People should wash their calloused feet with great tenderness, and they should thank God profusely that they go forth and anoint misguided Christianity, just as Mary Magdalene did for our Lord.48 They anoint them also, but only men should do it because they are not God.49 When people notice that their clothing is worn out, they should give them new clothing. If someone freely wants to give them much, they should not accept it. Rather, they should advise people to give with compassion wherever it does some good.

Their general chapter meeting takes place twice a year for the good and benefit of Christianity: in summer in the woods, in winter in the town hall. Whoever wants to enter this order should himself have two books at hand. He shall preach from the larger book. The first thing that is written in this book is the Credo in deum,50 and thereafter it is filled with learned sermons all ordered according to the articles of Christian faith. From the smaller book he shall recite to our Lord the hours of the Holy Office. The first master51 who will take up this way of life will be the son of the king of Rome. His name before God in German is Alleluia. The pope shall invest him with his immediate power. After that he shall himself choose and shall receive this way of life from the pope.52

Then many important masters shalljoin him. They should not be younger than twenty-four years of age. They shall accept no one except those who are healthy and have had advanced studies. They must all be priests, confessors, and sound, well-qualified masters. The first master shall be called their prince and should be accompanied by three brothers, because the Christian faith shall undergo trials most frequently in his case. There should be one master for every thirteen of them. They shall call him their protector, and he should be accompanied by two brothers. Their power is very great, for no bishop is their equal. Wherever they go, they shall be authorized to preach, hear confessions, and sing and say mass. In each diocese there shall be seven of them, signifying the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit. In an archdiocese there shall be thirteen of them, signifying the holy convent of our Lord.53 At Rome there shall be thirty of them, signifying the blessed selling that took place with Christ." The greatest number of them shall be in Jerusalem where Jesus suffered death for our sake. Their small chapter meeting shall be held every three weeks, signifying the complete union with the Holy Trinity; by five brothers, signifying the five wounds; or by seven, signifying the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit; and thereafter by as many as can gather together. Wherever they eat or drink, the oldest in the order shall speak for a while about Christ's deeds and his holy life, and the others should be silent.

I also saw their bed-how they should lie on straw between two white woolen blankets with a pillow under their head. This should be placed under the bottom blanket on the straw. Their loins shall never sit nor lie comfortably, for they shall be hardy all their days until their holy martyrdom, as was the case with Christ. However, if an old master who has served well, and because of age cannot practice austerity up until the end of the order, should become sick or weak, he should be bedded in comfort and lovingly cared for, because they are still capable of giving much holy advice. And they should also be given the best nourishment. This holy life shall continue in great tranquility for thirty years. During that time they shall so greatly illumine and instruct Christians that no one shall turn away from the Christian faith because of untutored simplicity.

Woe, thereafter calamity shall strike! The Antichrist shall come55 and assume power over the secular princes by means of gold, precious stones, and unimaginable deceptive cunning, to which they are now so drawn. Hence they follow him quite happily and say that he is their god and lord, and they follow him in solemn procession, presenting him with their seal and

proclamations. Alas, then he comes to the spiritual powers. There he also discovers greed and brings such great perverse wisdom that very few bishops, priors, and priests withstand him. But these blessed brothers shall put their life on the line and preach fervently the Christian faith. And they shall give true indulgence for all sins to all those who die in the Christian faith with true sorrow, so that they will be saved without purgatory. Because these pious brothers dealt with people in such a pious manner earlier, many a holy martyr among them shall triumph. Many Jews and some wise heathens shall receive holy baptism and the Christian faith from these brothers. This shall so enrage the Antichrist that he shall impose his stern prohibition and intense severe oppression upon all those who go to their sermons. Whoever then goes there and stands by them is certainly a blessed person.

Then tribulation begins. The good separate from the evil and risk their bodies and all that they have. The Antichrist's messengers arrive there and, first of all, stab the holy preacher with an iron pole because of his Christian faith. God's dear friend must hang there writhing in front of the children of God. Thus do they carry the holy man impaled between them for all the world to see. The evil ones laugh, the good weep. And he sings with the voice of the Holy Spirit: "Credo in deum," and he consoles and calls out: "Follow me, ye holy children of God!" All who then follow him are captured, have their eyes bound, are struck with scourges, and are driven like sheep being stolen to a place where a flood of water is passing by. There, their blessed heads are all chopped off and hurled into the water. Where there is no water, they are driven onto a field and martyred. God gives the evil ones the idea to bind the eyes of the good so that in their prison they may not see the great splendor, the enormous power and honor that the accursed ones have from their lord, the Antichrist. So may they the better persevere; for they, too, are just human, as are these. They take the dead blessed preacher and put him high up on the same place from which he spoke God's word and was martyred. Those who wish to preach there according to the Christian faith have to be living martyrs and great saints.

The Antichrist's power is so great that no one is his equal. When the pope can no longer do battle against him, he turns to the holy brothers and suffers what they suffer. Then Enoch and Elijah come to their aid.56 They are now in sweet paradise, living there in both soul and body in the same bliss and eating the same food that had been given to Adam if he had remained there. They, too, in obedience to God, must avoid the same tree from which Eve and Adam ate the apple when they broke God's commandment. I have seen this tree. It is not large, and its fruit is outwardly quite lovely and desirable like a rose; but under the surface it is by nature very sour. That signifies the bitter harm of sin, which God never intended for man. Because this fruit is so detrimental for a noble person that it is still poison for us, God has put his prohibition on it, for he never wanted to cause human beings distress.

In this final agony, after these blessed brothers have consoled the simple folk until no good person is left who has not suffered a martyr's death, most of these brothers will be still alive. Though innocent, their suffering is so great and their prayers so holy, that God then sends Enoch and Elijah to them, who console them and lead them out of the woods so that they might go preach again and prepare for death. These two lords, who then come from paradise, are so wise in divine truth that by their might they turn the Antichrist around and drive him off. They tell him clearly who he is, from what power his emblems derive, how he has gotten where he is, and what sort of end he shall have. When the perverted ones hear what a pitiful god had been given them because of their great greed and because of their lust for the many kinds of evil that God sees in their hearts, then many a noble man and many a fair woman among Christians who had followed the Antichrist are converted. And so these blessed must be martyred, for then the Antichrist is given supreme power on earth. He commands that all the men be rounded up so that he can test their Christian faith. On the streets red-hot griddles are made ready to which they are then driven all together. Their wives and fair children are summoned. Then they are commanded to choose: whether, by denying their faith, they prefer to keep their lovely wives and dear children, their riches and honor or, by keeping their Christian faith, they are willing to cook on the griddles and lose their lives. The men say: "Oh, dear wives and children, do not think about me; remember rather that you are Christians and offer your bodies to God. Then we shall not be separated."

Then the men are bound hand and foot and are thrown onto the griddles. The women and children say: "Lord Jesus, Child of Mary, for love of you we gladly want to suffer the same torment."

Then a pit filled with fire is made ready. The children and the mothers are hurled into it, and firewood and straw are heaped upon them. Thus are they burned to death.

An angel accompanies Enoch and Elijah from paradise. The radiance and bliss that show on their bodies shall always be preserved. When they behold the earth, they shudder, as men do who look upon the sea and wonder in fear how they are going to get across it. Then they" receive earthly appearances and, as a result, become human beings who are mortal. They eat honey

and figs and drink water mixed with wine, and their spirits also receive sustenance from God.

28. The Fivefold Power of Love. Because of the Weakness of People and the Treachery of the World One Must Remain Silent About the Truth

This book was begun in love, it shall also end in love; for nothing is as wise or as holy or as beautiful or as strong or as perfect as love. Our Lord Jesus Christ said: "Speak, Father; I shall now be silent as you are silent in the mouth of your Son, angered because of the weakness of people. Just so did my humanity speak trembling at the treachery of the world; for it rewarded me with bitter death."

Book V

1. Three Kinds of Sorrow, Ten Kinds of Benefits, and the Path of Angels and Devils

There are three kinds of sorrow by which the sinner conforms himself again to the seal that was inscribed on the cross when sins crushed us. The first is sorrow for guilt, which has three qualities: bitterness in the heart out of which the sin flowed; shame in the senses that took pleasure in the sin; a clear image of the life in which the person became evil. This sorrow reconciles the sinful soul to the heavenly Father and frees her from the eternal pains of hell. The second is sorrow of penance, which also has three qualities: intense striving and constant aspiration and pure victory over all temptations. This sorrow completely frees the sinner from purgatory. The third is sorrow out of love, for it is true to God alone. It considers an insult to God much more serious than harm to itself or its own interior suffering. Also, it would rather go body and soul to hell than sadden its lover with a serious sin. This sorrow out of love makes people on earth holy and perfect, and raises them up before God in heaven. When the blessed soul is in such a state, God is dearer to her than she is to herself, and sin is her most serious regret.

The blessed person who has these three kinds of sorrow receives the honor here on earth that God lets his fiery spirit shine forth unceasingly from his Holy Trinity into this loving soul, just like a bright sunbeam shining forth from the hot sun lights up a new golden shield. The radiant light of God and the loving soul that so delightfully sparkles forth from both of them has such great power and shines so brightly for all who are in heaven, purgatory, and hell that the highest angels, Cherubim and Seraphim, feel an intimate closeness to the loving soul, and in this same light, on fire with boundless love, they descend to the soul as it flames with love.' That is the path of the noble princes2 to the pampered soul in this poor body, for the angel and the loving soul are from God a whole nature in their innate chastity and in the fire of love in the Seraphim. But acquired chastity, adorned and illuminated with the flowing fire of divine love, beams forth downward into the Cherubim.' Toward them in turn fiery bright joys of love burst forth from the Seraphim, for they4 are on fire with love. This is why the exquisite radiance travels down, causing them5 to flash with love. The angels that are given to us in baptism cannot tend this burning love, for God has not given them the heat. Rather, they are given to us to cultivate our virtue; and their noble presence and our best free will sanctify all our actions and drive the devil's cunning and power away from our five senses. But the great fiery radiance that lights up everything, as it descends from the Holy Trinity into the loving soul, strikes such fear into the devils that they dare not pass through this holy ray. Because of it they suffer much humiliation. The paths that God has allowed them in the air-these can be taken from them by an earthly human being through union with God. They can freely travel over those paths where evil wants them to be. But where they sense a loving soul in a body, they must pass by under the earth. Also, they cannot foul the air where they find those blessed who truly live free of serious sin. All the sins they bring to us they must always begin on earth. As we then ascend to God with our Christian faith in our best strivings, they lose all their power and must hasten away from us.

2. Two Kinds of Suffering, Four Kinds of Benefits, and the Manifold Host of Sins

I thank God for all goodness and I find fault with myself the while I live, for God does not punish without a reason. As long as a person has the ability to sin, he needs suffering as well as virtues. That suffering is very profitable which a person inflicts upon himself for the love of God after seeking counsel. But that suffering is much nobler and more useful which God inflicts upon us by means of his enemies or his friends, since he is nobler than all tormentors. Christ did not redeem us with the pain that he inflicted upon himself; rather, he taught us how we should serve him in toil and suffering. But he redeemed us with the suf fering that his enemies inflicted upon him, despite his innocence, and with his woeful, shameful death, when no one remained his faithful friend except one maiden: Mary, his mother, was truly inwardly united to him, as she outwardly remained there standing near him.

As I, in my disloyalty, was being ill-tempered because of my suffering, God gave me this consolation and said: "Look, no one can do without suffering because it purifies a person of his many sins from hour to hour." Alas, I saw such a huge and frightening host of sins of all kinds following us, as though all the mountains, all stones, every drop of rain, all grass, trees, greenery, and sand were all living persons and were trying to crush us so that we would never ascend to God. Alas, for the pitiful mote sins that we cannot express in words; for them that suffering is visited upon us here which we carry secretly on our

wretched body. Second, the bitterness of suffering protects us from a future fall, which often causes a pure heart to tremble, though it carries enclosed within it God's spirit. Third, the nobility of suffering makes us worthy to receive God's favor; for if I receive all my comfort, my necessities, and my earthly consolation with fear, with dread, and with a lonely heart, then God is present with his consolation.

3. God Shall Weigh All Innocent Suffering and Also the Blood of Three Kinds of People

On the last day, Christ Jesus shall hold aloft a glorious scale before his Father. Upon it will lie his holy toil and his innocent suffering, and in it and next to it all the blameless torment, humiliation, and interior pain that was ever suffered by human beings for the love of Christ. Indeed, when the right side of the scales sinks, those rejoice the most who have much upon it. The blood of virgins by its nature, the blood martyrs shed for their Christian faith, and other blood spilled through killing but shed in innocence during justified self-defense: this is what the holy Son of God shall weigh together with his blood, because it was poured out in true innocence. Marriage blood is not put onto the scale. Why? It is beforehand impure, but it extinguishes that very sin that arises from carnal knowledge.6

4. The Power of Marvelous Love Is Manifold; How the Soul Sinks. Four Kinds of Humility. The Sevenfold Beauty of the Loving Soul

O wondrous Love of God, you possess great sacred power, you illumine the soul, teach the senses, and bestow full strength on all virtues. Fortunate am I, poor village maid, that I ever beheld you, dear Lady. 0 Love, you are full of delight and worthy of praise in all your acts. This is what I experience in my soul. All virtues are your subjects. But sinking humility that has not been fouled with arrogance in spirituality, and chastity-innate or acquired, that are both completely pure-these two virtues must accompany love, though they are subject to her.

This love passes through the senses and storms the soul with all its might. All the while that love grows in the soul, it ascends to God longingly and, richly flowing, opens up to receive the wonder that is approaching. It dissolves through the soul into the senses. Then does the body gain its share, so that it is refined with respect to all things.

Can someone who loves God have evil habits? Nowhere do I find this to be the case; such great power does genuine love of God have. And yet the soul is never so utterly flooded with divine love that she is not often tempted by earthly things. This love a soul can never receive that is riddled with false love. When love has grown to ripeness in the soul, it has also ascended as far as is humanly possible. For love is limited in its capacity. If it did not have a limit, alas, sweet God, how many a pure heart would burst in sweet bliss.

When the soul in her pursuit of love and the great longing of her God-stalking heart has ascended the lofty mountain of powerful love and beautiful knowledge, she acts like the pilgrim who has climbed mountains with great zest but then climbs down the other side in great fear, so that he does not take a tumble. Just so, when the soul has been permeated by the radiant heat of long love and has thus become faint in the embrace of the Holy Trinity, she begins to sink and to cool, as does the sun when it descends from its highest point and sinks down into the night. God knows, this is what happens to the soul and also to the body. The soul, rich in love, sinks downward under the pull of profound humility and constantly retreats from what God does to her out of love. This is very agreeable to her because of her noble nature, which God and she fill to the same single end. Also, she turns the eye of her desire from all things in order to be able to gain much praise for God. The body, too, sinks far down when it serves its enemy,' obeys without complaint, and avoids its friends to God's honor. The soul sinks deeper still because she has more strength than the body. She sinks with great zeal to the lowest place that God holds in his power. Oh, how dare I name this place for those who know nothing of sinking humility.

First humility is external, having to do with one's dwelling place and clothes-that they are proper, are tailored to a religious cut, and yet are clean. Second humility has to do with conduct in the company of others-that it is lovingly attuned to all needs and in all things. Out of this grows the holy love of God. Third humility has to do with the senses-that a person make proper use of them in all things and love in the right amount. Fourth humility dwells in the soul. This is sinking humility, which performs many a sweet marvel in the love-rich soul. It chases her up into heaven and drags her down again into the abyss. It leads the soul to all creatures one by one and says: "Now look, all this is better than you are!" And it brings her then to the spot where she can go no further: under Lucifer's tail.' If, in her desire to honor God as she would want, she could remain there, she would prefer nothing better. So tightly is the poor love-rich soul bound by humble love that she feels no fear or shame except in the

temperate way one is accustomed to fear in heaven.' But the poor body must feel both fear and shame because of the darkness of its heart and the weakness of its external senses, because it has not yet been transformed by death.

The soul, on the other hand, is just as beautiful in her body as she is in heaven, but she is not as secure.
She is just as bold but she is not as strong.
She is just as powerful but she is not as constant.
She is just as lovely but she is not as happy.
She is just as generous but she is not as rich.
She is just as holy but she is not as innocent.
She is just as content but she is not as full.
That soul alone is satisfied which is here flooded with the humble love of God.

When she has thus ascended to those heights possible for her while she is still attached to the body and has sunk to the deepest point that she can find, then she is fully grown in virtues and holiness. Then she shall be adorned with the suffering of long waiting.

Then she goes to wait faithfully
And looks upon all things with great wisdom;
Nothing can escape her;
She makes it all yield its praise to God.

5. The Purgatory of a Beguine Whom No Prayer Helped Because of Her Selfishness

Woe, Sin, you are so destructive since even holy works that one performs without counsel are very destructive if one speaks thus: "No, I am beyond the need for human counsel. I intend to live according to God's counsel." I always shudder at these words because no person in any situation can humble himself to better advantage than by following Christian counsel with an obedient heart. This became clear to me in the case of a woman who loved our Lord from her heart and cherished this love with such superhuman exertion that her nature shriveled up and she died. As is the Christian custom, I prayed for her. In a rapture of my spirit I saw her spirit, which was in itself bright as the sun. This came from the faithful love in her pure heart. She was surrounded by great darkness and urgently desired to reach eternal light. Whenever she was ascending, dark night always blocked her. This was her selfish will refusing counsel that so utterly held this person back.

I asked her: "How can one help you?"

She replied: "While on earth I never wanted to follow anyone's advice given according to Christian custom. Because of this no one's prayer or desire can be of help to me."

So I turned to our dear Lord and asked him how it could be that a person could be delivered over to suffering who, while on earth, has assumed so much holy suffering out of love for him.

Our Lord said: "All virtues are worthless to me that come about apart from counsel; for I came to earth because of counsel." And I served my Father and all men on earth with great submission, and then I ascended into heaven in complete freedom. But in what I always did, no one follows me. The longing, prayer, and all the effort that one expends on her on earth shall adorn her when she ascends to heaven."

The soul: "Everything that is given to us as a help on our path to heaven is rightfully ours. But once we arrive there, it is shared by the souls. This God does for us for our own good, so that they might more readily come and help us praise God in eternal glory."

In justice, her suffering was to last seventeen years, but God's mercy reduced it to seventeen months because she had acted out of such intense love. May God help us to right moderation! Amen.

6. How the Soul Praises the Holy Trinity

Lord Jesus Christ, you have flowed spiritually out of the heart of your eternal Father from eternity and were born in the flesh from a pure and untouched virgin, St. Mary, and are with your Father one spirit, one will, one wisdom, one power, one superior might over everything that ever was, forever!

Lord, eternal Father, I, too, the most unworthy of all human beings, have flowed forth spiritually from your heart and, Lord Jesus Christ, was born in the flesh from your side and, Lord God and Man, I have been purified by the Spirit of you both. Thus do I, poor despondent human being, speak:

"Lord, heavenly Father, you are my heart.
Lord Jesus Christ, you are my body.
Lord Holy Spirit, you are my breath.
Lord, Holy Trinity, you are my only refuge and my eternal rest!"

7. How God Praises the Soul in Return

You are a solid foundation for my divine flowing.
You are a glory of virginal constancy.
You are a flower of sublime delight.
You are a vanquisher of devils.
You are a mirror of inward contemplation.

8. A Good Person Should Have Three Children for Whom to Pray

No one knows what consolation or suffering or longing is unless he is touched by these three himself. I am seeking help because I am sorely afflicted. I have three children that I see suffering great distress.

The first child is poor sinners who lie in eternal death. There is nothing to console them with except that they have a living human body." Alas, I look at the child with a bloody heart and I take it into the arms of my soul with weeping eyes and carry it before the feet of its Father from whom I got it. Then I look at the child and beg its faithful Father, Jesus, that he awaken this child with the same voice of his divine mercy with which he awakened Lazarus.12

To this God replies: "I shall heal the sickness of this child. If it does not again succumb to this death, it shall be like me in my beauty, in my nobility, and in my abundance, surrounded and permeated by all bliss in eternal everlastingness. Arise, my dear child, you are healed! Free will I have given you and shall never take it away, for according to it all your dignity shall be measured, like that of the saints, in the beautiful kingdom of heaven." Alas, this child still lies motionless upon its own selfish will.

My second child: these are the poor souls who are tormented in purgatory; to them I must give my heart's blood to drink. When I pray for them and see the many kinds of distress and the bitter thirst that they suffer in a specific manner for each sin, then I suffer the pain of a mother. And yet I am happy that they suffer torment for their real guilt to the glory of God. They accept their suffering with great patience because they see all their guilt clearly. They suffer their pain with acquired wisdom and drink into themselves much interior suffering. If this child is to recover soon, its mother has to be very faithful and merciful.

My third child: these are the imperfect in religious life. When I look upon all my sick children, for none do I feel more distress than for this one because, alas, it has so completely estranged itself from heavenly things through its external preoccupation with transitory things that it has utterly lost its noble way of life and its sweet intimacy with God, to which God had drawn it by especially choosing it. Because of this they become so completely disoriented that no one can turn them around with words. And so they revile the interior life, pervert God's sweetness, and maliciously interpret everything they see and hear, as well. Thus they appear wise outwardly but unfortunately are all fools inwardly. This child has the worst chance of recovery because it is the first to slip into stubborn contentiousness, then into indolence, then into false consolation, then into despair, and then, alas, it loses all grace. And so this poor child creeps along in its sinful existence till its end. Thus it is very doubtful indeed which direction this confused soul will take.

9. Concerning the Glory of Seventy Men Who Arose with Christ as Testimony

On the glorious day of Easter, when our redemption was so clearly made manifest and Jesus Christ arose in such might and left his grave in such majesty that the Jews and the heathens lost their power and all their honor and true Christians were blessed by the Father's good will, were made fortunate by the power of the Son, and were made holy evermore by the teaching of the Holy Spirit: on that day seventy men arose together with our Lord. They had been obedient to God's commands when they fought God's fight. They were found to be just when they were tempted and, in their great thirst, they splashed water with their hands to their mouth. Their souls were joined again by God to their bodies but in such a way that one could clearly tell that they had been dead.'

But the sinful human juice that Adam bit from the apple, that still courses through all our members because of our nature and, in addition, the cursed blood that originated in the apple for Eve and all women-that was not given back to them because their transformation was supposed to be a divine testimony with God that eternal death was dead. They were no longer subject to death because they did not have in themselves these two things.' Their soul separated from their body without pain or suffering. Their bodies lie in beauty above the air and above the stars. Because they did not die a second time in a human manner, their bodies did not need to be buried on earth.

Adam, and all men with him, retained this juice. Eve and all women kept this shameful blood. This alone it is that by nature torments our flesh and our senses, and ultimately has to die bitterly within us. For after Adam's fall the only affliction Jesus Christ took from us was eternal death and he ordained that, through sorrow, we might come back. He did, however, give us very much sweet consolation, counsel, and teaching through which we might easily recover from all our debilities.

10. How Sin Is Like God's Greatness

The greatness of almighty God is similar to nothing as much as it is to the sinful immensity of my wickedness.

11. A Religious Name Shall Be Exalted. Concerning the Conduct of Sisters. How They Should Pray and Toil with God

O religious Name,15 how noble you are above all earthly names. For this reason Jesus Christ himself wanted to bear you so faithfully his whole life that all lofty names-king, emperor, count, and all names that are named for nobility-must decay; but a religious name alone shall be exalted to the extent that it has been here nobly borne. Indeed, it shall be wonderfully, especially, and in sanctity raised up near Brother Jesus and Sister Mary, who were the very first always to bear a religious name, suffering outwardly such great contempt but with such holiness inwardly. This is very much contrary to those people who here with much ostentation adorn themselves spiritually with holy bearing and deep bowing, and drape themselves in public in beautiful words that one might well imagine that inwardly they possess the flood of the Holy Spirit which is causing it all to come gushing forth. No, unfortunately it is sometimes a very cunning temptation that causes a person to assume out of self-will that, without effort and without striving, he has a good name; and yet he does not feel in his heart the full birth of the Holy Spirit. This comes clearly to light when he turns into a fierce bear and a roaring lion in the presence of his closest companions, when he should be a lamb as to meekness and a dove as to virtues. Thus their life before the world is a sham, and before God and their equals a very damaging lie.

Woe to you, most wretched Lust, how my heart is enraged by you! For you rob my dear sisters of their inward sweetness of God and the outward loveliness that should be preparing them and leading them to the holy bridal bed of the Holy Trinity. You make them so hard inwardly and so indignant outwardly that one cannot utter a spiritual word in their presence without their immediately twisting it.

No, dear Sister, before all else you must have an open mind. Then you will get an obliging heart and an open soul into which grace can flow. If you expand too much your basic needs without reason or necessity, truly you shall never have a share in the heights of holy longing, the breadth of divine feeling, and the depths of God's flowing sweetness. It is an eternal shame and an extreme crudity that a king's bride so much enjoys wallowing in muck.

Ah, Sister, if you are to pray as you should, surrender yourself to God completely and say: "Dear intimate Friend, Jesus, this hour belongs to you alone, to poor sinners, to Holy Christianity, and to distressed souls, but not to me. All power and strength of my heart I give you today, Lord, that you, my Love, to your own praise might come to their aid in accordance with my desire; and grant me thereafter, Lord, that I really know who I myself am. Then I shall really be downcast."

But, dear Sister, when you go to your work, bless yourself and say: "Lord, this hour belongs to you and me. Help me, Jesus,

Love of my heart, that I may burrow my soul and my mind so deeply into you that earthly desire may not devour me." Indeed, Sister, if you are just humanly wise, desire will attack you fiercely. But if your wisdom comes from grace, no evil can seduce you or betray you. For in that grace which flows forth from the Holy Trinity into a heart that remains ever open to heaven, one finds truth and good judgment in all things. It is quite easy to seem good to people. But if truth is absent, you are snake's venom. Make your heart ever pure within and be humble outwardly. Then you are one with God.

12. How God Responds to a Brother Concerning What Is Written in This Book"

Master Heinrich, you are surprised at some of the words that are written in this book. I am surprised that you can be surprised at this. Indeed, ever since I, sinful woman, have been required to write, it has been a matter of great distress to me in my heart that I am able to describe this authentic knowledge and these holy sublime contemplations to no one except through these words. They seem to me, compared to eternal truth, all too feeble.

I asked the eternal Master what he had to say about this. He replied: "Ask him how it happened that the apostles, after having been so timid, became so bold when they received the Holy Spirit." Ask also where Moses was when he saw nothing but God.' Then ask as well how it happened that Daniel spoke in childhood.""

13. Tm Kinds of Benefit a Good Person's Prayer Has

That prayer has great power
Which a person undertakes with all his might.
It makes a bitter heart sweet
A sad heart happy
A poor heart rich
A foolish heart wise
A faltering heart bold
A weak heart strong
A blind heart seeing
A cold soul burning.
It draws great God down into a small heart.
It drives the hungry soul up to God’s fullness.
It brings together two lovers, God and the soul, to a place of bliss.
There they talk much of love.
O woe! That I, unhappy sack of misery, cannot die there!

14. The Purgatory of Bad Priests

It has been a long time since I saw purgatory. It was like fiery water and boiled like fiery bell metal. Above it was a cloak of murky fog. In the water fish were floating about that had human form. These were the souls of wretched priests who in this world floated in greedy desires and burned in damned lust that so utterly blinds them that they are unable to love anything good. Upon the water were fishermen who had neither boats nor nets. Instead, they fished with their fiery claws because they actually were spirits and devils. When they brought them to the shore, they cruelly tore their skins off and threw them right into a boiling pot. Then they jabbed them with fiery pitchforks. When they decided they were well done, they gobbled them with their beaks. Then the devils went back out on the water, expelled them from under their tails, and then fished for them, boiled them, and devoured them again.

15. The Purgatory of a Good Priest

A pure priest died in his own assigned parish. I prayed for him, as one Christian is accustomed to do for another. Then my soul saw him in marvelous honor, as he was yet in the state of waiting for heavenly glory. Four angels led him across the storms in the first heaven and plucked harps with heavenly strings for his enjoyment. This was the purgatory by which they prepared him for heavenly bliss. I asked him how he had gained this special honor.

He said: "On earth I loved solitude and was fearful only in my prayers."

I said: "Ah, most blessed Man, why did you not ascend right to heaven with these delightful angels?"

He replied thus: "The glory that I am to receive because of my pure priestly life is so great that I cannot yet enter into it."

16. It Is Diabolical to Sin

Some people who are learned say it is human to sin. In every temptation of my sinful body, in every movement of my heart, in every bit of knowledge of my senses, and in the whole nobility of my soul, I could never find anything else but that it is diabolical that one commit a sin. Whether the sin be small or great, the devil is always its companion. Indeed, it is the devilishness that we take upon ourselves through our selfish free will that is much more harmful to us than our whole human nature. This is human: hunger, thirst, heat, frost, pain, grief, temptation, sleep, weariness. These are the things that Christ, who was true man, bore upon his person because of us and with us. Indeed, if sin were purely human, then he should have sinned, too. For he was true man in the flesh, a just man in wisdom, a man steadfast in virtue, and a perfect man in the Holy Spirit. Beyond that he was eternal God in eternal Truth and not a sinner. But if we are to become like him, we also have to live like him or be saved by sorrow.20

17. This Is a Greeting, Praise, and Prayer of a Sinner21

Greetings to you, living God.
You are mine before all things.
I am endlessly glad
That I can speak to you without guile.
When my enemies pursue me,
I flee to your arms
Where I can complain about my suffering
While you incline yourself to me.
You well know how you can pluck
The strings of my soul.
Ah, begin at once

That you may be ever blessed.
I am a low-born bride;
And yet you are my lawful husband.
I shall ever rejoice about this.
Remember how well you can caress
The pure soul on your lap
And do it, Lord, to me now,
Even though I am not worthy of you.
Ah, Lord, draw me up to you.
Then I shall be pure and radiant.
If you abandon me to myself,
I shall remain dark and sluggish.

18. How God Responds to This

Thus does God answer:

“I respond to your greeting with such a heavenly flood:
Were I to give myself to you in all my power,
You would not preserve your human life.
You well know I must hold back my might
And hide my splendor

To let you remain in earthly misery
Until all my sweetness rises up
To the heights of eternal glory,
And my strings shall play sweetly for you
In tune with the true value of your patient love.
Still, before I begin,
I want to tune my heavenly strings in your soul,
So that you might persevere even longer.
For well-born brides and noble knights
Must undergo a long and intensive preparation at great cost."

19. How Seventeen Kinds of Sin Pursue a Person

These things drive a person so far from God that he can never come back to God unless great force is exerted upon him by the Holy Trinity.

Vanity is the first sin that begins to chase a person away from God;
And if we don't leave it, then lust rises up;
But if we don't leave lust, then greed rises up;
If we don't leave that, then sloth rises up;
If we don't leave that, then lying rises up;
And if we don't leave that, then perjury rises up;
If we don't leave that, then anger rises up;
And if we don't leave that, then slander rises up;
If we don't leave that, then pride rises up;
And if we don't leave that, then hatred rises up;
And if we don't leave that, then vengeance rises up;
And if we don't leave that, then despair rises up;
If we don't leave that, then insolence rises up;
If we don't leave that, then shamelessness rises up;
If we don't leave that, perverted wisdom rises up;
If we don't leave that, unbelief rises up and says: "It is not as they say."

Alas, they then receive all things coming from God with such distrust that one scarcely dares say anything at all to them. And what they produce themselves is so twisted and utterly shot through with lies that, alas, no one can find the Holy Spirit in their words. But sometimes they act in a praiseworthy manner. Unfortunately it is deceptive.

Perfect soul, rejoice.
You alone are like God.
This is indeed fitting;
For you drink in with godlike patience
Many a bitter draught though guiltless.

You are often saddened by your enemy like hell's frost on heaven's flowers. Yet they go on blooming, exalted in their noble beauty. For through the Holy Spirit the root of their constancy is green in all seasons.

20. Praise of God in Eight Things. An Offering for Sins

O great dew of the noble Godhead,
O tender flower of the sweet maiden,
O beneficial fruit of the fair blossom,
O holy sacrifice of the heavenly Father,
O faithful pledge of redemption for the whole world!
You, Lord, are my refreshment
And I am your blossoming.
You are small before me, Lord, in your submissiveness,
And I am great before you in the misery of my wickedness.
Daily I offer you whatever I have:
Nothing but baseness.
And you, Lord, shall infuse me with your grace.
Then I can flow from your love.

21. Why Man Is Rejected and Yet Loved, and How You Should Bless Yourself

Thus does the mind of a person speak who has experienced truth: Lord, my body has been killed through the elimination of all wickedness. That is why your enemies have cast me from their presence like a dead man who smells foul. And yet, Lord, my soul is alive in you. That is why I am loved by your friends. Ah, Bridegroom dear to my heart, my sweet Jesus Christ, I bless myself unceasingly in my heart before all earthly things and I beg you that you keep me untouched by them; for no matter how holy they are, they draw me away from you at the highest point. That I cannot bear, and that is why I must creep away from them.

22. The Seven Things ofJudgment; Shame and Good Will

The noblest joy of the senses, the holiest peace of heart, and the greatest delight in doing come from keeping one's integrity in all that one does. Our dear Lord speaks about this and teaches me seven things that all the blessed shall have about them who shall preside over the last judgment with Jesus Christ.22 Whoever does not have these things shall stand before the court like a sold servant before his master. For all who here struggle against God's truth on the side of crafty lying sell off these virtues.

The first is: to be just in the present life. This means: if I see my friend treating God's enemy and mine unjustly, then I should in loyalty reprove my friend and in charity help my enemy. The second is: to be merciful in distress. Explanation: if I see my friend and my enemy in equal distress, I should help both equally. The third is: to be faithful in public. Explanation: I should never scold my companion except for his unrepented sins. The fourth is: to be ready to help in secret. Explanation: that one search out and inquire where the lonely, sick, and prisoners are; and that one soothe them with words and bid them tell you their secret distress, so that you might be able to come to their aid. Woe to those who pass by those who are sick and alone without groans, tears, or any sign of compassion. How ill that befits those in religious life and, alas, drives them so far from God that they immediately lose sweet intimacy with God; yet they do not want to believe that God's judgment has struck. The fifth is: to be silent in distress. Explanation: that one not speak those reckless words that arise out of an arrogant and angry heart. If one so refrains, one shall find unfathomable favor with God. The sixth is: to be full of the truth. Explanation: that person is genuinely full of the truth whose heart, to the best of his knowledge, reproaches him with not the slightest wrongdoing and who is glad that God's eye sees into his heart, and who would not need to feel ashamed anywhere, even if everyone looked into his heart. The seventh is: to be the enemy of lies. Explanation: that we reproach lies in everyone and we do not cover them up in our own case.

These seven things we should practice and accomplish against the desires of our miserable flesh and against lust and the weakness of the human senses. We can accomplish them in no other way.

But the nobility of our soul gives us the first counsel for all good things with God's true sweetness; however, our perverted flesh in its baseness neglects many a godlike deed. Whenever we remember the blessed hour when God so skillfully created us out of the infinite depths of his heart, and out of his wisdom and out of his cheerful disposition, which pours out in all its goodness without surcease, and out of his sweet mouth-spiritually into our soul, with wisdom into our mind, with benefit to our body, then we must outwardly be ashamed of our evil habits and inwardly of our fickle heart. We should also, alas, be consciously ashamed that with so little benefit we bear the noble and numerous gifts of God, that they return such puny fruit to

the place from which they flowed out.23 Good will brings all virtues to their rightful place, even when the body is incapable of the deeds.

23. St. Mary's Prayer, Gabriel's Light, the Child's Blanket, Where the Milk Came from, the Gifts for the Child, the Devils, and the Hunger Cloth

I saw a maiden at her prayer. Her body was bowed to the earth and her spirit had raised itself toward the eternal Godhead; for before the time when Jesus Christ opened heaven with the key of the holy cross, no human being was so holy that his spirit could or would ascend to the eternal heights by striving and soaring, by longing and embrace with the love of the Holy Trinity. This is why the spirit of the pure virgin was not able to enter heavenbecause Adam had shoved the bolt shut so fast. But God inclined himself at times so close to the earth that he consoled his friends and they perceived his will. And the prophets cried out and entreated our Lord to come down. But it was this virgin who drew our Lord down here with the sweet voice of her soul; and she said in her prayer when she was alone: "Lord God, I am happy that you intend to come in such a noble manner that a maiden shall be your mother. Lord, I want to serve in this with my chasteness and with all that I have from you."

Then the angel Gabriel strode down here in a heavenly light. The light surrounded the virgin all around, and the angel wore garments the likes of which I never discovered anywhere on earth. When she glimpsed the light with the eyes of the flesh, she arose and was frightened. Looking at the angel she discovered in his face the same chasteness that she had. She stood there with great composure, inclined her ear, and raised up her mind. Then the angel greeted her and announced God's will to her. His words were pleasing to her heart; her senses became full and her soul fiery. But still she asked for clarification. Her maidenly modesty and divine love moved her to do so. When she had been instructed, she opened her heart willingly with all her might. She knelt down and said: "I surrender myself to God's service according to your words."24

Then the whole Holy Trinity, with the power of the Godhead, the good will of its humanity, and the noble delicacy of the Holy Spirit, passed through her whole virginal body into the fiery soul of her devout will, placed itself in the open heart of her most pure flesh, and united itself with all that it found in her, so that her flesh became its flesh in such a manner that a perfect child grew in her body and she became a true mother of his flesh, while remaining an unblemished virgin. The longer she carried him, the more radiant, beautiful, and wise she became. Then she arose and said: "Lord Father, I praise you because you have made me great, and my family shall become great in heaven and on earth."25

When the time had come, when other women are sad and move about with difficulty, Mary was agile and cheerful. And yet her body was quite swollen because she had within it the fully developed Son of God. Mary did not know in advance when God wanted to be born of her until she saw him in her lap on the road on that night in Bethlehem-in a strange town where she herself was a poor homeless guest. The almighty Father with his wisdom, the eternal Son with his human truth, the Holy Spirit with his delicate sweetness passed through the intact wall of Mary's body with blissful ease and without any effort. It had happened just as quickly as when the sun in loving calm sends forth its light upon the sweet dew.

When Mary gazed at her fair child, she inclined her head to his face and said: "Welcome, my innocent Child and mighty Lord, all things are yours." At the conception of our Lord, while his mother was expecting, at his birth, and while he was on the lap of his mother before being placed in the crib, the power of the Holy Trinity and the blissful celestial fire in Mary were so intense that the spirit of hell, which travels about the whole world and knows everything that happens to all things, was not able to approach closely enough to the land and place where Mary was to learn of the miraculous way the Child had gotten there.

Mary took a coarse blanket from Joseph's saddle-one that the donkey had on his back under the saddle-and the upper part of her shift under which she had carried our Lord. The other part she tied around her body again. The delicate virgin wrapped the hardy Savior in this blanket and laid him in the crib. Then he immediately began to cry like a newborn child. As long as babies are unable to speak, they never cry except to express a real need. This is just what our Lord did when, despite his noble nature, he was put to bed in a cowshed because of base sin. He wept for all humankind, hiding all his happiness and all his power. The virgin was sad, and the Child was hungry and cold.

Then the mother had to nurse her Son. This was his Father's will and the Holy Spirit's pleasure. In maternal love, with maidenly bearing, the virgin bent down to her afflicted child and offered him her youthful breast. Now hear of the marvel! The bright blossoming of her fair eyes, the spiritual beauty of her maidenly countenance, the sweetness flowing from her pure heart, and the delightful sparkle of her noble soul: these four things drew together according to the will of the Father, the need of the

Son, and the delight of the Holy Spirit in her maidenly breast. And sweet milk flowed forth from her pure heart without any pain. The Child suckled like a human child and his mother rejoiced in a holy manner. The angels sang to God a hymn of praise. The shepherds came and found for all to see our true pledge of redemption in a crib belonging to another.

Then I asked Mary where Joseph was. She said: "He has gone into town and is buying us some small fish and plain bread." Water is what they drank. Then I said: "Lady, you should be eating the very best bread and drinking the finest wine." "No," she said, "that is the food of rich people. We don't have any of that in this poor life."

When the strange star appeared, Satan, too, came to Bethlehem and cunningly followed the three kings; and he gazed with much malice at the Child.

As they were offering the Child great honor with expensive gifts, Satan's thoughts became very confused and he said this to himself: "Poor wretch, what is happening to you now? This could well be the same child of whom the prophets have written, whom your master Lucifer so long and so often put in your charge-that you should come to his birth and make it impure. Then the whole world would remain subject to hell. This child was begotten and born without sin. Otherwise, it would not have been hidden from me. Now all my wiles have been lost. Now I will have to return to my master and lament to him my distress, for this child is going to be too much for us. If it is going to climb above us, how are we supposed to put up with that? Never was any child born who was given such honor."

When Lucifer heard this news, the archfiend sat there gnashing his teeth and shrieking, and the fire of his wrath lit up all of hell. He spoke: "If a human being is to be judge over us, we shall have to tremble evermore before all men who live according to his will. Go back again, Satan, and get the help of the princes of the land, the teachers of the Jews, and teach them how to kill him while he is still a child before he goes to school."

When Satan came to Herod, he discovered Lucifer's likeness in this evil man: hate, pride, greed. On these three paths the great devil proceeded into his bulky heart and spread out into all his five senses and made the king so murderous that he carried out the devil's will on innocent children, who are now glorious saints in heaven.

I asked Mary what she had done with the gifts26 since she did not buy a sacrificial lamb.27 She said: "Sacred flowing generosity, mercy to those in distress, and the love of voluntary poverty took this treasure from me. My sacrificial lamb was Jesus Christ, the Son of God almighty, who was born out of my heart and whom, according to the decree of his Father, all immaculate lambs signify who were ever brought for sacrifice in honor according to his Father's intention. He is my true sacrificial lamb; I was to have no other. The offerings that were brought to my Child I used to remember all those whom I found truly to be in need. These were poor orphans, and pure virgins who were thereby able to marry and not be stoned.2S Also, those who were alone and ill, and those far advanced in age: these were supposed to have the advantage of it, and God intended it for them. But thirty marks of gold were left over after I soothed the distress of these poor. These I was supposed to give for a hunger cloth to which the common people went for their prayer; for there were many symbols pictured on it."29

The cloth was half black and half white. On the north side in the temple the cloth was black. This signified the long-lasting darkness during the old law.30 Upon it were embroidered green images; for although the old law was darkened by many serious sins, yet there were some people during that time who did not shrivel up from their sins; rather, they were dark because of the legalistic observances. All the pictures showed the guilt and distress that so greatly moved mighty God to preserve Noah the just man and his household and let the whole world perish. On the south in the prayer house the cloth was splendidly white. This was a sign of the pure radiant chastity of St. Mary, through which we all should still overcome all the sufferings of our hearts. Upon it were embroidered pictures in gold, likenesses of the birds that Noah sent forth from the ark, which were recognized as signifying the faithless greedy ones who seek all their comfort here on earth. Also embroidered there was the pure dove with the green branch who, guiltless of this, came back again, who did not take the carrion flesh into its mouth. This signifies those who day after day approach God with new virtues and keep themselves steadfastly flying on course toward heaven, drawn by the Holy Spirit.

All the way down the middle, where the pieces came together, was a stripe of gold. Through the middle of this went a green border encrusted with precious stones. This signified the most precious wood that bore the body of our Lord when the gates of heaven were pierced through and beat upon with hammers, and the bolt of Adam flew off them. Although few recognized the meaning, the two ornaments were a glorious cross.31 Upon the cross was embroidered a white sacrificial lamb and it was adorned with precious stones and bright gold, as though it were about to catch fire. This was a prophetic symbol-and it then

came to passwhen the innocent Lamb of God suffered a great death of love upon the lofty tree. This is why, at the passion of our Lord, the lifeless hunger cloth fell, together with the dead lamb, so that the living Lamb of God should ever be adored on that very spot. Mary sewed for her Child Jesus a coat with an adjustable seam, so that when the coat became too short or tight, she would widen and lengthen it. The coat was brownish and of coarsely fibered thread.

Joseph was a poor people's carpenter and earned many a penny for their needs. Mary sewed and spun to make clothes for the three of them. When they fled into Egypt, God's angel embraced them with a heavenly light, so that the devil did not know where the Child had gone off to until the time when it had grown to a youth thirty years old and was a perfect man. Then the devil became aware of him in the desert and thereafter on many occasions when he manifested his divinity. Then he turned to the Jewish teachers; they were inwardly very wicked but outwardly quite handsome in their bearing. He taught them how they might resistJesus with twisted words and not accept his teaching, but might stand firm in their Jewish law.

Then Satan went again to Lucifer and said: "Alas, Master, our honor shall fall! I have found on the sinful earth a man who is by himself stronger and wiser than were all of us before we fell. Even with all my wits I cannot make him entertain a sinful thought."

And Lucifer again bared his fangs like a dog and snapped with his hellish mouth and said: "You shall stir up all men against him. If he is the most exalted of all men, he will be able to escape all sin."

"Master, we can easily get out of this mess, for I can find a lot of people who would gladly kill the man."

He said: "No, I am afraid it might well turn out bad for us, for with the power of God on high he so easily frees people from infirmities of the flesh and from human death. If his body were taken from him, I fear even more that his soul would come to us and free those who are his. For that goes far beyond our power that he frees people on earth-contrary to nature-from all kinds of suffering and even death. Still, because of original sin he must go down to hell himself. But if he remains pure of all sin and if one takes his life from him though he is innocent, then he does not belong in hell, for never was an angel or a human being damned without being guilty. But if he is noble and free, then whatever he wills shall happen, no matter what we want. But you can see to it with your artful ways that the greatest crowd belongs to us, to hell. And you should constantly strive that people revile him to the limit and that they torture him with the most excruciating pain. If he then turns out to be simply human, he will fall into great despair and thus will remain ours."

Mary, our Lady, spoke to our Lord with her thoughts as often as she wanted, and his Godhead then answered her sometimes. This is why she bore the sufferings in her heart with such control. Mary Magdalene, however, was quite unprepared when she did not see our Lord with the eyes of the flesh.32 She was inconsolable and her heart was the while full of grief and distress. She burned intensely in simple love without lofty knowledge of heavenly things until the hour when the apostles received the Holy Spirit." Only then was her soul wounded by the Godhead. But our Lady was very calm when our Lord arose from death so gloriously. And yet of all humankind her heart was most deeply filled with divine knowledge.

24. The Six Kinds of Children of Our Lord God and the Virtues of St. Dominic and How God Has Honored His Order in Four Ways

An exalted prince has a son who is an advantage for him and brings much consolation to his people. The son is such a cause of praise for his father and such a gloriously dear son that the memory of the son and all his deeds engender the father's glory wherever the son turns. This exalted prince is our dear Lord, the heavenly Father. He has gotten seven capable sons and a very beautiful daughter by our mother, Holy Christianity. His first Son, our dearest Brother-that was our Lord Jesus Christ. What honor the heavenly Father has from this Son and what consolation his people have from him are quite obvious. And how the heavenly Father united himself with this Son and how he has put him at his right hand and how much majesty and honor he has given him-that is boundless and yet fitting. The second son of the heavenly Father were the holy apostles, who preserved for us the precious treasure that was dug out of the lofty mountain34 that a tree bore, and our enemies pierced through it35 at five places and drove out and smashed all our heavenly treasure. The third son were the bold martyrs who drenched the path to heaven with their blood. The fourth son were the steadfast confessors who cleanse us and teach us. The fifth son were the pure virgins who have preserved their chastity out of love for God. They are able to move the heavenly Father on our behalf because they bear his likeness fully in themselves. He wants to have them for himself alone, and they shall wear their garlands in his embrace forever. Indeed, they shall not cover their heads in shame, as is the custom for earthly brides.

When our Lord so gloriously put these worthy children near him in such sublime hospitality that all their earthly suffering and practices had been forgotten, his common folk wandered so far off from the true faith and from sincere confession that the heavenly Father felt compassion and got then two more sons at one birth by our dear mother, Holy Christianity. And she nursed these two sons herself at her two breasts which are so full of sweet milk that never in the least can they be sucked dry. These breasts were and are the old law and the new law with which our mother, Holy Christianity, nurses all God's children.

Our Lord said this, too: "One should not ordain anyone a priest unless he is familiar with both the Old and the New Testament, because with just one leg no one can go to court or serve for any length of time."

The two sons are the preachers and the lesser brothers, of whom St. Dominic and St. Francis were the first roots. Alas, how much of what they faithfully practiced has been lost! The more that is lost, the weaker the order becomes. The less long it stands, the sooner another son shall be born out of the faithful heart of the eternal Father, who does not want to desert his children in these times.

St. Dominic watched out for his brothers with true devotion, with a friendly face, and with holy wisdom; not carelessly, not with perverse intentions, and not in a cruel manner. The wise man he taught, in addition, to temper all his knowledge with divine simplicity. The simple man he taught true wisdom. Those suffering temptation he helped bear all their interior suffering in secret. The young he taught to hold their tongues; because of this they became outwardly proper and inwardly wise. The sick and the frail he consoled quite lovingly and also showed serious concern for all their distress. They were all very happy that he stayed with them so long, and his sweet company soothed them for all their wearying toil. In its beginnings this order was pure, simple, and full of burning love of God, as well. The pure simplicity God gives to some people is at times so ridiculed by others that the gift in which one finds and chooses God's wisdom is lost. This extinguishes the burning love of God as well.

That member of the order who finds it painful to be highly esteemed and who considers all earthly honor to be a serious temptation cannot desert this way of thinking because of the nobility of his religious spirit that he accepted from God in an attitude of holy submission of his heart to all creatures. Either he will retain the honor in shame and fear, in constant zeal, in compassionate helping, and in cheerful joy, or he must strive with all great wisdom to put down the burden honorably. For the heart of a religious must have calm peace and must blossom forth in love toward the Holy Trinity.

God has given special honor to these two sons in four things. He did this so that they would have no other concern about themselves except to avoid sin. "Rather," our Lord said, "all their concern and striving should be directed toward my people's becoming blessed and holy." The first thing is that they are handsomely welcomed by people. The second is faithful help without payment with the necessities of life. The third is holy wisdom coming from divine truth. The fourth is power in practical matters in Holy Christianity. When one mercilessly drives the brothers to work without gentle counsel, much damage results, about which I must now be silent.

25. Something That One Misses in Heaven in Seven Things; Thereafter Follow Seven Things; the Praise of a Disheartened Person Is Beneficial in Seven Ways

One thing in heaven I miss most of all. It is also the noblest, shines forth toward the Trinity most beautifully, and costs the most in this life as well. This is that one is willing, able, and skillful in praising God well from the heart and in thanking him cheerfully and in raising one's desires aloft and in bringing one's works to fruition while one is in poverty, in disgrace, in loneliness, in times of suffering, in spiritual aridity-which is most difficult of all, while compelled by obedience, and in all kinds of bitterness both within and without. Because of this the soul and body in heaven become so worthy of esteem and praise that they sing more beautifully of love than the others, shine more radiantly in joy than the others, soar higher than the others, and live in greater bliss than the others. They are more finely adorned than the others, have a greater abundance of honor than the others, enjoy greater delight, and drink more deeply in the Holy Trinity than the others.

"Lord God, I ask you: How fragrant do you find this praise and these acts of thanksgiving that a despondent person offers without experiencing any sweetness?"

Now hear what he said: "It rises up majestically, its honor is and shall become manifold; for all that ever was shall yield to it until it arrives at the abode of my Holy Trinity and there performs such marvels that it utterly permeates my Three Persons and stirs, charms, and enamors my whole Trinity. The soul senses quite well the fragrance I possess. I cannot be completely intimate with her unless she is willing to lay herself in utter repose and nakedness in my divine arms, so that I can take delight

in her. For it was for this that I surrendered myself into her power-like a child, poor, naked, bare, scorned, and finally into death-that she alone-ah, if she desires it-might be my closest, my dearest companion. And she shall ever more in soul and body soar about and play to her heart's content in my Holy Trinity and drink herself full like the fish in the sea. And all the pain that she suffered for love of me and in imitation of mewhere has it all gone then? Thus shall I prepare for her sweet amusements.

26. How God Praises Himself and Celebrates Himself in Song

Ah, now listen how the Holy Trinity praises itself with its wisdom that has no beginning, with its goodness that has no end, with its everlasting truth, and with its whole eternity. Now harken to that sweetest, most sublime, and bliss-filled voice, as the Holy Trinity sings with full voice within itself from where have flowed forth the sweet voices of all the saints that have sung in heaven and on earth, and shall do so eternally.

The Father's voice recites a hymn of praise to himself: "I am a flowing spring that no one can block; but a man can easily block up his heart with an idle thought, so that the restless Godhead that continually toils without toil cannot flow into his soul."

The Son sings thus: "I am a constantly recurring richness that no one can contain except the boundlessness which always flowed and shall ever flow from God, and which comes again in its fullness with his Son."

The Holy Spirit sings this praise: "I am an insuperable power of truth. This one finds in a person who to his honor perseveres in God, come what may."

Thus does the whole Trinity sing: "I am so strong in my undividedness that no one can ever separate me or shatter me in all my eternity."

27. The Heavenly Father Received His Son, Jesus, with Twelve Words

With these words the heavenly Father received his Son when he had come out of this earthly strife into heavenly peace: "Welcome, my glorious Son, who are I myself, my hand in your works, my honor in your power, my strength in your struggle, my praise in your victory, my will at your resurrection, my marvel at your ascension, my wrath at your judgment. The immaculate bride that you are bringing me shall belong to you and me indivisibly forever. My Godhead is your crown, your humanity is my reconciliation." The Spirit of us both is one will, one counsel, one strength in all things without end and without beginning. Your soul is the most intimate bride of our Three Persons."

Oh, how delightfully the soul of Christ sparkles in the whole Holy Trinity, just like the delightful flashing in the beautiful sun that no one can see who does not have the fairest of eyes.

28. The Seven Crowns of Brother Albert. Disposition Is One Thing, Choice Is Another

Wherever knowledge includes wisdom and love, choice brings fruit; and no one knows whether one is good until one is tempted by evil.

I prayed for the soul of Brother Albert of Minden, and God showed me his excellence. I saw the crowns of seven virgins suspended above his head. I was greatly puzzled how this could be, because he had been a penitent.37 Our Lord said: "He won these crowns because he preserved seven virgins' chastity through much effort simply out of love for me; and all of them shall enhance his dignity eternally, but they shall never touch his body or his soul."

I saw this in heaven: reward, dignity, and crown; and it is not all the same thing. Reward has to do with actions, dignity with virtues, the crown with love. But the reward's abundance is determined by the number of good actions. Dignity is extended by the amount of virtues. The crown shines on high according to the intensity of the fire of love.

Brother Albert told me then that a brother was going to die in six years, but this turned out not to be true. In the seventh year I asked our Lord why this was the case. Our Lord said: "He saw the predetermination and not my choice. I choose for my special friends long humiliation for which they are not at fault, and I keep alive in them the holy desire to live longer."

Whenever a person scrutinizes his heart in the light of love, that is, in truth, then he discovers nothing other than that he

should by rights be scorned more than anyone else. In this state his desire grows with boundless hunger and draws the person out of himself and into God's will to such an extent that God sees fit to prolong his life and bestows upon him completely new favors, if he is willing to keep and preserve them with diligent care.

29. After Ecstasy with God a Person Would Be Like an Angel If He Were to Follow It, and Concerning the Wickedness of the Devil

If a person were to conduct himself rightly after the ecstasy that comes from God and after the light which he experiences, he would enter into such great delight and such holy knowledge that no heart would be able to bear it. He would thus be like an angel ever in all things united in love with God. He would thus become the hell of the devil and the heaven of God. But when a good person leaves this rapture, God sends the devil to him to tempt him with those things that are hardest of all, so that he might wake him up again. But our dear Lord takes the devil's power away from him and protects the person so that he cannot bring him down. And yet he really thinks that he has been given leave to bring the person down as he would like. This is why he is so busy day and night. Alas for me! This has often happened to me!

God revealed to me such a glorious thing, promising to fulfill it, that because of my worthlessness I did not dare believe it. And so, alas, I did not thank him for it. Then the devil came and wanted to inflict pain on me.

I said: "What do you want? You see quite clearly that God is with me. How dare you torture me in his presence!"

The devil said: "I want now what I have always wanted-to put my chair next to his. Indeed, I would like to drive him from the chair of your soul, if I could, and sit down on it, and I would like heaven, paradise, purgatory, and earth to be one big hell in hell eternal."

And I said: "Don't you wish that all these things were heaven, so that you, too, might receive favor?"

He said: "No, that I can never do."

I said: "Alas, how very miserable you are, that you feel no shame before God!"

He said: "Whoever has anything good about himself is not completely evil, and he who sins loses all sense of shame; for if he felt shame he would not commit any sins. I am as cocky as a fly and land on everything. I spare no one.

Only the one who defends himself with virtue
Remains untroubled,
And he who stands firm in God
Conquers gloriously all the sorrows of his heart."

30. Twenty Powers of God's Love and Many Kinds of Names

Ah, dear divine Love, ever embrace my soul,
For it would murder me beyond all pain

If I were to be separated from you!
Ah, Love, let me now not grow cold,
My actions are all dead
When I do not feel you.
O Love, you cause sweet pain and distress;
You give the true children of God instruction and consolation.
O Fetter of love,
Your tender hand is strong.
It binds both young and old.
O Love, you make large burdens light,
And to you small sins seem heavy.
You serve without reward
Ministering to all creatures.

Ah, sweet divine Love, whenever I sleep too long
And miss good things,
Be so kind and awaken me,
And sing to me, Lady, your song
With which you touch the soul
Like a sweet chord of strings.

Ah, Lady Love, throw me beneath you.
I would gladly suffer defeat.
If you would only take my life,
That would be, Lady, all my solace.
Alas, generous divine Love, you pamper me too much.
This shall be my constant complaint.
Love, your most elegant greeting
Has filled my spirit.
Love, your most pure sufferings
Make me live without sin.

Love, your constant devotion
Has brought me to such sweet distress.
O divine Love, how can I be patient in your absence
If you want to be estranged from me?
Love, it is a blissful, heavenly exhilaration
That your absence is so pleasant for me.
O wondrous Love, ever blessed is he indeed,
Whom you instruct.
That is his most blissful humility,
That, Lady, he asks you to leave him.

Ah, Love, how few do you find
Who seek you with all their might in all things,
And with constant effort enjoy you
And who in the pangs of love bid you
That you flee from them.
But there are many
Who call out to you with their mouths
And turn from you in their actions.

Love, your leaving and coming
Are equally welcome to the well-ordered soul.
Love, you have worked that great miracle,
That God has performed with us in heartfelt love.

Love, your most refined purity
Standing like a lovely reflection
Of the chaste soul in God's presence
Creates in the breast of virgins
Hot pangs of desire
For Jesus their Love.
Those who love intensely and are virgins,
These are the maidens of the Seraphim.

Love, your holy mercy
Causes the devils much suffering.
Love, your sweet peace
Fosters calm minds and a pure life.
Love, your holy fulfillment
Makes spirits free
In voluntary poverty.
Love, your true perfection
Does not easily complain about misfortune or hardship.

31. Of Ten Powers of Love and That No Creature Can Fully Imagine the Longing of the Soul for God

O Love, how far your light shines in the soul
And how fiery is your glow
And how incomprehensible is the wonder of you
And how rich is your wisdom

And how ready is your gift
And how powerful are your bonds
And how perfect is your being
And how pleasant is your flow
And how abundant are your refreshments
And how faithful is your labor
And how holy is your discretion.

When you pass through the soul with all these things and she then rises up and begins to fly with the wings of a dove, which are all the virtues, and she then begins to desire with the longing of the eagle, she follows the heat up to heaven, for she finds everything transitory to be cold and tasteless.

Thus do I then speak from the mouth of truth:

Lord, the desire I have for you when you draw me up,
Lord, the wisdom I then receive in the flights of love,
Lord, the union I then grasp in your will,
Lord, the constancy I then preserve as your gift,
Lord, the sweet remembrance when I think of you,
Lord, the pampering love that I feel for you

is so rich in itself and is in your divine eyes so great-even if you did not know it, Lord, not even all the grains of sand, all the drops of water, all the grass and leaves, stones and wood, all lifeless creatures; in addition, all living creatures: fish, birds, animals, worms, flying and creeping things, devils, heathens, Jews and all your enemies; and more: all your friends, humans, angels, saints-now if all these persons could speak, were willing to, and called out unceasingly till the last day; truly, Lord, as you well know, they could not make clear to you even half of the intensity of my longing and the pain of my suffering and my heart's pursuit and my soul's striving for the fragrance of your balsam, to hang inseparably in your embrace forever.

Indeed, Lady Mary, Mother of God, how did you fare when with your Son you began to experience the love of the eternal

Godhead that a soul free of duplicity has in this life, united with the eternal Godhead, and the caresses with which he cherishes her? Lady, you could become weary and your Son would become faint, for the fiery energy of divine love surpasses all human strength.

32. The Sublime End of Sister Mechthild

Now I must, though under duress, write this story that I would gladly pass over in silence, because I greatly fear the stealthy sword thrust of empty glory. But I fear much more, if God gives me my due, that I, poor woman of God, have already kept silent about too much. Misery, fear, and constant suffering of the heart have I borne secretly from childhood regarding a good end. Now, most recently, God has revealed to me that two throngs came down from heaven in procession. These were virgins and angels. The virgins signify virtues with which a person has served God. The angels signify a pure life in which a person has followed God.

Our Lord and his glorious mother followed this delightful procession until the first ones stood before the person's mouth. The path was peaceful; all around it was brighter than the sun from the radiance of the saints who came out of God's bliss. Then the soul said: "Lord, this path suits me just fine, out of all proportion to my worth. But I greatly fear that I shall come out of my body."

Our Lord said: "If that should happen, I shall draw you into my breath, so that you will follow me like you would a magnet."

On both sides of the procession was a throng of devils. There were so many of them that I was unable to encompass them all with my sight. Still, I was not afraid of a single one. They thrashed about with great ferocity and they clawed each other like madmen. The soul was all the more elated when she then saw our Lord before her. In great astonishment she asked our Lord how this could be. Our Lord said: "The elation comes from the positive certainty that you know for certain that all these devils can never, ever keep you from me."

33. How Small Sins Harm Perfection and How Through Them the Devil Draws Close to the Soul

It impedes people in religious life most of all in their pursuit of perfection that they pay so little heed to small sins. I tell you truly: whenever I blunder with a laugh that harms no one, or with an annoyance in my heart that I reveal to no one, or with a bit of impatience at my own suffering, then my soul becomes so dark and my mind so dull and my heart so cold that I must weep in my gloom and lament in misery and amicably beg and strongly desire and humbly recognize all my deficiencies. Only then is the favor granted me in my wretchedness that I may creep back like a beaten dog into the kitchen. Further: when I have a defect about me that is unrecognized and unrepented, there immediately arises a hell stain on my soul. There is no help for it. The devil who is in charge of purgatory, where the sin shall burn, immediately thinks he is seeing his likeness. Terror begins to come over me since I am alone, though my soul had been made free of all terror when I received the gift that one calls conscious love. Then I fall immediately to the ground and say: "Have mercy on me, God" or "Our Father."" And then I return immediately into my sweet paradise out of which the stain had driven me.

34. Five New Saints Sent for the Sake of Bad People and How God Will Hereafter Wash Christianity in His Own Blood

Given the nobility of holiness and the weakness of human nature, I am very surprised that St. Elizabeth was so quickly canonized a saint after having been buried so short a time." Our Lord explained this to me and said: "It is right for messengers to be quick. Elizabeth is and was a messenger whom I sent to wretched women living in castles who were so permeated with lust, so covered with arrogance, and so constantly engulfed in vanity that they by rights should have gone into the abyss. But many a lady followed her example to the extent they could and wanted. I sent St. Dominic as a messenger to unbelievers and as a teacher to the ignorant and as a comfort to the despondent." I sent St. Francis as a messenger to greedy priests and arrogant lay persons.' St. Peter, the recent martyr, is my messenger of blood in which heretical Christianity so miserably lies imprisoned .12 They all say they are pure, but in my eyes they are impure. They say they are faithful, and yet in my eyes they are false. They say they love me, but they love their own flesh much more. Whoever wishes to remain with me, let him renounce with St. Peter his earthly body. Hidden guilt ultimately creates public distress."

I, poor wretch, became so bold in my prayers that I acted foolishly and took depraved Christianity into the arms of my soul.

I groaned to raise her up. Then our Lord said:

"Give up, she is too heavy for you."

"No, sweet Lord, I shall lift her up
and carry her to your feet
with those very arms of yours
with which you carried her on the cross."

And God granted wretched me my wish
So that he might make me hush.

When poor Christianity then stepped before our Lord, she was like a maiden. I looked at her and I noticed that our Lord was looking at her as well. I became very ashamed. Our Lord said: "Now just look! Isn't this maiden clearly the right one for me to love without end in my eternal nuptial bed and for me to take in my lordly arms and gaze upon with my divine eyes? She is blearyeyed in knowledge and her hands are crippled as well. She can hardly do any good works. She hobbles on the feet of her desires, for she seldom and listlessly thinks of me. Her skin is filthy as well, for she is impure and unchaste."

Then the poor spirit" said: "What can be done for her then?" Our Lord said: "I shall wash her in my own blood, and all the blessed who are truly guiltless I shall protect and take unto myself secretly in a holy death. What is more," said our Lord, "Sister Jutta of Sangerhausen I have sent as a messenger to the heathens with her holy prayers and good example."`

Our Lord said this as well: "I hereby send this book as a messenger to all religious people, both the good and the bad; for if the pillars fall, the building cannot remain standing." Truly, I say to you," said our Lord, "in this book my heart's blood is written, which I shall shed again in the last times."

Our Lord told me about three kinds of blood: "The first blood that was shed by Abel, the holy innocents, John the Baptist, and all those who shed their holy innocent blood before the death of our Lord-that was Christ's blood because for his sake they suffered a holy death. The second blood was the blood of the heavenly Father, which Christ poured forth from his innocent heart. The third blood, which shall be shed in Christian faith before the last day, is the blood of the Holy Spirit, for without the Holy Spirit's help no good action has ever been performed. The blood of the martyrs shed for the love of Christ gives participation46 and a crown. The blood of the Father in Christ gives redemption and faith. The last blood in the Holy Spirit gives perseverance and glory."

35. How Sister Mechthild Thanks and Praises God and Prays for Three Kinds of People and for Herself

Ah, kind Father, God in heaven, draw my ever-flowing soul unimpeded into yourself and flow toward her, Lord, with all the delightful things you have within yourself. Then she can beg and demand and praise you to the fullest for your goodness.

Ah, and give me, Lord, the rapture of your Holy Trinity in the sweet soaring of love, Lord, so that I may enjoy with honor all your generous gifts and so that, sweet Lord, I may never ask you for something, Lord, which you do not want to give me for your glory. Amen.

Ah, Father of all goodness, I, a poor sinner, thank you for all your faithful concern for my ravaged body, for my forsaken soul, for my sinful heart, for my saddened senses, for my being, which is despised in this world-Lord Father, these are what belong to me and nothing else-and for your dear Son, Jesus Christ, and for the community of all creatures when they were as yet undepraved and as they shall come again into the most glorious state that they can and want to attain.

Ali, sweet Father, with all these things I praise you today for all your faithful protection that you granted to my poor body and my forsaken soul. With these same things, great God, I thank you, Lord, for all your generous gifts which you, Lord, have ever deigned to give me in body and soul. With this throng of all creatures, I desire today, Lord, your praise in all things and for all things that, Lord Father, have flowed spotless out of your sweet heart. But with all these things, my Dearest of all dear things, I beg you, Lord, to give honor to yourself by the true transformation and complete conversion of poor sinners who today lie in mortal sin. I beg you also, my true Love, for a holy increase in all virtues and in Christian constancy for all the blessed who live here free from mortal sin. I pray to you also, Dearest, for all the suffering souls who have gone to purgatory because of our sins, souls whom we should have kept safe by our good example. I beg you, Lord, for holy sanctification, for true

protection, and for the fulfillment by the Holy Spirit for all those expressly who, for the sake of your love, have helped wretched me, Lord, endure my exile in body and soul.

I beg you, bountiful God, for the sake of your poor Son, Jesus, that you turn the pain of my spiritual poverty and the gall of my bitterness into honey on the palate of my soul. I pray to you, living God, on behalf of the eternal nobility of our Christian faith, that you, Lord, preserve it for us in your divine wisdom against all false testimony; and fortify, Lord, our spirit that it rest in your Holy Trinity. I pray to you, sweet Lord, for all my Christian torturers, that they may yet get to know you and love you in holiness. I pray to you, almighty God, for true support for false people in power to rule with good judgment and that the innocent in the community be mercifully spared. I beg you, eternal Consolation, that you come today to comfort all burdened souls who on this day in fear take leave of their bodies, that you, merciful-hearted God, may be their champion and mete out to them eternal life. I beg you, Lord, for the complete purification, spiritual constancy, and glorious preservation of divine truth in all things for all those especially who wear the garment of religious life and wield spiritual authority purely out of love for you.

I beg you, kind God, for true thankfulness at all times for all your gifts to help those who for love of you carry troublesome burdens. I beg you, holy God, for mercy when you consider my worthless life, and for constant union, Lord, of yourself with my soul and for the trusted viaticum of your holy body, that it may be at the end my last nourishment for soul and body. I also beg you, sublime, bliss-filled Trinity, at the last hour of that difficult separation of my poor soul from my sinful body, that you then, Lord, incline toward me so that all my enemies depart from me sad and I, Lord, according to your sweet pleasure and my long-felt desire, might unceasingly so gaze upon you that the eyes of my soul might sparkle in your Godhead and the sweet pleasure of your love might glide out of your breast and through my soul. Through our Lord Jesus Christ your Son."$ Amen.

Book VI

1. How a Prior or a Prioress or Other Religious Superiors Should Conduct Themselves Toward Those Under Them

Great fear is bound up with power. When one says, "You are now our superior or our prior or our prioress," God knows, my dear friend, you are in dire straits. You should then perform your venia' with great humility, turn immediately to prayer, and let God console you. You should so transform your heart in God's holy love that you love in a special way each and every brother or sister entrusted to you in all his needs. In all their difficulties you should show your subordinates and brothers loving cheerfulness or kind concern and compassion. With friendly words you should bid them go forth and preach boldly and hear confessions competently, for this is why God has sent them into this world-that they should be redeemers and helpers for poor sinners in the same way Christ was the Redeemer of the whole world, coming down from the lofty palace of the Holy Trinity into this stenchoozing world.

Thus shall you speak to each of your brothers in the deep humility of your pure heart: "Alas, my dear fellow, I, though unworthy of anything good, am your servant in all the ways I can be and not your master. Unfortunately, however, I have authority over you and send you forth with the heartfelt love of God. The difficulty of your task moves me deeply, and yet I make the decisions. I rejoice in the sublime honor the heavenly Father has prepared for you.

"I hereby send you forth in the same name, just as Jesus went forth from his Father, when he went searching for the one lost sheep for such a long time that he died of love. May God's true love go with you on holy paths and in productive efforts. I shall send along with you the longings of my soul, the prayers of my heart, and the tears of my sinful eyes, that as a favor to me God might send you back here holy and full of love. Amen."

Thus shall you encourage all your brothers as they go forth. You should also raise their spirits when they return. You should go in advance to the guest quarters and with God's liberality make all arrangements for the basic comfort of God's disciples as far as is in your power. Indeed, dear fellow, you should even wash their feet yourself. You still remain their master or mistress. And be subject to them in humility. You should not spend a long time with guests. You should keep good order in the religious community. The guests should not stay up late; this is a holy matter. You should visit the infirmary every day and comfort the sick with the consoling words of God and refresh them generously with earthly things, for God is rich beyond all accounting. You should clean for the sick and in God cheerfully laugh with them. You should yourself carry away their personal waste, lovingly ask them in confidence what their private infirmity is, and truly stand by them. Then God's sweetness shall flow into you in marvelous ways.

You should also go into the kitchen and see to it that the needs of the brethren of the community are well taken care of, that your own stinginess and the laziness of the cook do not steal from our Lord sweet song in the choir. For a starving cleric does not sing well. Also, a hungry man cannot study with concentration. And so God often loses the best through the worst.

At chapter meetings you should be just but with a gentle spirit, basing your judgments completely on the amount of guilt. You should be very careful not to use your authority contrary to the will of the brethren or the community, for that is the source of much dissension.

You should always bless yourself when prideful thoughts come to you. Unfortunately, these do come into the heart under the semblance of good and say, "Well, after all, you are prior (or prioress) in all matters. You can certainly do what you think is best." No, dear fellow, in so doing you disturb God's holy peace. With a submissive spirit and endearing cheerfulness you should say: "Dear brother (or sister), how does this suit you?" and then take action according to their best-intentioned wishes.

Whenever the brothers (or sisters) in your community offer you honor, you should be inwardly afraid with a sharp watch on your heart, and outwardly you should show moderate embarrassment. You should receive all complaints with sympathy and you should offer all advice with sincerity.

If your brothers are planning great building projects, turn it into something holy and say: "Oh, dearly beloved brothers, let's

build the Holy Trinity a delightful palace in our souls with the Holy Scripture as the lumber and with noble virtues as the stones." Profound humility is the cornerstone of this glorious palace in which God eternal shall caress his love-starved bride without end with all the pleasure in his power according to her consuming desire. It has been chiseled in the sweet sufficiency of earthly transitoriness, where insatiable arrogance and cutting empty honor shall never provide the urge that we build something the way worldly lords or ladies do. Rather, we want to build on earth as heavenly princes do. Then, on the last day, we shall sit byJesus, who will still be poor, just like his holy apostles.2 Dear brothers, we want to build our dwellings in heaven with divine joy, and we want to build our huts on earth with concern,' for we have no certainty that we will live until tomorrow.

You should have an eagle's eyes, observing and seeing those under you lovingly in God, not with malice. If you find someone secretly suffering temptation, by all means stand by him with great love. Then God cannot help but be secretly close to you.

I want to tell those blessed brothers who have some office some words of truth that I saw in the Holy Trinity when I was alone in prayer. When a person prays in Christian faith with a heart so humble that one cannot endure a single creature to be beneath one, and with a soul so detached that all things but God alone disappear when one is praying, then a person is a divine God with the heavenly Father. But if a person then has a profound realization of how frail he is on his own, even in sweet embrace he will remain fearful to the extent that nothing will concern him but God's honor alone.

When, however, because of a real need and to achieve a practical result a person toils with the same love with which he prayed, then he is a human God with Christ. But what one botches up and does to no practical purpose and out of no real need is all dead before God.

When a person purely for the love of God and not for earthly reward instructs the ignorant, converts sinners, consoles the despondent, and brings those in despair back to God, then he is God the spirit with the Holy Spirit.

Ah, that is a very blessed person who does everything humanly possible that is praiseworthy in God's eyes with that same love for God's praise and with the constant good intention of his whole heart. That person is one whole person with the Holy Trinity.

But the dust of sin that settles upon us constantly, even against our will, is quickly annihilated by the fire of love when the glance of the eyes of our soul touches the Godhead with the lonely sighing of sweet desire that no creature can resist. When she begins to rise, the dust of sin falls away from her and she becomes one God with God in such a way that whatever he wills she wills as well, and they can be united in complete union no other way.

Indeed, dear fellow, you should readily offer our dear Lord God a free hour, day or night, during which you can pray lovingly and undisturbed. For heaven's gift with which God greets and instructs his chosen dear ones is in its nature so noble and so refined and flows so sweetly that when God eternal, gravely wounded by love for her, wants to visit the love-hungry soul in the cozy bridal bed, he would renounce for more than thirty years everything that he found pleasant if he might kiss her again and again and embrace her with his bare arms. If you were to think about this, how could you act so crudely as not to give him an hour a day in return for those thirty years?

When I, the most wretched of persons, go to my prayer, I deck myself out according to my worthlessness. I dress myself in the foul puddle that I myself am. Then I put on the shoes of precious time that I wasted day after day. Then I gird myself with the suffering I have caused. Then I put on a cloak of wickedness of which I am full. Then I put on my head a crown of secret shameful acts that I have committed against God. After this I take in my hand the mirror of true knowledge. Then I look at myself in it and see who I really am. Alas, I see nothing but utter misery. I prefer to wear these clothes rather than to have my wish regarding all earthly possessions. And yet they cause me such distress in my wretched fury that I would rather be clothed with hell and crowned with all the devils if this could happen through no fault of mine. Alas, how very often do robbers-our own ficklenesscome and strip these clothes from us when we are pleased with ourselves and in our guilt declare ourselves innocent?' Then we have been robbed by vain honor and struck down by pride. Then we are more naked than naked. Alas, how deeply must we then be ashamed before God, his friends, and all creatures!

If we want to overcome our shame with great honors, we must clothe ourselves with ourselves. So adorned, I seek Jesus, my sweet Lord, and I find him so quickly by no other means as by those things that are repugnant and burdensome. One should

very eagerly step forward with intense desire, ashamed of one's guilt, and with flowing love and humble fear. Then the filth of sin disappears from the divine sight of our Lord. And then lovingly he begins to cast his radiance toward the soul and she begins to dissolve out of deeply felt love. The soul loses all her guilt and all her sorrow, and he begins to teach her his complete will. Then she begins to taste his sweetness and he begins so to greet her with his Godhead, that the power of the Holy Trinity penetrates fully her soul and her body; and she receives true wisdom. And then he begins so to caress her that she becomes weak. She so begins to drink it all in that he becomes lovesick. Then he begins to limit the intensity, because he knows better her limits than she herself does. And then she begins longing to show him great faithfulness. And then he begins to give her full knowledge. And then she begins to taste with delight his love on her flesh. And then he begins to strengthen with holy feeling in her soul all his gifts. If she then guards against the ignoble love of her flesh and the alluring sweetness of all earthly things, she will be able to love to perfection and gain much praise for God in all things.

Now, dear fellow, there are still two more things that you must guard against with holy zeal, for they have never borne fruit. The first is that a man or woman wants to accomplish much in pursuing good deeds and fine conduct in order to achieve a high church office. Such an attitude vexes my soul. When such people have then achieved power, their baseness becomes so many-faceted that no one who voted for them with great enthusiasm is happy with them. They then become misguided by honors and their false virtues turn into vices.

The second is when a person is chosen rightfully with no meddling on his part and he then changes so completely that he never feels the urge to leave this office. This is a sign of many failings. For even if he is irreproachable in it, he should still be fearful and humble.

A sincere woman and a good man who after my death would have liked to talk with me but cannot should read this little book.

2. The Rule of a Canon: How He Should Conduct Himself. This Came from God

We should greet people in the Holy Spirit with his divine fullness, and we should thank them for their merciful gifts. But even more, in union with all creatures, we should thank the heavenly Father for his holy favor that he unceasingly pours out of his Holy Trinity day after day into the hearts of sinners. That the eagle flies so high, it has no need to thank the owl for that.

I prayed for a noble cleric at his wish.' This is the holy answer from God which he spoke to me: "His wish is to sink to a humble life, the favor I give him is great, and his will is holy. Nevertheless, he should remain right where he is." God, the sublime pope of heaven, has sent him this rule, and it reads as follows: "He should pray always and without ceasing according to the rules for clerics. In addition, I shall grant him my divine sweetness. This he shall enjoy in the solitude of his heart. Whenever he is tempted, he should call out to me with great vigor and I shall come quickly to his aid. He should fulfill his duties completely but should keep expenses small. He should keep no one in his pay for the sake of power or as a return for favors. Rather, he should retain honest servants in proportion to his rightful needs. He should not occupy himself with the concerns of his relatives. But if one of them wants to follow him, he should help him. He should wear simple, comfortable clothes, as he presently does; but next to his skin he should wear coarse clothing to combat the various pleasures he has received in his skin. In addition, he should sleep on straw between two woolen blankets, and he should have two pillows for under his head. During the day he should cover his bed with a fine quilt, and his bed should remain exactly where it was before for all to see. In front of his bed he should lay a mat and a kneeler. Thus, with humble heart he should give good example against an evil life. He should also have two switches next to his bed to chastise himself with upon awakening.

"Once a day, while he lies fully prostrate, his prayer should be as follows: `Lord, eternal Father, God of heaven, I, a worthless human being, thank you, Lord, that you have let your grace descend upon me. I ask you now, dearest Father, together with all those close to you, that your sweet heavenly flood that ever pours down out of the inexhaustible living spring of the whole Holy Trinity may cleanse my soul continually of all stains through our Lord. '"6

At this point I asked: "Lord, how shall he preserve himself in earthly honor without sinning?"

Our Lord said: "He should keep himself in constant fear, just like a mouse that is caught in a trap and awaits its death. The bottom part of the trap is earthly honor; the upper part is my almighty power." This is the explanation our Lord gave: "Whoever desires that I taste good to him should tremble in fear at all times in all things at the taste of his own flesh, where the heart plays with hidden lust. Therefore, when he eats, he should be easily satisfied and selfless. When he sleeps, he should be

disciplined and alone with me. When he is out in the world, he should be a mouse in his heart. When he goes to confession, he should be truthful and obedient and act in all matters as his confessor advises."

3. God Gives Authority. How Billy Goats Become Lambs

That this same noble cleric' was chosen deacon is God's will. For he himself said: "For this reason I have taken him from one chair and put him onto another, that he might be food for billy goats.'" Explanation: God calls the cathedral canons billy goats because their flesh stinks of lust in eternal truth before his Holy Trinity. The skin of a billy goat is noble, and this is true of their authority and possessions. But when this skin is removed at death they lose all their nobility. And our Lord was asked how these goats might become lambs. Our Lord spoke thus: "If they eat the fodder that Canon Dietrich puts in their trough, that is, holy penance and sincere advice in confession, they shall become the kind of lambs that one calls sheep rams: lambs with horns." The horn is spiritual power that they use in a holy manner to God's praise. One should be strong and trust God utterly, for he says: "I myself shall help this canon successfully atone for his guilt."

4. Discernment and Fear That Preserve the Senses from Earthly Things`'

Oh, what a wretched person I am! I complain to God in heaven that I am worse than I was thirty years ago. For the creatures that then helped me bear my misery did not have to be so noble to help this poor body thrive. This is why I must constantly station two guards between my soul and all earthly things, so that she may find just that amount of pleasure in my flesh that my meager needs require. They also preserve my senses, so that these earthly things do not lead me astray into a greedy desire to possess much or to linger in pleasure.

The one guardian is discernment, which arranges all things in such a way that they are used entirely according to God's will. In this way a person always retains a heart alien to all earthly things, so alien that, if a person loses earthly things, his heart becomes so buoyant, his soul so unfettered, and his senses so carefree that he feels as comfortable in God as though his dearest friend had taken the heaviest of all burdens from him; for whichever person does not find earthly things to be a heavy burden cannot be called a truly spiritual person before God. This is why our Lord said: "In times of want one uses all things rightly. What is good about poverty is that it uses only what is necessary. That is why it is holy. Then overindulgence cannot bring darkness into the soul."

My other guardian is holy fear, which together with God's wisdom keeps my soul from smiling upon the earthly things that are given to her. Rather, she receives them as though they were a temptation, a hook baited to catch cupidity and vain honor, which cast many a praiseworthy person in religious life into such darkness that he loses the light of discernment, the fire of love, and the taste for God's sweetness, peace, and mercy without even noticing it.

And so our Lord said: "Indeed, they make fine arguments: that they want to love earthly things and gather much for themselves so that they might the better serve me. But they serve themselves more than me." The person who works only for his own comfort and advantage is his own self. However, everyone should be a Christ in himself, living for God and not for himself. For that most blessed person who lives completely in God, it is all the same to him what he has. For it is holy poverty into which God casts this man with his power in the same way he cast his most beloved Son down from heaven onto the road and into a feeding trough belonging to someone else. Just so does our Lord cast his chosen friends far from earthly consolation, so that they might hunger for heavenly consolation.

A truly holy person fears earthly happiness more than he shows concern for the basic necessities of life. Why? His home is in heaven and his prison is in this world. This is why our Lord said: "Those who know and love the nobility of my liberty cannot bear to love me only for my own sake. They must also love me in creatures. Thus do I remain what is most close to them in their souls."

5. After Love and Desire the Beauty of Creatures Gives Knowledge Along with Sadness

The first knowledge that God gave me, after touching me with love and after the flood of desire, was accompanied by sorrow. Whenever I glanced at anything that was beautiful or dear to me, I began sighing and then weeping; and then I began to reflect, to complain, and to speak thus to all things: "Alas! Be careful! No, this is not your Beloved who greeted your heart, lit up your senses, and captured so blissfully your soul. Don't let the rich delights of earthly things push you away from him.

Rather, in the nobility of creatures, in their beauty and usefulness, I shall love God and not myself."

6. At the End You Should Have Love, Longing, Fear, and Three Kinds of Sorrow

I asked our Lord how I should conduct myself in the time just before my death.

Our Lord said: "You should conduct yourself in the final hours just as you did in the beginning. You should have love and longing, sorrow and fear; for these four things were the beginning of your life, and so they should also be your end."

Then I said: "Dear Lord, what happens to those two things that are the foundation and crown of heavenly honor: Christian faith and true hope?"

Our Lord responded thus: "Your faith becomes a knowing and your hope is transformed into true certainty."

I saw these explanations in his words and know them in my heart, as well.

My sorrow arises from three things. Most of all, I am sorry for my sins. This is the result of love. But by constantly loving I have lost the pain of sorrow. I am sorry for the sins of all human beings, which makes me like a sick person who has a craving for something very fine that he can never or seldom have. And so my heart remains disconsolate and my soul in her desire chases after a huge wild animal. Our Lord said about this: "One cannot catch large animals unless one drives them into water. Thus a sinner will never be converted unless he is pursued by the swift desire of holy people into the deep tears of their hearts."

I am sorry for all the good works that I have failed to do out of love of my flesh without real necessity. Our Lord said about this: "One cannot build a dwelling unless one has a place to build. In like manner one cannot receive a reward in heaven without having performed good works." Our Lord lets this hold true because of love in his heart, so that he can say to each and every soul: "Receive, my very dearest, this rich honor you yourself have earned." That God might be able to address these words to the soul with sincerity to her glory and love, as though he were not the cause of her happiness, and that she might receive in body and soul full honor-this is why our Lord is so deeply concerned that in our struggles, in our want, and in times of suffering we carry on in sincere love: that he might in generosity depart from his justice as much as is fitting for his Godhead. This is what I discovered in the heap of God's favors.

7. Our Self-Will Can Resist the Barbed Hook. The Good Soul Comes Swiftly to God

In my community there is a religious person who causes me much distress because of her contrary disposition. This person is not willing to obey me in regard to anything.' With great intensity I complained to God and was very perplexed how this could be. And our Lord said: "Look what is causing the trouble."

Then I saw that a special devil was clinging to this person and was pulling her away from all good things. So I said: "Who gave you the power to cause God such great humiliation through this person?"

And the devil said: "Nothing other than this person's own selfish will gave me this power."

At these words I saw that the devil pursued all religious persons who give him the opportunity with such derisive contempt because they lead such phony lives by making excuses for themselves before God and all creatures.

Then I said: "Who is going to help this poor wretch to become free from you?"

The devil, under compulsion from God, said: "No one can help her but her own free will, for God has given her the power to change. If she does that, I will be forced to scurry off."

"I hereby ask you by the eternal Truth: what is your name?"

The devil replied: "I am called Barbed Hook, and this throng that you see back there are all mates of mine with the same task that I have. There are as many of them as we find people who are not willing to obey their well-intentioned superior in good things."

Thereupon my soul flew to God so swiftly that she literally arose with no effort on her part and snuggled herself into the Holy Trinity, just as a child snuggles into its mother's coat and lays itself right at her breast. My soul then spoke with the power and the voice of all creatures thus: "Ah, dear Lover, consider my distress with this person so that, Lord, you change her attitude with your divine sweetness."

"No," said our Lord, "she is not worthy of my sweetness. Instead I shall make her body sick, and the pain will so paralyze her that only with great difficulty will she continue on her sinful path. And I shall strike her dumb, that she not utter spiteful words. She shall also become so blind that she will be ashamed to see frivolity. And yet, whatever one does to her, one does to me."

Fourteen days later this actually happened. Alleluia.

8. Between God and Lucifer There Are Two Kinds of Purgatory. How the Devil Tortures Souls

Our human brother Jesus Christ ascended with all virtues into heaven to the heights of his Godhead. And no one can follow him in this unless he, too, has all virtues. Similarly the Holy Trinity has ascended in glory above all things to the blissful heights with all its virtuous friends, who are ever glorious, fair, and joyous in the same measure that they possess within themselves praiseworthy likenesses of his divine virtue. Indeed, all virtues that are practiced on earth with good intentions and not hypocritically, and are adorned with love and performed without sin, are the musical strings in heaven that resound without end out of the faithful soul and out of the submissive body into the Holy Trinity. The Father thanks the Son for having brought her there with virtues, and the Son honors the Father for having created her, and the Holy Spirit gently urges Father and Son that the Holy Trinity might flow out to her with such force and sing so sweetly that she view and love all things with God. Then the sinful devil Lucifer has sunk down under all things together with those who strive after and love only the vices.

Between God's heights and the devil's pit there are two kinds of purgatory. In these two purgatories there are many kinds of suffering and anguish. The first purgatory consists of profitable sufferings that afflict us in this world with various kinds of pain. The second purgatory-after this life-is so large that it begins at the mouth of hell and ends at heaven's gate. But the devils can torment souls only on earth, in the air, and in all the places where a person has sinned, and in the heights where he polluted the air with his sins. Thereby the devil convicts them, so that their shame and torment are all the greater because of all the sins that remain unatoned here. But when they have become so blessed that they have been freed from the hands of the devil, they still burn painfully within themselves because of small wrongdoings. Thereafter, through help and forbearance they pass beyond all distress. This is so close to heaven that they possess all joys but three: They do not see God. They have not yet received their honor. They have not yet been crowned. This is the purgatory on earth and the one in the air between hell and heaven. Because of her spiritual nature, however, the soul cannot suffer torments from physical things once she has left the body."

9. The Saints Honor Those Who Honor Them and They Console Them at Their Death

When one honors the saints by remembering them well, together with all the throng,12 as one can do on the day that God honored them with a holy death, they are so grateful that they immediately come in all the glory that they received from their holy actions. I actually saw this on the feast of St. Mary Magdalene as one was glorifying God with songs of praise for the great honor that she received as a reward. She danced about in the choir to the holy song and looked each of the singers in the eyes. She came forward and said: "All those who honor my death, I shall be with them at the end and shall honor them in return. I shall stand ever at their side, giving as much help as they are capable of receiving."

Four majestic archangels led her in their midst and the number of lesser angels was beyond human reckoning. Then I asked her what the names of the four princes were. She said: "The first is called Power; the second is called Longing; the third is called Good Will; the fourth is called Constancy. With these four virtues I overcame all the sufferings of my heart. For this God gave me two things as a reward: noble servants and a crown. It is the same with other saints as well."

Our Lord says: "When one blows upon the tiniest spark, it contributes warmth and brightness in heaven's fire, where the saints are all aglow."

10. Prayer, Masses, God's Word, the Lives of Good People, Fasting, and Carenae13 Free Souls from Purgatory

I prayed for a soul whose body had been killed in the midst of a sinful life. Then our Lord said this: "Seven years of fasting and seven years of carenae would be like one raindrop on a huge fire. With less than thirty years of praying he cannot be helped, because he lost his life thirty years before his time through foolish pride. These he has to make good to me with suffering."

[The soul speaks:]' "Alas, Lord, can I not beseech your goodness?"

[God speaks:] "Indeed, when two wrestle with each other, the weaker must lose. I shall willingly be the weaker, even though I am almighty. Three thousand masses are the price of his redemption, for he never attended a whole mass except out of human respect."15

"Lord, what was it that saved him?"

"Whenever he heard my words, he sighed. I rewarded him for that since toward the end he so lived that he sighed because of his sins."

"Lord, if his mother's brother-who from his youth till he turned gray has been considered a pious man and who is worn with toil and care-were to offer all this up for him, and for love of you were to depart and place himself in the position where he first became well known, would you perhaps let this soul go free?"

"Yes," said our Lord, "if I were so urgently importuned, I would have to grant everything that one wanted."

"Lord, if this religious man were to give his good works to this poor soul, what would happen to it then?"

Immediately, God let me see this blessed person;
This was not possible for me before
Because of the coarse nature of his punishment
Which my soul cannot bear.
He was fairer than the sun
And he soared in bright bliss
High above all earth's misery.

Full of cheer and contentment he said: "Tell my friends: even if the earth were made of gold and the bright sun shined upon it constantly both day and night with the sweet breezes of May and with delightful flowers ripening to fruit, I would not want to be there for one hour, so blissful is this life."

Hehad not yet entered heaven eternal.

11. How a Student Is Dead and a Dominican Was Seems

Our Lord spoke thus: "I say to you with my burning Godhead and with my living humanity that his nature is dead in a holy death, and so he can no longer commit serious sins on earth."

Then he was seen looking like a Dominican, standing on a column of red marble and preaching to the people thus: "Come, blessed of my Father," come to me, all ye blessed; and depart from me all ye cursed."

Then it was seen and understood that all preachers preach and teach us from these two sayings.

12. How You Should Conduct Yourself as to Fourteen Things

When you pray, you should be humble.
When you confess, you should be truthful.
When you do penance, you should be untiring.
When you eat, you should be frugal.
When you sleep, you should be disciplined.
When you are alone, you should be faithful.
When you are with people, you should be discreet.
When one teaches you good manners, you should be receptive.
When one castigates you for your wickedness, you should be patient.
When you do something good, you should think yourself bad.
When you do something bad, you should immediately seek
forgiveness.
When you are vain, you should fear.
When you are sad, you should have great trust in God.
When you are doing manual work, you should go at a fast pace:
Then you can drive away evil thoughts.

13. How Religious out of Blindness Fend Off Inwardness from Themselves. The Sixfold Power of God's Gift

"Ah, dear Jesus, God of heaven, I have to ask you about something, Lord. I just cannot stand it any longer because of the great blindness that I recognize at the bottom of it." It is this: that religious people fend off divine inwardness in the following way. When God sees fit to let his divine heart shine forth in love toward the very blessed soul so intensely that a small spark alights on the cold soul and she receives so much that the heart of this person begins to glow, his soul to melt, and his eyes to flow, then our Lord would like to make an earthly person so heavenly that one actually wants to follow, love, and see God in him. And the person's senses say: "No, I can be of much use in external matters."" And it is especially cloistered people who say this when they are being especially clever.

Our Lord responds to this in the following way:
“My Godhead came to earth;
My humanity did the work.

My Godhead went on the cross;
My humanity suffered death.
My Godhead arose from death
And led humanity to heaven.
All those who drive me away from them
Shall be driven away from me.
What is a human being capable of doing on his own?
[Nothing but sin.][19]
Never did my humanity ever do something
That my Godhead did not plan in advance.”

“People say, Lord, that it is the mark of wisdom
To spare the body.[20]
For your divine breath wafts down
From your Holy Trinity so delightfully
And penetrates the soul so powerfully
That the body loses all its strength:
This makes a person unproductive.”

Our Lord said this:
“One should not offer gratis the king’s food
Until one has consumed the ordinary bare sustenance.
My special favor endows a person with special dignity,
In body and soul.
It provides instruction for the ignorant
And consolation for the wise.
It also gives eternal praise and boundless honor
To the fathomless spring from which it has flowed
When it swirls up again, having borne full fruit,
To where it flowed forth from me.”

Indeed, this favor that God is wont to grant a person powerfully and unexpectedly is so noble in itself and brings with it such closeness to God that it is no small sin that a person commits who rejects him for the sake of some earthly thing. Alas, ignoble soul, how can you manage to reject God before enjoying him fully, as is his will? For his most sublime pleasure lies hidden in you.

Do you want to know how you should make use of God's holy favor and enjoy it according to God's will? Well, it shall teach you this itself if you welcome it. You should receive it with external virtues and internal desire. In humble fear you should keep hold of it, submissive in all tribulations. Give it time and room in you; that is all that it asks of you. It shall melt you so deeply into God that you know what his will is concerning how long you should pursue his intense caressing of you, and when and how you should work for sinners and for those in purgatory, and should attend the needs of each and every person, alive or dead.

When you have accomplished this inwardly to God's pleasure insofar as lies in your soul's power-she will grow weary in herself as long as she is in the grips of her mortal body-then the soul says after this pleasurable experience:

“Lord, now flee from me inwardly,
And stand by me outwardly,
So that all my actions shine forth
In proportion to your favor,
And that I suffer willingly
And hardly complain about my cares.”

14. Those Who Complain in Suffering Lack Six Things; How One Should Bear Sickness and Contempt

Whoever in pain complains of his burdens
Is either blind in knowledge
Or spineless in forbearance.
His love has grown cold
And he is jaded in virtue,
Or his mind is dull
And blunt as to good words.

For this reason our Lord said: "This person does not want to be sick and does not want to be scorned. What, then, shall I use as the foundation of his glory?"

"Lord, when a person is sick and scorned, how can he then increase your glory?"

"When he is sick, he should honor, serve, and love me alone with cheerful forbearance. When he is scorned, he should love me and wait patiently. When preachers and confessors are forced from their office and cannot exercise it but still have the holy wish to do so, that is not an obstacle to their happiness. It is an enhancement of their glory."

15. The Sufferings of Enoch and Elijah, the Last Preachers, and the Wickedness of the Antichrist'

O mighty divine love, you have inflicted such sweet anguish on me that my soul languishes in wonder. When I consider that my body shall so fade away at death that I shall no longer suffer or praise my beloved Jesus, then I feel such pain that I desire, if that were possible, to live till the last day. Faithful love that is from God and does not have its source in me forces me to long for this. This is why our Lord said: "If you die, let your days fill you with sorrow, however holy you may be."

"Truly, Lord, I beg you that my longing not die when I can no longer serve you with my body."

Our Lord said: "Your longing shall live. It cannot die because it is eternal. If it keeps striving for my sake till the last day, then soul and body shall be reunited. When I put them together again, she shall praise me without end. Also, she has served me since the very beginning, for you wanted to exist from the time of Adam until now for love of me, just as you wanted to experience all human suffering and serve in all human labor for love of me. Moreover, I declare that your being shall remain until the end of humanity."

"Ah, my Dearest, who shall be the last human to whom my being might be joined? The life of religious people at the end of the world shall be precious."

Our Lord responded thus: "Enoch shall be the last human being to cultivate the spiritual life."

Thereupon God again showed me the end of this world, when the last brothers shall be martyred. Their hair, that they shall never cut, has a specific purpose in God's will: The Antichrist shall command that they be hung up by it onto trees. There they shall hang and nobly die, for their heart burns within them with the sweet fire of heaven as intensely as the body languishes in distress. And so, in the midst of the solace of the Holy Spirit and the pain of the miserable flesh, their soul shall depart from their body with no terror of these sufferings.

Elijah and Enoch shall travel from India to the sea, and a great throng shall follow each of them-all of them Christians fleeing to them from the Antichrist. They shall all be clubbed to death like rabid dogs that one chases down on the street, that have been poisoned and can live no longer. These are then followed by others who are secretly Christians. For they know well from God that they can escape heathenism no other way.

Elijah will be the first to be martyred. He shall be bound to a lofty cross, his hands nailed through.

They do this out of fierce hatred,
Because he constantly spoke of the holy cross
And what happened to Christ on it.
They do not let him die,
In the hope that in suffering so long
He might forsake Christian teaching
And thus turn to the Antichrist.
And so he hangs there, this holy intimate friend of God,

And no cry of pain escapes him.
Three days and three nights
He comforts Holy Christianity
Until his soul departs.
I saw the heavenly Father at his end,
And he received Elijah's soul
With his human hands and said:
"Come, my dear one, it is time for you."
And in a flash from heaven God led him away.

That wretched man, the Antichrist, does not allow God's intimate friend to be buried, for he wants all Christians to abjure their faith. In that he is deceived, for all who gaze upon the body are moved to Christian faith, and they desire to worship it. So filled with sweetness are they by the presence of the holy body that they forget all the agony of death and all earthly goods.

Enoch is still alive, for the Antichrist desires to hear all the wisdom that Enoch knows from God so that he can twist it

publicly with his false teaching and perhaps draw Enoch to himself. The whole world would then be his in great honor.

Meanwhile so many of the wicked are drawn away from the Antichrist that he attacks Enoch with fierce words. Not till then does Enoch tell the Antichrist the truth:

"You are a scourge to the whole world
Sent by God because of the evilness of the wicked
And for the holiness of the good.
You are well versed in the writings of the Old Law
And the New Law as well.
Now see how you shall fare after all your efforts.
You have made your choice with full intent.
According to scripture you shall be lost,
As you can well read for yourself.
It wasn't you who created earth and heaven.

You do not give the angels eternal life.
You did not make man,
Neither soul nor body.
You have never given any creatures their natural life.
How, then, could you ever be God?
You have wrought all your works in lies and evil scheming.
The eternal Truth is Jesus Christ,
Who is one eternal God with his Father."

Sullenly the Antichrist says:

"How dare you speak the name of my enemy in my presence,
To whom you ascribe more of my honors than to me?
But I shall yet get even with you
And shall free the whole world from you.
Take him at once into my power
And pour boiling pitch into his mouth
And put a tight noose around his neck.
That will make my enemy shut up at once.
If I could hear his words,
I would gladly let him suffer more.
So hang him dead, high above all murderers,
So that all who look upon him
Desert the Christian faith.

He has insulted me in my honor.
No one needs his instruction.
I have been expected since long ago.
Everything shall be done according to my plan."

Enoch recites his holy prayer in his pure heart thus:

“Eternal Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
You eternal God undivided,
I thank you, Lord,
That you chose me long ago,
And I praise you, Lord,
In this anguish.
I pray to you, Lord,
For your sheep and mine,
That shall now be without a shepherd.
Keep them, Lord, each and every one,

And comfort them in secret.
Receive now, Lord, my soul.
I have no earthly love for my body.”

The response that God will give to his thanksgiving and his entreaty has been written here. I saw it and read it as written in the Holy Trinity:

“Dear son, come swiftly now to me.
I am truly in you.
Your dear ones for whom you have prayed to me
Shall baptize their children themselves.
I shall free them from the Antichrist at once.
In their hearts they shall remain Christians.
And I shall preserve them from all wavering.
Come, dear intimate friend, I await you,
And my heart skips forth to meet you.”

16. How the Soul of Our Lord Dwells in the Trinity and What Its Task Is; How It Speaks for the Sinner and Concerning the Task of Our Lady

When I wake up at night,

I wisely try my powers,
To see whether I, poor wretch, can pray at all
For this faithless Christianity
That inflicts such suffering on my Beloved.
Sometimes he draws me along a different route,
Pathless and bridgeless,
Where I must follow him barefoot
And stripped of all earthly things.
Who can so delicately conquer humanity?
Who can so swiftly transport the soul?
Who can so nobly illumine the mind
But God, who created it?
He works wonders with us.

Thus did I of a night
Call to mind the Holy Trinity
In the spontaneous sweet flowing of my soul.
There in the heights of the whole Holy Trinity
I saw without asking the soul of our Lord Jesus.
His soul dwells forever, unsurpassed in dignity,
In the Holy Trinity.
Therein it is enclosed and mysteriously entwined,
And it shines forth fair and glorious on all creatures,
Through the Holy Three Persons.

Then, with proper restraint, as is the custom at court, I asked to speak to the soul of our Lord for his glory, because it seemed to me that it worked special miracles. I hovered so close to it that I greeted it thus: "May you be blessed, dear One. What marvels do you perform in this eternal mirror,22 in which all the blessed gazed upon themselves in wonder? You have a delightful labor in blissful restlessness."

The soul of our Lord replied to the pitiful creature: "Welcome, my likeness,23 for I, too, am a soul as you are; and I carried the burden of all souls with my guiltless body. This is my task: I constantly move the limitless Godhead, thereby recalling to the heavenly Father the infinite love he has for the human soul. I greet my divine humanity as well and thank it for my blessedness; and I call to mind its bond-for he24 was himself an earthbound human-that he remember where he came from, how great and how noble is man's kinship to him,25 and that he should never let man perish. For no one ever begot or gave birth to himself. Because of this you overcame all your sufferings without sin. Thus do I urge God's humanity to special mercy and that he remember how weak man is, and that he was not created free of his enemies, and that man must ever and again fight as one well-armed but whose eyes are bound. It is dark humanity that binds them. Remember, noble Son of God, how wretchedly sad I was on earth within you, and continue to help like a father all those who carry my likeness within them; for I am your soul. I must also wrest from the Holy Spirit his gift, for he shall bring to earth all blessedness to humankind from heaven."

"Heavenly Father, did you thrust the bolt of your justice so firmly across the gate of heaven that poor sinners can never enter? I shall take my complaint to Jesus, your dear Son, who holds the key to your kingdom2fi in his human hand with your almighty power."

This very same key was fashioned in the same land by Jewish hand. When Jesus turns the key, the outcast sinner shall come into your favor.

This is the word of the heavenly Father: "My soul cannot endure that I banish the sinner from me. And so I pursue many of them on and on till I have them in my grasp, and I save them a place so narrow that no one, no matter how clever, can follow me there."

And then the soul of our Lord speaks again:

“This is my glory,
And thus am I adorned.
The Godhead is my crown;
His humanity is my reward.
The Holy Spirit has embraced me
And so wondrously permeated me
That no creature can equal me or reach me.
Thus do I carry constantly in this Holy Trinity
All the sinners of earth, on and on,
That God not let them fall
Into the eternal abyss.

But this virgin in whose body I found shelter,
When I left the Holy Godhead for the humanity of her Son,
This virgin is a protectress of all chastity
And an advocate of all those tempted
Who show sorrow and reverence
Before the Holy Trinity.
Judgment is yet in her hands."

17. God Considers the Sinner Good, What a Good Right Will Is, Concerning a Good Burden27

This is incomprehensible: that God considers the sinner as a converted person. And that is right will in serving God, that one swiftly hurry to me and not look back; and I carry all burdens that are accepted for love of me.

18. You Should Scrutinize Your Heart at All Times

Look into your heart at all times
With the truth of the Holy Spirit.
Then you will find all lying purely detestable.
For lying drives out God's love,
And it strengthens in one's heart
Secret cunning, hate, and rage.

19. Good Intentions That One Cannot Turn into Deeds

I have often been much saddened
That I could never turn good intentions into good works.
Wavering and weakness rob me of them,
And that no one dares offer me sound advice.
And, alas, I dare not venture beyond my nature.
This has been the case since the time
God let me fall of my own free choice
From the bliss of the heights,
Where I was so lost in wonder
That I could not find the boundaries of things,
Where powerful love had drawn me in

With the flames of its fire.
But now it has pressed me down
Into a bottomless swamp
Where I find no footing.
And yet all that I suffer
I do not call pain,
For I would rather be yet further removed—
To the lowest place—
Cast off like a raging dog
And no one's friend,
Unknown, in banishment,
With poor people in a foreign land.

And yet I shall not live except under obedience,
For holy, humble obedience is the seal of all virtues.
Good intention that a good person has
And cannot turn into a good deed
Is like exquisite, fair flowers,
Giving forth fragrance but no fruit.
Thus did God console me:

That all good will shall
Out of the abundance of a good life
Become blossoms of eternal bliss
From which God shall make wreaths
For his never-ending wedding feast
Which his chosen ones shall wear there
Who here go on so faithfully
With a wealth of good will
Which they are not able to turn into good works.

O generous God, hold out your fatherly hand to me,
And lead me into the land of love;
For I have, alas, lost much time,
And I would like to make up for it with you, Lord.
For comfort of the body and contentment of the senses
Must be received in humble fear
If one is to remain in whole truth.

20. This Book Came About out of a Threefold Favor; Love Flows, It Is Rich and Full of Desire, It Becomes Sick; Who Possesses Heaven; God Bestows Suffering and Consolation as Well

God bestowed upon me the favor that is written down in this book in a threefold manner. First and foremost, with great tenderness; then, with sublime intimacy; and now, with intense suffering. I much prefer to remain in this state than in the other two. This is why: although God's tenderness and intimacy are in themselves eternal and noble, they are unfortunately so foreign in this world that all who truly grasp them are not at all able to describe them. And so I have the greatest fears when enjoying pleasure, because Christ suffered much intense pain in this world. But the nature of love is such that it flows in sweetness; then it becomes rich in knowledge; thirdly, it becomes full of longing in rejection.

Oh, you are terribly inconstant. And, alas, sometimes true love of God becomes so weak from the base sweetness of empty honor, from swollen pride and from the loathsome frenzy of anger and from the unchecked desires for the things of this world that it becomes paralyzed in all its members. This is the way it works from the very beginning; this is its nature.

Further, no one possesses the whole of heaven in his heart but he alone who has removed himself from all consolation and all favors in this world. For pleasure has cut us off from God. And so we must return to him through suffering. And yet God cannot restrain himself-and we cannot do without it-from giving us his abundance and his favor for everything we do, refrain from doing, and suffer.

21. How Bad Priests Shall Be Humiliated; [How Preachers Alone Should Preach and Be Bishops;]28 Concerning the Last Brothers

Woe, Crown29 of Holy Christianity, how greatly have you been sullied. The jewels have dropped from you, for you are undermining and violating the holy Christian faith. Your gold lies tarnished in the foul pool of carnality, for you have become shabby and do not have the least bit of true love. Your purity has been consumed in the lustful fire of gluttony. Your humility lies buried in the swamp of your flesh. Your truthfulness has been reduced to nothing amid the lying of this world. Your blossoms of all virtues have fallen away from you.

Woe, Crown" of the holy priesthood, how utterly have you disappeared. You have nothing left but your trappings; that is,

ecclesiastical authority with which you war against God and his chosen intimates. For this God shall humiliate you before you know it, and our Lord speaks thus: "I shall touch the pope in Rome in his heart with great misery, and in this misery I shall tell him reproachfully that my shepherds of Jerusalem have become murderers and wolves. Before my very eyes they murder the white lambs, and the old sheep are all sick in the head because they cannot eat from the healthy pasture that grows in the high mountains, which is divine love and holy teaching.

"He who does not know the path to hell, let him look at the corrupt clergy, how their lives go straight to hell with women, children, and other public sins. This is why it is necessary that the last brothers come.

For when the cloak is old,
So is it also cold.

And so I must give my bride, Holy Christianity, a new cloak." These shall be the last brothers that were mentioned earlier."

"Son Pope, this is what you should bring about; then you shall be able to live a long life. The reason your predecessors did not live long is that they did not bring about the hidden intentions of my will. "32

Thus did I see the pope at prayer and heard God give him this message.

22. Seven Things, Five of Which One Finds in Heaven and Two on Earth"

23. How God Speaks with the Soul in Three Places

At the first place the devil often speaks to the soul. At the other two places he cannot do so. The first place is a person's senses. This place is equally accessible to God, the devil, and all creatures. They can speak here as they wish.

The second place where God speaks with the soul is in the soul. No one can enter this place but God alone. But when God speaks in the soul, it happens without any kind of awareness by the senses, in a great, mighty, swift union of God with the soul. Thus the senses cannot hear this delightful conversation. They become so humble that they cannot bear any creature beneath them. Should a person humble himself beneath the devil? Certainly, with this in mind: it should seem to him who has caused God such great insult with his life that he has often painted the devil's likeness onto his soul through his daily sins and sometimes inflicted large wounds on his soul with mortal sins. The soul that is in the embrace of the Holy Spirit cannot contain herself. She must ever sink away from all earthly comfort and from the pleasure of this comfort. But the soul that is in the embrace of its own selfish will inclines with much pleasure to earthly things.

The third place where God speaks to the soul is in heaven, when God raises up the soul in the pleasure of his will and suspends her there where she may take pleasure in the wonder of him.

24. How Christ Reveals His Wounds in Days of Suffering. Four Things Knock on Heaven's Gate

In my days of great suffering, God revealed himself to my soul, showed me the wounds of his heart, and said: "See how they have hurt me."

And my soul said: "Alas, Lord, why did you suffer such distress? From that time when so much of your pure blood was shed from your pure heart the whole world should rightfully have been redeemed by it.""

"No," he said, "that did not satisfy my Father. For all the poverty, all the toil, and all the suffering and humiliation are just a knocking at the gate of heaven up to the time when my heart's blood poured onto this earth. Only then was heaven opened."

The soul said: "Lord, when this happened, you were dead. I am confused. How can someone dead still bleed?"

Our Lord said: "My body was then in a human manner dead when my heart's blood flowed with a beam of the Godhead through my side. The blood issued forth by grace, just as did the milk that I drank from my virginal mother. My divinity was present in all members of my body while I was dead, just as it was before and afterward. After its long sadness, my soul rested the while in my Godhead. And a spiritual image of my humanity has always existed without a beginning suspended in my

eternal Godhead."

25. Concerning Burned Love

"Ah, dear Lord, have mercy on one who has been consumed here in the fire of your love and has been absorbed in your humility and has been annihilated in all things."

God speaks:

"My Godhead burned you;
My humanity recognized you;
My Holy Spirit sanctified you in your poverty.
Those who love much like to remain silent.
Those who do not love have always been schemers against love."[35]

26. Thinking About Death and Living Long Are Good

I am very surprising, and I am surprised in my human way of thinking that my soul is so surprising. Whenever I think of death, my soul looks forward to her leaving with such intensity that my body floats in great superhuman delight and my senses recognize ineffable wonders in the departure of the soul. Thus I would most of all like to die at the time God has foreseen. And yet, on the other hand, I say I want most of all to live until the last day. Then again my desire reaches back to the time of the martyrs, that I might shed my sinful blood in true Christian faith for the sake of Jesus whom I love. A special gift forces me to dare to state this: that I love God. For whenever vice and suffering come my way, my soul begins to burn in the fire of true love of God with such sweetness that my body floats suspended in divine pleasure. But a sadness remains in my senses, and I pray to God for all who slander me or revile me, that God preserve them from sin.

27. How You Should Thank and Ask

Lord heavenly Father, I thank you that you created me.
Lord Jesus Christ, I thank you that you redeemed me.
Lord Holy Spirit, I thank you that you have purified me.
Lord Holy Trinity, whole and undivided, I ask you to remember all faithfulness
And send me a merciful death
That will free me from all distress.
Into your hands I commend my spirit.[36]

28. When You Are to Die, Take Leave of Ten Things

When I come to die, I shall take leave of all those things from which I am departing.

I shall take leave of Holy Christianity and I shall thank God that I bear the name of Christian and that I came to true Christian faith. And if I were to remain here longer, I would strive to be a help to Holy Christianity that is afflicted with many sins.

I shall take leave of all the poor souls who are now in purgatory. If I were to remain here longer, I would eagerly help you atone for your guilt, and I thank God that you have found grace.

I shall take leave of all those who are in hell, and I thank God that he has exercised his justice in regard to them. If I were to remain here longer, I would never wish them anything good.

I shall take leave of all those sinners who are in mortal sin. I thank God that I am not one of them. And if I were to remain here longer, I would eagerly carry their burden before God.

I shall take leave of all those penitents who are engaged in doing their penance. I thank God that I am one of them. If I were to remain here longer, I would have to hold them dear.

I shall take leave of all my enemies. I thank God that they did not get the better of me. If I were to remain here longer, I would lay myself under their feet.

I shall take leave of all earthly things. I lament to God that I never made use of them according to his holy determination.

I shall take leave of all my dear friends. I thank God and them that they were my help in need. If I were to remain here longer, I would have to feel shame for the failings that they noticed in me.

I shall take leave of all my baseness. I lament to God that I so ruined his holy gift to my soul that there was never a shortcoming so trivial that it was not noticed by heaven in my soul. No matter how penance was done for it, there was always some damage involved. Lord Jesus, I make my complaint to you, but the shame is all mine.

I shall take leave of my wretched body. I thank God that on many occasions he preserved me from many a sin. If I were to remain here longer, its baseness is of so many kinds that I would never get to like it.

29. Ten Parts of Divine Fire out of God's Nobility

An unworthy person pondered in her simplicity God's nobility. And God let her recognize in her senses and see with the eyes of her soul a fire that burned unceasingly in the heights above all things. The fire had been burning without a beginning and shall keep on burning without end. This fire is God eternal, who holds within himself eternal life and from whom all things have come forth. The sparks of the fire that have shot forth are the holy angels. The bright flickerings of the fire are all the saints of God. For their life has given Christianity many a fine sparkle. The ever-glowing coals of the fire are all the blessed here on earth who are on fire with heavenly love and shine with good example. All those who have grown cold in sin can warm themselves on the coals. The embers of the fire have been scattered and extinguished. These are the bodies of the blessed waiting in the earth for their heavenly reward. The rule of the fire is yet to come. That is Jesus Christ, to whom his heavenly Father has entrusted the first redemption and the last judgment. On the last day, out of the embers, he shall fashion for the heavenly Father the most exquisite chalices from which at his eternal wedding feast he himself shall drink all the holiness that, together with his dear Son, he has poured into our soul and into our human understanding.

Ah, I shall drink of you
And you shall drink of me
All the goodness that God has preserved in us.
Happy is he who stands firm
And does not let spill
What God has poured into him.

The smoke of the fire is all earthly things that one often makes use of with improper pleasure. How beautifully they shine in our eyes. How wantonly they play in our hearts. And yet they bear hidden within them a great amount of bitterness, for they disappear like smoke and blind the best. They make even the holiest persons bleary-eyed.

The comfort of the fire is the delightful pleasure that our soul receives inwardly from God through the warmth of the divine fire, so sacred that we, on fire, reflect back toward the heavenly fire, and we persevere in virtue so that we are not extinguished.

The bitterness of the fire is the word that God shall speak on the last day: "Go from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire!""

The radiance of the fire is the gleaming sight of the divine countenance of the Holy Trinity that shall flood our body and soul with light, so that we shall see and know there the marvelous bliss that here we cannot even name.

These things have come out of this fire and flow back into it, each according to God's disposition, in eternal praise.

Whoever wishes to speak more about this,
Let him prostrate himself in this fire
And see and taste how the Godhead flows,
How humanity pours,

How the Holy Spirit wrestles
And vanquishes many a heart,
Forcing it to love God in many different ways.

30. Pure Love Has Four Things

Pure love of God has four things about it: that one be so utterly of one mind with God that whatever might happen to us, except for sin, we thank God devoutly for it.

Secondly, that we use to good effect the gifts we have from God in body and soul.

Thirdly, that we live purely and morally, free of sin.

Fourthly, that we have all virtues in us. Alas, if only I had them and really put them to good use with regard to everything, I would exchange that for all the marvels of contemplation that I ever heard anyone mention. What good are lofty words without works of mercy? What good is love of God when joined to rage against good human beings?

You say: "If God were to give it to me, I would be happy to do it. "38

Now listen here: Virtues are half gifts from God and half our own doing. Whenever God gives us insight, we should put virtues to good use.

31. How God Made the Soul. Concerning Pleasure and Pain. How God Is Like a Sphere

I said in one passage in this book that the Godhead is my Father by nature." You do not understand this, and say: "Everything that God has done with us is completely a matter of grace and not of nature."

You are right, but I am right, too. Consider this analogy. No matter how good a person's eyes are, he can't see farther than a league. No matter how acute a person's mind is, he cannot grasp nonphysical things except with faith, and he gropes around like a blind man in the darkness. The loving soul that loves everything that God loves and hates everything that God hates has one eye that God has illumined. With it she peers into the eternal Godhead and sees how the Godhead has labored in the soul with her nature. He formed her according to himself. He planted her in himself. With her, most of all among all creatures, he united himself. He enclosed her within himself and poured so much of his divine nature into her that she can say nothing else but that with all this oneness he is more than her Father.

The body receives its value from its relationship as brother of the Son of the heavenly Father and from the reward of his toils. The Son of God, Jesus Christ, performed his work with heartfelt love, by suffering poverty, pain, toil, humiliation-even unto his holy death. The Holy Spirit also performed his works, as you say, with his grace and has produced all the gifts that we ever received. These are three different kinds of works, and yet one undivided God performed them in us.

Two things are continually at work on earth and in purgatory through the power of God. One continues to work only in heaven. The second continues to work only in hell. This first is bliss without suffering in heaven. The second is suffering without bliss in hell."

Where was God before he created anything? He was in himself and all things were as present and as manifest to him as they are today. What form did our Lord God have then? Exactly like that of a sphere, and all things were enclosed within God with no lock and no door. The lowest part of the sphere is a bottomless foundation beneath all abysses. The highest part of the sphere is a top above which there is nothing. The circumference of the sphere is an unmeasurable circle." At this point God had not yet become Creator. But when he created all things, did the sphere open? No, it has remained whole and it shall remain whole forever. When God became creator, all creatures became manifest in themselves: human beings in order to love God, to

enjoy and know him, and to remain obedient; birds and animals to live according to their nature; inanimate creatures to remain firmly placed in their being. Now listen to this: Whatever we know is absolutely nothing unless we love God properly in all things, just as he himself created all things in properly measured love and offered and taught us love, as well.

32. How We Become Like God, St. Mary, the Angels, and the Saints

To the extent that we love mercy and practice constancy we are like the heavenly Father, who without ceasing performs these things in us.

To the extent that we suffer poverty, humiliation, rejection, and pain here we are like the true Son of God, who endured in complete forbearance all his adversity and suffering.

To the extent that we here flow outward with all the abundance of our heart to give our possessions to the poor and to spend our lives in the service of the sick we are like the Holy Spirit, who is an abundant outpouring of the Father and the Son.

To the extent that we are truthful, temperate, and modest in holy simplicity we are like the Holy Trinity, who is true God and has performed all his works, and still does, in the order proper to them.

To the extent that we are chaste in complete purity, humble in complete submissiveness, ready to serve in all holiness, innocent of all ill will we are like our dear Lady St. Mary, who was ennobled through these virtues, so that she, a virgin, became a mother and, though a mother, remained a virgin, and is alone empress over all creatures.

To the extent that we are kind, friendly, and peace-loving we are like the angels, who never do anything wicked.

To the extent that we lead a holy life in exile and are unconsoled in hardship we are like St. John the Baptist, who has been elevated above many saints.

To the extent that we desire that God be praised, recognize what we have been given, and properly carry out God's will we are like the prophets and the holy fathers, who through great virtue overcame themselves in God.

To the extent that we learn wisdom and through it change other people and stand true to God in all trials we resemble the holy apostles, who went out of themselves even to death.

To the extent that we are patient in all distress and in the measure that we hold fast to our Christian faith, even in the face of death, we resemble the holy martyrs, who have marked out for us through the shedding of their blood the true path to heaven.

To the extent that we resolutely bear the difficulties of Holy Christianity, both those of the living and those of the dead, we are like the holy confessors, who remained watchful in great toil and heard confessions with sympathy.

To the extent that we remain unconquered in battle42 and preserve our maidenly honor we are like the holy virgins, who have not lost true victory.

To the extent that we have deep sorrow and to the extent that we perform many kinds of holy penance we are like those holy widows, who, after sinning, attained such great honor.

To the extent that we have all the virtues about us we are like God and all his saints, who have followed God with complete devotion.

33. Concerning a Strict Chapter43 to Which a Pilgrim Came Who Turned Out to Be a Great Lord

For a long time a certain person used to hold a strict chapter in his heart, considering how he had harmed himself, and the humiliation arising for God because of him. And then he cast out from his heart all the sinful desires of his flesh and put in their place a willingness to suffer all torments for love of God. He cast out all the pleasures he had with friends and relatives and put in their place all the humiliation that those hostile to him wished to inflict on him. He cast out as well all love of wealth and honor that give the sinful world such joy and put in their place all the poverty that one can possibly endure with good counsel.

To this chapter our Lord Jesus Christ came, looking like a poor pilgrim. The person's spirit was so enlightened that he recognized that it was our Lord, and he said: "Hello, dear Pilgrim, where are you coming from?"

He answered: "I am coming from Jerusalem. I was seriously wounded there. I suffered deep humiliation, poverty, and pain. I brought it all to you."

"I thank you for that, very dear Lord; I have certainly experienced that many a day."

Then our Lord took a simple crown, put it on the person's head and said: "This is the crown of poverty, humiliation, and suffering. This crown shall yet be adorned with my own image." Then the pilgrim went away.

The person became sad, and said: "Alas, alas for my dear Pilgrim. I really wanted to talk more with him." Then she44 looked up in the heights and caught sight of him.

He resembled a powerful lord and was surrounded by heavenly delights, and said: "I bless you and greet you. My peace be with you always! Amen."

34. Someone Who Despises the World Should Be Honored with Nine Things

A voice was heard and these words were spoken:

"Look! Here she comes who despised the world
And who put lies to flight
And who loved truth
And who blessed me.
She shall be received with all honor.

She shall be grounded in truth.
She shall be blessed forever.
She shall be clothed with all beauty.
She shall be crowned with all dignity.
She shall be placed on the chair of eternal rest.
She shall be welcomed by every tongue.
She shall be served with all benefits.
She shall enjoy all gifts."

35. How the Soul of One Blessed Speaks to Her Body on the Last Day

Rise up, my dearly beloved,[45] and be healed of
All your sufferings,
All your days of pain,
All your humiliation,
All your sadness,
All your loneliness,
All your wounds,
And all your toils.

The morning star has arisen: that is the birth and life of St. Mary.
The sun has sent forth its radiance: that is when God became man,
labored, and ascended into heaven.
The moon shall ever remain unchanged: that is that we ever after shall
remain unchanging in eternal life.
In the past my whole well-being depended on you;
Now all your consolation depends on me.
If I had not come back to you,
You would never be taken from these ashes.
Eternal day has arisen for us.
Now we shall receive our reward.

36. That John the Baptist Sang Mass for the Poor Girl Was Spiritual Knowledge in the Soul

One cannot grasp divine gifts with merely human understanding. And so they sin who do not keep their spirit open to invisible truth. What one is able to see with the eyes of the flesh, hear with the ears of the flesh, and say with one's fleshly mouth is as utterly different from the open truth of the loving soul as light from wax is from the bright sun.

ThatJohn the Baptist sang mass for the poor girl was not of the flesh; it was so spiritual that only the soul saw it, understood it, and enjoyed it. The body had nothing from it except what it could grasp in its human senses through the nobility of the soul. And this is why the words had to be expressed in human terms.

My Pharisee remarked in response to this description thatJohn the Baptist was a layman. The Most Holy Sacrament in the mass is God's body.' John the Baptist touched this same Son of God in humble trembling fear while leading a holy life of such dignity that he heard the voice of the heavenly Father and caught his words and saw the Holy Spirit and recognized the Son in them both.47 John the Baptist also preached the holy Christian faith openly to all the people and pointed out for the people with his finger the true Son of God who was there present: "Behold the Lamb of God."" Neither pope nor bishop nor priest can ever speak so perfectly the word of God as did John the Baptist, except through our Christian faith which is above human understanding. Was this man really a layman? Prove me wrong, you who are blind! Your lies and your hate shall never be forgiven you without punishment!

37. You Should Praise God, Lament, and Ask for Twelve Things

Blessed are you, dear Lord Jesus Christ, God, Son of the living God! Through the tenets of my faith I know truly that you are here present, true God and true man. In this same name I adore you, Lord, today as my God and my Lord, as my Creator and my Redeemer, as my most dearly Beloved of all men and the most worthy of all lords, now and forever. Lord, heavenly Father, lament to your Holy Trinity that I have sinned before your eyes without fear and without shame. Alas, help me today, generous God, with all your favor, for my heart has been darkened by the habit of sinning. Cleanse my heart today, Lord, of all earthly love; and pour down, Lord, your heavenly flood into my and soul, that I might weep over indignities to you and over how deplorable my sins are.

Lord, I thank you for all the favors that you, dear Lord, have shown us, are showing us and shall show us eternally. I ask you, Lord, heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, that you purify me with your grace of all my sins and protect me from all sin, and that you make me holy for eternal life with all virtues.

I ask you, Lord Jesus Christ, by your holy death and by the pitiful suffering your holy body suffered on the holy cross, that you, Lord, with the eyes of your divine mercy, of your human faithfulness and the favor of the Holy Spirit, deign to look upon all my distress and, at the end, my death. Give me then, Lord, your very own body, that I might receive you, Lord, with true Christian faith, with genuine love, so that your holy body might be and remain the last food of my body and the eternal bread of my poor soul.

I ask you further, dearest Lord, that you might want to comfort my poor soul with your own self and might release me from all enemies. I ask you, dearest Lord Jesus Christ, that you then receive my poor soul into your fatherly hands and take me then in great joy out of this wretched banishment into the land of your blessed Father, where, Lord, I might bless you and praise you

with all the saints who are now there present and shall yet come. Grant this to me, dear Lord Jesus Christ, and to all those with me who are kind and faithful to me out of love for you. And come to the aid of those with me, too, who are unkind and unfaithful to me against your wishes, together with all those who, with me, are believing Christians.

I ask you, Lord, for the sake of your own honor that you give us Christians always on the chair in Rome a leader filled with all Christian virtues through which Holy Christianity may expand in love and be freed from all sins and be made holy with all virtues, so that you, dear Lord, might see fit today to free with your almighty hand Jerusalem and all the towns and lands that are oppressed by unjust power, for the sake of your three glorious names."

Together with all the saints I ask you, dearest Jesus Christ, for Christian peace, for a sufficient harvest and for good weather for this land and for all Christian lands. I ask you, dear Lord, that you keep your friends in your service and that you convert your enemies and undermine their wickedness. I ask you, Emperor of all honors and Crown of all princes, Lord Jesus Christ, on behalf of the princes in this land and those of all Christian lands, that you deign today to unite them in your Holy Spirit, so that they never again instigate a sinful war against your will and against their own well-being.

I pray to you, dear Jesus Christ, for all Christians who are today in distress, suffering drought, are sick, in prison, in sadness, in severe poverty. I ask you in your generous kindness that you might so comfort them today that they may never lose your eternal comfort and your blessed favor.

I pray to you, holy Father of heaven, for all Christian souls that depart from their bodies today, that you, merciful God, might be their Preserver and impart to them eternal life. Ah, dear Lord, have mercy on the souls of my father and mother, and on all the souls in purgatory. Free them, Lord, at this hour through your three glorious names. May they rest in peace. Amen.50

I pray to you, dear Lord, for all my companions," that you may give all of us the virtues that purify and sanctify our life for your praise and for the benefit of Holy Christianity. Receive today, Lord, this prayer and my lament, and hear and answer me according to your grace. Amen.

38. No one Can Destroy God's Heaven. Hell Drives God Out

"Alas, dear Lord, almighty God, how long shall I stand here on the earth of my flesh like a stick or a target that people run, hurl, and shoot at, having long ago sullied my honor with cunning and malice?"

Now listen to this reply:

“No one is so swift of foot,
No one is so strong at hurling,
No one is so cunning in shooting,
No one is so malicious in his rage
That he can destroy my heaven
Or smash to pieces or damage the place where I dwell.
What is more: Those who today offer me shelter
And tomorrow throw me out,
They are like hell.
Whose foundation I am,
I shall be his pinnacle as well.”

"Alas, Lord, who shall help me that I always travel on the path that, if I slip, I not fall?"

Fear of God shall keep me upright; God's will shall guide me.

39. The Reflection of God's Radiance by Our Lady and Her Power

Oh, oh, oh, three Persons have one name undivided in one God. Gracefully they flow full force toward Mary's countenance, inseparable in one light beam, richly bestowing the bright light of heavenly honors. With an indescribable greeting52 it touches her heart, which shines and glows in such a way that the sublime reflection of the Holy Trinity lingers on her countenance.

It flows farther still
And fills all the humble vessels of love,
Giving them splendor and honor
Far beyond the others.

In this bright reflection our Lady can well make demands. And yet, if she wants to request something, she does so with humility; for God in his love became man in her humility. Does our Lady need humility in heaven? Only to the extent that she honors God more than herself, submissively together with all the blessed who follow her example.

Our Lady's radiance is illumined by all the pure gifts that she received from God. She is adorned as well with all the virtues perfectly. She is crowned with all dignity. Thus does she flow back into God full of all charm.

How our Lady feels bliss in the Holy Trinity and how God unites himself to her beyond how he does with all pure persons cannot be expressed in words. But to the degree they were united here on earth, our Lady feels bliss in heaven, and, in like measure, our Lord pours into her, beyond what he does with all the other saints. Our Lady has power over all the devils to keep them away from people. And that is why we like to proclaim our Ave Maria in her splendorous presence: so that she might remember us here.

40. Temptation, the World, and a Good End Test Us

No one knows how firmly he stands until he has been flung into the temptations of the body.

No one knows how strong he is until he is assailed by the wickedness of the world.

No one knows how good he is until he has achieved a good end.

41. How God's Splendor Is Reflected in a Human Being and in the Angels

You53 want me to continue to write, but I cannot. Bliss, glory, brightness, intimate love, truth: these so overwhelm me that I have become dumb, unable to say more of what I know.

And yet: A mirror was seen in heaven before the breast of each soul [and body] .54 In it shines the mirror of the Holy Trinity, giving truth and knowledge of all the virtues the body ever practiced and of all the gifts the soul had ever received on earth. From here the glorious reflection of each and every person shines forth back again into the sublime majesty from which it flowed forth. The radiance of the angels is fiery, bright with love, for they take great delight in our blessedness. They serve us effortlessly and their reward increases while the earth exists. True love of God has the same power in the angels that it does in men. That our serving requires great effort is due to our being sinful.

42. Sister Mechthild Wrote the Following in a Note to Her Brother B., of the Order of Preachers, Saying55

"The greatest j oy in heaven is the will of God. When unwillingness becomes willingness, God's j oy enters into the heart of a sad person. This is the confession of a spiritual person-that one has carelessly scorned a gift that comes from God. We should accept gifts of pain with j oy. We should accept gifts of comfort with fear. Thus we can put all things that come our way to good use.

Dear friend, be in harmony with God, and be happy with his will.

[43. This Writing Flowed out of God's

The writing in this book flowed out of the living Godhead into Sister Mechthild's heart and has been as faithfully set down here as it was given by God, out of her heart and written by her hand. Thanks be to God.]57

Book VII

1. The Crown and the Dignity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Which He Shall Receive After the Last Day

Our Lord, the heavenly Father, in his divine wisdom has stored away many ineffable gifts with which he intends to adorn his chosen children after the last day. Especially for his only begotten Son, Jesus, our Redeemer, has the heavenly Father prepared and fashioned a crown with such rich and exquisite workmanship that all the craftsmen who ever existed, are now, and ever shall be could not fully capture the splendor and rich delights of this crown. The spiritual eyes of the loving soul beheld this crown in limitless eternity and its nature was made known to her. What is this thing called eternity? It is the uncreated wisdom of the infinite Godhead that has neither beginning nor end.

The crown has three arches. The first arch is that of the patriarchs, the second that of the prophets, the third that of Holy Christianity. The crown is formed by the images and decorated with the presence of all the blessed who are destined to possess God's kingdom on the last day. They shall have honor that is portioned out to them according to their works.

The first arch of the crown is fashioned and illumined with the precious stones of the holy interior life and good works the patriarchs ever performed. The arch is also formed by human likeness, body and soul. The first likeness on the arch of the crown is that of St. Stephen, and all the martyrs who ever shed their blood in Christian faith are depicted together with him. Next to this, St. Peter and all God's apostles with him are also depicted; then come all the blessed who followed the teachings of the apostles. Those married people shall also be depicted on this arch, together with their children, who have followed God through good works.

The second arch of the crown is covered with the likenesses of the popes together with all the spiritual fathers to whom God entrusted his sheep. This arch is fashioned with all spiritual authority and decorated with the flowers of Christian teaching.

The third arch of the crown is formed most beautifully of all, with the noble human form of our Lord Jesus Christ, and with him his glorious mother Mary with all her virgins who shall follow the Lamb.' St. John the Baptist is represented there very close to the Lamb, and all those who became Christians under his hands are splendidly represented with him. This arch of the crown is adorned with the natures of all creatures in accordance with the love and affection that the creator had for them when he created all things according to his will.

The crown is garlanded with many knightly shields of mighty Christian faith. The empire shall also be represented on the crown, fashioned and decorated down to the very last peasant, their honor always depending on how well they served God.

At the time of the Antichrist the crown shall be crenelated with many a glorious image, such as that of Elias and Enoch, and many holy martyrs shall be there before them wearing the flowers of the holiness of their life and enhanced by their precious blood.

The crown shall also be dyed in the blood of the Lamb, and shall shine forth and be gilded with the powerful love that broke the sweet heart of Jesus in two. Our heavenly Father created this crown; Jesus Christ earned it; the Holy Spirit fashioned it and hammered it out in fiery love, making it so pliable with the refined skills of the Holy Trinity that it fits our Redeemer Jesus Christ so well and looks so glorious on him that the heavenly Father receives more joy still from his only begotten Son. This has to be, even though the eternal Godhead without a beginning always contained all bliss and joy within itself, does now, and ever shall. And yet it causes him special eternal joy, that he shall gaze with such happiness upon his eternal Son, together with all his followers.

When Jesus Christ has held his last judgment and has served and celebrated his last supper, he shall receive this crown from his Father in great honor and with him all those who in body and soul with great effort have come to the eternal feast. Each soul and body shall see its honor on the crown.

The crown was produced on earth at a great cost-not with gold, nor with silver, nor with jewels; rather, with human toil, with human tears, sweat, and blood, with all the virtues and, finally, with painful death. Angels will not be seen on the crown because they are not human beings. But they shall praise God for the crown with delightful song.

The first choir sings: "We praise you, Lord, because of your glorious law from which have come forth all here present whose likenesses appear on your crown."

The second choir: "We praise you, Lord, with the faith of Abraham and with the fervent longing and prophecies of all the prophets."

The third choir: "We praise you, Lord, with all the wisdom and piety of all your apostles."

The fourth choir: "We praise you, Lord, with the blood and the constancy of all your martyrs."

The fifth choir: "We praise you, Lord, for the holy prayer and Christian teaching of all the baptists and confessors."

The sixth choir: "We praise you, Lord, with the steadfastness of the penitence of your widows."

The seventh choir: "We praise you, Lord, with the chastity of all virgins."

The eighth choir: "We praise you, Lord, with the fruit of your mother and virgin."

The ninth choir: "We praise you, Lord, for your holy death and your glorious life after your death, and for your great outpouring of every gift and every goodness with which, Lord, you have raised us up and admirably ranked us. We praise you, Lord, with your fiery love in which you have made us one."

Above the crown flies the loveliest banner ever seen in this empire. This shall be the holy cross on which Christ suffered his death. The cross has four ends. The bottom end is decorated with bliss brighter than the sun. On the right side beneath the cross the pillar is suspended upright, stained with the blood of the Lamb, festooned and decorated with the nails with which our Lord was wounded. At the top of the tree of the cross hangs suspended the fairest imperial thorn-crown of the realm.

The thorns have blossoms
Lily white, rosy pink,
Delightful, bright as heaven.

That is the banner of the crown with which Jesus won the victory and returned alive to his Father.

Right after the last day, at the eternal celebration, when God has made all things new, this crown will be revealed and will sit lightly upon the humanity of our Lord to the glory and praise of the Holy Trinity and the joy of all the blessed evermore.

The humanity of our Lord is an intelligible image of his eternal Godhead,2 so that we can grasp the Godhead with the humanity and, like the Holy Trinity, enjoy, hug, kiss, and embrace God in an incomprehensible manner, whom neither heaven nor hell nor purgatory can ever grasp or resist. The eternal Godhead shines forth, lighting up all the blessed who are in its presence and making them ready for love, so that they freely rejoice and live ever free of interior suffering. The humanity of our Lord greets, rejoices, and loves his flesh and his blood without ceasing. Though there is no longer flesh and blood there, still the brotherly kinship is so great that he has to love his human nature in a special way.

The Holy Spirit, too, shares its heavenly outpouring of love, enriching the blessed and so utterly satisfying them that they sing with joy, charmingly laugh and leap with measured step, flow and float along. They soar and climb from choir to choir to the heights of the realm where they gaze into the mirror of eternity' and understand the will and all the works of the Holy Trinity and how they themselves have been formed in body and soul, as they shall remain forever. The soul is formed in the body with human qualities but has a divine shimmer about it and shines through the body as radiant gold shines through pure crystal.

Thus do they[4] become utterly free and happy,
Agile, strong, and filled with love,
Radiant and as godlike as one can be.
They travel about wherever they want
As swiftly over a thousand leagues

As one here forms a thought.
Just think what such movement is like!
And yet never can they touch or grasp an end of this kingdom.
The expanse of space and streets of gold are overly large,
And yet are the right size and not really golden.
They are infinitely better than gold and precious stones.
These things are completely of the earth and shall be annihilated.

And now comes the end of the crown: The Holy Spirit will be fashioning the crown until the last day. Then the Father and the Son shall reward him for his work. As recompense hey shall give him all the souls and bodies that are assembled in the kingdom of God. There within them the Holy Spirit shall rest eternally, and he shall constantly hail them and fill them with joy. Everything that was ever done or will ever be done for the love of God, everything that was ever endured or forsaken for God's sake shall all blossom forth on the crown. Ah, what a crown! Ah, who can help me become a tiny flower on the crown like the newly baptized infants who are the tiniest flowers on the crown?

If this description is too long, it is because I take such rich delight in the crown. Actually, I have set down many a long description with few words. I say this to myself: "How much longer, helpless puppy, will you go on yapping? You have to quiet down because I have to keep silent about what is finest."

2. How a Person Prayed for All the Souls on All Souls 'Day

On All Souls' Day I prayed together with Holy Christianity for all the souls that are doing penance in purgatory. Then I saw a purgatory that was like a stove. On the outside it was black; inside it was full of fiery flames. Looking inside I saw how they stood in the flames and burned like a bundle of straw. Then someone was standing next to me who looked like a large angel. I asked him how it was that the souls squeezed themselves outside when the prayers of good people reached them. Some squeezed themselves outside and some were unable to do so. Then he whom I asked answered me: "When they were on earth, they did not want to come to the aid of those who were begging them for help in their distress."

Then my soul was moved to pity because of their power and dignity, and cried to heaven: "Lord God, could I go inside to them and suffer with them so that they might come to you sooner?" Then our Lord revealed that he was the angel standing next to me, and he said: "If you are willing to go in, I shall go in with you." Then our Lord clasped the spirit of this person to himself and brought her inside. When the soul came inside with our Lord, she felt no pain. Then she asked how many of them there were. Our Lord said: "You can't finish counting them, and these are the ones for whom you prayed while they were on earth."

Then I found a person for whom I used to pray thirty years ago. And I was saddened because I had nothing to give him and, because of my wretchedness, I did not dare ask for great things from such a great Lord. Then I said the following words: "0 dear Lord, would you release them?" Then all at once they rose up in great numbers wonderfully whiter than snow, and they floated off toward paradise in pure sweet bliss. There they rested in joy. When they rose out of the fire, they all sang the following psalm: "Praise the Lord, ye children. After that they sang: "We praise you, Lord, for the greatness of your goodness, for the generousness of your gift and for the faithfulness of your help."

Our Lord was still standing next to the place of fire and held the spirit of the person in his embrace. The soul of the person said: "0 Lord, you well know what I desire." This was that she might be at the feet of our Lord in order to thank him.

Our Lord then let her down,
And she thanked him again
That she was able to witness the great honor
That the poor souls had received from God.
Then she found on his feet
The rose-colored wounds
Of our true redemption.

Then she prayed: “Lord, give me your blessing.”
And our Lord said: “I bless you with my wounds.”

May this happen to me and to all God's friends and mine. This, alas, did not come about through my efforts, for I consider the entreaties of Holy Christianity to be worth much more than mine.

3. How Beneficial It Is for a Person to Examine His Heart Constantly with Humble Fear

I know of no one so good that it is unnecessary for him to examine his heart constantly, to recognize what dwells within it, and also to criticize with great frequency all his deeds. One should do this with humble fear. God's voice taught me this, for I have never performed any deed so well that I could not have done it better. This is what I criticize myself for.

This is how we should chide our frailty: "Well now, you most wretched of all creatures, how long do you intend to harbor useless habits in your five senses? Our childhood was foolish, our youth became troubled. How we then conquered is clear to God. Alas, in my old age there is, unfortunately, much that I must criticize, for it is unproductive in resplendent deeds and cold as to graces. It is powerless as well, since it does not have youth with which to sustain fiery love of God. It also has no tolerance for pain, so that a small twinge that youth would ignore is quite painful. But proper old age is joyfully patient and trusts in God alone.

Seven years ago a discouraged old person complained to God about this sorry state of things. God gave this reply:

“Your childhood was a playmate of my Holy Spirit.
Your youth was a bride of my humanity.
Your old age is now a housewife of my Godhead.”

Alas, dear Lord, what good is it that a dog barks if the owner of the house keeps on sleeping? The thief breaks into his house anyway.

And yet the prayer of a pure heart sometimes awakens the dead sinner. Woe, sinner! How bitterly can one weep for you, for you are your own murderer and you are harmful to all goodness and yet a benefit to it. A good person receives great profit when he sees someone weaken or fall into sin. He then looks very carefully around him so that he might not get into that trouble at all. Thus does a good person better himself through evil things. Freely performed good deeds then follow. But a wicked person gets worse when he sees bad examples. He becomes so evil that he looks with contempt upon good deeds and good people. And he is most comfortable with his own perverse wisdom.

My dear Schoolmaster, who taught me this book, silly stupid person though I be, also taught me the following saying: You should not trust someone who is not sincere in what he does. I know an enemy who is a destroyer of divine truth in the human heart. If one gives him room, he writes, with the approval of the person, false wisdom into the person's heart and says: "I am quick to anger and weak by nature." This is not an honorable excuse before God. With the help of grace you should become meek and strong.

"I have no grace." Then in your lack of grace you should call out to the God of grace with humble tears and with constant prayers in holy desire. Then the worm of anger will die. You must do violence to yourself. Then there will be no need for any hurtful force from God or anyone else to come upon you. Then the worm of anger shall be annihilated. If, with God, we want to overcome and drive out our anger and all our imperfections, we simply have to ignore our sinful temptations in secret and outwardly put on a holy, cheerful demeanor.

Alas, wretched brood, as long as we storm around in anger, even if there is anything good about us, we still have to come back to our heart.' Then we must rightly be ashamed. The anger consumed our strength and dried out our flesh, and so we wasted our valuable time when we should have been serving God. Alas, this is an eternal loss! Again, alas! I regret the sinful tears that were shed in haughty anger. The soul becomes so darkened thereby that a person is incapable the whole time of rightly enjoying any good things. But tears of sorrow are so holy. If a great sinner could shed one tear of sorrow for all his sins, he would never go to everlasting hell-if he remained in this disposition.

No matter how small the sins are that a good person commits regularly, which he just won't give up the while he lives-if he dies thus without confession and penance, no matter how holy he is, he will end up in bitter purgatory. For as merciful as God is, he is also at the same time just and angered by all sins. I tell myself that love must dwell in us. Never should we be self-righteous. Then humility will dwell within.

4. Our Lord's Switch

Not long after I arrived at the convent,' I was so terribly afflicted with sickness that my Lady felt pity. So I said to our Lord: "Dear Lord, what is your purpose with this suffering?" And our Lord said this:

"All your paths have been measured out;
All your footsteps have been counted.
Your life has been sanctified.
Your end shall be happy,
And my kingdom is very close to you."

"Lord, why is my life sanctified, since I can do so little that is good?"

Then our Lord said: "Your life has become sanctified because my switch never leaves your back."

We praise you, God,' that God is so good.

5. Why the Convent Was Once Undergoing Trials

One should do good to those who one knows are in need of it. For I do not want to have from the convent the good that one withholds from them. This is the explanation: Each one according to his office should in mercy do good to those he knows to be in need.

6. The Chapter Room1° and How a Person Should Examine His Infractions and Weep for Them; Two Golden Pennies and Good Will and Desire

Whoever has this knowledge, let him lament and weep with me. For the chosen children of God frequently take God's body, receiving it in a holy manner. But I have to go to my chapter room accompanied by my burning conscience.

Then my unworthiness comes and chides me.
Then my indolence comes and accuses me.
Then the frivolousness of my personality comes and points out my capriciousness to me.
Then the wretchedness of my useless life comes and saddens me.
Then fear of God comes and scourges me.

Then I crawl forward like a tiny worm on the ground and hide myself under the grass of my many various omissions all my days. There I sit and cry to heaven: "0 merciful God, grant me that I might today share in the grace that your chosen ones have now received."

Thereupon our Lord replied: "Take two golden pennies that weigh the same and go shopping with them. If they are of equal value, they are equally good."

"Alas, dear Lord, how can my wretchedness be equal to your goodness? For I am not the person who could well offer you honor. I have nothing that is suitable for you, and for consolation my soul clings to worthless nothings in the world. And so I am rejected and, alas, corrupt. I am not at all what I have long desired to be."

Our Lord said: "With good will and with holy desire you can make good whatever you want."

7. How a Person May Always Be United with God

For a person to be constantly united with God is heavenly bliss beyond all earthly pleasure. How is this supposed to happen to us? Our longing should constantly accompany all our actions, and we should constantly examine all our actions in Christian faith and from God's point of view, and never be useless. Thus we praise God with all our works for all the works he ever performed on earth for love of us. Then we are united with him in his works on earth with celestial love. After this we shall be spiritually illumined. Then we praise our Lord God with all the gifts that he ever gave us: our body and possessions, friends and relatives, and all the earthly joy that we could desire. In so doing we thank God for all his generous gifts that he ever gave us on earth for body and soul. Then we are united with God in the love of receiving and in humble gratitude. We should thereby press all God's gifts to our heart. Then our heart becomes full of love, our senses are opened, and our soul so resplendent that we look into divine knowledge like someone who sees his own countenance in a bright mirror. Thus can we know God's will in all our actions, so that we glorify God's will and love it whether it brings suffering or comfort; and we are happy about what happens to us, except for sin. This we should weep over and hate, for it is always cursed. Thereby we on earth become united with the saints in heaven because they are the happiest of all about the will of God in heaven.

I do not know how the enemy found out when God gave me this knowledge at night and I was united in it with great joy. He came to me and spoke to me in confidence because he wanted to trick me. I heard his voice with my fleshly ears, and I saw his form with spiritual eyes-black, filthy, and like a frightening human. But I was not afraid of him. This is why: Whenever God's grace is present in the soul and occupies the senses, the body cannot be afraid in his presence. But when the body is still occupied with useless activity-if he comes then, the body suffers such pain in his presence that I have never suffered that amount of pain in my life.

Then he said to me: "I dreamed at night that I was rich and had a lot of possessions."

He wanted me to think that this holy union of God with the soul was just a dream. The housewife of the body, the soul, said inwardly: "You are not truthful."

And he said: "Yes, and I shall exist as long as God lives."

And the soul said: "You certainly are smart. Tell me, what should I do?"

The devil went too far: "You should be happy and should make a show of this great event in your demeanor."

The soul: "Unfortunately, I am not so small that I can grasp through the eye of the needle all my enemies to the heavenly gates of my everlasting land."

The devil: "You are shielded all too well."

The soul: "In your words I recognize your falseness, doubt, empty glory, and arrogance. Even if a steel wall up to the clouds were around me, my heart would still never be free and safe from my enemies."

Then he stood there and trembled before me. Oh, how full of falseness that seemed to me to be! Then he tore out his hair and sprang away angrily.

8. How a Person Seeks God

When God chooses to withdraw from someone, that person seeks our Lord God and says:

“Lord, my suffering is deeper than the abyss.
My heart’s anguish extends outward wider than the world.
My fear is larger than the mountains.
My longing is higher than the stars.
Nowhere in these things can I find you.”

In this distress the soul noticed her Lover near her, resembling a fair young lad, so fair that it cannot be described. And yet she would have hidden herself. Then she falls at his feet and greets his wounds. So sweet are they that she can no longer feel any of her pain or anything of her age. And she thought: "Alas, how much you would like to look upon his countenance, but then you would have to abandon his wounds. And how much you would like to hear his words and wishes." Then she arises clothed and adorned in spotless propriety.

Then he says: "Welcome, my dearest love." In the sound of the words she knew that every soul that serves God in his favor is his dearest love.

Then he said: "I must temper you as to pleasure, both yours and mine." The pleasure is beyond describing.

He said: "Receive this crown of virgins." Then the crown went from him and came onto her head. It shone as though it were of pure gold. The crown was double and was also the crown of love.

Then our Lord said: "This crown shall be displayed before the whole army of heaven."

Then she asked: "Lord, are you going to receive my soul tomorrow after I have received your holy body?"

"No," he said, "you are to become richer still in suffering."

"Lord, what should I be doing here in this convent?"

"You should illumine and teach them and should remain with them in great honor."

Then she thought: "Ah, now you are here alone with our Lord."

As she thought this, she saw two angels standing next to her. They were as worthy of respect as secular princes are in comparison to poor people. Then she said: "How can I now hide?"

They said: "We shall bring you from suffering to suffering, from virtue to virtue, from knowledge to knowledge, from love to love."

That a sinful mouth should and must say all this is difficult for me; and yet, before God and because of obedience, I dare not omit it. May I keep a human sense of shame and fear of God all my days!

9. How the Loving Soul Praises Our Lord with All Creatures

The loving soul never has enough of praising. That is why she gathers within herself in her longing everything that God ever created and then calls out to heaven: "Lord, if it were possible that all these people were as perfect and as holy as your blessed mother, Mary, that still would not be enough for wretched me for praising you fully with your only begotten Son. Lord, can one ever praise you enough? No, and that makes me happy."

To this our Lord replied: "Those virgins who have long served me shall praise me."

10. This Happened at a Time When There Was Great Turmoil

I prayed to our Lord for distress caused by war and for the many sins of the world. And our Lord answered and said: "The stink of sins nauseates me from the abyss of earth to the heavens. If it were possible, they would drive me out. Sins once did drive me out; then I came in humility and served the world until my death. Now nothing like that can ever happen again. Now because of sin I must sometimes bring my justice into play."

"Dear Lord, what then should we poor wretches do?"

Our Lord said: "You should humble yourselves under the restless hand of God almighty and fear him in all your actions. I shall yet free my people from all distress; they are my friends. Prayer in common appeases my heart. I shall show how I am disposed. I hear with pleasure the prayers of religious people who mean it from the heart": Our help is in the name of the Lord. Praise the Lord all ye nations. And the Son is glorified. The kingdom of the world. My heart leapt up. Whom I saw. Glory be to the Father and the Son."

"Lord heavenly Father, accept your service and your praise from your downcast children and free your people from this present distress and release us all from all our bonds except from the bonds of love. May they never be taken from us!"

11. How Our Lord Was Seen Looking Like a Worker

Our Lord showed me an allegory that he realized in me and still does. I saw a poor man get up from the ground. He was clothed in poor linen cloth like a worker. In his hands he had a carrying frame. On it lay a burden similar to the earth. I said: "My good man, what are you carrying?"

"I am carrying," he said, "your sufferings. Turn your will toward suffering; lift, and carry."

And the person said: "Lord, I am so poor that I do not have anything."

Our Lord said: "This is what I taught my disciples when I said: `Blessed are the poor in spirit.'12 This is the case when a person can do nothing but would like to-that is spiritual poverty."

The person: "Lord, if it is you, turn your face toward me so that I can recognize you."

And our Lord said: "Recognize me within."

The soul: "Lord, if I were to see you in the midst of thousands, I would easily recognize you." My heart turned me within into a guard and I did not dare dispute with him that it was he. So I said: "Dear Lord, this burden is too heavy."

And our Lord said: "I shall put it so close to me that you can carry it quite well. Follow me and see how I stood on the cross in the sight of my heavenly Father, and remain like that."

She said: "Lord, give me your blessing for it."

"I bless you without ceasing. There will be good help for your sufferings."

"Lord, help in this all those who willingly suffer torment for love of you."

12. How a Person Should Resist Vain Honor and Temptation

Whenever a person thinks well of himself, vain honor immediately leaps forth out of a corner of the human heart along with sinful desire and tries to sprawl out into the five senses. Then one should take oneself in hand and instantly beat one's breast in humble fear and bless oneself with the sign of the holy cross. Then it will immediately disappear, as if it had never existed. I in my wretchedness have often had this experience. One should do this same thing the minute evil thoughts come shooting in. They, too, disappear because of the power of the holy cross-if one is really sorry for them.

13. How Our Lord Was Seen Looking Like a Pilgrim

I, a poor unworthy person, shall disregard myself and tell what I have seen and heard in God. One night I saw our Lord standing there in the likeness of a pilgrim. He acted as if he had been trudging through all of Christendom. I fell at his feet and said: "My dear pilgrim, where are you coming from?"

He said: "I'm coming from Jerusalem." By that he meant Christianity. "And I have been driven from my shelter. The heathens do not acknowledge me, Jews do not want me, Christians attack me."

Then I prayed for Christianity. And our Lord made clear in fine detail his innocence regarding the great shame that he suffers from Christianity and explained how much good he has done for Christianity from the beginning and how he has labored for Christians and day after day still searches for ways to pour his grace into them.

Then our Lord again complained and said: "People drive me from the shelter of their heart with their selfishness, and when I find no room in them, I let them be in their selfishness. And when they die I judge them as I then find them to be."

Then I prayed for the convent: "Dear Lord, do not let them perish."

["I shall let no one perish."]" "I shall put a light in their cemetery. In it they shall know themselves."

14. God's Choosing and Blessing

Another night, while I was at prayer and filled with longing and oblivious of myself, I became aware of our Lord. He was standing in the cemetery and had the whole community before him lined up according to when they had entered the convent. And our Lord said to them: "I have chosen you. If you choose me, I shall give you something."

Then I said: "Lord, what shall you give them?"

And he said: "I shall make of them on earth shining mirrors, so that all who see them shall recognize their life in them. And in heaven I shall make them radiant mirrors, so that all who look upon them will know that I have chosen them." Then our Lord stretched forth his hand and gave them his blessing saying: "I bless you with myself. Choose me in all your thoughts."

The ones who choose our Lord in all their thoughts are those blessed who praise our Lord fittingly.

Then I said: "They are going to ask me in what form and fashion I saw you."

And he said: "There are some among them who know me."

15. How a Person Who Loves Truth Should Pray

The person who loves truth likes to pray thus: "Ah, dear Lord, grant me and help me that I always seek you in a holy manner with all my five senses in all things, for I have chosen you in preference to all lords and all sovereigns as Bridegroom of my soul. Grant me also, Lord, that I might find you with all my longing, burning or spent though it be. I desire also that I may enjoy you with the flowing love of all your gifts. Give me, Lord, abundantly of your outflowing, that it fill my heart and mind so that pain, scorn, and bitterness may ever feel pleasant to me. Grant me that it may ever turn out that way for me through your favor, generous God; now grant me this. Help me also, Lord, to keep you by giving up completely my own will according to your desire. Then I would never, ever lose that love that never ceases to burn. Amen."

16. How a Person Spoke and Prayed

For a long time a person desired more than all gifts and suffering that God release her soul with a holy end. And our Lord said: "Wait for me."

The person said: "Dear Lord, I cannot control my longing; I would so dearly like to be with you."

Our Lord said: "I longed for you before the beginning of the world. I long for you and you long for me. Where two burning desires meet, there love is perfect."

17. How Knowledge Speaks to the Conscience

Knowledge said to the conscience: "No matter how much people despise you and inflict suffering upon you, nevertheless stand pure in God."

Conscience: "Lady Knowledge, you have put it very well. To feel comfortable in all kinds of trouble a person must have a

humble heart."

Knowledge: "Lady Conscience, you have such a fine mirror in which you frequently examine yourself very meticulously. This14 must indeed be the living Son of God with all his works. It cannot be that you are so wise by some other means."

Conscience: "Lady Knowledge, when I examine myself in it, I experience both pleasure and pain. Pleasure, because God comes to me as a flowing goodness; pain, because I am so feeble in good works."

Knowledge: "Lady Conscience, in all things you prefer God's will and God's glory to your own benefit for body or soul. You are hell for the devil and heaven for God. To what can one compare you?"

Conscience: "Lady Knowledge, everything I have from God was given me on loan, so that with it I might gain praise and glory for him and for my own benefit as well. For if I am to pay him back, I shall certainly need his grace."

Knowledge: "Lady Conscience, you are very much fettered by the sins of the world, and the imperfections of religious people cause you much heartache. They have freedom of choice to go to heaven or to hell or to a long stay in purgatory. That is a heavy burden for you."

Conscience: "Lady Knowledge, I do not complain because I am met with dislike or because I have days of suffering. Rather, I feel sorrow for the sins of the world just as I do for my own. Suffering cleanses the body of sin and sanctifies the soul in God. This is why we joyfully stand ready for its command."

Knowledge: "Lady Conscience, the well-intentioned high and mighty in the world offer up to God their possessions and their alms. Religious people offer their flesh and blood in his service, offering up to God, above all things, their own will in obedience. That weighs more, that has greater value."

Conscience: "Lady Knowledge, that is not enough. If we want to enjoy God in the heights, we must have the crown of humility and pure chastity, from birth or chosen later, and the pinnacle of love before all else."

This same delightful garment is worn by the Holy Trinity: the Father-the pinnacle of love; the Son-pure, humble chastity that he imparted to all his chosen ones; the Holy Spirit-on fire with love for us in all our good actions in true humility.

Knowledge: "Lady Conscience, steadfastness in good things: that is a love that toils. One cannot do without it if one wants to possess with God the highest honor, both here and in his eternal realm. Happy the person who here strives for it."

18. Suggestions for the Seven Hours15 for Honoring the Passion of Our Lord

At matins:"

O great dew of the noble Godhead,
O tender blossom of the sweet maiden,
O beneficial fruit of the beautiful flowers,
O holy sacrifice of the heavenly Father,
O faithful pledge of redemption for the whole world, Lord Jesus Christ!
Receive your holy morning service as praise and honor
For your birth in exile, your lonely distress,
Your extreme suffering, your holy death,
Your glorious resurrection, your splendid ascension,
Your almighty glory as praise and honor.

Remember, dear Lord, that I must carry out your holy will to a good end in all I do and leave undone in my whole life to honor your Holy Trinity and for all those who are with me and in your name are your friends and mine.

At prime:

0 wretched shame, 0 dreadful pain that killed your glorious body and sweet heart. Help me, dear Lord, that I can and shall make the best of being despised and of all my interior suffering in your love, as it may please you in your eternal glory.

At terce:

O heavy burden, 0 wretched weight that you carried for us, Lord, under your cross! Carry us, Lord, through all our distress into eternal life.

At sext:

O bloody agony, O wounds so deep,
O pain so great.
Let me, Lord, not perish
In all my painful anguish. Amen.

At none:

O most blessed anguish, O most holy death,
O most delightful mirror of the heavenly Father,
Jesus Christ, fastened high on the cross by hand and foot!

I commend to you, Lord, my soul at my final end, that I may unceasingly and forever more be united with you just as your heavenly Father was and is. Grant this to me and to all who love you faithfully.

At vespers:

O bound flowing of love,
O faithful outpouring of the heart,
O glorious body that was killed there for my sake,
Dearest Lord Jesus Christ!

I beseech you that my five senses may and shall constantly rejoice in the bloody lance and in the wound of your heart, and that my lonely soul shall eternally rejoice therein, along with those for whom I shall and want to pray according to Christian practice. Amen.

At compline:

O holy depths of all humility,
O generous breadth of all gifts,
O glorious heights of all love,
In which you, Jesus Christ, pray to your heavenly Father!

Fulfill now, Lord, your prayers in us and sanctify us in truth, and give us the depths of all humility in which we may bow low beneath all creatures, since creatures resist someone who does not do as we do. Grant us, Lord, the breadth of all generosity, and that we, for love of you, fulfill willingly the rule of our order; and give us, Lord, the heights of your love that it may preserve us pure in you and uncorrupted by all earthly things. Amen.

19. The Greeting of Our Lady

Hail, dear Lady Mary, you are the everlasting joy of the Holy Trinity.
Hail, dear Lady Mary, you are the beginning of all our happiness.
Hail, dear Lady Mary, you are the companion of the holy angels here and in God's kingdom.
Hail, dear Lady Mary, you are the flower of the patriarchs.
Hail, dear Lady Mary, you are the hope of the prophets.
Hail, dear Lady Mary, you are the white lily of humble virgins.
Hail, dear Lady Mary, remember how the greeting came to you from Gabriel's mouth and welcome my soul in my final hour, and bring me with joy unspoiled out of this land of exile into the richly joyous land of your dear Child where I may find rest.

Hail, dear Lady Mary, you are the wisdom that taught the apostles.
Hail, dear Lady Mary, you are the rose of the martyrs.
Hail, dear Lady Mary, you are the protection of the confessors.
Hail, dear Lady Mary, you are the helper of all widows.
Hail, dear Lady Mary, you are the glory of all the saints of your dear Child. Pray for me, that I might be sanctified with them with all my works as far as it is possible for a lowly person like me, Mary, dear Empress.
Hail, dear Lady Mary, you are the refuge of sinners.
Hail, dear Lady Mary, you are the mighty helper of those in despair.
Hail, dear Lady Mary, you are the consoler of all Holy Christianity.
Hail, dear Lady Mary, you are the terror of all evil spirits, for they took flight from you. Drive them from me, dear Lady, that they never, ever find joy because of me, and may I ever be constant in your service.

20. How One Should Pray the Ave Maria to Our Lady

Hail, celestial Empress, Mother of God and the dear love of my heart. Receive, lady, your Ave Maria today as praise and honor for the blissful sight of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, which is wonderfully unconcealed and opened to the virginal maternal countenance, filled with all happiness. Ali, lady, remember all my longings and all my prayers, all my torments and all my distress and all my interior suffering, my honor, my soul, and my final end, when I leave this deplorable exile. I commend all of this ever and again to your motherly faithfulness and your maidenly honor and your womanly goodness and, in addition, I commend all those with me who are my friends and yours in the name of God almighty, my dearest Lady, Mary, noble Empress!

21. How One Should Examine One's Heart Before Going to God's Tablet'

You" want to have instruction from me, but I myself am uneducated. What you are searching for you can find a thousand times better in your books.

Whenever I, in my unworthiness, am about to go up and receive the body of our Lord, I examine the countenance of my soul in the mirror of my sins. There I see myself as I lived, as I am now living, and as I shall live in the future. In this mirror of my sins I see nothing but alas and woe. Then I cast my face to the ground and weep plaintively, if I can, because eternal incomprehensible God is so kind that he wants to bow down to the filthy puddle of my heart. Then I call to mind that injustice it would be fairer if one were to drag my body to the gallows, like a thief who had stolen from his rightful lord the precious treasure of purity, which God gave me in holy baptism.

As long as we live,
We shall ruefully lament
That we have darkened ourselves.
For this, Lord, may you forgive us like a father.

If a person did not confess a sin and has no intention of confessing it, he should not receive God's body.

Now I shall approach true hope
And shall thank God
That I was ever noticed,
That it can actually happen to a wretched person like me
That I may receive the body of God.
Now I shall joyfully go to God's table
And I shall receive that same bloody Lamb
That willed to be on the cross,
Bloody, with his holy five wounds untended.
Fortunate for us that this ever happened.
In his holy passion I shall endure all my troubles.
We go joyfully, then, and with hearts filled with love
And with our souls open, and receive our Beloved,
The most Beloved of our hearts,

And lay him down in our soul
As in a cozy cradle,
And sing his praise and honor
For that first hardship that he wished to endure
When he lay in the crib.
Then we bow down with our soul and our five senses
And thank our dear One and speak thus:
"Lord, I thank you for you.
I ask you now whether you might give me your jewels,
That I might live pure,
Free from all sin.
Lord, where shall I then put you?

I shall give you what I have.
I shall put you in my little bed.
This little bed is made completely of suffering.
When I ponder your suffering,
I forget about mine.
Lord, you shall lay my cheek down for me.
The pillow for my cheek is the pain I feel within
That I am not always ready
To receive your gifts of suffering.
That, Lord, is my whole lament.
The bed's blanket is my longing

That binds me.
Now if, Lord, you wish to soothe me,
Then do my will
And give me those sinners
Who are in the state of mortal sin.
Then you will bring joy to my soul.
Lord, what then do we want to say about love
As we are lying here so close together
In the bed of my suffering?
I have received you, Lord,
As you were when you arose from the dead.
Dear One to my heart, now console me
That I might remain pure with you always.

Great happiness shall follow.
Give me, Lord, the guilty souls from purgatory,
Though I do not have enough to pay the ransom.
I have just received you, Lord,
As you were when you ascended to heaven.
Now, Dearest, you should not be too easy on me.
I would like one day to die of love.
Lord, you can satisfy me no other way.
Give me, Lord, and take from me, Lord,
Everything you want,
And leave me just this wish—
That I might die of love in love. Amen."

22. Praise of the Heavenly Father

It is well for me that I praise you, God, all ways for your noble goodness, that you have chosen me for your holy service. Sanctify my heart and mind, that I might receive all your gifts with holy inwardness and might remain with you in joy.

23. How One Should Thank the Son

It is well for me to thank you, imperial Son of God. I shall thank you always that you took me, in the world, out of the world. Your holy pain that you suffered for my sake is mine. All that I ever suffer I want to give to you in return. Even though this is an unequal bargain, it nevertheless makes my soul free. Keep me always in your favor, so that you may be praised forever. Jesus, my dearly Beloved, loosen my bonds; let me remain with you.

24. The Flood of Love

It is well for me to thank you, Holy Spirit. It is my belief that you are one Person of the Holy Trinity. Your sweet loving spring waters erase all the suffering of my heart, for they come forth softly out of the Holy Trinity. I beg you, Lord Holy Spirit, to protect me from all malice of the evil spirits with your divine love, so that they not find in me what they are seeking.

25. The Greeting for the Holy Trinity

I, lacking all virtues; I, fragile in my being; if I dare or can, then I shall greet the sublimity, the splendor, the bliss, the wisdom, the nobility, and the wondrous oneness of the Holy Trinity. Out of it has flowed forth immaculate all that was, that is, that ever shall be. There I must one day enter again. How shall that happen? I must crawl back, for I am sinful. I must make amends with good works. I must hurry with faithful diligence. I must fly with the feathers of doves-these are virtues and goodness and a holy frame of mind. I must soar in all things above myself. When I am utterly spent, then I shall enter. How I shall then be received-never has a human eye beheld such a sight; never has a human ear heard it; never could a human tongue

describe it.19 Glory to you, Trinity!20

26. How One Should Entreat God in Temptation

Lord Jesus Christ, I, a poor human being, implore you and desire your help, for my enemies are hunting me down. Lord God, I appeal to you, for they want to drive me from you. Lord, almighty Son of God, drive them away from me. Do not deliver me into their power, and keep me pure in you, for you have redeemed me with your suffering. Be now my help and my consolation. Lord, let me not perish, for you willingly died for my sake. Lord Jesus Christ, I seek your help. Awaken my soul from the sleep of my lethargy and illumine my senses from the darkness of my flesh. Accompany me as I travel all my paths to you, as far as is humanly possible, without sin; for your eyes see my failings.

Mary, Mother of God, heavenly Empress!
May you be my helper in this,
For I am, alas, a sinner.
May I find favor
With your dear Child.
Mother of all chastity.
I lament all my interior suffering to you.
Hail Queen![21]

27. How a Religious Person Should Turn His Heart Away from the World

When a person in religious life sees his relatives and dearest friends fashionably dressed and decked out, he indeed needs to be armed with the Holy Spirit so that he not entertain the thought: you could have had such a life. From such a thought his heart becomes so dark and his mind so unreceptive to God and his mouth so sluggish for holy prayer and his soul so completely alienated from God that inwardly he resembles his relatives much more than he does a person in religious life.

If he wants to stand pure with God,
He must take up the struggle.
For his conscience is then clouded,
This beacon of the Holy Spirit.
For the conscience does not shine
Without the light of the Holy Spirit.
But when the beacon has been brightly lit,
Then is its splendor well recognized.
So it is, too, with a religious person
For whose heart the baubles of the world are a terror.

He preserves well his beacon unextinguished.
But if his heart is open to the world,
His beacon shatters
And the bitter north wind of craving the life of our kinfolk comes,
And they claim they are unaffected by the swamp
In which, alas, they are indeed sinking
And drowning in sin.
Thus is our beacon extinguished,
And yet we have nothing from worldly things.
After this comes the south wind,
The fraudulent allurements of the world,

That appear so beautiful
Yet contain much bitter suffering.
If this is what pleases us,
Eternal loss is ours.
We must indeed preserve ourselves,
For there is no sin so small
That it does not leave its eternal mark on the soul.
Why is this so?
Never was a sin repented so completely
That it would not have been better left undone.
And so we should be in constant fear

If we want to stand pure with God.
What we have given to God,
We can never take back without serious harm to ourselves;
For we were given to him in a fair deal.
The fish in water sees with great appetite the dead red bait
With which one wants to catch it.
But it does not see the hook.
So it is with the poison of the world.
She[22] does not reveal its danger.

If you really want to reform,
Then look to your Bridegroom,
Lord of the whole world.
How fair he stood there
Richly clothed in bloody red,
Blackened, battered with scourges,
Bound to the pillar.
There he received many piercing wounds for love of you.

Take this to heart
And you will be able to escape the deceits of the world.
If you would follow further with your holy thoughts,
Then look up and behold
How he stood there on the cross
Raised up on high before the eyes of the world,
Blood running down over him.
These garments shall be the darlings of your heart,
His kingly eyes brimming over with tears,
His sweet heart flooded with love.
Now harken to the voice
That teaches you of God's love:

How the henchmen's hammers pounded
And pierced through his hands and feet on the cross.
Remember, too, the wound of the lance
That went through his side to the center of his heart,
And lament to him all your sins.
Thus shall you gain knowledge of God.
Look at the piercing crown
That he wore upon his head.
Kiss him before all else.
He gives you richly all delights.
Thank him for wishing to die out of his great love for you,
And let no one deceive you.
Then you can be a queen of his realm forever.
If this is what you choose,
You shall in joy overcome the sufferings of the whole world.

28. The Misfortunes of War

I was commanded with a holy seriousness to pray for the troubles now going on in Saxony and Thuringia." When I set about doing this with prayers of praise and petition, our dear Lord did not receive me and remained gravely silent. I had to endure this in loving patience for seventeen days. Then I said to our dear Lord: "0 dear Lord, when is the fortunate hour to come that you want and that I must pray for because of this distress?"

Our Lord then revealed himself to me and said:

"The bliss-filled dawn,
Rich in hues,
Is the poor people
Who are now enduring many kinds of misfortune.
After this the eternal sun of everlasting light
Shall rise for them,
Which after this trial shall shine upon them in eternal joy.
They shall be made holy thereby and as bright as the dazzling sun
As it rises in mid-morning and reaches its zenith.

Some are in the army out of need and fear. These I shall let be taken prisoner and die, so that they can come to me. Those who are the causes of the war are more horrible in themselves and more fierce in their deeds than if they dared to attack the images in my churches."

Then I saw that eternal death followed those common foot soldiers who robbed and pillaged on the streets. If there were no war, they would be thieves and charlatans. But, as always, the bad people are making the blessed good. Thus must God show his love through suffering. He can win them no other way. Thus did God explain to me the advantages,24 and I know not when or where it shall finally end.

I know this for certain: that I shall gladden the hearts of God's friends. I know this for certain: that no matter what the friends of God suffer, God never forgets them, for he is their help and their consolation in all their troubles. We should fight on accordingly, and suffer willingly in joy. Then we shall sparkle and shine in the sight of God.

29. A Teaching

If you want to turn your heart completely to God,
You should hold onto three things as a teaching:
Fearful in the face of sin,
Well-intentioned as to all virtues,
Constant in all good things.
Then shall you bring your life to a good end.
If you make yourself act thus,

You can indeed accomplish it with God's help.
Pray to God for this constantly
And you shall bear all your troubles lightly.
Confess purely and serve God diligently
And you shall be rich in joy.

30. A Prayer When Virgins Receive Their Crown

Receive, Lord, your brides, and approach them with the lilies of pure chastity all their days.

Receive, Lord, your brides, and approach them with the roses of diligent work for a good end.

Receive, Lord, your brides, and approach them with the violets of profound humility and lead them to your bridal bed and, united inseparably with them, embrace them with all love forever. Amen.

31. A Lament

This is the lament of the loving soul,
The only one she cannot bear.
She must tell it to the friends of God
So that they may find love more enjoyable:
"Lovesick and weak in body,
The trials of suffering and the harshness of force,

This is what makes the way
To my dear Lord too long for me.
Lover, how can I do without you for so long?
Indeed, I am, alas, far too distant from you!
Lord, if you will not receive my complaint,
I must again take up my sorrowing
And wait and suffer both inwardly and outwardly.
You know full well, dear Lord,
How much I want to be with you."

Our Lord:

"When I come, I come in magnificence.
Never was there anguish so great
That I could not heal it completely.

You must continue to wait.
I want to prepare you better
Before I bring you to my Father,
So that you please us all the more.
I still hear your plaint of love with pleasure."

Whenever our human understanding grows dark,
With the lament in our heart we awaken divine love.

32. How the Works of a Good Person Shine Forth in Relation to the Works of Our Lord

How the works of a good person shall light up and shine in heavenly honor these words make evident:

To the degree that we have been innocent here, God's holy innocence shall light up and shine into our holy innocence.

To the degree that we perform good works here, God's holy toil shall light up and shine into our holy toil.

To the degree that we possess inwardness here in intimacy with God, God's holy intimacy shall richly light up and send sparks into our holy inwardness.

To the degree that we accept our suffering with gratitude here and bear it with patience, God's holy suffering shall light up and shine into our suffering.

To the degree that we have diligently practiced all virtues here, God's holy virtue shall light up and shine into our virtue with much glory. May this last forevermore.

To the degree that we here burn in love and shine in a holy life, God's love shall burn in our soul and our body unceasingly forever, and never be extinguished.

These counter-illuminations light up and shine forth from the eternal Godhead. We receive these good works from God's holy humanity and perform them through the power of the Holy Spirit. Thus do our works and our life return to the Holy Trinity. Then it becomes manifest how we are doing here. To the degree that we lead a holy life in divine love here, we shall blissfully soar there in the heights, and to that degree shall the power of love be given us there as a reward, that we receive the power to carry out our whole will, that we are known by the saints as we have been. Thereby shall we be their companions! Amen.

33. A Spiritual Potion

I am sick: I thirst longingly for the health potion that Jesus Christ himself drank. When he, God and man, came into the crib, the potion was ready at hand. He drank so much of it that he became so drunk with the fire of love that with all virtues he endured for us all his intense sufferings. He always bestowed virtue; his goodness never faltered. I long for a health potion. This potion is suffering for love of God.

Suffering is bitter. And so we grind up a spice called "willingly suffer." A second spice is called "patience in suffering." It is also bitter. And so to counter it we grind up another spice called "holy intimacy," which turns patience sweet, as well as all our hard work. A third spice is "to persevere long in suffering," waiting for our eternal life and salvation. This is also very bitter. And so to counter this we grind up a spice called "with joy unflagging."25

Ah, dear Lord, if you would give me this potion, I could live unflagging in suffering with joy. Then I would for a time forgo heaven. So intense is my longing for it. Lord, may you give this potion according to your very dear will, to me and to all those who desire it for love of you.

34. Spiritual Food

After a bitter potion one is certainly in need of tasty food. Rising desire and sinking humility and flowing love-these three maidens bring the soul up to heaven before God. And then she becomes aware of her Lover. She says: "Lord, I make my complaint to you that you are under attack by what is dearest to you on earth; namely, by Christians. Lord, I make my complaint to you that your friends are so seriously hampered by your enemies."

Our Lord: "If they have true goodness, they can transform all that they encounter, except for sin, in a marvelous manner into a valuable dissemination of the word of God." That is why suffering shouts the loudest of all ways of serving God: "Depart from me, for it is better for a person to be unconsoled in accordance with God's will than to be consoled in accordance with

his own will." God's will is pure; our will is very much contaminated by the flesh. All who inwardly love intensely become outwardly calm, for all outward effort hampers the inward spirit. What the spirit then sings inwardly transcends every earthly voice.

Patience sings most sweetly of all above the angelic choirs, for angels have no patience since they experience no pain. We have this from the humanity of our Lord, but all honor as well by which we are honored by God on earth and shall also be elevated in heaven. Through the noble struggle of our Lord and through his holy suffering our Christian struggle and our suffering, accepted in good spirit, are ennobled and made holy in the same way that all waters have been made holy from the River Jordan, in which our dear Lord was baptized.

Ah, dear Lord, help us that our holy desire may never rest and our sinking humility may never rear up in arrogance. May the flowing fire of the holy love of God be here our purgatory, where all our sins shall be devoured.

35. The Seven Psalms

Dear Lord Jesus Christ, I recite these holy seven psalms26 in praise and honor of all your holy suffering in which you wanted to die on the holy cross for my sake. Dearly Beloved, I ask you, when the time comes for you to carry out your command regarding me-that I am to die-may you then come to me as a trustworthy physician to his child; and give me then, Lord, a holy sickness in which I may prepare myself with the proper attitude and with true Christian faith. "Lord, rebuke me not in thy anger."27

I ask, dearest Lord, that you come to me as my very dearest friend in my distress, and bring me then, Lord, such sincere sorrow that all my sins shall be blotted out, so that they shall not sadden me after this life. "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven."28

I ask, dearest Lord, that you come as a trustworthy father confessor to his dear friend, and bring me then the true light, the gift of your Holy Spirit, that I might see and know myself in it, and lament all my sins from the heart with such holy hope that my mouth not become bound by all my sins and that I be found pure. And give me then, Lord, your very own body, that I may receive you, Dearest One, with as much love as ever a human heart can. May you remain sustenance for the journey of my lonely soul, so that I, Dearest One, remain your beloved companion with you for life eternal. Amen. "Lord, rebuke me not in thy anger. "29

I ask you, dear Lord, to come to me as a faithful brother to his dear sister, and bring me holy armor with which my soul may prepare herself, so that my enemies cannot harm me when they shall accuse me. May they feel shame for all their efforts directed against me. "Have mercy on me, 0 God."'°

I ask you, Lord, to come to me as a trusted father to his dear child, and watch over my end. When my sinful mouth can no longer speak, then speak to my soul inwardly that you might console her and protect her forever, so that I might feel joy and not sadness. For this I beg you, Lord, through your abundant goodness. Amen. "Hear my prayer, 0 Lord; let my cry come to thee!""

I ask you, Lord, to send me your virgin mother. I cannot do without her. May she then fulfill what I have long desired and defend my poor soul from all her enemies. "Out of the depths I cry to thee, 0 Lord!"32

I ask you, dear youthful Jesus, Child of the pure maiden, to come as my dearest bridegroom and make me rich, as is the custom for noble bridegrooms when they give their brides a handsome morning gift," and receive me on the arm of your love and cover me with the mantle of your long-cherished desire. Blessed am I forevermore when I am then released! If we were to think of this hour often, all our pride would sink to the ground, as he shall then reveal his glorious countenance to us. Then my soul shall have its favorite pastime. What I now painfully long for can never happen on earth as I wish it. "Hear my prayer, 0 Lord, give ear to my supplications.""

36. A Spiritual Convenf5

I begged God to let me know, if it were his will, that I might stop writing. Why? Because I know that I am just as weak and unworthy, and more so, than I was thirty years ago when I was required to begin. Then our Lord showed me a little sack in his hand and said: "I still have healing herbs."

And I said: "Lord, I don't know these herbs at all."

He said: "You shall well recognize them when you see them. With them one shall refresh the sick, strengthen the healthy, awaken the dead, and sanctify the good."

After this I saw a spiritual convent that was constructed of virtues.

The abbess is sincere love
Who has much holy understanding
With which she diligently preserves the community in body and soul,
All for the glory of God.
She gives them many a holy teaching—
Whatever God's will is.
Thereby she frees her own soul.

The lady chaplain of love is divine humility.
She is always subordinate to love.
Then pride must depart.

The prioress is the holy peace of God.
To her good will is given patience
To instruct the community in divine wisdom.
To whatever things she gives her attention
It is always done for God's glory.

The subprioress is amiability.
She it is who gathers up faults and disposes of them with kindness.
Whenever one does something wrong,

One should not carry it around inside for a long time.
Thus does God increase a person's goodness.

The chapter should have four things about it[36]:
Manifestation of holiness that is rooted in God's service.
Its calming efforts hurt the enemy and honor God.
This is cause for it to rejoice much.
It should guard against empty honor
And should be a help to honor for others.
If they serve diligently,
God shall reward them accordingly.

The choir mistress is hope.
She fills one with holy humble devotion
So that the impotence of the heart rings in song so beautifully before God
That God loves the notes
That sing in the heart.
Whoever sings along with her
Shall share her success
In celestial love.

The schoolmistress is wisdom
Who sedulously teaches the unlearned with even temper.
For this she shall be honored before good people.
That someone enjoys zealously teaching the helpless poor
Brings the convent holiness and honor.

The mistress of the cellar is an outflowing of helpful gifts.
Because she does this in divine joy
She gains from divine grace a holy heart and mind.
All who ask anything of her
Should be ever disciplined, frugal, and uncomplaining.
Then God's sweet gift shall flow into their hearts.
Those who are her helpers
Shall gain God's sweet gifts, just as she.

The mistress of the chamber is generosity
Who always enjoys doing good in measured amounts.
She gives what she has kindly.
For this she shall receive from God a special gift.

Those to whom she gives something thank God with holy fervor.
He finds his dwelling place in her heart,
As does a noble drink in a spotless cask.

The mistress of the sick is toiling mercy
Which ever hungers to be untiringly at the service of the sick
With help and with cleanliness,
With balsam and with good cheer,
With solace and with friendliness.
God gives her recompense,
That she might ever serve gladly.
Whoever sends her help
Shall be treated the same way by God.

The portress is watchfulness
That always accomplishes with a holy will
Whatever is demanded of her.
Thus her efforts are not lost,
And she comes to God well prepared.
Whenever she wishes to pray,
God is with her in holy peace
To soothe the sufferings of her heart.
When she sometimes falls into difficulty,
Holy obedience, whom she joyfully serves,
Smooths it all over.

The mistress of discipline is holy custom.
It shall always burn like a candle
Inextinguishable in heavenly freedom.
Thus we easily endure all our interior sufferings
Until we achieve a holy end.

The provost is divine obedience, not sinful obedience.
To him all virtues are subordinate.

Thus can the convent thrive in God.
Whoever enters this convent
Shall ever live in divine joy
Here and eternally.
Blessed are they who persevere in it!

37. The Eternal Feast of the Holy Trinity

Whoever in sincere love wishes to prepare himself for the eternal feast of the Holy Trinity has to begin it here. He should obey and serve the heavenly Father constantly in all things with holy fear and humble humility. He should obey and serve his Son in suffering and in patience, with voluntary poverty in holy toil. He should obey and serve the Holy Spirit in holy hope beyond all fear with a joyful heart and an ever-gentle disposition. Then one shall taste his goodness.

Pure loving virgins shall, moreover, follow the noble Youth, Jesus Christ, Child of the pure maiden, who is utterly filled with love, as he was at age eighteen. His Person is the most beloved of the virgins, and he is the most handsome of all. They follow him with bliss-filled tenderness into the blossoming meadow of their pure conscience. There the Youth breaks for them the flower of all virtues from which they fashion garlands that they shall wear to the eternal celebration.

When the fine meal has been enjoyed, which Jesus Christ himself shall serve, one shall look on at the most sublime dance of praise. There soul and body shall wear the garland of their virtues which they have practiced here with great holy devotion. And they shall follow the Lamb in untold bliss'; from bliss to love, from love to joy, from joy to splendor, from splendor to power, from power to the highest heights before the eyes of the heavenly Father.

This is how he greets his only begotten Son and also his many pure brides who have accompanied him: "Ah, dear Son. What you are, I am. What they are fills me withjoy.3$ My dear brides, be joyful forever, rejoice in my eternal purity; let all pain and all suffering softly disappear. My holy angels shall serve you; my saints shall honor you; the mother of my Son's humanity shall be ready with praise for you because you are like her. Rejoice, dear brides, my Son shall embrace you warmly; my Godhead shall permeate you totally; my Holy Spirit shall lead you evermore, all according to your wish, to a delightful feast for your eyes. Could your success ever be greater? I myself shall love you. Those who are not pure virgins shall share and observe and enjoy this feast as far as possible."

After hearing and seeing this with the eyes of my soul in a short time, I was human dust and ashes as I had been before.

38. How a Person in Religious Life Should Daily Lament and Confess His Sins to God

I, a sinful human being, lament and confess to God all the sins of which I am guilty in God's eyes. I confess and lament all the good works that I did not perform. I confess and lament those sins I committed when I did not know what sin was.39 I confess and lament those much worse sins I committed knowingly and maliciously and actively and out of vanity.

Have mercy on me, 0 Lord, for I am truly sorry for them; and give me, Lord, complete certainty that you have forgiven me for all of them. Otherwise, I can find no joy in living. Jesus, dearest Lover of mine, let me approach you in true sorrow and with deep love for you in my heart, and never let me grow cold, so that I constantly feel your intense love in my heart and in my soul and in my five senses and in all my members. Then I can never grow cold.

39. How the Devil Rages and Chases About, Bites, and Gnaws When a Loving Soul That Burns with Divine Love Departs This World

Blessed is the good person that he was ever born who follows God with all the virtues he can possibly attain. His soul will be free in love. At the end of life the holy angels come and receive the pure souls with immeasurable love into the bliss of heaven and lead them off from here and bring them with great praise to God.

The enemies from hell who came there4° will find all their efforts in vain. They had come there filled with hate and rage. When they then realized that they were not going to get their way at all, how they did rage about and chase around! How they did gnash and gnaw! How they did howl and whine! For they feared the horrible torments that they were going to receive from their masters because they had lost the soul. Thus do they curse at each other:

"You wretch, it was your fault."

"Shut up, mate. I never caught her in great impatience. When I assailed her with evil thoughts, sorrow was always her companion."

"That whispering to her confessors robs us of all our glory. There were a lot more like us to whom she was dearly entrusted. How can we now show up back at court?"

"Woe, master, what were you trying to prove by assigning this person to us? We couldn't discover any big sin in her."

"I often tempted her severely, and then she would start bawling. Me and my mates, we couldn't bring her down. With her weeping she drove me off. With her sighing she singed my hair and burned my claws. I just could never get near her."

"Her obedience was so great; never was it ever equaled. That is how she escaped us fair and square. This was our greatest disadvantage: All her good works burned inside with divine love, for she performed all her good works with good intentions."

And their master says: "Gentlemen, you have come here to court heavily incriminated. I entrusted her to you. The pain I shall impose upon you shall last forever. You shall not spend time among humans, as I would gladly do if I were granted the honor. But now you shall lie with me here in hell. That shall be your punishment. I shall send forth learned scholars to blind the understanding of good people. If we could destroy the great zeal they have for God, we would recover all our honor, the young would follow them, and our tribe would be increased. If only one soul could belong to me that so brightly burns with love of God, I would wear her as a crown and would reward myself for my tenacious efforts. Thus would I have pleasant recompense for my grief."

"Forget your presumptuous wishes." You desire something that you have never gotten and never will, come evil or torment. All the blessed Christians who love God in their interior suffering are so flooded with and immersed in love that they radiate holy virtues and are aflame with love in all their works. You well know it profits you not one whit that you tempt them so severely. They simply wait until it turns into an occasion for praising God. No matter how much you plot trickery against them, they are always ready with praise."

The growling and shrieking, the biting and gnashing he did in his bonds are beyond description."

Lord God, we thank you; give us a holy end. This is one of the greatest j oys that the blessed soul has, that she sees and knows that the enemies who have caused her so much pain fight among themselves and suffer their punishments in hell. In spite of it all, she has j oyfully escaped them and shall wear the eternal crown because of the torment they inflicted on her.

40. Thus Does the Loving Soul Speak to Her Dear Lord

If all the world were mine,
And if it were pure gold,
And if I were to be here eternally, as I wished,
The noblest, fairest, and richest empress,
That would ever be worthless to me,
So great is my joy in seeing Jesus Christ, my dear Lord,
In his glory in heaven!
Consider what they suffer who must wait for him so long.[43]

41. How a Dominican Father Was Seen

Forty years agog I knew a religious man. In those days religious people were without duplicity and aflame with love. He progressed in the spiritual life and in piety and clearly performed much holy work for our Lord. He has now departed from here. I prayed to our Lord for his soul, as Christians do, that God might forgive him if he were guilty of anything. Then I saw, first of all, a radiance. God had prepared it for him. But I did not see him in it and this saddened my soul.

Some time later, when I was again praying for him, I discovered him in a fiery cloud. He was asking that he be forgiven. So I spoke with all my might to our dear Lord: "Ah, dear Lord, grant me this, that I might repay evil with good."

Then he drew himself up in the cloud and said: "0 Lord, how strong is your power, how right is your truth!"

And I said: "Well then, how are you doing now?"

He said: "You can see for yourself how I am doing."

"Why are you suffering these torments?"

The soul: "Those who falsely appeared to be holy made accusations to me against innocent people. I judged them accordingly and had a sinful opinion of them. That is why I suffer these torments. Ah, if I could still sigh!"45

I was unable to help him in this matter. He had also harmed me a bit.

A third time I again prayed for him. Then he ascended in bliss. Our dear Lord went to meet him and said to him: "That your path after your death has been so long and so difficult is the result of malicious people. You followed me in a holy manner and served me loyally. You shall wear the crown of virgins, the crown ofjustice, and the crown of truth."

Then he ascended in radiance above eight choirs and touched the ninth. Then I saw him no longer. Had false liars not influenced him, he would have entered into eternal joy with no suffering. That he trusted them was his undoing.

42. The Drink of Honey

Lord God, bless your precious treasure with a holy end and open it so that it might be a cause for praising you in heaven and on earth.

And a voice said:

"You shall keep your drink of honey.
It lies hidden in a safe place.
I shall open it
So that many might enjoy it."

43. Of Simple Love, How Wisdom Is Seen

Those who wish to know but have little love
Remain forever at the beginning of a good life.

And so we must ever be in constant fear
How we are pleasing God in it.
Those who simply love and know very little
Are opened to great things.
Holy simplicity is the physician of all wisdom.
It causes the wise man to see himself for the foolish person he is.
When simplicity of heart dwells in the wisdom of the mind,
Much holiness results in a person's soul.

44. Five Sins and Five Virtues

Covetousness in poverty,
Falsity in truth,
Slowness to show mercy,
Sneering ridicule in public,
Neglect of order:
These five failings seriously infect the spiritual life.

Truth free of duplicity,
Manifest mutual love,
Fear in speech,
Hidden love for God in one's heart,
Open zeal for all good things:
These five things keep the spiritual life healthy.

45. Seven Things, Five of Which One Finds in Heaven and Two on Earth"

Seven things I must say to God's honor: "Lord God, if it is possible, grant that I never forget them on earth." Five are found in heaven; two must remain here.

The first is: harm that is my fault because I have sinned and neglected to perform good works I could easily have done.

The second is: that I, Lord, wait for you with constancy, no matter when you want to come to me and in whatever manner you ordain a holy end for me.

The third: the fiery longing that I have for you.

The fourth: the burning love unextinguished in me that you cause.

The fifth: the first look of your sublime countenance upon me. Alas, that I was never able to experience this on earth as I desired. This is why my soul often sings, "Woe."

The sixth I scarcely dare to mention.
I might be struck dumb in mentioning it.
I never heard it named on earth.
This is the playful flood of love
That flows mysteriously from God into the soul
And through his power flows back again according to her ability.
What bliss there is then between them!
No one else knows
What activity goes on between them.[47]
For each finds its part.
Whatever one has given out here
Will all be given back there.
This is God's heavenly love
That begins here so delicately
And goes on there boundlessly.

The seventh can hardly be touched with words.
One can sense it through Christian faith:
How great it is, how lofty, how vast, how blissful,
How glorious, how joyous,
How full of unending joys.[48]
Blessed is he who shall dwell there forever.
The happy sight full of all pleasure
And the holy enjoyment of one's wishes,
They are of many kinds
And go on endlessly without number,
Glorious yet measured.
For they spring forth from the living God.
The deliciously sweet desire,
Blissful, ravenous, full of love,
Flows ever forth lavishly from God.
And yet the soul keeps her sweet hunger
And lives on without care.

46. How the Soul Presents Herself in Spiritual Poverty

Here the soul presented herself in spiritual poverty and in eternal love to God and in restless longing to go to God. Thus does she speak: "The long waiting is coming to an end. In the future God and the soul shall be united, unseparated forever. Whenever I think about it, my heart feels intense joy. Ah, dear Lord, how still you have become. I thank you evermore that you have been avoiding me for so long a time. And so may you be praised eternally that your will is done and not mine. And now today I shall find consolation in your words that I heard in Christian faith, when you say: `I love those who love me. We want to come to them, my Father and I, and want to make a dwelling place with them. '49 Blessed am I, dear Lord, because of your generous goodness, which makes you hold back nothing."

Then our Lord said: "When the time of redemption comes, when I shall give you heavenly gifts, then I shall act very quickly because my eternity is contained therein. I shall unfold and raise it high above the bloody earth. I can think of nothing I would like more."

Eternal love of God dwells in the soul. Transitory love of earthly things dwells in the flesh. The five senses have the power to determine which way they turn.

47. One Sin That Is Evil Beyond All Sins

I heard tell of a sin. I thank God that I never had anything to do with it. It seems to me, and is, evil beyond all sins. This is total unbelief. It enrages me in my whole soul and in my whole body and in all my five senses and in my whole heart. I thank Jesus Christ, the living Son of God, that it has never entered my heart. This sin did not arise among Christians. The arrogant fiend has duped simple people with it. They claim to be so holy that they shall enter into the eternal Godhead and rest next to the eternal holy humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ. Though they think they are in a sublime state, they have really delivered themselves over to being eternally cursed; and yet they claim to be the holiest. They scoff at God's words written about the humanity of our Lord.

You, most needy of all humans, if you really had knowledge of the eternal Godhead, it would be impossible for you not to know the eternal humanity as well that hovers in the eternal Godhead. You would have to know the Holy Spirit as well, who illumines the heart of a Christian there and whose fragrance in the soul surpasses all sweetness and who instructs one's mind better than any learned professor, so that one then says in humility that one cannot be perfect in the sight of God.50

48. How Love Was Seen with Her Maidens

In the night I spoke thus to our Lord: "Lord, I dwell in a land called exile, which is this world. For nothing in it can console me or cheer me except suffering."" In this place I have a house. It is called full of pain. This is the house where my soul lies

captive: my body. This house is old, small, and dark. One should take this in a spiritual sense.

In this house I have a bed called restlessness, for everything not connected with God causes me pain. In front of the bed I have a chair called discomfort. It causes me discomfort to see the sins of others of which I was never guilty. In front of the chair I have a table called vexation, because I so seldom find a spiritual way of life among religious people. On the table is a tablecloth that is clean. It is called poverty. It contains much holy goodness. If one were to use it properly, one would cherish it in one's heart. Love of riches is a thief of poverty. On the table a dish is served up to me called bitterness of sin. It should be called well-intentioned effort as well. The beverage is called scant praise, because, alas, the good works I perform are all too few.

This house looked dark inside. Then true love of God revealed itself to me. It was like a noble empress. The outline of her body was refined, white, and rosy in the blossom of youth. She was accompanied by a great number of virtues. They all resembled maidens. She put them at my disposal if I myself wanted them. For her part she would gladly put all of them at my service. She was more splendidly crowned than with glittering gold. Her clothes were like green, light taffeta. When I gazed upon her properly, my dark house was all lit up so that I saw everything that was in it and that had ever happened there. When I looked at her, I recognized her easily, for I had also seen her when she was my dear companion. But now I shall not talk about this because this has all been put down in the book.52

Then I said: "Ah, dearest of all ladies, you are more than a thousandfold above me, and yet you serve me with such great honors, as though I were more than an empress."

She replied: "When I found you with the pure intention of separating yourself from all earthly things, I didn't just want to be your lady. I also had to be your constant lady-in-waiting. Such is the pleasure I take in a pure heart that has freed itself from all earthly things through sincere love of God." By this she meant: No matter how many earthly things a person has, they must not be allowed to stick to a person's heart.

"Dear maiden," since you have served me for so long a time, it is only right that the feeble lady reward the maidservant honorably. As a reward I have given you everything I had and could achieve on earth."

She said: "I have gathered it all up; I shall return it to you with great honor."

"I don't know, lady, what else I can give you, unless you want my soul. That I shall be very happy to give you."

And she said: "That is what I have been longing to have from you for a long time. Now you have finally given her to me. Speak to my maidservants also, that they serve you diligently. Then I can remain with you in God's true love, which I myself am. God is love.""

Then the soul speaks to the first maidservant-sorrow: "Lady True Sorrow, come to me and bring me holy tears. They shall make me free of sin.

"Lady Humility, sit at my side and drive pride and vain honor away from me. When they see you near me, they are forced to flee from me.

"Dear Lady Gentleness, sit by me beneath my habit. Then friendliness will be at my disposal.

"0 noble Obedience, I subordinate myself to you in all my actions. May you never leave me. Then in all my actions I shall retain divine truth free of lies, which well befits God's intimate friends.

"Dear Lady Mercy, be at my side when I minister to the sick, that I be hardworking, that I may well bear the cost, that I may serve them with my person and my resources.

"Ah, dear Lady Chastity, I commend my virginal garment to you, that it may ever be pure and clean; for my dear Bridegroom Jesus Christ is always at my side.

"Lady Patience, I have great strength in silence and suffering. You rob all my temptations of their power, so that they are not able to harm me. I want to have you toiling with me.

"Lady Sanctity, come here to me and kiss the mouth of my soul and dwell in the ground of my heart. Then I shall always remain healthy.

"Lady Hope, I ask you to bind all the wounds of my heart that love has inflicted upon me so that I may ever keep God's blessing, no matter what distress I am given.

"Ah, glorious, holy Christian Faith, you have always illumined the eye of my soul so that I well know where to turn in matters of Christian thought. I commend to you my works and my mind.

"0 dear Lady Vigilance, do not sit, but rather stand always at my side. Then I shall remain free of evil.

"Lady Temperance, be with me always. Then I shall be ever ready for God's service.

"Lady Frugality, may you be my dear chambermaid. I shall love you so. You make my hard bed soft, my coarse food tasty. You give me power in poverty. This comes from God's goodness.

"Peace and Calm, I cannot do without you. May you walk with me on all my journeys. Those who talk much and whisper much seldom keep their honor. Those who boast-that can never be all to their advantage.

"Wisdom is always together with love and is the mistress of all maidens. She keeps whatever love gives. She makes useful whatever a person learns or reads.

"Chaste Modesty has special qualities about her. She is pleased to remain without praise in the presence of all people.

"Now I am well provided for as to ladies-in-waiting. But there are two more that I do not want to forget: Fear and Constancy. May the two of them be ever with me. Then all my servants shall be attentive to their duties.

"I thank you, dear Love of God, Lady Empress, that you have given them all to me as a help as I travel in exile on the road to heaven."

49. Concerning a Lay Brother

A lay brother of the Order of Preachers was struck dead by thunder. Prayers were said for his soul with the sincere wish that anything for which he had not done penance might be forgiven him. And his soul was shown to that person who was praying for him. He was fair in celestial bliss and in no way suffering. His soul gave the reasons why this was the case: "I was always humble in my heart, cautious in my thinking, and well-intentioned in my actions. That is why I experience no pain."

The soul: "Why then didn't you go immediately to heaven?"

He replied: "I had to receive divine knowledge and heavenly love here first. I didn't have these on earth."

"Why do you have that small blemish on your face?"

He said: "I used to frown at those who didn't do what I wanted. I never did penance for this."

"How can the blemish be removed?"

He said: "If I just had a sigh!"

But he could not get one from that person, for at that instant he was given it.55

Then he was happy and said: "Now it is gone."

"Why are you wearing this crown? After all, you are not yet in heaven."

He said: "I had an unusual death. That is why God gave it to me."

50. The Visible Favor of God

O dear Lord Jesus Christ, who are one eternal God with the eternal Father, remember me! I thank you, Lord, for your visible favor with which you constantly touch me, which cuts through all my bones, all my veins, and all my flesh. Whenever I can repay you for it, Lord, with holy thankfulness, I am secure; otherwise, I am not. You can certainly consider your frail creature feeble, Lord, for your intention is good, even better than good. For many things are called good which are not as good as that which you do to me. But when you touch me with your most sublime sweetness that permeates my body and my soul utterly, then I fear that I can draw to myself all too much of your divine pleasure. For I am unworthy of it on earth. And so I pray to you at times more for other people than for myself, so that I might draw away from my pleasure out of love of God and Christian loyalty. Thereafter I fear the rearing up of pride, which cast the most exalted angel out of heaven. I also fear the serpent of vain honor that deceived Eve. I fear the betrayal that thrustJudas from God. If I am faithful to God, I shall persevere in all virtues, in all goodness, and in great vigilance with God along with our dear Lady, his virgin mother.

51. A Prayer Against Sins of Omission

I, the least, the weakest, the most unworthy among the whole human race, it is my desire and I beg you, Lord heavenly Father, Lord Jesus Christ, Lord Holy Spirit, Lord Holy Trinity, that you might forgive me today all my sins of omission which I have committed in your holy service, and not just while seeking my advantage or out of necessity, but rather because of my sinful malice, which I could easily stop if I wanted to. Accept now, Lord, this tiny improvement that I now achieve with my will to the honor of your dear mother and of all the saints who are being honored today by Holy Christianity, and to praise and honor the blessedness of all God's saints through which, dear Lord, they have drawn near to you. Now help me, dear Lord, to such a change in my life that I may so become a companion of your saints on earth through a holy life that I might share their company in your kingdom before your glorious countenance along with all those who desire me to pray for them.

52. How the Loving Soul Bows Beneath the Hand of God

I say to my five senses: "Bow beneath the almighty hand of God. Even the fiends of hell, no matter how arrogant they are in their fiery fetters, must bow and cower beneath the hard coercion of almighty God. Those in purgatory must in their guilt bow beneath their punishment until that final hour when they shall be found pure. Sinners on earth must bow under the burden of their guilt and be judged penitent by doing penance or be damned to eternal hell. Good people on earth must bow in sorrow to do penance all their days. The chosen pure who love God in utter faithfulness are much oppressed and suffer much holy distress. They bow and bend down beneath all pain and beneath all creatures with their ever-hovering love. Pride is rare among them.

"This is what I should keep in mind, and I shall and must drink from the same cup out of which my heavenly Father drank if I am to possess his kingdom." The kingdom of heaven bows with all the holy angels in delight-filled holiness. For their existence and life were given them by God as a gift. The saints bow and bend low before God in flowing love and in blissful longing with zealous devotion. Thus do they thank God for putting his gift so lovingly at their disposal in their distress on earth. This enabled them to endure all their anguish of heart. May I also experience this, for I, too, am in much distress for love of him."

53. The Prison of Religious People

I felt sorry in my heart for the distress of the community in which I live. In the night I spoke to our Lord in the solitude of my heart thus: "Lord, how do you like this prison?"

And our Lord said: "I am held captive in it."

In these words I understood the meaning of all the following words:

“I fasted in the desert with them.
I was tempted by the enemy with them.
I toiled all my days tirelessly and productively with them.
I was betrayed in hate with them.
I was sold in unbelief with them when they offered themselves to me in God’s service.
I was treacherously ambushed with them.
I was fiercely attacked with them.
I was taken captive in grasping envy with them.
I was bound in obedience with them.
I was scorned in great contempt with them.
I was beaten in great innocence with them; what they are forced to hear against their will should not sadden them.

I was dragged before the court with them like a guilty thief; they should call this to mind during chapter meetings and in confession.
I was scourged with them; when they scourge themselves, they should remember me.
I bore my cross with them; when they are downcast, they should remember me.
I was nailed to the cross with them; for this reason they should suffer willingly and complain little about their troubles.

I entrusted my spirit with them to my Father at my death; thus should they entrust themselves to me in all their trials.
I died with them a holy death; thus shall they become free of all their bonds.
I was buried with them in earthly stone; thus shall they be and remain pure of all earthly things.
I arose from the dead; thus shall they always rise out of their failings; thus may they receive heavenly radiance into their souls.
I ascended into heaven by my divine power; there they shall follow me in all the power of these words.”

I truly hope that you57 constantly achieve this and know; whoever has not yet done so, may the true God bring it about in him.

54. Four Qualities of Faith

That one believe in God in a Christian manner and that one love God in a holy manner and that one truly know Jesus Christ and that one faithfully follow his teaching to one's human end: I believe that in these four things one shall find eternal life. We believe as Christians, not like Jews or like unbelieving Christians. They claim to believe in God but do not believe in his most holy work that he wrought; that is, that he gave us his only begotten Son. They reject him. Lord God, this is what we complain about to you. We believe it was the divine will that he sent us his only begotten Son into this world. We believe in the works and the death of our Lord Jesus Christ by which he redeemed us. We believe in the Holy Spirit who brought our happiness to completion in the Father and in the Son, and brings it even now to completion in all our good works.

How should we love God in a holy manner? We should love everything that the Holy Trinity commands us to love. God did not create sin. This is why he hates it in us. God loves goodness in us, which is he himself.

How should we know Jesus Christ? By his works we should know him and should love him more than ourselves.

How should we follow his teaching? Just as he taught us to and as his followers still teach us. As long as we do this, our blessedness shall increase.

55. How a Friend Writes to a Friend

Because you love God beyond your human power, because you hold God dear with all the strength of your soul, because you know God with all the wisdom of your soul, and because you have received God's favor with much holy thankfulness, I am sending you this letter.

The great outflow of divine love that never ceases flows on and on unceasingly and effortlessly in such a sweet course unfailingly that our tiny vessel becomes full and brims over. If we do not block it with self-will, our small vessel is always overflowing with God's favor.

Lord, you are full and you fill us as well with your favor. You are great and we are small. How are we to become like you? Lord, you have given us much and we should pass it on in turn. Though we are a small vessel, still you have made it full. One can pour a small full container into a larger container so often that the large container becomes full from the small container. The large container is the satisfaction that God receives from our works. We are, alas, so tiny that a single little word from God or from Holy Scripture fills us so completely that for the moment we can take in no more. Then we pour the gift back again into the large container that is God. How are we to do this? In holy longing we should pour it over sinners that they be cleansed. If it again becomes full, we should then pour it over the imperfection of religious people that they fight on and become perfect and remain so. If it again becomes full, we should pour it over the distress of poor souls who are in torment in purgatory, that God in his goodness might relieve them of their many sufferings. If it again becomes full, we should then in holy mercy pour it over the distress of Holy Christianity that is afflicted with many sins. Our Lord God loved us first of all. He also toiled for us first and foremost. And he also suffered most of all on our behalf. We should give him the same in return if we want to be like him.

Thus did our Lord speak to a person: "Give me everything that is yours, and I shall give you everything that is mine." The recompense of love that we return to God is sweet indeed. The recompense of the toil is very often, alas, burdensome, for a person must sometimes outwardly do without what love has inwardly consumed. Someone asked me how difficult that is. I could not in the least make it clear through merely human concepts. Our Lord suffered much for us, even death. But, alas, a small suffering seems to us great indeed. Because of this I have to feel contempt even for myself and complain to God that I have so little virtue. Love makes suffering sweet, more than one can say. And if we wish to become like God, we have to overcome in many a conflict. The mind of God and of the loving soul come together in the same manner as the sun and the air join together through the majestic energy of God in a sweet, vibrant mixture in which the sun overcomes the coldness and darkness of the air, so that one notices only that it is all one sun. That comes from divine bliss.

May God give us all this love and preserve it for us! Amen.

56. How God Touches His Friends with Suffering

When one experiences sadness
That one has not sought
And in no way has been the cause of,
Our Lord says this about it:
“I have set it in motion. That is,
Just as my Father had me set in motion on earth,
So, too, those whom I draw to myself on earth
Suffer much pain because of it.
They should indeed know this:

The harder I draw them toward me,
The nearer they come to me.
When a person so overcomes himself
That he considers suffering and consolation of equal value,
Then I shall raise him up into sweetness,
And thus he shall have a taste of eternal life.”

57. A Bit About Paradise

This was revealed and I saw how paradise was constituted. Of its breadth and length I could find no end. I first approached it between this world and the beginning of paradise. There I saw trees, foliage, and a little grass but no weeds. Some trees bore apples but most of them had only leaves with a refined fragrance. Swift waters flow through there and the wind blows from south to north. There in the waters earthly sweetness is found mixed with heavenly bliss. The breeze was sweeter than I can say. Neither beast nor bird was there, for God had entrusted it to man alone, that he might live there in comfort.

I saw there two men, Enoch and Elijah." Enoch was sitting and Elijah was lying on the ground in great fervor. Then I spoke to Enoch. I asked him whether they were living as humans do. He said: "We eat a bit from the apples and drink a little of the water to keep the body alive. But most important is God's power."

I asked him: "How did you get here?"

"I came here in such a manner that I don't know how I got here or what I was doing before sitting down here."

I asked him what his prayer was like.

"Faith and hope are the basis of our prayer."

I asked him how he felt, whether he found it at all irksome to be there.

He replied: "I am perfectly fine and suffer no discomfort."

"Do you have fears about the conflict that is yet to take place in the world?"59

"God shall arm me with his strength so that I can hold my own in the struggle."

"Do you pray at all for Christianity?"

"I pray that God free them from sin and bring his kingdom to them."

Elijah sat up and his countenance was fair, fiery, the color of heaven. His hair resembled white wool. They were attired like poor men who seek their bread with a staff in their hand. I asked Elijah how he prayed for Christianity.

"I pray with mercy, humility, faithfulness and obedience."

"Do you pray for souls?""

"Yes, when I entreat, their suffering is decreased. When I ask, the suffering even disappears."

"Are they ever redeemed?"

"Yes, many of them."

"Why did God bring you here?"

"That we might be helpers of Christianity and of God until the last day."

I saw a twofold paradise. I have described the earthly part. The heavenly part is up above and covers the earthly part against all storms. In the highest part are those souls who have no need of purgatory but have not yet come into God's kingdom. They hover in bliss as does the air in the sun. Power and honor, reward and crown are not yet theirs until they enter God's kingdom.

When the whole earth passes away
And the earthly paradise no longer exists;
When God has held his judgment,
The heavenly paradise shall also pass away.
All that come to God
Shall dwell in a common house.
There shall be no more hospitals for the sick.
Whoever enters God's kingdom
Is free of all infirmity.
May Jesus Christ be praised
Who has given us his kingdom.

58. St. Gabriel`

Holy Angel Gabriel, remember me.
I entrust the message of my longing to you.
Tell my dear Lord Jesus Christ
How sick with love for him I am.
If I am ever to recover,
He himself must be my physician.
Tell him in confidence
The wounds that he has inflicted upon me
I can no longer endure
Unsalved and unbandaged.
He has wounded me to death.
If he leaves me lying here untended,

I can never recover.
If all mountains were a balsam for wounds
And all waters a health potion
And all blossoming trees a bandage to heal wounds,
They could not restore me to health.
He must lay himself onto the wounds of my soul.

Holy Angel Gabriel, remember me.
I entrust this message of love to you.
Whoever wants to hold God dear,
This love letter shall awaken his senses,
If he wishes to follow God.

59. How the Message Came Before God

In my spirit I heard the truth clearly;
My message has reached God.
The reply that is to come back to me
Is so great, so powerful, so profound,
So rich, so blissful, and so overwhelmingly radiant
That I am incapable of receiving it
The while I am a creature of the earth,
Unless I depart for a short while from this poor existence
In such a manner that I remain in it not at all.
But for now I must simply keep silent about this message.
I was able to receive no more of it
That one may speak of openly.

To the extent that a poor creature like me could,
I saw St. Gabriel in blissful glory
Standing in the heights of heaven before God.
He was clad in new garments ablaze with love.
They were his reward
For so ably and honorably bearing messages.
I saw the flames of love playing brightly about his face.
He was in the embrace of the Godhead
And permeated by it.
I could neither understand nor hear his words,
For I am still the likes of an earth-bound fool.

60. How the Child Was Seen

In the night when the Son of God was born, the Child was seen wrapped in poor pieces of cloth and tied with string. The Child lay alone on the hard straw in front of two animals. Then I spoke to the mother: "0 dear Lady, how long shall your dear Child lie there alone like that? When will you take it on your lap?"

Our Lady replied that she never let the Child out of her sight. She held out her hand to him and said: "It shall lie on this straw for seven hours by day and by night. Its heavenly Father wants it that way."

I then realized that the heavenly Father was especially happy with this. I prayed to the Child for those who had commended themselves to me. Then a voice spoke out of the Child, though its mouth did not move at all: "If they want to keep me in their minds, I shall keep them in my favor. I have nothing to give them but myself and eternal life."

In the crib[62] the Child lay on the hard straw.
Its heavenly Father wanted it that way.

61. How One Should Prepare Oneself for God

If a bird remains on the ground for a long time, its wings deteriorate and its feathers become heavy. Then it raises itself aloft beating its feathers and drawing itself far upward until it catches the air. Then it takes flight yet higher. The longer it flies, the more it soars in exhilaration, scarcely returning to earth to refresh itself. Thus did the wings of love take from it earthly pleasure. In this same way we should prepare ourselves when we are to approach God. We should raise the feathers of our longing to God. We should elevate our virtue and our good works with love. If we do not give up on this, we shall become conscious of God.

Ah, Desiring Love,
You call out many a sweet word
To the ears of your dear Lord.
You rarely rest.
Now be glad and let yourself be heard.
He shall yet turn to you in joy.

Ah, Sinking Love,
You suffer much sweet anguish.
Your loneliness is great.
How shall you win Jesus?
He is running much too far ahead of you.
Indeed, you chose him instead of sin
And have lost yourself in him.
And so you must suffer many a torment.
I shall restore myself in him.

Ah, Free Love,
You so strongly lure my heart and senses

That I would soon bolt from here.
Yet I cannot win you as I would.
And so I must still love you in anguish.

Ah, Powerful Love,
You are well protected.
You have good intentions in all things.
You carry one well past all troubles.
Your hope and your faith are great.
You shall overcome all your troubles.

Ah, Wise Love,
You keep holy order
As you praise God and know him therein
And accomplish his will in all things.
If you do this faithfully,
You shall take your rest in God.
This shall be the cause of my rejoicing.

62. How the Maidens Serve Their Lady the Queen

This conversation was revealed to a person in her spirit as follows: I saw a path that went from the east where the sun rises to the west where it sets. All those who have good will toward God traveled this path. They all passed through the valley but traveled at different speeds. They journeyed as pilgrims who had left what was dear to them and wanted to seek what is best of all: God. Some turned back to the sensual pleasure they had left and did not complete the journey. Some rested in the grass of various pleasures and among the flowers of vanity. They remained a very long time on the journey. Thereafter, they shall experience the stern rod of bitter purgatory, even if they live free of mortal sin. Concerning this our Lord said: "Some people journey with good intentions in their holy works yet have about them such bad habits and are so repulsive in their vehemence that one can hardly put up with them. In the case of such people I withhold my judgment. They should seek mercy from me in humble fear. Then they would not lose their good works, and the bitterness in their hearts would disappear. Then they would be able to become themselves again. Whoever seeks my mercy cannot endure the darkness."

One person went alone along the path. This was because earthly pleasure was not able to give his soul consolation. Then the person saw two persons going along before him. One went on the left side of the path, the other on the right. He asked them who they were and what they were doing. The one on the left said: "I am God'sjustice. God's judgment was entrusted to me and is mine since Adam sinned in paradise. My judgment has long-lasting and serious consequences. Now this maiden has come along and stands beside me. She has become my equal. Her name is mercy. All who seek her and constantly call out to her overcome all their inner anguish. She is utterly perfect. She has taken from me what was rightfully mine. Whatever troubles a person has, if he then flees to me in penitence, she lays her soft hand on what is crooked. Then I stand there like an idiot and can do nothing about it. All of this came about through the true Son of God, who robbed me of my strictest justice with his mercy. She consoles the downcast; she heals wounds; she brings joy to all who come to her. She wrested great power from me. I am dear to her and she to me. We shall always be together until the last day. Then judgment is mine."

God's judgment and God's justice are not completely one and the same. Judgment portions out guilt for what comes before it unrepented. Justice is a holy life God has given to all his dear friends. He practiced it in his own life. For he was just in all he did. Hence he knows when we practice it. Thus can we become pure with him.

This mercy of God and the holy justice of his Son, to which he held during his life on earth, and the favor of the Holy Spirit of them both were followed on the path by a worthy throng. They all resembled virgins. When I saw them, I recognized all of them easily. And yet I made inquiries of them because I was interested in their replies. I asked who they were and what their duties were. They said: "We are noble and well-bred maidens and serve to God's praise his most beloved queen, whom God has chosen above all things; that is the human soul. We serve our lady the queen so that she might accomplish her Lord's will

with all zeal and with her full attention in all things, always according to the Christian dispensation. Then she shall never be found guilty."

"Lady Wisdom, what service can you render together with your sister Discernment?"

"We teach my lady the queen to distinguish between evil and good in divine wisdom with the holy power of discernment, so that she can imagine how things are now and might be later. Thus she gains a practical advantage in all things."

"Lady Truth, what service can you render at court with your sister Sanctity?"

"I serve my Lord and my lady the queen in total devotion, that she might always be true to her Lord in all trials. Thus shall she ever remain secure and free and be ever inwardly holy, subject to her Lord in all things. This shall keep her outwardly worthy of praise."

"Lady Humility, what service can you render together with your sister Gentleness?"

"I teach my lady the queen to love from the heart the will of my Lord and all his gifts. Thus can she rest in holy gentleness, driving out with cheerfulness all her interior suffering."

"Lady Generosity, what service can you render together with your sister Obedience?"

"I teach my lady the queen, with her longing love of God, always in her prayers to be generous to the wicked and the good, to the living and the dead. The treasure is manifold and large; it all returns to her lap. If she carries out her Lord's will, she shall practice holy obedience in all her works. Thus shall she remain God's queen."

"Lady Strength, what service can you render together with your sister Constancy?"

"I teach my lady to be strong in all conflict. Thus can she remain in her kingdom being ever constant. Then she shall remain ever free before her Lord."

The number of these maidens is beyond human reckoning. For everything that a good person does in God, inwardly and outwardly, requires virtue.

Together on the path with these maidens there j ourneyed a great lord who resembled a very holy and mighty bishop. This was our Christian faith. He was fiery within and was completely aflame with divine love. Together with all these virtues he served this queen.

High overhead hovered a maiden resembling a golden eagle. She was surrounded by a heavenly radiance. She illumined and taught and put all these maidens in the proper order for serving their lady the queen. This love dwells in Christian faith; she rests in the palace of her lady the queen. It is her task to force love to love, God to the soul, and the soul to God. That is why she is in the first commandments'

63. God's Will Is a Sovereign Lord in All Being

Constant longing in the soul,
Constant days of pain in the body,
Constant anguish in the senses,
Constant hope in one's heart for no one but Jesus—
All who have forsaken themselves in God
Know well what I am saying.

For two days and two nights I was so seriously ill that I had hope that my end had come. I thanked God as best I could for his favors. And I urged God to take me to him if that were his dearest will. "And yet, Lord, if your praise can at all be increased thereby, I shall gladly remain in this miserable body for love of you. Lord, I have so lived for many a day that, Lord, I never offered you such a difficult sacrifice as this. Lord, thy will be done and not mine. I do not have dominion over myself. You do in all things."

Then I saw high up in the distance how the saints were making preparations as though they were about to come to my end. I could not distinguish the individual persons among them. For such a powerful light was shining in their midst that it seemed to me that I was one with them. This was high in the west where the sun sets. From the north came evil spirits who stood close by. They had to witness my judgment. They were all tangled together and tied up like whipped dogs. Choking at the collar, they tried to get at me. I was not afraid of them. I was glad. I realized that their presence would have to bring honor to God because God has relieved his friends of all harassment from them and they, in their wickedness, return to hell.

In the midst of all this a change took place in my condition, so that I had to remain in this bitter, wretched life. I had been so secure and free, without fear or suffering. Woe, woe, woe! If only I could have remained in this death! If it were not for God's goodness, I would now be utterly disheartened. If I now had normal human strength and divine love, then I would really start serving God. I would try to bring things to a good end, just as I always wanted to and still do.

64. How God Serves Man

Thus does a beggar woman speak to God in her prayer:

"Lord, I thank you because in your love you have stripped me of all earthly riches and now clothe and feed me from the resources belonging to others. For everything that clings to me in possessiveness, causing pleasure in my heart, has to become completely alien to me.

"Lord, I thank you for taking from me my eyesight and for now serving me with the eyes of others.

"Lord, I thank you for taking from me the use of my hands and for now serving me with the hands of others.

"Lord, I thank you for taking from me the strength of my heart and for now serving me with the hearts of others.

"Lord, on their behalf, I beg you to reward them on earth with your divine love, that they might entreat you and serve you with all virtues until they achieve a holy end."

All who for love of God leave all things with a pure heart-they are all archbeggars. On the last day they shall sit in judgment with Jesus our Redeemer.

"Lord, may you change in me and in all sinners everything I complain of to you.

"Lord, for your own honor may you grant me and all imperfect religious people everything I ask for.

"Lord, whatever I do, fail to do, or suffer, may praise of you never grow silent in my heart. Amen."

65. How God Adorns the Soul with Suffering

Whenever virgins in all ages are clothed according to the will of their Bridegroom, they need nothing more than their wedding dress. This means being racked with pain in sickness, in days of suffering, in temptation, and in much anguish of heart. We find much of this among sinful Christians. These are the wedding dresses of loving souls. But the everyday work clothes are fasting, keeping vigils, scourging oneself, going to confession, sighing, weeping, praying, fearing sin, severely curbing the senses and the body in God for love of God, sweet hoping and ceaseless loving desire and a constantly praying heart in all one's works. These are the work clothes of a good person. When we are sick, we wear wedding dresses; and when we are healthy, we wear work clothes.

This is how the tormented body speaks to the lonely soul: "When shall you soar with the feathers of your yearning to the blissful heights to Jesus, your eternal Love? Thank him there for me, lady, that, feeble and unworthy though I am, he nevertheless wanted to be mine when he came into this land of exile and took our humanity upon himself; and ask him to keep me innocent in his favor until I attain a holy end, when you, dearest Soul, turn away from me."

The soul: "Ah, dearest prison in which I have been bound, I thank you especially for being obedient to me. Though I was often unhappy because of you, you nevertheless came to my aid. On the last day all your troubles will be taken from you.

Then we shall no longer complain.
Then everything that God has done with us
Will suit us just fine,
If you will now only stand fast
And keep hold of sweet hope."

Obedience is a holy bond. It binds the soul to God and the body to Jesus and the five senses to the Holy Spirit. The longer it binds, the more the soul loves. The less the body preserves itself, the fairer its works shine before God and before people of good will.

NOTES TO TEXT

Prologue to the Lux Divinitatis

1. Revelationes Gertrudianae ac Mechtildianae, ed. Solesmes Monks (Louis Paquelin), 2 vols. (Poitiers and Paris: Oudin, 1875-77); Vol. 2: Sororis Mechtildis Lux divinitatis, pp. 435-37. Hereafter referred to as Rev. I and II.

2. This Heinrich cannot be Heinrich of Halle, Mechthild's longtime spiritual advisor, who died before the translation was undertaken. Because of the consistency in style between this prologue and the text of the Lux div., Neumann concludes that this Heinrich, a lector in the Dominican house in Halle, is responsible for both (1964, 193-94).

3. Satan's "body" signifies his follower and provides a parallel to "Christ and his church."

4. Historical and mystical indicate that the book should be read on more than one level, as was the common way of reading the Bible, which was often said to have four senses or meanings: literal or historical, allegorical, anagogical, and mystical. As used here, mystical seems to comprise all those ways of interpreting that are not literal or historical.

5. Cf. Liber specialis gratiae, Mechthild of Hackeborn in Rev. II, 11 42; V 3, 3; and Legatus divinaepietatis, Gertrud the Great in Rev. I, V 7.

6. The rest of the prologue, which continues for a few pages, is comprised almost entirely of quotations taken from various parts of the Lux div.

Latin Foreword with Table of Contents and Middle High German Translation

1. This foreword precedes the text of the FL. A later hand has added in German the heading "Concerning the Revelations of a Loving Soul." About the author of the Latin foreward it can be said that he struggled to write it in Latin (the final paragraph is in Middle High German); that he wrote it about 1270 and was familiar only with Books I-V; and that his index of subjects, which he takes imperfectly from the chapter headings, shows him to be careless and superficial. See Neumann 1964, 180-83.

2. The Latin word inspiratus literally says that the book was "breathed into" its human author by the Lord through grace.

3. The Latin word conscriptus seems to refer less to writing as done by an author than to the acts of compiling or writing down something being dictated. See Neumann 1964, 183-84.

4. Neumann (1964, 182-83) believes that this final thought about reading the book nine times, etc., was added about the middle of the fourteenth century.

Book I

1. The first paragraph of this prologue, which is best understood as an introduction to FL as a whole, has been pieced together from sentences coming later in the text. Neumann credits these lines to the compiler or editor (1964, 182-83). The first part ("This book... standing") is taken from V 34, 41-43; N I 195. The second part ("and it... me alone") is taken from 11 26, 11; N I 68. The third part ("and proclaims ... intimacy") is modeled on 11 26, 15-16; N I 68. Unlike the concluding sentence ("All who... nine times"), which Neumann considers to be, both here and in the Latin prologue to FL, a mid-fourteenth-century addition, these lines are also found at the beginning of the Lux div. and hence were part of the book before Mechthild's death. Because these lines are preceded by the statement that God himself speaks the words of the book and, more importantly, because the words are spoken by our Lord (V 34), or God (11 26), in their original context, the "I," "me," and "my intimacy" must be taken to refer to God and not to Mechthild.

2. Given the context, it is most likely that "religious people" means primarily members of the clergy and religious orders.

3. That is, the pillars of the church.

4. An example of clever wordplay gets lost in the translation: gemachet and unmaht. The word gemachet (made) recalls

God's maht (might or power). Thus his unmaht (un-might) is his powerlessness to withhold the gift of making the book.

5. This chapter is a fine example of Mechthild's appropriation of the language and conventions of courtly-love poetry for her purposes. The dialogue was a popular device in courtly-love poetry. Here it is combined with allegory: in courtly fashion the soul (queen) converses with the allegorical figure Lady Love. Love is addressed as frouwe minne and the soul as frouwe kfineginne. However, though each uses frouwe (lady or mistress) in addressing the other, they are not equals, as the course of the dialogue makes clear. As to rank, the soul is superior and, when Lady Love uses frouwe in addressing her, frouwe retains much of its original meaning as the feminine equivalent of lord, or one's feudal master. Thus, I have chosen to renderfrouwe kicneginne with "my Mistress and Queen," which is meant to convey the deference Love shows the soul. Emotionally, however, the roles are reversed. Clearly the soul is utterly dependent on Lady Love, who is, of course, divine love in both senses-the soul's love for God and God's love for the soul, which is the soul's reward for having given up everything for God. When the soul addresses Love as frouwe, she is acknowledging the latter's nobility. Hence the more usual translation "Lady" seems appropriate. As the course of the dialogue reveals, however, the soul has surrendered everything to divine love. Hence the more radical dependence is that of the soul on Lady Love. This dependence is conveyed to the audience in part by the soul's using frouwe to address her.

6. As becomes clear through the word hundredfold and Lady Love's statement that the soul can demand God and his kingdom in return for leaving everything, the scriptural context for this dialogue is Matthew 19:27-29.

7. In this chapter Mechthild offers us a poetic description of mystical union or the experience of ecstasy, which she calls God's greeting. One is left with the impression, however, that she is not recounting one specific event in her life but rather is giving a generic description of such experiences.

8. In order not to offend against orthodoxy in describing ecstasy, one could not imply a complete separation of body and soul. For more on this, see Schmidt, note 13, p. 347.

9. The predicate of this sentence is Neumann's not completely convincing attempt to save a corrupt passage. See note to I 2, 13; N 11 5.

10. In addition to "laments" the ms seems to suggest "recognizes" as a possibility as well. See note to I 2, 23; N 11 6.

11. "Raised up" (verzogen) alludes to her having been raised up, like Paul, in ecstasy or rapture. Cf. 2 Cor 12:2-4.

12. In the Song of Songs the bride is frequently called a dove by the bridegroom. Cf. Sg 2:14; 5:2; and 6:9.

13. From what follows it seems that the "master of the house" is the body to whom the soul is unhappily married. A nasty spat ensues when the soul returns from her tryst.

14. This calls to mind a poem by Walther von der Vogelweide, "Nemt, frouwe, disen kranz," in which the speaker of the poem is dreaming of a love encounter and is so elated that he laughs, wakes himself up, and thus spoils the dream. Perhaps Mechthild is alluding to this poem.

15. That is, to me, Mechthild.

16. Mechthild's oxymoron, that she wishes to "die living" to describe ecstatic union, may be in imitation of Gottfried of Strassburg who, in his narrative Tristan, often similarly juxtaposes love, life, and death.

17. Mechthild repeats this theme of "blind saints... who love and do not know" in a varied form in I 20 below.

18. Many themes and images occurring in this chapter are similar to themes and images in the Song of Songs; examples include the beating and wounding of the beloved (5:7), the bed of love (3:1), and love sickness (2:5 and 5:8).

19. This translates Neumann's rendering of the sentence and implies that the soul wishes that love kill her. This fits well with the lovedeath thoughts of the previous chapter. The punctuation in Morel's edition elicits the following translation: "Am I not going to be killed by your hand? Then it would be better if I had never known you."

20. During the offertory of the mass a drop of water is added to the wine in the chalice and loses itself in the wine.

Mechthild is no doubt alluding to this. The passage also recalls Bernard of Clairvaux's discussion of union with God in On Loving God 10.28.

21. The German title differs markedly from the Latin title in the Lux div. (De collatione anime et corporis). Neumann (note to I 5, 1; N 11 9) takes this as an indication of an early corruption.

22. Paul (Rom 9:3) expresses similar sentiments.

23. Cf. I 2 and note 7 above.

24. The most influential thinker on the doctrine of angels in the Middle Ages was Pseudo-Dionysius, who divided them into nine ranks or choirs. Beginning with the highest rank, these are Seraphim, Cherubim, Thrones, Dominions, Virtues, Powers, Principalities, Archangels, and Angels.

25. The speaker is presumably the Lord.

26. That is, free of bitterness or rancor.

27. Chapters 12-21 bear resemblances to two types of poems occurring in courtly-love poetry: the dialogue and the Wechsel (exchange). The dialogue is a conversation between lovers who talk to each other directly. Chapters 14-15 seem the clearest example of this. The Wechsel consists of two or more loosely connected strophes. The lovers do not address each other directly but speak of what they share: their love, for example, or a common experience. Though the logical connection between the strophes is weak, each speaker speaks a kind of monologue that the reader intuitively refers to the other speaker. Many of these chapters may be thought of as part of a Wechsel.

28. For an interesting study of this passage, see Paul Michel, "Dutch die bilde uber bilde: Zur Bildgestaltung bei Mechthild von Magdeburg," In Abendlandische Mystik im Mittelalter, Symposion Kloster Engelberg, ed. Kurt Ruh (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1986), 509-26.

29. Cf. the frequent similar references to fragrance in the first chapter of the Song of Songs.

30. Cf. Sg 1:13.

31. The word I have rendered "protection" (sicherheit) means, among other things, the oath of submission that a knight conquered in single combat, if he is to avoid being killed, must swear to the knight who has bested him. In view of the preceding phrase ("defeat and retreat"), the soul might well be admitting that she has been conquered by divine love, to which she then utterly submits in order to stand under its protection.

32. Schmidt (note 20, p. 349) points out the similarity of this thought to one occurring in William of St. Thierry, to the effect that one needs two eyes to know God: love and knowledge. One eye, working alone, does not suffice.

33. Jubilus is a Latin word used here and in other spiritual writings of the age to signify rapture or ecstasy in which the soul is raised up above all earthly things. It is interesting to note that Mechthild uses it here for the state or condition of the Trinity as it creates the human soul.

34. Here begins a long series containing a good number of mystical paradoxes, which caused the copyists much difficulty, as is evidenced by the number of corruptions and questionable passages. Neumann is quite aware that he has not been able to restore the original wording in every case. Cf. note to I 22, 12-34; N 11 14.

35. Despite the attempts of others to replace "experiences" (ervert) with something else, Neumann decided to retain it from ms E.One suggested substitution is erwert (= enwirdet: becomes nothing, is annihilated). Cf. note to 1 22, 13; N 11 14-15.

36. All editors assume a lacuna here and in the other instances in this passage where ellipsis points occur.

37. That is, the deeper she dwells in infinite God.

38. The Middle High German word eigen, which I have translated by "own," means more than simply belonging to

someone. When used with reference to a person it implies the status of an unfree serf (eigenman=serf). Thus God here becomes the unfree serf or slave of the soul.

39. That is, in the Trinity.

40. The red wine of Christ's suffering restores the health of the soul.

41. In the original, for purposes of rhyme (lust-brust), the singular (breast) occurs.

42. Schmidt (note 24, p. 351) calls attention to the long tradition, beginning with early ecclesiastical writers, according to which Mother Church (ecclesia) suckles Christians. See also Caroline Bynum's treatment of this theme in her Jesus as Mother: Studies in the Spirituality of the High Middle Ages (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982).

43. Chapters 23 and 24 offer another example of dialogue similar to that found in courtly lyric poetry.

44. Neumann finds this sentence puzzling and possibly corrupt. Though he does not emend it, he considers emendations that would make it mean: 1. His (Christ's) life died out of love for you. Or: 2. Your lover (Christ) died out of love for you. Cf. note to 1 28, 5; N 11 19.

45. "Death... life": the usual order (life-death) is reversed here because of assonance rhyme (beliben-libe).

46. Neumann (note to I 29, 2; N 11 19) attributes the final phrase, "in Twenty-Three Steps of the Cross," to Heinrich of Halle's sense of order. The Lux div. introduces this chapter with the following narrative: "One day, when the sisters all hastened off to hear the word of God, Sister Mechthild remained behind alone, shut up in a small room. She began to lament sorely and to be sad, saying in her heart: `Woe is me, Lord, that I, poor wretch, because of my infirmity am not strong enough to be present to hear your word.' Soon there appeared the Consoler of those who grieve in the habit of the Dominicans, and he said to her: `Look at me, my bride, and see.'"

47. This phrase is in Latin in the text: Vide me, sponsa!

48. These are the hours at which the corresponding parts of the Divine Office are sung.

49. The charm of this chapter rests largely on the fact that each line has interior rhyme.

50. The Lux div. adds here: "The holy woman used to sing these seven phrases to the Lord when her body was weakened by sickness or in ardor of the spirit or in the delight of longing love."

51. Nothingness (das niht) and somethingness (das iht) are staples of the vocabulary of later mystics, especially of Meister Eckhart. Here we find a clear indication that they predate Eckhart's innovative influence on vernacular mystical vocabulary.

52. This is most likely a reference to the standard interpretation of the story of Martha and Mary (Lk 10:38-42), in which Jesus chides Martha for being too busy and worried regarding everyday matters and praises Mary's contemplative focus on what alone is truly necessary.

53. Chapters 36 and 37 present us with another example of Mechthild's employment of a device related to the dialogue form of courtly lyric poetry.

54. The deer and the eagle are traditional animal symbols of the contemplative soul based on Psalms 41:2 and 102:5, respectively.

55. These last sentences continue the allegory: the woods are the companionship of holy people; the nightingale is union with God; and the voice of the birds is holy knowledge.

56. I have chosen to follow Schmidt here and have translated "to circle higher." Cf. Schmidt, note 37, p. 354. Neumann (note to I 44, 36; N II 23-24) seems to conclude that the original phrase meant "to crawl/creep further."

57. That is: I will accompany you willingly, I depart from you in sadness.

58. Neumann (note to I 44, 62; N 11 24) is of the opinion that Mary's milk is unnatural because of its miraculous origin, which Mechthild explains in detail in V 23 below.

59. This is Neumann's proposed reading of a very problematic sentence. See note to I 44, 74 f.; N 11 25-26.

60. The original has: "ir sint so sere genattirt in mich" (I 44, 82; N 31). This translates literally as: "You are so very natured into me." This line serves as the culmination of Mechthild's play with "nature" in this chapter. For more of her thoughts on the nature of the soul, see VI 31 below.

61. This coyness is reminiscent of passages in courtly poetry: the poet of the Nibelungenlied, for example, discreetly refuses to reveal explicitly to his audience the joys of Siegfried and Kriemhild on their wedding night; and the girl in Walther von der Vogelweide's Under der linden hopes no one finds out what happened when she met with her lover.

62. Courtly poetry often plays with the paradox of lovers being inseparable, even when they must leave each other.

63. The names of these feast days may have been added to the original text by a later hand. Cf. note to I 45, 3-18; N 11 27.

64. Cf. Rv 12:1.

65. Schmidt (note 45, p. 357) points out the frequent occurrence in the Bible of images of grapes, wine, and the wine press, usually referring to a process of transformation. Cf. Lam 1:15; Is 5:2 and 63:3; Prv 3:10; Mt 21:33; and Rv 14:20.

66. Hartmann von Aue in the prologue to Gregorius (11. 97-143) gives an allegorical interpretation of the parable of the Good Samaritan (Lk 10:25-37). The oil and wine the Samaritan pours on the wounds of the robbers' victim are taken to be the balm (oil) of mercy or grace and the stinging antiseptic (wine) of the law or justice, which requires penitence and penance.

67. These words are in Latin in the text: "Veni, dilecta mea, veni, coronaberis!" As Neumann (note to I 46, 51 f.; N 11 28-29) points out, these words, taken from Song of Songs 4:8, were sung during the consecration of a virgin, a ritual in Mechthild's time not exclusively reserved for the ceremony of nuns' professing their vows but allowed also to women living outside the cloister, such as beguines.

68. I have used "religious" to translate geistliche here. It seems to indicate priests and members of religious orders, but perhaps it is not restricted to such in this context. Cf. Book I, note 2 above.

Book II

1. The toils Mechthild has in mind are most likely extreme acts of asceticism.

2. The phrase "with separation" possibly indicates that God and creatures retain their separateness even in special intimacy.

3. The uninterrupted bliss of the soul in heaven after death would be more than a human being on earth could endure.

4. That is, the nine choirs of angels mentioned in I 6 above.

5. The thought seems to be that it was a good idea for God to put Mary, the pinnacle of his creation, next to his throne. The archangels, surprised to see mere human beings above them in heaven, cannot quibble about someone as perfect as Mary being above them.

6. The tower should be thought of as being at the west end of the church over the entrance, at the opposite end from the altar.

7. The choir is that section of the church situated between the nave and the sanctuary, usually separated from the nave by a grill or something similar.

8. The Middle High German word ampellen (Latin: ampullae) can mean both small containers for liquid and lamps.

9. The complete lyrics can be found in 11 2 above.

10. These words are in Latin in the text: Gaudeamus omnes in domino. They are the first words of the introit for the feast of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Good Counsel, April 26.

11. Following the Lux div. Neumann (note to 11 4, 65 f.; N 11 31-32) takes this she to be the poor girl.

12. This "Book of the Genealogy" ofJesus Christ is Matthew 1:1-16 and is read on the feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, September 8.

13. Since Mechthild uses the word wihen (ordain) here in alluding to the marvelous happening that occurred when the pregnant Mary visited pregnant Elizabeth, whose baby leaped in the womb and was filled with the Holy Spirit (see Lk 1:41), perhaps she is interpreting this event to mean that John thus received ordination. However, when she later defends this vision against the charge that it is not authentic because in it John the Baptist, a layman, celebrates mass, she does not bring up such an argument. See VI 36 below.

14. Neumann (note to 11 4, 89-91; N 11 32) finds this phrase confusing. He suggests emending the text to read "at the words [of consecration] and signs of his hand."

15. This is probably best taken to mean that the lamb unites itself completely with the soul of the girl, which is in the divine image. This happens "in her stable," her body.

16. The lines in brackets, which also occur in the Lux div., were obviously added after Mechthild's death. No one, however, has been able to offer convincing arguments as to exactly when, where, or by whom they were added.

17. That is, the garment worn next to the skin.

18. The reader is warned not to attach undue theological weight to the phrase "one being." The context does not warrant it. God speaks here in lyrical phrases and as a lover-not as a theologian-in saying he and the soul shall become one.

19. As Neumann (note to 11 6, 14; N 11 33) points out, Mechthild usually employs Playful or playing (spilend) to refer to ecstatic mystical union, availing herself thereby of the traditions of courtly love and bride mysticism.

20. This is the beginning of the Gloria in the ordinary of the mass. Translation: "Glory to God in the highest."

21. In the text the pronouns and possessive adjectives in the beginning of the chapter are masculine because they refer back to "A person" (Ein mensche), which is masculine. They are best taken, however, as referring to Mechthild herself because she often refers to herself this way. Therefore I have changed he, him, and his to she and her.

22. Neumann (note to 11 14, If.; N 11 33) considers this title to be at least partially corrupt.

23. Because the Lux div. translates "from humanity" with "from the weakness of humanity" (ex infirmitate humanitatis), Neumann (note to II 14, 3; N 11 33-34) weighs the possibility that the original might have been more in line with the Lux div.

24. The lyrical charm of this passage, as in many passages, is enhanced by the rhyme in the original: stunt, runt, gesunt, munt, count.

25. Chapters 17 and 18 are another example of Mechthild's employing the courtly-lyric form of the dialogue or exchange.

26. That is, regrettably I sink back to earth because our union also involves my body, which weighs me down and hastens my return to earth.

27. A more literal rendering: "in your and God's bed of love."

28. I have adopted Schmidt's (p. 54) punctuation here because I cannot discover a plausible meaning by following Neumann's (II 19, 12-13; N I 50) punctuation.

29. As Neumann (note to 11 19, 17; N 11 35) points out, notlich, which I have rendered as "overwhelmed," is used by Mechthild to refer to the soul or God's (overwhelming) love at the point of mystical ecstasy.

30. In I 1 above, Lady Love also addressed the soul as her mistress and queen.

31. Cf. 2 Cor 12:2-4.

32. I have not translated this last clause in line with the reading that Neumann, despite misgivings (note to51 ; 11 19, N 11 36), has decided to retain. A literal translation of that reading would indicate that the soul deceives the senses. Taking the context into consideration and the translation of the clause offered in the Lux div., it seems likely that Mechthild wants to say that, in this heaven created by the devil, either the senses are themselves deceived, or they deceive the soul.

33. Cf. 2 Cor 11:14.

34. I have omitted two lines after" Three Persons" that Neumann puts in brackets because they were clearly not written by Mechthild. Translation: "which begin thus: God's true greeting, coming from the heavenly flood." This is a reference to the opening line of I 2 above.

35. Another of Mechthild's references to herself as a dog. Cf. 11 3 above.

36. See Book II, note 28 above.

37. The Lux div. introduced this chapter with "In raptu... "(In a rapture,...).

38. The Seraphim are those in the highest order of angels. The lowest order is made up of those simply called angels.

39. Concerning a sword piercing Mary's soul, cf. Lk 2:35.

40. That is, clerics and/or members of religious orders.

41. C£ Mt 14:1-12 and Mk 6:14-29.

42. John the Evangelist, the disciple "whom Jesus loved" and who at the Last Supper "was lying close to the breast ofJesus" (Jn 13:23), was in medieval times considered the mystic among the apostles. His symbol was the eagle, which, according to medieval lore, was the only animal that could look directly at the sun and not go blind. In like manner, John was thought to be able to look into the Godhead and not go blind.

43. Cf. 2 Cor 12:2-4.

44. Cf. Acts 7:54-60.

45. The word in the text, petze, is a corruption of the Latin pax (peace) and refers to the kiss of peace in the mass or to the object (crucifix or image of Christ) that the celebrant passed around to be kissed after the recitation of the "Lamb of God."

46. Cf.Jer 30:12.

47. Cf. Mt 8:4

48. The whole exchange between Mechthild and the devil is modeled on Christ's temptation in the wilderness. Cf. Mt 4:1-10; Mk 1:12-13; and Lk 4:1-13.

49. That is, by love.

50. Schmidt (notes 85 and 87, p. 363) points out Mechthild's probable dependence on Richard of St. Victor's De quattuor gradibus violentiae caritatis (On the Four Steps of Violent Love) for her concept of "bound love."

51. Cf. Jb 7:5 and 30:30.

52. In love poetry to break off or pluck flowers is frequently an allusion to loss of virginity.

53. This is perhaps a reference to her writing the FL.

54. For the apples, cf. Sg 2:3-5. The tree in most medieval interpretations of the Song of Songs is the cross of Christ. Concerning color symbolism, see Horst Laubner, Studien zum geistlichen Sinngehalt des Adjektivs im Werk Mechthilds von Magdeburg (Goppingen: Kummerle, 1975), 41-48.

55. Because this line is missing in a good manuscript (B) and in the Lux div., and because its meaning in this context is unclear, it may not be authentic. Cf. note to 11 25, 129; N 11 45.

56. These two final lines occur only in the Lux div. In the critical edition Neumann offers a Middle High German reconstruction of them (translated here).

57. That is, because I am trying to honor you by writing this book.

58. These last three words succinctly describe the three major difficulties Mechthild faces in seeking acceptance for her book: 1. Learned: she has little education. 2. Religious: she does not belong to a religious order approved by and under the jurisdiction of the church. 3. Man: women in general found it difficult to be taken as speaking with authority. Thus arises the need to insist that God is the book's author.

59. The gospel passage providing the foundation for this entire speech by God is Matthew 11:26/Luke 10:21-22.

60. The sentence up to this point presents some textual difficulties. How many writers are indicated? What does Mechthild mean by "write after me"? Neumann has chosen to rely heavily on the Lux div. in attempting to establish the critical text. The Lux div. speaks of writers (plural) and has them writing (conscripserint; most likely a future perfect indicative) after Mechthild (post me). Conscribere can indicate either the act of writing according to a model or text, or the act of taking down dictation (note to 11 26, 34 f.; N 11 46 and Neumann 1964, 183-86).

Book III

1. That is, the empty space left by the fallen angels.

2. For an extended study of this chapter, see Petrus Tax, "Die grol3e Himmelsschau Mechthilds von Magdeburg and ihre Hollenvision," Zeitschrift fur deutsches Altertum and deutsche Literatur 108 (1979), 112-25.

3. This is a ceremonial greeting. Schmidt (note 98, p. 365) describes a picture in a ms in Einsiedeln (Cod. Eins. 710, fol. 20b) of Christ laying his right hand on the breast of the soul represented as a nun. She has her left hand resting on his right shoulder.

4. Cf. Walther von der Vogelweide's Under der linden, where the girl asks: "Did he kiss me?" (Kust er mich?); to which she immediately supplies the answer: "Yes indeed, a thousand times." Schmidt (note 100, pp. 365-66) gives examples of occurrences of the divine kiss in medieval religious writings.

5. God, a spiritual being, creates or makes by giving a command with words; e.g., "Let there be light" (Gn 1:3).

6. Tax, "Himmelsschau," p. 117, interprets this to mean that a whole tenth (and highest) choir fell together with Lucifer.

7. This short sentence probably means that some angels from the other nine choirs fell with Lucifer as well.

8. Tax, "Himmelsschau," p. 117, considers desolation (das ellende) to be a synonym for breach (bruch). But perhaps it is better to think of it as the upper reaches of the breach. Cf. also Schmidt, note 103, p. 366.

9. The song of the virgins that one would expect here is absent from all mss.

10. That is, they have not yet assumed their places on the chairs.

11. First in ascending order.

12. That is, in the choir totally vacated by Lucifer and those closest to him.

13. Christ arose from the dead in the perfect manhood of someone thirty years old. All redeemed Christians shall rise from the dead as thirty year olds. But the unbaptized children shall not rise from the dead in the same manner as the faithful elect.

14. That is, the body.

15. Exactly what Mechthild means by this allusion is not clear. The Middle High German word used here to describe the dog is edel (noble), but the Lux div. translates edelwith crudelior (fiercer). Perhaps that conception is that a dog with good bloodlines is a better watchdog or hunter.

16. This concluding paragraph offers a clever defense against possible objections: first, by calling to mind the evangelical injunction to become as guileless children and not take on the legalistic attitudes of the Pharisees; and, second, by stating that God is the chapter's primary author. Perhaps already at this stage of her writing Mechthild was experiencing attacks by detractors, or perhaps she added this paragraph later.

17. Mechthild here addresses the bride in the Song of Songs.

18. Cf. Sg 2:17.

19. That is, that wisdom teach me moderation.

20. That is, the Annunciation.

21. That is, that she cannot be present at the recitation of the Divine Office.

22. That is, from celebrating mass.

23. That is, if a priest in serious sin celebrates mass, the mass is valid but the priest sins mortally.

24. The image (plucking) is that of the Trinity as a stringed instrument.

25. The word hanttrfiwe (solemn assurance) means literally hand-loyalty; i.e., faithfulness promised by some formal gesture with the hand. It is used in reference to the faithfulness promised by the groom to the bride at the wedding ceremony. Cf. note to 111 9, 52; N 11 56.

26. The prophets frequently called Israel a whore for being unfaithful to its God. Cf., for example, Is 1:21; Jer 3:6-10; and Ez 16 and 23.

27. The Lux div. reads "mystical temple of Solomon."

28. The following chapter is filled with allusions to the accounts of the passion and death of Christ given in the gospels.

29. I have rendered mit heliger italheit by "in holy simplicity." However, as Neumann (note to 111 10, 22; N 11 57-58) points out, the phrase is troublesome for several reasons. Another possible reading is "in hellish vanity."

30. Neumann's (note to III 10, 29; N 11 58) best guess for this difficult word (minnelouffe) is to relate it to the chase or hunt imagery of the Song of Songs, imagery that appears also in 11 25 above.

31. Mechthild seems to be saying that "that," i.e., receiving communion despite her feelings of unworthiness, is no more a hindrance to her glorifying God in so doing than it is to use an oven to bake. Just as an oven fulfills its purpose through baking, she fulfills hers by accomplishing in herself God's goodness. And to do so, she must receive communion.

32. This is in Latin in the text: Puer natus est nobis (Is 9:6). It is from the introit of the third mass of the Feast of the Nativity of the Lord.

33. That is, those in purgatory.

34. That is, members of the clergy and/or religious orders.

35. A venia is a complete prostration performed while praying.

36. A discipline is a whip made of cord for penitential practices.

37. That is, female members of religious orders and beguines.

38. That is, fellow members of my order.

39. The biblical imagery most similar to that in this chapter would seem to be Paul's in Ephesians 6:11-17.

40. The final section of this sentence is hopelessly corrupt in ms E. The Lux div. preserves a vestige of the image of mutual illumination between God and creature found elsewhere. The final three words of the critical edition are "in das mine" (into mine). I have rendered them literally and think that mine means my (God's) heart, parallel to creatures' hearts mentioned earlier in the sentence.

41. That is, with God, or familiarity with divine things.

42. I have translated "gegen dem ewigen gotte" by "face to face with God eternal." Although face to face may seem at first an unnecessary addition, I think it is warranted because, in the standard medieval view of Moses, which goes back to Augustine (De genesi ad litteram 12, cap. 27, n. 55; PL 34, 477-78), this prophet's exalted position rested on his being the only Old Testament figure to have seen God face to face. The preposition gegen employed by Mechthild instead of the more usual mit (with) seems to imply this traditional thought concerning Moses.

43. That is, the Song of Songs, whose author was believed to be Solomon.

44. Cf. Sg 4:7.

45. Cf. Jer 31:22. Patristic theology considered this passage to be a prophecy of the Incarnation.

46. Cf. Dn 14:30.

47. For a detailed analysis of this chapter, see Tax, "Himmelsschau," pp. 126-36.

48. A medieval reader would most likely see this as an allusion to the city of the devil, or Babylon, as described by Augustine in his City of God.

49. "High spirit" (hoher muot) is a conventional term in courtly poetry and describes the feeling of exhilaration one should feel because one is a member of such a worthy society. Thus, Mechthild seems to be condemning courtly literature as a frivolous pursuit that distracts from serious spiritual concerns.

50. Such effects of a powerful vision have a long tradition. Cf., for example, Dn 7:28; 8:27; and 10:7-9.

51. The neo-Platonic influence and perhaps heretical implications of the soul's origin emanating from this passage need not be taken with complete theological seriousness. Content here is clearly being influenced by Mechthild's striving for rhyme and lyrical effect.

52. Mechthild seems to be saying that limbo (or Abraham's bosom), where those pre-Christian figures destined for heaven, such as Adam, Eve, Moses, the prophets, etc., had to wait until saved by Christ's redemptive act, was converted into the worst part of purgatory after Christ's ascension. Just as Mechthild condemns Christians to a worse punishment than non-Christians, so also does she consign prominent Christians who barely avoided hell to this "renovated" limbo.

53. That is, what we have not done penance for on earth has to be atoned for hereafter.

54. That is, they have repented and confessed their sins, but have never done penance for them.

55. The Lux div. translates this phrase by "sine medio" (directly). Perhaps the image is that of the soul at death escaping the body through the mouth.

56. The critical edition has a period here and joins the following clause to the next sentence. I find it much more difficult to come up with a satisfactory reading following that punctuation. Schmidt (p. 113) punctuates as I do.

57. Neumann (note to 111 23; N 11 64) remarks that this chapter has no corresponding chapter in the Lux div. and was probably moved here from Book VII.

58. The soul's final speech marks her as a courtly lover pursuing her beloved. Her love consists in desire rather than in fulfillment. She is willing to suffer anything to attain her goal, but she knows, as does, say, the poet Reinmar von Hagenau, that her basic manner of bearing herself is to be one of faithful waiting.

59. Here Mechthild expresses a thought that recalls lines of a poem by Walther von der Vogelweide (Herzeliebez frouwelin) in which he states that it is not beauty that causes love but rather love that causes one to be beautiful: "Liebe machet schoene wip" (Love makes women beautiful).

Book IV

1. Neumann (note to IV 2, 101-3; N 11 66) thinks these last two sentences might well have been added by Mechthild later, as she was editing her work.

2. Schmidt (p. 125) translates die cristanheit with "the church" (die Kirche). I have chosen the more literal "Christianity." Clearly, however, the two concepts are almost identical in Mechthild's thinking.

3. These three words are in Latin in the text: "Ego sum Jhesus."

4. Mechthild seems to be indicating here that she went into ecstasy.

5. That is, the cupidity's desire.

6. That is, the spiritual authority Christ gave to Peter and his other disciples to bind and to absolve. Cf. Mt 16:18-19; 18:18; and Jn 20:23.

7. Neumann (note to IV 3, 37; N 11 67) explains that this refers to Christ's sitting at the right hand of the Father.

8. A more literal translation would be: "and her nostrils are stuffed with sweet violets." I doubt, however, that such a rendering captures the spirit of the image.

9. I have rendered "die gruenen wissen lylien" (green white lilies) as "verdant white lilies" and "das wisse gruene morgenrot" (the white green dawn) as "the pale green dawn" because a literal translation leads to confusion about the colors. However, as Mechthild continues her allegorical description, it is important to realize that green and white have already been explicitly mentioned twice.

10. The Trinity is threefold and one, like an eye that is made up of white (Father); green, i.e., the iris (Son); and light, i.e., the pupil (Holy Spirit).

11. Neumann (note to IV 3, 60; N 11 68) explains horn as a corner of the battlements and remarks that Mechthild is here exploiting the tradition of the fortress of love allegory frequently occurring in courtly poetry, but that she adds to it by employing technical terms of military engineering. Schmidt (note 144, p. 375) notes the implied reference to the Trinity in the threefold horn and recalls the symbolic meaning of the horn among the ancient Assyrians, Babylonians, and Hebrews as well as the horns on the head of Moses in Christian art.

12. That is, members of religious orders.

13. That is, the gift of the wisdom from the natural faculties.

14. The verse form Mechthild chooses for this chapter, except for the last few lines, resembles the couplet, though the lines vary in the number of feet, and not all couplets rhyme.

15. The "it" refers to false consolation.

16. This should probably be interpreted to mean: the possibility that I might sin in the future.

17. Probably an offering connected with a successful harvest.

18. Just what the four kinds of offerings are is not self-evident. Neumann (note to IV 9, 3; N 11 70) suggests: for mass, for bringing communion to the sick, for the last anointing, and at harvest time.

19. Here Mechthild is drawing on the tradition of the dawn song, which expresses the sadness of the lovers because, after a night together, they must separate. Cf. also, Sg 3:1.

20. That is, the souls in purgatory.

21. That is, the lowest joy in heaven.

22. 1 Jn 3:2.

23. Translation: We praise you, God.

24. That is, Mechthild.

25. A very confusing sentence that puzzles the commentators. The Lux div. seems to interpret it to mean that, if the Second Person had been flesh before the Annunciation, flesh would have been a beginning or principle of the Second Person's nature or being. This is what is then denied.

26. That is, the more virtuous we are on earth, the higher is the rank of the angels we are given as vassals in heaven.

27. The Lux div. interprets this specifically to mean "take up the life of a beguine."

28. Instead of claws, this might mean "with sharp points on its horns." See Neumann, note to IV 7, 9; N 11 74-75.

29. This entire chapter is obviously modeled on the traditions of the bestiaries (German: Philologus). These were works treating real and fabled animals by listing their (often merely imputed or imagined) characteristics, which were then allegorized in a moral or theological vein.

30. The word in the text is empfangen, which can mean both "to receive" and "to conceive."

31. Schmidt (note 164, p. 379) suggests that the fish is Christ. From early Christian times the fish was a symbol for Christ.

32. Neumann (note to IV 18, 99; N 11 77) explains this clause as referring to the public ceremony during which relics of the saints were held up for veneration.

33. The name in German: Alles Nictze.

34. The Lux div. introduces this chapter with this addition: "The beginning of the order was on fire with glowing divine love and, while it shone in the faultlessness of external purity, it gave forth, as it were, the fragrance of lilies, and it knew nothing of hypocrisy. Clothed in true simplicity, it was bright with beauty."

35. This refers no doubt to the Dominicans as confessors and praises them for being theologically schooled enough to carry out their duties in the confessional knowledgeably and with good judgment.

36. The Lux div, introduces this chapter with the following addition: "I was in the habit of visiting the graves of deceased

pious people and of greeting them as though they were God's household servants."

37. That is, Mechthild.

38. The clarification about the length of time is necessary because the text does not say "a week" but rather "fourteen time periods" (vierzehen stunde).

39. The Lux div. gives the name of the sister: Oda.

40. The word burial in this chapter heading either means something like "lying in state" or rests on a reading in ms E that says that John's body lies and is buried (. and begraben) which Neumann (note to IV 23, 3; N 11 79), following the Lux div., has emended to "lies unburied" (unbegraben)

41. Creation is a literal translation (schoepfnisse). Mechthild seems to be using the phrase "creation of the eternal kingdom" to denote heaven as a place or space with a clear but thin border between it and what is beneath it.

42. The orthodoxy of this statement is questionable. Usually the knowledge that their punishment will come to an end is seen as the decisive difference between those in purgatory and those in hell.

43. See above 111 21.

44. The Lux div. introduces this chapter with the following remarks, which are the basis for the claim that Mechthild had a brother who became a Dominican: "Brother Baldwin, brother by blood of Sister Mechthild, was brought up from childhood in good manners and was instructed in all virtues. In addition, he strove by his own industry to attain learning and was steeped in scholastic training. Finally, because of the merits of his sister, he was received into the Order of Preachers. Here he made such progress in virtue and knowledge that his brothers promoted him to the office of subprior, though against his will. He was so weighed down by this that, though he was young and strong, his bodily strength began to deteriorate."

45. That is, members of a new religious order.

46. That is, members of the order are not to travel alone.

47. In Mechthild's day this would be from November 1 to February 22.

48. Cf.Jn 12:3; Mt 26:7; and Mk 14:3.

49. That is, ordinary Christians should anoint the feet of the members of this new order, but only men should do this anointing because the members of this order are not God.

50. English: I believe in God.

51. The German word meister (master) means primarily a teacher or professor but, as this chapter also seems to imply, someone who wields authority, such as a religious superior.

52. These last two sentences seem to be saying that the founder of this new order, the son of the king of Rome, shall be authorized by the pope to write a rule for the new order, which then receives the pope's approval. Mechthild's prophecy of a new religious order may have been very controversial. It seems to reflect the prophetic writings of the Calabrian abbotJoachim of Fiore (c. 1135-1202), who foretold the appearance of a new and more perfect religious order in the coming new age. Joachim's views on the Trinity were condemned by the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215 and, in a perhaps not unrelated move, the founding of new religious orders was also prohibited.

53. That is, Jesus and his twelve apostles.

54. That is, by Judas. See Mt 26:15. The selling of Jesus is called "blessed," most likely in line with the felix culpa tradition. Adam's fall (culpa) was fortunate (felix) because it resulted in the elevation of the human race by causing the Word to become flesh. The selling of Christ can be seen in this same light.

55. Also in her elaborations on the last days, the Antichrist, and the return of Enoch and Elijah, Mechthild seems to have been greatly influenced by Joachim of Fiore. For more on this, see Schmidt, note 1 81, pp. 382-83; and Bernard McGinn, The Calabrian Abbot: Joachim of Fiore in the History of Western Thought (New York: Macmillan, 1985).

56. Elijah (cf. 2 Kgs 2:11-12) and Enoch (cf. Gn 5:24 and the pseudoepigraphical book of Enoch) were both taken up to heaven (or, for Mechthild, to paradise) without dying. Hence the common belief that they shall come back to earth in the last days.

57. That is, Enoch and Elijah.

Book V

1. Neumann (note to V 1, 24 f.; N 11 83) points out that the Lux div. modifies this passage concerning the angels and omits the names of the two highest ranks, probably because Mechthild's words could cause some concern as to the orthodoxy of her conception of the angels.

2. That is, the angels.

3. Concerning innate and acquired chastity in the soul: The former is no doubt that of Adam and Eve before the fall. This is the more perfect chastity and thus is put on the same level as the highest angels, the Seraphim. Acquired chastity, the best that humans can achieve since the fall, shines into the second highest choir, the Cherubim. On the sources for Mechthild's views on the angels, see note to V I, 27-33; N 11 83-84; and Schmidt, note 184, pp. 384-85.

4. That is, the Seraphim.

5. That is, souls.

6. Augustine's doctrine of original sin and its consequences for human sexuality are the most likely sources for Mechthild's statements about "marriage blood." According to the Bishop of Hippo, since the fall sexual intercourse is evil because it causes disorder in the human person. Passion overwhelms reason. Marriage, however, legitimizes sexual pleasure, which, nevertheless, remains disordering and hence evil in itself.

7. That is, the soul.

8. Kurt Ruh, "Mechthild von Magdeburg and Wichmann von Arnstein," Zeitschrift fur deutsches Altertum and deutsche Literatur 120 (1991), 322-25, has discovered Mechthild's probable source for this unusual image of the soul under Lucifer's tail: the Magdeburg Dominican Wickmann of Arnstein, a contemporary of Mechthild and author of mystical writings.

9. Schmidt (note 157, p. 379) assumes the influence of Heinrich of Halle here because Mechthild so carefully distinguishes filial fear, which is still possible in heaven, from servile fear, which is not.

10. That is, I was following God's plan of redemption in coming to earth.

11. That is, though spiritually dead through mortal sin, they still live on earth and may be saved.

12. Cf.Jn 11:17-44.

13. The scriptural basis for this paragraph is probably Matthew 27:51-53. Schmidt (note 189, p. 385) lists many medieval theologians who were of the opinion that others arose from the grave and ascended into heaven when Christ did.

14. That is, the juice from the apple and the cursed blood.

15. That is, the name one receives upon entering religious life.

16. The Lux div. introduces this chapter with the following addition: "Brother Heinrich, named `of Halle,' lector at Ruppin, having wondered at the sayings and writings of Sister Mechthild, received the following response from her."

17. Cf. Acts 2:3-7

18. Cf. Ex 3:6.

19. This is a reference to the role of young Daniel in saving Susanna from the elders, as related in the Book of Susanna. Cf. especially verses 44-63. The Lux div. concludes this chapter with the following addition: "This learned and good man, the aforementioned lector, collected all the writings of this Mechthild and put them together in one volume and divided it into six parts, as it now appears to those reading it. Sister Mechthild, who survived him, saw his soul in the sight of the Lord in heaven holding this book in his hand and rejoicing with his face radiant. For through the writing down of this book he attained for himself many rewards. Through them he appeared full of glory in the sight of the saints."

20. That is, by being truly sorry for our sins.

21. "Sinner" is feminine in the text and no doubt refers to Mechthild.

22. The words "over all humankind" appear in some manuscripts after `judgment" but are not considered authentic by Neumann (V 22, 7: N 1 172).

23. The following sentence appearing in some manuscripts "That is God's heart; alas for my guilty pain!" is not considered authentic by Neumann (V 22, 46-47; N 1 174).

24. Cf. Lk 1:38. Mechthild phrases Mary's reply to the angel in more courtly fashion than does the biblical text.

25. Cf. Lk 1:46-48.

26. That is, those gifts brought by the three wise men.

27. Lk 2:22-24. Mechthild's concern seems to be: Why did Mary give an offering of two pigeons, the traditional offering of poorer people, and not a lamb, since they were suddenly rich because of the gifts of the three wise men?

28. The Lux div. explains this by adding" not be stoned as adulteresses according to the law. Schmidt (note 207, pp. 387-88) thinks these remarks about virgins would also call to mind for the medieval audience the legend about St. Nicholas: that he gave money to the father of three young sisters and thus saved them from having to become prostitutes.

29. A hunger cloth (hungerlachen or hungertuoch) was a veil or curtain that was hung in front of the altars or in front of the sanctuary during Lent as a symbol of mourning and penance. It was often covered with rich, symbolic embroideries.

30. That is, during the time of the Old Testament.

31. The vertical gold stripe down the middle of the hunger cloth and the horizontal green border encrusted with gems form a cross.

32. Cf.Jn 20:1.

33. That is on Pentecost. Cf. Acts 2:1-4.

34. The mountain is Christ. Cf. 11 21 above. The tree bearing the mountain is the cross.

35. That is, the mountain.

36. That is, by becoming man the Son reconciled humanity to God. Cf. 1 Jn 2:1-2.

37. That is, he was married and belonged to a third order, either Franciscan or, more likely, Dominican. He probably ended his days in a religious house in Magdeburg. Mechthild is surprised to see the crowns of virgins over someone who was not a virgin. Neumann (note to V 28, 7; N 11 103) remarks that the crowns are suspended over his head. He is not actually wearing them, as is Sister Hildegund in 11 20 above.

38. The two prayer titles are in Latin in the text: Miserere mei dens and Pater roster.

39. St. Elizabeth of Hungary (1207-31) was canonized in 1234.

40. St. Dominic (c. 1170-1221) was canonized in 1234.

41. St. Francis (1181/82-1226) was canonized in 1228.

42. St. Peter was a Dominican who worked among the Catharists in Lombardy and Tuscany. He was murdered in 1252 and canonized in 1253.

43. That is, Mechthild.

44. Jutta of Sangerhausen, a noblewoman, after her husband had died on a pilgrimage to Palestine and her children had entered religious life, took the veil and served the poor and lepers. In 1260 she went to Prussia as a hermitess to work for the spread of Christianity. She died in 1264 and was later venerated there as a saint.

45. This sentence stands at the beginning of the preamble to Book I and thus serves as an introduction to the entire FL. See the preamble to Book I.

46. That is, participation in Christ's suffering and death.

47. That is, preserves one in faith and redemption until one attains glory in heaven.

48. This last phrase is in Latin in the text: Per dominum nostrum, jhesum Christum filium tuum.

Book VI

1. See Book III, note 35 above.

2. The text reads "his lord apostles." But Neumann (note to VI 1, 70; N 11 110) thinks lord is not original and suggests replacing it with holy, which I have done.

3. That is, with concern that we do not waste much time on them because they are temporary.

4. The next few lines allude to the often allegorized parable of the Good Samaritan in Luke 10:30-37.

5. The Lux div. identifies this person as "Dietrich, the venerable deacon of the church of Magdeburg."

6. The final phrase is in Latin in the text: per dominum nostrum.

7. That is, the canon in the previous chapter.

8. In the original, boeke (rams) can refer to male sheep, goats, chamois, etc. Given the function of the image of goats in the gospels and in popular tradition, I am assuming that Mechthild is referring to male goats.

9. The Lux div. introduces this chapter with the words: "When she had grown old, Sister Mechthild said:..."

10. This is an indication that Mechthild served at one time as the head of a beguine community.

11. Schmidt (note 245, p. 391) considers this last sentence to be an obvious addition by Heinrich of Halle.

12. The Lux div. interprets this to mean the act of honoring the saints in conjunction with all Christians.

13. Carenae were periods of additional fasting that could be imposed by bishops or abbots for serious sins. Cf. note to VI 10, 4; N 11118.

14. Neumann (note to VI 10, 7-8; N 11 118) assumes that the bracketed words were added later to the text.

15. That is, out of fear of what people might think and say if he left mass early.

16. The chapter heading is clearly incomplete. This rendering translates Neumann's attempt to restore it. Most likely the first part of the chapter has also been lost. The Lux div. introduces the chapter with the following information: "A certain student of good morals, devoted to God, and a blood relative of mine was struck with insanity and the loss of reason with God's consent and in his inscrutable dispensation; and he remained bereft of senses and mind to the very end of his life. I had considered him to be suitable for religious life and intimacy with God. Thus I was inwardly quite disturbed by the course of events. I prayed to God for him." Since such concrete references to people or events are rare in the German text, Neumann (note to VI 11, 1; N 11 118) assumes a missing introductory sentence along the following lines: "I prayed to our Lord for a student who lost his mind and whose nature was dead while he went on living."

17. This first phrase of the quotation (Mt 25:34) is in Latin in the text: Venite, benedicti patris mei. The last part is from Matthew 25:41.

18. That is, the senses refuse to turn inward from the external distractions they are drawn to and thus hinder God's activity in the soul.

19. Neumann (note to VI 13, 18; N 1 220) does not consider this phrase authentic.

20. That is, to spare the body the exhausting intensity of contemplative experiences and raptures that render it useless for external pastoral activities.

21. Concerning Enoch, Elijah, and the last brothers/preachers, see IV 27 and Book IV, note 55 above.

22. For literature on the traditions of God as a mirror, see Schmidt, note 19, p. 349.

23. According to medieval thought, the human soul is what is created in the "image and likeness" of God. Cf. Gn 1:26.

24. The soul of Christ, in saying "he," is referring to the "human" Christ.

25. That is, by becoming human, Christ ennobled human nature.

26. The image of the cross of Christ as the key opening the gates of heaven has a long tradition. See note to VI 16, 44 f.; N 11123.

27. The Lux div. begins this chapter with: "The Lord says:..."

28. Neumann (note to VI 21, 1 f.; N II 125) does not consider the bracketed words to be authentic.

29. That is, the clergy.

30. This probably refers to the higher clergy.

31. See IV 27; VI 15; and Book IV, note 55 above. See also note to VI 21, 2; N 11 125-26.

32. The reigns of the popes around this time were Innocent IV (1243-54), Alexander IV (1254-61), Urban IV (1261-64), Clement IV (1265-68), Gregory X (1271-76), Innocent V (1276), Hadrian V (1276), John XXI (1276-77), and Nicholas III (1277-80). Hence this chapter may have been written during the reign of Nicholas III.

33. This chapter is the same as VII 45. I have followed Neumann in placing it there.

34. This sentence is confusing. The Lux div. renders it thus: "Why, Lord, did you have to suffer such huge torments since in your pure prayer [in the garden of Gethsemane] the precious drops running down to the ground would have been sufficient to make reparation for the whole world." Implication: there was really no need for Christ to suffer more after that.

35. In calling those who do not love "schemers against love" (varer der minne), Mechthild is using the vocabulary of courtly-love poetry. Varerare those at court who are jealous of the happiness the lovers enjoy in loving and who do what they

can to make their love public and thus destroy it.

36. This last sentence, taken from Luke 23:46, is in Latin in the text: in manes tuas commendo spiritism meum.

37. Cf. Mt 25:41.

38. The sense seems to be: If God were to give me the necessary virtue, I would gladly perform the good work connected with it.

39. See I 44 above, in a speech of the soul toward the close of the chapter.

40. And on earth and in purgatory these two things-suffering and bliss-are both continuously present together.

41. For some secondary literature on God as a circle, see Neumann (notes on umbezil and unbegriffenlich to VI 31; N 11 132-33) and Schmidt (note 267, pp. 393-94).

42. That is, in battle against the desires of the flesh.

43. Chapter, as used here, is a regularly held meeting of a religious community, during which part of the rule is usually read and, among other things, matters of religious discipline settled.

44. I have followed the text in keeping the person holding strict chapter with himself masculine to this point. With the introduction of a she, Mechthild most likely wishes to reveal that she has been speaking of herself throughout.

45. Cf. the Song of Solomon, especially 2:10 and 13.

46. This chapter is a response to criticisms against Mechthild: that the experience she describes in 11 4 above is theologically untenable and, by implication, not an authentic experience because she describes John the Baptist, who was never ordained a priest, celebrating mass.

47. Cf.Jn 1:29-34.

48. The words from the gospel of John (1:29 and 36) are in Latin in the text: Ecce agnus dei.

49. This final phrase Burch dine here name dri (for the sake of your three glorious names) bears striking resemblance, especially because of the similarities in unusual word order, to a line in Walther von der Vogelweide's Palastinalied: "durch die sine namen dri" (for the sake of his three names). The purpose of Walther's song is to recruit crusaders to go and free Jerusalem from the infidel. Given the similarity of Mechthild's sentiments, she may well be trying to recall Walther's song to the minds of her audience.

50. The last words are in Latin in the text: Requiescant in pace. Amen.

51. Neumann (note to VI 37, 63; N II 139) comments that, if this chapter was written before Mechthild entered the Cistercian convent at Helfta, "companions" (gaden) refers to the beguines with whom she lived.

52. Another example of Mechthild using "greeting" (gruos) to refer to ecstatic experience. Cf., for example, I 2 above.

53. This you is in the plural (ir).

54. The bracketed words are not considered authentic by Neumann. See note to VI 41, 7: N II 141.

55. These final two chapters are not listed in the table of contents and were probably added later.

56. This chapter, which is not included in the Lux div., is generally considered to have been added by an editor.

57. The final phrase is in Latin in the text: Deo gratias.

1. Cf. Rv 14:4. This chapter draws heavily on images from the Book of Revelation.

2. Neumann (note to VII 1, 93; N 11 143) refers to Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologica, I, q. 35, a. 1 and 2, in connection with Mechthild's calling the humanity of Christ an "intelligible image (begriffenlich bilde) of his eternal Godhead."

3. See Book VI, note 22 above.

4. That is, the blessed.

5. This "he" is confusing. One expects "they," i.e., Father and Son.

6. Ps. 112:1. In Latin in the text: Laudate pueri dominum.

7. I have followed Neumann's punctuation here. Schmidt (p. 273) changes the punctuation and the meaning of the ambiguous iht and comes up with a rendering that is at least equally plausible. Her translation translated: "Alas, wretched ones, as long as we storm around in anger, there is nothing (iht) good about us. We must then return again and again to our heart."

8. A reference to Mechthild'sjoining the Cistercian sisters at the convent in Helfta. There is general agreement that this happened in about 1270 or 1271.

9. In Latin in the text: Te deum laudamus.

10. The chapter room in a religious house (cf. Book VI, note 43 above) is here being used by Mechthild as a symbol for the activities of the conscience.

11. From here through "Glory be to the Father and the Son" the text is in Latin: Adiutorium nostrum in nomine domini. Laudate dominum omnes gentes. Gloriatur etfilius. Regnum mundi. Eructavit cor. Quem vidi. Gloria patri etfilio. These are all responses in the Divine Office sung on various feast days.

12. Mt 5:3. In Latin in the text: Beati pauperes spiritu.

13. This sentence is not contained in the main manuscript tradition. However, Neumann (note to VII 13, 17; N 11 148-49) does not exclude the possibility that it is authentic, especially since it serves nicely as a bridge between what immediately precedes and follows it.

14. That is, the mirror.

15. That is, the hours at which members of a religious community assembled to sing the Divine Office.

16. The first five lines, excluding "Lord Jesus Christ," also introduce V 20 above.

17. That is, before receiving holy communion.

18. This you is in the plural and is no doubt addressed to the sisters of the Cistercian community of Helfta, which Mechthild had joined. Helfta was known for the high level of learning among its members.

19. Cf. 1 Cor 2:9.

20. In Latin in the text: Gloria tibi trinitas!

21. In Latin in the text: Salve regina!

22. The antecedent of "She" is most likely the world. The noun world is feminine in German. Also, Lady World (frouwe welt) occurs frequently in medieval art and literature as a temptress poisoning the soul.

23. Schmidt (note 292, p. 397) sees King Gustav Adolf of Nassau's military campaigns in Saxony and Thuringia as being

the historical events prompting this chapter. These campaigns took place in 1294. This would mean that Mechthild died after 1294. Neumann (1964, 197-99) makes a case for earlier military activities being Mechthild's point of reference and puts Mechthild's death in about 1282.

24. That is, the positive results of war.

25. Neumann (note to VII 33, 11; N II 154) is convinced that the numbering of the spices became confused in transmission. He thinks that Mechthild wished to enumerate five spices that would allude mystically to the five wounds of Christ. The five spices would be: willing suf fering, patient suffering, holy intimacy, perseverance in suffering, and joy in suffering.

26. That is, the seven penitential psalms.

27. Ps 6:1. In Latin in the text: Domine ne in furore.

28. Ps 32:1. In Latin in the text: Beati quorum remissa.

29. Ps 38:1. In Latin in the text: Domine ne in furore.

30. Ps 51:1. In Latin in the text: Miserere mei dens.

31. Ps 102:1. In Latin in the text: Domine, exaudi orationem meam et clamor.

32. Ps 130:1. In Latin in the text: De profundis clamo.

33. It was often the custom in the Middle Ages for a bride to receive a gift from her new husband on the morning after the wedding night. In the Nibelungenlied, for example, Siegfried gives the Nibelungen treasure to Kriemhild as her "morning gift."

34. Ps 143:1. In Latin in the text: Domine, exaudi orationem meam auribus percipe.

35. Schmidt (note 298, p. 400) notes that allegorical use of the convent is frequent in medieval spiritual writing, but that Mechthild's is the first to occur in German and that a clear relationship to a source has not been demonstrated.

36. It is not really clear in the course of the next several lines just what these "four things" are. Also, the noun to which "it(s)" refers in the following three lines is not clear from the original text.

37. CE Rv 14:4.

38. Possible alternate rendering: "That they are here fills me with joy."

39. Schmidt (note 300, p. 400) refers to Psalm 51:5: "Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me" and to the problem of unknowingly becoming involved in guilt, as it is treated by Wolfram of Eschenbach in Parzival and Willehalm. Another medieval line of thought that might provide the background for Mechthild's statement is the Augustinian doctrine of original sin, which often documented its claim of human sinfulness before birth by referring to this psalm verse. For more on this and its consequences for an influential medieval view on human sexuality, see, for example, John T.Noonan, Jr., Contraception. A History of Its Treatment by the Catholic Theologians and Canonists (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1965).

40. That is, to where a person with a pure soul lies dying.

41. The devils bested by the soul respond to their master Satan.

42. Satan's growling and gnashing are his angry response to what his minions have just reported to him.

43. Mechthild is here drawing on medieval secular love poetry, which frequently expressed similar ideas in similar form. One of the best-known such poems in German is:

If all the world were mine
From the sea to the Rhine,
I would renounce it
That the Queen of England
Might lie in my arms.

Translated from Poets of the Minnesang, ed. Olive Sayce (Oxford, 1967), p. 2.

44. Schmidt (note 303, p. 400) sees this mention of forty years as evidence for the view that Mechthild died after 1290, since it is generally agreed that Mechthild started writing in 1250 and her writings are what made her known. Those favoring the time around 1282 as the time of her death could counter that Mechthild knew this clergyman for some time before she began writing and that the harm he caused Mechthild, mentioned later in this chapter, could have come after they have been acquainted for several years. Also, a mere five chapters before this one, at the beginning of VII 36 above, Mechthild says she has been writing for thirty years.

45. That is, if I could still have productive sorrow for my failings, as one can before death but not here in purgatory.

46. This chapter appears twice in ms E, once as VI 22 and here. Cf. Book VI, note 33 above.

47. For these three lines I have adopted Schmidt's (p. 316) punctuation. Neumann (VII 45, 15-17; N 1 291) has no punctuation after the first them, which turns the lines into an anacoluthon.

48. Neumann (note to VII 45, 22; N 11 159) considers this line to be a later addition, and not by Mechthild.

49. Cf.Jn 14:23.

50. Given the problems faced by Mechthild in defending her book against charges that it contained heretical statements, it is not surprising to see her in her later years taking a very clear stand on the question of unorthodox teachings. Here she distances herself from those who claim that the soul can become so holy that it may, as it were, enter the Trinity. (It would be possible to bring such a charge against Mechthild herself, given the vision she describes in 111 9!) According to Neumann (note to VII 47, 18; N 11 160) the final sentence of this chapter takes a position against teachings such as those of the homines perfecti treated by Herbert Grundmann in Religiose Bewegungen im Mittelalter, 2 ed. (Darmstadt, 1961), pp. 402-38 and 524-38.

51. I have translated ane pine as "except suffering," taking Mechthild to be saying here something similar to what she says in VII 46 above about spiritual poverty. Schmidt (p. 318) takes Mechthild to be saying that nothing in this world can console or cheer her without, at the same time, causing her to suffer.

52. Neumann (note to VII 48, 26; N II 160) takes book to mean the already complete ms of Books I-VI. More specifically the reference is to I 3 above.

53. In calling Love of God, her dialogue partner, "dear maiden," Mechthild is responding to her partner's words spoken above-that she wanted to be Mechthild's lady-in-waiting.

54. 1 Jn 4:16. In Latin in the text: Deus caritas est.

55. A troubling sentence. Possible meaning: Mechthild was not able to provide him with the necessary sigh because it was at that very moment being given him by someone else. Cf. Schmidt p. 323, lines 12-13.

56. Cf. Mt 26:39; Mk 14:36; and Lk 22:42.

57. This you is plural.

58. Mechthild places Enoch and Elijah here to await the last days when they shall return to earth. See IV 27 and VI 15 above.

59. Cf. VI 15 above.

60. That is, the souls in purgatory.

61. Mechthild has cast this chapter in the form of a Botenlied or messenger's song, a conventional form in courtly-love poetry in which the speaker addresses a messenger concerning the object of his or her love and asks him to bear the message of love to the beloved one. Mechthild also employs several expressions and/or images of such poetry, such as "sick with love," "recover," "physician" of love, "wounds" of love, etc.

62. In Latin in the text: Inpresepio.

63. Cf. Dt 6:5 and Lk 10:25-28.

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'Cf. "Herz," in Handbuch theologischer Grundbegriffe, ed. Heinrich Fries (Munich, 1962) Vol. I, 668-697, by P.Hofmann and Karl Rahner.

Y See Mechthild von Magdeburg, Das fliefende Licht der Gottheit, Zweite, neubearbeitete Ubersetzung mit Einfuhrung and Kommentar von Margot Schmidt (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt: Froniniann-Holzboog, 1995), note 296, pp. 397-400, especially p. 399.

'Cf. Johannes Stohr, "Neuzeitliche Diskussionen fiber die Einwohnung des dreifaltigen Gottes," Von der Suche each Gott, ed. Margot Schmidt and Fernando Dominguez (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt: Froniann-Holzboog, 1998), 249-82.

4 See 11 25.

'See the first few lines of VII 21.

Cf. Marianne Heinibach, "Der ungelehrte Mund" as Autorittit. Mystische Erfahrung as Quelle kirchlich-prophetischer Rede im Werk Mechthilds von Magdeburg (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt: Fromann-Holzboog, 1989), 74-75.

9 Cf. also Schmidt, note 149, p. 376.

'Cf. Schmidt, note 83, p. 362. Regarding the sources and occurrences of this image, cf. Rudolf von Biberach, Die siben strassen zu got. High Alemannic Translation according to Ms Einsiedeln 278, ed. Margot Schmidt (Florence, 1969), 133* f.

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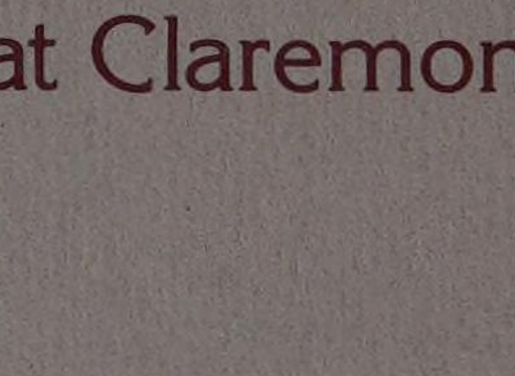

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HILDEGARD of BINGEN

SCIVIAS

TRANSLATED BY
MOTHER COLUMBA HART AND JANE BISHOP

INTRODUCED BY
BARBARA J. NEWMAN

PREFACE BY
CAROLINE WALKER BYNUM

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Cover art: MOTHER PLACID DEMPSEY, a Benedictine nun of the Abbey of Regina Laudis in Bethlehem, Connecticut, is also a sculptor, painter, graphics designer and book illustrator. Regarding the cover and inside illustrations she says: "Doing art work for this volume became a unique personal experience in which I was struck by three things. First, I realized there has existed for centuries a body of illustrations of the Visions that are traditionally ascribed to St. Hildegard's 'direct supervision.' Despite their obvious differences in style, which suggest not merely different artists but entirely different historical periods, they have enjoyed a long history of commentaries by various spiritual writers and important scholars, including, in our time, Dr. Carl Jung. Recognizing their unique value in terms of tradition and their own intrinsic aesthetic beauty, I chose to represent them here in all their clarity and forthrightness. In so doing, I came to appreciate that, in a very real sense, they do proceed from her 'direct supervision.' Secondly, I came to understand directness and supervision as the marks of St. Hildegard, who looked upon the mystery of nature and mankind with the radical and comprehensive 'eye' of Faith, that is, through supernatural 'seeing' or, as one may say, through 'Super-Vision,' and this is what I have tried to express on the cover. Thirdly, I realized that her 'Super-Vision' includes the hidden bringing together of many persons to share and creatively carry out that Vision. In this regard I wish to express my debt to her and, through her, to the Abbess and members of my own community, to Sr. Mary Charles, R.S.M., Dr. John Farina, children's book illustrator Mercer Mayer, and to Jeanne Parr."

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MOTHER COLUMBA HART, O.S.B. was graduated from Smith College in 1924 *summa cum laude,* having studied under Eleanor S. Duckett and Howard R. Patch. She remained for the M.A. degree in English and continued graduate work at Radcliffe and Harvard in romance philology, Middle English, and Latin paleography under John L. Lowes, John S. Tatlock, and Charles H. Haskins. She earned a second M.A. at Radcliffe in 1926. After European travel she studied French while living in Paris for two years, and later translated *Ouvrons la Bible* by Roger Poelman (*How to Read the Bible,* New York: Kenedy, 1953, and London: Longmans, 1955). Her first original book, *Mary of the Magnificat,* had come out in 1942 (Sheed & Ward). The work of translating from the Latin *The Exercises of Saint Gertrude* (Newman, 1956) brought to her attention the dearth of information about Gertrude's life and suggested research on thirteenth-century women, especially the Flemish mystics. Thus she discovered Hadewijch, some of whose letters she presented in *The American Benedictine Review* (1962). Her translation from the Latin of William of Saint Thierry's *Exposition on the Song of Songs* was begun at this time and appeared in Cistercian Fathers Series (1970). In 1972 Mother Columba contributed to *The American Benedictine Review* another article on medieval women "*Consecratio Virginum:* Thirteenth-Century Witnesses." In 1980 she brought out a volume in The Classics of Western Spirituality Series, which may well be considered her masterpiece, the translation of *The Complete Works* of Hadewijch.

At 86, Mother Columba has retired from active research for publication and remains a beloved elder and resource person in her Benedictine community of the Abbey of Regina Laudis in Bethlehem, Connecticut, where she has been a member for forty years.

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Author of the Preface

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Preface

Until recently the visionary women of the Western European Middle Ages were neglected by scholars. German historians tended to see the two great twelfth-century Rhineland prophets, Hildegard of Bingen and Elizabeth of Schönau, and the mystical group at the convent of Helfta in the thirteenth century as important only insofar as they foreshadowed Protestantism. The intense affective female piety of the early fourteenth century described in the collections of visions and pious biographies known as *Nonnenbücher* made scholars so nervous that they neglected these works altogether except as philological evidence of the development of the German language. English students of mysticism denigrated the female mystics of their own and the continental tradition as "experiential," and judged their works, along with those of such male devotional writers as Richard Rolle, inferior to speculative, neo-Platonic mystical writing. Historians of science and psychology, as well as phenomenologists of religion, repeatedly explained women's visionary experiences as neurosis or disease (migraine, hysteria, anorexia nervosa, and so on). Further, as Peter Dronke has pointed out, there is no major female writer from the Middle Ages whose works modern scholars have not attributed (often with very little evidence) to a man.[1] If I had written this preface in 1950, I might well have argued that the only thing the diverse female writers of the Middle Ages had in common was their neglect by modern scholarship.

All that has changed. Not only has the field of women's history emerged as a branch of research with considerable methodological sophistication, but women's theological writing and piety have received particular emphasis. Two anthologies of medieval women writers in translation have recently appeared, and religious texts predominate. At least two current series are devoted exclusively to women's texts.[2] The plays of Hrotsvitha of Gandersheim and Hildegard of Bingen are now performed by college drama depart-

ments and church groups; several recordings of Hildegard's liturgical songs are on the market; extravagant claims about the effectiveness of women's medicine and midwifery circulate; radical feminists today appropriate from medieval texts insights they characterize as female or feminist and use them to challenge or reform or profoundly reinterpret the modern church. In the 1980s female authorship is often attributed to anonymous texts, sometimes on the shakiest of bases. A German postage stamp in 1979 honored the eight-hundredth anniversary of the death of Hildegard of Bingen; the postwar, apocalyptic German artist, Anselm Kiefer, includes the thirteenth-century beguine and visionary Mechtild of Magdeburg as the only woman in his monumental painting "Germany's Spiritual Heroes."

The recent enthusiasm for visionary women in general and for the immensely talented polymath Hildegard of Bingen in particular raises disturbing interpretative questions. For Hildegard is in no way typical, either as a nun or as a visionary or as a female writer. As Professor Newman notes in her introduction, Hildegard was profoundly different from such later figures as Catherine of Siena and Teresa of Avila, the only women taken seriously as theologians or as mystics by the Catholic church until recently. Nor is Hildegard, who is in any case an extremely difficult writer, made easier to understand by isolating her from her twelfth-century German, monastic context and relocating her in a tradition of female spirituality running from Perpetua (d. 203) to Therese of Lisieux (d. 1897). A Benedictine abbess, Hildegard advocated a monastic life of obedience and communal prayer—not the extravagant and individualistic asceticism of some later medieval women. A proponent of Gregorian reform, Hildegard proselytized for clerical purity and power, and argued that women should not hold priestly office, although she (virtually alone among medieval women) undertook preaching missions with ecclesiastical approval. Authorized to write by God's command (as were many other medieval women), Hildegard dominated her confessors, scribes and illustrators in a way not common with female saints, some of whom (such as Elizabeth of Hungary or Angela of Foligno) were so controlled by their confessor-scribes that it is indeed hard to know whether their piety and even their words represent truly the divine message they heard in the inner recesses of their hearts.[3] Moreover, Hildegard was a prophetic seer whose visions had political content and were based in a physical experience of light and pain. She wrote in Old Testament images of precious stones and noble buildings, of agriculture and organic growth, of courts and war and beautiful garments—images radically different from the more tender, domestic, even sentimental meditations on the Holy Family and the human experience of Jesus common in Rhineland convents of the fourteenth century. A visionary who took her revelations as a text for exegesis, not an experience for re-living, Hildegard was not, technically speaking, a

mystic at all. She wrote not about union but about doctrine, although her attention to bodily phenomena such as sexual desire or menstrual cramps sets her apart from other visionary theologians of the twelfth century (such as Hugh or Richard of St. Victor).

Readers who come to the complex and difficult text presented here equipped with a background in feminist theology or in women's history may be surprised by many things—among them Hildegard's sense of inferiority as a female and her confident self-assertion in castigating the clergy. Readers who approach the *Scivias* with knowledge of later medieval apocalyptic or mystical writing may be puzzled by the virtual absence of nuptial imagery—usually thought, quite incorrectly, to be characteristic of women writers—and by the lack of a spirituality of *imitatio Christi* and self-punishing asceticism. In presenting Hildegard's obscure yet brilliant visions to such readers, it is therefore tempting merely to underline their idiosyncrasy and leave it at that. This would, however, be unwise. The flood of questions raised by recent work on women's piety needs to be addressed, if only by spelling out clearly two issues at stake. First, is there a female spirituality in the period between 1100 and 1517? Second, did medieval women speak with their own voices and out of their own experience, or is their work merely the inscription of the misogynist and patriarchal values of the dominant religious tradition? Although related, these are not the same question.

To ask the first question is really to ask whether there are consistent and identifiable ways in which women's religious concerns, considered across decades, classes and national or linguistic lines, differ from those of men. The question does not, as some have argued, make essentialist assumptions about the "eternal feminine." To be sure, there were biological constraints affecting women's roles in the medieval period—constraints of which Hildegard, with her keen medical curiosity, was well-aware. But no modern theorist would explain women's religious options or opinions as biologically determined. There were, however, institutional and educational constraints not rooted in biology that were constant throughout the later Middle Ages. Women were prohibited from holding priestly office and increasingly from exercizing roles as preachers and spiritual counselors. They were cut off from the new scholastic education of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, yet found encouragement and opportunities to write when vernacular languages and genres emerged in that much-studied shift from oral to written culture.[4] The question of women's piety is therefore in part a question of whether social, educational and institutional limitations were so powerful an influence as to differentiate fundamentally women's insights from men's.

Recent studies of medieval saints have suggested that certain themes such as the religious significance of illness and the need for charismatic authorization do characterize women's religious experience. Analyses of the

structure of women's prose and women's visions also suggest that particular fears shaped women's intellectual efforts, and indeed that the act of writing itself was often for a woman both service to others and audacious self-integration. Some recent scholarship has even argued that gender-related imagery is used differently by males and females, although the best of such work eschews any assumption that women are generally drawn to feminine or men to masculine images. Research on medieval medical texts has established that learned and folkloric traditions shared an emphasis on the threatening physicality of females; some historians would argue that such traditions underlie the extravagant physiological imagery in women's writing as well as the extraordinary bodily miracles such as stigmata, miraculous lactation, and so forth performed by women from the thirteenth century on.[5]

It is clear that this recent research cannot be ignored in a study of Hildegard. Different as she may be from later, more affective female mystics, her *Scivias* nonetheless scintillates with a concern for embodiment—as both glorious and deplorable—that puts her in the company of Mary of Oignies, Angela of Foligno and Catherine of Genoa. Atypical as we may find her moderate Benedictinism, her assumption of quasi-clerical roles and her exegetical rather than experiential stance toward her visions, the act of writing that wrenched her from depression into leadership reminds us of the stunning personal integration and religious creativity achieved by Beatrice of Nazareth, Catherine of Siena and Teresa of Avila in similar acts.

The second question asked in recent decades about women's writing is also complex. Both radical feminists and conservative students of mysticism have queried whether what we have in women's texts from the twelfth to the fifteenth century are women's voices at all. In a culture where official theology was defined by scholastic debate and papal pronouncement, where reception of the eucharişt required the recipient to submit to previous scrutiny by a male confessor, where increasingly elaborate rules were devised for "testing" charismatic gifts, which could be adjudged "feigned sanctity," how can we be sure we hear women speaking freely? Can phrases such as Hildegard's repeated assertion of female inferiority really be accepted as women's own, even when penned or dictated by the woman herself?[6]

Some scholars have wished to decide this issue a priori, declaring women's writings either a vague echo of more theoretically powerful works by orthodox males or a species of "false consciousness" that reflects merely patriarchal repression. This position assumes not only that women's courage, serenity, self-sacrifice and loyalty were self-delusion but also that the power to repress is the only effective power in human history. To this a priori assumption scholarly scrutiny of texts can, of course, provide no rebuttal. But recent scholarship not committed to this ideological position has found in Hildegard, as in Catherine of Siena or Julian of Norwich or

even—for all their orientation toward male advisers—Elizabeth of Schönau or Dorothy of Montau, the wellings up of profound female experience. The low-keyed irony with which Hildegard reminded corrupt clerics that God had been forced to choose an inferior mouthpiece because *they* had fallen so low, like the cheeky casuistry with which the fourteenth-century English woman Margery Kempe met the admonition not to preach, have hardly seemed to all recent interpreters an internalizing of misogyny.[7] Nor have all scholars read as repression Hildegard's glorious sense of the power and independence conferred on women by virginity.

It would, however, be misleading to close with general methodological issues raised by the current discussion of female spirituality. Attentive readers will find that Hildegard directs her audience not to a consideration of woman but to a consideration of humankind. She meditates not on the experience of *anima* as *sponsa*, languishing with desire for Christ her bridegroom, but on the place of the human person (*homo*) in a divine plan that marches from creation through Christ's incarnation to last judgment and final redemption. For a lyrical evocation of soul seeking the sensual delights of ecstatic union, one must turn, in the twelfth century, to Cistercian or Carthusian monks. The *homo* of whom Hildegard writes is a lump of mire, although surrounded with jewels (pt III, vision 1). The body this *homo* wears as a garment is crucial to its self and will rise at the last day gendered and intact, but body is useful to *homo* not as a locus of earthly or celestial sensations but as an instrument of self-discipline.

Hildegard's Latin is less beautiful than that of her more affective and evocative Cistercian contemporaries; her concern is more ecclesiological; her vision of the divine economy more historical; her piety is tougher and less individualistic. Readers who expect to be moved or inspired as Bernard of Clairvaux moves and inspires may be initially disappointed. But if one pauses for a moment while reading and looks beyond the elaborate and often confusing details of Hildegard's revelations, one realizes one has been shown the structure of salvation. With Hildegard one does not feel; one sees. Before the eyes of the mind pass such vivid images as the first human being, formed of clay, refusing to pluck the flower of obedience (pt II, vision 1); the great maternal figure *Ecclesia*, with souls going in and out of her womb (pt II, vision 3); the pillar of Christ's humanity, up and down which the virtues climb as on a ladder (pt III, vision 8); the bones of the dead leaping together at the end of time into figures whose very appearance reveals their status as saved or damned (pt III, vision 12); the crystalline beauty of the heavens in eternity, filled with light and song (pt III, vision 13). Hildegard's visions are in fact one vision: a primer and a *summa* of Christian doctrine.

Hildegard spoke to recall the lukewarm and their faithless leaders to God. Her speaking required courage. It also required troubled times and

divine inspiration. Indeed she believed God had called upon a weak woman to rage against evil only because humankind had turned away from heaven and bent its will toward the dust from which it had been created. But rage she did, with confidence and power. It is hard not to see in her parable of the apostles (pt III, vision 7) a description of her own prophetic role:

> And so . . . the Holy Spirit came openly in tongues of fire. . . . And, because the apostles had been taught by the Son, the Holy Spirit bathed them in Its fire, so that with their souls and bodies they spoke in many tongues; and, because their souls ruled their bodies, they cried out so that the whole world was shaken by their voices.
>
> And the Holy Spirit took their human fear from them, so that no dread was in them, and they would never fear human savagery when they spoke the word of God; all such timidity was taken from them, so ardently and so quickly that they became firm and not soft. . . . And then they remembered with perfect understanding all the things they had heard and received from Christ. . . .
>
> And so, going forth, they made their way among the faithless peoples who did not have roots. . . . And to these they announced the words of salvation and of true faith in Christ.

NOTES

1. Peter Dronke, *Women Writers of the Middle Ages: A Critical Study of Texts from Perpetua (+ 203) to Marguerite Porete (+ 1310)* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), ix.

2. *Medieval Women Writers*, ed. Katharina M. Wilson (Athens, GA: The University of Georgia Press, 1984); *Medieval Women's Visionary Literature*, ed. Elizabeth A. Petroff (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986). See also the *Matrologia Latina* series, edited by Margot King and published by Peregrina Publishing Co.; and the projected series *Femina*, to be edited by Jane Chance and published by Focus Publishing.

3. See *Sankt Elisabeth: Fürstin, Dienerin, Heilige: Aufsätze, Dokumentation, Katalog*, ed. Philipps-Universität Marburg (Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 1981); Paul Lachance, *The Spiritual Journey of the Blessed Angela of Foligno According to the Memorial of Frater A.*, Studia Antoniana 29 (Rome: Pontificum Athenaeum Antonianum, 1984).

4. Herbert Grundmann, "Die Frauen und die Literatur im Mittelalter: Ein Beitrag zur Frage nach der Entstehung des Schrifttums in der Volkssprache," *Archiv für Kulturgeschichte* 26 (1936), 129–61. On the shift from orality to scribality, see M. T. Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record: England, 1066–1307* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979); Per Nykrog, "The Rise of Literary Fiction," in *Renaissance and Renewal in the Twelfth Century*, ed. Giles Constable and Robert Benson

(Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982), 593–612; Brian Stock, *The Implications of Literacy: Written Language and Models of Interpretation in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983).

5. See Donald Weinstein and Rudolph Bell, *Saints and Society: The Two Worlds of Western Christendom, 1000–1700* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 234–35; Richard Kieckhefer, *Unquiet Souls: Fourteenth-Century Saints and Their Religious Milieu* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 57–58; Petroff, 28–32 and 37–44; Marie-Christine Pouchelle, *Corps et chirurgie à l'apogée du Moyen Age* (Paris: Flammarion, 1983); Caroline Walker Bynum, "'. . . And Woman His Humanity': Female Imagery in the Religious Writing of the Later Middle Ages," in *Gender and Religion: On the Complexity of Symbols*, ed. Bynum, Harrell and Richman (Boston: Beacon, 1986), 257–88; idem, "The Female Body and Religious Practice in the Later Middle Ages," *Zone* 3–5 (1989), to appear.

6. See *Frauenmystik im Mittelalter*, ed. Peter Dinzelbacher and D. Bauer, Wissenschaftliche Studientagung der Akademie der Diozese Rottenburg-Stuttgart 22.–25. February 1984 in Weingarten (Ostfildern: Schwabenverlag, 1985); Caroline Walker Bynum, *Holy Feast and Holy Fast: The Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 13–30 and 277–96; P. Dinzelbacher, "Zur Interpretation erlebnismystischer Texte des Mittelalters," *Zeitschrift für deutsches Altertum und deutsche Literatur* 117 (1988), 1–23; Ursula Peters, "Frauenliteratur im Mittelalter? Überlegungen zur Trobairitzpoesie, zur Frauenmystik und zur feministischen Literaturbetrachtung," *Germanisch-Romanische Monatschrift*, N.F. 38 (1988), 35–56.

7. Dronke, 149 and 201; Clarissa W. Atkinson, *Mystic and Pilgrim: The Book and the World of Margery Kempe* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1983), 108–9.

Introduction

St. Hildegard (1098–1179), founder and first abbess of the Benedictine community at Bingen, is one of the most fascinating spiritual figures of the twelfth century. The bearer of a unique and elusive visionary charism, she was also a prophet in the Old Testament tradition—the first in a long line of prophetically and politically active women—yet at the same time a representative of the German Benedictine aristocracy in its heyday. Proudly aware of belonging to a social and spiritual elite, she was profoundly humble before God, awed by the audacity of her own mission, and by turns diffident and strident about her gifts.

Measured in purely external terms her achievements are staggering. Although she did not begin to write until her forty-third year, Hildegard was the author of a massive trilogy that combines Christian doctrine and ethics with cosmology; a compendious encyclopedia of medicine and natural science; a correspondence comprising several hundred letters to people in every stratum of society; two saints' lives; several occasional writings; and, not least, a body of exquisite music that includes seventy liturgical songs and the first known morality play. Although other women had written before her, their works had fallen back into silence; the names of Perpetua, Egeria, Baudonivia, Dhuoda and Hrotsvitha were unknown to her. Nor was she aware of her great French contemporary, Heloise. We must not underestimate the courage she needed as the first woman, to the best of her knowledge, to take up wax tablets and stylus in the name of God. Even greater, perhaps, was the daring required to embark on her career as a public preacher of monastic and clerical reform. This mission led her to undertake four prolonged preaching tours, beginning at the age of sixty; she spoke mainly to monastic communities, but on occasion addressed clergy and laity together in the public squares. In the meantime she continued to guide and administer the two nunneries she had founded, the first despite strong opposition from

her abbot. Its daughter house, located in the Rhineland village of Eibingen, is still thriving today.

To her contemporaries Hildegard was "the Sibyl of the Rhine," an oracle they sought out for advice on everything from marital problems and health troubles to the ultimate fate of their souls. Often she gave her advice unsought—most notably to her patron, the emperor Frederick Barbarossa, whom she rebuked fiercely for his role in the German papal schism. Her books enjoyed a modest circulation and a widespread notoriety. By later medieval generations she was remembered primarily as an apocalyptic prophet. Her fiery but enigmatic writings about the Antichrist and the last stages of world history were collected by a Cistercian monk in 1220 and continued to circulate until the Reformation, when she was perversely hailed as a proto-Protestant because she had prophesied the confiscation of ecclesiastical wealth by princes and the dissolution of monasteries.

In our own day the voice that Hildegard had called "a small sound of the trumpet from the living Light" is resounding once more. In Germany she still enjoys a wide popular cult, and the abbey at Eibingen has become a center of scholarship and pilgrimage. Herbalists have rediscovered some of her prescriptions and begun to experiment with their use in modern homeopathic practice. Musicians have performed her liturgical songs and her drama, the *Ordo virtutum*, to great acclaim. To students of spirituality Hildegard remains of compelling interest, not only as a rare feminine voice soaring above the patriarchal choirs, but also as a perfect embodiment of the integrated, holistic approach to God and humanity for which our fragmented era longs. While the movement for creation-centered spirituality has exaggerated certain elements of her teaching and denied its more ascetic and dualistic aspects, it remains true that Hildegard unites vision with doctrine, religion with science, charismatic jubilation with prophetic indignation, and the longing for social order with the quest for social justice in ways that continue to challenge and inspire.

Hildegard's Life and Works

Hildegard's life, which is well-known from her own writings as well as a variety of contemporary documents, presents a mixed image of oppression and privilege.[1] Born into a noble family of Bermersheim near Alzey, she enjoyed the inestimable advantages of wealth, high birth, membership in a large and well-connected family and easy access to the holders of political and ecclesiastical power.[2] At the time of her birth the Cistercian order was in its infancy and the first stirrings of the apostolic poverty movement had barely begun. Benedictine monasticism, especially in Germany, remained an

option for the elite, and many communities had close connections with the houses of their noble founders or patrons. On the other hand, the ethic of world-renouncing asceticism held a strong appeal for these powerful families, so it was not unusual when the daughter of the Count of Sponheim, a woman named Jutta, decided in 1106 to adopt the solitary life of a recluse.

Jutta's family was closely connected with Hildegard's, and her conversion provided an ideal opportunity for Hildegard's parents, Hildebert and Mechthild, to perform a pious deed. They offered their eight-year-old daughter, the last of ten children, to God as a tithe by placing her in Jutta's hermitage.[3] As a handmaid and companion to the recluse, Hildegard was also her pupil: She learned to read the Latin Bible, particularly the Psalms, and to chant the monastic Office. In time, other women joined Jutta and Hildegard, and the hermitage became a nunnery professing the Benedictine Rule. As a teenager Hildegard made her formal profession of virginity. We hear nothing more of her until 1136 when Jutta died and Hildegard was elected abbess in her stead. Five years later she received the prophetic call that eventually led her to compose the *Scivias* and embark on her public mission.

Although the outward circumstances of Hildegard's life were in no way remarkable until that date, her inner life had always been mysterious. In the personal memoirs that form part of her official biography she reports not early mystical longings or a precocious sense of vocation, but rather a peculiar temperament, which doomed her to chronic ill health and, at the same time, gave her a propensity for visions from earliest childhood. She could see things that were invisible to those around her; she foretold the future; and her visual field was filled at all times with a strange luminosity that she later came to call "the reflection of the living Light." In this light she perceived a variety of figures, ranging from human forms to elaborate architectural models, which she was able to interpret with the aid of a "voice from heaven." Finally, on rare occasions she came into contact with a greater brightness, which she called "the living Light" itself; her description of this experience (written at the age of 77) suggests a direct encounter with the divine presence.[4] Initially, however, her visions were merely baffling. Hildegard confided them only to Jutta and to the monk Volmar, her teacher and later her secretary and close friend.

The early genesis of these visions, their connection with the "aerial fires" and other illnesses that plagued Hildegard, and above all, the fact that she experienced visions for forty years before receiving her prophetic call and learning to interpret them as a gift from God, strongly suggest a physiological basis. Charles Singer and, more recently, Oliver Sacks have concluded that the abbess suffered from "scintillating scotoma," a form of migraine.[5] But illness did not prevent her from living an extraordinarily active life and surviving to the ripe age of eighty-one. Moreover, she always

stressed that she received her visions while "fully awake in mind and body" and without any impairment of her normal sense functioning—a description that would exclude any seizures, ecstasies or trance states. It is even clearer that she did not in any way seek to induce the visions. As a Benedictine she practiced and counselled only moderate fasting and avoided mortifications; nor is it reported that she spent long hours in private prayer. Her visionary experience, then, was one of the givens of her physical and psychological make-up. It took decades of painfully acquired self-knowledge—and the authority of an abbatial position—before she was able to understand the visions as a vehicle for divine revelation. Her spirituality thus stands in contrast with that of later mystics who deliberately cultivated visions and other paranormal experiences. Nevertheless, her visions set a seal on the prophetic authority she claimed: without them she would have had neither a message nor an audience. Illness, on the other hand, kept her constantly aware of her human frailty and furnished one of the abiding themes of her spirituality, that of divine power made perfect in weakness.[6]

Hildegard's prophetic call came to her in 1141 in the form of a fiery light that permeated her whole heart and brain and gave her an infused knowledge of all the books of Scripture. In the *Scivias* preface, where she describes this illumination, she is careful to give her exact age at the time as well as the names of all her superiors (the reigning emperor, the archbishop of Mainz and the abbot of St. Disibod). This scrupulous dating follows a literary convention established by the Hebrew prophets and continued by the seer John of Patmos; like them, Hildegard was keenly aware of history and her own historical moment. The illumination, with the subsequent command to "cry out and write," had come to her not because she was any more devout or deserving than others, but because the times were desperate. Unlike modern historians Hildegard did not perceive the mid-twelfth century as a time of spiritual fervor and renewal, but as an "effeminate age" in which the Scriptures were neglected, the clergy "lukewarm and sluggish" and the Christian people ill-informed. Her mission, then, was to do with her prophetic charism what professional clerics had failed to do with their priestly charism: teach, preach, interpret the Scriptures and proclaim the justice of God.

After she overcame her initial hesitation about writing, it took Hildegard ten years to complete the *Scivias* with the editorial help of Volmar and the assistance and moral support of her favorite nun, Richardis von Stade.[7] This decade was marked by numerous crises in her life. Through the agency of Volmar and of her bishop, Henry of Mainz, Hildegard's fame eventually reached the ears of Pope Eugenius III, who happened to be presiding over a synod of bishops at Trier in the winter of 1147–48. Eugenius, a Cistercian, had been a disciple of St. Bernard before his elevation. Not long before the synod of Trier, Hildegard had written to the abbot of Clairvaux to seek

confirmation of her gifts, and Bernard intervened on her behalf with the pope. The upshot was that Eugenius took advantage of his proximity to Hildegard's convent to procure a copy of her unfinished *Scivias*, which he read in public before the assembled bishops and then officially endorsed, sending the seer a letter of apostolic greeting and benediction to continue her work.[8] The importance of this papal seal of approval cannot be overestimated. Not only did it increase Hildegard's confidence and security in the face of continuing self-doubt, but it also authenticated her publicly and protected her from the censure she was bound to attract for violating the deutero-Pauline strictures on female silence and submission.

At about the time of the synod Hildegard received a vision in which she was instructed to leave St. Disibod, the male community to which she and her nuns were attached, and found a new convent on the site of a ruined Carolingian monastery near Bingen. This plan met with vehement objections from her abbot along with many of the nuns, who were loath to leave their comfortable surroundings for a desolate wilderness. Hildegard's desire for independence from the monks—juridical and financial as well as spiritual—embroiled her in prolonged conflict with the abbot of St. Disibod.[9] In addition, some of her daughters refused to move; her beloved Richardis left to become abbess of another monastery, much to Hildegard's chagrin; and her migration exposed her to ridicule from the local nobility, whose goodwill was essential if the new community was to prosper. Nevertheless she persevered, using her family connections to secure the land and a miraculous "charismatic illness" to persuade the abbot that her departure was the will of God. Her new monastic church of St. Rupert was formally consecrated in 1152.

During the 1150s Hildegard devoted herself to securing the welfare of her monastery, the Rupertsberg, with every means at her disposal.[10] She worked to establish monastic discipline by teaching and preaching; supervised construction of the new buildings; obtained gifts and bequests to make her community financially secure; fought for a charter of independence from St. Disibod; and fostered the cult of her new patron, St. Rupert, by writing his *vita*. To instruct her nuns she wrote a commentary on the Athanasian creed, and she enriched their liturgical life with the repertoire of songs that she eventually gathered into her *Symphonia*.[11] To this period also, in all likelihood, belong the final version of her music drama, the *Ordo virtutum* (*Play of Virtues*), and the mysterious *Lingua ignota*, which she seems to have created as a kind of secret language to instil a sense of mystical solidarity among her nuns.[12]

This intense burst of activity directed toward her daughters was complemented by an ever-widening correspondence with the outside world. Hildegard's growing fame brought a constant stream of pilgrims and mira-

cle-seekers, as well as prospective nuns, to the Rupertsberg gates. Most of her correspondents were fellow abbesses, abbots and priests, although there is an impressive sprinkling of secular rulers and prelates and a less prestigious, though perhaps more revealing, selection of letters to ordinary laymen and women. It is difficult to evaluate Hildegard's correspondence in its present state, however, since her secretaries edited freely in order to upgrade the status of her associates and enhance her image as an inspired oracle of God—possibly with a view to imminent canonization. A forthcoming critical edition of her letters will make it possible, for the first time, to assess the actual scope and influence of her correspondence.[13]

According to an autobiographical preface, it was in the same decade of almost unbelievable energy that Hildegard composed her two scientific works. The *Book of Simple Medicine*, also called *Nine Books on the Subtleties of Different Kinds of Creatures*, summarizes the natural science of her age in a logical encyclopedic format. Four books on animals, two on herbs and trees, and three on gems, metals and "elements" combine a wealth of empirical observation with medical notes on the wholesome and poisonous properties of creatures, moral symbolism belonging to the genre of bestiary lore, and magical charms to be used in healing. A companion volume, the *Book of Composite Medicine* or *Causes and Cures*, was apparently never redacted in final form. Along with more or less systematic material on diseases and their treatment, it contains a fascinating miscellany of traditions about Adam and Eve, observations on sexuality and even astrological lore.[14]

It is significant that these works, unlike the *Scivias* and Hildegard's later visionary writings, make no claim to divine inspiration. Neither she nor her secretaries ever made any attempt to disseminate them, nor are they included in the huge manuscript of her collected works, prepared at the Rupertsberg shortly after her death. This omission suggests that Hildegard made a sharp distinction between God's work and her own, yet her creativity and curiosity knew no bounds. The medical works, especially *Causes and Cures*, were probably compiled for her personal use. A tradition of miraculous healings ascribed to her suggests that she practiced medicine informally, like many monastics; on the evidence of these writings, she used both natural and supernatural means.[15] Only in her last written work did she attempt to combine her scientific interests with her prophetic and theological mission.

Around 1158, Hildegard was ready to turn her restless mind in new directions. The Rupertsberg, strengthened and stabilized by two charters from the new archbishop of Mainz, was now well enough established that she could risk prolonged absence for the sake of preaching. Over the next five years she undertook three major tours, despite the burden of illness. Travelling along Germany's great rivers, the Rhine and the Main, she

preached at numerous monasteries and gave fiery apocalyptic sermons in the cathedral towns of Cologne and Trier. Many of these communities subsequently requested transcripts of her sermons, which can be found among her correspondence.[16] This period also saw the composition of a new visionary work, the *Liber vitae meritorum* (*Book of Life's Merits*), which became the second volume of her trilogy. Based on her own experience as a spiritual director, it deals with moral psychology and penance in the context of an overarching christological vision. This little-known work represents a novel synthesis of at least three medieval genres: the *psychomachia* or virtue-vice debate, the penitential and the otherworld vision. It is an important early witness to the developing doctrine of purgatory and represents an interesting compromise between the older medieval concept of virtues and vices as static entities and the newer psychological dynamism favored by the Victorines and Cistercians.[17]

By the time she had completed the *Book of Life's Merits* Hildegard was sixty-five and in constant ill health, but her old age witnessed both the most remarkable literary work and the bitterest conflicts of her long career. Although the abbess could inspire deep loyalty and devotion in her friends, she also had a talent for making enemies. Her sheer force of will, combined with a dazzling array of spiritual and intellectual gifts, a courage hardened by decades of struggle, and a prophetic persona, which she displayed in season and out, made her a formidable opponent; and she did not take defeat easily. When Richardis left her to become abbess of Bassum, Hildegard contested the election and appealed the case all the way to the pope, who ruled against her; she relented only when her young disciple took sick and died at the height of the conflict.[18] The monks of St. Disibod, too, had tasted her wrath when they objected to her plans for independence. But the conflicts of her last years show Hildegard in a more disinterested light, taking considerable risks for the sake of her principles.

The most celebrated of these quarrels set the prophet against the emperor, Frederick Barbarossa.[19] The two had earlier been on excellent terms. Sometime in the mid-1150s Frederick had summoned Hildegard to his palace at Ingelheim to give a prophetic oracle, the contents of which neither party ever disclosed in writing. In 1163 he gave her an imperial charter of protection for the Rupertsberg, guaranteeing valuable liberties. But from an ecclesiastical point of view, Frederick was already schismatic at this time, for in 1159 he had supported an antipope, Victor IV, in opposition to Alexander III. Most of the German bishops had been willing to support Victor, but when he died in 1164 and Frederick appointed a successor instead of seeking reconciliation with the legitimate pope, the prelates were outraged and Hildegard added her prophetic voice to the chorus, calling her imperial patron a madman. She

continued to oppose the emperor when he named a third antipope in 1168, thus refusing to let her loyalties be dictated by political self-interest.[20] Her staunchly orthodox stance is also demonstrated by a polemic she wrote against the Cathars in 1163 at the request of the canons of Mainz.[21]

In the meantime Hildegard had begun work on her final visionary opus, the *Liber divinorum operum* or *Book of Divine Works* (also called *De operatione Dei* or *On the Activity of God*).[22] This work, inspired by an overpowering vision of Caritas or Divine Love, sets forth Hildegard's cosmology and her most mature views of history and eschatology. Like the *Scivias*, it ends with an apocalyptic scenario, which was eagerly scrutinized for centuries to come. The heart of the book, however, lies in a pair of carefully balanced commentaries on the Johannine prologue and the first chapter of Genesis. This construction holds the key to Hildegard's whole theological vision, which revolves around the identity of the Creator with the incarnate Word. Reverent meditation on the cosmos and its proportions, which all have their analogues in the microcosm of the human body, leads to the same eternal center as meditation on history in its divinely ordained stages. Just as the human form is inscribed in the center of the universe in a celebrated illustration of this text, so Christ or incarnate Love is inscribed in the center of time.[23] The consequences of this vision are worked out in detail by means of the ingenious allegories and intricate numerological correlations so dear to Hildegard's age.

Before completing the *Book of Divine Works* the abbess lost her secretary, Volmar, who died in 1173. He was replaced first by Gottfried of St. Disibod, who began to compose her *vita*, and then by the extraordinary Guibert of Gembloux, a Belgian monk.[24] Through hearsay Guibert had become fascinated by Hildegard's visions, and it is to his insatiable curiosity that we owe most of what she recorded about her inner experience. In return for this spiritual favor he rendered her invaluable aid by coming to serve as secretary and provost of the Rupertsberg during her final years. Despite the impatience of his own community, Guibert did not leave Hildegard even in 1178, when her feisty and unyielding temper led to the unexpected consequence of an interdict.[25] The occasion was the burial of a nobleman, at one time excommunicated, in her monastic churchyard. Learning of the incident, the prelates of Mainz demanded that the corpse be exhumed, but Hildegard maintained that the deceased had died in a state of grace and refused to obey even at the price of being excommunicated herself. For six months she and her nuns endured deprivation of Mass, sacraments and their unique liturgical chant. The abbess continued to fight until the interdict was lifted only a few months before her death. At this date the underlying cause of the prelates' antagonism is no longer clear, but Hildegard's resistance stands as a final

testament to her courage and the loyalty of her disciples. The controversy also occasioned one of her most profound and poignant letters, an apologia for music and its role in the spiritual life.[26]

Hildegard's Spirituality

Although Hildegard is frequently classified as a mystic, she may be more precisely identified as a visionary and prophet. Classical definitions of mysticism stress the union of the soul with God and the whole system of ascetic and contemplative disciplines that aim to facilitate that union. But Hildegard, while she certainly had a powerful sense of the divine presence, did not follow the unitive way. "Prayer" to her meant primarily petition and liturgical praise, while "the love of God" meant reverence, loyalty and obedience to his commands. In the rare texts where she portrays herself as a partner in dialogue with God, she is not the enamored bride longing for divine union, as in St. Bernard's *Sermons on the Song of Songs*, but the fragile and woefully inadequate mortal—"ashes of ashes, and filth of filth"—trembling before the great commission she has received. Like Moses "stuttering and slow of speech," and like Isaiah "of unclean lips," she offers the prophet's classic response to a calling she has not chosen, yet cannot do other than obey.

The essentially prophetic character of Hildegard's spirituality explains the startling lack of interest in her own subjectivity. In spite of her unusual inner experiences, she recorded only as much as she had to reveal in order to authenticate her works. Thus only at the beginning and end of each book does she describe its genesis in visions; elsewhere the emphasis rests firmly on the content, and still more on the meaning, of the things seen. Moreover, her autobiographical prefaces and endings tend to focus as much on the seer's disabilities (her femaleness, poor health and lack of education) as they do on her revelations. These disclaimers, far from representing a simple "modesty topos," also serve the aim of authentication; they are meant to persuade readers that, because the author is not "wise according to worldly standards," her weakness and foolishness have been empowered by God alone.[27]

Hildegard's prophetic self-awareness pervades all her writings except for her scientific works, and accounts for many of their stylistic features as well as their characteristically objective or outer-directed teaching. Because she saw herself as the voice of another, not as a speaker in her own right, she often seems disturbingly unaware of the human element in her writings. Not only does she lapse easily from speaking about God in the third person, as preacher, to speaking *for* him in the first person, as prophet; she also claims

direct verbal inspiration for her entire opus and threatens terrible divine vengeance on anyone who dares to add, delete or alter a word. This instrumental view of her activity also required her to deny any education beyond "simple reading," although she was already well-acquainted with the Church Fathers and standard biblical commentaries when she wrote the *Scivias*, and by the end of her life was a woman of remarkably wide culture. Her posture as a simple, unlearned person was not intended to deceive; aside from reinforcing her prophetic persona, it constitutes an implicit critique of the learned clerics whose negligence, she believed, had necessitated her mission.

Hildegard never went beyond her limited and stylized self-disclosures to reveal more of her inner life until she was in her seventies, and even then she did so only at the request of hagiographically inclined admirers. For her first biographer, Gottfried, she wrote or dictated a valuable autobiographical memoir; and for the adoring Guibert she supplied this celebrated and oft-quoted account of her "mode of seeing":

> In this vision my soul, as God would have it, rises up high into the vault of heaven and into the changing sky and spreads itself out among different peoples, although they are far away from me in distant lands and places. And because I see them this way in my soul, I observe them in accord with the shifting of clouds and other created things. I do not hear them with my outward ears, nor do I perceive them by the thoughts of my own heart or by any combination of my five senses, but in my soul alone, while my outward eyes are open. So I have never fallen prey to ecstasy in the visions, but I see them wide awake, day and night. . . . The light that I see thus is not spatial, but it is far, far brighter than a cloud that carries the sun. I can measure neither height, nor length, nor breadth in it; and I call it "the reflection of the living Light." And as the sun, the moon, and the stars appear in water, so writings, sermons, virtues, and certain human actions take form for me and gleam within it.
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> Now whatever I have seen or learned in this vision remains in my memory for a long time, so that, when I have seen and heard it, I remember; and I see, hear, and know all at once, and as if in an instant I learn what I know. But what I do not see, I do not know, for I am not educated. . . . And the words in this vision are not like words uttered by a human mouth, but like a shimmering flame, or a cloud floating in a clear sky.
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> Moreover, I can no more recognize the form of this light than I can gaze directly on the sphere of the sun. Sometimes—but not often—I see within this light another light, which I call "the living

> Light." And I cannot describe when and how I see it, but while I see it all sorrow and anguish leave me, so that then I feel like a simple girl instead of an old woman.[28]

This is not the kind of experience that could be taught or learned. Readers might be reminded of Augustine's theory of illumination, which was probably familiar to Hildegard, or of the variant form of Neoplatonic light-mysticism that reached medieval Europe through Pseudo-Dionysius. A still closer parallel can be found in the experiences of Simeon the New Theologian and the Byzantine hesychasts, who sought by means of spiritual exercises to attain purity of heart and thus behold the uncreated light of Mount Tabor. Hildegard could not possibly have known this latter tradition, however; and as we have seen, she made no effort to cultivate or promulgate her special mode of seeing. Nor did she theologize about her visionary experience *per se*.

Aside from the dynamics of prophetic inspiration, Hildegard's spirituality is best understood through the ecclesiastical roles she played: Benedictine abbess, Gregorian reformer and apocalyptic preacher. As mistress of the Rupertsberg, she was indeed a Benedictine to the core. The *Scivias* opens with a vision of two thoroughly monastic virtues, Fear of the Lord and Poverty of Spirit; one has eyes on every side, and the other is inundated with the glory of God, indicating that only the humble possess true vision. Throughout Hildegard's works, but especially in the *Scivias*, the foundational virtues are humility, obedience and discretion, which, like Benedict, she called "the mother of virtues." In governing her community and advising her fellow superiors, she advocated a middle way between laxity and self-indulgence on the one hand and excessive abstinence on the other. She placed a premium on unity, and her teaching is pervaded with classical monastic themes: spiritual warfare, knowledge of good and evil, the conflict between soul and body, the acquisition of virtues, the special merit of chastity. Monks and virgins, in her view, were "new planets" which first appeared in the heavens at Christ's nativity;[29] she never doubted that they formed an elite corps among Christians and, if they persevered in their vows, would receive a special reward.

Although she herself was raised by a recluse, Hildegard was not particularly sympathetic to the eremitic life. A number of abbots and abbesses sought her counsel because they longed to lay down the burden of governing and work out their salvation in a hermit's cell; she always replied that this was a temptation to be resisted.[30] In fact, Hildegard's originality in so many fields should not obscure the fact that she represented a rather old-fashioned type of monasticism. Her reaction to the newer currents is neatly epitomized in her quarrel with the abbess Tengswich of Andernach, sister of the canoni-

cal reformer Richard of Springiersbach.[31] Richard and Tengswich were pioneers in the movement for apostolic poverty, and Tengswich had criticized Hildegard sharply (under the veil of ironic praise) because the abbess of Bingen accepted only noble girls in her convent. What is more, she allowed them to wear jewelry when they received communion. In a spirited reply Hildegard defended the principle of class discrimination: One would not put beasts of different species in the same stall, and even angels had their hierarchy. As for wearing jewels, it was perfectly acceptable for the brides of Christ to dress like noble ladies because, as virgins, they were exempt from the rule of female subordination that required matrons to wear veils and lay aside their elegant attire. This blend of renunciation with privilege continues the long tradition of high-born abbesses, who gave up the titles and secular powers of nobility while retaining its influence, prestige and corporate wealth.

As a reformer Hildegard belongs squarely within the Gregorian camp. In fact, as Jeffrey Russell wrote of Gregory VII himself, her life "is proof that a burning spirit can dwell within a breast committed to order."[32] *Ordo* is indeed a key word in the *Scivias*. Hildegard did not call for radical change of social or ecclesiastical structures; it was the abuse of authority, not the nature of it, that she opposed. Her ideal was a Christendom wherein the secular power would be firmly subordinate to the spiritual, princes and prelates would rule with vigilance and justice, and subjects and layfolk would offer prompt obedience. Yet because her message was largely directed to those in power, and particularly to the ecclesiastical hierarchy, she concerned herself far more with the negligence of clerics and the arrogance of rulers than with the sins of subjects. Three issues that particularly concerned her were clerical celibacy, simony and the subservience of prelates to the secular power—a burning question in Barbarossa's Germany where the bishops were virtually ministers of state. All of these issues, of course, continued the eleventh-century struggle of the reformed papacy against what it perceived as lay encroachments on the dignity of the church.

In addition, Hildegard was zealous for orthodoxy and thus deeply troubled by the hierarchy's failure to offer any effective resistance to the Cathars, who were making numerous converts even as she composed the *Scivias* and had infiltrated the Rhineland by the 1160s. Their alarming success may account for the space she devoted to the sacraments of marriage and the eucharist, which were particularly reviled by these dualistic sectarians. In her most vehement and memorable preaching the abbess highlighted purity of doctrine along with sexual purity, both of which could be symbolized by the powerful image of the virgin Ecclesia. Hildegard not only personified Mother Church in this ancient symbol; in a sense, she impersonated her, making herself a mouthpiece for the pure but continuously imperilled bride

of Christ.[33] In short, she placed her zeal for reform at the service of an essentially clerical vision of the church and a hierarchical vision of society. For her there could be no conflict between the spirit of prophecy and the spirit of order.

Hildegard's apocalyptic preaching must be understood in its proper context.[34] As she was not a radical reformer, neither was she a millenarian; she did not envisage an imminent Second Coming or look forward to a golden age of the Spirit. Rather, her apocalyptic message is closely akin to that of the Old Testament prophets. She shared their perception that divine judgment inevitably follows on human sin, and especially on the sins of rulers. If the princes of the church did not renounce their greed, fornication, oppression and negligence, they would be punished by the loss not only of their wealth and power, but even of the dignity they had signally abused. The perpetrators of this vengeance would be princes and people, not because Hildegard believed that kings were superior to prelates or that laypeople had a right to choose their own priests, but because she saw that the secular power could serve as God's scourge to punish his faithless people, just as the Assyrians of old had been allowed to punish Israel. Apocalyptic imagery coupled with the preaching of reform carries the same message that Jonah brought to the Ninevites: If the preaching is obeyed, it is just possible that the prophesied disasters will be averted.

But there is another dimension to Hildegard's apocalyptic. Like all prophets she was deeply concerned with history, and in both the *Scivias* and the *Liber divinorum operum* she surveyed the course of salvation history from beginning to end, from the creation to the final judgment.[35] In order to understand the present it was necessary to consider the past—the successive dispensations of grace before the birth of Christ—as well as the future, in which his work of salvation would at last be fulfilled. Hildegard's vision of the end, as set forth in *Scivias* III.11–12, entails a grim succession of evils that must come to pass before the judgment. As elaborated in the *Liber divinorum operum*, however, her scenario for the last times represents neither a gradual improvement nor a progressive deterioration in the state of the world. On the contrary, history is now seen as "one thing after another": ages of justice and injustice, each with its own deformations or reforms, would alternate until the coming of Antichrist. Hildegard did not presume to say when he would arrive, but she did frequently speak of her own era as an "effeminate age," which had succeeded the virginal epoch of paradise and the masculine epoch of the apostles and would in turn cede to still worse times. In one passage she even suggested that this effeminate age, signalled by the advent of feminine prophets, began around the time of her own birth.[36] But as a rule, the succession of periods is not dated even in the flexible and teasing manner that is typical of apocalyptic. Later generations could and did interpret the

prophecies as they pleased, inserting themselves into the sequence wherever they chose.[37]

The *Scivias*

The title *Scivias* is short for *Scito vias Domini*, or *Know the Ways of the Lord*. The firstfruits of Hildegard's prophetic labor, this book was ten years in the making (1141–51), and during her lifetime it remained the best-known of all her works. Pope Eugenius III's approval granted it an instant celebrity, which it has retained among modern cognoscenti in large part because of the splendid illuminations that adorn an early manuscript. The *Scivias* resulted directly from Hildegard's prophetic call and was addressed to a largely clerical and monastic audience, more specifically to indolent male theologians: "Unlock for them the enclosure of mysteries which they, timid as they are, conceal in a hidden and fruitless field. Burst forth into a fountain of abundance, and overflow with mystical knowledge, until they who now think you contemptible because of Eve's transgression are stirred up by the flood of your irrigation."[38] The visionary's gender is defiantly flaunted as a challenge to idle and "effeminate" clerics.

For modern readers the initial challenge of the *Scivias* lies in its distinctive style and structure. The text is divided into three books of unequal length, dealing respectively with the orders of creation, redemption and sanctification. The third book contains as many visions as the first two combined. Within each vision, or major structural unit, the organization is complex but uniform. Hildegard always begins with a simple and usually brief description of what she has seen; her visionary experience itself is taken for granted. Occasionally she is addressed by a divine voice or a figure within the vision. At the end of each vision proper, its interpretation is introduced by a formula: "And I heard a voice from heaven, saying . . ." From this point onward the initial vision becomes a "text" to be interpreted phrase by phrase, just as a traditional monastic commentator would gloss a text from Scripture. First the visual phenomena are interpreted allegorically; then more or less elaborate teaching follows, clarifying points of doctrine and morality that have been suggested by the vision.[39] Within each of these doctrinal units, scriptural passages are introduced as proof texts, and these in turn receive allegorical readings. The didactic and exegetical nature of the whole is signalled by the recurrent pedagogical questions, *Quid est hoc?* and *Quomodo?*—"What does this mean?" Finally each unit closes with an admonitory formula that remains constant for all the visions in a particular book, thus lending further structural unity.

The order of visions is carefully arranged to afford multiple perspec-

tives on the system of Christian doctrine. In the division into three books focusing on creation, redemption and sanctification, there is an allusion to the works of the Trinity. The first book explores connections between macrocosm and microcosm, things above and things below, the created world and the fallen world. In the second book, which is dominated by the figure of Ecclesia or Mother Church, Hildegard presents her teaching on the sacraments of redemption: baptism, confirmation, priesthood, penance and the eucharist. She apparently regarded monastic vows as a sacrament too, for they are treated at length. (Marriage, as a sacrament of the original creation, is discussed in Book I.)[40] Book III has a double structure, at once historical and moral. Most of the visions in this part develop the image of a complex allegorical building, the "edifice of salvation," which is upheld by divinity and inhabited by the Virtues. Hildegard's depiction of its walls, pillars and towers traces the successive ages of salvation history from creation through the last judgment, while her visions of the personified Virtues allow her to present a theology of the moral life. The two themes coalesce in the last vision, a symphony of praise for the inhabitants of heaven. Both history and moral struggle are here transcended and consummated.

Read as a visionary text the *Scivias* is unique; read as a compendium of Christian doctrine, it takes its place alongside many similar works of the period. The closest parallel is provided by Hugh of St. Victor's summa, *On the Sacraments of the Christian Faith*, written only a decade before (c. 1134; Hugh died in the year Hildegard began to write).[41] As an early scholastic who was also a noted teacher of contemplation, Hugh bridged the gap between the older monastic theology represented by Hildegard and the newer, more systematic mentality of the schools. In his summa the Victorine theologian used the method of scholastic argument rather than inspired visions, and he claimed only human authority. But a comparison of his table of contents with Hildegard's will show the essential similarity of matter (see below), if not of manner, between the two contemporary works. The twenty-six *Scivias* visions treat subjects closely akin to Hugh's thirty sections. Of the topics covered by Hugh, Hildegard omits only philosophical subjects like causality, predestination and natural law, along with certain "priestly" matters like vestments, masses for the dead and ceremonials for the dedication of a church. On the other hand, she includes an extensive treatment of the virtues, which Hugh omits. If Hildegard had been a male theologian, her *Scivias* would undoubtedly have been considered one of the most important early medieval summas.

The fact of visionary inspiration, of course, gives her work a tone and style quite unlike Hugh's. Where he argues, she asserts; where he speaks in his own person, she speaks *in persona Dei*. Her untutored Latin is often difficult and idiosyncratic, despite the fact that she had Volmar as a copy

INTRODUCTION

On the Sacraments of the Christian Faith by Hugh of St. Victor

Book I [On the Creator and the Dispensation of the Law]

1. On the six days of creation
2. On the primordial causes
3. On the Trinity
4. On the will of God and its signs
5. On the creation of the angels, and on free will
6. On the creation of man
7. On the fall of the first man
8. On the restoration of man
9. On the institution of the sacraments
10. On faith
11. On the natural law
12. On the written law (the Ten Commandments)

Book II [On the Redeemer and the Dispensation of Grace]

1. On the incarnation of the Word
2. On the church and its orders, and on the secular power
3. On the spiritual power, or the ranks of clergy
4. On sacred garments
5. On the dedication of a church
6. On the sacrament of baptism
7. On confirmation
8. On the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ
9. On sacramentals
10. On simony
11. On the sacrament of marriage
12. On vows
13. On vices and evil works
14. On confession
15. On the anointing of the sick
16. On death, hell, and prayers for the dead
17. On the end of the world
18. On the renewing of the world

editor to correct her mistakes in grammar. Occasionally she uses picturesque technical terms of her own devising; for instance, one of her standard phrases for *monk* is *vivens odor vovens iter secretae regenerationis* ("a living fragrance vowing the way of secret regeneration"). A *priest* is a *pigmentarius*, or "perfumer," perhaps with reference to the aromatic chrism of his anointing, and *viriditas* (literally, "the color green") means not only verdure or foliage, but all natural and spiritual life as quickened by the Holy Spirit.

The *Scivias*, then, can be approached from many angles: It is a prophetic proclamation, a book of allegorical visions, an exegetical study, a theological summa. Finally, it may be considered as a multimedia work in which the arts of illumination, music and drama contribute their several beauties to enhance the text and heighten the visionary message.[42] The earliest manuscript to survive until modern times was prepared around 1165 in the Rupertsberg scriptorium and illuminated with thirty-five remarkable miniatures. These paintings were produced at great expense, using costly gold and silver leaf as well as colors, and they are iconographically unique.[43] In style, too, they diverge from contemporary manuscript illumination as strikingly as Hildegard's Latin differs from that of a rhetorically trained twelfth-century humanist. Recent literature has presented the abbess herself as painter, but there is no medieval evidence to support this hypothesis, and if it were true both Hildegard and her biographers would surely have mentioned such a notable achievement. Given the peculiarities of the work, however, it seems likely that the artist (or artists) lacked formal training and worked under the visionary's personal supervision. The painter may have been a gifted Rupertsberg nun, or perhaps a monk from St. Disibod or another monastery closely associated with Hildegard.

Whoever the artist, he or she stayed close to the text of the visions and apparently eschewed the use of models, recombining iconographic motifs in new forms as creatively as Hildegard re-envisioned the familiar themes of Christian doctrine. The paintings are thus far more than illustrations; insofar as possible, they draw the viewer into the numinous world of the visionary's own experience. In this respect they resemble the didactic and meditative diagrams sprinkled through the works of Hugh of St. Victor.[44] The originality of these miniatures becomes even clearer when they are compared with illustrated Hildegard manuscripts prepared outside the Rupertsberg, such as the Heidelberg *Scivias* and the Lucca manuscript of the *Liber divinorum operum*.[45]

Unfortunately the famed Rupertsberg *Scivias* vanished in the bombing of Dresden and has not been seen since 1945. But a photocopy had been providentially made in 1927, and the twentieth-century nuns of Eibingen devoted seven years to the preparation of a hand-copied and hand-painted facsimile on parchment. This manuscript (1927–33), with miniatures painted

by Dame Josepha Knips, is today our only surviving source for the original colors. Although the black-and-white copies reproduced in this volume do not convey the beauty of the originals, they may serve the reader as points of orientation when details of the text are difficult to visualize. Readers must be wary, however; although the correspondence between text and miniature is close, it is not exact, and discrepancies should be noted.

In the last *Scivias* vision Hildegard introduced music to end her work in a triumphant chorus of praise. We know from epistolary evidence that she was already celebrated for her lyrics as early as 1148 and as far away as Paris.[46] The fourteen pieces included in *Scivias* III.13, which were later incorporated in her *Symphonia*, comprise seven antiphons and seven responsories in honor of the Virgin Mary, the angels and the hierarchy of heaven. Although the *Scivias* manuscripts do not supply musical notation, Hildegard's melodies have come down to us in the two extant *Symphonia* manuscripts, and several of these pieces are now available on record.[47] In Hildegard's lifetime they were undoubtedly sung by the Rupertsberg nuns as part of the Divine Office.

Following the songs is a short play, which brings the reader from heaven back to earth, from the Church Triumphant to the Church Militant. It presents the struggle of a soul tempted by the enemy but rescued and strengthened by a choir of Virtues, until it finally attains salvation and sees the devil bound. In this short form the play admirably summarizes the themes of Book III. It was probably not long afterward that Hildegard expanded it into the longer version known as the *Ordo virtutum* and composed its melodies, if indeed she had not already done so.[48] This liturgical drama (also available on record) antedates other known morality plays by about a century and a half.[49] Unlike other moralities, it is set entirely to music, with the exception of the devil's speeches; as the spirit opposed to all harmony, he is incapable of song. While later morality plays, composed in the vernacular, aimed at wide popular appeal and often included humor, Hildegard's Latin drama is thoroughly monastic and aristocratic in character.[50] Its performance at the Rupertsberg may have coincided with the dedication of the nuns' new church in 1152, a year after the *Scivias* was completed.

Synopsis of the Visions

Because of the length of this volume it has unfortunately been impossible to provide detailed annotation. Hence the reader may find it helpful to use these capsule summaries as a *vade mecum* alongside the translation. The synopsis provided below highlights the salient features of symbolism, iconography and doctrine presented by each vision and its accompanying min-

iatures. It may be read either as an overview of the *Scivias* or as an introduction to the individual sections.

Book One: The Creator and Creation

1. *The mountain of God.* Hildegard sees the Lord of the universe enthroned as "angel of great counsel" on an iron-colored mountain, which represents the eternity of his kingdom. The commentary highlights divine majesty vis-à-vis mortal humility, for the two Virtues irradiated by the glory of God are Fear of the Lord and Poverty of Spirit—both images of the seer's own state of mind as she confronts this awesome vision. One Virtue represents the beginning of wisdom, and the other, the first beatitude. Like Isaiah in his vision of the Temple (Is 6:1–8), Hildegard is called and sent by the Lord to proclaim his justice. She is then granted insight into the mystery of human intentions as God sees and judges them.

2. *Creation and the fall.* In highly compressed and allegorical form this vision depicts the fall of Lucifer and his angels (represented as "living lamps" or stars) and the subsequent fall of Adam and Eve. The iconography is unusual and full of arcane significance. Eve, for instance, appears as a shining cloud full of stars because she is the "mother of all living," and her unborn children are meant to replace the fallen angels. Hildegard's commentary on the Genesis narrative largely exonerates Eve and lays the greatest burden of blame on Satan, breaking with the usual tendency to interpret this text in a misogynist vein.[51]

Representation of the first human couple serves as a vehicle for teachings on sexuality and marriage. Hildegard's message here is in complete conformity with mainstream Catholic doctrine. She teaches that marriage is good, but virginity is better; divorce, adultery and fornication are wrong; consanguinity is a bar to marriage; procreation is a natural process designed by God but tainted by original sin; and sexual relations are permissible only when both partners are fertile. In the relations between man and woman she affirms male supremacy yet stresses mutuality, even to the point of misquoting 1 Corinthians 11:9. Where Paul said "Man was not created for woman, but woman for man," Hildegard states that "woman was created for the sake of man, and man for the sake of woman." She adds that there is no reason why a menstruating woman should not attend church, although a bride who has just lost her virginity and a man who has been wounded in battle should abstain.

The vision ends on a note of reassurance. Although Adam and Eve were cast out of paradise, the sinless Redeemer delivered them by means of chastity, humility, charity and other virtues. Likewise, human disobedience

caused the whole creation to rebel, destroying its original harmony, yet God preserved paradise inviolate as a sign of great mercy to come.

3. *The cosmos.* This vision of the cosmic egg, depicted in loving detail by the miniaturist, represents the universe as a symbolic, layered structure in which God sustains powerfully contesting forces in a delicate balance. Moving from the outermost layer inward, Hildegard sees zones of luminous and shadowy fire, representing divine purification and judgment; pure ether, which signifies faith; a watery layer for baptism; and finally the globe made up of four elements. Each of the heavenly bodies also has its allegorical meaning: the solar disk is Christ, sun of justice; the moon is the church, which reflects his light; stars are the works of piety; and so forth. Surprisingly, Hildegard does not develop the creation and birth mythology that the egg shape may suggest to readers; rather, she represents this form—"small at the top, large in the middle and narrowed at the bottom"—as symbolizing the stages of human history. The rest of the allegory also focuses on the mysteries of the incarnation and the church, in keeping with the overall theme of the *Scivias*.

In the *Liber divinorum operum* I.2 Hildegard presents an alternative vision of the universe in the form of a sphere. Her interpretation there correlates its proportions with those of the human body, since a major theme of that book is the correspondence of macrocosm and microcosm. To explain the discrepancies between her two visions she remarks that the egg shape better demonstrates the distinction between the various elements, while the sphere more accurately represents the measurements of the cosmos.[52]

The vision concludes with a long polemic against astrology, magic and divination. The seer argues that heavenly bodies are the servants of God and have no power in themselves for good or evil; people who scrutinize the stars to learn their fate are guilty of pride and fall prey to the devil's seductions. It is difficult to reconcile this polemic with the deterministic lunar astrology set forth in *Causes and Cures*.[53]

4. *Soul and body.* In this three-part vision Hildegard begins with a powerful myth, continues with teaching on human nature and psychology, and closes with a series of moral exhortations. The vision must have been a favorite with the artist, who illustrated it with three separate paintings.

The structure is unusual in that a lengthy myth precedes interpretation of the vision proper. Hildegard introduces a lonely pilgrim soul wandering in the "tabernacle" of her body and lamenting because she has lost her mother, the heavenly Zion. The soul's poignant lament recalls the lamentations of Israel in the wilderness, seeking the promised land and the new tabernacle in

which God dwelt. Attentive readers will hear echoes of Job, Jeremiah and other biblical sufferers. There is also a strong Platonic coloring, for the soul grieves that it is oppressed by the sinful and burdensome flesh; the mother-daughter dynamics may even suggest Demeter and Kore, with the devil cast in the role of Pluto. The myth is illustrated in the right-hand column of the first miniature, reading from bottom to top; here the artist has depicted the soul led captive by demons, tortured on the rack, assaulted by savage beasts, hiding in a cave, scaling a mountain and, at last, given wings to soar up to its heavenly tabernacle, where the devil continues to attack it in vain. This vividly realized *psychomachia* is akin to the *Ordo virtutum*.

The heavenly voice next explains the vision itself, which represents the infusion of the soul into the embryo in its mother's womb. Conception and pregnancy are described by means of the ancient folk analogy of milk curdling into cheese; the quality of the milk or semen determines the strong, weak or bitter character of the product. This vision is illustrated in the left side of the miniature, which shows men and women—the ancestors of the unborn child—carrying bowls of cheese, into which a devil insinuates corruption. There follows a discussion of the natural powers of soul and body: the intellect or moral judgment, the will, the reason and the senses. Soul and body are meant to cooperate harmoniously; the body is not inherently evil, but through the devil's temptations it is a continual source of tribulation to the soul.[54] The second miniature portrays a Christian kneeling in prayer to receive strength against demonic attack.

In a third painting angels and demons struggle for possession of the soul as it passes from the dying person's mouth. This image of the four last things (death and judgment, heaven and hell) corresponds to Hildegard's classic teaching on the Two Ways. Every soul must choose between the sacred East, where the sun of justice rises, and the bitter North, where Satan rules his realm of darkness and cold (Is 14:12–15).

5. *The synagogue.* This brief vision personifies the people of the covenant in the form of a woman, Synagoga, who is the "mother of the incarnation" and thus the mother-in-law of the church. Hildegard is adapting a traditional iconography, which depicted the two women as rivals—Synagoga rejected and blinded because of her unbelief and supplanted in God's favor by Ecclesia, or the Gentile church.[55] The stereotype of the Jews as a literal, carnal people is present in force. But the "true believers" in Israel—Abraham, Moses and the prophets—enjoy a privileged status and are allowed to admire the new bride's beauty from afar. Like many of the figures in Hildegard's visions, Synagoga can be "read" vertically from head to feet as an allegory of successive historical periods. In the end, the seer teaches, the Jews will be converted and "run back with great haste to the way of salva-

tion." This commonplace view, derived from Romans 11, was shared by Bernard of Clairvaux, Honorius and many other contemporaries.

6. *The choirs of angels.* The nine choirs of angels were conventionally ranked, in ascending order, as angels, archangels, virtues, powers, principalities, dominations, thrones, cherubim and seraphim, and arrayed in three clusters of three. Hildegard's text supplies an alternative division into two, five and two so that her nine choirs can provide analogues for human nature. Angels and archangels signify body and soul, the cherubim and seraphim, as always, symbolize the knowledge and love of God, and the five middle orders represent the five senses. Further allegorical details pertain to the incarnation and the life of virtue. From Pseudo-Dionysius Hildegard takes the notion that the celestial hierarchy above mirrors the ecclesiastical hierarchy below. Her vision of the choirs as "armies arrayed like a crown" inspires the artist's brilliant mandala-like image of nine concentric circles ranged about a void to signify the ineffable Presence.[56]

The reason for placing the synagogue and the angels in this section of the *Scivias* is not immediately apparent. But Hildegard may have meant to show that while the synagogue prefigures the work of salvation and the angels assist in it, true redemption could not be accomplished until the advent of Christ and the church—the subject of Book II.

Book Two: The Redeemer and Redemption

1. *The Redeemer.* This initial vision recapitulates important themes of Book I—Hildegard's prophetic call, the creation and the fall of man—but the emphasis has now shifted to the Second Person of the Trinity. Vision I.2 focused on Satan and Eve; this vision concentrates on Christ and Adam. Hildegard first sees an unquenchable fire that is "wholly living and wholly Life," with a sky-blue flame to represent the eternity of the Word. After creating the first human being, the triune God offers him "the sweet precept of obedience" in the shape of a fragrant flower, but Adam fails to pluck it and thereby falls into thick darkness. The forbidden fruit of Genesis is here transmogrified into a blossom that the man is *supposed* to pluck, so that his sin becomes one of omission; thus obedience is seen as a positive good and evil as a privation. This revisionist view expresses Hildegard's idea that the "knowledge of good and evil" is God's gift to humanity rather than the devil's temptation.

Redemption proceeds in gradual stages. First the night of sin is illumined by the shining stars of the patriarchs, then by the prophets, culminating in John the Baptist; finally Christ appears as the radiance of dawn. By his passion and resurrection he delivers Adam, whose fate is contrasted with that

of the unrepentant Satan. In the miniature Adam is represented three times: as the creature fashioned from mud (*adamah* = "red earth"); as the young man who withholds his hand from the flower; and as the old man who has fallen into darkness and "returned to his earth." The artist's vision diverges significantly from the text. He or she has added a central medallion to represent the six days of creation, and the unity of Creator and Redeemer is brilliantly figured in symmetrical spheres of light at the top and bottom of the miniature. A "finger of God" stretches downward from the light to awaken the newly created Adam, while the radiance of the risen Christ flames upward to redeem the fallen Adam.[57]

2. *The Trinity.* Somewhat illogically, this vision of the triune God follows that of the Redeemer, perhaps because the Trinity was first revealed to humankind through the incarnation. Father, Son and Holy Spirit are signified by a radiant light, a sapphire-hued figure and a glowing fire; the exposition stresses the unity and inseparability of the Persons. Hildegard then introduces three similitudes from created things: a stone with its dampness, solidity and kindling power; a flame with its light, heat and color; and a word with its sound, breath and meaning. The analogies of the flame and the word are ancient, but they are developed here in original fashion. It is noteworthy that none of these analogues is gender-specific, and the naming of Father and Son is balanced by a reference to "the embrace of God's maternal love," which is charity.

From the rather abstract language of Hildegard's text the artist has conceived another mandala-image. "Light" and "fire" become concentric circles glimmering with gold and silver leaf, and quivering lines suggest the vitality and energy of the living God.[58]

3. *The church, bride of Christ and mother of the faithful.* This is the first of four visions that center around the figure of Ecclesia and the sacraments. Baptism, the sacrament of her maternity, is represented in striking imagery faithfully reproduced by the artist. Reading the miniature from top to bottom and from right to left, the four panels illustrate successive moments of Hildegard's vision. (a) Ecclesia, the bride of Christ, lovingly embraces his altar. (b) She prepares to give birth to God's children; festive angels prepare their places in heaven. (c) Baptism. Two ancient images, the womb of Mother Church and the net of Peter, are conflated here. Converts or catechumens, represented as "black children," race to enter their mother's womb to be reborn; she gives birth "through her mouth," that is, through the words of blessing and the breath of the Spirit. The luminous disk, familiar from the previous visions, represents invocation of the Trinity. As the newly baptized Christians emerge, they shed their dark skins and are clothed in the "pure

white garments" of initiation. (d) Christ instructs the newly baptized in the Two Ways of sin and justice.

The teaching in this vision emphasizes the majestic and mysterious powers granted to the church as well as the grace of baptism. The church will never be conquered by hell; her secrets transcend comprehension; her crown is the teaching of the apostles, and her heart, the virginity of Mary. Following patristic doctrine Hildegard uses the symbol of Ecclesia's virginity to accentuate her pure faith, inviolate in the face of heresy and schism. But in her capacity as mother, Ecclesia grieves over the sins and rebellions of her children.

Baptism, Hildegard teaches, is analogous to circumcision under the old covenant, but is accessible to people of both sexes and all ages. It opens the kingdom of heaven to believers and remits the sin of Adam. Several brands of Donatism are rejected in passing; for example, baptism does not depend on the holiness of the priest, but on the invocation of the Trinity; infant baptism is acceptable to God; a layman may baptize in case of emergency. The symbolism of rebirth inspires an interesting digression on literal birth, which includes a surprising analogy between a man's motives in procreation and God's motives in creation. But the superior excellence of virginity is reiterated.

4. *Confirmation.* After the faithful are cleansed in baptism, they must receive the Holy Spirit through the sacrament of anointing with holy oil, which is reserved to the bishop. The vision depicts the power of the Spirit as a lofty tower that upholds and strengthens the woman Ecclesia. Her children appear in varying guises to indicate their spiritual and ecclesiastical status; thus, contemplatives are distinguished from lay Christians by the more glorious light on which they fix their gaze. But in each category some are more zealous in devotion, others more vigorous in justice. Hildegard teaches that while the sacraments are necessary for salvation, they are not sufficient; they must be accompanied by repentance and good works.

5. *Three orders in the church.* Ecclesia appears in her glory, clothed in radiant light of many colors: crystal clarity to signify the priesthood, the rosy glow of dawn for virginity, purple for monastic imitation of Christ's passion, and cloudy brightness for the secular life. This vision strongly affirms the principle of hierarchy in the church: spiritual people are to secular as day is to night, and monks rank as high above clergy as archangels do above angels. It is permissible to move from a lower order into a higher, but not to descend from a higher to a lower.

Hildegard treats the priesthood briefly, stressing clerical celibacy and commending the life of regular canons. Her vision of virginity is more

lyrical, characterized by imagery of music, flowers and feminine beauty. Virgins, she says, imitate the example of Christ and John the Baptist; they alone are entitled to sing the new song in paradise [Rv 14:3–4]; they go beyond the letter of the Law to fulfill the counsels of perfection. On the subject of monasticism Hildegard addresses several points of contemporary controversy. Although monks rank higher than priests, they may be ordained and preach if the church has need of them. Since God considers the intention rather than the outward habit of the monk, children should not be offered as oblates without their consent. Renegade monks, on the other hand, must be brought back to the monasteries they have fled. Married couples cannot separate to take monastic vows unless both partners consent.

Although Hildegard's position on oblates and her emphasis on intention are in keeping with the spirit of twelfth-century monastic reform, she expresses a highly critical view of new orders. Praising St. Benedict as a "second Moses," she inveighs against diversity, novelty and singularity and proclaims that God will judge innovators. The faithful monk ought to be "humble and content with what his predecessors instituted for him." This kind of humility is equivalent to conservatism; in her view innovation can spring only from pride.

The last part of the vision elaborates on the unforgivable sin of "blasphemy against the Holy Spirit," which Hildegard defines as despair of God's mercy in the form of either final impenitence or suicide.

6. *Christ's sacrifice and the church.* This vision, by far the longest in the *Scivias*, deals with subjects of burning interest to twelfth-century theologians: the nature of the eucharist and of the priesthood. In the vision proper Hildegard draws on a patristic typology that enjoyed wide diffusion in medieval art. The crucifixion is represented as the wedding of Christ and the church: As Christ hangs on the cross his predestined bride, Ecclesia, descends from heaven and is united with him, receiving his body and blood as her dowry. Whenever Mass is celebrated, Ecclesia, as heavenly archetype of the celebrant, devoutly offers this dowry to the Father and renews her marriage union with the Son.

The numerous doctrinal points in this section can be grouped under six headings: eucharistic theology, liturgical practice, communion, requirements for the priesthood, sexual ethics and penance. Under the first heading Hildegard offers a commentary on the Mass, focusing particularly on the consecration of the gifts. Although she does not use the word *transubstantiation* and its related Aristotelian vocabulary, her teaching is in essence identical with the doctrine later defined by Fourth Lateran and elaborated by Thomas Aquinas. A surprising emphasis falls on the role of the Virgin Birth. The Virgin Annunciate becomes a model for priests, who bring Christ's body

into the world by uttering the words of consecration just as Mary did by uttering her *fiat;* and the wheat of the eucharistic bread is made to symbolize the purity of Christ's virginal flesh. Since original sin is transmitted through the taint of lust, the Redeemer's body and blood must be free from every hint of sexuality in order to cleanse the sinful flesh of mortals.

After treating various points of ritual—fasting before communion, reception in both kinds, the use of traditional words and vestments—Hildegard presents a typology of communicants. The second miniature for this vision illustrates the five types: faithful believers, doubters, the unchaste and lustful, the malicious and envious, the warlike and oppressive. According to the quality of their faith and repentance, Christians may communicate either unto salvation or unto judgment.

In the section on priesthood Hildegard condemns simony (the purchase and sale of ecclesiastical office) and pluralism (the holding of multiple benefices by a single cleric). She also reiterates traditional criteria for the priesthood: a candidate must be adult, male and sound in body. (Women, she says, are "an infirm and weak habitation appointed to bear children," but as virgins they can possess the priesthood vicariously through their bridegroom, Christ.) The bulk of this section is devoted to clerical celibacy. Priests must have no wife except for the church and the justice of God; a married priest is an adulterer and serves the devil. Hildegard answers the objection that priests were married in apostolic times by arguing that God formerly permitted this aberration "because there were so few priests," just as he permitted the patriarchs to marry their female kin because there were so few people. "But now the church is adult and strong, and her ministers are many," so a higher standard of celibacy can be enforced.

The polemic against clerical marriage leads into a long catalogue of sexual sins: cross-dressing, fornication, homosexuality, "unnatural" intercourse, masturbation, bestiality and "nocturnal pollution." This list of prohibitions in turn raises the subject of confession and penance, which is treated more briefly. Confession resurrects sinners from death; it may be heard by a layman in case of emergency; and it is strengthened by almsgiving—especially if the recipients are among the "deserving poor." Hildegard urges priests to use their power of binding and loosing effectively and condemns those who abuse this authority through anger or negligence.

7. *The devil.* Hildegard's placement of this vision is pivotal. The threat of satanic temptation ends this book as the promise of angelic assistance ended Book I, but the vision of the devil bound anticipates the dramatic victory that closes Book III.

The hideous multicolored "worm" or dragon symbolizes the many

kinds of vice and temptation with which the Evil One assaults people. As in Hildegard's previous visions of the church, Christians are divided into categories according to their degrees of faith and justice. Satan assails the "spiritual people" (priests and monastics) in one manner, the secular people in another, while heretics are represented as wholly in his power. Some features of the heresy Hildegard attacks suggest the Cathars; for example, they revile the sacraments and the clergy, feign Catholicism out of fear and lay claim to a pretended sanctity. Other accusations, for instance of devil-worship and obscene sacrifices of human seed, are ancient slanders earlier hurled at Christians and gnostics of the subapostolic age. Satan's power appears to be formidable, even though he is bound firmly by a chain and in the end the saints trample on him.

An interesting feature of the vision is the image of Vanity Fair, possibly inspired by Revelation 13:17 and 18:11–17. This scene is illustrated in the lower panel of the second miniature, where the artist has depicted the sinister merchants in the hats worn by medieval Jews.

Book Three: The Virtues and the History of Salvation

1. *God, Lucifer and humanity.* This vision at first recapitulates I.1: Hildegard sees a figure of God enthroned in majesty and her calling is reaffirmed. The poignant novelty here is an image of newly created humanity: God "held to his breast what looked like black and filthy mire, as big as a human heart, surrounded with precious stones and pearls." The operative theological idea is an old, half-mythical opinion that humanity was created to replace a "tenth choir" of angels who fell with Lucifer. An eloquent miniature represents Hildegard's vision of these angels as shooting stars that are gradually extinguished as they fall, until only cinders remain. But their departing light is not quenched; it returns to the bosom of God, and since Satan fell "without an heir," God treasures his inheritance of light for a new creation. Unlike the angels, human beings are then fashioned with a "vile earthly nature" to preserve them from pride and consequent ruin.

The vision thus supplies one possible answer to a question that must arise among all theists who denigrate the body, namely, why a good God should have created such a "miserable form" in the first place. Despite the wretchedness of human nature, however, the Son of God has assumed it in the incarnation, so that no angel dares to despise it. Moreover, the filthy mire is held firmly to God's heart and adorned with the gems and pearls of sanctity. The vision is meant to inspire humility and gratitude as well as fear of God's justice; the commentary stresses that unlike the fallen angels, human beings can and therefore must repent of their misdeeds.

2. *The edifice of salvation.* This vision sets forth a blueprint of the symbolic building that will be expounded in detail through the remainder of the book. The miniature provides an indispensable diagram, although it depicts a square building where Hildegard describes a rectangular one. Built on the mountain of God, grounded in faith and fear of the Lord, the city or edifice of salvation has a double symbolism representing, on the one hand, the course of salvation history, and on the other, the doctrines and virtues every Christian must believe and acquire to be saved.

The most important wall links the East (represented on top, as is usual in medieval maps) with the North (shown to the left). In the East lies the figurative realm of Christ, in the North that of Satan, and the luminous wall between the two therefore signifies *speculativa scientia,* or the knowledge of good and evil. This is not "speculative knowledge" in the sense of abstract thought, but "reflective knowledge" in the sense of moral judgment (the adjective is from *speculum,* a mirror); this faculty is the cognitive aspect of free will.[59] The remaining three walls are of masonry, which has several meanings: the joined stones denote human flesh and its labors, the Law and the works of justice. Thus moral knowledge must be conjoined with right action for the upbuilding of salvation.

Hildegard gives two interpretations for the points of the compass. In one reading, East and West signify the dawn of salvation and the sunset of the Law, while North and South represent the fall and restoration of Adam. Alternatively, the diagram may be read counterclockwise beginning at the right. The four cornerstones are successive covenants between God and humanity: At the South stands Adam, at the East Noah (the dawn of justice), at the North Abraham and Moses as representatives of the Law (the beginning of war against Satan), and at the West Christ (the revelation of the Trinity).[60] The proportions of the building also receive numerological meanings.

This vision assigns further theological value to the despised body. Again human beings are contrasted with angels: The latter are purer and more luminous, but humans are more valiant and meritorious soldiers of God because they have to do battle against their own nature. In ascetic struggle "they conquer themselves, chastising their bodies, and so know themselves to be in [God's] army."

3. *The tower of anticipation of God's will.* From now on the exploration of the building proceeds counterclockwise, beginning with the northeast wall. Hildegard first examines the "tower of anticipation" of God's perfect will, which was manifested in the incarnation and first prefigured in the Abrahamic covenant of circumcision.[61] Aside from foreshadowing baptism, this covenant is taken primarily as a sign of sexual discipline: The initial

"cutting off" of unchastity leads by stages to the perfect virginity of Christ and Mary.

Within each portion of the building Hildegard sees a group of feminine Virtues appropriate to that particular moment of salvation history. The Virtues occupy an important place in her theology; they are not exclusively human qualities but "brilliant stars given by God, which shine forth in human deeds." The Latin *virtus* means "energy" or "power" as well as "virtue," and Hildegard plays on both senses. In effect, a virtue is a divine quality that becomes an operative force in willing souls and fully incarnates itself in right action; it is a synthesis of grace and moral effort. As Hildegard puts it, the Virtues do not work of their own accord, but with the cooperation of the person who has received them from God. They appear in feminine form in keeping with a long tradition of virtue-vice allegory that goes back to Prudentius, but also because in Hildegard's symbolic theology the feminine represents the sphere of synergy in which divinity and humanity work together for salvation.

The first three Virtues in this tower represent the initial manifestations of the ascetic life: Celestial Love, Discipline and Modesty. There follow two christological Virtues: Mercy (associated with the Virgin Mary and Christ's birth) and Victory (connected with his conquest of Satan). Standing somewhat to the side are Patience, who imitates Christ's passion, and Longing, who clings to a crucifix. Hildegard's allegorical technique further characterizes the Virtues by assigning intricate symbolism to their iconography—colors, garments and attributes.[62] In addition, each Virtue utters a self-defining motto; similar formulas recur in the *Ordo virtutum* where they are set to music.

4. *The pillar of the Word of God.* Near the northern corner stands the pillar of the Word, signifying both the incarnate Word and the written word of Scripture. The latter has not two parts as one would expect, but three: Old Testament, New Testament and commentary, or "the profound and rich wisdom of the principal doctors." Such is the authority that Hildegard, in accord with monastic tradition, assigned to patristic exegesis. The first two sides of this triangular pillar display the saints of the old and new covenants: first, patriarchs and prophets, seen as precursors of Christ, and then apostles, martyrs and other Christian heroes. The third side, representing the exegetes, shows by its shape that wisdom arose from a small beginning, increased in the course of time, but will dwindle again in the last days. At the top of the pillar perches the dove of the Holy Spirit.

The Virtue in this vision is the Knowledge of God, more a divine than a human figure. More awesome in appearance than the other Virtues, she embodies the mystery of God's mercy and judgment in bringing sinners to

grace through the scourge of calamity. Illness and other chastisements may redeem sinners by making them physically incapable of their former vices, which otherwise they would never voluntarily leave. These reluctant Christians are the wedding guests whom Christ has "compelled to come in" (Lk 14:23).

5. *The jealousy of God.* "The Lord is a jealous God and avenging, the Lord is avenging and wrathful; . . . The Lord is slow to anger and of great might, and will by no means clear the guilty" (Na 1:2–3). This grim vision presents the vengeance of God against evil, symbolized by a wrathful crimson face and three silently beating wings. Naturally the head faces north, directing its vigilance against Satan and his kingdom.

In the face of God's jealousy no sin goes unpunished. If it is not avenged by voluntary penance it will exact its price either in earthly suffering or in the torments of purgatory or hell. Though vengeance may appear to strike without warning, God is always just, for human beings have been granted judgment to discern good from evil; ignorance of the Law is no excuse. Hildegard's ethical stance is one of uncompromising self-denial; the choice of good is associated with struggle and anxiety, and that of evil with self-will, desire and pleasure. Certain sins, such as desecration or robbery of a church, simony and withholding of tithes, are singled out as special objects of God's vengeance because they defile the honor of his house.

6. *The stone wall of the old Law.* The northwest wall of the building signifies the Old Testament Law, the period of history between Abraham and Christ, and the political order. Most of the commentary in this vision asserts and defends the principles on which Christian feudal society was based.

The human race, Hildegard maintains, is divided into two unequal orders, the spiritual and the secular, and each of these classes has its proper hierarchy. Among the secular people there are the higher and lower nobility, free men and women and serfs; among the spiritual there are "the excellent and the superior, the obeyers and the enforcers." Hildegard has no doubt that these distinctions were ordained by providence; they "were and are and always will be." Two ideological justifications for hierarchy are set forth: (a) it prevents anarchy, because without rulers people would "kill each other off and perish"; and (b) it teaches by the example of earthly authority how divine authority should be loved and feared. Though the spiritual power is more exalted than the secular, princes as well as prelates represent God's justice and mercy. The "greater" deserve to rule the "lesser" because God has chosen them for their superior abilities—intelligence, integrity, eloquence —just as he chose Jacob to rule over Esau. But usurpation of power, whether

through bribery or simony, violence or black magic, is harshly condemned —despite the same Jacob's example! Subjects ought of course to be obedient; if they suffer persecution from rulers, they can imitate Christ's passion.

Eight Virtues inhabit this section of the building. The first group consists of Abstinence, Liberality and Piety: self-denial is the prerequisite for generosity toward God and neighbor. In the second group Truth, Peace and Beatitude appear, representing three stages in the victory over evil. Slightly apart stand two Virtues embodying God's temporal and eternal gifts: Discretion, associated with secular justice, and Salvation of Souls. The latter manifests herself in two phases: In her "Jewish" period she has a swarthy complexion, dark curls and a multicolored tunic, but after Christ's birth she takes on a luminous white aspect, stripping off all "diversity."

7. *The pillar of the Trinity.* In *Scivias* II.2 Hildegard presented the Trinity as an eternal living reality. Her focus in this vision is on the Trinity as a saving doctrine revealed by Christ at a particular moment of history. Hence the pillar appears at the west corner of the building, symbolizing the prophetic "end of the ages." It is triangular, like the pillar of the Word (III.4), and its three edges are sharp swords cutting off all infidels: heretics, Jews and pagans, symbolized respectively by chaff, broken wings and rotten wood. Hildegard adds a lengthy parable, which she then interprets as an allegory of the apostles' preaching, and supplies some rather cloudy similitudes for the Trinity. As if to defend their obscurity, she stresses that this divine mystery must be humbly accepted and not presumptuously scrutinized.

8. *The pillar of the Savior's humanity.* This important vision depicts the incarnation as the primary locus of the Virtues, that is, the context in which humanity is enabled to collaborate with God. The pillar closely resembles Jacob's ladder, but in place of the angels seen by the patriarch, Hildegard perceives "all the virtues of God ascending and descending." Her imagery is indebted to that of an earlier visionary, Hermas (third century), who in *The Shepherd* had described a host of celestial maidens in the guise of stonemasons working to build up the church.[63] Hildegard's maidens also carry stones, representing "the winged and shining deeds people do . . . to win salvation." These Virtues descend to human beings through the humanity of Christ and return to heaven through his divinity.

The miniature shows the influence of a traditional pictorial motif, the ladder of salvation, whereby Christians climb up from earth to heaven on the rungs of virtue. Based on classic texts like the Benedictine Rule and John Climacus's *Ladder of Perfection*, the image was particularly favored by monks and nuns. Many representations of it show demons on either side of the

ladder, picking off unwary souls with their arrows;[64] Hildegard's image is more positive and depicts supportive Virtues in their place. At the top of the ladder stands the Grace of God, clothed as a bishop to admonish and exhort the faithful.

The seven principal Virtues (proceeding from top to bottom) are Humility, Charity, Fear of God and Obedience on the right, and Faith, Hope and Chastity on the left. Humility is the queen of Virtues, as in the *Ordo virtutum*, but Charity is the most important and has the longest speech. She wears the sapphire blue associated with the Word of God and is assimilated to him as Chastity is to the Virgin Mary. The latter is overshadowed by the dove of the Holy Spirit and appears pregnant with a child named Innocence. In several places the text echoes earlier visions: for example, Fear of the Lord first appeared in I.1, and Hope with her crucifix is very similar to Longing in III.3.

A more perplexing cross-reference points back to I.4, for Hildegard observes that the pillar of the Savior's humanity stands "in the same place" as the radiant diamond-shaped figure she had earlier seen. But that figure was independent of the allegorical building, so Hildegard must be implying that a consistent "inner geometry" persists through all her visions. In both contexts the figure in question signifies the incarnation, but in I.4 Hildegard was discussing the means by which every soul enters its body when it is formed in the womb, while here she stresses the uniqueness of Christ's birth from the Virgin.

The central teaching of the vision concerns synergy, or cooperation with God. Hildegard teaches that God's grace will not forsake even the most hardened sinner, but it is not irresistible; the human will always retains the freedom to choose or reject salvation. To the sinner grace brings first self-knowledge, then repentance, finally hope and amendment of life. The discourse of this Virtue should be compared with earlier teaching on the Knowledge and the Jealousy of God. In a lengthy digression Hildegard draws an analogy between the seven Virtues and the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit resting on Christ [Is 11:2], thus reinforcing the centrality of the God-man.

9. *The tower of the church.* This tower stands at the southern corner of the building and represents the whole history of the church; it is therefore unfinished. But somewhat inconsistently, the seven turrets at its summit, standing for the gifts of the Holy Spirit, are already built. This detail clearly indicates how allegorical significance prevails over the logical coherence of the image. The motifs of the heavenly ladder and the cooperation of Virtues are continued from the previous vision.

Wisdom, God's feminine co-worker in creation, stands atop the "house of seven pillars" described in Proverbs 9:1. As the first of the cardinal virtues,

she precedes Justice, Fortitude and temperance. The last of the four, however, is given not her classical name but the more impressive title of Sanctity—an index of the importance Hildegard ascribed to sobriety and self-denial. Unique among the Virtues, Sanctity has three heads. Two are sexless, but the left one, labelled Self-Sacrifice, is significantly female.

Hildegard's doctrine of the church stresses the role of the apostles and doctors. The faithful, as always, are divided into various categories: some cherish and preserve their baptismal garment, others feel constrained by it but keep on struggling, while still others throw off the garment and return from the church into the world. Worst of all are the simoniacs with their filthy lucre. Continuing her polemic, Hildegard claims that they purchase offices "by means of [their] spiritual father, money—for in that transaction money becomes [their] bishop." But the attack on unjust authority is balanced once again by a call for obedience to the powers that be; they will perish horribly in God's judgment, but the time is not yet.

10. *The Son of Man.* This vision completes the circuit of the building, returning to the eastern corner where the Son of Man is seated on a throne beneath that of the Shining One (God the Father). He exhorts the people of God on self-knowledge, obedience and sexual discipline, reminding the married that coupling is only permissible out of desire for children, and the celibate that mere outer virginity does not suffice for their salvation. True continence is the gift of God and should not be promised hastily or presumptuously. A consecrated virgin should rely on divine strength alone and prepare for a lifetime of ascetic struggle.

Five more Virtues fill up the complement of the city. They are Constancy, Celestial Desire (symbolized by the thirsty hart of Psalm 41), Compunction, Contempt of the World (safely ensconced within the wheel of God's mercy) and Concord (winged like an angel because she prefigures the life of heaven). Christ appears in his human aspect in a rather understated form. Like Ecclesia, he is visible only from the navel upward because his lower parts represent ages of history yet to unfold. Some of these mysteries will be disclosed in the apocalyptic visions that follow.

11. *The last days and the fall of Antichrist.* This is the vision that won Hildegard her greatest celebrity as a prophet. Although she draws on earlier apocalyptic scenarios, notably that of the tenth-century monk Adso,[65] the seer adds powerful imagery of her own. Her three principal themes are (a) the "five ferocious epochs" to come; (b) the career of Antichrist; and (c) the rape and recovery of the church.

The upper left panel of the miniature depicts five beasts that symbolize future epochs of world history: a fiery dog, a yellow lion, a pale horse, a black

pig and a gray wolf. Each of these animals suggests the temperament of villainous rulers to come. In the *Liber divinorum operum*, vision III.10, the description of these eras is considerably expanded, and ages of justice and reformation are posited in between the ages of misrule. All the beasts appear in the North, since they belong to Satan's kingdom; but no term is set to their rule. Hildegard says only that the world is now in its seventh age, "approaching the end of time." This is a conventional view, however, which has nothing to do with her symbolism of the beasts. In the sixth age of the world Christ was incarnate, just as on the sixth day Adam was created. The seventh age is a "sabbath," which may be indefinitely prolonged. One apocalyptic sign, however, is the fact that Hildegard herself prophesies. God has called her because his duly appointed authorities now languish in idleness, and the world order is showing signs of decrepitude.

The approaching Antichrist is represented as a parodic inversion of Christ.[66] Born of a harlot who feigns that she is a virgin, he will be wholly possessed by the devil from his mother's womb and trained by her in the magical arts. Through preaching and false miracles, even the feigned resurrection of the dead, he will make many converts; finally he himself will simulate death and resurrection and promulgate his own scriptures. As Hildegard emphasizes Christ's virginity throughout the *Scivias*, she also stresses the Antichrist's lawless sexuality. Not only is he a child of fornication, but he himself will reject continence and all other forms of self-denial. For a time he will be opposed by the "two witnesses," Enoch and Elijah, whom God is reserving in heaven for the last times, but eventually they will suffer martyrdom for the faith.

The most daring part of the vision concerns the Antichrist's rape and bloody violation of the church, depicted in the lower panel of the miniature. Her private parts now become visible, with the monstrous head of the Antichrist appearing in place of her genitals, for he is both her son and her seducer. As Satan corrupted Eve, so will the son of perdition attempt to corrupt the virgin Ecclesia. But Christ's bride will emerge triumphant, though bruised, bloodied and in large part deceived by his wiles. After enduring persecution and martyrdom, she will be vindicated by her heavenly Bridegroom (upper right panel) and united to him in marriage. Scatology and eschatology merge as the Antichrist, self-exalted on a mountain of excrement, is struck down by a thunderbolt from on high.

12. *The last judgment, the new heaven and the new earth.* At an unspecified time after the fall of Antichrist, the last judgment with its terrors will come to pass and history will have ended. In Hildegard's vision there are no surprises in the judgment: Good and evil are plainly manifest in the forms of

the newly awakened dead. Sentence is passed on the reprobate without appeal, and unbelievers are not even allowed to stand trial, for they are damned in advance. The saints, on the other hand, receive bliss and glory from Christ, who comes in majesty on the clouds of heaven, yet with his wounds still open from the cross.

As the Son of Man sits in judgment, all creation is "shaken by dire convulsions" in which the elements are purged of mortality. Hildegard sees a "black skin" peeled away from them, recalling her image of the newly baptized in II.3. There follows a chillingly Platonic vision of permanence: In the new heaven sun, moon and stars will stand motionless, and on the new earth shall be fire without heat, air without density, a sea without waves. The vision ends on a note of everlasting stasis: "And so there was no night, but day. And it was finished."

13. *Symphony of praise.* This magnificent coda is not really a vision but a concert. The songs Hildegard records in this section do indeed, as she claims, marvelously summarize all the meanings she has presented before. In the first fourteen pieces she offers praise to the Virgin Mary, the choirs of angels and five categories of saints: prophets, apostles, martyrs, confessors and virgins. Each rank of the celestial hierarchy is honored with an antiphon and a responsory, although the liturgical genres of these pieces are not specified here as they are in the *Symphonia* manuscripts.

Heaven is not populated only with saints, but also with repentant sinners. The second part of this section is a lament and prayer of intercession for the fallen. In the final portion a penitent soul's pilgrimage to heaven (earlier presented mythically in I.4) is set forth in dramatic form. The soul slips from well-meaning innocence to impatience when she asks the Virtues for a "kiss of the heart," and they warn instead that she must do battle by their side. At this point the devil intervenes and easily leads her into sin. In contrast to later morality plays, Hildegard is not interested in dramatizing the soul's adventures in evil; instead she presents a verbal contest between the devil and the Virtues to fill the time until the soul's repentance. In the end the Virtues receive the weeping penitent, and led by their queen Humility and celestial Victory, they conquer and bind the devil.[67]

The play is followed by a brief commentary and a tribute to the power of music, anticipating the apologia Hildegard was to write at the end of her life. In liturgical song "words symbolize the body" and the humanity of Christ, she writes, "and the jubilant music indicates the spirit" and the Godhead. An allegorical reading of Psalm 150, in which the different instruments are made to symbolize the varieties of saints, leads into a final affirmation of the prophet's mission and brings the *Scivias* to a close.

INTRODUCTION

Hildegard's Place in the Tradition

Although Hildegard occupies a central place at the crossroads of twelfth-century culture, the question of "sources and influences" has always posed difficulties for students of her work. One reason for the problem has already been addressed: Hildegard's prophetic persona demanded that she present herself as a "simple and unlearned little woman," and her claim to direct visionary inspiration barred appeal to merely human authorities. Thus, although she was undoubtedly well-versed in theological and spiritual writers, she virtually never cited her sources in even the most conventional or formulaic way. In addition, her distinctive literary style makes it difficult to recognize quotations, except for the scriptural texts that she chose to gloss. Since the exegetical tradition in which she worked was both conservative and cumulative, any one of a dozen writers might be cited with equal plausibility as the source for a given doctrine or interpretation. Only in rare cases, such as the seer's debt to the *Shepherd* of Hermas in *Scivias* III.8, or to Adso's treatise *On the Antichrist* in III.11, can we point with confidence to an individual writer.

In general, the most pervasive influences in the *Scivias* are the Bible and its commentaries, the liturgy, the Benedictine Rule and the works of such widely read Church Fathers as Augustine, Jerome, Gregory the Great and Bede.[68] In all of these Hildegard's monastic heritage is evident. She was steeped in the Divine Office with its spirit of formal, communal praise; her idea of heaven (*Scivias* III.13) is a thoroughly Benedictine one, which emphasizes not the vision of God or the mystical union, but the unending liturgy of the saints. She was familiar with the moral as well as the exegetical works of the Fathers, particularly with their teachings on virginity. And if her knowledge of early Christian writings included a moderately obscure author like Hermas, it probably embraced a fair amount of apocryphal literature as well. Attempts to trace her reading in classical authors, including scientific writers, have remained highly conjectural.[69] Unfortunately we have no library catalogue for either the Rupertsberg or the monastery of St. Disibod; even if we had, a list of manuscripts would not take account of the rich oral tradition, so important even in the literate world of the monastery. Some of Hildegard's arcane lore about Adam and Eve, for instance, seems to come from Jewish tradition and may have been acquired firsthand,[70] and much of her medical knowledge was surely gained through oral transmission and experience.

Hildegard probably acquired her knowledge of the Church Fathers from florilegia and earlier medieval adaptations as well as original texts. Among late antique and Carolingian authors she would surely have known Isidore of Seville, Rabanus Maurus, Paschasius Radbertus and the hymnodist

Notker of St. Gall. The Neoplatonic tradition, which strongly colored her cosmology—accounting for affinities with more "avant-garde" authors like Bernard Silvestris and Alan of Lille—may have reached her through John Scotus Eriugena.[71] On the other hand, she might have known this author only indirectly through his twelfth-century popularizer, Honorius Augustodunensis. Among her contemporaries Hildegard stands closest to Honorius himself, a prolific author who apparently spent the latter part of his life in Regensburg,[72] and to Rupert of Deutz, a Benedictine who wrote numerous works of theology and exegesis.[73] We have already noted similarities between the *Scivias* and the work of Hugh of St. Victor. Other reformers, such as Gerhoch of Reichersberg and Godfrey of Admont, furnish useful points of comparison and contrast for Hildegard's ecclesiastical program.[74] And she was undoubtedly familiar with certain writings of Bernard of Clairvaux, the recipient of her first letter, although Cistercian spirituality had only a limited influence on her outlook. While she admired Bernard's personal holiness and shared the order's preoccupation with Caritas, or divine love, the physical and aesthetic austerities of the white monks were foreign to her. Her version of "bridal spirituality" is more indebted to traditional literature on virginity, such as the *Speculum virginum*,[75] than to Cistercian currents.

In sum, Hildegard's opus presents us with a synthesis of classical Benedictine theology, exegetics and spirituality as they stood in the mid-twelfth century, touched but not yet deeply permeated by the new modes of piety that were already changing the face of the church.[76] Yet conservative as she was, nothing she ever wrote can be mistaken for the work of another author. All is charged with the urgency of her prophetic mission, shaped by her powerfully original visionary and poetic gifts, and not least, colored subtly but pervasively by her feminine self-awareness. Hildegard's place in the tradition of women's spirituality is a complex question.[77] While that tradition may be theoretically helpful in understanding her life and work, we must remember that it was a hidden tradition that Hildegard herself did not know; any similarities between her spirituality and that of earlier female writers must result from common solutions to common problems, not conscious or even unconscious influence. With regard to later female writers the case is very different; there we must reckon with Hildegard herself as a significant role model.

Her community at Bingen, unlike the famous convent at Helfta a century later, never became a vital center of feminine spiritual culture. It may be that Hildegard's own presence was too overbearing, or her visionary gift too intimately bound up with her unique psychology and temperament, to inspire imitation. In any case, there was never a "school of Hildegard" as there was, so to speak, a "school of St. Bernard," of St.-Victor, or of Eckhart. Nevertheless the seer did have one unsought "disciple," her younger contemporary

Elisabeth of Schönau.[78] Excited by Hildegard's growing fame, this young Benedictine began to have visions a year after the *Scivias* was published. She visited Hildegard, corresponded with her, honored her as a spiritual mother, named one of her books after the *Scivias* and even adopted the older nun's conception of an "effeminate age" to justify feminine prophecy. Like Hildegard, too, Elisabeth felt herself called to preach reform, write epistles of spiritual counsel and utter apocalyptic warnings. One contemporary chronicler saw the two visionary nuns as partners in a single divine visitation.[79]

Yet a comparison between Hildegard and Elisabeth reveals precisely which elements of the older woman's spirituality belonged to the future and which to the past. As Elisha to Hildegard's Elijah, Elisabeth "inherited" her prophetic spirit along with her gift of visions, her fiery reformist zeal, her role as moral adviser to all who sought (or were subjected willy-nilly to) her advice, and her willingness to intervene in politics—though the two women were not always on the same side.[80] Like Hildegard, Elisabeth was spiritually sensitive and physically frail, prone to continual illness which often accompanied her visions. These shared traits continued to dominate the profile of women's spirituality in the later Middle Ages; we meet them again in Catherine of Siena, Birgitta of Sweden and a host of lesser-known women.

Yet there was much in Hildegard that Elisabeth found less congenial, or at any rate less imitable. The abbess of Bingen's systematic review of Christian doctrine, her Platonism, her scientific and cosmological interests, her deep learning, her idiosyncratic style and brilliant, esoteric symbology, her artistic gifts (expressed not only in her musical and dramatic creations but also in the careful, architectonic structure of her books)—all these remained foreign to the seer of Schönau. In short, it is the complexity, variety and sheer intellectual difficulty of Hildegard's opus that marks her and not Elisabeth as a woman of the twelfth-century Renaissance. Although the two nuns were contemporaries, one senses that Elisabeth would have been equally at home in a community of consecrated women a century later, while Hildegard would have been an anachronism.

What Elisabeth may have found lacking in her spiritual mother, and what she in turn supplied and passed on to later religious women, was precisely her mysticism. In her one finds ecstasies, deliberate cultivation of mystical experience, a highly developed subjectivity and deeply personal (as opposed to communal) relationships with the saints; one also finds a characteristically intimate and mutually dependent relationship with her confessor, so different from Hildegard's clearly dominant position vis-à-vis her secretary Volmar.[81] Even in their approach to their common Benedictine heritage the two nuns differed remarkably. Hildegard translated her private visions into the public medium of liturgical praise, which her whole community

could share; Elisabeth translated her public experience of the liturgy into private mystical conversations with the angels and saints.

My point here is not to make invidious comparisons between the two visionaries, so close and yet so fundamentally different, but rather to show how Hildegard's life and work were received by subsequent generations. In fact, the late medieval public recreated the spiritual mother in the image of her daughter, whose works were copied and read far more widely.[82] Thus Hildegard was long remembered and celebrated as the visionary, prophet and apocalyptic preacher that she was; she was quickly forgotten as the learned writer, monastic theologian and gifted composer that she also was. The Cistercian prior Gebeno of Eberbach kept her prophetic reputation alive by publishing an extremely popular anthology of her apocalyptic prophecies, which he entitled *Speculum futurorum temporum* or *Pentachronon* (1220); this collection proved much more appealing to later medieval tastes than Hildegard's original writings.[83] On Gebeno's authority she was known to the Flemish mystic Hadewijch as "Hildegaert die alle die Visione sach," and cited at length by Lodewijk van Velthem as an anti-fraternal prophet.[84] Somewhat later, as the generic image of a late medieval "holy woman" came to be superimposed on her dimly remembered figure, she was taken for a mystic and ecstatic.

The Christian humanists of the Renaissance took a new kind of interest in Hildegard. Trithemius, abbot of Sponheim (1462–1516), published enthusiastic if dubiously accurate reports of her career,[85] and Jacques Lefèvre d'Etaples printed the first edition of the *Scivias* (1513). But the Reformation contributed two further distortions. Andreas Osiander claimed Hildegard as a Protestant in 1527, because of her prophecies against negligent clergy,[86] and in due time a more "virile age," which she had also prophesied, vented its misogyny by denying her the dignity of authorship altogether, ascribing her works to Volmar or some other pseudonymous male.[87]

The rediscovery and authentication of Hildegard's oeuvre is the work of twentieth-century scholarship, which has gradually chipped away at the falsified, stereotypical image of the female mystic and the a priori notion that a medieval woman could not, and therefore did not, write.[88] But as Hildegard and her work become known to the public through popular as well as scholarly presentations, through concerts and recordings as well as articles and books, new stereotypes arise to replace the old. Just as the later Middle Ages and the Reformation found in Hildegard the role model they needed, so our own era has created the image of Hildegard the feminist, the liberationist, the "creation-centered mystic," the holistic health practitioner, the prophet of ecological justice.[89] This model of sanctity has proven useful and inspiring to many women and men, and it contains a grain (but only a grain)

of historical truth. The image of a saint, however, is always a work of synergy. Hildegard teaches that a virtuous life is the joint creation of God and humanity. By extension, a saintly life is the joint creation of the era that produces the saint and the era that venerates him or her. Those who admire Hildegard's contemporary icon will find it lovingly painted elsewhere. For those who wish to become acquainted with Hildegard the author, this faithful and unabridged translation of the *Scivias* lets her speak for herself.

NOTES

1. The primary source for Hildegard's life is a *vita* by the monks Gottfried of St. Disibod and Dieter of Echternach, begun a few years before her death and completed shortly afterward; it includes autobiographical memoirs supplied by the abbess. *Vita S. Hildegardis*, ed. J.-P. Migne, *Patrologia latina* [PL] 197 (Paris, 1855): 91–130; trans. Anna Silvas, "Saint Hildegard of Bingen and the *Vita S. Hildegardis*," *Tjurunga: An Australasian Benedictine Review*, 29 (1985): 4–25; 30 (1986): 63–73; 31 (1986): 32–41; 32 (1987): 46–59. There are two modern biographies in German: Adelgundis Führkötter, *Hildegard von Bingen* (Salzburg, 1972); and Eduard Gronau, *Hildegard von Bingen, 1098–1179* (Stein-am-Rhein, 1985).

2. On Hildegard's family see Marianna Schrader, *Die Herkunft der hl. Hildegard*, rev. ed. (Mainz, 1981).

3. Guibert of Gembloux, *Hildegardis vita* (fragment), ed. J.-B. Pitra, *Analecta S. Hildegardis*, vol. 8 of *Analecta sacra* (Monte Cassino, 1882): 408.

4. Letter to Guibert of Gembloux "de modo visionis suae," Ep. 2, ed. Pitra: 331–34.

5. Charles Singer, "The Scientific Views and Visions of Saint Hildegard," *Studies in the History and Method of Science* 1 (Oxford, 1917) pp. 1–55; Oliver Sacks, *Migraine: Understanding a Common Disorder* (Berkeley, 1985) pp. 106–8.

6. Barbara Newman, "Divine Power Made Perfect in Weakness: St. Hildegard on the Frail Sex," in *Peaceweavers*, vol. 2 of *Medieval Religious Women*, ed. Lillian T. Shank and John Nichols (Kalamazoo, 1987) pp. 103–22. On this theme in women's spirituality generally see Elizabeth Petroff, ed., *Medieval Women's Visionary Literature* (Oxford, 1986) pp. 32–44.

7. Ildefons Herwegen, "Les collaborateurs de Ste. Hildegarde," *Revue bénédictine* 21 (1904): 192–203, 302–15, 381–403. Recent research has indicated that Volmar's role was limited to copy editor and scribe; he did no significant stylistic revision.

8. Ep. 1, PL 197: 143ab. Cf. Marianna Schrader and Adelgundis Führkötter, *Die Echtheit des Schrifttums der hl. Hildegard von Bingen* (Cologne, 1956) pp. 111–19.

9. See the letter from Hildegard to her daughters, PL 197: 1065b–67a.

10. Maria Brede, "Die Klöster der hl. Hildegard Rupertsberg und Eibingen," in *Hildegard von Bingen, 1179–1979*, ed. Anton Brück (Mainz, 1979) pp. 77–94.

11. Barbara Newman, ed. and trans., *Symphonia armonie celestium revelationum* (Ithaca, 1988).

12. This work is still unedited, but see fragments in Pitra, 496–502, and Wilhelm Grimm, "Wiesbader Glossen," *Zeitschrift für deutsches Alterthum* 6 (1848) pp. 334–40.

13. Lieven Van Acker, "Der Briefwechsel der hl. Hildegard von Bingen: Vorbemerkungen zu einer kritischen Edition," *Revue bénédictine* 98 (1988): 141–68; 99 (1989): 118–54.

14. Irmgard Müller, *Die pflanzlichen Heilmittel bei Hildegard von Bingen* (Salzburg, 1981); Karl-Heinz Reger, *Hildegard-Medizin;* Joan Cadden, "It Takes All Kinds: Sexuality and Gender Differences in Hildegard of Bingen's 'Book of Compound Medicine,' " *Traditio* 40 (1984): 149–74.

15. *Vita,* Bk. III; *Acta inquisitionis de virtutibus et miraculis sanctae Hildegardis,* PL 197: 131–40.

16. See, for example, Ep. 48, PL 197: 244–53 (Cologne) and Ep. 49, PL 197: 254–58 (Trier).

17. Angela Rozumek, *Die sittliche Weltanschauung der hl. Hildegard von Bingen: Eine Darstellung der Ethik des Liber vitae meritorum* (Eichstätt, 1934).

18. Schrader and Führkötter, *Echtheit,* 131–41; Peter Dronke, *Women Writers of the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 1984): 154–59.

19. Heinrich Büttner, "Die Beziehungen der hl. Hildegard zur Kurie, Erzbischof und Kaiser," in *Universitas: Festschrift für Bischof Stohr* 2 (Mainz, 1960).

20. On the schism see M. G. Cheney, "The Recognition of Pope Alexander III: Some Neglected Evidence," *English Historical Review* 84 (1969): 474–97; Robert Somerville, *Pope Alexander III and the Council of Tours (1163): A Study of Ecclesiastical Politics and Institutions in the Twelfth Century* (Berkeley, 1977).

21. "De Catharis," Pitra, 348–51; Raoul Manselli, "Amicizia spirituale ed azione pastorale nella Germania del sec. XII: Ildegarde di Bingen, Elisabetta ed Ecberto di Schönau contro l'eresia catara," *Studi e materiali di storia delle religioni* 38 (1967): fasc. 1–2, 302–13; Gerhard Müller, "Die hl. Hildegard im Kampf mit Häresien ihrer Zeit: Zur Auseinandersetzung mit den Katharern," in Brück, *Hildegard von Bingen,* 171–88.

22. The title *De operatione Dei,* used by Heinrich Schipperges for his German translation, appears in the oldest and best MS. (Ghent, Universiteitsbibliotheek, Cod. 241), but it appears to be a later scribal addition. Contemporary lists of Hildegard's works give the title *Liber divinorum operum.*

23. On this MS. see Anna Masetti and Gigetta dalli Regoli, *Sanctae Hildegardis revelationes, MS. 1942* (Lucca, 1973); Rita Otto, "Zu denen gotischen Miniaturen einer Hildegardhandschrift in Lucca," *Mainzer Zeitschrift* 71–72 (1976/77) pp. 110–26.

24. Albert Derolez, ed., *Guiberti Gemblacensis Epistolae* I, CCCM66 (Turnhout, 1988): 216–57.

25. Epistles 8 and 9, PL 197: 159–61; Dronke, 196–99.

26. Ep. 47, PL 197: 218–21.

27. Barbara Newman, "Hildegard of Bingen: Visions and Validation," *Church History* 54 (1985), pp. 163–75; Christel Meier, "Prophetentum als literarische Existenz: Hildegard von Bingen," in *Deutsche Literatur von Frauen* I, ed. Gisela Brinker-Gabler (Munich, 1988) pp. 76–87.

28. Epistle to Guibert of Gembloux, Pitra, 332–33.

29. Letter to the monks of St. Disibod, Pitra, 354.

30. See Epistles 32, 33, 37, 42, 44, 66, 70, 74, 77, 78, 86, 100, 101, 108, and 112 in PL 197; Sabina Flanagan, "Hildegard of Bingen as Prophet: The Evidence of her Contemporaries," *Tjurunga* 32 (1987): 16–45.

31. Alfred Haverkamp, "Tenxwind von Andernach und Hildegard von Bingen: Zwei 'Weltanschauungen' in der Mitte des 12. Jahrhunderts," in *Institutionen, Kultur und Gesellschaft im Mittelalter: Festschrift für Josef Fleckenstein,* ed. Lutz Fenske, Werner Rösener and Thomas Zotz (Sigmaringen, 1984): 515–48.

32. Jeffrey Russell, *A History of Medieval Christianity: Prophecy and Order* (Arlington Heights, 1968), p. 123.

33. Barbara Newman, *Sister of Wisdom: St. Hildegard's Theology of the Feminine* (Berkeley, 1987), chap. 6.

34. See Charles Czarski, *The Prophecies of St. Hildegard of Bingen*, diss., University of Kentucky, 1983; Kathryn Kerby-Fulton, *The Voice of Honest Indignation: Reformist Apocalypticism and Piers Plowman* (Cambridge, 1989), chap. 1.

35. Elisabeth Gössmann, "Zyklisches und Lineares Geschichtsbewusstsein im Mittelalter: Hildegard von Bingen, Johannes von Salisbury und Andere," in *L'Homme et son univers au moyen âge*, 2 ed. Christian Wénin (Louvain, 1986), pp. 882–92.

36. *Vita* 2.16, PL 197: 102cd. Cf. PL 197: 167b, 185c, 254cd, 1005ab.

37. Cf. Robert Lerner, "Medieval Prophecy and Religious Dissent," *Past & Present* 72 (1976): 3–24.

38. *Scivias* I.1.

39. Christel Meier, "Zwei Modelle von Allegorie im 12. Jahrhundert: Das allegorische Verfahren Hildegards von Bingen und Alans von Lille," in *Formen und Funktionen der Allegorie*, ed. Walter Haug (Stuttgart, 1979), pp. 70–89.

40. The sacramental system was still quite fluid in Hildegard's day, and the notion of seven sacraments not yet universally accepted.

41. Hugh of St. Victor, *On the Sacraments of the Christian Faith* [*De Sacramentis*], trans. Roy Deferrari (Cambridge, MA, 1951).

42. Cf. Heinrich Schipperges, "Das Schöne in der Welt Hildegards von Bingen," *Jahrbuch für Ästhetik und allgemeine Kunstwissenschaft* 4 (1958/59): 83–139.

43. The full-color illustrations are reproduced in the Latin edition of the *Scivias* (CCCM, vols. 43–43a) and in the German translation by Maura Böckeler, *Wisse die Wege* (Salzburg, 8th ed., 1987).

44. Grover Zinn, "Mandala Symbolism and Use in the Mysticism of Hugh of St. Victor," *History of Religions* 12 (1972/73): 317–41.

45. On the miniatures see Josef Schomer, *Die Illustrationen zu dem Visionen der hl. Hildegard als künstlerische Neuschöpfung* (Bonn, 1937); Rita Otto, "Zu einigen Miniaturen einer *Scivias*handschrift des 12. Jahrhunderts," *Mainzer Zeitschrift* 67–68 (1972/73): 128–37; Christel Meier, *Text und Bild im überlieferten Werk Hildegards von Bingen* (Wiesbaden, 1978).

46. Letter of Odo of Soissons, Ep. 127, PL 197: 352a.

47. *A feather on the breath of God:* Sequences and hymns by Abbess Hildegard of Bingen, Gothic Voices (Hyperion A66039); *Geistliche Musik des Mittelalters und der Renaissance*, Instrumentalkreise Helga Weber (TELDEC 66.22387); *Gesänge der hl. Hildegard von Bingen*, Schola der Benediktinerinnenabtei St. Hildegard (Psallite 242/040 479 PET); *Hildegard von Bingen: Symphoniae*, Sequentia (Harmonia Mundi 1C 067-19 9976 1).

48. Peter Dronke, "The Composition of Hildegard of Bingen's *Symphonia*," *Sacris Erudiri* 19 (1969/70): 381–93; "Problemata Hildegardiana," *Mittellateinisches Jahrbuch* 16 (1981): 97–131.

49. Performance edition by Audrey Davidson, *The "Ordo virtutum" of Hildegard of Bingen* (Kalamazoo, 1985); recording by Sequentia, *Hildegard von Bingen: Ordo virtutum* (Harmonia Mundi 20395/96); liner notes include an English translation by Peter Dronke.

50. Robert Potter, "The *Ordo Virtutum:* Ancestor of the English Moralities?" *Comparative Drama* 20 (1986): 201–10.

51. Newman, *Sister of Wisdom*, chap. 3.

52. Kent Kraft, *The Eye Sees More Than the Heart Knows: The Visionary Cosmology of Hildegard of Bingen*, Ph.D. diss. University of Wisconsin, 1977.

53. On the basis of this inconsistency earlier scholars rejected the authenticity of all or part of *Causae et curae:* Hans Liebeschütz, *Das allegorische Weltbild der hl. Hildegard von Bingen* (Leipzig, 1930); Bertha Widmer, *Heilsordnung und Zeitgeschehen in der Mystik Hildegards von Bingen* (Basel, 1955); Heinrich Schipperges, *Heilkunde* (Salzburg, 1957). For more recent views see Dronke, *Women Writers*, 173–79; Newman, *Sister of Wisdom*, chap. 4.

54. Magna Ungrund, *Die metaphysische Anthropologie der hl. Hildegard von Bingen* (Münster, 1938).

55. Charles Singer, "Allegorical Representation of the Synagogue in a Twelfth Century Illuminated Manuscript of Hildegard of Bingen," *Jewish Quarterly Review*, n.s. 5 (1915): 267–88.

56. Heinrich Schipperges, *Die Welt der Engel bei Hildegard von Bingen*, 2d ed. (Salzburg, 1979).

57. On the iconography see Christel Meier, "Zum Verhältnis von Text und Illustration im überlieferten Werk Hildegards von Bingen," in Brück, *Hildegard von Bingen*, 159–69.

58. Heinrich Ostlender, "Dante und Hildegard von Bingen," *Deutsches Dante-Jahrbuch* 27 (1948): 159–70; Ernst Benz, "Die Farbe im Erlebnisbereich der christlichen Vision," *Eranos Jahrbuch* 41 (1972): 273–82; Peter Dronke, "Tradition and Innovation in Medieval Western Colour-Imagery," *Eranos Jahrbuch* 41 (1972): 98–106.

59. Margot Schmidt, "Hildegard von Bingen als Lehrerin des Glaubens: *Speculum* als Symbol des Transzendenten," in Brück, *Hildegard von Bingen*, 95–157.

60. Barbara Maurmann-Bronder, *Die Himmelsrichtungen im Weltbild des Mittelalters: Hildegard von Bingen, Honorius Augustodunensis und andere Autoren* (Munich, 1976).

61. Peter Dronke, "Arbor Caritatis," in *Medieval Studies for J.A.W. Bennett*, ed. P.L. Heyworth (Oxford, 1981), pp. 228–33.

62. Christel Meier, "Die Bedeutung der Farben im Werk Hildegards von Bingen," *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* 6 (1972): 245–355.

63. Hermas, *Pastor, Sources chrétiennes* 53 (Paris, 1958); J.B. Lightfoot, trans., *Excluded Books of the New Testament* (London, 1927), pp. 249–403. See especially Vision III and Similitude IX.

64. Cf. Herrad of Hohenbourg, *Hortus Deliciarum*, reconstructed by Rosalie Green, Michael Evans, et al. (London, 1979): II, 352, Plate 124.

65. Adso of Moutier-en-Der, *De ortu et tempore Antichristi*, ed. D. Verhelst, CCCM 45, trans. John Wright in *The Play of Antichrist* (Toronto, 1967).

66. Cf. Wilhelm Kamlah, *Apokalypse und Geschichtstheologie: Die mittelalterliche Auslegung der Apokalypse vor Joachim von Fiore* (Berlin, 1935); H.D. Rauh, *Das Bild des Antichrist im Mittelalter* (Munich, 1973); Richard Emmerson, *Antichrist in the Middle Ages: A Study of Medieval Apocalypticism, Art, and Literature* (Seattle, 1981).

67. Peter Dronke, "Hildegard of Bingen as Poetess and Dramatist," in *Poetic Individuality in the Middle Ages* (Oxford, 1970), pp. 169–79.

68. The edition of Führkötter and Carlevaris (CCCM, 43–43a) provides meticulous annotation and comprehensive indices of scriptural and liturgical texts, patristic and medieval authors and key words in the *Scivias*.

69. The most ambitious source studies are those of Hans Liebeschütz, *Das allegorische Weltbild der hl. Hildegard von Bingen* (Leipzig, 1930); and Bertha Widmer, *Heilsordnung und Zeitgeschehen in der Mystik Hildegards von Bingen* (Basel, 1955).

Recent writers, with the notable exception of Peter Dronke, have been more skeptical about the extent of Hildegard's classical learning.

70. According to her *Vita* (II.1), Hildegard disputed with Jews and tried to convert them: PL 197: 105b.

71. Heinrich Schipperges notes the affinities but does not believe that either Hildegard or the Chartrian poets were acquainted with the new Arabic learning: "Einflüsse arabischer Medizin auf die Mikrokosmosliteratur des 12. Jahrhunderts," in *Antike und Orient im Mittelalter*, ed. Paul Wilpert (Berlin, 1962), pp. 129–53.

72. Valerie Flint, "The Place and Purpose of the Works of Honorius Augustodunensis," *Revue bénédictine* 87 (1977): 97–127.

73. John Van Engen, *Rupert of Deutz* (Berkeley, 1983).

74. Cf. Wolfgang Beinert, *Die Kirche—Gottes Heil in der Welt: Die Lehre von der Kirche nach den Schriften des Rupert von Deutz, Honorius Augustodunensis und Gerhoch von Reichersberg* (Münster, 1973).

75. On this influential work, which Hildegard certainly knew, see Matthäus Bernards, *Speculum virginum: Geistigkeit und Seelenleben der Frau im Hochmittelalter* (Cologne, 1955); an edition by Jutta Seyfarth is forthcoming in the CCCM series.

76. Friedhelm Jürgensmeier, "St. Hildegard 'Prophetissa Teutonica,'" in Brück, *Hildegard von Bingen*, pp. 273–93.

77. There is much recent work on this subject. For overviews of the tradition see Dronke, *Women Writers;* Petroff, *Medieval Women's Visionary Literature;* Katharina Wilson, ed., *Medieval Women Writers* (Athens, GA, 1984). On Hildegard and the theme of gender see Elisabeth Gössmann, "*Ipsa enim quasi domus sapientiae*: Zur frauenbezogenen Spiritualität Hildegards von Bingen," in *Eine Höhe, über die nichts geht*, ed. Margot Schmidt and Dieter Bauer (Stuttgart, 1986); Caroline Bynum, "'. . . And Woman His Humanity': Female Imagery in the Religious Writing of the Later Middle Ages," in *Gender and Religion: On the Complexity of Symbols*, ed. Caroline Bynum, Paula Richman, and Stevan Harrell (Boston, 1986): 257–88; Newman, *Sister of Wisdom*, chap. 7.

78. Josef Loos, "Hildegard von Bingen und Elisabeth von Schönau," in Brück, *Hildegard von Bingen*, pp. 263–72; Kathryn Kerby-Fulton and Dyan Elliott, "Self-Image and the Visionary Role in Two Letters from the Correspondence of Elizabeth of Schönau and Hildegard of Bingen," *Vox Benedictina* 2 (1985): 204–23; Elisabeth Gössmann, "Das Menschenbild der Hildegard von Bingen und Elisabeth von Schönau . . . ," in *Frauenmystik im Mittelalter*, ed. Peter Dinzelbacher and Dieter Bauer (Ostfildern, 1985), pp. 24–47.

79. *Annales Palidenses* ad 1158, MGH.SS. 16, p. 90.

80. For instance, Elisabeth supported Barbarossa's candidate, Victor IV, in the German papal schism.

81. While Volmar was initially Hildegard's teacher and served as provost of her convent, in the second half of her life she exercised an unmistakable intellectual and spiritual dominance. Elisabeth, on the other hand, subordinated herself humbly to her brother and abbot, Ekbert, whose guidance shaped the course of her visions.

82. About 150 manuscripts of Elisabeth's works survive, as opposed to about three dozen of Hildegard's.

83. The work is unedited except for fragments in Pitra, 483–88.

84. Lodewijk van Velthem, *Voortzetting van den Spiegel Historiael*, Book VII (1316), vol. 3, ed. Herman vander Linden and Willem de Vreese (Brussels, 1938); Ernest McDonnell, *The Beguines and Beghards in Medieval Culture* (New Brunswick, 1954), pp. 292–94. Henry of Langenstein may have been the first to call Hildegard the

"German Sibyl": G. Sommerfeldt, "Die Prophetien der hl. Hildegard von Bingen in einem Schreiben des Magisters Heinrich von Langenstein (1383)," *Historisches Jahrbuch* 30 (1909): 43–61.

85. *Chronicon Hirsaugiense* ad 1149, 1150, 1160, 1180; *Chronicon Sponheimense* ad 1136, 1148–1150, 1179, 1498; *Catalogus illustrium virorum* [sic] *Germaniae*, p. 138; *De scriptoribus ecclesiasticis*, p. 281; all in *Opera historica*, ed. Marquand Freher (Frankfurt, 1601; rpt. 1966).

86. Widmer, *Heilsordnung und Zeitgeschehen*, 260. In 1680 Jerome Baptista, Lord Bishop of Albarazin, published a pamphlet entitled "The Nunns Prophesie, or, The True, Wonderful, & Remarkable Prophesie of St. Hildegard, First Nunn, and then Abess: concerning the Rise & Downfall of those Fire Brands of Europe, the whole Order of Jesuits."

87. Johann Wilhelm Preger, *Geschichte der deutschen Mystik im Mittelalter* I (Leipzig, 1874). J.P. Schmelzeis, in *Das Leben und Wirken der hl. Hildegardis* (Freiburg im Breisgau, 1879), maintained that Hildegard transcribed her Latin writings directly from heaven without understanding a word of them.

88. The epoch-making work was the historical and paleographic study of Marianna Schrader and Adelgundis Führkötter, *Die Echtheit des Schrifttums der hl. Hildegard von Bingen* (Cologne, 1956), together with the studies by Liebeschütz, Widmer, Schipperges and Dronke already cited.

89. This is the image promulgated in the publications of Bear & Company: Gabriele Uhlein, *Meditations With Hildegard of Bingen* (Santa Fe, 1982); Matthew Fox, *Illuminations of Hildegard of Bingen* (Santa Fe, 1985); and translations of the *Scivias* by Bruce Hozeski (Santa Fe, 1986), and of the *Liber divinorum operum* by Robert Cunningham (Santa Fe, 1987).

Translator's Note

Scivias, St. Hildegard's great work of religious genius, is composed of a relatively brief Prologue (Declaration) and three Books, each Book being made up of several Visions. That Hildegard saw each Book as a unit is clear both from the climactic movement of each of her three main parts and from the fact that she employs three closing sentences of a poetic character. By the first of these she concludes all six of the Visions of Book One; by the second, all seven of the Visions of Book Two; and by the third, all thirteen of the Visions of Book Three.

Every Vision contains a varying number of subdivisions, unequal in length, indicated by numbered subtitles. Certain illustrations in the twelfth-century manuscript (reproduced in colors and gold both in Böckeler's German translation and in the Brepols 1978 critical Latin text, and in black and white in this translation) show that Hildegard herself wanted the subdivisions and corresponding subtitles. My translation therefore retains both subdivisions and corresponding subtitles; to save space, I have abridged the more lengthy subtitles.

For each separate Vision Hildegard uses the following literary procedure: First she gives the reader a poetic and obscure account of what she "saw," then she goes on to repeat and develop each sentence or phrase of the preliminary account, disclosing gradually the Vision's deep significance. And yet she never says, "I have outlined all the points, and now I will repeat and develop them." Therefore, for the assistance of the reader, italics are used in each vision both for her initial account and for her repetitions of each sentence or phrase thereof in her subsequent explanation.

Because of the extreme length of *Scivias,* I have reduced explanations, inserted between square brackets, to a minimum. Hildegard's three poetic expressions—"chrism makers" (*pigmentarii*) for "bishops and priests," "living fragrance" (*vivens odor*) for "monk," and "vowing the way of secret regeneration" (*vovens iter secretae regenerationis*) for "making monastic profession"—I translated literally only in the preliminary occurrences, reverting thereafter to the commonplace terms.

Mother Columba Hart, O.S.B.

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

Co-Translator's Note

My contribution to this translation has been in two main areas. First, while remaining faithful to the meaning of the Latin, I have rendered it somewhat less literal to make it read better in English. In Book Three, Vision Thirteen, where Hildegard breaks into poetry to express the songs sung in heaven, I have carried out Mother Columba's decision to do them in poetic rather than prose form in English: I have put them into a very loose pentameter, not because that corresponds to any discernible meter in the original but to reflect Hildegard's poetic intentions.

Second, I have tried to correct a practice in the English of the last few hundred years that is not justified by the Latin. English has tended to translate the Latin *homo*, "human being," by the word *man*, which increasingly in our time is understood to refer exclusively to males. Latin has the word *homo* for "person," and *vir* and *mulier* for "man" and "woman"; because its pronouns agree in gender with the nouns they modify rather than with the beings they express, it is possible to write for long stretches in Latin without any suggestion of an exclusionary "his" or "her," which is unavoidable in English. Hildegard is writing for and about both men and women most of the time in this work and writes of them as "humans"; when she represents God speaking to her, He calls her not "O mulier" but "O homo," "O human being." Consequently, with some slight loss in resonance in the English because we are used to grand rhetoric about "men" and "mankind," I have translated the various forms of *homo* by "person," "humans," "people" or "humanity" wherever possible. It has sometimes been necessary to use a singular, personal collective noun for Humanity, in which case I have used the capitalized "Man"; otherwise, wherever the words "man" and "woman" appear here, they reflect Hildegard's talk of the different situations of *viri* and *mulieres* in the original.

Jane Bishop

HILDEGARD of BINGEN

SCIVIAS

THE SEERESS

Declaration

These Are True Visions Flowing from God

And behold! In the forty-third year of my earthly course, as I was gazing with great fear and trembling attention at a heavenly vision, I saw a great splendor in which resounded a voice from Heaven, saying to me,

"O fragile human, ashes of ashes, and filth of filth! Say and write what you see and hear. But since you are timid in speaking, and simple in expounding, and untaught in writing, speak and write these things not by a human mouth, and not by the understanding of human invention, and not by the requirements of human composition, but as you see and hear them on high in the heavenly places in the wonders of God. Explain these things in such a way that the hearer, receiving the words of his instructor, may expound them in those words, according to that will, vision and instruction. Thus therefore, O human, speak these things that you see and hear. And write them not by yourself or any other human being, but by the will of Him Who knows, sees and disposes all things in the secrets of His mysteries."

And again I heard the voice from Heaven saying to me, "Speak therefore of these wonders, and, being so taught, write them and speak."

It happened that, in the eleven hundred and forty-first year of the Incarnation of the Son of God, Jesus Christ, when I was forty-two years and seven months old, Heaven was opened and a fiery light of exceeding brilliance came and permeated my whole brain, and inflamed my whole heart and my whole breast, not like a burning but like a warming flame, as the sun warms anything its rays touch. And immediately I knew the meaning of the exposition of the Scriptures, namely the Psalter, the Gospel and the other catholic volumes of both the Old and the New Testaments, though I did not have the interpretation of the words of their texts or the division of the syllables or the knowledge of cases or tenses. But I had sensed in myself

wonderfully the power and mystery of secret and admirable visions from my childhood—that is, from the age of five—up to that time, as I do now. This, however, I showed to no one except a few religious persons who were living in the same manner as I; but meanwhile, until the time when God by His grace wished it to be manifested, I concealed it in quiet silence. But the visions I saw I did not perceive in dreams, or sleep, or delirium, or by the eyes of the body, or by the ears of the outer self, or in hidden places; but I received them while awake and seeing with a pure mind and the eyes and ears of the inner self, in open places, as God willed it. How this might be is hard for mortal flesh to understand.

But when I had passed out of childhood and had reached the age of full maturity mentioned above, I heard a voice from Heaven saying, "I am the Living Light, Who illuminates the darkness. The person [Hildegard] whom I have chosen and whom I have miraculously stricken as I willed, I have placed among great wonders, beyond the measure of the ancient people who saw in Me many secrets; but I have laid her low on the earth, that she might not set herself up in arrogance of mind. The world has had in her no joy or lewdness or use in worldly things, for I have withdrawn her from impudent boldness, and she feels fear and is timid in her works. For she suffers in her inmost being and in the veins of her flesh; she is distressed in mind and sense and endures great pain of body, because no security has dwelt in her, but in all her undertakings she has judged herself guilty. For I have closed up the cracks in her heart that her mind may not exalt itself in pride or vainglory, but may feel fear and grief rather than joy and wantonness. Hence in My love she searched in her mind as to where she could find someone who would run in the path of salvation. And she found such a one and loved him [the monk Volmar of Disibodenberg], knowing that he was a faithful man, working like herself on another part of the work that leads to Me. And, holding fast to him, she worked with him in great zeal so that My hidden miracles might be revealed. And she did not seek to exalt herself above herself but with many sighs bowed to him whom she found in the ascent of humility and the intention of good will.

"O human, who receives these things meant to manifest what is hidden not in the disquiet of deception but in the purity of simplicity, write, therefore, the things you see and hear."

But I, though I saw and heard these things, refused to write for a long time through doubt and bad opinion and the diversity of human words, not with stubbornness but in the exercise of humility, until, laid low by the scourge of God, I fell upon a bed of sickness; then, compelled at last by many illnesses, and by the witness of a certain noble maiden of good conduct [the nun Richardis of Stade] and of that man whom I had secretly sought and found, as mentioned above, I set my hand to the writing. While I was doing

it, I sensed, as I mentioned before, the deep profundity of scriptural exposition; and, raising myself from illness by the strength I received, I brought this work to a close—though just barely—in ten years.

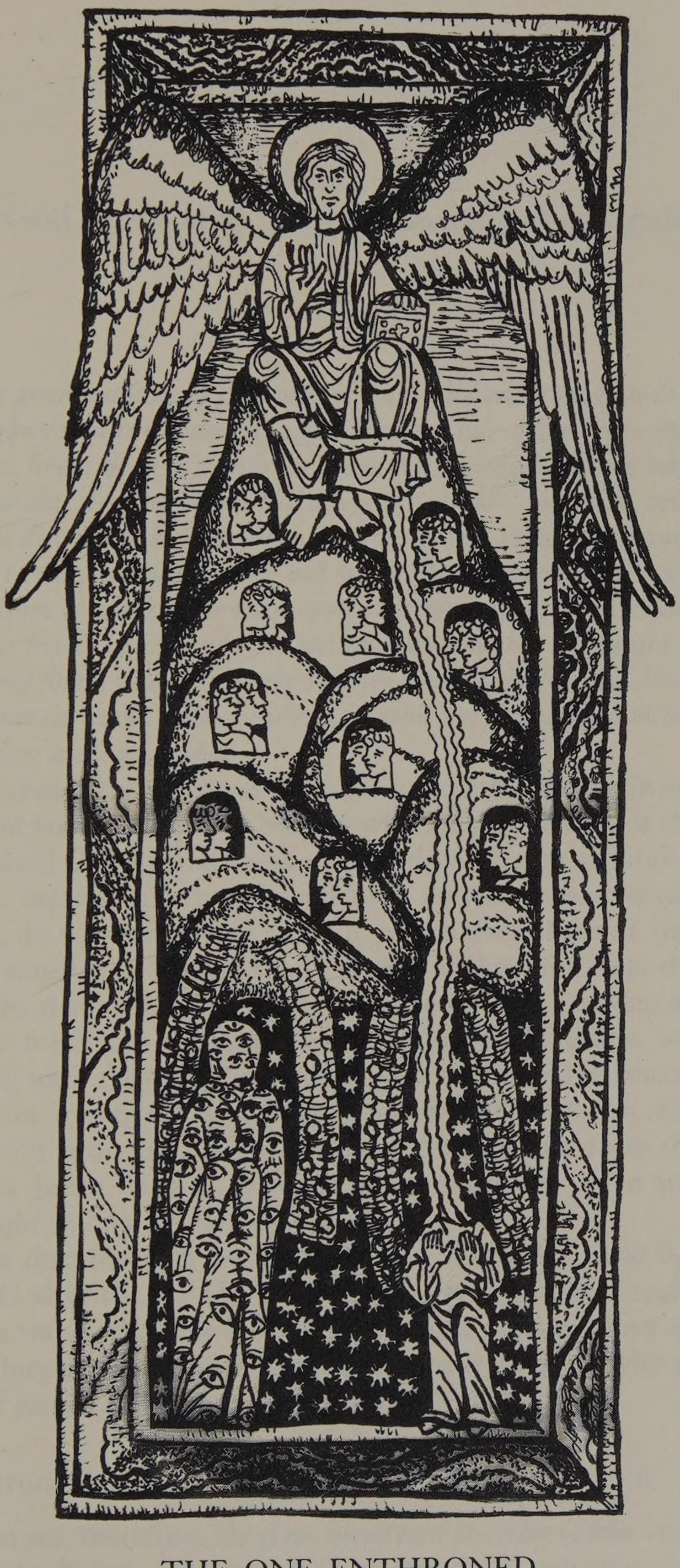
These visions took place and these words were written in the days of Henry, Archbishop of Mainz, and of Conrad, King of the Romans, and of Cuno, Abbot of Disibodenberg, under Pope Eugenius.

And I spoke and wrote these things not by the invention of my heart or that of any other person, but as by the secret mysteries of God I heard and received them in the heavenly places.

And again I heard a voice from Heaven saying to me, "Cry out therefore, and write thus!"

Book One

THE CREATOR AND CREATION



THE ONE ENTHRONED

VISION ONE
God Enthroned Shows Himself to Hildegard

I saw a great mountain the color of iron, and enthroned on it One of such great glory that it blinded my sight. On each side of him there extended a soft shadow, like a wing of wondrous breadth and length. Before him, at the foot of the mountain, stood an image full of eyes on all sides, in which, because of those eyes, I could discern no human form. In front of this image stood another, a child wearing a tunic of subdued color but white shoes, upon whose head such glory descended from the One enthroned upon that mountain that I could not look at its face. But from the One who sat enthroned upon that mountain many living sparks sprang forth, which flew very sweetly around the images. Also, I perceived in this mountain many little windows, in which appeared human heads, some of subdued colors and some white.

And behold, He Who was enthroned upon that mountain cried out in a strong, loud voice saying, "O human, who are fragile dust of the earth and ashes of ashes! Cry out and speak of the origin of pure salvation until those people are instructed, who, though they see the inmost contents of the Scriptures, do not wish to tell them or preach them, because they are lukewarm and sluggish in serving God's justice. Unlock for them the enclosure of mysteries that they, timid as they are, conceal in a hidden and fruitless field. Burst forth into a fountain of abundance and overflow with mystical knowledge, until they who now think you contemptible because of Eve's transgression are stirred up by the flood of your irrigation. For you have received your profound insight not from humans, but from the lofty and tremendous Judge on high, where this calmness will shine strongly with glorious light among the shining ones.

"Arise therefore, cry out and tell what is shown to you by the strong power of God's help, for He Who rules every creature in might and kindness floods those who fear Him and serve Him in sweet love and humility with the glory of heavenly enlightenment and leads those who persevere in the way of justice to the joys of the Eternal Vision."

1 The strength and stability of God's eternal Kingdom

As you see, therefore, *the great mountain the color of iron* symbolizes the strength and stability of the eternal Kingdom of God, which no fluctuation of

mutability can destroy; and *the One enthroned upon it of such great glory that it blinds your sight* is the One in the kingdom of beatitude Who rules the whole world with celestial divinity in the brilliance of unfading serenity, but is incomprehensible to human minds. But that *on each side of him there extends a soft shadow like a wing of wonderful breadth and length* shows that both in admonition and in punishment ineffable justice displays sweet and gentle protection and perseveres in true equity.

2 Concerning fear of the Lord

And before him at the foot of the mountain stands an image full of eyes on all sides. For the Fear of the Lord stands in God's presence with humility and gazes on the Kingdom of God, surrounded by the clarity of a good and just intention, exercising her zeal and stability among humans. And thus *you can discern no human form in her on account of those eyes.* For by the acute sight of her contemplation she counters all forgetfulness of God's justice, which people often feel in their mental tedium, so no inquiry by weak mortals eludes her vigilance.

3 Concerning those who are poor in spirit

And so *before this image appears another image, that of a child, wearing a tunic of subdued color but white shoes.* For when the Fear of the Lord leads, they who are poor in spirit follow; for the Fear of the Lord holds fast in humble devotion to the blessedness of poverty of spirit, which does not seek boasting or elation of heart, but loves simplicity and sobriety of mind, attributing its just works not to itself but to God in pale subjection, wearing, as it were, a tunic of subdued color and faithfully following the serene footsteps of the Son of God. *Upon her head descends such glory from the One enthroned upon that mountain that you cannot look at her face;* because He Who rules every created being imparts the power and strength of this blessedness by the great clarity of His visitation, and weak, mortal thought cannot grasp His purpose, since He Who possesses celestial riches submitted himself humbly to poverty.

4 They who fear God and love poverty of spirit are the guardians of virtues

But *from the One Who is enthroned upon that mountain many living sparks go forth, which fly about those images with great sweetness.* This means that many exceedingly strong virtues come forth from Almighty God, darting fire in divine glory; these ardently embrace and captivate those who truly

fear God and who faithfully love poverty of spirit, surrounding them with their help and protection.

5 The aims of human acts cannot be hidden from God's knowledge

Wherefore *in this mountain you see many little windows, in which appear human heads, some of subdued color and some white*. For in the most high and profound and perspicuous knowledge of God the aims of human acts cannot be concealed or hidden. Most often they display both lukewarmness and purity, since people now slumber in guilt, weary in their hearts and in their deeds, and now awaken and keep watch in honor. Solomon bears witness to this for Me, saying:

6 Solomon on this subject

"The slothful hand has brought about poverty, but the hand of the industrious man prepares riches" [Proverbs 10:4]; which means, a person makes himself weak and poor when he will not work justice, or avoid wickedness, or pay a debt, remaining idle in the face of the wonders of the works of beatitude. But one who does strong works of salvation, running in the way of truth, obtains the upwelling fountain of glory, by which he prepares himself most precious riches on earth and in Heaven.

Therefore, whoever has knowledge in the Holy Spirit and wings of faith, let this one not ignore My admonition but taste it, embrace it and receive it in his soul.

MAN'S FALL

VISION TWO
Creation and the Fall

Then I saw as it were a great multitude of very bright living lamps, which received fiery brilliance and acquired an unclouded splendor. And behold! A pit of great breadth and depth appeared, with a mouth like the mouth of a well, emitting fiery smoke with great stench, from which a loathsome cloud spread out and touched a deceitful, vein-shaped form. And, in a region of brightness, it blew upon a white cloud that had come forth from a beautiful human form and contained within itself many and many stars, and so doing, cast out both the white cloud and the human form from that region. When this was done, a luminous splendor surrounded that region, and all the elements of the world, which before had existed in great calm, were turned to the greatest agitation and displayed horrible terrors. And again I heard Him Who had spoken to me before, saying:

1 No unjust impulse takes the blessed angels from the love and praise of God

No impulse of injustice makes those withdraw in terror who follow God with faithful devotion and burn with worthy love through affection for Him, from the glory of heavenly beatitude; while they who serve God merely in pretence not only fail to advance to greater things but, by just judgment, are cast out from the things they erroneously suppose they possess. This is shown by the *great multitude of very bright living lamps;* they are the vast army of heavenly spirits, shining in the blessed life and living in great beauty and adornment, because when they were created by God they did not grasp at proud exaltation but strongly persisted in divine love. For, *receiving fiery brilliance, they acquired an unclouded splendor,* because when Lucifer and his followers attempted to rebel against the supreme Creator, they, with zeal for God in his and his followers' downfall, clothed themselves in the vigilance of divine love, while the others, not wishing to know God, embraced the torpor of ignorance. In what way? At the fall of the Devil great praise burst forth from these angelic spirits who persevered in rectitude with God, because with keenest sight they knew that God continues immovable, without any change of any mutability in His power, so that no warrior can ever conquer

Him. And thus, burning in His love and persevering in righteousness, they despised all the dust of injustice.

2 Lucifer, for pride in his beauty and power, was cast forth from Heaven

But Lucifer, who because of his pride was cast forth from celestial glory, was so great at the moment of his creation that he felt no defect either in his beauty or in his strength. Hence when he contemplated his beauty, and when he considered in himself the power of his strength, he discovered pride, which promised him that he might begin what he wished, because he could achieve what he had begun. And, seeing a place where he thought he could live, wanting to display his beauty and power there, he spoke thus within himself about God: "I wish to shine there as He does here!" And all his army assented, saying, "What you wish we also wish." And when, elated with pride, he tried to achieve what he had conceived, the jealousy of the Lord, reaching out in fiery blackness, cast him down with all his retinue, so that they were made burning instead of shining and black instead of fair. Why did this happen?

3 God would have been unjust if He had not cast them down

If God had not cast down their presumption, He would have been unjust, since He would have cherished those who wished to divide the wholeness of divinity. But He cast them down and reduced their impiety to nothing, as He removes from the sight of His glory all who try to oppose themselves to Him, as My servant Job shows when he says:

4 Words of Job on this subject

"The lamp of the wicked shall be put out and a deluge shall come upon them; and He shall distribute the sorrows of His wrath. They shall be chaff before the face of the wind, and sparks scattered by the whirlwind" [Job 21:17–18]. This means the flagrant filth of wanton wickedness that emerges from false prosperity, like a distinguishing mark on the carnal will of those who do not fear God but spurn Him in perverse rage, disdaining to know that anyone can conquer them, while in the fire of their ferocity they want to consume whatever they oppose. In the hour of God's vengeance this filth will be trodden underfoot like dirt; and by the supreme judgment these impious ones will be cast down in wrath by all who are under heaven, because they are harmful both to God and to humans. Therefore, since God does not allow them to have what they want, they are scattered everywhere

among people, tormented by pain in the rage of their madness, because they burn to possess what God does not allow them to devour. And since they withdraw in this way from God, they become entirely useless, able to do nothing good for either God or humanity, cut off from the seed of life by the foreseeing eye of God's contemplation. For which reason they are given over to misery, wasting themselves in the flat taste of evil fame, since they do not receive the downpouring rain of the Holy Spirit.

5 On Hell, which in its voracity keeps souls swallowed up

But *the pit of great breadth and depth* that appeared to you is Hell, having within it, as you see, the breadth of vices and the depth of losses. It has a mouth indeed like the mouth of a well, emitting a fiery smoke with great stench, because in its voracity to swallow up souls, it shows them sweetness and gentleness, and with perverse deception leads them to the torments of perdition, where rises a burning fire with black smoke pouring out and a boiling, deadly stench; these dire torments were prepared for the Devil and his followers, who turned away from the Supreme Good, not wishing to know or understand it. Therefore they are outcast from all good, not because they did not know it, but because in their great pride they despised it. What does this mean?

6 In the casting down of the Devil Hell was created

In the casting down of the Devil this exterior darkness, full of all kinds of pains, was created; for these evil spirits, in contrast to the glory that had been prepared for them, were subject to the misery of many punishments, and in contrast to the brightness they had had, endured the thickest darkness. How? When the proud angel raised himself on high like a snake, he received the prison of Hell, because it could not be that anyone should prevail over God. For how could two hearts possibly exist in one breast? Likewise, there could not be two gods in Heaven. But since the Devil and his followers chose proud presumption, therefore he found the pit of Hell prepared for him. So also the people who imitate them in their actions become sharers of their pains, according to their deserts.

7 Gehenna is for the impenitent, other torments for those who can be saved

Some souls, having reached the point of damnation, are rejected from the knowledge of God, and therefore they shall have the pains of Hell without the consolation of deliverance. But some, whom God has not con-

signed to oblivion, experience a higher process and undergo purgation of the sins into which they have fallen, and at last feel the loosing of their bonds and are delivered into rest. How is this? Gehenna is ready for those who have impenitently forgotten God in their hearts, but other torments for those who, though they perform bad works, do not persevere in them to the end, but at last, groaning, look back to God. For this reason let the faithful flee from the Devil and love God, casting away evil works and adorning good works with the beauty of penitence; as My servant Ezekiel, inspired by Me, urges, saying:

8 Words of Ezekiel on this subject

"Be converted, and do penance for all your iniquities; and iniquity shall not be your ruin" [Ezekiel 18:30]. That is to say: O you people! who till now have wallowed in sin, remember your name of Christians, be converted to the way of salvation, and perform all your works in a gush of penitence, who previously had innumerable vices and committed many crimes. Thus as you rise from your evil habits, that iniquity by which you had been soiled will not sink you deep in the ruin of death, since you cast it off in the day of your salvation. Therefore the angels will rejoice over you, because you have abandoned the Devil and run to God, knowing Him better in your good actions than you did when you endured the mockery of the ancient seducer.

9 The Devil's fraud, which deceived Adam through the serpent

That *a loathsome cloud spread out from the pit and touched a deceitful, vein-shaped form* means that from the bottom of perdition the Devil's fraud came forth and invaded the serpent, who already bore within itself the crime of fraudulent intention, in order to deceive humanity. In what way? Because, when the Devil saw Man in paradise, he cried out with great aversion, saying, "Oh! who touches me in the mansion of true beatitude?" And so he knew that he had not yet perfected in any creature the malice he had within himself, but seeing Adam and Eve walk with childlike innocence in the garden of delight, with great wonder he rose up to deceive them through the serpent. Why? Because he understood that the serpent more than any other animal resembled him and was eager to accomplish by its deceitfulness what he could not do openly in his own form. So when he saw Adam and Eve turn away in soul and body from the forbidden tree, he understood that they were obeying a divine precept, and that in the first work they began he could very easily throw them down.

10 Only from Eve's reply did the Devil know the tree was forbidden

For he would not have known that this tree was forbidden them unless he had proved it by guileful questioning and by their answers. Wherefore *in that bright region he blew upon a white cloud, which had come forth from a beautiful human form and contained within itself many and many stars* because, in that place of delight, Eve—whose soul was innocent, for she had been raised out of innocent Adam, bearing in her body the whole multitude of the human race, shining with God's preordination—was invaded by the Devil through the seduction of the serpent for her own downfall. Why was this? Because he knew that the susceptibility of the woman would be more easily conquered than the strength of the man; and he saw that Adam burned so vehemently in his holy love for Eve that if he, the Devil, conquered Eve, Adam would do whatever she said to him. Hence the Devil *cast out both the cloud and the human form from that region* because that ancient seducer cast out Eve and Adam by his deception from the seat of blessedness and thrust them into the darkness of destruction. How? By first misleading Eve, so that she might flatter and caress Adam and thus win his assent, since she more than any other creature could lead Adam to disobedience, having been made from his rib. Thus woman very quickly overthrows man, if he does not hate her and easily accepts her words.

11 What things are to be observed and avoided in marriage

Because a mature woman was given not to a little boy but to a mature man, namely Adam, so now a mature woman must be married to a man when he has reached the full age of fertility, just as due cultivation is given to a tree when it begins to put forth flowers. For Eve was formed from a rib by Adam's ingrafted heat and vigor, and therefore now it is by the strength and heat of a man that a woman receives the semen to bring a child into the world. For the man is the sower, but the woman is the recipient of the seed. Wherefore a wife is under the power of her husband because the strength of the man is to the susceptibility of the woman as the hardness of stone is to the softness of earth.

But the first woman's being formed from man means the joining of wife to husband. And thus it is to be understood: This union must not be vain or done in forgetfulness of God, because He Who brought forth the woman from the man instituted this union honorably and virtuously, forming flesh from flesh. Wherefore, as Adam and Eve were one flesh, so now also a man and woman become one flesh in a union of holy love for the multiplication of

the human race. And therefore there should be perfect love in these two as there was in those first two. For Adam could have blamed his wife because by her advice she brought him death, but nonetheless he did not dismiss her as long as he lived in this world, because he knew she had been given to him by divine power. Therefore, because of perfect love, let a man not leave his wife except for the reason the faithful Church allows. And let them never separate, unless both with one mind want to contemplate My Son, and say with burning love for Him: "We want to renounce the world and follow Him Who suffered for our sake!" But if these two disagree as to whether they should renounce the world for one devotion, then let them by no means separate from each other, since, just as the blood cannot be separated from the flesh as long as the spirit remains in the flesh, so the husband and wife cannot be divided from each other but must walk together in one will.

But if either husband or wife breaks the law by fornication, and it is made public either by themselves or by their priests, they shall undergo the just censure of the spiritual magisterium. For the husband shall complain of the wife, or the wife of the husband, about the sin against their union before the Church and its prelates, according to the justice of God; but not so that the husband or wife can seek another marriage; either they shall stay together in righteous union, or they shall both abstain from such unions, as the discipline of church practice shows. And they shall not tear each other to pieces by viperous rending, but they shall love with pure love, since both man and woman could not exist without having been conceived in such a bond, as My friend Paul witnesses when he says:

12 Words of the apostle on this subject

"As the woman is of the man, so is the man for the woman; but all are from God" [1 Corinthians 11:12]. Which is to say: Woman was created for the sake of man, and man for the sake of woman. As she is from the man, the man is also from her, lest they dissent from each other in the unity of making their children; for they should work as one in one work, as the air and the wind intermingle in their labor. In what way? The air is moved by the wind, and the wind is mingled with the air, so that in their movement all verdant things are subject to their influence. What does this mean? The wife must cooperate with the husband and the husband with the wife in making children. Therefore the greatest crime and wickedest act is to make by fornication a division in the days of creating children, since the husband and wife cut off their own blood from its rightful place, sending it to an alien place. They will certainly incur the deceit of the Devil and the wrath of God, because they have transgressed that bond God ordained for them. Woe to them, therefore, if their sins are not forgiven! But although, as has been shown, the husband

and wife work together in their children, nevertheless the husband and the wife and all other creatures come from the divine disposition and ordination, since God made them according to His will.

13 Why before the Incarnation some men had several wives

Before the Incarnation of My Son, however, certain men among the ancient people had several wives at once, as they wished; they had not yet heard the open prohibition of My Son, Who when He came into the world showed that the right fruit of this union of husband and wife as long as they live is the fruit manifest in the union of Adam and Eve, a union to be exercised not by the will of Man but by the fear of God. For it is better to have this right union, by the arrangement of the prudence of the Church, than to crave fornication; but you humans ignore this, and pursue your lusts not only like humans but like beasts.

But let there be right faith and pure love of the knowledge of God between husband and wife lest their seed be polluted by the Devil's art and divine vengeance strike them because they are biting and tearing each other to pieces and sowing their seed inhumanly with the wantonness of beasts. In such a case jealousy will torture them like a viper, and without the fear of God and without human discipline a defiled excess of seed will be stored up in them, and often, by the just judgment of God, this perversity of theirs will be chastised by having those born of them deprived of limbs and of health in their lives; unless I receive their penitence and show Myself propitious to them. For if any shall call upon Me in penitence for their sins, I will accept their penitence for the love of My Son; for if anyone lifts a finger to Me in penitence, that is, reaches out to Me in penitence and groaning in his heart, saying, "I have sinned, Lord, before You!" My Son, Who is the Priest of priests, will show Me that penitence; for penitence which is offered to priests for the love of My Son obtains the purgation of the sinners. Therefore, people who worthily do penance escape from the jaws of the Devil, who, trying to swallow the hook of divine power, has grievously wounded his jaw; and now, therefore, faithful souls pass out of perdition and arrive at salvation. How?

Because the priests at the altar, invoking My name, will receive the confession of the peoples and show them the remedy of salvation. So, in order to find God propitious, let them not contaminate their seed by various vices, since those who emit their semen in fornication or adultery render their children, born of them thus, unsound. How? Can he who mixes mud or ordure with pure clay make a lasting vessel? Likewise, will he who contaminates his semen in fornication or adultery ever beget strong sons? But many work in different ways in their inmost being, and many of these become

prudent toward the world and toward God. And with these the heavenly Jerusalem is filled; deserting vice and loving virtue, they imitate My Son in chastity and in great works, carrying in their bodies, as much as they are able, His martyrdom.

But when I do not wish a person to have children, I take away the virile power of the semen, that it may not coagulate in the mother's womb; so also I deny the earth the power to bear fruit when by My just judgment I will to do so. But do you wonder, O human, why I let children be born in adultery and similar crimes? My judgment is just. For, since the fall of Adam, I have not found in human seed the justice that should have been in it, for the Devil drove out this justice by the taste of the fruit. Therefore I sent My Son into the world born of a virgin, so that by His blood, in which there was no carnal pollution, He might take away from the Devil those spoils that he had carried off from humanity.

14 No human or angel but only the Son of God could deliver Man

For neither a human being, conceived in sin, nor an angel, who has no covering of flesh, could save Man, wallowing in sins and laboring under the heaviness of the flesh, from the power of the Devil; but only He Who, coming without sin, with a pure and sinless body, delivered him by His Passion. Therefore, though human beings are born in sin, I nevertheless gather them into My heavenly kingdom when they faithfully seek it. For no wickedness can take My elect from me, as Wisdom testifies, saying:

15 Words of Wisdom on this subject

"The souls of the just are in the hand of God; and the torment of death shall not touch them" [Wisdom 3:1]. Which is to say: The souls of those who embrace the path of rectitude with devout affection are aided by the celestial Helper; so that, because of the good works by which in the height of justice they strive for Heaven, the torment of perdition does not break them, for the true Light strengthens them in the fear and love of God. But after Adam and Eve were driven out of the place of delight, they knew in themselves the work of conceiving and bearing children. And falling thus from disobedience into death, when they knew they could sin, they discovered sin's sweetness. And in this way, turning My rightful institution into sinful lust, although they should have known that the commotion in their veins was not for the sweetness of sin but for the love of children, by the Devil's suggestion they changed it to lechery; and, losing the innocence of the act of begetting, they yielded it to sin. This was not accomplished without the Devil's persuasion; for that purpose he sent forth his darts, and it did not come to pass without

his suggestion; as he said, "My strength is in human conception, and therefore humanity is mine!" And, seeing that if Man consented to him he would become a sharer in his punishment, he said again within himself: "All iniquities are against Most Powerful God, since He is certainly not unjust." And that deceiver put this as a great seal on his heart, that Man, who had consented to him of his own accord, could not be taken away from him.

Therefore I took secret counsel within Myself, to send My Son for the redemption of humanity, that Man might be restored to the heavenly Jerusalem. And no iniquity could withstand this counsel, for My Son, coming into the world, gathered unto himself all who, forsaking sin, chose to hear and imitate Him. I am just and righteous, not willing the iniquity that you, O human, embrace when you know you can do evil. For Lucifer and Man each tried at the beginning of their creation to rebel against Me and could not stand firm, but fell away from good and chose evil. But Lucifer laid hold of total evil and rejected all good, and did not taste the good at all, but fell into death. Adam, however, tasted the good when he accepted obedience, but he longed for evil, and in his desire accomplished it by his disobedience to God. Why this happened is not for you, O human, to investigate; mortal cannot know what there was before the creation of the world or what may happen after the last day, but God alone knows this, except insofar as He permits His elect to know it.

But that fornication, which is commonly done by people, is abominable in My sight, for I created male and female from the beginning in integrity and not in wickedness. Therefore those hypocrites who say it is lawful for them to commit fornication, with animal appetites, with whomever they wish, are unworthy of My eyes, because, despising the honor and loftiness of their rationality, they look to the beasts and make themselves like them. Woe to those who live so and persevere in this wickedness!

16 Blood relatives may not be united in marriage

I also do not wish the blood of relatives to be mingled in marriage, where the ardor of family love is not yet weakened, lest there arise shameless love in the relation of consanguinity; but let the blood of different families flow together, which feels no blood relationship burning within it, so that human custom may work there.

17 Example of milk

Milk that is cooked once or twice has not yet lost its flavor, but by the time it is coagulated and cooked the seventh or eighth time, it loses its qualities and does not have a pleasant taste except in case of necessity. And as

one must not have sexual relations with a relative who is one's own spouse, so also one must abhor a sexual relationship with a relative related not to one but to one's spouse; let no human being join in such a coupling, which the Church by its Doctors, who established it in great responsibility and honor, has forbidden.

18 Blood relatives could marry in the Old, but not in the New Testament

Under the Old Testament people married their blood relatives by the precept of the Law, but that was allowed because of their hardheartedness, so that they might be at peace among themselves and charity be strengthened in them; so that these tribes would not break My Covenant by dividing and mixing with the pagans in marriage, until the time came when My Son brought the fullness of charity, changing the joining of relatives in carnal bonds into marriages with different people in bashful modesty. Thus, since the Bride of My Son [the Church] now possesses in holy baptism a bond of My fear and righteous justice, let such joinings of relatives be far from her; for the embraces of a man and woman related by blood would be wickedly enkindled into shameless fornication and ceaseless lust much more than those of unrelated people. I am explaining this by this person [Hildegard], to whom this human operation is unknown; she is receiving this explanation not from human knowledge, but from God. What next?

19 A man should be adult to marry and take only a wife of marriageable age

When a male is at the age of strength, so that his veins are full of blood, then he is fertile in his semen; then let him take in lawfully instituted marriage a woman who is also at the age of heat, that she may modestly receive his seed and bear him children in the path of rectitude.

20 On the avoidance of illicit and lustful pollution

But let not a man emit his semen in excessive lust before the years of his strength; for if he tries to sow his seed in the eagerness of lust before that seed has enough heat to coagulate properly, it is proof that he is sinning at the Devil's suggestion. And when a man is already strong in his desire, let him not exercise his strength in that work as much as he can; because if he thus pays attention to the Devil, he is doing a devilish work, making his body contemptible, which is entirely unlawful. But let the man do as human nature

teaches him, and seek the right way with his wife in the strength of his heat and the vigor of his seed; and let him do this with human knowledge, out of desire for children.

But I do not want this work done during the wife's menses, when she is already suffering the flow of her blood, the opening of the hidden parts of her womb, lest the flow of her blood carry with it the mature seed after its reception, and the seed, thus carried forth, perish; at this time the woman is in pain and in prison, suffering a small portion of the pain of childbirth. I do not remit this time of pain for women, because I gave it to Eve when she conceived sin in the taste of the fruit; but therefore the woman should be cherished in this time with a great and healing tenderness. Let her contain herself in hidden knowledge; she should not, however, restrain herself from going into My temple, but faith allows her to enter in the service of humility for her salvation. But because the Bride of My Son is always whole, a man who has open wounds because the wholeness of his members has been divided by the impact of a blow shall not enter My Temple, except under the fear of great necessity, lest it be violated, as the intact members of Abel, who was a temple of God, were cruelly broken by his brother Cain.

21 A woman shall not enter the temple after birth or defloration by a man

So a woman, too, when she bears offspring, may not enter My Temple except in accordance with the law I give her, because her hidden members have been broken, that the holy sacraments of My Temple may be unviolated by any masculine or feminine pain or pollution; because the most pure Virgin bore My Son, and she was whole without any wound of sin. For the place that is consecrated in honor of my Only-Begotten should be untouched by any corruption of bruise or wound, because My Only-Begotten knew in himself the integrity of the Virgin Birth. Therefore, let a woman who breaks the wholeness of her virginity with a man also refrain from entering My Temple while injured by the bruise of her corruption, until the injury of that wound is healed, in accordance with the sure instruction of church teaching. For when His Bride was wedded to My Son on the wood of the cross, she kept herself hidden until My Son commanded His disciples to teach the truth of the Gospel throughout the whole world; but afterward she arose openly and publicly preached the glory of her Bridegroom in the regeneration of the Spirit and water. So let a virgin who is joined to a husband do the same, namely remain hidden with modest shame until the time which church opinion appoints for her; and when she has given herself over to the love of her husband in her concealment, let her come forth openly.

22 Those who have intercourse with the pregnant are murderers

I do not want that work of man and woman to take place from the time when the root of a little child has already been placed in the woman, lest the development of that little child be polluted by excessive and wasted semen, until her purification after childbirth. After that it may be done again, in rectitude and not in wantonness, for the love of children. Thus the human race may procreate by honest human custom, and not as foolish people babble when they claim it is lawful to satisfy their lust at will, saying, "How can we contain ourselves so cruelly?" O humans, if you pay attention to the Devil, he will incite you to evil and destroy you with his deadly poison; but if you raise your eyes to God, He will help you and make you chaste. Do you not desire chastity in your works rather than lust? The woman is subject to the man in that he sows his seed in her, as he works the earth to make it bear fruit. Does a man work the earth that it may bring forth thorns and thistles? Never, but that it may give worthy fruit. So also this endeavor should be for the love of children and not for the wantonness of lust.

Therefore, O humans, weep and howl to your God, Whom you so often despise in your sinning, when you sow your seed in the worst fornication and thereby become not only fornicators but murderers; for you cast aside the mirror of God and sate your lust at will. Therefore the Devil always incites you to this work, knowing that you desire your lustfulness more than the joy of children. Hear, then, you who are among the towers of the Church! In your fornication do not accuse Me, but consider yourselves; for when you despise Me and run to the Devil you do unlawful things, and therefore you do not wish to be chaste; as My servant Hosea says, speaking of the corrupted people:

23 Hosea on this subject

"They will not set their thoughts to return to their God; for the spirit of fornication is in the midst of them, and they have not known God" [Hosea 5:4]. Which is to say: Evil people who do not know God hide the countenance of their heart, and do not do the various things that would bring it back to true brightness; that is, they do not see with clear eyes the things that are of God, but nurture evil in themselves; for, by the Devil's persuasion, the breath of wanton impurity weakens the virile strength they should have, and they cannot put good faith in God because the Devil turns them away from the life of felicity.

24 Commendation of chastity

But now I will turn to My most loving sheep who are securely placed in My heart, the seed of chastity. Virginity was made by Me, for My Son was born of a virgin. And therefore virginity is the most beautiful fruit of all the fruits of the valleys, and the greatest of all the persons in the palace of the unfailing King; for it was not subject to the precept of the law, since it brought My Only-Begotten into the world. Therefore, listen, all those who wish to follow My Son, in the innocence of free chastity or in the solitude of mourning widowhood: Virginity unspotted from the beginning is nobler than widowhood oppressed under the yoke of a husband, even though widowhood, after the grief of the loss of a husband, would imitate virginity.

For My Son bore many pains in His body and underwent the death of the cross; therefore you also, in His love, will suffer much anguish when you conquer in yourselves what was sown in the lust of sin by the taste of the fruit. But though you will endure in your seed flowing rivulets from the conflagration of lust, since you cannot be so chaste as to prevent human weakness from appearing in you secretly, you should in that labor imitate the Passion of My Son and resist yourselves; that is, extinguish within yourselves the burning flame of lust and other things of this world, casting out anger, pride, wantonness and other vices of that sort and attaining this victory by a great struggle. These battles are to Me full of great beauty and much fruit, brighter than the sun and sweeter than the love of spices; for when you trample under foot the burning lust within you, you imitate My Only-Begotten in His pains. And when you persevere in this, you will attain much glory for it in the celestial kingdom.

O sweetest flowers! My angels marvel at your struggle, for you escape from death, so as not to be polluted by the poisonous mud of the world; you have a carnal body, but you tread it under foot, and so you will be glorious in their company since you will appear unpolluted in their likeness. Therefore rejoice that you thus persevere, for I am with you when you receive Me faithfully and with joy in your hearts receive My voice; as I show in a secret vision of My beloved John, saying:

25 John on this subject

"Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any shall hear My voice and open the door, I will come in to him and will sup with him, and he with Me" [Apocalypse 3:20]. That is to say: O you who faithfully love Me, your Savior, look and see how, wishing to aid you, I wait at the tabernacle of your heart,

seeing what you have in the self-knowledge of your conscience, and with the breath of your memory I knock at your spirit, that its goodwill may open and grant admission. And if then the faithful heart, which fears Me, hears My knock, I join Myself to him, embracing him and taking with him the unfailing food, since he offers Me that sweet taste, himself, in his good works; therefore he too shall have that food of life in Me, because he loves what brings life to those who desire justice.

26 After Adam was expelled, God closed Paradise in

But, as you see, after Adam and Eve were expelled from Paradise, *a luminous splendor surrounded that region,* since when they went forth from the place of delight because of their transgression, the Power of the Divine Majesty took away every stain of contagion from the place and fortified it with His Glory, so that from then on it would be touched by no encroachment; which also showed that the transgression which had taken place there would one day be abolished by His clemency and mercy.

27 Creation opposed Man because he rebelled against God

And so *all the elements of the world, which before had existed in great calm, were turned to the greatest agitation and displayed horrible terrors,* because when Man chose disobedience, rebelling against God and forsaking tranquillity for disquiet, that Creation, which had been created for the service of humanity, turned against humans in great and various ways so that Man, having lowered himself, might be held in check by it. What does this mean? That Man showed himself a rebel against God in the place of delights, and therefore that Creation, which had been subjected to him in service, now opposed itself to him.

28 On the delightfulness of Paradise

But Paradise is the place of delight, which blooms with the freshness of flowers and grass and the charms of spices, full of fine odors and dowered with the joy of blessed souls, giving invigorating moisture to the dry ground; it supplies strong force to the earth, as the soul gives strength to the body, for Paradise is not darkened by shadow or the perdition of sinners.

29 Why God made Man such that he could sin

Therefore listen and understand me, you who say in your hearts, "What are these things and why?" Oh, why are you so foolish in your hearts, you who have been made in the image and likeness of God? How can such great

glory and honor, which is given to you, exist without testing, as if it were an empty case of nothing? Gold must be tested in the fire, and precious stones, to smooth them, must be polished, and all things of this kind must be diligently scrutinized. Hence, O foolish humans, how can that which was made in the image and likeness of God exist without testing? For Man must be examined more than any other creature, and therefore he must be tested through every other creature. How?

Spirit is to be tested by spirit, flesh by flesh, earth by water, fire by cold, fight by resistance, good by evil, beauty by deformity, poverty by riches, sweetness by bitterness, health by sickness, long by short, hard by soft, height by depth, light by darkness, life by death, Paradise by punishments, the Heavenly Kingdom by Gehenna, earthly things by earthly things and heavenly things by heavenly things. Hence Man is tested by every creature, in Paradise, on earth and in Hell; and then he is placed in Heaven. You see clearly only a few things among many that are hidden from your eyes. So why do you deride what is right, plain and just, and good among all good things in the sight of God? Why do you think these things unjust? God is just, but the human race is unjust in transgressing God's precepts when it claims to be wiser than God.

30 Man should not examine the highest things since he cannot the lowest ones

Now tell me, O human: What do you think you were when you were not yet in soul and body? Truly you do not know how you were created. But now, O human, you wish to investigate Heaven and earth, and to judge of their justice in God's disposition, and to know the highest things though you are not able to examine the lowest; for you do not know how you live in the body, or how you may be divested of the body. He Who created you in the first human foresaw all these things; but that same most gentle Father sent His Only-Begotten to die for the people, to deliver humanity from the power of the Devil.

31 Man now shines brighter in Heaven than before

And thus Man, having been delivered, shines in God, and God in Man; Man, having community in God, has in Heaven more radiant brightness than he had before. This would not have been so if the Son of God had not put on flesh, for if Man had remained in Paradise, the Son of God would not have suffered on the cross. But when Man was deceived by the wily serpent, God was touched by true mercy and ordained that His Only-Begotten would become incarnate in the most pure Virgin. And thus after Man's ruin many

shining virtues were lifted up in Heaven, like humility, the queen of virtues, which flowered in the virgin birth, and other virtues, which lead God's elect to the heavenly places. For when a field with great labor is cultivated, it brings forth much fruit, and the same is shown in the human race, for after humanity's ruin many virtues arose to raise it up again. But you, O humans, oppressed by the heaviness of the flesh, do not see that great glory God's full justice has prepared for you, without stain or unworthiness, so that no one can throw it down. For before the structure of the world was made, God in true justice had foreseen all these things. Therefore, O human, consider this comparison:

32 Man's condition symbolized by a garden, a sheep and a pearl

The master who seeks to set out a garden without being wearied first chooses a suitable site, and then, deciding on a place for each planting, reflects on the fruit of good trees and the utility, taste, fragrance and high esteem of various spices. And so this master, if he is a great philosopher and expert contriver, lays out each of the plantings where he sees that it will be most useful; and then he thinks of enclosing it with great walls, so that none of his enemies can destroy his planting. Then he appoints his experts, who know how to water the garden and who collect its fruit and make from it many fragrant things. Therefore consider well, O human: If that master foresaw that his garden, bringing forth no fruit or any kind of use, was to be destroyed, why would so great a philosopher and contriver have made, planted, watered and fortified it so eagerly and with so much labor?

Hear, therefore, and understand! God, Who is the Sun of Justice, made His splendor rise over the filth that is Man's wickedness; and that splendor shone with great brightness, as that filth stank exceedingly. The sun gleamed forth in its brightness, and the filth putrefied in its foulness; and therefore the sun was embraced by those beholding it with much greater love than if the filth had not been there opposite it. But as foul as the filth is compared to the sun, so evil is Man's wickedness compared to God's justice. Hence justice, being beautiful, must be loved, and iniquity, being foul, must be rejected.

Into this foulness fell a sheep belonging to the master who had planted this garden. But this sheep was separated from its master by its own consent, not by his negligence; afterward the master sought it again with great zeal and justice. Therefore the choir of angels shone with great honor, for the angels saw a human in Heaven. What does this mean?

When the innocent Lamb was suspended on the cross, the elements trembled, because the most noble Son of the Virgin was slain in the body by the hands of murderers; by His death the lost sheep was brought back to the

pastures of life. For the ancient persecutor saw that because of the blood of the innocent Lamb, which the Lamb had poured out in remission of the sins of humanity, he must lose that sheep, and only then first recognized who that Lamb was; previously he had not been able to understand how the Celestial Bread, without a man's semen and without any desire for sin, had become incarnate of the Virgin by the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit.

For that persecutor, when first he was created, raised himself up in the haughtiness of pride, throwing himself into death and expelling Man from the glory of Paradise; but God did not will to resist him by His power, but conquered him by humility through His Son. And because Lucifer derided God's justice, by God's just judgment he was unable to know the incarnation of God's Only-Begotten. For by this hidden decision the lost sheep was brought back to life. Therefore, O rebellious humans, why are you so hard-hearted? God did not will to forsake humanity, but sent His Son for its salvation; thus God crushed the head of pride in the ancient serpent. For when Man was snatched from death, Hell opened its gates, and Satan cried, "Alas, alas, who will help me?" And the Devil's whole band was torn with great agitation, marvelling that there was a power so great they and their prince could not resist it, since they saw the souls of the faithful being taken away from them. Thus Man was lifted up above the heavens because through the Son of God God appeared in Man and Man in God. Likewise, that master who lost the sheep but brought it so gloriously back to life had, like that sheep, a precious pearl that slipped from him and fell into the mud. But he, not allowing it to lie in the dirt, mercifully drew it forth and purified it of the filth in which it had lain, as gold is purified in the furnace, and restored it to its former honor with even greater glory. For God created Man, but the latter at the Devil's instigation fell into death, from which the Son of God saved him by His blood and brought him gloriously to the glory of Heaven. And how? By humility and charity.

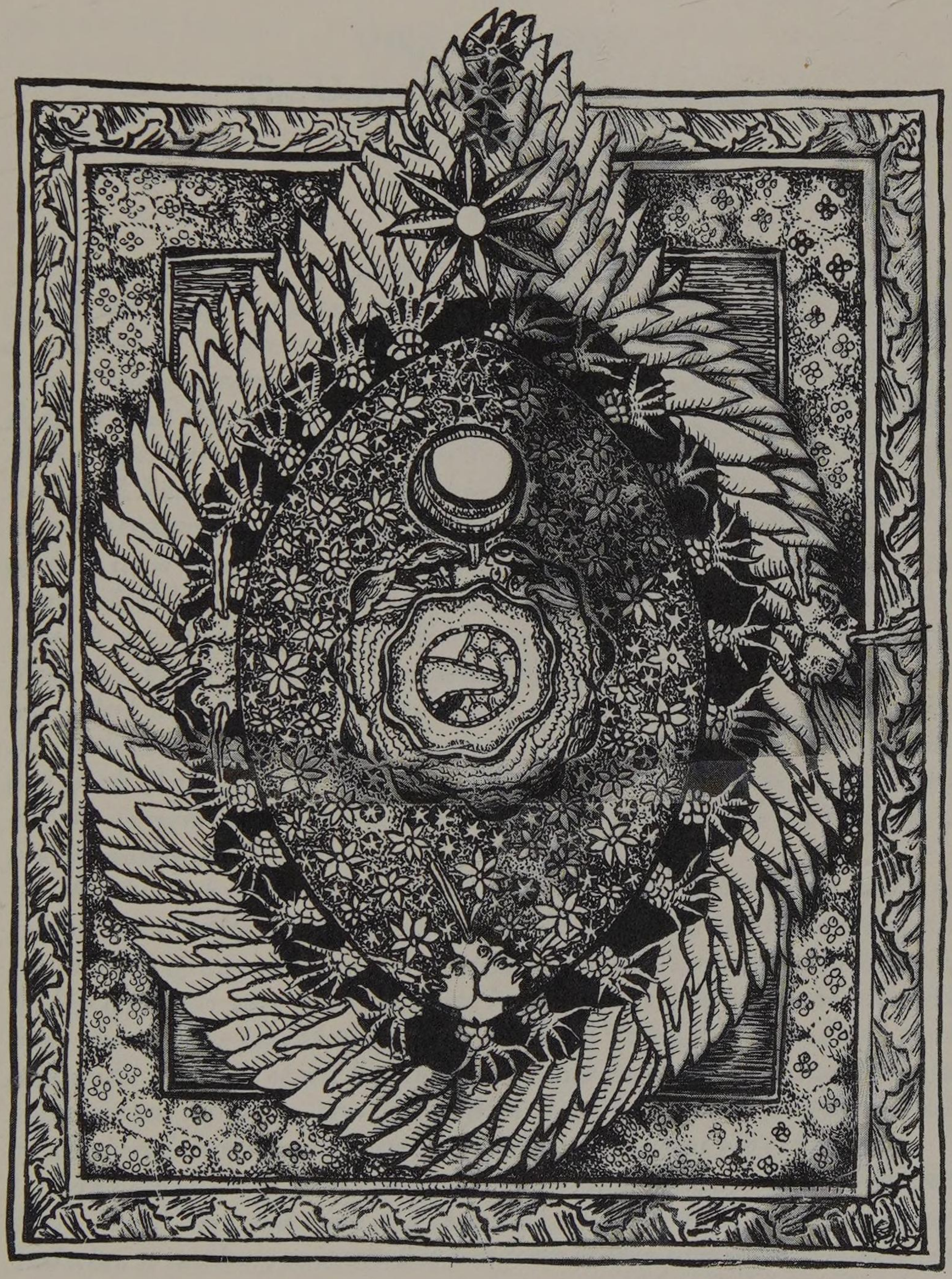
33 Commendation of humility and charity above all other virtues

For humility caused the Son of God to be born of the Virgin, in whom was found humility, not eager embraces or beauty of flesh or earthly riches or gold ornaments or earthly honors. But the Son of God lay in a manger, because His Mother was a poor maiden. Humility always groans, weeps and destroys all offenses, for this is its work. So let anyone who wishes to conquer the Devil arm himself with humility, since Lucifer fervently flees it and hides in its presence like a snake in a hole; for wherever it finds him, it quickly snaps him like a fragile thread.

And charity took the Only-Begotten of God, who was in the bosom of the Father in Heaven, and placed Him in the womb of a mother on earth, for

it does not spurn sinners or publicans but seeks to save all. Therefore it often brings forth a fountain of tears from the eyes of the faithful, thus softening hardness of heart. In this, humility and charity are brighter than the other virtues, since humility and charity are like a soul and body that possess stronger powers than the other powers of soul and bodily members. How? Humility is like the soul and charity like the body, and they cannot be separated from each other but work together, just as soul and body cannot be disjoined but work together as long as a person lives in the body. And as the various members of the body are subject, according to their powers, to the soul and to the body, so also the other virtues cooperate, according to their justice, with humility and charity. And therefore, O humans, for the glory of God and for your salvation, pursue humility and charity; armed with them, you shall not fear the Devil's snares but shall have everlasting life.

Therefore whoever has knowledge in the Holy Spirit and wings of faith, let this one not ignore My admonition, but taste it, embrace it and receive it in his soul.



THE UNIVERSE

VISION THREE
The Universe and Its Symbolism

After this I saw a vast instrument, round and shadowed, in the shape of an egg, small at the top, large in the middle and narrowed at the bottom; outside it, surrounding its circumference, there was bright fire with, as it were, a shadowy zone under it. And in that fire there was a globe of sparkling flame so great that the whole instrument was illuminated by it, over which three little torches were arranged in such a way that by their fire they held up the globe lest it fall. And that globe at times raised itself up, so that much fire flew to it and thereby its flames lasted longer; and sometimes sank downward and great cold came to it, so that its flames were more quickly subdued. But from the fire that surrounded the instrument issued a blast with whirlwinds, and from the zone beneath it rushed forth another blast with its own whirlwinds, which diffused themselves hither and thither throughout the instrument. In that zone, too, there was a dark fire of such great horror that I could not look at it, whose force shook the whole zone, full of thunder, tempest and exceedingly sharp stones both large and small. And while it made its thunders heard, the bright fire and the winds and the air were in commotion, so that lightning preceded those thunders; for the fire felt within itself the turbulence of the thunder.

But beneath that zone was purest ether, with no zone beneath it, and in it I saw a globe of white fire and great magnitude over which two little torches were placed, holding that globe so that it would not exceed the measure of its course. And in that ether were scattered many bright spheres, into which the white globe from time to time poured itself out and emitted its brightness, and then moved back under the globe of red fire and renewed its flames from it, and then again sent them out into those spheres. And from that ether too a blast came forth with its whirlwinds, which spread itself everywhere throughout the instrument.

And beneath that ether I saw watery air with a white zone beneath it, which diffused itself here and there and imparted moisture to the whole instrument. And when it suddenly contracted it sent forth sudden rain with great noise, and when it gently spread out it gave a pleasant and softly falling rain. But from it too came a blast with its whirlwinds, which spread itself throughout the aforementioned instrument.

And in the midst of these elements was a sandy globe of great magnitude, which these elements had so surrounded that it could not waver in any direction.

BOOK ONE

But as these elements and these blasts contended with each other, by their strength they made it move a little.

And I saw between the North and the East a great mountain, which to the North had great darkness and to the East had great light, but in such a way that the light could not reach the darkness, nor the darkness the light.

And again I heard the voice from Heaven, saying to me:

1 The visible and temporal is a manifestation of the invisible and eternal

God, Who made all things by His will, created them so that His Name would be known and glorified, showing in them not just the things that are visible and temporal, but also the things that are invisible and eternal. Which is demonstrated by this vision you are perceiving.

2 The firmament in the likeness of an egg and what it signifies

For this *vast instrument, round and shadowy, in the shape of an egg, small at the top, large in the middle and narrowed at the bottom,* faithfully shows Omnipotent God, incomprehensible in His majesty and inestimable in His mysteries and the hope of all the faithful; for humanity at first was rude and rough and simple in its actions, but later was enlarged through the Old and New Testaments, and finally at the end of the world is destined to be beset with many tribulations.

3 On the bright fire and the shadowy zone

Outside it, surrounding its circumference, there is bright fire with, as it were, a shadowy zone under it. This shows that God consumes by the fire of His vengeance all those who are outside the true faith, and those who remain within the Catholic faith He purifies by the fire of His consolation; thus He throws down the darkness of devilish perversity, as He did also when the Devil wanted to oppose himself to God though God had created him, and so fell defeated into perdition.

4 On the placement of the sun and the three stars

And in that fire there is a globe of sparkling flame, so great that the whole instrument is illuminated by it, which in the splendour of its brightness shows that within God the Father is His ineffable Only-Begotten, the sun of justice with the brilliance of burning charity, of such great glory that every creature is illumined by the brightness of His light; *over which three little torches are*

arranged in such a way that by their fire they hold up the globe lest it fall; that is, [the Trinity] shows how by its arrangement the Son of God, leaving the angels in the heavenly places, descended to earth and showed humans, who exist in soul and body, heavenly things, so that, glorifying Him by serving Him, they reject all harmful error, and magnify Him as the true Son of God incarnate through the true Virgin, when the angel foretold Him and when humans, living in soul and body, with faithful joy received Him.

5 On the ascent of the sun and what it signifies

Therefore *the globe sometimes raises itself up, so that much fire flies to it and therefore its flames last longer.* This means that when the time came that the Only-Begotten of God was to become incarnate for the redemption and uplifting of the human race by the will of the Father, the Holy Spirit by the power of the Father brought celestial mysteries wonderfully to pass in the Blessed Virgin; so that when the Son of God too in virginal chastity showed marvellous splendor and made virginity fruitful, virginity became glorious; for the longed-for Incarnation was brought to pass in the noble Virgin.

6 On the descent of the sun and what it signifies

So, indeed, *sometimes it sinks downwards and great cold comes to it, so that its flames are more quickly subdued.* This shows that the Only-Begotten of God, born of a virgin and hence inclined to be merciful to human poverty, incurred many miseries and sustained great physical anguish; but after He had shown Himself to the world in a bodily shape, He passed from the world and returned to the Father, while His disciples stood by, as it is written:

7 Words from the Acts of the Apostles

"While they looked on He was lifted up, and a cloud received Him" [Acts 1:19]. Which is to say: When the children of the Church had received the Son of God in the interior knowledge of their hearts, the sanctity of His body was lifted up into the power of His Divinity, and in a mystical miracle the cloud of secret mystery received Him, hiding Him from mortal eyes, and the blasts of the winds showed themselves His servants.

8 On the first wind and its whirlwinds

But, as you see, *from the fire that surrounds the instrument issues a blast with whirlwinds,* which shows that from Almighty God, Who fills the whole

world with His power, truth rushes forth and spreads with words of justice, which truly demonstrate to humanity the same living and true God.

9 On the second wind and its whirlwinds

But from the zone beneath it rushes forth another blast with its own whirlwinds because the rage of the Devil, knowing God and fearing Him, sends out the worst dishonor and the most evil utterances, *which diffuse themselves hither and thither throughout the instrument*, since in the world useful and useless rumors spread themselves abroad in many ways among the peoples.

10 On the dark fire and the thunder and the sharp stones

In this zone also there is a dark fire of such horror that you cannot look at it. This means that the ancient betrayer's most evil and most vile snares vomit forth blackest murder with such great passion that the human intellect cannot fathom its insanity; *whose force shakes the whole zone*, because murder includes in its horror all diabolical malignities. In the first man born hatred boiled up out of anger and led to fratricide, *full of thunder, tempest and exceedingly sharp stones large and small*, for murder is full of avarice, and drunkenness and extreme hardness of heart, which run riot relentlessly both in great murders and in minor vices. *While it makes its thunders heard, the bright fire and the winds and the air are all in commotion*, because when murder cries out in its eagerness to shed blood, it arouses the justice of Heaven and an outburst of flying rumors and an increased disposition to vengeance on the part of right judgment; *so that lightning precedes those thunders, for the fire feels in itself the turbulence of the thunder*, for the manifestation of divine scrutiny exceeds and suppresses evil, since the Divine Majesty, before the sound of that insanity manifests itself in public, foresees it with that watchful eye to which all things are naked.

11 The purest ether and the placement of the moon and two stars

But beneath that zone is purest ether, with no zone beneath it; for beneath the snares of the ancient betrayer shines most serene faith, with no uncertainty or infidelity hiding in it, since it is not founded by itself but dependent on Christ; *and in it you see a globe of white fire and great magnitude*, which is a true symbol of the unconquered Church, which, as you can see, asserts in faith innocent brightness and great honor; *over which two little torches are placed, holding that globe so that it does not exceed the measure of its course*, which signifies that the two Testaments given from Heaven, the Old and the

VISION THREE

New, connect it to the divine rules of the celestial mysteries, holding the Church back from rushing into a variety of different practices, for both the Old and the New Testaments show it the blessedness of the supernal heritage.

12 The placement of the other stars and what it signifies

And therefore *in that ether are scattered many bright spheres, into which the white globe from time to time pours itself out and emits its brightness;* for in the purity of faith many splendid works of piety are done by which the Church, though it may suffer words of disdain, passes on the beauty of its miracles. Though plunged in sorrow, it still marvels at the brightness of the works done by the perfected through others; and therefore, *it moves back under the globe of red fire and renews its flames from it, and then again sends them out into those spheres;* for, moving in contrition back under the protection of the Only-Begotten of God, and receiving from Him the pardon of divine consolation, it again shows the love of heavenly things in blessed works.

13 The third wind and its whirlwinds and what they signify

Therefore also *from the ether a blast comes forth with its whirlwinds, which spreads itself everywhere throughout the instrument;* for from the unity of faith there comes forth to help humanity a strong tradition of true and perfect statements, which swiftly penetrate to the ends of the earth.

14 The watery air and the white zone and what they signify

And beneath that ether you see watery air with a white zone beneath it, which diffuses itself here and there and imparts moisture to the whole instrument; for thus, under the faith possessed by the ancient and the modern fathers, baptism in the Church for the salvation of believers is truly shown to you, which, founded on blessed innocence and stability, propagates itself everywhere by divine inspiration and brings to the whole world the overflowing waters of salvation for believers. *When this zone suddenly contracts, it sends forth sudden rain with great noise, and when it gently spreads out it gives a pleasant and softly falling rain;* for sometimes baptism is presented by the apostles of truth with all their enthusiasm of preaching and depth of mind, and so manifests itself to the astonishment of humans with a rapid abundance of words and a flood of preaching; and sometimes that same baptism is presented by those preachers with sweet moderation, so that it reaches the people for whom it is meant discreetly by a gentle watering.

15 On the fourth wind and its whirlwinds

Therefore *from that air too comes a blast with its whirlwinds that spreads itself throughout the aforementioned instrument;* for when the flood of baptism brings salvation to believers, a true report of the words of forcible sermons goes forth and pervades the whole world with its manifest blessedness, so that the people, forsaking infidelity and seeking after the Catholic faith, openly declare it.

16 On the sandy globe of the earth and what it signifies

And in the midst of these elements is a sandy globe of great magnitude, which these elements have so surrounded that it cannot waver in any direction. This openly shows that, of all the strengths of God's creation, Man's is most profound, made in a wondrous way with great glory from the dust of the earth and so entangled with the strengths of the rest of creation that he can never be separated from them; for the elements of the world, created for Man's service, wait on him, and Man, enthroned as it were in their midst, by divine disposition presides over them, as David says, inspired by Me:

17 Words of David on this subject

"Thou hast crowned him with glory and worship, and given him dominion over all the works of Thy hands" [Psalms 8:6–7]. Which is to say: You, O God, Who have marvellously made all things, have crowned Man with the gold and purple crown of intellect and with the sublime garment of visible beauty, thus placing him like a prince above the height of Your perfect works, which You have distributed justly and rightly among Your creatures. Before all Your other creatures You have conferred on Man great and wonderful dignities.

18 On the movement of the earth and what it signifies

But, as you see, *as these elements and these blasts contend with each other, by their strength they make the globe move a little;* for at certain times the report of the Creator's miracles comes to all of God's creation, so that miracle is piled on miracle in a great thunder of words; and then Man, struck by the greatness of these miracles, feels the impact on his mind and body, and in these wondrous deeds considers with astonishment his own weakness and frailty.

VISION THREE

19 The great mountain between the North and the East

And you see between the North and the East a great mountain, which to the North has great darkness and to the East has great light. This shows Man's great choice between devilish impiety and divine goodness, evil deception giving the many miseries of damnation to the reprobate, and salvation giving the great happiness of redemption to the elect; *but in such a way that the light cannot reach the darkness, nor the darkness the light;* for the works of light do not come down among the works of darkness, and the works of darkness do not ascend to the works of light; though the Devil often tries to obscure the latter through evil people, like pagans, heretics and false prophets, and those whom they try to attract to themselves by fallacious deception. How? Because they want to know what it is not for them to know, imitating the one who panted to be like the Most High. And because they follow him, by their own will he shows them a lie as the truth. Hence they are not with Me, and I am not with them; for they do not walk in My ways, but love strange paths, seeking out the false things a foolish creature shows them about future events. And in their perverse seeking this is what they wish to have, despising Me and rejecting My saints, who love Me with a sincere heart.

20 Those who perversely examine the future by means of creatures

But these people who obstinately tempt Me by perverse art, examining creatures that were made for their service and asking them to show them things their wilfulness wishes to know—can they, by practicing this art, lengthen or shorten the time their Creator has given them to live? They cannot, by a day or by an hour. Or can they postpone what God has predetermined? In no way. O wretches! Do I not sometimes permit creatures to show you what will happen? They can show you these signs because they fear Me, God, as a servant can sometimes display the power of his master, and as the ox, the ass and other animals show the will of their masters when they faithfully do their bidding. O fools! When you consign Me to forgetfulness, neither looking to Me nor adoring Me, but looking to a creature subject to you for what it portends and shows, then you are obstinately casting Me aside, worshipping the frail creature instead of your Creator. Therefore I say to you: O human, why do you worship that creature, which cannot console you or help you and which cannot make you prosper in happiness, though it is affirmed that they can by astrologers, teachers of death and followers of pagan unbelief, who say the stars give life to you humans and determine all your actions? O wretches, Who made the stars?

But at times, with My permission, the stars by certain signs do manifest themselves to humanity, as My Son shows in His Gospel, where He says:

21 Words of the Gospel

"There shall be signs in the sun and the moon and the stars" [Luke 21:35]. Which is to say: By the light of these lights service is rendered to humanity, and in their revolutions the times of times are displayed. So in the latest times, by My permission lamentable and dangerous epochs will be foretold in them, so that the radiance of the sun and the splendor of the moon and the brightness of the stars will be dimmed, that human hearts may be stirred up to action. Thus also by My will the Incarnation of My Son was shown by a star. But no human being has a star of his own, which determines his life, as a foolish and erring people tries to assert; all stars are at the service of all people. That star only shone more brightly than all other stars because My Only-Begotten, unlike all other humans, was born without sin from a virgin birth. But that star gave My Son no aid, except in faithfully announcing His Incarnation to the people; for all stars and other creatures, fearing Me, fulfil My command, but do not have any knowledge of anything about any creature. For creatures fulfil My commands when it pleases Me, in the same way as when a minter, making a coin, strikes it with the requisite form; then that coin displays the form stamped on it, but has no power to know when the minter may decide to impress another form on it, for neither in the long nor in the short run does it understand the form it has. What does this mean?

O human, if a stone lay before you on which, if you looked carefully, you could read what was going to happen to you, then in your mistaken thoughts, saddened by your misfortune or elated by your prosperity, you would say, "Alas, [ach] I shall die!" or "O joy, [wach] I shall live!" or "Alas, what misfortune," or "O joy, what prosperity is mine!" Now what would that stone have conferred on you? Would it have taken away or given you anything? It could not be either against you or for you.

And likewise neither stars nor fire nor birds nor any other creatures of this kind can either harm you or help you by your examining them. But if, rejecting Me, you trust in a creature made for your service, I also in My just judgment will cast you out of My sight, taking from you the felicity of My kingdom. For I do not want you to scrutinize stars or fire or birds or other creatures for signs of future events; and if you persist in scrutinizing them, your eyes are obnoxious to Me, and I will cast you out like the lost angel, who deserted the truth and threw himself into damnation.

O human! When the stars and the other creatures were made, where were you? Did you give God advice about their arrangement? But the pre-

sumption of such scrutiny arose in the first of all dissensions, when Man forgot God to such an extent that he arrogantly inspected one kind of creature after another and sought in them signs of future events. And thus, indeed, the error arose about Baal, because people who were deceived worshipped the creature of God instead of God, to which the Devil's mockery incited them, because they were mindful of the creature rather than the Creator and desired to know what they were not meant to know.

22 How the Devil mocks humanity by the art of magic

Therefore, worse things than this appeared, for humans through the Devil began to be crazy for magic arts, so that now they see and hear the Devil, and he speaks to them deceitfully and shows them one sort of creature in their scrutiny as if it were another. It is not My will to say how the first seducers were taught by the Devil, so that now those who seek him see and hear him; but they are very guilty in this wickedness of theirs, for they deny Me, their God, and imitate the ancient seducer. O human! I have sought you by the blood of My Son, not in malicious iniquity but in great justice; but you forsake Me, the true God, and imitate him who is a liar. I am justice and truth; and therefore I admonish you by faith and exhort you by love and recapture you by penitence, so that, though you are bloody in the pollutions of sinners, you may yet rise from your fall into ruin. But if you despise Me, understand the comparison in this parable; which says:

23 Parable on this subject

A certain lord who had many servants under him gave each of them a full set of warlike arms, saying, "Be upright and useful, and renounce tardiness and indolence." But while they were marching with him, these servants saw beside the road a certain impostor, inventor of evil arts; and some of them, being deceived, said, "We wish to learn this man's arts!" And, casting away their arms, they ran to him. The others said to them, "What are you doing, imitating this impostor and provoking our lord to anger?" And they answered, "How does this harm our lord?" But their lord said to them, "O wicked servants! Why have you thrown away the arms I gave you? And why is it dearer to you to love this vanity than to serve me, your lord, whose servants you are? Go, then, follow this impostor as you desire, for you do not wish to serve me, and see how his folly will profit you." And he cast them out. Which is to say:

This lord is Almighty God, ruling all peoples with His power, Who has armed every person with intellect, commanding him to be active and vigilant in the exercise of virtue, and rid himself of perverseness and negligence. But

as people are going along the way of truth, disposed to walk in the divine commands, they are met by many temptations; for the Devil, the seducer of the whole world and the wicked contriver of many vices, waits for them not in the way of truth but in deceptive ambushes. Therefore, certain of them, who love injustice more than right, are seduced by the Devil and are more eager to imitate the vices of the ancient seducer than to embrace the virtues of God. And that intellect, which they ought to have used for the divine commandments, they twist to the vices of earthly iniquity and submit themselves to the Devil. The Doctors, as their companions, cite to them often the sacred Scriptures, reproaching them for their deeds and loudly asking why they follow the Devil's illusions and bring down divine vengeance on themselves. But they almost always deride these admonitions, claiming that they sin in few things and do not offend God by pride at all. Therefore, when they persevere in that obduracy, they receive the divine sentence; for these servants of iniquity are asked why they suffocated their God-given intellect and why they preferred the deceptions of the ancient seducer to loving their Creator, Whom they should actively have served. Thus they too are despised for devilish illusions according to their works, since they refused to serve God, and they are forced to consider what their wicked seduction has profited them since, thus cast out, they incur damnation, because they have disregarded the divine precepts and tried to follow the Devil rather than God.

For I do not will that humans should despise Me, when they ought to know Me in faith; for if they reject Me to examine a creature subject to them, thus imitating the ancient seducer, then I permit them to achieve the desires of their hearts both as to the creature and as to the Devil; and thus they learn by experience how much the creature they have adored will profit them, and what the Devil whom they have followed will give them.

24 Humans go out of the world whenever their salvation and use is complete

And, O foolish humans, why do you scrutinize a creature about the length of your life? For none of you can either know or avoid or get through the period of his life except as I decide he will live; for, O human, when your salvation is complete in both worldly and spiritual matters, you will leave the present world and pass on to that which has no end. For when a person has such fortitude that he burns for Me more ardently than other people, and, aware of the earthly dregs of stinking sin, is active in avoiding the snares of the ancient serpent, I do not take his spirit from his body before his fruits have fully ripened with sweetest fragrance. But if I find one who is of such frailty that in pain of his body and terror of the evil lurker he is too delicate to

bear My yoke, I take him away from this world before his soul, wasting away in weakness, begins to dry up. For I know all things. But I want to caution the human race with all possible justice, so that no person can excuse himself: When I strike them with a sentence of death as if they were about to die, when in fact they are to live for a long time yet, I warn and exhort people to do justice. For no one can have or make for himself any time unless I see usefulness in him and by My will allow him to live; as indeed Job testifies, when he says:

25 Words of Job on this subject

"You have appointed his bounds, which cannot be passed" [Job 14:5]. Which is to say: You Who are above all and foresee all before it comes to pass have indeed established in the secret of Your majesty the bounds of human life, so that they cannot be exceeded by humans either by knowledge, by prudence or by understanding, for any reason, in infancy, youth or old age, except according to Your secret providence, which willed to make Man for the glory of Your Name.

26 Words of God on this subject

I, O human, knew you before the foundation of the world. Nevertheless, I will to consider your days in your works and judge of their usefulness, and diligently and sharply examine your deeds. But if I suddenly withdraw anyone from this life, the usefulness of his life is complete; and if his life were extended longer, it would not keep on in freshness bearing good fruits but, tainted by the faith of the flesh, would only give off smoke like the empty sound of words and not attain to Me in the inmost depth of its heart. Therefore I do not grant him a prolongation of this life, but withdraw him from this world before he falls into the apathy of this infertility. But to you, O human, I say: Why do you despise Me? Did I not send My prophets to you, and give My Son on the wood of the cross for your salvation, and choose My apostles to show you the way of truth through the Gospel? So, having all good things through Me, you cannot excuse yourself. And why then do you put Me off?

27 God will no longer tolerate auguries from creatures

But I will no longer tolerate this perverse error, your seeking signs for your actions in the stars or fire or birds or any other creatures; all those who by the Devil's persuasion first fell into this error despised God and threw down His precepts, for which they themselves are despised. But I shine

above every creature in the glory of My Divinity, and My miracles are manifested to you in My saints; so I wish you not to practice this error of augury any more, but to look toward Me.

28 Concerning human foolishness and stubbornness

O fool! Who am I? None other than the Supreme Good. Therefore I grant you all good things when you diligently seek Me. And whom do you believe Me to be? I am God, above all things and in all things, but you want to treat Me as a serf who fears his lord. How? You want Me to do your will, while you despise My precepts. God is not thus. What does this mean? He does not remember a beginning nor fear an end. The heavens contemplate Me and resound with My praises and obey Me in that justice by which I established them. The sun, moon and stars appear among the clouds of heaven on their proper course, and the blasts of the wind and the rain move through the air as is appointed for them, and all do the bidding of their Creator. But you, O human, do not fulfil My precepts, but follow your own will, as if for you the law's justice were neither established nor manifested. And although you are but ashes, you are in such a state of contumacy that the justice of My law does not suffice for you, though it is plowed and cultivated in the body and blood of My Son and well trodden out by My saints of the Old and New Testaments alike.

29 Analogy of the goat, the hart and the wolf

But in your great foolishness you wish to lay hold of Me, threatening Me and saying, "If God wants me to be just and good, why does He not make me righteous?" Wishing to catch Me like this is as if a wanton goat wished to catch a hart; it would be thrown back and pierced by the hart's strong horns. So, when you try to behave wantonly and play with Me, I too will crush you in My just judgment by the precepts of the law as if by My horns. These trumpets resound in your ears, but you do not follow them; you run off after the wolf, which you think you have so mastered that it cannot hurt you. But the wolf will devour you, saying, "This sheep strayed from the road and did not want to follow its shepherd but ran after me; therefore I will to have it, for it chose me and forsook its shepherd." O human, God is just; so everything He does in heaven and earth is justly ordained.

30 Analogy of the physician

I am the great Physician of all diseases and act like a doctor who sees a sick man who longs to be cured. What does this mean? If the illness is slight, he cures it easily, but if it is serious, he says to the sick person, "I require

silver and gold from you. If you will give them to me, I will help you." I too, O human, do this. Lesser sins I wipe away in people's groans and tears and good resolutions, but for graver faults I say, O human, apply yourself to penitence and amendment, and I will show you My mercy, and give you eternal life. You shall not scrutinize the stars and other creatures about future events, or adore the Devil, or invoke him or ask him anything. For if you seek to know more than you ought to know, you will be deceived by the ancient seducer. The first man sought more than he should have sought, and was deceived by him and went to perdition. But the Devil did not foresee the redemption of Man, when the Son of Man slew death and broke Hell asunder. The Devil at first conquered Man through the woman; but God at last crushed the Devil through the woman who bore the Son of God, who wondrously brought the works of the Devil to naught; as My beloved John testifies, saying:

31 Words of John

"For this reason the Son of God appeared, that He might destroy the works of the Devil" [1 John 3:8]. What does this mean? The great brightness, the Son of God, appeared for the health and salvation of humanity, taking on the poverty of a human body, but shining like a burning star amid shadowy clouds. He was placed on the wine-press, where wine was to be pressed out without the dregs of fermentation, because He the cornerstone fell upon the press and made such wine that it gave forth the greatest odor of sweetness. He, shining as a glorious human being amid the human race, without any admixture of polluted blood, trod with His warlike foot upon the head of the ancient serpent; He destroyed all the darts of his iniquity, full of rage and lust as they were, and made him utterly contemptible.

Therefore, whoever has knowledge in the Holy Spirit and wings of faith, let this one not ignore My admonition, but taste it, embrace it and receive it in his soul.

BODY AND SOUL

THE SOUL AND HER TABERNACLE

VISION FOUR
Soul and Body

Then I saw a most great and serene splendor, flaming, as it were, with many eyes, with four corners pointing toward the four parts of the world, which was manifest to me in the greatest mystery to show me the secret of the Supernal Creator; and in it appeared another splendor like the dawn, containing in itself a brightness of purple lightning. And behold! I saw on the earth people carrying milk in earthen vessels and making cheeses from it; and one part was thick, and from it strong cheeses were made; and one part was thin, and from it weak cheeses were curdled; and one part was mixed with corruption, and from it bitter cheeses were formed. And I saw the image of a woman who had a perfect human form in her womb. And behold! By the secret design of the Supernal Creator that form moved with vital motion, so that a fiery globe that had no human lineaments possessed the heart of that form and touched its brain and spread itself through all its members.

But then this human form, in this way vivified, came forth from the woman's womb and changed its color according to the movement the globe made in that form.

And I saw that many whirlwinds assailed one of these globes in a body and bowed it down to the ground; but, gaining back its strength and bravely raising itself up, it resisted them boldly and said with a groan:

1 Lament of the soul returning by God's grace from the path of error to Zion

"A pilgrim, where am I? In the shadow of death. And in what path am I journeying? In the path of error. And what consolation do I have? That which pilgrims have. For I should have had a tabernacle adorned with five square gems more brilliant than the sun and stars, for the sun and stars that set would not have shone in it, but the glory of angels; the topaz would have been its foundation and all the gems its structure, its staircases made of crystal and its courtyards paved with gold. For I should have been a companion of the angels, for I am a living breath, which God placed in dry mud; thus I should have known and felt God. But alas! When my tabernacle saw that it could turn its eyes into all the ways, it turned its attention toward the

BOOK ONE

North; ach, ach! and there I was captured and robbed of my sight and the joy of knowledge, and my garment all torn. And so, driven from my inheritance, I was led into a strange place without beauty or honor, and there subjected to the worst slavery. Those who had taken me struck me and made me eat with swine and, sending me into a desert place, gave me bitter herbs dipped in honey to eat. Then, placing me on the rack, they afflicted me with many tortures. And stripping me of my garments and dealing me many wounds, they sent me out to be hunted, and got the worst poisonous creatures, scorpions and asps and other vermin, to hunt and capture me; and these spewed out their poison all over me so that I was made helpless. Therefore they mocked me, saying, 'Where is your honor now?' Ach, and I trembled all over and with a great groan of woe said silently to myself, 'Oh, where am I? Ach, from whence did I come here? And what comforter shall I seek in this captivity? How shall I break these chains? Oh, what eye can look on my wounds? and what nose can bear their noisome stench? and what hands will anoint them with oil? Ach, who will have mercy on my affliction?

" 'May Heaven graciously hear my cry, and earth tremble at my grief, and every living thing incline with pity toward my captivity. For the bitterest sorrow oppresses me, who am a pilgrim without comfort and without help. Oh, who will console me, since even my mother has abandoned me when I strayed from the path of salvation? Who will help me but God? But when I remember you, O mother Zion, in whom I should have dwelt, I see the bitter slavery to which I am subjected. And when I have called to memory the music of all sorts that dwells in you, I feel my wounds. And when I remember the joy and gladness of your glory, I am horrified by the poisons that pollute them. Oh, where shall I turn? and where shall I flee? My sorrows are without number; for if I continue in these evils, I shall become the companion of those whom I knew to my shame in the land of Babylon. And where are you, O mother Zion? Woe is me that I so unluckily drew back from you; if I had not known you, I would sorrow more lightly! But now I will flee from these evil comrades, for wicked Babylon has put me in a leaden dish and crushed me with heavy bludgeons so that I hardly breathe. And when I pour out my tears and groans to you, O my mother, wicked Babylon sends forth such a noise and roar of sounding waters that you cannot hear my voice. So with great care I will seek the narrow ways by which to escape my evil comrades and my unhappy captivity.'

"And when I had said these things, I went away by a narrow path and hid myself from sight of the North in a small cave, bitterly weeping for the loss of my mother, and also for all my sorrows and all my wounds. And so many tears did I shed, weeping and weeping, that my tears soaked all the pain and all the bruises of my wounds.

VISION FOUR

"And behold! A most sweet fragrance touched my nostrils, like a gentle breath exhaled by my mother. Oh, what groans and tears I poured forth then, when I felt the presence of that small consolation! And in my joy I uttered such cries and shed such tears that the very mountain in whose cave I had hidden myself was shaken by it. And I said, 'O mother, O mother Zion, what will become of me? And where is your noble daughter now? Oh, how long, how long have I been deprived of your maternal sweetness, in which with many delights you gently brought me up!' And I delighted in these tears as if I saw my mother.

"But my enemies, hearing these cries of mine, said, 'Where is she, whom up to now we kept with us as we liked, so that she completely carried out our will? Look how she is calling upon the dwellers in Heaven. Let us therefore use all our arts and guard her with such great zeal and care that she cannot escape us, for before she was completely subject to us. If we do this, she will follow us again.'

"But I came secretly out of the cave in which I had hidden and tried to go up to such a height that my enemies would be unable to find me. They, however, set in my way a sea of such raging heat that I could not pass over it. There was, indeed, a bridge, but so small and narrow a one that I could not cross by it. And on the shore of that sea appeared a mountain range so high that I could not make my way across it. And I said, 'Oh, wretched woman that I am, what shall I do now? For a little while just now I felt the sweetness of my mother's presence, and I thought she was trying to call me to her; but ach! is she now leaving me again? Ach! where shall I turn? For if I return to my former captivity, my enemies will deride me more than before, because I tearfully cried out to my mother and for a little while felt her gentle sweetness, but now I am forsaken by her again.'

"But because of that sweetness which my mother had lately sent me, I was for the first time filled with such strength that I turned to the East and resumed my way along the narrow path. But the paths were so hedged in by thorns and thistles and such obstacles that I could scarcely take a step. However, with great labor and sweat I struggled through them at last, so worn out by my travail that I could scarcely breathe.

"Thus, at last, I attained with the utmost fatigue to the summit of the mountain in which I had hidden before and turned downward to the valley into which I had to descend; and behold! there in my way were asps, scorpions, serpents and other like crawling things, all hissing at me. Terrified I uttered the loudest of shrieks, crying, 'O mother, where are you? I would suffer less if I had not lately felt the sweetness of your presence; for I am falling again into the captivity in which I lay just now. Where now is your help?' And then I heard my mother's voice, saying to me:

2 On the wings of the soul

"'O daughter, run! For the Most Powerful Giver whom no one can resist has given you wings to fly with. Therefore fly swiftly over all these obstacles!' And I, comforted with great consolation, took wing and passed swiftly over all those poisonous and deadly things.

3 On the tabernacle it entered

"And I came to a tabernacle, whose interior was all of the strongest steel. And, going in, I did works of brightness where I had previously done works of darkness. And in that tabernacle I placed at the north a column of unpolished steel, on which I hung fans made of diverse feathers, which moved to and fro. And, finding manna, I ate it. At the east I built a bulwark of square stones and, lighting a fire within it, drank wine mixed with myrrh and unfermented grape juice. At the south I built a tower of square stones, in which I hung up red shields and placed trumpets of ivory in its windows. And in the middle of this tower I poured out honey and mixed it with other spices to make a precious unguent, from which a great fragrance poured forth to fill the whole tabernacle. But at the west I built nothing, for that side was turned toward the world.

"And while I was absorbed in this work, my enemies seized their quivers and attacked my tabernacle with their arrows, but I was so absorbed in the work I was doing that I did not notice their madness until the gates of the tabernacle were full of arrows. But none of the arrows could penetrate the door or the steel lining of the tabernacle, so that I also could not be injured by them. When they saw this, they sent a tremendous flood of water to wash away both me and my tabernacle, but their malice accomplished nothing. Wherefore I boldly mocked them, saying, 'The architect who built this tabernacle was wiser and stronger than you. Collect your arrows and put them down, for from now on they cannot make your will triumph over me. See, what wounds have they given me? With great pain and labor I have waged many wars against you, and you tried to put me to death, but you could not; for I was protected by the strongest armor and brandished sharp swords against you and thus vigorously defended myself from you. Retreat, therefore, retreat, for you will have me no longer.' "

4 Lament of the soul while resisting the Devil's whirlwinds with God's help

But I, fragile and untaught, saw that many whirlwinds rushed upon another of these globes and tried to throw it down, but could not; for it resisted

strongly and gave them no room to rage. It nonetheless spoke with lamentation, saying: "I am a poor little thing, but I have a great duty. Oh, what am I? and what is the theme of my outcry? I am the living breath in a human being, placed in a tabernacle of marrow, veins, bones and flesh, giving it vitality and supporting its every movement. But alas! Its sensibility gives rise to filth, licentiousness and wantonness of conduct and every kind of vice. Ach! Oh, how great is the groaning of my complaint! For when the works of my tabernacle prosper, the Devil's persuasion meets me and ensnares me, and uplifts me in haughty pride, so that I say, 'I want to act according to the joys of earthly fertility.' For inside my tabernacle I understand all works, but I am so impeded by its ardent desires that before I can discern my proper work I see dire wounds in me. Oh, what a cry I let out! and I say, 'O God, did You not create me? Look how vile earth oppresses me!' And I start to run away. How is this? When my tabernacle knows carnal desire, then, because I take pleasure in its carnal acts, I myself fulfill those acts. But reason, which along with knowledge lives in me, shows me that I was created by God. And by reason I remember that Adam, when he had transgressed God's command, was afraid and hid himself. So I too am afraid and hide myself from the face of God when I sense that my works in my tabernacle are contrary to God. But when I think above all of the leaden scale of sin, I condemn all those works that burn with carnal desire.

5 On the whirlwinds engendered by the Devil's persuasion

"Alas for me, a pilgrim! How can I survive among these dangers? And what happens when the Devil's persuasion invades me, saying, 'Is a thing good which you do not know and cannot see and cannot do?' and again, 'Why forsake what you do know and do understand and can do?' What shall I do then? Full of sorrow, I will answer, 'Ach miserable me! for harmful poisons were instilled into me through Adam, when he disobeyed God and was cast out into the world and joined his tabernacle to carnal things. For in the taste of the fruit he knew by disobedience, a harmful sweetness poured itself into his blood and flesh, producing the corruption of vice. And therefore I feel the sin of the flesh in me, and intoxicated by this sin, I neglect the Most Pure God. But I must not follow the taste my tabernacle has in it. For since Adam was pure and honest when God created him and he first appeared, I fear God, knowing that I too was created pure and honest. But now, through the evil habits of vice, I dwell in disquietude. Oh, in all these ways I am a pilgrim!

"Therefore the whirlwinds tell me lies in many voices, which rise up within me, saying, 'Who are you? and what are you doing? and what are these battles you are fighting? You are indeed unhappy, for you do not know

whether your work is good or bad. Where will you go? and who will save you? and what are these errors that are driving you to madness? Are you doing what delights you? Are you escaping what distresses you? Oh, what will you do when you know this and are ignorant of that? For what delights you is not lawful for you, and what distresses you God's precept compels you to do. And how do you know whether these things are so? It would be better for you if you did not exist!' And after these whirlwinds have risen up thus within me, I begin to tread another path that is hard for my flesh to bear, for I begin to practice righteousness. But then I doubt as to whether or not the Holy Spirit has given this to me, and I say, 'This is useless.' And I wish to fly above the clouds. How? I wish to fly above my faculties and start things I cannot finish. But when I try to do these things, I only stir up great sadness in myself, so that I do no works, either on the heights of sanctity or on the plains of good will; but I bear within me the disquietude of doubt, desperation, sadness and oppression in all things. And when the Devil's persuasion disturbs me then, oh, how great a calamity overtakes me! For I am overcome in my unhappiness by all the evils that are or can be in blame, malediction, mortification of body and soul and shameful words against the purity, healing and loftiness that are in God. And then wickedness suggests to me that all the felicity and all the good which is in Man as well as God will be to me harmful and oppressive, offering me death rather than life. Ach! How unhappy is this struggle, which forces me from labor to labor, from sorrow to sorrow, from discord to discord, depriving me of all happiness.

6 From what cause these errors come into being

"But from whence does the evil of these errors come into being? From this: that the ancient serpent has within himself astuteness and deceptive cunning and the deadly poison of iniquity. For by his astuteness he infuses me with stubbornness in sinning and withdraws my intellect from the fear of God, so that I am not afraid to sin, and say, 'Who is God? I do not know who God is.' And by his deceptive cunning he instils obduracy into me, so that I am hardened in evil. And by the deadly poison of iniquity he takes spiritual joy away from me, so that I can rejoice neither in Man nor in God, and thus incites me to despairing doubt, so that I do not know whether or not I can be saved. Oh, what are these tabernacles that they should suffer so much danger from the deception of the Devil?

"But when, by God's gift, I remember that God created me, then in the midst of these oppressions I give this answer to the Devil's tempting: 'I will not yield to the frail clay, but furiously wage war!' How? When my tabernacle tries to do works of unrighteousness, I will tread upon marrow, blood and flesh in the wisdom of patience, the way the strong lion defends itself and the

serpent fleeing a mortal blow hides itself in its hole. For I must not let myself be struck by the Devil's arrows or practice the pleasures of the flesh. How?

7 How anger, hatred and pride are restrained

"When anger tries to burn up my tabernacle, I will look to the goodness of God, Whom anger never touched; and thus I will be sweeter than the air, which in its gentleness moistens the earth, and have spiritual joy because virtues are beginning to show themselves in me. And thus I will feel God's goodness.

"And when hatred tries to darken me, I will look to the mercy and the martyrdom of the Son of God, and so restrain my flesh, and in faithful memory receive the sweet fragrance of the roses that spring from thorns. And so I will acknowledge my Redeemer.

"And when pride tries to build in me a tower of vanity without foundation on the rock, and to erect in me the loftiness that wants no one to be like itself but always to be taller than the rest—oh, who will help me then, when the ancient serpent who fell into death by wishing to be above everyone is trying to cast me down? Then I say with grief, 'Where is my King and my God? What good can I do without God? None.' But then I look to God Who gave me life, and I run to the Most Blessed Virgin who trod underfoot the pride of the ancient abyss, and thus I am made a strong stone of God's edifice; and that rapacious wolf, who choked on the divine hook, from now on cannot conquer me. And thus in God's sublimity I know the sweetest good, which is humility, and feel the sweetness of the unfailing balsam and rejoice in the delightfulness of God as if I were amid the fragrance of all perfumes. And thus I ward off the other vices by the impregnable shield of humility."

8 Lament of a soul that with fear goes forth from its tabernacle

But then I, poor creature, saw that another of the globes freed itself from the lineaments of the form it was in and untied all its bonds, and with a groan drew itself out of them, and broke away lamenting from its abode. And it said, "I will go forth from my tabernacle. But, miserable and full of grief as I am, where shall I go? I shall go through dreadful and fearsome paths to the judgment where I shall be judged! There I will show the works that I have performed in my tabernacle, and there I will be requited according to my merits. Oh, what great fear, and oh, how much anguish will be there for me!" *And when it had thus freed itself, there came certain spirits, some of light and some of darkness, who had been its life's companions according to its behavior in its abode, and who waited for its release so that they could lead it away with them.* And I

heard a living voice saying to them, "Let her be led from place to place according to her works."

And again I heard a voice from Heaven saying to me, "The Blessed and Ineffable Trinity showed itself to the world when the Father sent into the world his Only-Begotten, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin, so that humans, born so diversely and bound by so many sins, should be brought back by Him to the way of truth; and thus those who, when released from their ties to the heavy body, carry good and holy works with them might gain the joys of the celestial inheritance."

9 God's knowledge is clouded by no obscurity

That you, O human, may grasp this more profoundly and show it more clearly, *you see a most great and serene splendor, flaming, as it were, with many eyes, with four corners pointing toward the four parts of the world.* This signifies the knowledge of God, great in its mysteries and pure in its manifestations, radiant with the most profound clarity, which extends its all-piercing gaze in fourfold firmness to the four corners of the earth. There this knowledge most clearly foresees those who will be rejected as well as those who will be gathered in; this shows the mystery of the Celestial Majesty, which, as you see, is presented to you in this image of great loftiness and profundity. *In it appears another splendor like the dawn, containing in itself a brightness of purple lightning;* for the knowledge of God also indicates that the Only-Begotten of the Father, taking flesh from the Virgin, hastened to shed His blood in the purity of faith for the salvation of humanity, while in the same knowledge of God the good and the evil are made known, for it is clouded by no obscurity of any kind. But you, O human, are saying, "What is Man to do, when God knows in advance everything Man is going to do?" And I, O human, say this to you:

10 In the beauty of God's justice no injustice can be found

O fool! In the wickedness of your heart you are imitating the one who first refused the way of truth and opposed it with a lie, because he wished to make himself like the Supreme Goodness. Who can obscure the Beginning and the End, Who is, was and will remain? And what are you, who are a spark among ashes? And what did you know when you were nothing? But you, with your lamentable beginning and miserable end, speak against the thing you do not know and should not know, the indescribable beauty of God's justice, in which no suspicion of injustice is found, or has been found, or will be found. O fool, for whom do you take the father of wickedness whom you imitate? What does this mean? When pride swells up within you,

you want to be raised above the stars and the other creatures and the angels, who fulfil God's precepts in all things. But you shall fall, as the one fell who opposed a lie to the truth. For he loved the lie, and therefore, entangled in death, he fell into the abyss. Therefore, O human, pay attention. If you do not contemplate the charity with which God freed you, and if you pay no heed to the number of good things God constantly gives you, and if you do not consider how, when you fall into many sins and love death rather than life, He calls you back from death; nonetheless, when you finally remember the Scriptures and the doctrines the faithful fathers of antiquity set before you, telling you to avoid evil and do good, then if you say from your inmost heart, "I have sinned gravely, wherefore I must return with due penitence to my Father who created me," your Father will receive you lovingly and place you in His bosom and clasp you in sweet embraces. But now you disdain to know that blessedness, which God sets before you, and you refuse to hear or to do God's justice. If it were possible to do, would you not reprimand God's justice as unjust rather than true? For that reason, if you had not been redeemed by the blood of the Son of God, you would be lying lost in perdition. But God's judgment is true and just. Wherefore, O human, what advantage will it give you if in My judgment you destroy yourself? In the choir of the angels and in My chosen vineyard resounds the praise of those who laud Me and say, "Glory to You, Lord!"; and, because they are just, they do not contradict My judgment. But what did it profit the Devil to oppose Me? He, seeing that his brightness was great, tried to exalt himself above all, so that a countless band of proud spirits joined with him; all of whom the Divine Power cast down with him in the zeal of Its rectitude. And so also are cast down all who persevere in evil and seek to avert God's justice, laboring to pervert the Supreme Good into perverse wickedness. So God never established anything unjust, but in the equity of His goodness He ordained all that is right.

11 On idols, and that they must be forsaken

But when the race of people to whom Adam and Eve had narrated how they were made by God and how they had been expelled from Paradise passed away, those people arose in the wantonness of vanity who in their unfaithfulness abandoned God, making themselves idols into which the Devil entered and mocked them. Others who followed them in perversity worshipped God's creature rather than the Creator Himself, and thought things that were not alive could determine their lives. So let all who are still foul with this infidelity forsake their stupidity and be converted in faith to Him Who broke the Devil's snares, laying aside old ignorance and embracing new life, as My servant Ezekiel exhorts, saying,

12 The prophet Ezekiel on this subject

"Cast away from you all your transgressions in which you have transgressed, and make for yourselves a new heart and a new spirit" [Ezekiel 18:31]. Which is to say: O you who want to persevere in rectitude under the Sun in Whose paths go the blessed sheep, cast out of your heart's knowledge inquiry into those secret things that in the highest wisdom are useless. By them you sought to fly to a vain height but were plunged into a deep pit, in which dwells no honor but only that horrible desire that does not know God. And when you do this, for your salvation go in the way of truth, where you will find in your heart the newness of the sparkling heavens, and where you will have in your spirit the newness of living breath.

13 On the inequality of human seed and the diversity of people made from it

You see also on the earth people carrying milk in earthen vessels and making cheese from it; these are the people in the world, both men and women, who have in their bodies human seed, from which the various races of people are procreated. *One part is thick, and from it strong cheeses are made;* for that strong semen, which is usefully and well matured and tempered, produces energetic people, to whom brilliant spiritual and bodily gifts are given by their great and noble ancestors, making them flourish in prudence, discretion and usefulness in their works before God and Man, and the Devil finds no place in them. *And one part is thin, and from it weak cheeses are curdled;* for this semen, imperfectly matured and tempered in a weak season, produces weak people, who are for the most part foolish, languid and useless in their works in the sight of God and the world, not actively seeking God. But also *one part is mixed with corruption, and from it bitter cheeses are formed;* for that semen is basely emitted in weakness and confusion and mixed uselessly, and it produces misshapen people, who often have bitterness, adversity and oppression of heart and are thus unable to raise their minds to higher things. Many of them nonetheless become useful; though they suffer many tempests and troubles in their hearts and in their actions, they come out victors. For if they were left in peace and quiet, they would become languid and useless, and therefore God forces them and leads them to the path of salvation, as it is written:

14 Words of Moses on this subject

"I will kill, and I will make live; I will strike, and I will heal; and there is none who can deliver out of My hand" [Deuteronomy 32:39]. Which is to

say: I Who Am, having neither beginning nor end, slay in their deeds wicked people who, steeped in vice by the Devil's filth, are deceived by the diabolic pits into sowing unhappy births. Oh, how crafty is the bite of the viper, which so poisons them that death tries to enter into them! Therefore I deprive them of prosperity in this world, where they are slain by many calamities that they cannot overcome but which by just judgment are always with them. But I, Who am thrown down by no darkness, also cause these people to live wonderfully elsewhere, when I draw the spirit that lives in them upward from the earth, so that it may not perish within them. I also afflict with wounds of weakness in their life's labor those who try in their pride of mind to rise to an absurd height, thinking that no one can cast them down; but I Who am present everywhere also sometimes raise them to true health, so that they will not be destroyed by vanity amid deceitful dangers. And in all these things there is no human or other creature who can subvert these works of Mine by any cunning or fierceness of his, for there is no one who can resist My will and justice.

15 Why stunted and deformed infants are born

And often, as you see, when male and female unite in forgetfulness of Me and in the mockery of the Devil, those who are born are found to be stunted so that their parents, who transgressed My precepts, may feel anguish at having these children and so return to Me in penitence. Often also I let these strange births take place among people for My glory and that of My saints, so that when those who are thus deformed are restored to health by the help of My elect, My name may be more ardently glorified among people. But those who bind themselves by an agreement to seek the glory of virginity ascend like the dawn to the secret places of Heaven, since for the sake of My Son's love they deprive themselves of the delights of the body.

16 An infant is vivified in the womb and confirmed by a soul on leaving it

And you see the image of a woman who has a perfect human form in her womb. This means that after a woman has conceived by human semen, an infant with all its members whole is formed in the secret chamber of her womb. And behold! *By the secret design of the Supernal Creator that form moves with vital motion;* for, by God's secret and hidden command and will, fitly and rightly at the divinely appointed time the infant in the maternal womb receives a spirit, and shows by the movements of its body that it lives, just as the earth opens and brings forth the flowers of its use when the dew falls on it. *So that a fiery globe which has no human lineaments possesses the*

heart of that form; that is, the soul, burning with a fire of profound knowledge, which discerns whatever is within the circle of its understanding, and, without the form of human members, since it is not corporeal or transitory like a human body, gives strength to the heart and rules the whole body as its foundation, as the firmament of Heaven contains the lower regions and touches the higher. *And it also touches the person's brain;* for in its powers it knows not only earthly but also heavenly things, since it wisely knows God; *and it spreads itself through all the person's members;* for it gives vitality to the marrow and veins and members of the whole body, as the tree from its root gives sap and greenness to all the branches. *But then this human form, in this way vivified, comes forth from the woman's womb, and changes its color according to the movement the globe makes in that form;* which is to say that after the person has received the vital spirit in the maternal womb and is born and begins his actions, his merits will be according to the works his soul does with the body, for he will put on brightness from the good ones and darkness from the evil ones.

17 How the soul shows its powers according to the powers of the body

The soul now shows its powers according to the powers of the body, so that in a person's infancy it produces simplicity, in his youth strength, and in adulthood, when all the person's veins are full, it shows its strongest powers in wisdom; as the tree in its first shoots is tender and then shows that it can bear fruit, and finally, in its full utility, bears it. But then in human old age, when the marrow and veins start to incline to weakness, the soul's powers are gentler, as if from a weariness at human knowledge; as when winter approaches the sap of the tree diminishes in the branches and the leaves, and the tree in its old age begins to bend.

18 A person has three paths within himself

But a person has within himself three paths. What are they? The soul, the body and the senses; and all human life is led in these. How? The soul vivifies the body and conveys the breath of life to the senses; the body draws the soul to itself and opens the senses; and the senses touch the soul and draw the body. For the soul gives life to the body as fire gives light to darkness, with two principal powers like two arms, intellect and will; the soul has arms not so as to move itself, but so as to show itself in these powers as the sun shows itself by its brilliance. Therefore, O human, who are not just a bundle of marrow, pay attention to scriptural knowledge!

VISION FOUR

19 On the intellect

The intellect is joined to the soul like an arm to the body. For as the arm, joined to the hand with its fingers, branches out from the body, so the intellect, working with the other powers of the soul, by which it understands human actions, most certainly proceeds from the soul. For before all the other powers of the soul it understands whatever is in human works, whether good or evil, so that through it, as through a teacher, everything is understood; for it sifts things as wheat is purified of any foreign matter, inquiring whether they are useful or useless, lovable or hateful, pertinent to life or death. Thus, as food without salt is tasteless, the other powers of the soul without intellect are insipid and undiscerning. But the intellect is also to the soul as the shoulder is to the body, the very core of the other powers of the soul; as the bodily shoulder is strong, so it understands the divinity and the humanity in God, which is the joint of the arm, and it has true faith in its work, which is the joint of the hand, with which it chooses among the various works wisely as if with fingers. But it does not work in the same way as the other powers of the soul. What does this mean?

20 On the will

The will activates the work, and the mind receives it, and the reason produces it. But the intellect understands the work, knowing good and evil, just as the angels, who have intellect, love good and despise evil. And where the heart is in the body, there the intellect is in the soul, exercising its power in that part of the soul as the will does in another part. How? Because the will has great power in the soul. How? The soul stands in a corner of the house, that is, by the prop of the heart, like a man who stands in a corner of his house, so that looking through the whole house he may command all its contents, lifting his right arm to point out what is useful in the house and turning to the East. Thus the soul should do, looking along the streets of the body toward the rising sun. Thus it puts its will, like a right arm, as the support of the veins and marrow and the movement of the whole body; for the will does every work, whether it be good or bad.

21 Analogy of fire and bread

For the will is like a fire, baking each deed as if in a furnace. Bread is baked so that people may be nourished by it and be able to live. So too the will is the strength of the whole work, for it starts by kneading it and when it is firm adds the yeast and pounds it severely; and, thus preparing the work in

contemplation as if it were bread, it bakes it in perfection by the full action of its ardor, and so makes a greater food for humans in the work they do than in the bread they eat. A person stops eating from time to time, but the work of his will goes on in him till his soul leaves his body. And in whatever differing circumstances the work is performed, whether in infancy, youth, adulthood or bent old age, it always progresses in the will and in the will comes to perfection.

22 How in the will's tabernacle all powers are activated and come together

But the will has in the human breast a tabernacle, the mind, upon which the intellect and that same will and a sort of force of the soul all breathe in strength. And all these are activated and come together in the same tabernacle. How? If anger arises, gall is produced and brings the anger to its height by filling the tabernacle with smoke. If wicked delight rises up, the flame of lust touches its structure, and so the wantonness that pertains to that sin is elevated and in that tabernacle united with it. But there is another, lovely kind of joy, which is kindled in that tabernacle by the Holy Spirit, and the rejoicing soul receives it faithfully and perfects good works in the desire of Heaven. And there is a kind of sadness that engenders in the tabernacle, out of those humors that surround the gall, the sloth which produces disdain, obduracy and stubbornness in people and depresses the soul, unless the grace of God comes quickly to rescue it.

But since in that tabernacle there occur contrary conditions, it is often disturbed by hatred and other deadly emotions, which kill the soul and try to lay it waste in perdition. But when the will wills, it can move the implements in the tabernacle and in its burning ardor dispose of them, whether they are good or evil. But if these implements please the will, it bakes its food there and offers it to people to enjoy. So in that tabernacle a great throng of good and evil things arises, like an army gathered in some place of assembly; when the commander of an army arrives, if the army pleases him he accepts it, but if it displeases him he orders it to disband. The will does the same. How? If good or evil arises in the breast, the will either carries it out or ignores it.

23 On the reason

But both in the intellect and in the will reason stands forth as the loud sound of the soul, which makes known every work of God or Man. For sound carries words on high, as the wind lifts the eagle so that it can fly. Thus the soul utters the sound of reason in the hearing and the understanding of humanity, that its powers may be understood and its every work brought

to perfection. But the body is the tabernacle and support of all the powers of the soul, since the soul resides in the body and works with the body, and the body with it, whether for good or for evil.

24 On the senses

It is the senses on which the interior powers of the soul depend, so that these powers are known through them by the fruits of each work. The senses are subject to these powers, since they guide them to the work, but the senses do not impose work on the powers, for they are their shadow and do what pleases them. The exterior human being awakens with senses in the womb of his mother before he is born, but the other powers of the soul still remain in hiding. What is this? The dawn announces the daylight; just so the human senses manifest the reason and all the powers of the soul. And as on the two commandments of God hang all the Law and the prophets, so also on the soul and its powers depend the human senses. What does this mean?

The Law is ordained for human salvation, and the prophets show forth the hidden things of God; so also human senses protect a person from harmful things and lay bare the soul's interior. For the soul emanates the senses. How? It vivifies a person's face and glorifies him with sight, hearing, taste, smell and touch, so that by this touch he becomes watchful in all things. For the senses are the sign of all the powers of the soul, as the body is the vessel of the soul. What does this mean? A person is recognized by his face, sees with his eyes, hears with his ears, opens his mouth to speak, feels with his hands, walks with his feet; and so the senses are to a person as precious stones and as a rich treasure sealed in a vase. But as the treasure within is known when the vase is seen, so also the powers of the soul are inferred by the senses.

25 That the soul is the mistress and the flesh the handmaid

'The soul is the mistress, the flesh the handmaid. How? The soul rules the body by vivifying it, and the body is ruled by this vivification, for if the soul did not vivify the body it would fall apart and decay. But when a person does an evil deed and the soul knows it, it is as bitter for the soul as poison is for the body when it knowingly takes it. But the soul rejoices in a sweet deed as the body delights in sweet food. And the soul flows through the body like sap through a tree. What does this mean? By the sap, the tree grows green and produces flowers and then fruit. And how is this fruit matured? By the air's tempering. How? The sun warms it, the rain waters it, and thus by the tempering of the air it is perfected. What does this mean? The mercy of God's grace, like the sun, will illumine the person, the breath of the Holy

Spirit, like the rain, will water him, and so discernment, like the tempering of the air, will lead him to the perfection of good fruits.

26 Analogy of a tree to the soul

The soul in the body is like sap in a tree, and the soul's powers are like the form of the tree. How? The intellect in the soul is like the greenery of the tree's branches and leaves, the will like its flowers, the mind like its bursting firstfruits, the reason like the perfected mature fruit, and the senses like its size and shape. And so a person's body is strengthened and sustained by the soul. Hence, O human, understand what you are in your soul, you who lay aside your good intellect and try to liken yourself to the brutes.

27 The soul inclined to sin leaves it when stung with remorse

But you, O human who are seeing these things, consider also that *many whirlwinds assail one of these globes in a body and bow it down to the ground.* This means that as long as a person lives in soul and body, his soul is disturbed by many invisible temptations, which incline it to sins of earthly desire through the pleasure of the flesh. *But that globe, gaining back its strength and bravely raising itself up, resists them boldly;* because when the faithful and careful person sins, by God's gift he is often stung with remorse and forsakes his sin; placing his hope in God, he rejects the Devil's lies and faithfully seeks his Creator, as the faithful soul truly showed when it lamented its miseries as above.

28 The soul tempted by the Devil evades his darts by celestial inspiration

And you see that *many whirlwinds rush upon another of these globes and try to throw it down, but cannot.* This means that the Devil assails this soul with many snares, trying to draw it into many sins and crimes, but cannot by his illusions prevail over it; *for it resists strongly and gives them no room to rage;* that is, fortifying itself with celestial inspiration, it drives away the darts of lying deception and hastens back to its Savior, as it declared in the words of its complaint quoted above.

29 The soul that forsakes its body awaits its sentence with great fear

And, as you see, *another of the globes frees itself from the lineaments of the form it is in and unties all its bonds.* This means that the soul, forsaking the members of its bodily dwelling, breaks its relationship with them when the

time comes for the body's dissolution. *And with a groan it draws itself out of them and breaks away lamenting from its abode;* for, taking itself out of the body with anguish, it tremblingly allows its habitation to fall, dreading the imminent tribunal of the Celestial Judge, at which it will perceive by God's just judgment the merits of its works, as it too shows in its complaint already quoted. That is why, *when it has thus freed itself, there come certain spirits, some of light and some of darkness, who have been its life's companions according to its behavior in its abode;* because in that dissolution, when a person's soul forsakes its habitation, by God's just and true ordinance both good and evil angelic spirits are present who have observed its deeds done in the body by means of the body. *They wait for its release so that they can lead it away with them;* for they await the sentence of the Just Judge on that soul when it is separated from the body, so when it leaves the body they lead it where the Celestial Judge will judge it on the merits of its deeds, as has been faithfully demonstrated, O human, to you.

30 Words of God to humanity, that they should obey the divine precepts

Therefore, O My dearest children, open your eyes and ears and obey My precepts! Why do you despise your Father, Who has delivered you from death? The choirs of angels sing, "You are just, O Lord!" [Psalm 118:137], because God's justice has no flaw in it; for God delivered Man not by power but by mercy, when He sent His Son into the world to redeem him. No smear of dung soils the sun; and likewise no wickedness of injustice can touch God. But you, O human, with reflective knowledge consider good and evil. What are you when you soil yourself with many desires of the flesh? and what are you when the brightest gems of the virtues shine in you? The first angel despised good and desired evil; therefore he received it, dying into eternal perdition and being entombed in death for rejecting the good. But the good angels condemned evil and loved good, seeing the fall of the Devil, who wanted to overthrow the truth and set up a lie. Thus they burned with love of God and firmly based themselves on all that is good, so that they wanted nothing but what pleased God, never ceasing to praise Him. The first man also knew God and loved Him in simplicity and, receiving His precepts, set himself to obey; but then he inclined toward evil and committed disobedience. For when the Devil suggested evil to him, he forsook good and perpetrated evil, and hence he was cast out of Paradise. Therefore, evil must be thrown down into the perdition of death, and good embraced in love of life.

But you, O human, when you consider good and evil, are standing, as it were, where two roads branch off. If you despise the darkness of evil and

want to see Him Whose creature you are, and Whom you acknowledged in holy baptism where the old sin of Adam was nullified in you; and if you say, "I want to fly from the Devil and his works and follow the true God and His precepts"; then think how you have been taught to turn away from evil and do good, and how the Heavenly Father did not spare His Only-Begotten but sent Him for your deliverance; and pray to God to help you. And He, hearing you, will say, "These eyes are pleasing to me!" And if you then cast off weariness and run courageously in God's commands, He will always hear the cry of your prayers. Therefore you should subdue your flesh and subjugate it to the rule of the soul. But you say, "I have in my flesh so many great burdens that I cannot conquer myself; but since God is good, He will make me good. How can I subdue my flesh, being human? God is good; He will perfect all good things in me. For when it pleases Him, He can make me good."

But I say to you: If God is good, why do you put such little value on knowing His goodness, which gave His Son over to deliver you by many sorrows and labors from death? When you say that you cannot do good works, you speak in unjust wickedness. For you have eyes to see with, ears to hear with, a heart to think with, hands to work with and feet to walk with, so that with your body you can stand up and lie down, sleep and wake, eat and fast. Thus God created you. Therefore, resist the desires of your flesh, and God will help you. For when you set yourself against the Devil like a strong warrior against his enemy, God delights in your struggle, wanting you to invoke Him in every hour, in all your troubles, constantly. But when you do not try to subdue your flesh, you make it feast with vice and sin, for you free it from the bridle of the fear of the Lord, with which you should be curbing it lest it go to perdition.

At such a time you are looking to the Devil, as he himself looked to wickedness when he fell into death. And, rejoicing in your perdition, he says, "Here is a person who is like us!" And then he falls on you and instils into you at his will his death-shadowed ways. But God knows what good you are capable of. For the Law is laid down for you according to what you can perform. God wishes from the beginning to the end of the world to take pleasure in His elect, that they may be faithfully crowned, adorned with the brightness of virtue. How shall this be? Let Man resist the pleasure of the flesh, lest he be caught up in the delights of the world; and let him not live securely, as if he could remain in the house he inhabits; for he is a pilgrim, whose Father awaits him if he chooses to return to Him in the place where he knows He is. Therefore, O human, if you turn your eyes to the two roads, good and evil, then you will learn, for you will understand both great things and small. How? Through faith you know the One God, in His divinity and humanity; and in evil you see the Devil's works. And when you know the just and the unjust roads, I will question you: "Which road do you wish to travel

on?" If you wish to travel in good paths, and if you faithfully hear My words, pray to God assiduously and sincerely to help you and not abandon you, since your flesh is fragile; and bow your head in humility, and shake off and quickly cast away from you such of your works as are evil.

God requires this of you. For what if someone were to offer you gold and lead, and say "Stretch out your hand for whichever you want"? You would eagerly seize the gold and leave the lead, for you love gold better than lead. So too you should prefer the country of Heaven to the downward slope of sin. But if you have fallen into sin, quickly rise by confession and pure penitence, before death lays claim to you. For your Father wants you to cry out, weep and ask for help so as not to remain in the squalor of sin. For if you have been wounded, you seek a physician lest you die. Does not God often send people troubles, so that they will more intently invoke Him? But you, O human, say "I cannot do good works!" I say you can. And you say "How?" And I say, "By thought and action." And you answer, "I lack decision." And I answer, "Learn to fight against yourself!" And you say, "I cannot fight against myself unless God helps me." Hear then how you can fight against yourself. When evil rises up in you and you do not know how to get rid of it, then, touched by My grace, which reaches you in the paths of your inner vision, at once cry out, pray, confess and weep so that God will help you, and remove evil from you, and grant you strength in good. For this good is yours by the knowledge that lets you understand God by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. If you were someone's workman, oh, how often you would have to do what your body found difficult! Would you not bear many trials for the sake of your earthly wages? Then why do you not serve God, Who gave you both soul and body, for the sake of heavenly wages? For if you wanted to possess a temporal object, oh, how you would labor that you might have it quickly!

But now it wearies you to seek what has no end. As the ox is roused by the goad, so you should exert yourself in body for fear of the Lord; if you do, God will not cast you out. If some tyrant were to capture you, you would at once turn to anyone who could help you, and beg him, pray him and promise him your property if he would come to your aid. Do this also, O human, when iniquity captures you; turn to God, beg, pray and promise Him your reformation, and He will help you. But you, O human, are blind when you need to see, deaf when you need to hear and senseless when you need to defend yourself, since the intellect and the five bodily senses God gave you are no more to you than filth and emptiness. Do you not have intellect and knowledge? The Kingdom of God can be bought, but not acquired in jest. Hear therefore, O humanity, and do not despise entry into the heavenly Jerusalem, or touch death, or deny God and acknowledge the Devil, or increase in sins and diminish in good deeds. You do not wish to hear God,

when you refuse to walk in His precepts, and you run to the Devil, when you seek to gratify the pleasure of your flesh. Recover therefore and be strengthened, for it is necessary for you.

So let the faithful person recognize his pain and seek a physician before he falls dead. If he considers his pain and seeks a physician, the latter when found will show him the bitter medicine that can save him; that is, the bitter words by which he must be tested to see whether his penitence comes from the root of his heart or only from his unstable breath. And when he has tested this, he will give him the wine of penitence, with which to wash away the pus from his wounds, and the oil of mercy, with which to anoint the wounds to heal them. Then he will enjoin him to be careful of his health, saying, "See that you keep taking this medicine carefully and regularly, and do not tire of it, for your wounds are serious." There are many who accept penance for their sins only with difficulty; but, though with much effort, they nonetheless carry it out for fear of death. But I give them My hand, and change their bitterness into sweetness, so that they may fulfil tranquilly that penance they began with such difficulty. But he who neglects repentance for his sins, saying it is hard for him to chastise his body, will be wretched, for he does not want to look at himself, or seek a physician, or have his wounds healed, but hides the dreadful wound in himself and covers over death with false appearances to conceal it. Thus he is averse to tasting penance, unwilling to look to the oil of mercy or seek the consolation of redemption; and so he will go into death, since he has loved death and not sought the Kingdom of God.

Therefore, O ye faithful, run in God's precepts lest the damnation of death seize upon you. Imitate the new Adam and cast off the old. For to him who runs, the Kingdom of God is open, but to him who lies on the ground it is closed. But miserable are they who worship the Devil, not knowing God. How? Because they do not adore one God in Trinity and do not seek to know the Trinity in Unity. So let the one who wishes to be saved be unwavering in the true Catholic faith. What is this?

31 On the Catholic faith

He who denies the Son does not worship the Father, and he who does not know the Father does not love the Son, and he who rejects the Holy Spirit has neither the Father nor the Son, and he who does not adore the Father and the Son does not receive the Holy Spirit. Therefore the Unity must be understood in the Trinity, and the Trinity in the Unity. O human, can you be alive without a heart and without blood? Even so it must not be believed that the Father is without the Son or the Holy Spirit, or the Son without the Father and the Holy Spirit, or the Holy Spirit without Them. For the redemption of humanity the Father sent the Son into the world and

then took Him back to Himself, the way a person sends out the thoughts of his heart and then recalls them to himself. Wherefore Isaiah speaks of the salvific mission of God's Only-Begotten by the will of the Celestial Majesty, saying:

32 Words of Isaiah

"The Lord sent a word unto Jacob, and it has lighted upon Israel" [Isaiah 9:8]. Which is to say: The Lord, that is the Supernal Father, sent the Word by Whom all things were made, that is God's Only-Begotten, Who was in divinity in the Father's heart forever without any beginning, into Jacob through the mouths of the prophets; and they faithfully foretold that the same Son of God would come into the world for human salvation, so that people forewarned and strengthened by them could overthrow the Devil and wisely reject his crafty deceptions. And the same Word lighted upon Israel when the Only-Begotten of God came into the high fecundity of the Virgin, into which no man had penetrated but which had inviolably kept its flower, so that He, born of the Virgin, might lead back those who were erroneously blind to the light of truth into the true way.

Therefore whoever has knowledge in the Holy Spirit and wings of faith, let this one not ignore My admonition, but taste it, embrace it and receive it in his soul.

EVADING THE DEVIL'S DARTS

THE SYNAGOGUE

VISION FIVE
The Synagogue

After this, I saw the image of a woman, pale from her head to her navel and black from her navel to her feet; her feet were red, and around her feet was a cloud of purest whiteness. She had no eyes, and had put her hands in her armpits; she stood next to the altar that is before the eyes of God, but she did not touch it. And in her heart stood Abraham, and in her breast Moses, and in her womb the rest of the prophets, each displaying his symbols and admiring the beauty of the Church. She was of great size, like the tower of a city, and had on her head a circlet like the dawn. And again I heard the voice from Heaven saying to me: "On the people of the Old Testament God placed the austerity of the Law in enjoining circumcision on Abraham; which He then turned into sweet Grace when He gave His Son to those who believed in the truth of the Gospel, and anointed with the oil of mercy those who had been wounded by the yoke of the Law."

1 The Synagogue is the mother of the Incarnation of the Son of God

Therefore *you see the image of a woman, pale from her head to her navel;* she is the Synagogue, which is the mother of the Incarnation of the Son of God. From the time her children began to be born until their full strength she foresaw in the shadows the secrets of God, but did not fully reveal them. For she was not the glowing dawn who speaks openly, but gazed on the latter from afar with great admiration and alluded to her thus in the Song of Songs:

2 Words of Solomon

"Who is this who comes up from the desert, flowing with delights and leaning upon her beloved?" [Song of Solomon 3:6, 8:5]. Which is to say: "Who is this new Bride, who with many good works comes up through the deserts of the pagans, who reject God's lawful precepts and adore idols, and ascends to heavenly desires, abounding in the delights of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, panting with great zeal and leaning on her spouse, the Son of God?" For it is she who blooms with the resplendent virtues given her by the Son of

God and flows with brooks of Scripture. And the same Synagogue, lost in admiration of the children of this new Bride, speaks thus by My servant the prophet Isaiah:

3 Words of Isaiah the prophet

"Who are these who fly like clouds, and like doves to their windows?" [Isaiah 60:8] That is to say: Who are these who, withdrawing themselves in mind from earthly and fleshly desires, fly full of desire and devotion to heavenly things, and with the simplicity of doves and without the bitterness of gall fortify their senses and with the great ardor of virtue seek the protection of that firm rock that is the Only-Begotten of God? For these are they who in supernal love tread underfoot earthly kingdoms and seek heavenly ones. The Synagogue therefore was marvelling at the Church, for she knew herself not to be adorned with those virtues she foresaw in her; for the Church is surrounded by angelic guardians to keep the Devil from harming her and casting her down, while the Synagogue, deserted by God, lies in vice.

4 On the varying color of the Synagogue

That is why *you see her black from her navel to her feet,* for from the time of her fullest strength to the end of her time she was soiled by deviation from the Law and by transgression of the heritage of her fathers, for she disregarded the divine precepts in many ways and followed the pleasures of the flesh. *Her feet are red, and around her feet is a cloud of purest whiteness;* for at the end of her time she killed the Prophet of Prophets and therefore slipped and fell down herself, while at the same time a most clear and acute faith arose in the minds of believers; for as the Synagogue ended, the Church arose, when after the death of the Son of God the apostolic doctrine spread throughout the world.

5 Her blindness, and why the prophets stand within her

That image *has no eyes, and has put her hands in her armpits;* for the Synagogue did not look on the true light, since she held the Only-Begotten of God in despite, and she conceals the works of justice under the apathy of her laziness, remaining in her torpor and negligently hiding them as if they did not exist. *She stands next to the altar that is before the eyes of God, but she does not touch it;* for she did in fact know superficially the Law of God, which she received by divine precept and divine visitation, but she did not plumb its depths, for she shrank from it rather than loved it, neglecting the sacrifice and the incense of devout prayers to God.

VISION FIVE

And in her heart stands Abraham; for he was the beginning of circumcision in the Synagogue; *and in her breast Moses;* for he brought the divine Law into human hearts; *and in her womb the rest of the prophets;* that is, they stand in that tradition that was given them by God as observers of the divine precepts; *each displaying his symbols and admiring the beauty of the Church;* for they displayed the miracles of their prophecies by marvelous symbols and with great wonder waited for the noble beauty of the new Bride.

6 That she is as great as a tower and has a circlet like the dawn

The Synagogue *is of great size like the tower of a city,* because she received the greatness of the divine laws and so foreshadowed the bulwarks and defenses of the noble and chosen City. *And she has on her head a circlet like the dawn,* because she prefigured in her rising the miracle of God's Only-Begotten and foreshadowed the bright virtues and mysteries that followed. For she was crowned, as it were, early in the morning, when she received the divine precepts, following Adam, who at first accepted God's commands, but afterward by his transgressions fell into death. So also did the Jews, who originally submitted to the divine Law, but then in their unbelief rejected the Son of God. But as humanity in the last days will be snatched from the perdition of death by the death of God's Only-Begotten, so too the Synagogue, stirred up by divine clemency, will before the last day abandon her unbelief and truly attain to the knowledge of God. How is this? Does not the dawn rise before the sun? But the dawn recedes, and the sun's brightness remains. How is this? The Old Testament receded, and the truth of the Gospel remains; for what the early people observed in the flesh in legal rites, the new people of the New Testament practice in the spirit, and what the former showed in the flesh, the latter perfect in the spirit. For circumcision has not passed away, because it has been transformed into baptism; as the older race was marked in one member, the newer race is marked in all its members. Hence the old precepts have not passed away but are transformed into better ones; and in the last times the Synagogue will also transform itself faithfully into the Church. For, O Synagogue, when you were wandering in many iniquities, polluting yourself with Baal and the others, shamefully breaking the custom of the Law and lying naked in your sins, I did what My servant Ezekiel tells of, when he says:

7 Words of Ezekiel

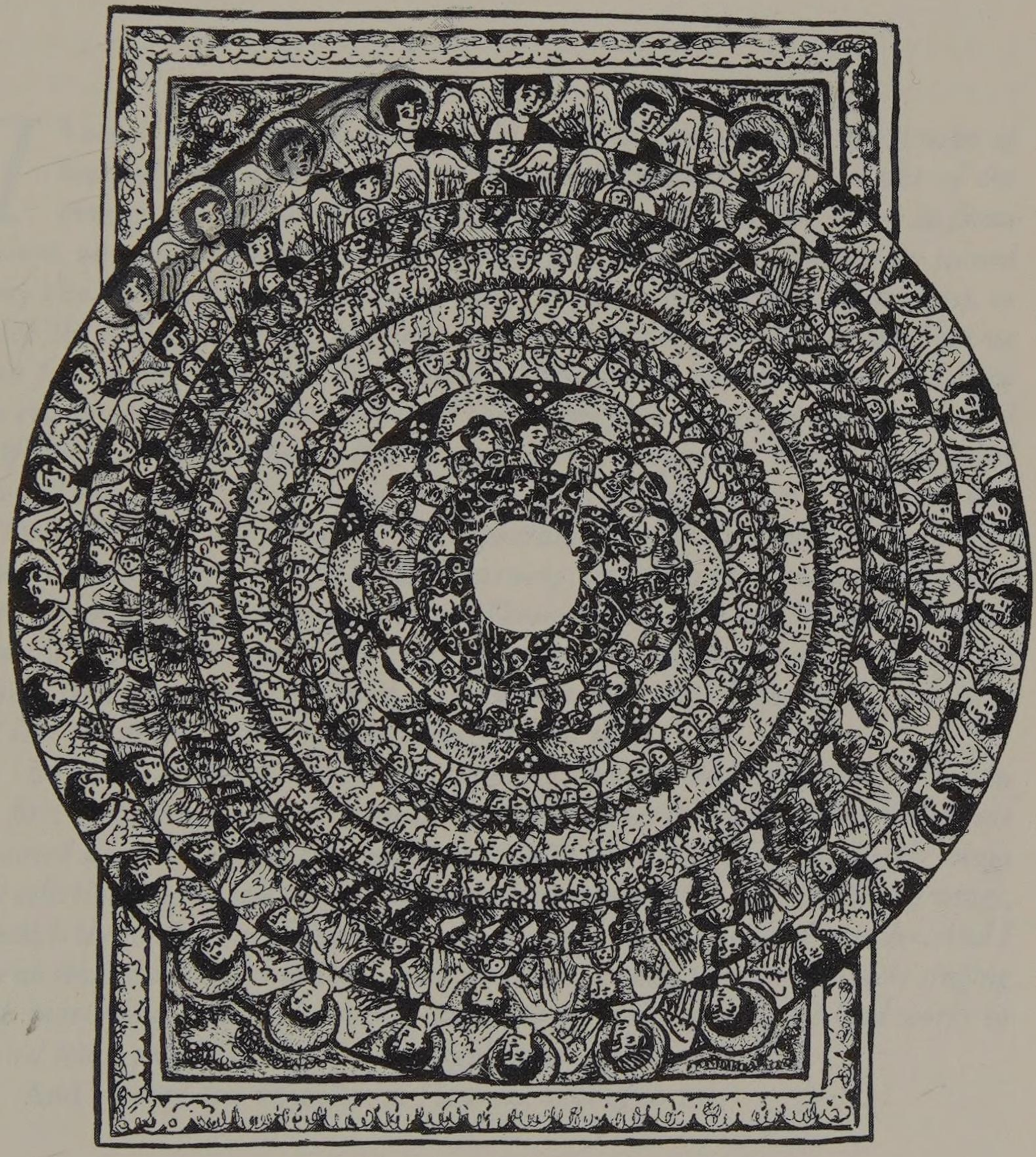
"I spread my garment over you and covered your shame; and I swore to you, and I entered into a covenant with you" [Ezekiel 16:8]. Which is to say: I, the Son of the Most High, in the will of My Father have spread My

Incarnation over you, O Synagogue, to save you, taking away your sins, which you have committed in many times of forgetfulness; I have promised you the remedy of salvation, showing you the ways of My covenant for it when I made known to you by apostolic doctrine the true faith, so that you might obey my precepts as a wife ought to submit to the power of her husband. For I have taken from you the harshness of the exterior Law and given you the sweetness of spiritual doctrine and in it shown you all My mysteries in Myself; but you have deserted Me, Who am just, and allied with the Devil.

8 Analogy of Samson, Saul and David

But, O human, understand that Samson's wife left him, and so he was deprived of his eyesight, and the Synagogue likewise forsook the Son of God, spurning Him stubbornly and rejecting His doctrine. But later, when his hair grew again, as the Church of God was strengthened the Son of God in His might overthrew the Synagogue and deprived her children, who were crushed by God's jealousy by means of pagans who did not know God. For she had undergone many errors of confusion and discord, and polluted herself by wicked transgressions. But as David at last called back the wife he had first married, but who had polluted herself with another man, so also the Son of God at the end of time will call back the Synagogue, which had first been joined to Him in His Incarnation but had rejected the grace of baptism and followed the Devil, and she will forsake the errors of unbelief and return to the light of truth. For the Devil drew the Synagogue away in her blindness, and gave her over to error and unbelief; and he will not cease to do this until the coming of the son of perdition. But the latter will fall in the exaltation of his pride as Saul fell, slain on Mount Gilboa, after driving David out of his land; as the son of iniquity will try to drive out My Son in His elect. But My Son, when the Antichrist has been cast out, will call back the Synagogue to the true faith, as David took back his first wife after the death of Saul; for at the end of time the people will see the one who deceived them conquered and run back with great haste to the way of salvation. For it was not fitting for the truth of the Gospel to precede the shadow of the Law, as it is fitting that fleshly things should precede and spiritual things should follow; the servant announces his master's coming, and the master does not go before the servant to serve him. So too the Synagogue went before as a foreshadowing sign, and the Church came after in the light of truth.

Therefore whoever has knowledge in the Holy Spirit and wings of faith, let this one not ignore My admonition, but taste it, embrace it and receive it in his soul.



THE CHOIRS OF ANGELS

VISION SIX
The Choirs of Angels

Then I saw in the secret places in the heights of Heaven two armies of heavenly spirits who shone with great brightness. Those in one of the armies had on their breasts wings, with forms like human forms in front of them, on which human features showed as if in clear water. Those in the second army also had wings on their breasts, which displayed forms like human forms, in which the image of the Son of Man shone as if in a mirror. And I could see no other form either in these or in the others. These armies were arrayed in the shape of a crown around five other armies. Those in the first of these five armies seemed as if they had human forms that shone with great splendor from the shoulders down. Those in the second shone with such great brightness that I could not look at them. Those in the third had the appearance of white marble and heads like human heads, over which torches were burning, and from the shoulders down they were surrounded by an iron-gray cloud. Those in the fourth had forms like human forms and feet like human feet, and wore helmets on their heads, and marble tunics. And those in the fifth had nothing human in their appearance, and shone red like the dawn. And I saw no other form in them.

But these armies were also arrayed like a crown around two others. Those in the first of these other armies seemed to be full of eyes and wings, and in each eye appeared a mirror and in each mirror a human form, and they raised their wings to a celestial height. And those in the second burned like fire, and had many wings, in which they showed as if in a mirror all the Church ranks arrayed in order. And I saw no other shape either in these or in the others. And all these armies were singing with marvellous voices all kinds of music about the wonders that God works in blessed souls, and by this God was magnificently glorified.

And I heard the voice from Heaven, saying to me:

1 God wonderfully formed and ordered His creation

Almighty and Ineffable God, Who was before all ages and had no beginning and will not cease to be when all ages are ended, marvellously by His will created every creature and marvellously by His will set it in its place. How? He destined some creatures to stay on the earth, but others to inhabit the celestial regions. He also set in place the blessed angels, both for human

salvation and for the honor of His name. How? By assigning some to help humans in their need, and others to manifest to people the judgements of His secrets.

Therefore *you see in the secret places in the heights of Heaven two armies of heavenly spirits who shine with great brightness;* thus, as is shown to you in the height of secret places that the bodily eye cannot penetrate but the inner sight can see, these two armies indicate that the human body and soul should serve God, since they are going to have the brightness of eternal blessedness with the citizens of Heaven.

2 On the appearance of the angels and its meaning

And those in one of the armies have on their breasts wings, with forms like human forms in front of them, on which human features show as if in clear water. These are the angels, who spread the desires in the depths of their minds like wings; not that they have wings like birds, but that in their desires they are quick to accomplish God's will, the way a person's thoughts speed swiftly; and by their forms they display in themselves the beauty of reason, by which God closely examines human deeds; for as a servant who hears his master's words carries them out according to his will, so the angels pay attention to God's will for humans and show Him human actions in themselves.

3 On the appearance of the archangels and its meaning

And so those in the second army also have wings on their breasts, which display forms like human forms, in which the image of the Son of Man shines as if in a mirror. These are the archangels, who contemplate God's will in the desires of their intellect and display in themselves the beauty of reason; they magnify the Incarnate Word of God in the purest way, because, knowing God's secret decrees, they have often prefigured the mysteries of the Incarnation of the Son of God. *And you can see no other form either in these or in the others;* for in both the angels and the archangels there are many secret mysteries that the human intellect, weighed down by the mortal body, cannot understand. *But these armies are arrayed in the shape of a crown around five other armies.* This shows that the human body and soul must, by virtue of their strength, contain the five human senses, purify them by the five wounds of My Son, and lead them to the righteousness of governance from within.

4 On the appearance of the Virtues and its meaning

And so *those in the first of these five armies seem as if they have human forms that shine with great splendor from the shoulders down.* These are the

VISION SIX

Virtues, which spring up in the hearts of believers and in ardent charity build in them a lofty tower, which is their works; so that in their reason they show the deeds of the elect, and in their strength bring them to a good end with a great glory of blessedness. How? The elect, whose inner understanding is clear, cast away all their wickedness of evil, being enlightened by these Virtues in the enlightenment of My will, and fight vigorously against the snares of the Devil; and these Virtues unceasingly show to Me their Creator these struggles against the Devil's throng. For people have within themselves struggles of confession and of denial. How? Because this one confesses Me, and that one denies Me. And in this struggle the question is: Is there a God or not? And the answer comes from the Holy Spirit Who dwells in the person: God is, and created you, and also redeemed you.

But as long as this question and answer are in a person, the power of God will not be absent from him, for this question and answer carries with it penitence. But when this question is not in a person, neither is the answer of the Holy Spirit, for such a person drives out God's gift from himself and, without the question that leads to penitence, throws himself upon death. And the Virtues display to God the battles of these wars, for they are the seal that shows God the intention that worships or denies Him.

5 On the appearance of the Powers and its meaning

Those in the second army shine with such great brightness that you cannot look at them. These are the Powers, and this means that no weak, mortal sinner can understand the serenity and beauty of the power of God or attain a likeness to it, for God's power is unfailing.

6 On the appearance of the Principalities and its meaning

Those in the third have the appearance of white marble and heads like human heads, over which torches are burning, and from the shoulders down they are surrounded by an iron-gray cloud. These are the Principalities, and they show that those who by God's gift are rulers of people in this world must assume the true strength of justice, lest they fall into the weakness of instability. They should contemplate their Head, Who is Christ the Son of God, and direct their government according to His will for human needs, and seek the grace of the Holy Spirit in the ardor of truth, that until their end they may continue firm and unshaken in the strength of equity.

7 On the appearance of the Dominations and its meaning

Those in the fourth have forms like human forms and feet like human feet, and wear helmets on their heads, and marble tunics. These are the Domina-

tions; they show that He Who is the Lord of all has raised human reason, which had lain polluted in the dust of humanity, from earth to Heaven, when He sent to earth His Son and His Son in His righteousness trod underfoot the ancient seducer; and thus the faithful should faithfully imitate Him, Who is their Head, placing their hope in Heaven and fortifying themselves with the strong desire of good works.

8 On the appearance of the Thrones and its meaning

And those in the fifth have nothing human in their appearance and shine red like the dawn. These are the Thrones, showing that when for human salvation the Only-Begotten of God, He Who was uninfected by human sin, put on a human body, Divinity bent down to humanity; for He, being conceived by the Holy Spirit in the dawn, which is to say in the Blessed Virgin, received flesh with no spot of uncleanness whatsoever. *And you see no other form in them,* for there are many mysteries of the celestial secrets that human frailty cannot understand. *But these armies are also arrayed like a crown around two others.* This means that the faithful who direct their body's five senses to celestial things, knowing that they have been redeemed through the five wounds of the Son of God, attain with every turn and working of their mind, because they ignore the heart's pleasure and put their hope in inward things, to love of God and their neighbor.

9 On the appearance of the Cherubim and its meaning

Therefore, *those in the first of these other armies seem to be full of eyes and wings, and in each eye appears a mirror and in each mirror a human form, and they raise their wings to a celestial height.* These are the Cherubim, who signify knowledge of God, by which they see the mysteries of the celestial secrets and fulfil their desires according to God's will. Thus, possessing in the depth of their knowledge the purest clarity, they miraculously foresee all those who know the true God and direct their hearts' desires, like wings on which nobly and justly to arise, to Him Who is above all; and, instead of lusting after the transitory, love the eternal, as they show by the high-mindedness of their desires.

10 On the appearance of the Seraphim and its meaning

And those in the second army burn like fire, and have many wings, in which they show as if in a mirror all the Church ranks arrayed in order. These are the Seraphim, and this means that just as they burn for love of God and have the greatest desire to contemplate Him, they also by their desires display with

shining purity the ranks, both secular and spiritual, which flourish in the mysteries of the Church, for the secrets of God show wondrously in them. Therefore all who, loving sincerity with a pure heart, seek eternal life, should ardently love God and embrace Him with all their will, that they may attain to the joys of those they faithfully imitate.

But you see no other shape either in these or in the others. This is to say that there are many secrets of the blessed spirits that are not to be shown to humans, for as long as they are mortal they cannot discern perfectly the things that are eternal.

11 All these armies sing of the miracles God does in blessed souls

But all these armies, as you hear, are singing with marvellous voices all kinds of music about the wonders that God works in blessed souls, by which God is magnificently glorified. For spirits blessed in the power of God make known in the heavenly places by indescribable sounds their great joy in the works of wonder that God perfects in His saints; by which the latter gloriously magnify God, seeking Him in the depth of sanctity and rejoicing in the joy of salvation; as My servant David, the observer of celestial secrets, testifies when he says:

12 The Psalmist on this subject

"The voice of rejoicing and of salvation in the tabernacles of the just" [Psalm 117:15]. Which is to say: The song of the gladness and joy of those who tread the flesh underfoot and lift up the spirit is known, with unfailing salvation, in the dwellings of those who reject injustice and do the works of justice; they might do evil at the Devil's temptation, but by divine inspiration they do good. What does this mean? Man often has inappropriate exultation at committing an improperly desired sin; but in that state he does not have salvation, for he has gone against the divine command. He, however, who strongly does the good he ardently desires shall dance in the true exultation of the joy of salvation, for while in the body he yet loves the mansion of those who run in the way of truth and turn aside from lying error.

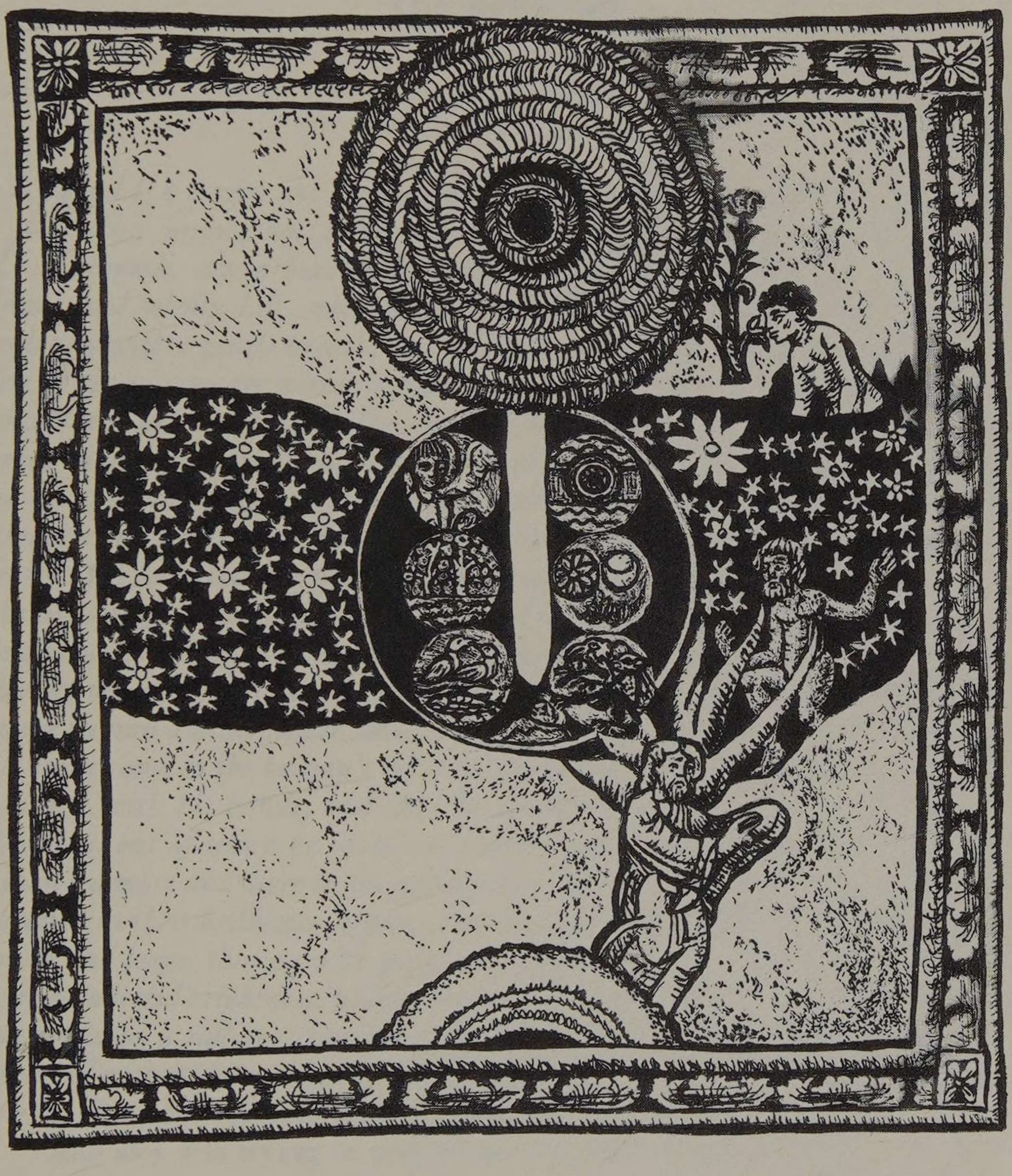
Therefore, whoever has knowledge in the Holy Spirit and wings of faith, let this one not ignore My admonition, but taste it, embrace it and receive it in his soul.

Book Two

THE REDEEMER AND REDEMPTION

Book Two

THE REDEEMER AND REDEMPTION



THE REDEEMER

VISION ONE
The Redeemer

And I, a person not glowing with the strength of strong lions or taught by their inspiration, but a tender and fragile rib imbued with a mystical breath, saw a blazing fire, incomprehensible, inextinguishable, wholly living and wholly Life, with a flame in it the color of the sky, which burned ardently with a gentle breath, and which was as inseparably within the blazing fire as the viscera are within a human being. And I saw that the flame sparked and blazed up. And behold! The atmosphere suddenly rose up in a dark sphere of great magnitude, and that flame hovered over it and gave it one blow after another, which struck sparks from it, until that atmosphere was perfected and so Heaven and earth stood fully formed and resplendent. Then the same flame was in that fire, and that burning extended itself to a little clod of mud which lay at the bottom of the atmosphere, and warmed it so that it was made flesh and blood, and blew upon it until it rose up a living human. When this was done, the blazing fire, by means of that flame which burned ardently with a gentle breath, offered to the human a white flower, which hung in that flame as dew hangs on the grass. Its scent came to the human's nostrils, but he did not taste it with his mouth or touch it with his hands, and thus he turned away and fell into the thickest darkness, out of which he could not pull himself. And that darkness grew and expanded more and more in the atmosphere. But then three great stars, crowding together in their brilliance, appeared in the darkness, and then many others, both small and large, shining with great splendor, and then a gigantic star, radiant with wonderful brightness, which shot its rays toward the flame. And in the earth too appeared a radiance like the dawn, into which the flame was miraculously absorbed without being separated from the blazing fire. And thus in the radiance of that dawn the Supreme Will was enkindled.

And as I was trying to ponder this enkindling of the Will more carefully, I was stopped by a secret seal on this vision, and I heard the voice from on high saying to me, "You may not see anything further regarding this mystery unless it is granted you by a miracle of faith."

And I saw a serene Man coming forth from this radiant dawn, Who poured out His brightness into the darkness; and it drove Him back with great force, so

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that He poured out the redness of blood and the whiteness of pallor into it, and struck the darkness such a strong blow that the person who was lying in it was touched by Him, took on a shining appearance and walked out of it upright. And so the serene Man Who had come out of that dawn shone more brightly than human tongue can tell, and made His way into the greatest height of inestimable glory, where He radiated in the plenitude of wonderful fruitfulness and fragrance. And I heard the voice saying to me from the aforementioned living fire: "O you who are wretched earth and, as a woman, untaught in all learning of earthly teachers and unable to read literature with philosophical understanding, you are nonetheless touched by My light, which kindles in you an inner fire like a burning sun; cry out and relate and write these My mysteries that you see and hear in mystical visions. So do not be timid, but say those things you understand in the Spirit as I speak them through you; so that those who should have shown My people righteousness, but who in their perversity refuse to speak openly of the justice they know, unwilling to abstain from the evil desires that cling to them like their masters and make them fly from the face of the Lord and blush to speak the truth, may be ashamed. Therefore, O diffident mind, who are taught inwardly by mystical inspiration, though because of Eve's transgression you are trodden on by the masculine sex, speak of that fiery work this sure vision has shown you."

The Living God, then, Who created all things through His Word, by the Word's Incarnation brought back the miserable human who had sunk himself in darkness to certain salvation. What does this mean?

1 On God's omnipotence

This blazing fire that you see symbolizes the Omnipotent and Living God, Who in His most glorious serenity was never darkened by any iniquity; *incomprehensible*, because He cannot be divided by any division or known as He is by any part of any of His creatures' knowledge; *inextinguishable*, because He is that Fullness that no limit ever touched; *wholly living*, for there is nothing that is hidden from Him or that He does not know; *and wholly Life*, for everything that lives takes its life from Him, as Job shows, inspired by Me, when he says:

2 Words of Job on this subject

"Who is ignorant that the hand of the Lord has made all these things? In His hand is the soul of every living thing and the spirit of all human flesh" [Job 12:9–10]. What does this mean? No creature is so dull of nature as not to know what changes in the things that make it fruitful cause it to attain its full growth. The sky holds light, light air, and air the birds; the earth nourishes

plants, plants fruit and fruit animals; which all testify that they were put there by a strong hand, the supreme power of the Ruler of All, Who in His strength has provided so for them all that nothing is lacking to them for their use. And in the omnipotence of the same Maker is the motion of all living things that seek the earth for earthly things like the animals and are not inspired by God with reason, as well as the awakening of those who dwell in human flesh and have reason, discernment and wisdom. How?

The soul goes about in earthly affairs, laboring through many changes as fleshly behavior demands. But the spirit raises itself in two ways: sighing, groaning and desiring God; and choosing among options in various matters as if by some rule, for the soul has discernment in reason. Hence Man contains in himself the likeness of heaven and earth. In what way? He has a circle, which contains his clarity, breath and reason, as the sky has its lights, air and birds; and he has a receptacle containing humidity, germination and birth, as the earth contains fertility, fruition and animals. What is this? O human, you are wholly in every creature, and you forget your Creator; you are subject to Him as was ordained, and you go against His commands?

3 That the Word was and is indivisibly and eternally in the Father

You see that *that fire has a flame in it the color of the sky, which burns ardently with a gentle breath, and which is as inseparably within the blazing fire as the viscera are within a human being;* which is to say that before any creatures were made the Infinite Word was indivisibly in the Father; Which in course of time was to become incarnate in the ardor of charity, miraculously and without the stain or weight of sin, by the Holy Spirit's sweet freshness in the dawn of blessed virginity. But after He assumed flesh, the Word also remained inseparably in the Father; for as a person does not exist without the vital movements within his viscera, so the only Word of the Father could in no way be separated from Him.

4 Why the Son of God is called the Word

And why is He called the Word? Because, just as a word of command uttered by an instructor among local and transitory human dust is understood by people who know and foresee the reason he gave it, so also the power of the Father is known among the creatures of the world, who perceive and understand in Him the source of their creation, through the Word Who is independent of place and imperishable in His inextinguishable eternal life; and as the power and honor of a human being are known by his official words, so the holiness and goodness of the Father shines through the Supreme Word.

5 By the power of the Word of God every creature was raised up

And you see that *the flame sparks and blazes up*. This is to say that when every creature was raised through Him, the Word of God showed His power like a flash of flame; and when He became incarnate in the dawn and purity of virginity, it was as if He blazed up, so that from Him trickled every virtue of the knowledge of God, and Man lived again in the salvation of his soul.

6 God's incomprehensible power made the world and the different species

And the atmosphere suddenly rises up in a dark sphere of great magnitude. This is the material of Creation while still formless and imperfect, not yet full of creatures; it is a sphere, for it is under the incomprehensible power of God, which is never absent from it, and by the Supernal Will it rises up in God's great power in the twinkling of an eye. *And that flame hovers over it like a workman and gives it one blow after another, which strike sparks from it, until that atmosphere is perfected and so Heaven and earth stand fully formed and resplendent.* For the Supernal Word, Who excels every creature, showed that they all are subject to Him and draw their strength from His power, when He brought forth from the universe the different kinds of creatures, shining in their miraculous awakening, as a smith makes forms out of bronze; until each creature was radiant with the loveliness of perfection, beautiful in the fullness of their arrangement in higher and lower ranks, the higher made radiant by the lower and the lower by the higher.

7 After the other creatures Man was created from earthly mud

But then the same flame that is in that fire and that burning extends itself to a little clod of mud, which lies at the bottom of the atmosphere; this is to say that after the other creatures were created, the Word of God, in the strong will of the Father and supernal love, considered the poor fragile matter from which the weak frailty of the human race, both bad and good, was to be produced, now lying in heavy unconsciousness and not yet roused by the breath of life; *and warms it so that it is made flesh and blood,* that is, poured fresh warmth into it, for the earth is the fleshly material of humans, and nourished it with moisture, as a mother gives milk to her children; *and blows upon it until it rises up a living human,* for He aroused it by supernal power and miraculously raised up a human being with intelligence of body and mind.

8 Adam accepted obedience, but by the Devil's counsel did not obey

When this is done, the blazing fire, by means of that flame which burns ardently with a gentle breath, offers to the human a white flower, which hangs in that flame as dew hangs on the grass. For, after Adam was created, the Father in His lucid serenity gave to Adam through His Word in the Holy Spirit the sweet precept of obedience, which in fresh fruitfulness hung upon the Word; for the sweet odor of sanctity trickled from the Father in the Holy Spirit through the Word and brought forth fruit in greatest abundance, as the dew falling on the grass makes it grow. *Its scent comes to the human's nostrils, but he does not taste it with his mouth or touch it with his hands;* for he tried to know the wisdom of the Law with his intelligence, as if with his nose, but did not perfectly digest it by putting it in his mouth, or fulfil it in full blessedness by the work of his hands. *And thus he turns away and falls into the thickest darkness, out of which he cannot pull himself.* For, by the Devil's counsel, he turned his back on the divine command and sank into the gaping mouth of death, so that he did not seek God either by faith or by works; and therefore, weighed down by sin, he could not rise to true knowledge of God, until He came Who obeyed His Father sinlessly and fully.

And that darkness grows and expands more and more in the atmosphere; for the power of death in the world was constantly increased by the spread of wickedness, and human knowledge entangled itself in many vices in the horror of bursting and stinking sin.

9 Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and the other prophets drove back the darkness

But then three great stars, crowding together in their brilliance, appear in the darkness, and then many others, both small and large, shining with great splendor. These are the three great luminaries Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, symbolizing the Heavenly Trinity, embracing one another both by their works of faith and by their relationship in the flesh, and by their signs driving back the darkness in the world; and, following them, the many other prophets both minor and major, radiant with many wonders.

10 The prophet John, glittering with miracles, foretold the Son of God

And then a gigantic star appears, radiant with wonderful brightness, which shoots its rays toward the flame. This is the greatest prophet, John the Baptist, who glittered with miracles in his faithful and serene deeds, and pointed out

by their means the true Word, the true Son of God; for he did not yield to wickedness, but vigorously and forcefully cast it out by works of justice.

11 At the Incarnation of the Word of God the great counsel was seen

And in the earth too appears a radiance like the dawn, into which the flame is miraculously absorbed, without being separated from the blazing fire. This is to say that God set a great splendor of light in the place where He would bring forth His Word and, fully willing it, sent Him there, yet not so as to be divided from Him; but He gave that profitable fruit and brought Him forth as a great fountain, so that every faithful throat could drink and never more be dry. *And thus in the radiance of that dawn the Supreme Will is enkindled;* for in the bright and roseate serenity was seen the fruitfulness of the great and venerable counsel, so that all the forerunners marvelled at it with bright joy.

12 Humans must not scrutinize God's secrets beyond what He wishes to show

But you, O human, who seek in the way of humans to know more fully the loftiness of this counsel, are opposed by a concealing barrier; for you must not search into the secrets of God beyond those things the Divine Majesty wills to be revealed for love of those who trust in Him.

13 Christ by His death brought back His elect to their inheritance

And you see a serene Man coming forth from this radiant dawn, Who pours out His brightness into the darkness; and it drives Him back with great force, so that He pours out the redness of blood and the whiteness of pallor into it, and strikes the darkness such a strong blow that the person who is lying in it is touched by Him, takes on a shining appearance and walks out of it upright. This is the Word of God, imperishably incarnate in the purity of unstained virginity and born without pain, and yet not separated from the Father. How? While the Son of God was being born in the world from a mother, He was still in Heaven in the Father; and at this the angels suddenly trembled and sang the sweetest praises of rejoicing. And, living in the world without stain of sin, He sent out into the darkness of unbelief His clear and blessed teachings and salvation; but, rejected by the unbelieving people and led to His Passion, He poured out His beautiful blood and knew in His body the darkness of death. And thus conquering the Devil, he delivered from Hell his elect, who were held prostrate there, and by His redeeming touch brought them back to the inheritance they had lost in Adam. As they were returning to their inheri-

tance timbrels and harps and all kinds of music burst forth, because Man, who had lain in perdition but now stood upright in blessedness, had been freed by heavenly power and escaped from death, as through My servant Hosea I have stated thus:

14 Words of Hosea on this subject

"The iniquity of Ephraim is bound up; his sin is hidden. The sorrows of a woman in labor shall come upon him; he is an unwise son; for now he shall not stand in the contrition of the sons. I will deliver them out of the hand of death, from death I will redeem them. I will be your death, O Death; I will be your destruction, O Hell!" [Hosea 13:12–14]. What does this mean? The Devil's perverse iniquity is bound by heavy fetters, since he does not deserve that God's zeal should release him; for he has never rightfully acknowledged Him as do those who faithfully fear Him. For the Devil always raises himself against God, saying, "I am God!"; and he always goes astray over the Blessed One of the Lord, opposing the name of Christians because of Him. Thus his malice is so ingrained that his sin, cruelly committed in filthy pride, can never deserve by any reparation to be covered by salvation. Therefore he will be in perpetual pain, as a woman in labor is afflicted by despair when she doubts she can survive the opening of her womb. For this misery will remain with him, that he is forsaken by beatitude because the wisdom of the sons flees from him, and he does not come to himself, as that man came to himself who returned to his father from his wickedness.

Thus he will never stand trusting in that action by which the children of salvation in the Heavenly Son crush death in its hardened iniquity, which the cunning serpent brought forth when he suggested deceit to the guileless first man. But since those children despise the poison of that unclean advice and look to their salvation, I will deliver them from slavery to idols; for idols are by their deceptiveness in the power of perdition, and for them the unfaithful forsake the honor of their Creator, entangling themselves in the Devil's snare and doing his works at his will.

And so I will redeem the souls of those who love and worship Me, the Holy and the Just, from the pain of Hell; for no one can be released from the Devil's fetters, which bind him with bitterest death by his transgression of God's precepts, except by the redemption of Him Who will redeem His elect with His own blood. This is how I will slay you, O Death, with utter destruction, for I will take from you the thing you think to live by, and you will be called a useless corpse; at the height of your strength you will lie prostrate, as a corpse without the soul lies prostrate awaiting decay. For when the happy souls are mercifully raised up to celestial bliss through the

new Man, Who will not be a party to poisonous deception, the fountain of living water will drown you. Thus also to your confusion I will be your destruction, O Hell!, when My strong power will take from you your ill-gotten spoils, so that you too, justly despoiled, will never again appear whole and laden with riches, but will lie prostrate and confounded forever, bearing wounds and decay.

15 The Son of God rising from the dead showed Man the way from death to life

And, as you see, *the serene Man Who has come out of that dawn shines more brightly than human tongue can tell*, which shows that the noble body of the Son of God, born of the sweet Virgin and three days in the tomb (to confirm that there are three Persons in one Divinity), was touched by the glory of the Father, received the Spirit and rose again to serene immortality, which no one can explain by thought or word. And the Father showed Him with His open wounds to the celestial choirs, saying, "This is My beloved Son, Whom I sent to die for the people." And so joy unmeasurable by the human mind arose in them, for criminal forgetfulness of God was brought low, and human reason, which had lain prostrate under the Devil's persuasion, was uplifted to the knowledge of God; for the way to truth was shown to Man by the Supreme Beatitude, and in it he was led from death to life.

16 The risen Christ appeared frequently to His disciples

But just as the children of Israel, after being liberated from Egypt, wandered in the desert for forty years before coming into the land flowing with milk and honey, so too the Son of God, rising from the dead, showed Himself for forty days to His disciples and the blessed women who wept and had a great desire to see Him. This He did to encourage them, lest they should waver in faith and say, "We did not see Him, so we cannot believe that He is our salvation!" He showed Himself to them frequently, to strengthen them that they might not fall.

17 When Christ ascended to the Father His Bride was given many ornaments

And He makes His way into the greatest height of inestimable glory, where he radiates in the plenitude of wonderful fruitfulness and fragrance. This is to say that the Son of God ascended to the Father, Who with the Son and the Holy Spirit is the height of lofty and excelling joy and gladness unspeakable;

where that same Son gloriously appears to His faithful in the abundance of sanctity and blessedness, so that they believe with pure and simple hearts that He is true God and Man. And then indeed the new Bride of the Lamb was set up with many ornaments, for she had to be ornamented with every kind of virtue for the mighty struggle of all the faithful people, who are to fight against the crafty serpent.

But let the one who sees with watchful eyes and hears with attentive ears welcome with a kiss My mystical words, which proceed from Me Who am life.

THE TRINITY IN THE UNITY

VISION TWO
The Trinity

Then I saw a bright light, and in this light the figure of a man the color of a sapphire, which was all blazing with a gentle glowing fire. And that bright light bathed the whole of the glowing fire, and the glowing fire bathed the bright light; and the bright light and the glowing fire poured over the whole human figure, so that the three were one light in one power of potential. And again I heard the living Light, saying to me:

1 On the perception of God's mysteries

This is the perception of God's mysteries, whereby it can be distinctly perceived and understood what is that Fullness, Whose origin was never seen, and in Which that lofty strength never fails that founded all the sources of strength. For if the Lord were empty of His own vitality, what then would have been His deeds? And therefore in the whole work it is perceived Who the Maker is.

2 On the Three Persons

Therefore you see *a bright light*, which without any flaw of illusion, deficiency or deception designates the Father; *and in this light the figure of a man the color of a sapphire*, which without any flaw of obstinacy, envy or iniquity designates the Son, Who was begotten of the Father in Divinity before time began, and then within time was incarnate in the world in Humanity; *which is all blazing with a gentle glowing fire*, which fire without any flaw of aridity, mortality or darkness designates the Holy Spirit, by Whom the Only-Begotten of God was conceived in the flesh and born of the Virgin within time and poured the true light into the world. *And that bright light bathes the whole of the glowing fire, and the glowing fire bathes the bright light; and the bright light and the glowing fire pour over the whole human figure, so that the three are one light in one power of potential.* And this means that the Father, Who is Justice, is not without the Son or the Holy Spirit; and the Holy Spirit, Who kindles the hearts of the faithful, is not without the Father or the Son; and the Son, Who is the plenitude of fruition, is not without the Father or the Holy Spirit. They are inseparable in Divine Majesty, for the

Father is not without the Son, nor the Son without the Father, nor the Father and the Son without the Holy Spirit, nor the Holy Spirit without Them. Thus these three Persons are one God in the one and perfect divinity of majesty, and the unity of Their divinity is unbreakable; the Divinity cannot be rent asunder, for it remains inviolable without change. But the Father is declared through the Son, the Son through Creation, and the Holy Spirit through the Son incarnate. How? It is the Father Who begot the Son before the ages; the Son through Whom all things were made by the Father when creatures were created; and the Holy Spirit Who, in the likeness of a dove, appeared at the baptism of the Son of God before the end of time.

3 People must not forget to invoke the One God in Three Persons

Hence let no person ever forget to invoke Me, the sole God, in these Three Persons, because for this reason I have made Them known to Man, that he may burn more ardently in My love; since it was for love of him that I sent My Son into the world, as My beloved John testifies, saying:

4 John on the charity of God

"By this the charity of God has appeared toward us: that God has sent His Only-Begotten Son into the world, that we may live by Him. In this is charity, not that we have loved God, but that He has loved us, and sent His Son to be a propitiation for our sins" [1 John 4:9–10]. What does this mean? That because God loved us, another salvation arose than that we had had in the beginning, when we were heirs of innocence and holiness; for the Supernal Father showed His charity in our dangers, though we deserved punishment, in sending by supernal power His Holy Word alone into the darkness of the world for the people's sake. There the Word perfected all good things, and by His gentleness brought back to life those who had been cast out because of their unclean sins and could not return to their lost holiness. What does this mean?

That through this fountain of life came the embrace of God's maternal love, which has nourished us unto life and is our help in perils, and is the deepest and sweetest charity and prepares us for penitence. How?

God has mercifully remembered His great work and His precious pearl, Man, whom He formed from the mud of the earth and into whom He breathed the breath of life. How? By devising the life of penitence, which will never fail in efficacy. For through his proud suasion the cunning serpent deceived Man, but God cast him into penitence, which calls for the humility the Devil did not know and could not practise; for he knew not how to rise up to the right way.

VISION TWO

Hence this salvation of charity did not spring from us, and we were ignorant and incapable of loving God for our salvation; but He Himself, the Creator and Lord of all, so loved His people that for their salvation He sent His Son, the Prince and Savior of the faithful, Who washed and dried our wounds. And He exuded the sweetest balm, from which flow all good things for salvation. Therefore, O human, you must understand that no misfortune or change can touch God. For the Father is the Father, the Son is the Son, and the Holy Spirit is the Holy Spirit, and these Three Persons are indivisible in the Unity of the Divinity. How?

5 On the three qualities of a stone

There are three qualities in a stone and three in a flame and three in a word. How? In the stone is cool dampness and solidity to the touch and sparkling fire. It has cool dampness that it may not be dissolved or broken; solidity to the touch that it may make up habitations and defenses; and sparkling fire that it may be heated and consolidated into hardness. Now this cool dampness signifies the Father, Who never withers and Whose power never ends; and this solidity of touch designates the Son, Who was born of the Virgin and could be touched and known; and the sparkling fire signifies the Holy Spirit, Who enkindles and enlightens the hearts of the faithful. What does this mean?

As a person who in the body often touches the cool dampness of stone falls sick and grows weak, so one who in his unsteady thoughts rashly tries to contemplate the Father loses his faith. And as people build their dwellings and defend themselves against their enemies by handling the solidity of stone, so too the Son of God, Who is the true cornerstone, is the dwelling of the faithful people and their protector from evil spirits. And as sparkling fire gives light to dark places by burning what it touches, so also the Holy Spirit drives out unbelief and consumes the blight of iniquity.

And as these three qualities are in one stone, so the true Trinity is in the true Unity.

6 On the three qualities in a flame

Again, as the flame of a fire has three qualities, so there is one God in three Persons. How? A flame is made up of brilliant light and red power and fiery heat. It has brilliant light that it may shine, and red power that it may endure, and fiery heat that it may burn. Therefore, by the brilliant light understand the Father, Who with paternal love opens His brightness to His faithful; and by the red power, which is in the flame that it may be strong, understand the Son, Who took on a body born from a Virgin, in which His

divine wonders were shown; and by the fiery heat understand the Holy Spirit, Who burns ardently in the minds of the faithful. But there is no flame seen where there is neither brilliant light nor red power nor fiery heat; and thus also where neither the Father nor the Son nor the Holy Spirit is known God is not properly worshipped.

Therefore as these three qualities are found in one flame, so Three Persons must be understood in the Unity of the Divinity.

7 On the three causes of human words

And as three causes for the production of words are seen, so the Trinity in the Unity of the Divinity is to be inferred. How? In a word there is sound, force and breath. It has sound that it may be heard, meaning that it may be understood, and breath that it may be pronounced. In the sound, then, observe the Father, Who manifests all things with ineffable power; in the meaning, the Son, Who was miraculously begotten of the Father; and in the breath, the Holy Spirit, Who sweetly burns in Them. But where no sound is heard, no meaning is used and no breath is lifted, there no word will be understood; so also the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are not divided from one another, but do Their works together.

So as there are these three causes for one word, the celestial Trinity is likewise in the celestial Unity. So as in a stone there exists and there operates no cool dampness without solidity to the touch and sparkling fire, or solidity to the touch without cool dampness and sparkling fire, or sparkling fire without cool dampness and solidity to the touch; and as in a flame there exists and there operates no brilliant light without red power and fiery heat, or red power without brilliant light and fiery heat, or fiery heat without brilliant light and red power; and as in a word there exists and there operates no sound without meaning and breath, or meaning without sound and breath, or breath without sound and meaning, but all keep indivisibly together to operate; so also these Three Persons of the true Trinity live inseparably in the majesty of the Divinity and are not divided from each other.

Thus, O human, understand the One God in Three Persons. In the foolishness of your mind you think that God is so powerless that He cannot truly live in three Persons, but only exist weakly in one. What does this mean? God is, in three Persons, the true God, the First and the Last.

8 On the unity of essence

But the Father is not without the Son, or the Son without the Father, or the Father and the Son without the Holy Spirit, or the Holy Spirit without Them; for these three Persons are inseparable in the Unity of the Divinity.

VISION TWO

How? A word sounds from a person's mouth, but the mouth does not sound without a word, nor does the word sound without life. Where does the word stay? In the person. And from whence does it go forth? From the person. And how? Because the person is living. Thus the Son is in the Father, Whom the Father sent into the dark world for human salvation, conceived in the Virgin by the Holy Spirit. As the Son is the Only-Begotten in the Divinity, He is the only-begotten in virginity; as he is the Only One of the Father, He is the only-born of the Mother; as the Father begot Him before time began, the Virgin Mother bore the same Only One within time, and after childbirth remained a virgin.

Therefore, O human, in these Three Persons recognize your God, Who created you in the power of His Divinity and redeemed you from damnation. And do not forget your Creator, as Solomon urges you when he writes:

9 Words of Solomon

"Remember your Creator in the days of your youth, before the time of affliction comes, and the years draw nigh of which you shall say: They please me not." [Ecclesiastes 12:1] What does this mean? With your mental powers remember Him Who created you when, in the days of your false confidence, you think it is possible for you to walk according to your own desires, and raise yourself on high to throw yourself into the abyss, and stand in prosperity to fall into calamity. For the force of life in you always strives to perfect itself, until the time when it is complete. How? From birth a child grows up to full stature and remains an adult, leaving the mental license that is in foolish behavior and thinking carefully about how to manage his affairs, as he did not do in the foolishness of childhood. So let the person of faith do too. Let him leave childish behavior and grow up to fullness of virtue and persevere in its strength, leaving the pride of his desire, which pants after foolish vice; but let him with anxious care meditate what may be useful for him, though before he stooped childishly to childish ways.

Therefore, O human, embrace your God in the daylight of your strength, before the hour comes for the purgation of your works, when all things will be manifest and nothing will be overlooked, when the times come that will be complete and will never end; about which times your humanity murmurs a little, saying, "These changes do not please me, for I do not understand whether they will give me good fortune or calamity." For the human mind always wavers on this subject, since when it does good works it is anxious about whether or not they will please God, and when it does bad ones it is afraid to lose forgiveness and salvation.

But let the one who sees with watchful eyes and hears with attentive ears welcome with a kiss My mystical words, which proceed from Me Who am life.

MOTHER CHURCH

VISION THREE
The Church, Bride of Christ and Mother of the Faithful

After this I saw the image of a woman as large as a great city, with a wonderful crown on her head and arms from which a splendor hung like sleeves, shining from Heaven to earth. Her womb was pierced like a net with many openings, with a huge multitude of people running in and out. She had no legs or feet, but stood balanced on her womb in front of the altar that stands before the eyes of God, embracing it with her outstretched hands and gazing sharply with her eyes throughout all of Heaven. I could not make out her attire, except that she was arrayed in great splendor and gleamed with lucid serenity, and on her breast shone a red glow like the dawn; and I heard a sound of all kinds of music singing about her, "Like the dawn, greatly sparkling."

And that image spreads out its splendor like a garment, saying, "I must conceive and give birth!" And at once, like lightning, there hastened to her a multitude of angels, making steps and seats within her for people, by whom the image was to be perfected.

Then I saw black children moving in the air near the ground like fishes in water, and they entered the womb of the image through the openings that pierced it. But she groaned, drawing them upward to her head, and they went out by her mouth, while she remained untouched. And behold, that serene light with the figure of a man in it, blazing with a glowing fire, which I had seen in my previous vision, again appeared to me, and stripped the black skin off each of them and threw it away; and it clothed each of them in a pure white garment and opened to them the serene light, saying to them one by one:

"Cast off the old injustice, and put on the new sanctity. For the gate of your inheritance is unlocked for you. Consider, therefore, how you have been taught, that you may know your Father Whom you have confessed. I have received you, and you have confessed Me. Now, therefore, behold the two paths, one to the East and the other to the North. If you will diligently contemplate Me with your inner vision, as in faith you have been taught, I will receive you into My kingdom. And if you love Me rightly, I will do whatever you shall wish. But if you despise Me and turn away from Me, looking backward and not seeking to know or understand Me, Who am recalling you by pure penitence though you are filthy with sin, and if you run back to the Devil as to your father, then perdition will take you; for you will

be judged according to your works, since when I gave you the good you did not choose to know Me."

But the children who had passed through the womb of the image walked in the splendor that surrounded her. And she, benignly gazing on them, said in a sad voice, "These children of mine will return again to dust. I conceive and bear many who oppress me, their mother, by heretical, schismatic and useless battles, by robberies and murders, by adultery and fornication, and by many such errors. Many of these rise again in true penitence to eternal life, but many fall in false obduracy to eternal death."

And again I heard the voice from Heaven saying to me: "The great edifice of living souls, which is constructed in Heaven from living stones, is adorned with the immense beauty of its children's virtues, encircling them as a great city encircles its immense throngs of people, or as a wide net does a multitude of fishes; and however much the work of the faithful thrives in the Christian name, by so much does it blossom with celestial virtues."

1 The building of the Church, who redeems her children by Spirit and water

Wherefore now *you see the image of a woman as large as a great city;* this designates the Bride of My Son, who always bears her children by regeneration in the Spirit and in water, for the strong Warrior founded her on a wide base of virtue, that she might hold and perfect the great crowd of His elect; and no enemy can conquer or storm her. She expels unbelief and expands belief, by which it should be understood that in the mortal world each of the faithful is an example to his neighbor, and so they do great works of virtue in Heaven. And when the just, one by one, shall come to join the children of light, the good they have worked will appear in them, which cannot be seen here among mortal ashes, concealed as it is by the shadow of trouble.

2 The Church in her origin was adorned by apostles and martyrs

She has a wonderful crown on her head; for at her origin, when she was raised up by the blood of the Lamb, she was fittingly adorned with apostles and martyrs, and thus betrothed with true betrothal to My Son, since in His blood she faithfully formed herself into a firm edifice of holy souls.

3 The Church is adorned by the priesthood and almsgiving

And from her arms a splendor hangs like sleeves, shining from Heaven to earth. This is the work of power done by priests, who with purity of heart and hands and in the strength of good works offer the holiest of sacrifices

upon the holy altar in the sacrament of the body and blood of their Savior. And the most glorious of their works is to show mercy, always offering generous help for every grief and distributing alms to the poor with a gentle heart while saying with their whole soul, "This is not my property, but that of Him Who created me." And this work, inspired by God, is before His eyes in Heaven, when by the teaching of the Church it is done among the faithful on earth.

4 On the maternal kindness of the Church

Her womb is pierced like a net with many openings, with a huge multitude of people running in and out; that is, she displays her maternal kindness, which is so clever at capturing faithful souls by diverse goads of virtue, and in which the trusting peoples devoutly lead their lives by the faith of their true belief. But He Who casts the net to capture the fishes is My Son, the Bridegroom of His beloved Church, whom He betrothed to Himself in His blood to repair the fall of lost humanity.

5 The Church, not yet perfected, will be brought to perfection near the end

She does not yet have legs or feet, for she has not yet been brought to the full strength of her constancy or the full purity of her fulfillment; for when the son of perdition comes to delude the world she will suffer fiery and bloody anguish in all her members from his cruel wickedness. By this calamity, with bleeding wounds, she will be brought to perfection; then let her run swiftly into the heavenly Jerusalem, where she will sweetly rise anew as a bride in the blood of My Son, entering into life with ardor in the joy of her offspring.

6 How the Church devoutly offers up her children in purity

But she stands balanced on her womb in front of the altar that stands before the eyes of God, embracing it with her outstretched hands; for she is always pregnant and procreating children of hers by the true ablution, and offering them devoutly to God by the purest prayers of the saints and the sweet fragrance of chosen virtues both hidden and manifest; which are plain to the clear understanding of the mind's eye when all stain of falsity and all noises of human praise are removed, as incense is purged of a noxious stench that corrupts its smell. This good work is in God's sight the sweetest sacrifice, at which the Church constantly labors, striving with her whole desire for heavenly things in bringing virtues to fruition, and by increase of such fruit

thirtyfold, sixtyfold and a hundredfold building the high tower of the celestial walls.

7 No wickedness of devilish art can obscure the Church

And she gazes sharply with her eyes throughout all of Heaven; for her purpose, which she devoutly keeps to in the heavenly places, can be obscured by no wickedness: no persuasion of devilish art, nor error of a wavering people, nor storms over the various countries in which madmen tear themselves to pieces in the fury of their unbelief.

8 The human mind cannot fully understand the secrets of the Church

You cannot make out her attire, which is to say that the human intellect, weighed down by fragile weakness, cannot fully understand her secrets; *except that she is arrayed in great splendor and gleams with lucid serenity,* for the True Sun shines everywhere around her by the bright inspiration of the Holy Spirit and her most becoming adornments of virtue.

9 On the virginity of Mary

And on her breast shines a red glow like the dawn; for the virginity of the Most Blessed Virgin when she brought forth the Son of God glows with the most ardent devotion in the hearts of the faithful. *And you hear a sound of all kinds of music singing about her, "Like the dawn, greatly sparkling";* for, as you are now given to understand, all believers should join with their whole wills in celebrating the virginity of that spotless Virgin in the Church.

10 On the expansion of the sacrament of the true Trinity

And that image spreads out its splendor like a garment, saying that she has to conceive and give birth, which means that in the Church the sacrament of the true Trinity will more widely expand, for it is her garment in which to shelter the faithful peoples, through whom she grows by the building up of the living stones, who are washed white in the pure font; thus she herself affirms that it is necessary to salvation that she conceive children in blessing and bring them forth in cleansing, by regeneration in the Spirit and water.

11 The ministry of angels is at hand for each of the faithful

And at once, like lightning, there hasten to her a multitude of angels, making steps and seats within her for people, by whom the image is to be perfected;

because for each of the faithful there is at hand a fearsome and desirable ministry of blessed spirits; they are building stairs of faith and seats of sovereign quiet for those faithful souls, in whom that happy mother, the Church, will attain to her full beauty.

12 Those regenerated by the Church their mother in the faith of the Trinity

Then you see black children moving in the air near the ground like fishes in water, and they enter the womb of the image through the openings that pierce it. This signifies the blackness of those foolish people who are not yet washed in the bath of salvation, but love earthly things and run about doing them, building their dwelling on their unsteadiness; they come at last to the mother of holiness, contemplate the dignity of her secrets and receive her blessing, by which they are snatched from the Devil and restored to God. Thus they enter the confines of the churchly order in which the faithful person is blessed by salvation, when he says within himself, "I believe in God," and the rest of the articles of faith.

But she groans, drawing them upward to her head, and they go out by her mouth, while she remains untouched. For this blessed mother sighs inwardly when baptism is celebrated by the sacred anointing of the Holy Spirit, because the person is renewed by the true circumcision of the Spirit and water, and thus offered to the Supreme Beatitude Who is the Head of all, and made a member of Christ, regenerated unto salvation by invocation of the Holy Trinity. But in this that mother suffers no hurt, for she will remain forever in the wholeness of virginity, which is the Catholic faith; for she arose in the blood of the true Lamb, her intimate Bridegroom, Who was born of the untouched Virgin without any corruption of integrity. So too that Bride will remain untouched, so that no schism can corrupt her.

She will often, however, be bothered by the wicked, but with the help of her Bridegroom she will always most strongly defend herself, like a virgin who is often assailed by the cravings of desire through the Devil's art and the arguments of men, but pours out her prayers to God and is forcibly liberated from their temptations and her virginity preserved. So also the Church resists her wicked corrupters, the heretical errors of Christians, Jews and pagans, who infest her and try to corrupt her virginity, which is the Catholic faith. She resists them strongly, lest she be corrupted, for she was and is and will remain a virgin; the true faith which is her virginity keeps its wholeness against all error, so that her honor as a chaste virgin remains uncorrupted by any touch of lust in the modesty of her body.

And thus the Church is the virginal mother of all Christians, since by the mystery of the Holy Spirit she conceives and bears them, offering them

to God so that they are called the children of God. And as the Holy Spirit overshadowed the Blessed Mother, so that she miraculously conceived and painlessly bore the Son of God and yet remained a virgin, so does the Holy Spirit illumine the Church, happy mother of believers, so that without any corruption she conceives and bears children naturally, yet remains a virgin. How is this?

13 Analogy of the balsam, onyx and diamond

As balsam oozes from a tree, and powerful medicines pour from an onyx vessel in which they are stored, and bright light streams without impediment from a diamond, so the Son of God, unopposed by corruption, was born of the Virgin; and so too the Church, His Bride, brings forth her children without being opposed by error, yet remains a virgin in the integrity of her faith.

14 The Trinity in baptism takes away black sins and confers a white garment

And you see how *that serene light with the figure of a man in it, blazing with a glowing fire, which you saw in your previous vision, again appears to you.* This means that the true Trinity in the true Unity is again shown to you to confirm your faith, as you saw it in that previous exceedingly true vision, with the serene Father and His sweet Son who was in divinity before all time in the Father, conceived within time in the flesh by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin. For in holy baptism Heaven opens and that Blessed Trinity appears to the baptized, so that the faithful person may receive the knowledge of how to worship the One God in the true Trinity, Which truly appeared in the first sacrament of baptism.

And it strips the black skin off each of them and throws it away; and it clothes each of them in a pure white garment and opens to them the serene light, speaking to them one by one words of blessed admonition. For the Divine Power, looking into human hearts, mercifully takes from them the crimes of their unbelief by the washing of baptism, and throws those crimes out of the Way, Which is Christ; for in Christ there is no death, but life through pure confession and the washing away of sins. Through Him each of them is clothed in the purity of salvation, and through Him the brightness of the blessed inheritance, from which the first human being was expelled, is opened to them. And each of the faithful is admonished by words of truth that he should lay aside the old ways of iniquity and accept the new gift of grace for salvation.

VISION THREE

And the children who have passed through the womb of the image walk in the splendor that surrounds her; which means that they, who through the font of sacred baptism have the Church as their happy mother, should remain in and keep to the divine law by which that mother is illuminated and adorned, for if they renounce it by infidelity they will again be stained by the sins from which they had been cleansed.

15 On the Church's lament over the error of her children

So she, benignly gazing on them, says in a sad voice that these children of hers will return again to dust. For this blessed mother, loving them with deepest love and feeling their pain in the depths of her viscera, laments that they whom she brought forth in the washing of regeneration and who were made pure in the heavenly places have longed again for earthly things and become filthy with sin. How? Because many who outwardly receive the faith inwardly oppose it by various vices and tread the way of error instead of the way of truth. Many of them recover from this falsity, but many persist in wickedness; their mother shows this by her words quoted above.

16 Two signs are given to people with which to defend themselves

Two signs of the law for those who were signed were handed down and are known to humanity: circumcision among the ancient fathers, and baptism among the new doctors. By these people are guided like an ox by its yoke; for, though the ox is corrected by the goad, it would still make a crooked furrow if it were not bound to the yoke. Likewise, people would not go forward in My ways if they were not bound to the yoke of their signs.

17 Analogy of the young man

This would be as if a young man were to start off on a journey and his father were to say to him, "Go the right way," but not give him a sword or any weapons of war with which to defend himself. What would happen then? He would flee naked, neither daring nor able to defend himself from the danger that stands in his way and hinders his journey; and he would hide himself, not being signed with the fearsome armor that would have defended him. So would My people be naked if they were not baptized; but now they are fearsome to their enemies who see them signed with the anointing of baptism, by which they resist all who try to destroy them, whether it be a human throng or a devilish army.

18 Why the twofold law was not given to Adam

But the twofold law was not given to Adam. Why? I gave him a law about the tree when he regarded Me in the innocence of his heart. But he spurned Me and agreed with the cunning serpent, and that was so dangerous that no mortal eye will be able to see Me as long as it remains in this transitory world. And because Adam transgressed My precept, he and his race were without a law until the time that prefigured the nobility of My Son.

19 The ancient serpent was fought by Noah and Abraham and bound by the Church

But the warning of the Holy Spirit appeared in Noah as the human race was on the verge of perishing, when I raised the ark above the Flood. For before the ages I foresaw that this evil race, which had completely polluted itself with black wickedness, would have to be replaced by a new stock. For after the death of Adam, his progeny went astray, not knowing that I am God, saying, "Who is God? Who is God?" And then every evil arose in their midst, so that the ancient serpent slithered among them with unhampered power, persuading them to do all his will. He was then free from bondage in fetters, for before the Flood the warning of the Holy Spirit did not strike him; but I threatened him in Noah, from whom the new stock arose, for I so instructed My people that they could never forget the teaching.

Thus the warning of the Holy Spirit first threatened him in Noah, but then circumcision in Abraham struck him in the jaw; and at last the Church bound him in the last days, until the world passes away on the final day. I permitted the Devil to exercise his power in the world before the Flood because of the ancient contest in which he conquered Adam, until he had filled his belly with the carcass of all iniquity; and I allowed this because My judgment is just. Therefore I raised up the towering mass of the Flood and slew the sinners, but in My mystery preserved Noah, whom Satan could not despoil, because by My will he stayed above the Flood. And in the Flood I symbolized the righteous offspring, My Son, announcing to the new age that He Who would silently come into the world and make known the Holy Trinity was truly to be worshipped. How?

20 On the three wings and what they signify

He displayed three wings, which symbolize the Holy Trinity; for which you, O Synagogue, shall deny Me and an alien people shall receive Me, and for which you, O Abraham, shall be magnified. O Abraham, you are encircled

with circumcision, you are walled round by the ancient covenant, and you are adorned with the dawn of the Church's sun. I gave circumcision to you and your race until the coming of My Son, who openly forgave the sins of humanity; but with Him the physical circumcision of the flesh of the foreskin came to an end, and in the sanctification of the washing of My Son, the true font of baptism poured forth.

21 Men who were uncircumcised in the time of circumcision were transgressors

But those of your race who in the time of circumcision were not circumcised when they were told to be, whether they were of lesser or greater age, transgressed the terms of My covenant; except women, on whom circumcision is not enjoined. For a woman is not to be circumcised, since the maternal tabernacle is hidden within her body and cannot be touched except as flesh embraces flesh; and also she is under the power of a husband like a servant under his master.

22 Adam's creation had three causes and so does a man who begets children

For a man has three causes for his act: desire, potency and zeal. His desire enkindles his potency, and thus in both the man and his work there is zeal to complete the work and burning will. In the same way there were three causes at work in the creation of Adam: God's will formed Man by means of His power and perfected Him in great loving-kindness in His own image and likeness. So in God's will note a parallel with a man's desire, and in God's power, a man's potency, and in the loving-kindness of God's will and power the zeal of the man's desire and potency.

In this way the human race is begotten by men on women, as God made humanity from the mud of the earth; and as the earth in its freshness is constituted to bring forth from seeds the fruits of the field, so women are to bring forth children in the waters of birth. What does this mean?

A woman from time to time becomes aware of moisture in her, which diffuses itself through her in the fluid of fertility with heat. Otherwise she would not willingly receive her husband, but refuse him and not consent to his will or procreate children. For if she did not have the fluid of fertility with heat, she would remain fruitless like dry ground, which does not yield itself to any fruitful use. But this fluid of fertility is not always inflamed into the ardor of desire in a woman, unless she has previously been touched by a man and so knows the passion of the ardor of desire; for desire in her is not as strong and burning as in a man, who is as strong as a lion in his desire for

the deed of begetting. He, therefore, has the strength of the desire and the deed, and a woman's business is only to submit to the command of his will; she is then occupied with the procreation of her offspring until she brings them into the world.

23 A woman who is a virgin for the love of God is by God greatly ornamented

But she who desires My Son and wants to keep her virginity for His love is greatly ornamented in His nuptial chamber, for she sets at naught the burning she endures for the sake of His love, but perseveres in chastity, choosing not to be consumed by the fire of ardent lust; and in her spiritual marriage she despises [the idea of] a fleshly husband, and renounces the thought of one to strive with her whole desire after My Son. O dearest seeds, O flowers sweeter and more exquisite than any perfumes, whose soft fragility rises like the dawn to betrothal with My Son, loving Him dearly with chaste love; she is His bride and He is her Bridegroom, for this race of virgins loves Him dearly and is to be adorned in the Heavenly Kingdom with glorious ornaments! But what else?

24 A man who refuses marriage for love of God is a consort of the Son of God

And when the strength of a man refuses to lead a consort in marriage, so that the man for love of My Son controls himself in the vigor of his nature, whose fulfillment is the begetting of children, but he restrains his body so as not to fulfil the desires of the flesh; that this man conquers himself in this manner is extremely pleasing to Me. Therefore I make him too a consort of My Son and place Him like a calm mirror before his face, because he resists the Devil, who drew the human race to himself by filthy and wicked infidelity. To save humanity from this snare I sent My Son into the world, born of the sweet Virgin without any stain of sin; and that innocent Lamb brought and consecrated the font of salvation, abolishing in it the foreskin of the ancient sin. What is this?

This bitter foreskin is the crime of Adam's transgression, and My Son took it away, entering the font of salvation Himself and nobly setting apart the Christian multitude, that the ancient serpent who deceived humanity might in that same washing be drowned. How? The Son fulfilled the Father's terms, and took His inheritance. What does this mean? The race of Adam was driven for his transgression out of the place of delight, but in the baptism of salvation was recalled to life by My Son. How? He Himself spoke the words of blessing over the unbelievers who resisted My precepts, so that,

terrified, they would seek pardon in a spirit of contrition, which My servant Isaiah testifies as I told him to, saying:

25 Words of Isaiah the prophet

"And the children of those who afflicted you shall come and bow down to you, and all who slandered you shall worship your footsteps" [Isaiah 60:14]. What does this mean? O You Who are celestial Peace and the purest Sun! By You shall burst forth the living root, which is regeneration by the Spirit and water, and those who had lain prostrate under the heaviest curse in the filth of horrible impurity shall come eagerly to acknowledge You; and thus bowed down, they will rise at last to truth and justice. How?

They will suck the maternal sweetness of the true faith, not knowing it by sight but grasping it by faithful belief. And who are they? Those who sprang in sin from a race that never saw You in Your burning charity but persistently afflicted and oppressed You as if You were not their destined ruler; but who came to their senses and most sweetly loved You.

And so when they come to follow the true faith they will accept You as King, and adore You as Lord and run swiftly in the holy paths You have shown them; they will gaze on You always with uplifted hands and keep constant vigil before You by good works, never growing weary of seeing You by faith; and all this will be done by those who formerly tore You without shame or reverence, and divided You in hatred and envy; but now they will embrace You ardently in the mirror of faith. What does this mean?

26 Heaven was closed to Man by Adam's fault until the Son of God came

The fall of Adam closed Heaven through My wrath; for Man spurned Me and listened to the cunning serpent, and therefore all the glory of Paradise was closed to him. This closure lasted until the coming of My noble Son, Who by My will entered the flowing Jordan, where My voice resounded mercifully when I said that He was My beloved Son in Whom I was well pleased. I willed this so that at the end of time I might redeem humanity through My Son, Who cleaves to Me in brightest warmth of love as the comb to the honey; therefore I sent Him into the font, which symbolizes Me the Fountain of living water, so that He Himself Who is the fountain of salvation might raise up those souls whom the Holy Spirit by water would redeem from sin and from eternal death. Wherefore the Holy Spirit appeared there too, for through Him remission of sins is given to the faithful; that is, in the mystical secret when My Only-Begotten was pointed out by the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove, which bird is of simple and honest

behavior, and likewise the Holy Spirit is simple unfailing justice and goodness above all good. And this was fitting, for My Son was born of the Virgin without any stain of sin, and in baptism a person who is born with sin from a man and a woman is splendidly and gloriously born again without sin, as My Son says to Nicodemus in the Gospel:

27 Words of the Gospel

"Truly, truly I say to you, unless a man is born again of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven" [John 3:5]. What does this mean? With firmest certainty and not with wavering doubt, I say to you who are born of filth that Man, risen out of burning heat and wrapped in a poisonous form, will be confounded by his apathy unless in the true joy of a new child he is born again from the water of sanctification and the spirit of illumination. How? Because Man, who overflows like water with the spirit of his enlivening, will not be able to enter into salvation as an heir to the Kingdom of his Creator unless he is purified by the true regeneration, as water cleans the dirty and spirit gives life to the inanimate; for he is guilty of the sin of the first parent, who was fraudulently deceived by the Devil. How?

As the thief who wishes to steal the King's most noble and precious possession sneaks in furtively, so the deceptive idea crept in by the maw of the Devil, by which he wickedly stole the beloved jewel of holy innocence and chastity in which dwelt the Holy Spirit; so it must now be cleansed by the holy ablution. For the death-bearing heat, which comes out of transgression of Almighty God's commands and is kindled by lust in the curdling of desire, must now be drowned in Him, Who never grudgingly hides His wonders, but generously shows them forth in infinite mercy.

28 Words of God in exhortation

Hear My Son, therefore, in this plan of regeneration, which is the revelation of My Kingdom; and learn from Him, that you may fulfil My precepts. Do this and so please Me, and beware lest the ancient serpent seduce you; and if you keep to your baptism, which was commanded for you in the name of the Blessed Trinity, you shall not die. And as often as you fall, rise again with greater penitence, in accordance with My mercy on your sins.

O you My dearest children, know the goodness of your Father Who by Himself has delivered you from the jaws of the Devil through pure confession and true pardon and given you all the good things with which to labor to possess the celestial Jerusalem, which you lost by crafty deception; for no one can seek out his lost inheritance except by the sweat of his labor. But you can easily receive supernal blessedness, your just inheritance, by a simple

rule. For the Holy Spirit, as was said before, expels Satan's power from Man in baptism, sanctifying him as a new person in regeneration, so that he can receive his lost joys. Therefore, let anyone who desires to be saved not refuse to be regenerated for the purgation of his sins.

29 In circumcision one member was circumcised, but all members are in baptism

For to the men of the race of Abraham I gave circumcision in one member, but in My Son I commanded all men and women of all people to be circumcised in all their members. How? The circumcision of baptism sprang from the baptism of My Son, and so it shall remain till the last day, and then its sanctity will abide for eternity and know no end. And those who are thus circumcised in the washing of baptism will truly be saved, if they faithfully keep this washing by just works; for I will receive any person, whether of lesser or of greater age, who will keep My covenant, which he has made with Me, believing in Me and confessing the true Trinity either by himself or by those who speak for him, as an infant or a person unable to speak asks by another's mouth. And I will not destroy him in eternity, like one who refuses to receive this font and the works of faith, as is written in the Gospel in the teaching of My Son:

30 Words of the Gospel

"He who believes and is baptized shall be saved; but he who does not believe shall be condemned" [Mark 16:16]. What does this mean? A person who sees by his knowledge, which is his inner eye, what is hidden from his outer sight and does not doubt it, most certainly believes; and this is faith. For what a person perceives outwardly, he knows outwardly, and what he sees inwardly, he understands inwardly. Therefore, when human knowledge ardently perceives in the mirror of life the incomprehensible Divinity the outer eye cannot see, the lusts of the flesh are thrown to the ground and trampled on.

Thus the spirit of that person sighs for true loftiness and feels the regeneration brought by the Son of Man, He Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, whose mother did not receive him from the flesh of a man, but from the mystery of the Father of all. And when He sweetly came He showed in water the pure and living mirror that makes Man live in regeneration. For as Man was born in the flesh when divine power created him in the form of Adam, so the Holy Spirit revives the life of the soul by the pouring out of water; It receives into Itself the spirit of the person, restoring him to life, as he is first brought into life on a wave of blood when he comes out

of the vessel of the body. And just as a human form is then lovingly formed and called human, so now the soul of the person is vivified in water before the eyes of God, so that God knows that he is an inheritor of life.

Wherefore he who receives the font of salvation and the covenant of justice finds life in salvation, because he has faithfully believed. But he who does not will to believe is dead, for he does not have the breath of the Spirit with which to fly in the heights of Heaven, but gropes his way by touch with blinded eyes, and in the darkened knowledge of the flesh is not truly alive; for he lacks the vital teaching God has breathed into one who against the will of his flesh ascends on high. That person, then, will be condemned to the death of unbelief, because he did not have the washing of salvation. For I have not excluded any age or race from this salvation, but through My Son I have mercifully instituted this calling for all people.

31 God receives in baptism both sexes at all ages

For in whatever hour and of whatever sex or age a person may be, male or female, infant or decrepit, when he comes to baptism with loving devotion I will receive him with My merciful help. And I do not refuse the washing of baptism to an infant, as certain false deceivers declare who lyingly say I reject such an offering; as in the Old Testament I did not spurn the circumcision of an infant, though he did not request it with his own voice or receive it of his own will, but his parents supplied it for him.

So now in the new grace I do not reject the baptism of an infant, although he does not ask it by speech or by consent; his parents do this for him.

32 In honor of the Trinity there must be three present at the font

But if he wants to attain salvation, he should then in all justice fulfil the faithful promise that those who stood with him at the sacred font made for him. In honor of the Holy Trinity these ought to be three people, the priest who pours the water on him and the two who give the words of faith for him. But those who are thus joined to the baptized in the washing of baptism cannot enter into marriage relations with him, for they are joined to him by spiritual relationship. In the baptism of My Son, I the Father thundered, which the priest re-enacts when he gives the benediction for the washing; and the Holy Spirit was seen in the form of a gentle animal, whose place is held by the man who speaks to and teaches the person to be baptized in simplicity of heart; and My Son was present to be baptized in the flesh, which is symbolized by the woman who stands by in the sweetness of a

nurturer in the place of the sweet Incarnation of My Only-Begotten. And what then?

33 Analogy of a baby

And as a baby is nourished in its body by milk and the food another grinds up for it, so also a baptized person must observe from his inmost heart the doctrine and the faith given to him in his baptism. But if the baby does not suck at its mother's breast or take the food ground up for it, it will die at once; and so also if a baptized person does not receive the nurturing of his most loving mother, the Church, or retain the words his faithful teachers proposed to him at baptism, he will not escape a cruel death for his soul, for he has refused his soul's salvation and the sweetness of eternal life. And as, when the baby cannot chew its bodily food with its teeth, someone else grinds it up for it to swallow lest it should die, so too in baptism, since it lacks words to confess Me, of necessity there are spiritual helpers there for it, who provide it with the food of life, namely the Catholic faith, lest it fall into the snare of perpetual death. How?

A master gives his orders to his servant in a commanding voice, and the latter carries them out in anxiety and fear; likewise a mother teaches her daughter charity, and the latter fulfils her words in obedience; and in the same way, let those who have vowed the faith offer the words of salvation at the proper time to the baptized person, that he may carry them out with faithful devotion for the love of Heaven.

34 In baptism all sins are remitted

No matter how grave are the sins with which a person is burdened, if he enters into holy baptism in the name of the sacred Trinity I truly efface all the crimes of his wickedness; as in an infant, when he is washed in the bath of regeneration, I truly take away the old sin of Adam. But do not marvel, O human, that in the font of baptism a person is justified of all his sins and mercifully relieved of their weight. For the innocent Lamb, who entered the font of baptism without any stain of sin, mercifully removes the evil of human sins in baptism by the great mystery of His Incarnation. But I perceive and scrutinize all things most keenly both in this world and in eternity, where there is no bodily death and all things are manifest. What does this mean?

Gehenna is tested by the works of death and eternal life by the works that pertain to life. How? Death is tested by death, for when a man dies by God's just judgment in his sins, without penitence and without mercy be-

cause he did not ask for it, his death is received into the deathliness of Hell. And Life is tested by life, so that good works shine in Heaven, for they are ruled by eternal life.

So also they who are baptized in the font of blessing are tested by the holiness of the second regeneration. And I am invoked by the benediction of the priest, so that My ears are attentive to the words of faith, even if he who invokes me is in the grasp of sin.

35 Even if a priest is a sinner, God accepts a baptism from him

For even if a priest is a sinner, I nonetheless accept the office of baptism from him, if he performs it faithfully by the invocation of My Name. His iniquity will condemn him if he perseveres in it without penitence. But I do not refuse to receive from him the celebration of baptism when he invokes Me with the words of faith. Why is this?

36 Analogy of the rich man

If a rich man has a steward who dispenses his goods justly to his dependents and so faithfully fulfils his duties, yet that steward is guilty in another deed, his master will not disdain to accept his duties from him; but he will say to him nonetheless, "Servant wicked in your deeds!" He will be indignant at him in his mind, but he will not disdain to accept from him the duties he performs with justice. So I too, Who have many stewards, do not refuse to receive My sacrament from a priest who is duly anointed and remains faithful to his duties, though he must be blamed for his other deeds; I judge him My enemy from his other unjust acts, but I do not disdain to receive from him what is Mine.

37 In a case of necessity, any person of faith may baptize

But if some person who is scheduled to be baptized thinks his separation from the body is near and asks for baptism, and a priest cannot be found to baptize him, if anyone pours the water on him with the invocation of the Triune Majesty, he is baptized; and he will receive the remission of his sins and the grace of heavenly blessedness through this pouring, for he has been washed in the Catholic faith, and this baptism cannot be changed.

But in this invocation no Person of the Three ineffable Persons can be omitted; for if due to unbelief one of Them is not invoked, the truth is not conferred by salvation but falsehood has caused deception. The invocation of the ineffable Trinity must not be lacking, for the Trinity was not lacking at the pure baptism of My Son, but there declared Its marvels wonderfully

through Itself. Therefore, let those who want to be saved receive the regeneration of life unto salvation, and not neglect to receive it lest they perish; for, as an aborted fetus is rejected and perishes without the heat of life, and does not remain in its mother's womb either to be formed or to be quickened, so they who have nothing to do with the sacraments of the Church, the mother of all sanctity, either in mind or in deeds are in danger of death without the consolation of the Holy Spirit.

This let all peoples hear and understand who wish to enter the Kingdom of God in the regeneration of the Spirit and water, according to what is given to them in the holy Scriptures through the gift of the Holy Spirit.

But let the one who sees with watchful eyes and hears with attentive ears welcome with a kiss My mystical words, which proceed from Me Who am life.

CONFIRMATION

VISION FOUR
Confirmation

And then I saw the image of an immense round tower, all made of a single white stone, with three windows in its summit from which shone so much brilliance that even the roof of the tower, which was constructed like a cone, showed very clearly in its light. These windows were adorned all round with beautiful emeralds. And the tower stood directly in back of the image of the woman described in the previous vision, just as a tower is placed in the wall of a city, so that because of its strength the image could not fall.

And I saw those children who, as mentioned before, had passed through the womb of that image, shining with great brightness; some of them were adorned with gold color from their foreheads to their feet, but others lacked that color and had only the brightness. And some of these children were looking at a pure and brilliant splendor, but the rest at a turbulent red flash located in the East. Of those who were meditating on the pure and brilliant splendor, some had clear eyes and strong feet and were marching forward vigorously in the womb of the image; but others had weak eyes and crippled feet and were blown here and there by the wind. These, however, had a staff in their hands, and they flew in front of the image and touched it at times, though languidly. Still others had calm eyes but weak feet, and they moved back and forth in the air before the image; and others had weak eyes and strong feet, but they walked before the image languidly. But of the ones who were contemplating the turbulent red flash, some were well-ornamented and advanced into the image with vigor; but others tore themselves away from her and attacked her and broke her established rules. Among these, some by the fruit of penitence humbly returned to her, but others by obstinacy and neglect remained in the elation of the way of death. And again I heard the voice from Heaven saying to me:

1 Each baptized person should be anointed and confirmed by a bishop

After the illumination of baptism, which rose with the Sun of Justice Who sanctified the world by His own washing, the new Bride of the Lamb was adorned and confirmed in the fire of the ardor of the Holy Spirit for the

perfection of her beauty. So also each of the faithful who is regenerated by the Spirit and water should be decorated and confirmed by a bishop's anointing, so that he will be strengthened in all his members toward achieving beatitude and find himself most perfectly adorned with the full fruits of highest justice.

Therefore, *this tower that you see* represents the flaming forth of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, which the Father sent into the world for love of His Son, to enkindle the hearts of His disciples with fiery tongues and make them stronger in the name of the Holy and True Trinity. Before the coming upon them of the Holy Spirit in fire, they were sitting shut up in their house, protecting their bodies, for they were timid about speaking of God's justice and feeble in facing their enemies' persecutions. Because they had seen My Son in the flesh, their inner vision was unopened and they loved Him in the flesh, and thus did not yet see the bright teaching that afterward, when they were made strong in the Holy Spirit, they spread abroad in the world. But by Its coming they were so confirmed that they did not shrink from any penalty, but bravely endured it. And this is the strength of that tower, which strengthened the Church so much that the insane fury of the Devil can never overcome it.

2 Confirmation confers the immense sweetness of the Holy Spirit

You see the tower as immense and round, all made of a single white stone. This means that the sweetness of the Holy Spirit is boundless and swift to encompass all creatures in grace, and no corruption can take away the fullness of its just integrity. Its path is a torrent, and streams of sanctity flow from it in its bright power, with never a stain of dirt in them; for the Holy Spirit Itself is a burning and shining serenity, which cannot be nullified, and which enkindles ardent virtue so as to put all darkness to flight.

3 In confirmation the Trinity manifests itself by verdant virtues

It has three windows in its summit from which shine so much brilliance that even the roof of the tower, which is constructed like a cone, shows very clearly in its light; for the ineffable Trinity is manifested in the outpouring of the gifts of the power of the Holy Spirit. And from the blessed Trinity so much clarity of justice emanates through the teaching of the apostles that in it the great power of Divinity, which in the height of its omnipotent majesty is incomprehensible, is shown more clearly to mortal creatures, that is, humans. But it can be grasped only as much as possible for the faith of a believing and faithful person.

Hence these windows are adorned all round with beautiful emeralds; for the

VISION FOUR

Trinity is declared openly throughout the world by the verdant virtues and tribulations of the apostles, which are never greeted with arid apathy. How? Because it is known how ravening wolves sought to tear apart the apostles for their faith in the truth, and these various calamities strengthened them for the struggle, so that by fighting they constructed the Church and strengthened her with strong virtues to build up the faith and adorned her with many brilliancies. And because the Church, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, has been so strengthened by them, she desires and asks that her children also be adorned in this anointing by the Holy Spirit, Which penetrated the hearts of the faithful in that high and mystical mercy when by the will of God the Father It came into the world in fiery tongues. Therefore, the person who was baptized with the baptism of salvation must also be confirmed by the anointing of that excellent Teacher, as the Church is confirmed on the firm rock.

4 How the Church, fortified by the Holy Spirit, can never fall into error

Hence the tower stands directly in back of the image of the woman described in the previous vision, just as a tower is placed in the wall of a city, so that because of its strength the image cannot fall. For the Holy Spirit has worked marvels in the exceeding strength of Him Who is the true Bridegroom of the Church, and It shows the Church to be so strong in her defenses that, because of the fortitude she derives from Its fiery gift, she can never be thrown down by any error of wickedness. Under heavenly protection she will always rejoice, without spot or wrinkle, in the love of her Bridegroom, because My Only-Begotten was conceived nobly by the Holy Spirit and born without stain of the Virgin, as I said to Moses:

5 Words of Moses on this subject

"Behold, He said, there is a place with Me, and you shall stand upon the rock. And when My glory shall pass by, I will set you in a hole of the rock and protect you with My right hand, until I pass. And I will take away My hand, and you shall see My back parts" [Exodus 33:21–23]. What does this mean? The miracle is at hand that will be fulfilled in My will. But first you will fight with harsh legal precepts whose force is in their outward significance and where you will not find the sweetness and gentleness that will be revealed in My Son. And this harshness of the Law, which by My command you will write down, will stand in hard and stony hearts until you and your followers have shown all the glory that is to be rendered to Me until the coming of My Son. And when this is fulfilled in the Law you are writing, I

will be glorified, and I will place you inside the pierced rock. How? I will place you in the hardness of the Law, appointing you to be over it as master of the old times, which will be pierced by My Son, when I send Him into the world at the right time and He expounds it farther than you have in His mystical words. So His strength will protect you, for He will bring words more acute than yours; and He will open the Law's commands that are now closed until He returns to Me. What does this mean?

He, taking on a body from the Virgin, will in that body give words of salvation to the world until in it He passes through death. Then I will take away My hand, when I lift Him up to Me above the stars and lay bare all His mysteries through the Holy Spirit; and thus you will see His Incarnation as a person is seen from the back and not the front, seeing Him when incarnate but not grasping His Divinity. For your children will see him when he returns to Me, more than they understood Him when He lived visibly among them.

6 The baptized are adorned when they are anointed by the bishop

And you see those children who, as mentioned before, had passed through the womb of that image, shining with great brightness. These are they who in the innocence of a clean and pure heart have gained a mother, the Church, in the font of regeneration, as was shown to you before, and are children of light, for their sins are washed away. *Some of them are adorned with gold color from their foreheads to their feet;* for from their beginning in good works to their end in sanctity, they are adorned with the shining gifts of the Holy Spirit by their anointing with chrism in the true faith at the hand of the bishop. How? Just as gold is adorned by having precious stones set into it, so baptism is adorned with the chrism given to those baptized in faith by the hand of the bishop, as it is written:

7 Words of the Book of Kings on this subject

"The King went over the brook of Cedron, and all the people marched toward the way of the olive trees, which led to the desert" [2 Kings 15:23]. What does this mean? The Son of the Virgin, who rules the whole world like an earthly king, left the people behind and went into the flowing waters of the blessed washing, which by the teaching of the Holy Spirit shows the way of salvation to one of strong desire. What does this mean? Christ left death and crossed over to life, revealing supreme beatitude in the regeneration by the Spirit and water, which are the great ornaments of the celestial Jerusalem, which never ends. Therefore all the people who believed in Him, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, went by the anointing with oil to the way that

had been hidden; and they looked out over the desert of Adam's sin, which bore no trace of the beauty of God's just inheritance, and considered whether or not that way led back to salvation. For the wound of the first man's sin required that he be anointed by the office of the priest; this was not required for the Son of the Virgin, since He was wholly conceived in sanctity and His mother's womb was not wounded or corrupted but remained whole.

But whatever is weakened and confounded by the wounds of the Devil's advice must be strengthened and adorned by the anointing of oil, that the gaping bloody wound of fleshly desire may be wiped clean.

8 Those baptized but not confirmed have light but not adornment

But others, as you see, lack that color and have only the brightness. For, having been cleansed only by the ablution of baptism, they lack the anointing with chrism by the bishop, which is the sign of the ardent Holy Spirit. What does this mean? The anointing with the gifts of the Holy Spirit by confirmation is the special ability of the episcopal office, which is to be done among the faithful after the regeneration of the Spirit and water, to found the believer upon a firm rock. How? My Son received baptism in His body and thus sanctified it by His flesh, which was not divided, for He alone is the Son of the Virgin, and therefore is called the Son of Man, but the Virgin did not conceive him by a man but gave birth to him with unbroken virginity. After the affliction of His Passion and the glory of His Resurrection, in that same flesh He entered Heaven and returned to Me; and then the Holy Spirit illuminated the world in fiery ardor, confirming all justice in the hearts of His disciples and revealing to them what had before been hidden. How?

The Holy Spirit enkindled their hearts as the sun, beginning to appear from around a cloud, shows its burning heat by its shining light. What does this mean? Love of My Son was secretly burning in their minds, and thus the fire of the Holy Spirit passed through them and showed the bright sunlight of their teaching. For this is the testimony the Holy Spirit gave to the Church, that death cannot resist the justice of God.

9 Confirmation should be conferred by bishops alone

Therefore, O children of Truth, hear and understand the confirmation of the Holy Spirit, which He offers you in the sweet unction of His teaching, being Himself the master of all anointing. This anointing, therefore, in honor of the Holy Spirit should be conferred only by the bishop. For every ecclesiastical order is instituted in the Holy Spirit, and therefore this anointing is of the Holy Spirit.

Therefore, a person who has received the mystery of regeneration unto life has not taken possession of the fullness of churchly ornaments unless he is anointed in this way, as the Church is adorned by the glorious Holy Spirit. And as the Church is perfected by the gifts of the Holy Spirit, a believer ought to be confirmed by the anointing of the bishop, who is the reverend master in the honor of the Holy Spirit; for the Holy Spirit by Its fire brings forth and kindles sure doctrine in the Christian people.

10 The one confirmed may not marry those who held his hands

Hence those who stood by the one anointed in this unction by the Holy Spirit may not enter into earthly conjugal relations with that person, to whom they are joined in the Holy Spirit. What does this mean? Faith brings a person to this anointing, and the one who then holds his hands symbolizes faith, which does not seek the things of the flesh but always goes toward the things of the spirit. For My eye sees a person as he will be when he comes to Me in his deeds.

11 One who returns to the Devil after baptism is condemned unless he repents

But if, O human, you forsake Me after baptism and return to the Devil, by My just judgment you shall be condemned for it, since I gave you the great gift of intellect and showed you My mercy in the font of baptism. For all who ask for My mercy in baptism will find it freely, for the sake of My Son Who came into the world and endured many labors in the body; therefore, O human, you should patiently endure the conflicts of your soul and body, and for My Son's sake I will receive you.

And no one must be turned away from the washing of baptism if he faithfully seeks it in My name, for I receive a person ardently at whatever time he seeks Me. But if his works thereafter are wicked, they condemn him to death. Therefore, O human, be cleansed in the regeneration of salvation and be anointed in the unction of holiness, and flee death and seek life. For the Church, mother of the faithful, prays constantly that her children may escape death and find life. How? God gave her a voice to supplicate for her children until the full number of them enter the tabernacle of the celestial city. And she has such a voice to tell Me Who am before all ages always to see and think of My Only-Begotten's Incarnation, so that for love of Him I may spare her children, whom she received in the regeneration of the Spirit and water. For unless they are saved they cannot enter the heavenly kingdom.

12 Three ways in which the Church resounds like a trumpet

Therefore she cries out, "Fear the Father, love the Son, burn in the Holy Spirit!" How? This cry is given to her by Me the Father in the Son through the Holy Spirit; it is the voice resounding in her like a trumpet in a city. And she speaks in her children no other way than this. Therefore, Omnipotent God is reminded by His Son to spare human sins, which by their penitence can be forgiven without their damnation, because the Son of God took on humanity without sin. Because God is just and the splendor of Heaven is not touched by any unclean stain, He was not clothed with polluted flesh conceived by the seed of sin; and how should Man, stained with immense foulness, enter the Kingdom of Heaven unless through My Son, incarnate without uncleanness? He receives sinners who are purified by penitence; and who could do this except God? Hence the Church too turns back to her children and cherishes them with maternal love.

13 On the many differences among the baptized

And you see that *some of these children are looking at a pure and brilliant splendor, but the rest at a turbulent red flash located in the East.* This means that among the children of the Church, whom she procreates by the power of God in the innocence of her incorruption, some direct their attention to spiritual purity and shine with serene virtue, treading earthly things underfoot for love of the true Sun; but others have bodily senses that different vices throw into disorder, yet they too burn for the true faith and aspire to eternity for the supernal reward. *Of those who are meditating on the pure and brilliant splendor, some have clear eyes and strong feet and are marching forward vigorously in the womb of the image;* for when they pursue celestial things they fix their just thoughts on God's commandments and direct their footsteps toward the good end, and thus walk in the close embrace of their mother's love, lessening their devotion neither in temporary nor in eternal things.

But others have weak eyes and crippled feet, for they do not hold to a clear purpose nor a strong performance in the work of perfection. Therefore *they are blown here and there by the wind,* for they are thrown into unstable conduct by various prideful temptations.

But these have a staff in their hands, and they fly in front of the image and touch it at times, though languidly; for they place obstinate confidence in their works, show themselves to the Church of God with empty pomp, and fatuously attend to her from time to time for reasons of worldly prudence. But when by this false pretense they appear wise in the sight of humans, before God they appear as vainglorious fools.

Still others have calm eyes but weak feet, and they move back and forth in the air before the image; the divine commands are known to them through their insight in contemplation, but they are lame in the feet of fulfillment, and thus they appear before the Bride of Christ in restless instability. Seeking wisdom in the dark, and thinking they have it before it has really taken hold on their minds, they derive no power from it.

Others have weak eyes and strong feet, but they walk before the image languidly; for they hold onto a mild inclination toward good works, when they should be advancing more vigorously in deeds of justice, but they do not go in the ways of the Church, for they fix their minds on earthly things more than heavenly. Therefore they are foolish before God, for they wish to grasp by worldly prudence what they cannot attain.

But of the ones who contemplate the turbulent red flash, some are well-ornamented and advance into the image with vigor; for these, though they possess earthly things, carry their beautiful works nonetheless into the very heart of the Church; they do not disdain to set the foot of righteousness in the divine law, but obey God's commandments, and receive strangers, clothe the naked and feed the hungry. Oh, how happy they are, since thus they receive God, and He Himself dwells with them!

But others tear themselves away from her and attack her and break her established rules. They abandon the maternal womb and the sweet nourishment of the Church and trouble her with many errors, and with different oppressions tear to pieces her laws, which God established. *Among these, some by the fruit of penitence humbly return to her;* for their grave offenses they inflict grave punishments on themselves by doing worthy penance for the restoration of life. *But others by obstinacy and neglect remain in the elation of the way of death;* for they reject life and receive the judgment of death for their hard hearts and contumacious folly. As Ezekiel says in his mystical vision:

14 Words of Ezekiel

"The King shall mourn, and the prince shall be clothed with sorrow, and the hands of the people of the land shall be troubled. I will do to them according to their way, and I will judge them according to their judgments, and they shall know that I am the Lord" [Ezekiel 7:27]. What does this mean? The soul in which Reason is king, feeling the pleasure of sin at hand, assents to it mournfully because it knows the evil of it. How? Because its reason, wisdom and knowledge are inspired by God; and thus, though the body consents, it finds the evil shameful, knowing that it is not good.

Therefore, when it is polluted with many crimes by the acts of the flesh, it heaves deep sighs and yearns for God. And when in the breath of pride the

sinful deed is done, the body is clothed with confusion like an unworthy prince, having exercised its sovereignty in uncleanness; for as a person grieves when clothed in vile garments, so also he is sad when a shameful reputation originates, to his confusion, in himself. Therefore the bad deeds of those prostrate in their evils on the ground will be confounded by heavenly commands, for such do not have the garments of salvation, which is beatitude with God; and evil confusion will possess those who lack this happiness. And so I will deal with them in the road of iniquity in which they stand, honoring the path of sin and putting no justice into their hearts though warned by the Holy Spirit; I will grant them no mercy, because they do not know the good or fear Me, but disdain Me, the Creator of all, with raging wickedness, and do whatever they like.

Therefore I will judge them according to their own judgments, which are the works they desire and do; I will give them no rewards of happiness, but set the punishment of damnation in their way, since they show Me no honor; and they shall know that no one can free them from it except Me, the Lord of all.

But let the one who sees with watchful eyes and hears with attentive ears welcome with a kiss My mystical words, which proceed from Me Who am life.

THE MYSTICAL BODY

VISION FIVE
The Three Orders in the Church

After this I saw that a splendor white as snow and translucent as crystal had shone around the image of that woman from the top of her head to her throat. And from her throat to her navel another splendor, red in color, had encircled her, glowing like the dawn from her throat to her breasts and shining from her breasts to her navel mixed with purple and blue. And where it glowed like the dawn, its brightness shone forth as high as the secret places of Heaven; and in this brightness appeared a most beautiful image of a maiden, with bare head and black hair, wearing a red tunic, which flowed down about her feet.

And I heard the voice from Heaven saying, "This is the blossom of the celestial Zion, the mother and flower of roses and lilies of the valley. O blossom, when in your time you are strengthened, you shall bring forth a most renowned posterity."

And around that maiden I saw standing a great crowd of people, brighter than the sun, all wonderfully adorned with gold and gems. Some of these had their heads veiled in white, adorned with a gold circlet; and above them, as if sculpted on the veils, was the likeness of the glorious and ineffable Trinity as it was represented to me earlier, and on their foreheads the Lamb of God, and on their necks a human figure, and on the right ear cherubim, and on the left ear the other kinds of angels; and from the likeness of the glorious and supernal Trinity golden rays extended to these other images. And among these people there were some who had miters on their heads and pallia of the episcopal office around their shoulders.

And again I heard the voice from on high, saying, "These are the daughters of Zion, and with them the harps of the harpers and all sorts of musical instruments, and the voice of all gladness, and the joy of joys."

But beneath that splendor, which glowed like the dawn, I saw between Heaven and earth a thick darkness appear, the horror of which exceeded what human tongue can utter.

And again I heard the voice from Heaven saying, "If the Son of God had not suffered on the cross, this darkness would mean that no person could attain celestial glory."

And where the splendor shone, which was mixed with purple and blue, it encircled the woman's image with strong ardor. But another splendor, like a white cloud, decently enveloped that image from the navel down, to the point at

which it had not yet grown further. And these three splendors around that image shone afar, showing that within her many steps and ladders were well and properly placed.

And when I saw these things, I was seized with extreme trembling; my strength failed me, and I fell to the ground, unable to speak. And behold! A great splendor touched me like a hand, and I recovered my strength and voice. And from that splendor again I heard a voice, saying;

"These are great mysteries. For consider the sun and the moon and the stars. I formed the sun to give light by day, and the moon and stars to give light by night. The sun symbolizes My Son, Who went forth from My heart and illuminated the world when in the latest times He was born of the Virgin, as the sun goes forth and lights the world when it rises at the end of the night. And the moon symbolizes the Church, betrothed to My Son in true and celestial betrothal. And as the moon is so made that it always increases and decreases, but does not burn of itself unless it is kindled by the light of the sun, so too the Church has a cycle of movement: her children sometimes rise in increase of virtues and sometimes decline by inconstant behavior or harm by outside forces. For she is often assailed in her mysteries by ravening wolves, that is to say malicious people, whether bad Christians or Jews or pagans; and she is not fired to endurance by herself, but lit up by Me through My Son to persevere in good. But the stars, which differ from each other in the brightness of their glory, symbolize the people in the differing religious orders of the Church."

1 Apostles and their followers, the priests, surround the Church with teaching

Thus you see that *a splendor white as snow and translucent as crystal shines around the image of that woman from the top of her head to her throat.* For the Church, who is the incorrupt Bride, is surrounded by apostolic teaching, which reveals the pure Incarnation of Him Who descended from Heaven into the Virgin's womb and Who is the strong and clear mirror of all the faithful. And this teaching, which shines so brightly around the Church, constantly surrounded her from the start, from the time she first began to be built until she attained the strength to swallow the food of life. How?

The apostolic teaching shone around the head of the Church when the apostles first began to build her up by their preaching; moving through different places, they collected workers who would strengthen her in the Catholic faith and make themselves into priests and bishops and all the ecclesiastical orders, to establish faithfully the rights of men and women who married and all other such institutions. Therefore, the chrism-makers [bishops and priests] conform to that teaching; they are like the priests of the

Testament of the Law, who were appointed to nourish the multitudes with inner food under the law of circumcision. Hence also the apostles chose those orders with which, by heavenly inspiration, they adorned the Church. What does this mean?

That their followers, who took their places, faithfully traverse streets and farms and cities and other places, regions and lands, carrying the health-giving chrisms and announcing the divine law to the people. For they are fathers and stewards, carefully chosen to make church rules known to the people by their teaching and to distribute to them the food of life; and therefore they must show themselves such in their lives that My sheep will not be offended by their works, but walk uprightly after them. For they have this office that they may openly serve the bread of life to the people, and for each one individually set in order the duties of faith; therefore they must so restrain themselves as not to desire carnal union, since they must give the spiritual food to believers and offer to God the spotless sacrifice prefigured in innocent Abel. For of him it is written:

2 Example of Abel

"Abel also offered of the firstlings of his flock, and of their fat." [Genesis 4:4] What does this mean? That at the beginning of time there shone forth in him, who was innocent in his life, a blessed and kingly manifestation, which by God's gift touched not earth but Heaven. How? Because Abel in his integrity offered to God the purpose and the full service of his will, resolving in his heart to offer Him the first increase of his substance and successfully doing so, thus honoring the Supreme Father and showing Him proper reverence.

So, as Abel was in charge of his flock, pasturing and guarding it and with simple devotion offering its increase and its fatty nourishment to God, let the aforementioned chrism-makers, who are set over the children of the Church, who are the sheep of Christ, pasture them according to His plan, faithfully nourish them by their words, teaching them the church rules, and protect them forcefully from the snares of the ancient waylayer, and offer gifts from some of them, with sincere reflection, to the Observer of all. How?

If they cannot make them perfect in all respects, let them nonetheless offer to God some fruit that comes from them: first, like the increase of the firstborn of the flock, their good intentions, and then, like the sweet fruit of its fatlings, the perfect work of activity in their will. But why did Abel worship God so devoutly? The fact is that the wholeness of his chastity impelled him to such great devotion.

3 The ministers of the Church must keep their chastity

Therefore let those who are appointed by consecration to offer to God the sacred sacrifice approach His altar in the sweetness of chastity. For if they themselves are authors of corruption, how can they offer to others wounded by corruption the hand of salutary healing? And so, that they may be able to give others health-giving remedies with confidence, I will them to imitate My Son most forcefully in love of chastity. But if they should fall, let them hasten to rise immediately by penitence and flee as if naked from the shamefulness of sin; let them seek the wholesome remedy and faithfully follow Abel, whose sacrifice was acceptable to God.

4 Those who live in obedience when unsupervised gain an eternal reward

But those churchmen who enclose themselves in a cloister of obedience and behave according to the ordinances of their superiors, which the latter made by My inspiration, even though they do not have bishops carefully watching over them and do not bear the burden of their anxiety, gain for themselves with those bishops the celestial reward in the city of the chosen, because they subject themselves to their superiors for the sake of eternal reward alone.

5 On the noble and joyous state of perfect virginity

But you see that from her throat to her navel another splendor, red in color, encircles her. This means that after the teaching of the apostles had so invigorated the Church that she could truly discern the saving food and make it the source of her interior strength, there arose the noblest perfection of churchly religion, which tasted heavenly sweetness with burning ardor and stringently restrained itself in order to gird itself with secret power; rejecting the union of human coupling, it avoided the division caused by the bitterness of the flesh. How?

That splendor glows like the dawn from her throat to her breasts; for this perfection arose from the taste of the excitement of miracles and extended in virginal gladness to the sweet nourishment of churchly religion. *And it shines from her breasts to her navel mixed with purple and blue;* for she fortified herself for the stringency of inner chastity by the noblest training, namely by imitating the Passion of My Son to gain the celestial love He guarded in His heart. Therefore, *where it glows like the dawn, its brightness shines forth as high as the secret places of Heaven;* for the perfection that flowers in the state of

virginity directs its strength not downward toward earthly things, but miraculously upward to what is in Heaven.

6 On the image of the maiden

In this brightness appears a most beautiful image of a maiden, with bare head and black hair. This is serene Virginity, innocent of all foulness of human lust. Her mind is unbound by any shackle of corruption, but is not yet perfectly able to bar troubled and dark thoughts from the minds of her children, as long as they are in the world; but she forcefully resists and opposes such thoughts.

Therefore *she wears a red tunic, which flows down about her feet;* for she perseveres toward the goal of widest and most blessed perfection by the sweat of her labor in virtuous works, surrounded with the variety of virtues and imitating Him Who is the plenitude of sanctity. She is also, as is shown you in this hidden and supernal light, the noble daughter of the celestial Jerusalem, the glory and honor of those who have shed their blood for love of virginity or in radiant humility preserved their virginity for the sake of Christ and died sweetly in peace. For she was betrothed to the Son of Almighty God, the King of all, and bore Him a noble brood, the elect choir of virgins, when she was strengthened in the peace of the Church.

7 The throng that stands around that maiden

And around that maiden you see standing a great crowd of people, brighter than the sun, all wonderfully adorned with gold and gems. This is to say that noble Virginity is surrounded and ardently embraced by a wonderful crowd of virgins. They all shine before God more brightly than the sun does on the earth; for they have conquered themselves and bravely trodden death underfoot in the glorious works they have humbly performed for Christ, and so are adorned beautifully with the highest wisdom. *Some of them have their heads veiled in white, adorned with a gold circlet;* for, shining in the glory of virginity, they indicate that those who seek its rank should veil their minds from harmful heat all around, and grasp the purity of innocence which is adorned with the beautiful splendor of chastity.

Above them, as if sculpted on the veils, is the likeness of the glorious and ineffable Trinity as it was represented to you earlier; which shows that these people's minds firmly and strongly uphold the honor of the celestial and glorious Trinity, Which was truly shown you before in a mystery, by their knowledge of love and steadfast chastity.

On their foreheads is the Lamb of God, and on their necks a human figure,

and on the right ear cherubim, and on the left ear the other kinds of angels; which declares that in their reverent chastity they will imitate the mildness of the Son of God, laying aside stiffnecked wantonness and knowing themselves to be frail humans. In prosperity they will listen to and embrace true and unfailing knowledge; at the approach of adversity they will listen for angelic aid. So *from the likeness of the glorious and supernal Trinity golden rays extend to these other images,* for the ineffable Trinity unceasingly works the miracles of Its profound wisdom among the faithful who seek virtue and flee the seductions of the Devil.

And among these people there are some who have miters on their heads and pallia of the episcopal office around their shoulders. For among those who flourish in the honor of virginity there are some in the celestial city who ably held the rank of the ancient fathers and the glory of higher offices in the world, yet did not lose the ornament of virginity. Hence, as you hear, all those who in their desire kept their integrity for the sake of celestial love are called "daughters of Zion" in the celestial habitations; for in their love of virginity they imitated My Son, Who is the flower of virginity. Therefore the sounding echoes of the blessed spirits and the outpouring of voices and the winged decorations of happy minds and the golden vision of shining stones and jewels are all with them. How? Because the Son of God grants them this, that a sound goes forth from the Throne in which the whole choir of virgins joins in singing with great desire and harmonizing in the new song, as John, the beloved virgin, testifies, saying:

8 Words of John

"And they sang, as it were, a new song before the throne, and before the four living creatures and the ancients" [Revelation 14:3]. What does this mean? In those faithful ones who embrace chastity for a good purpose and preserve their virginity unstained for love of God, good will bursts forth wonderfully in praise of their Creator. How? In the dawn-light of virginity, which always surrounds the Son of God, steadfast praise is hidden; no worldly office and no tie of the law can resist it, and it sings in the voice of exultation a celestial song to the glory of God. How?

That song, which was not heard before the Only-Begotten of God, the true flower of virginity, returned in the body from earth to Heaven and sat again on the right hand of the Father, has a swift course and makes itself heard wonderfully in new liberty. And, since new customs, which have not been seen before, are regarded with amazement when they are seen, this new and unheard-of mystery resounded in Heaven in honor of virginity, before the majesty of God (for God could do this) and before the four wheels that rolled into the four corners of the earth bearing the truth of justice and the

humanity of the Savior like the living creatures in the new Law, and before those ancients who were imbued with the Holy Spirit and showed the path of righteousness to the people under the old Law. Why is this? Because God by the new grace softened the rigor of the old institution.

9 Virginity offered to God must be carefully preserved

But since virginity is so glorious before God, those who have offered it to God of their own will must carefully preserve it; for this holy purpose, undertaken with great devotion to virginity, must be faithfully kept. So let those who have undertaken this mystery take care not to fall back. For when they offer themselves to God, not joined by any bond of marriage or burdened by any secular business but spurning carnal coupling and desiring to cleave to the glorious innocence of the innocent Lamb, they are beloved imitators of My Son.

So a man who decides in his mind not to join himself to any rib, but wants to persevere in the modesty of virginity for love of My Son, will become his companion, if he perseveres in the works of chastity; for he has offered these holy gifts to My Son for the glory of a heavenly reward by the vow of a most sacred pact of churchly religion.

But if he then breaks this pact because of an evil stinging of his flesh and commits adultery, he reduces his liberty to servitude, for by his shameful pleasure he has wickedly brought low his head when he ought to have chastely imitated My Son; and he has uttered a lie, vowing to live chastely and not fulfilling it. Therefore, if he perseveres in his rash fault he will undergo the strict judgment of the Just Judge, for no shame or lie can appear in celestial glory.

But if before his death the man does penance for his guilt with bitter tears, My Son's flowing blood will receive him, since he abhors his sin; but this does not place him back among his companions who shine with the glory of integrity, for he has deserted their society, casting away the liberty of his pact and reducing it to the slavery of sin.

10 She who breaks the vow of virginity will be not a lady but a handmaid

And a maiden who of her own will is betrothed in holiness to My Son is becomingly received by Him, for He wishes to have her united with Him in companionship. How? That she may embrace Him with chaste love, and He may love her in secret; for to Him she is always lovable, since she seeks Him rather than an earthly bridegroom. But if she then transgresses this pact, she is polluted in the sight of those who are in celestial joy; and if she perseveres

in this rashness, by just judgment she will be deprived of heavenly glory. But if she repents, she will be received as a handmaid and not as a lady, since she has deserted her royal betrothal and loved another more than Him she should have loved. And let him who seduced and violated her, if he wants to atone for his guilt, repent as if he had broken open Heaven; only thus will he escape the condemnation of death, for he rashly violated a heavenly betrothal. What does this mean?

11 Illustration of this issue

If some great ruler had a bride exceedingly dear to him, who was adulterously corrupted by a servant of his servants, what would that lord do? He would certainly send his army to destroy him in greatest wrath, since this man had struck him to the very viscera. But if this servant, fearing the army, should beg his master to intercede for him, and fall at his feet with tears to ask him to spare him, then that king would suffer him to live because of his own goodness and the other's petition, and restore him to the society of his fellow-servants. But he would not reward him like his close and familiar friends, even though he did show him the favor he deserved among his fellow-servants of the same rank. So it will be for one who seduces and violates a bride of the eternal King. For that King, issuing His judgments in righteous zeal, will send him to perdition, because in this deed he disregarded Him and held Him in scorn.

But if the wretch, looking forward in fear to that day of wrath, humbly begs God's elect to ask pardon for him from the Lord and tearfully contemplates the Humanity of his Savior until he is absolved from sin by His grace, then the King, mindful of the blood that was shed for the redemption of the human race, and for love of the citizens of Heaven, will save him from his guilt and from the power of the Devil and accord him the salvation of the blessed so that he will not go to perdition. But He will not adorn him in the dance of the royal wedding, at which the other friends of God will rejoice with those sacred virgins who in celestial betrothal are dedicated to My Son; just as He will not crown with the rank of virginity one who has lost the modesty of virginity, even though He grants him with His other elect joy in the celestial city and an inestimable reward.

12 The great difference between celestial desire and earthly lust

But beneath that splendor, which glows like the dawn, you see between Heaven and earth a thick darkness appear, the horror of which exceeds what human tongue can utter. This is to say that under the glory of virginity, the fall of our first parent openly stands between the spiritual and the carnal

intellect; and that fall was the darkest shadow of unfaithfulness, so that no person could expound its terror. Why?

Because in the Incarnation of the Son of God, born of the Virgin, celestial desire was supreme and earthly lust was lacking; so Adam's transgression was miraculously remade into salvation by the blood of the Son of God; not earlier, since no other but the Only-Begotten of God, sent into the world by the Father, could cancel that transgression and permit entry into Heaven. Therefore, as you hear in this vision, unless the Son of God had shed His blood for human salvation, that transgression would have weighed Man down so much that he could not have attained to the joy of the citizens of Heaven.

13 On monks who enter into monastic profession

And where the splendor shines, which is mixed with purple and blue, it encircles the woman's image with strong ardor. This symbolizes the perfection of those who imitate the Passion of My Son in the ardor of their love and strongly adorn the Church with their self-restraint. How? Because they are the high building of the growing treasury of the divine counsel. For when the Church was invigorated and grew stronger, to increase her beauty there came forth a living fragrance [monks], vowing the way of secret regeneration [making monastic profession]. What does this mean? That there then arose the wonderful order, which attained to My Son in the beauty of His example; for as My Son came into the world separated from the common people, so this army lives in the world separated from the rest of the people. This people first arose in the desert and in hiding, as balsam sweetly oozes from the tree, and then grew into a great multitude, as the tree extends its branches. And I blessed and sanctified this people, for they are to Me the lovely flowers, roses and lilies, which grow in the fields without human labor; for no law constrains these people to desire such a narrow way, but they undertake it of their own will without any legal command, as I inspire them, and do more than they are told to. Therefore, they gain a very great reward from Me, as is written in the Gospel, where the Samaritan brought that wounded man to an inn:

14 Words of the Gospel

"And the next day he took out two pence and gave them to the innkeeper, and said, 'Take care of him, and whatever you spend over and above this, I will repay you when I return' " [Luke 10:35]. What does this mean? On the first day of salvation, that is, when the miraculously incarnate Son of God was abiding in the world in His body and until His resurrection, He per-

formed in His Humanity many marvellous works, by which He wholesomely brought the wounded man to true remedies. But the next day, that is, after His resurrection, when all the mysteries of truth had been openly given to the Church, He figuratively offered the New and Old Testaments as a sure proof of eternal life and a sweet food for the believing people.

And He gave these writings by His grace to the pastors of the Church, who keep His flock; and He said to them with sweet admonition, "Use churchly rules to look after the company of Christians redeemed in My blood, which I have entrusted to you, taking care that they do not err or lack in what pertains to life. But whatever you may add in your goodwill to what I have ordered you to keep, doing more than is commanded of you, I your Leader and Savior, who now leave the world and ascend to the Father but will return to judge the world and establish it forever, with no wearing away through the passage of time, will then repay you for your labor and your goodwill, with added fruits. And I will say to you 'O faithful and righteous servant, who has ministered faithfully!' Whoever willingly adds more than the Law commanded him will receive a twofold reward; for I hold him glorious in My name, since he has loved Me greatly." And I say:

15 The orders of virgins and monks are not found in the precepts of the Law

Neither the race of virgins nor this singularly devoted order, nor those who imitate them, such as desert hermits, are commanded by the Law; as the prophets too were not appointed by people under the laws of the flesh, for they arose imbued only by My inspiration. But they do more than was commanded them, which priests and those pertaining to their order do not, for these things were commanded by Abraham and Moses in the Old Testament, and the apostles took them from the Law, set them up in My will by the Holy Spirit and handed them on to be kept by the Church. And the same apostolic teaching was set forth in the Gospel by My Son, when His disciples were sent out to spread abroad the words of truth to the whole world.

What then? As the apostles announced the way of salvation to the people, the bright dawn of the daughters of Zion arose in the love of My Son, that is, the dawn of those who strongly repressed their flesh and harshly mortified their evil desires. And as this chaste virginity followed My Son in ardent love, that singularly devoted order greatly pleasing to Me also imitated His Incarnation. These are My true temples, where I am worshipped as if by choirs of angels; they bear in their bodies the Passion and death and burial of my Only-Begotten, not in that they die by the sword or other human terrors, but in that they imitate My Son by renouncing the will of their own flesh, separating themselves from all worldly things and ornaments in which the

world rejoices. Which is written in the Gospel about John, the lamp of the world:

16 Example of John the Baptist

"And the same John had a garment of camel's hair and a leathern girdle about his loins" [Matthew 3:4]. What does this mean? Divine grace had woken miraculous abstinence in him, and by that grace he had a defense of his virtue, for in his mind he had despised honor and earthly riches, and in his body he had tamed the wanton urges through the restraints that, to mortify vice, he had put on the pleasures of the flesh. For, advancing through hard and rough ways and trampling down earthly lust, he built greater towers of virtue than his predecessors. How?

Because, vigorously performing many works of virtue, he ardently loved chastity and showed the way of healing to those who devotedly sought it. Therefore, all monks who make profession should follow John in his way of life, who shone by his lofty works of blessed virtue amid the great darkness of the world; they should flee from the meaningless expanse of worldly things, restrain their wandering minds and so force their bodies to renounce evil desire. Thus they will outshine by more excellent means those who before their time walked simply in the way of the Lord and made their simple habitations; they will take the steep and narrow path by firmly treading underfoot those things that are the pleasures of the world. How? Because, despising themselves and subjecting their bodies to the service of Christ in the work of the virtues, they will shun wantonness by austere behavior and so shine brightly for others by their good examples. For they faithfully imitate the angelic choir. How? By renouncing worldly things; for, as the angels do not seek or long for the things of earth, these people follow them miraculously in despising all fleeting things.

17 Monks for the needs of the Church may take Church offices

So as My Son brings the message of the healthful sacraments, and is the Priest of priests and the Prophet of prophets and the builder of blessed towers, if a necessity arises a monk who is firmly rooted and competent for it may be a messenger and priest, prophet and counselor of the Church. He is not to be kept away from these offices, as long as his sight is clear and he does not slumber at his churchly duty but attends to his teaching; he must only reject being occupied by secular business and its contagion. For neither angels nor priests nor prophets will hide God's justice, but will make it known in truth from His precepts; as in the Gospel it is written again of John, whose austerity they follow, that he was not a reed shaken in the wind.

18 Words of the Gospel concerning John

"And all the country of Judea went out to him, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins" [Mark 1:5]. What does this mean? They, whose hearts had been struck by fear of death and love of life, went out with sighs and groans from the pleasures of vice to him who had the divine grace to do everything for them, by means of simple confession from their devoted wills and visions of peace. How? Because John, the forerunner of the Truth, conveyed to them both bitterness and sweetness. Therefore they entreated from his rectitude an outpouring of penance, so that, by avoiding evil deeds and doing good ones and confessing their crimes, they might deserve to reach Him Who would confer on them true salvation in the light of the New Testament instead of the remedy in the shadow of the Old. And just as John taught those who came to him and baptized them in the river after receiving their words of repentance in honor of the Savior to come, so now, in the name of the Savior Who has come and brought salvation to the faithful, let those who add shining works to the testimony of sanctification not neglect to do so. Inspired by the Holy Spirit, let them reach new heights of austerity in renouncing worldly things, following the model they adopted when they listened to that testimony and put on the new man through the regeneration of the Spirit and water, rejecting the service of the Devil. And, when necessity impels, let them offer the hand of assistance to those who ask, admonishing, uplifting and healing; and if they have worthily attained an office by churchly promotion, let them faithfully imitate their Forerunner, so as truly to complete in the new light what he showed in the shadow.

For the monks are the girdle of the Church and strongly encircle her, since they are concerned with My Son's Incarnation and also exercise the function of the angels; that is, they do not cease at any hour to sing melodiously or pray in compunction, with the freshness of remorse and not with the useless dry dust of noisy cries, and they do not seek to handle worldly things but examine themselves thoroughly with charity and humility.

Oh, these are My strong and loving people, for in them I contemplate the sufferings that My Son underwent in the flesh; and they die His death, when they forsake their own will and submit to obedience for the sake of eternal life, walking in the commands of their superiors.

19 The monks' unique garment symbolizes Christ's Incarnation and burial

Therefore their garment is unlike that of other people, for it symbolizes the incorrupt Incarnation of My Son, which is completely different from the

procreation of other people. For the command of the Law concerning men and women did not touch the Incarnation, in the same way that no written law obliges these people to their strictness of life; though one who undertakes it with a vow by his own will for the love of God should persevere in it, lest he recoil and fall, like Lucifer who forsook light and went into darkness.

And this garment flies with wings of subtlety like the glitter of supernal spirits, and points to the Incarnation and burial of My Son; for one who gives himself up to strictest obedience has on his garment the sign of My Son's Incarnation, and one who renounces secular business for the works of justice has on his garment the sign of My Son's burial. Hence one who by purity of will is clothed in this garment is uplifted by a heathful remedy.

And therefore, let one who receives it with blessings and the invocation of the Holy Spirit not renounce it; for he who despises it in persistent and evil rejection will be with the one who spurned the order of angels and was entombed in death. What does this mean? These people are not spurred on by any precept of the Law to their strictness of life, but have undertaken to observe My pact of their own will and thus make My Church illustrious by the holiness of their ways. How? This order rose after the apostles' preaching as the sun rises after the first light of day. What does this mean?

20 Benedict, who is a second Moses, made this order a separate way

The first light of day designates the faithful words of the apostolic teaching; the dawn, the beginning of this way of life, which following that teaching first came about in solitude and in caves; but the sun symbolizes the separate and well-disposed way I then brought about through My servant Benedict, whom I passed by in burning fire, teaching him to honor the Incarnation of My Son in the garment of his way of life, and imitate His Passion in the abnegation of his will. For Benedict is like a second Moses, lying in the cleft of the rock and tormenting and repressing his body with great harshness for the love of life, as the first Moses wrote on the stone tablets at My command and gave the Jews a Law that was harsh and hard. But as My Son penetrated that same Law with the sweetness of the Gospel, so also My servant Benedict by the sweetness of the Holy Spirit's inspiration made the plan of this order a separate and level path, which before him was an exceedingly hard way of life. And he gathered together by it large numbers for his order, as My Son, through the sweetness of His fragrance, gathered to Himself the Christian people.

And so then the Holy Spirit spoke in the hearts of His elect who sighed for life, telling them that as in the washing of baptism the crimes of the peoples are washed away, so they themselves should renounce the pomps of the world as a sign of the Passion of My Son. How? Because in holy baptism

a person is converted from the power of the Devil and rejects his old stains of sin, and thus these too should reject earthly business by the sign of their garment, which is also an angelic sign. How? Because by My will they are appointed protectors of the people.

21 For Church necessities a proven monk may receive priesthood

For this reason, those of them who are found proven in their holy way of life may be established as pastors of My Church, as the angels, who are touched by no stain from earthly affairs, are the guardians of My people. For, as the angels hold before God a twofold rank, so the people of this religious order live in a twofold life. How? The angels in the heavenly places serve God without interruption, and on earth continually protect people from the snares of the Devil. So these people imitate the angelic order when they despise earthly things and serve God daily, and also defend all other people from evil spirits day and night by their prayers. Therefore, if My Church does not have a fitting pastor, let the people of this religious order come to her aid, crying out and weeping; and let the one among them who is found proven defend her with vigorous zeal, receiving priesthood too if necessary.

22 No one should undertake this order without being very closely examined

But no one should undertake the religious life of this order suddenly and as if just waking from a dream, but let him first be tested with close examination as to the self-control of his mind, and whether he can persevere in this purpose; for if he were to undertake it by his own will in the pact of blessing and later in perverse error renounce it and impenitently mock Me, he would perish miserably in the condemnation of death. Therefore, O my dearest children, who are so scattered by opposition, rise up quickly in humility and charity, and manfully and unanimously consent to your holy purpose.

23 Secular people who keep God's laws greatly adorn the Church

But, as you see, another splendor, like a white cloud, decently envelops that image from the navel down, to the point at which it has not yet grown further. This is the secular life, which with pure and calm purpose surrounds the Church with reverence and renders her just assistance, from the fullness of her growing strength until the point past which she has not yet developed in her children. How? Because what lies closest to the navel is the womb, from which the whole human race is procreated. Therefore this refers to the

secular people in the Church, through whom she must be brought to the full number of her orders, for here are gathered kings and dukes, princes and rulers, and their subjects, rich and poor, and the destitute living among the others. And by all these the Church is exceedingly adorned, for when lay-people faithfully observe the Law of God, which is laid down for them, they beautify the Church greatly; when they obey their superiors with sincere humility and devotion, and chastise their bodies for God's love by alms and vigils and continence and widowhood and other good works that are of God, they embrace God with many embraces. Therefore they who keep the law appointed for them by My will are most lovable to Me.

24 Married people cannot become monastics unless both agree to do it

If any layperson desires to renounce worldly things to bear the yoke of My liberty, let him come to Me quickly, unless he is in the bonds of a fleshly union. This tie he may not rashly loose unless his consort wills it. How? Husband may not leave wife and wife may not leave husband for this purpose unless it is the will of both, and they both decide either to remain in the world or to separate from the world; for it cannot be that a whole person can remain well if one foot remains with his body and the other is cut off from it. So it is not fitting for a husband to worship the world while his wife deserts the world, or for a wife to reside in the world while her husband flees the world, if they wish to have glory in celestial life; for if this is done indiscreetly and foolishly, it will be called a robbery rather than an offering. So let those who are legally joined in a fleshly union live together with one mind, and not foolishly separate from each other without a dispensation or declaration from Church authority, as is written again in the Gospel:

25 Words of the Gospel

"What therefore God has joined together, let not Man put asunder" [Matthew 19:6]. What does this mean? God, creating the human race, took flesh out of flesh and joined them in a union, and thus established that this connection must not hastily be broken. How? Because in the union of man and woman flesh will be united to flesh and blood to blood by a legal ceremony, so that they cannot be divided from each other in foolish haste, unless both dissolve the bond for a just cause or a rightful devotion; for God in His secret wisdom graciously formed this union of male and female for the propagation of people. And because He so rightly constituted this union, foolish human desire should not cause a breach between the two parts, and

neither part should take the dowry of its blood to an alien place; for, as God commanded that people should not slay each other, He also commanded that they should not divert their blood from its rightful place by cruel fornication.

Therefore, let people repress the ardor of their longing and not transmit their flame to an alien fire. For if an ardent will takes hold of the will of another and stirs it up to fervent lust for a stronger or weaker reason, the two will coalesce into one by the first person's mental desire and the other's consent to be embraced by it. For the sight of the outer eye makes the inner heat burst into flame. And even if the one body does not sin with the other, the living will still makes them burn, so that all their viscera are shaken by their feelings. Therefore, let the outer person be guarded with such caution that the inner person may never be wounded by carelessness.

26 These orders consolidate the Church in their ranks and degrees

And you see that *these three splendors around that image shine afar;* which is to say that these three institutions surround and consolidate the blessed Church in a wondrous way in honor of the heavenly Trinity, causing her to burst forth with buds and spread out with blessed verdure. Therefore *they show that within her many steps and ladders are well and properly placed.* These are the various orders of laypeople and religious, in which the Church by good habits and the practice of virtue guides her children, educated in sweet reverence, to Heaven. How? When they spurn earthly things and love celestial ones. What does this mean? When they faithfully fulfil in divine love the precepts instituted for them.

27 Each order must avoid diversity, singularity and novelty in way of life

But as in three Persons there is one God, so in these three orders there is one Church, founded by Him Who has planted all good things. For whatever He has not planted will not be able to stand. And thus those institutions He has not instituted will fall into great errors. How? Those institutions that in haughty pride seek to ascend and do not wish to be subject to those higher than they were not planted by God. And this happens when a lesser order strives to raise itself above a greater one, which was constituted by My will on the ancient counsel of the first Fathers; and when it tries in its madness to appear more important by distinctive signs in its vestments; as if the order of angels tried to raise itself above the order of archangels. What would this mean? That they were nil and useless, since with vain ideas they tried to divide the orders duly constituted by God. But this should not be.

So it is not fitting that I should be invoked by those who, with a mania

for diversity, always wish for a new purpose, and who, not knowing their own minds, leave the well-trodden path and the well-plowed ground of the early Fathers, who were inspired by the Holy Spirit. Many of these, in the greatness of their pride, forsake the established ordinances that the Church has from the early Fathers, and make schisms in their various institutions. And they wish in their wanderings to be called fruitful trees, but they cannot even be called empty reeds, as is shown by the beloved John, who writes about those who wither in apathy and are cut off:

28 Words of John

"I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I would you were cold or hot! But because you are lukewarm and neither cold nor hot, I will spew you out of my mouth" [Revelation 3:15–16]. What does this mean? O fools, who are shamefully withering up inside, I Who am the Knower of Secrets see with the eye of knowledge the works of your desires; you have not fled utterly from the works of the fire of the fiery Enlightener, and yet you have not renounced the works that produce the ice of frigid stiffness. How? You are not entirely given over to works of cold evil, and you are not entirely burning for good deeds, but you waver toward each in the instability of your mind, like a lukewarm wind; and you do not think either about the deserved punishments of evil or about the worthy rewards of good. How? Because you look into such a deep abyss that you cannot find its bottom, but you also give your attention to such a high mountain that you cannot scale its summit.

Oh, how much better it would be for you to know yourself as an unprofitable servant and a sinner, rather than remaining in lukewarmness and hardly glancing at what is right. For if you were separated from good actions you would know yourself to be a sinner, and if you withdrew yourself from evil works you would have some hope of life. But now you are like a lukewarm wind, which gives neither moisture nor heat to the fruits. For you are one who begins, but not one who finishes; you touch the beginning of good, but you never feed on its perfection, like the wind that blows around a person's mouth and not the food that reaches his stomach. Which is more precious, an empty noise or a finished work? Of course a finished work is more acceptable than an empty noise.

Work, then, in the silence of humility, and do not puff yourself up with pride; for anyone who forsakes the holy society of My docile and loving servants, and undertakes with eager boasting a work he disdains to complete with sweet mildness, will be counted as nothing.

But if you begin in rectitude to try to penetrate the meaning of My words, which offer food to the faithful, but are then sluggish in them and

show no sweetness of justice to those you encounter, and so fall to worse things, I will begin to cast you out by that same meaning of My words for your lukewarm negligence. For you show no savor of sweetness in doing your works and do not pant after the blessed reception of inner gifts. And, being so cast out, you will be trodden underfoot, like food that is so insipid in taste that a person spits it out of his mouth before it can reach his stomach. But what now?

The wind blows, and its noise resounds, but it puts forth no flower from its roots nor reproduces itself. For they, who should be under My yoke, are willful and undisciplined. What does this mean? They neglect the right path and make themselves useless tabernacles. For such people, who are sluggish inside and have no fervor for justice, neither burn for the laws set up for them nor follow the way of life of their fathers before them; but each of them nurtures some singularity in himself and lays down laws for himself according to his own will, and so in wavering thoughts and inflated pride raises himself up to fly. And, since they do not keep to the righteous pact of their fathers, they are always new and unskilled, and they wander here and there in great instability, following their own will.

29 Analogy of a craftsman

Therefore I compare them to stupid craftsmen who are building a large building, yet do not follow the wisdom of previous craftsmen who are well-trained in the use of their tools and knowledgeable about how to plan and raise a building; but they carelessly and foolishly trust in themselves, wanting to excel others in wisdom, and build their buildings such that they will be shaken by storms and thrown down by the winds. For they will not be built on rock, but on sand.

And thus do those who trust to themselves in their pride and seek to seem wiser than the early Fathers; they do not want to walk according to their covenant, but lay down shaky laws for themselves at their own will, and thus, leaning not on Christ but on their own unstable conduct, they are often stirred up to sin by the temptations of the Devil.

30 The institution of his predecessors suffices for one who is humble

Therefore, lest the breath of the Holy Spirit, which suffused the early Fathers, be expelled by these people's swelling pride, I desire the faithful person to be humble and content with what his predecessors instituted for him. For if he should vainly will more than he ought humbly to seek, he

might later grow lukewarm and draw back from it and be shamefully confounded, as it is written in the Gospel:

31 Words of the Gospel on this subject

"When you are invited to a wedding, do not take the first place, lest one more honorable than you should be invited, and he that invited you both should come and say to you, 'Give this man place'; and you with shame must go and take the last place" [Luke 14:8–9]. What does this mean? When you are told by divine inspiration that because of your faithful labors you are summoned to that holy tabernacle that flourishes in a bridal way of life, unceasingly rejoicing with purity and honor and holiness in the virginal branch and in the blessed Mother the Church, with no sadness of corruption or confusion or degradation of the bud or the flower, then curb your mind in humility and do not uplift it in pride. How?

When for love of God you free your body from earthly affairs, you will grow as a beautiful flower, blossoming and never withering in the heavenly Jerusalem with the Son of God, in Whom are all ornaments for souls; for the old person produces all human abominations, but the new builds all the holiness of virtue. So when you have come to such holiness, blush to imitate the ancient serpent, who cast himself out of the place of beatitude because he was hungry for vainglory. What does this mean? If you see anyone better adorned than you, do not in eagerness of mind ascend above him, saying, "I want to be above him or like him!" If you exalt yourself so, are you a faithful servant, since you are provoking the Lord to anger by opposing yourself to Him? But if you see that someone has stronger resources than you, and out of envy disparage him, you are not walking in the plain road but going by trackless ways.

So be eager to serve God in humility and do not give yourself up madly to pride; and do not exalt yourself in vain pretense over one who, if assessed justly, shines with a greater desire of eternal life than you burn with yourself, and who for his heavenly ardor is invited to the height of blessedness by Him Who loves all lovers of truth. For if you do, He Who by His inspiration summoned you to the service of humility and the other to the gift of charity may come with the eye of knowledge and judge you with His righteous judgment, saying, "You lifted yourself up in eager pride to a place for which you are not fit; leave your vainglory and submit in duty, and give this beloved one of mine the place of honor you so rashly seized!" And what will become of you then?

If you are overthrown in this way, in anguish of grief and sadness you will begin to feel extreme dejection and abhor yourself as contemptible; for

the Protector of souls will take from you the honor you usurped when you opposed yourself to Him and tried to seize what was not yours to have. So what you wanted will be taken from you, and what you did not want will be given to you. And so also when a lesser order exalts itself over a greater one it will be suppressed, overthrown by My just judgment, for I do not wish that pride to be anything but thrown down and confounded. For if a handmaid exalts herself above her mistress, she will be despised the more by all who see her, for she tried to become what she should not have desired.

32 The Gospel on those who make laws after their own hearts

Therefore, those who make laws for themselves according to their own hearts, not seeking My will, fail rather than go forward, as My Son testifies in the Gospel, saying, "Every plant which My Heavenly Father has not planted will be rooted up" [Matthew 15:13]. What does this mean? That every offshoot of the knowledge of heart, mind or conduct will be destroyed if, arising out of the fecundity of human nature, it is so sown in a person that he burns to unite himself with a willful desire; and if it is then changed into mental pride or carnal wantonness or overflowing pollution or self-excuse for sin or changeful actions that rush up and down without examining whether they are useful or useless. It will be destroyed by just judgment, for truly My Father in Heaven, who dwells in justice, has not planted this plant; it will be uprooted and wither, because it thrives not on the dew of Heaven but on the moisture of the flesh. How? Because the person has done the deed in foolish knowledge, wishing not to contemplate the justice and will of his Creator but to look to the one who tirelessly spins the wheel of his body.

For what seems good to people who have not fixed their eye sharply on God will prove ruinous unless it is warmed by the breath of the Holy Spirit, for it will have changed into vainglory. For when vain people are afflicted by boredom, they will often revert to vainglory, sometimes uplifting themselves to pride, pretense and jealousy of spirit, and sometimes tearing themselves to pieces in annoyance, disdain and opposition to institutions that came from Me; and also discouraging each other from doing good things, which spring not from apathetic boredom but from the ardor of desire to make daily progress.

For what flows from Me is a sweet and delightful taste to the soul; it goes forward in perseverance and does not look back in indecision. Therefore, blessed is the one who, confiding in Me, puts his hope and the beginning and end of his works not in himself but in Me. He who does these things shall not fall; but he who tries to stand without Me will go to ruin. And who does the latter? Those who vaingloriously embrace novelty and, bored with My precepts, trust in themselves. But though an old garment is vexa-

tious to human minds, I in My gifts must not be spurned, for in their simplicity they are always new, and the older they are the more precious they are.

Hence those things people devise themselves without My inspiration in the vanity of their habits will melt away amid their vain exertions. And though these things in human eyes may sometimes seem to last, I reject them from My sight and hold them as nothing, as it is written in the Gospel:

33 Further words of the Gospel

"Let them alone, for they are blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch" [Matthew 15:14]. What does this mean? Allow perverse livers to dissipate themselves in perversity, for they refuse to correct themselves by righteousness of works. And because in their own estimation they call themselves just, when in their actions they are vain, they become blind from their very qualities, disdaining to walk in the way of justice and proposing to those who follow them in bad deeds the way of iniquity instead of truth. So they who have not the right vision of justice think they are just when they are unjust, and when they show the path of false justice to people ignorant of the road of true doctrine, they fall into the ditch of despair, because neither they nor their followers know where they are going.

34 God casts down some innovators and leaves others whom He will judge later

And in these cases I sometimes in My wrath cast down innovations in the sight of humanity; but in My foreseeing vision I silently tolerate others in human sight for a while, which I will nonetheless do justice on in future by the weighing of My just judgment. Therefore, let one who is faithful yearn to ascend to the height of virtue, not to descend to the depths of worldliness. How?

35 One may go from a lower to a higher degree but not from higher to lower

One who is in a lower degree can ascend to a higher, but one who is in a higher degree should not descend to a lower. What does this mean? Counts can rise to be dukes, and dukes can rise to be kings, but it is not fitting that kings should descend to be dukes or dukes stoop to be counts. For if kings subjected themselves to dukes and dukes submitted to counts, all the people would shout, "Wach!" and hold them in derision.

BOOK TWO

Thus laypeople can enter the order of priests and bishops, and these clerics can join those who have taken vows as monks; but it is not fitting that vowed monks should go over to the order of clerics, or that clerics should rush back to the laity. And if monks go to be clerics, or clerics return to the laity, the souls of the just will say of them, "Alas, alas, alas!" and they will be rejected in My sight unless they turn to fitting penance; for if a higher rank falls upon a lower one, both will be destroyed.

So will it be for those who leave the right path and go backward. For if one has put on My Son, what other son His equal could he put on? None, and truly none. But rejoice in your Father; for often I find the greater people in the lower ranks and the lesser in the higher, since pride falls and humility ascends.

36 Example of souls and angels

Therefore have peace and charity and humility among you, as the souls of the just have with the angels and the angels with the archangels. For the souls of the just do not envy the office of the angels, and the angels are not angry at the glory of the archangels. Why is this? Archangels point out the greatest things in the greatest times of necessity, and the angels announce lesser things in the normal course of events, while the faithful people humbly obey. Therefore, let each fulfil his office faithfully. How?

Let those who are vowed monks, like the archangels, renew their powerful assistance whenever there is a great occasion of necessity in the Church; and let those who have the office of clerics, like the angels, do their business in the daily life of their institution; and let people who want to attain to supreme beatitude faithfully receive their words. How?

37 Monks symbolize grain, clerics fruit and laypeople meat

Because they who are vowed monks are like grain, which is the strong, dry food of humans; so this people of Mine is bitter and harsh to the taste of the world. And the clerics are like fruits, sweet to the taste, and show themselves sweet to people by the usefulness of their office. And the common laypeople are like meat, but meat comes partly from chaste birds; thus those who live in the world according to the flesh have children, but among them are found followers of chastity, such as widows and the continent, who fly to heavenly desires by their appetite for virtue.

38 These three churchly institutions take two separate paths

But these churchly ranks live in two ways. How? Of spiritual and secular people. How? Like day and night. What does this mean? Spiritual

people are like the day, and secular people are like the night, since they live in temporal human life. What does this mean? Day holds the sun's brightness and the serenity of the shining sky; this symbolizes the fact that the spiritual kind includes both the order of vowed monks and the order of clerics. Night holds the light of moon and stars and the blackness of the dark; this means that secular people include among themselves both just people, who shine in their works, and sinners weighed down by the darkness of their sins. But let one who forsakes the night of the seculars and is converted for love of life to the day of the spirituals be constant in this action; for if he goes backward, he will be compared to old Adam who transgressed the command of life and was driven out into the calamities of the world.

Therefore, let no one hasten to leave the world and boldly enter into My covenant of his own will until he is thoroughly examined and tested; for I do not want one who has seized the robe of My Son to let it go. For is it fitting that one who has clothed himself with His Incarnation and received His cross into his hands should renounce his Lord? By no means. Therefore listen to this.

39 To renounce the sign of religious life will mean harsh judgment

A person who has willingly confessed in his heart and vowed in his soul's devotion to bear My yoke and renounce worldly things, and then with ardent heart and desirous soul and just purpose received the sign of the religious life, must remain in it, for if he renounces it and scorns the resulting evil he will be strictly judged. Why is this? Because he has spurned Him Whose sign he has received and then trampled on, just as the Jews spurned Him when in the madness of unbelief they afflicted Him on the cross. And, as the Jews did not fear that wicked deed, so this one does not fear to reject that same Passion in rejecting his vow. For what a person promises he must fulfil, as David testifies, saying:

40 Words of David on this subject

"I will go into Your house with burnt offerings; I will pay You my vows, which my lips have uttered" [Psalm 65:13–14]. What does this mean? By resolving to do good and just deeds, I will go, O my God, into the order that You in Your holiness have given, leaving the couch of pleasure in ardent desire, for nothing is sweeter to me than to pursue You, the Creator of all. And therefore I will pay you my vows, which my mouth uttered together with my soul. For I wish to perfect what I promised You, the Just Judge, in my ardent desire: to direct my actions toward You, against Whom I have foolishly transgressed. And I desire to hasten back to You, to avoid evil deeds

and do good ones; for the reason and the intellect that burn in me seek to aspire in true penitence toward You, the Living God, rather than to imitate the Devil by deceitful contrariety.

Therefore, O human, when you thus offer Me your heart, think on how you may wisely accomplish this. For My eye sees most sharply what human will tells me; and whatever is Mine, I will most strictly require.

Why then, O foolish and more than foolish, do you take on yourselves such great burdens, as if you thought it easy to set aside the will of the flesh? According to the law My commands have given you, you are not obliged to leave the world unless you first train yourselves by so many labors that you are able to bridle the carnal desires in you.

41 Those who take the sign of religion for the wrong reason are like Balaam

But you are like a lukewarm wind, for vainglory blows upon your minds; and so after some adversity you say, "I want not to work any more in the world, but speedily to flee it. Why should I wear myself out in vain labor like this?" And when you say these things to yourself, you think it will turn out as you expect. But many seek Me with a vacillating mind, so that they are marked only outwardly with the sign of religious life, not seeking Me with pure eyes or looking simply about them with true doctrine to see how to escape the Devil who seeks to devour them; as the dove, seeing reflected in pure water the bird that seeks to seize her, takes to flight. But these people do not flee from the Devil when they see him coming in doctrinal writings; but in sudden stupefaction, born of the blindness of their minds, they blow toward Me like a lukewarm wind.

For some undertake the religious life renouncing not their own will but only their secular clothes, because they have experienced misery and poverty instead of riches in the world; they leave the world because they cannot have it as they wish. Others are foolish and simple about the world and, being unable to guide themselves, are contemptible to people; so they flee from the world because they are mocked by it. Others labor greatly under the calamities of sickness and bodily weakness, and so leave the world not for My sake but to remedy these afflictions more easily. Yet others suffer such great anguish and oppression from the temporal lords to whom they are subject that they withdraw from the world for fear of them, not so as to obey My precepts but only so that those lords can no longer have power over them.

So all these come to the religious life not for the sake of celestial love but for the sake of the earthly troubles they have, not knowing whether I am salted with wisdom or insipid, sweet or bitter, a dweller in Heaven or on

earth. What does this mean? They do not look for the spice or the sweetness of the Scriptures, or consider how I dwell in the hearts of those who seek celestial things. And since, neglecting to fear Me and advancing according to their own wills, they will not examine these things, they are alien to Me and fugitives.

Therefore I do not count them as having left the world and come to Me; but they are guilty of fearing the servant and despising the master; for they follow earthly business and do not fear Me, and thus they are counted afraid of the least important and reckless of the most important things. Therefore, they become like Balaam, who, seeing the Israelite people beautiful in their tents, longed with a false longing to join with them, saying:

42 Example of Balaam

"Let my soul die the death of the just, and my last hour be like theirs" [Numbers 23:10]. What does this mean? When a person is stirred up in his soul to begin deeds of justice, then with mounting desire he sighs and longs for them, saying, "I, a wretch entangled in many sins and bonds, yearn to have my soul reject carnal desires and leave behind all malice of wickedness, and, by that contrition which makes the just despise themselves, abide in the dwelling place of good works. How? That in my good deeds my end may be like that of the ones who do God's justice, so that the result of My good works may equal the beginning of their just purpose." But if the person who says these things is then, when his sighing is over, tempted by evil spirits and conquered by carnal desire so that he returns to iniquity, he does what Balaam did when he was deceived by the wickedness of his greed. How? Because at first he wanted to curse My people, and I opposed him both by My angel and by his ass; and by My zeal I led him to bless My people with the blessing of the words I placed in his mouth and to desire to be made like to My people Israel in his death. But afterward, touched by the spirit of dissension, he returned to his first separation and scattered that people for a deathly reward by the fornication of his counsel, as he promised when he said:

"But yet, going to my people, I will give counsel what your people shall do to this people in the latter days" [Numbers 24:14]. What does this mean? Just this: When I turn back to the path of desires related to the pleasures of the flesh, I will begin again those lusts I had previously known. How? Because I know what I am in my flesh and serve it fittingly; and I know well the motives that always act upon it. "So, O human, to you who burn for these delights I, the Devil, show in my secret mind incentives for your desires; and by my delightful suggestions I so enkindle your ardor that

through knowledge of the ancient joys of earth, which flower in your heart, you will extinguish that burning desire which previously impelled you toward holy works, first stopping them and at last leaving them as if you had never known them."

Therefore, O human, just as Balaam stooped to wrong desires after first looking upward with righteous longing, so do those who seek Me feignedly. For when they see those who have truly renounced the world go forward sincerely and persevere laudably and truthfully in strict and blessed ways of life, they call them beautiful and sweet, and on sudden impulse undertake their life and want to be like them. But after they have joined themselves to them, as Balaam looked to the Israelite people, they are often recalled to carnal desires, by which they were dominated before, by the various villainies they had in their hearts while still in the world. And when they are thus entangled, they contaminate My chosen flock with poison and hostility, shaking them with storms and scattering them with their wicked counsel. For when they deceitfully withdrew from the world, they did not call upon Me in their prayers to help them or ask Me to test their bodies to see if they could persevere in their purpose. So I leave them to find out how much their own will can help them when they trust in themselves.

Oh, how foolish and fruitless are their lives, for they are not provided with the written Law of God or the fruitfulness of His word; and so they did not consider what to do when they entered on the strict way, as good earth considers when it brings forth useful fruit. So let them listen: O human, only today you were a fiery furnace, burning fiercely in your flesh with carnal desires; and who gave you such a great respite that you could escape the great fire of your passion?

43 One who takes the sign of religion foolishly and ends badly is ruined

Truly one who wishes to undertake these things should examine with his inner eyes how to begin them through Me and by My help perfect them; for if he begins them foolishly and fails to fulfil them he may go to ruin, like the ancient enemy, who, confiding in himself, was cast out by the wrath of My zeal. So shall they also be cast out who, considering neither Me nor themselves, clothe themselves with the Passion of My Son in unthinking and hasty pride, and afterward find it too much for them and renounce it in disgust. Therefore, let those who submit themselves to the Passion take heed how they love it, as Jeremiah the prophet, inspired by the Holy Spirit, urges, saying:

VISION FIVE

44 Words of Jeremiah

"O all you that pass by the way, attend and see if there is any sorrow like to my sorrow! For He has made a vintage of me, as the Lord spoke in the day of His fierce anger" [Lamentations 1:12]. What does this mean? O all you who have deserted vices, rejecting the worldly and imitating the spiritual, and so are passing by the Way that is Life and Truth, which is I, the Son of God: Attend when you begin good works, lest when you start to imitate My Passion you forget My sorrow; and take care, for the sake of perfect justice, that the sorrow you impose on yourselves for My sake is like My sorrow. How?

By persevering unfailingly to a good end in these miseries you bear for My sake, as I also persevered in My sorrow in My purpose of dying for you; for I was oppressed and trampled in the Passion of the cross, as a grape of the vine is crushed in the winepress, that you might eat My Body and drink My Blood. The Ruler of Heaven and earth foresaw this with His all-seeing eye in the beginning, when Adam forsook life and accepted death; My Heavenly Father foresaw that in the latter days He would conquer the ancient seducer and deliver the human race with celestial aid, through Me his Son, incarnate of the Virgin to oppose the Devil with the great strength of justice. Therefore let the person, of whatever age or sex he is, who clothes himself with the Passion of Christ take care to retain it firmly, lest if he renounce it by an error of neglect he may later be unable to find it when he wants to have it.

45 Children may enter the holy way of life only with their informed consent

Therefore also, let people who want to subject their children to that Passion in humility of life not do it with imprudent and inconsiderate haste, but examine the matter with wise discretion and not force them to do without their consent what the people themselves could not bear. How?

If you offer your child to Me when discerning intellect is not in him, but all his understanding lies undeveloped, and that offering is against his will because you have not sought his consent to it, you have not acted rightly; you have offered a ram. How? If someone offers a ram at My altar without binding its horns strongly with ropes, the ram will certainly run away. So also if a father or mother offer their child, who is the ram, to My service, but do not honor his will, which is his horns, by assiduous care or supplication or entreaty or diligent exhortation, which are the ropes that bind him, since by all these the child should be brought to consent in good will; not having been

proved by these tests, he will certainly run away, physically or mentally, unless God guards him by miracle.

And if you, O human, confine that child with such great strictness of bodily discipline that he cannot free himself from the pressure of his will's repugnance, he will come before Me arid and fruitless in body and soul because of the captivity unjustly inflicted on him without his consent. Then I will say to you, O human who has bound him:

46 Example of the field

I had a green field in My power. Did I give it to you, O human, that you might make it put forth whatever fruit you wished? And if you sow sand in it, can you make it grow into fruit? No. For you do not give the dew, or send forth the rain, or confer fresh moisture, or draw warmth out of the burning sun, all of which are necessary to produce good fruit. So too, you can sow a word in human ears, but into his heart, which is My field, you cannot pour the dew of compunction, or the rain of tears, or the moisture of devotion, or the warmth of the Holy Spirit, through all of which the fruit of holiness must grow.

And how did you dare so rashly to touch one dedicated and sanctified to Me in baptism, that without his will you handed him over to bear My yoke in strict captivity; so that he became neither dry nor green, not dying to the world or living to the world? Why have you so oppressed him that he can do neither? If I comfort him by miracle so that he may remain in the spiritual life, that is not for humans to look into; for I want his parents not to sin in his oblation, offering him to Me without his will.

But if anyone, father or mother, wishes to offer their child to My service, let them say before presenting him, "I promise God that I will keep my child with skillful care until he reaches the age of reason, entreating, beseeching and exhorting him to go permanently into God's service. And if he says yes, I will speedily offer him to the service of God; but if he does not consent, may I be guiltless in the sight of God's Majesty."

And if the parents of the child have brought him up in this way until the age of reason, and if then the child turns away and will not give his consent, then they have shown their devotion in him as far as they could and must not offer him against his will or force him to enter that servitude which they themselves do not want to bear or perform.

47 Those who maliciously turn others from following God commit sacrilege

But one who wishes with a devoted mind to be subject to Me should be strongly exhorted to do it and is not to be drawn back from his good

intention by the envy of any spiteful soul. For if anyone deflects from his purpose one who desired to follow Me, he commits sacrilege, since he breaks My covenant in the other's mind. And therefore he will render account in the just judgment if he remains firm in this evil, since he turned away one who wished to serve Me, which he should not have done, as it is written:

48 Words of Moses

"Anything that is devoted to the Lord, whether it be man, or beast, or field, shall not be sold, neither may it be redeemed" [Leviticus 27:28]. What does this mean? When a person's longing soul, in its full knowledge, touches his good sense with the conviction that he should do a certain thing, his will accepts it and says, "This is fitting for the honor of God." And so the person promises the thing to God with good devotion and just reverence, and offers himself to Him by a kiss of the heart, that is by the will of his desire. Therefore, the thing has been offered to God as the dowry of holiness. How? Because God, seeing the person's will working in him, accepts this will by a ring of sanctification, as a husband undertakes by a betrothal ring to keep his bride in a pact of alliance that means that from now on he will never forsake her.

Hence when God has accepted this will from the manly strength of a person who forces himself to leave what he has and give what he possesses more to God than to himself, that bond of consecration must remain, and he must not forsake his devotion. Why? Because his wisdom has known it and his good sense has understood it and his will has built it up in God's honor; so whether it is a person who has offered himself to God, or an animal, owned by a person, which is offered to God, or a field bringing forth fruit, which was consecrated to God, it must not be given for a high price or held for a low profit lest God's honor be counted a trifling matter.

49 One who begins God's service and then rejects it must be recalled to it

But even as no one must be forced against his will to turn from the secular way to the spiritual path, so too one who undertook My service with devoted will and then despised and rejected it must be recalled by just judgment to resume it. How? If he has upright guides and spiritual masters full of My zeal, they should call him back to My service. In doing this, let them first soothe him by supplication, exhortation and caressing speech, and then proceed to correct him by blows, cold, hunger and similar punishments, so that these miseries will warn him by recalling to his mind the pains of

Hell; and, fearing them, he may cast from him the filthiness of his soul and be recalled to the path he had deserted. As is written of these things in the Gospel:

50 Words of the Gospel

"Go out into the highways and byways, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled" [Luke 14:23]. What does this mean? You who are a spiritual shepherd and a just guide and an upright master, leave your original habits, which you got from your first parents, and enter the strait and narrow way of unyielding precepts, written by men sure of themselves in the design of the Holy Spirit. And consider most sharply in My zeal those who, living under these precepts and your rule, undertook or vowed, by their own will and not by the undue urging of another, to observe the holy purpose of My covenant, but then esteemed it lightly and yearned to go back to their old vices. And, by sweet and bitter reproofs, compel them to enter into church discipline, that the house I have dowered may be filled, both with those who have been strongly reproved and with those who have been sweetly admonished. For some must be called to life by various punishments, and others by various blandishments. How?

As the righteous shepherd anxiously seeks his lost sheep, so must spiritual masters seek with great diligence their underlings who go astray through vice, and force them by their cleverness to return to the house of justice from which they went out or wished to go out, that the Church may be filled with sheep, some bitterly reproved and some gently exhorted, to be brought to the heavenly pastures.

51 The undisciplined who refuse correction must be expelled to save the rest

But if any are so stubborn as to refuse to correct themselves, either by bodily punishment inflicted on them in My zeal by their superiors, or for fear of Me Who am the God Who does not wish iniquity, or for love of the blood poured out by My Son Who suffered for them; and if these labor to pollute with their filth My faithful friends who are moving quickly in My ways, then these friends of Mine must expel them like wolves, lest they contaminate the flock, which My friend Paul urges, saying:

52 Words of the Apostle

"Put away the evil one from among you" [1 Corinthians 5:13]. What does this mean? You who are at the height of governing yet remain in humble

subjection, expel this evil one from among you; for he despises fear of Me and opposes Me, the Creator of Heaven and earth. Expel him from among you with such force that he may never fix a root in your consciousness or set his foot in your company, lest the sweet unguents of your good works become worthless. But if any of these shall wish to return in penitence and shall seek Me his Creator with a pure heart, I will receive him even if he comes at the end of his course, for I judge all things justly.

53 Feigned converts are deceived, sincere converts received by God

But if someone hides and reserves the treasure of his heart, saying, "Until I feel myself about to die I will not turn away from secular affairs," and so defers his conversion until his last gasp; and then, when he can no longer breathe and despairs of longer life, tries to renounce the world; he deceives his soul, for his conversion is deceptive, made in jest and taken as a jest. But if one is close to death and renounces the world with his whole heart, for his sins and for love of Me, and desires to serve Me ardently as long as he lives, I will truly accept his devotion with all the choirs of angels and grant him the glory of life. For though a person may be involved in great crimes, when he faces up to his sins and weeps bitterly over his offenses, and does this simply because he has provoked Me to wrath, I will raise him up from death to salvation and not deny him the celestial inheritance, as the psalmist David testifies in My Spirit, saying:

54 Words of David

"In what day soever I shall call upon you, behold! I know You are my God" [Psalm 35:10]. What does this mean? In whatever day of my life divine grace shall illumine my mind with celestial brightness as I lie in the dark, so that in bitter remorse for my sins and with a heavy and wounded heart I call upon You, Who grant to all who call on You with a pure heart the remedy of Your loving kindness, by this visitation I know that You Who mercifully bring all these things to pass are my God. What does this mean? When by Your grace You Who can do it shall lead me to know You as my God in works of justice, and humble myself for my deeds of wickedness; then You will receive me, for I sincerely seek you and tearfully cry out after you and know You in renewal of soul, and I exhaust my body in true penitence and know it to be of no worth.

When a person performs his penance thus, he will find the remedy for his sins. How? Because he knows Me to be his God. How? Because he has forsaken his sins, and therefore he will see with the eye of penitence that those things he did before in his evil desire were vain.

55 Blasphemers against the Holy Spirit and suicides are rejected by God

Let no one therefore neglect to seek the remedy of penitence. If one neglects penitence when he is sound of body, let him nonetheless be eager to seek it in his last moments, and I will receive him into salvation; for however great the stain of sin is, by pure penitence it is washed away for the sake of My Son. But this is not true of anyone who has impenitently uttered blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, and anyone who has obdurately flung his own body into death; these two things are like one. And in the glory of eternal life I will not acknowledge these people, as it is written in the Gospel:

56 Words of the Gospel

"Every sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven to people; but the spirit of blasphemy shall not be forgiven" [Matthew 12:31, misquoted]. What does this mean? Every sin committed as an excess of the flesh, or in lust or bitterness or such vices, or blasphemy, which is the worship of idols, where the true God is not known and a false image is adored, or the invocation of demons, where the true God is known but in human perversity the Devil is called upon; all these things are forgiven people who are truly repentant and, stung by tears from their inmost hearts, faithfully seek the true God Who grants His mercy to all who call upon Him. For though people who do these things go gravely astray in sin, if they do not utterly renounce God, Who reigns in the heavens in sovereignty and power, they will seek and find His helping hand.

But if they persevere in their infidelity, so that they never recover from their wickedness but deny God with firm heart and consenting soul; if they say to themselves, "What is this that is called God? For there is no God in any mercy or truth Who could want or have power to help me," and therefore remain impenitent because they do not believe that they can be cleansed of sin or saved; then they are blasphemers of God. And if they persist in this, they cannot receive pardon for the blasphemy because of the wickedness of their obduracy, for they so stifle the understanding of their hearts that they cannot aspire upward. For they regard as nonexistent the One by Whose mercy they must be saved, as the psalmist David asserts, saying:

57 Words of David

"The fool has said in his heart, 'There is no God' " [Psalm 13:1]. What does this mean? In his foolish utterance he who lacks wisdom and understanding has denied God in his heart, unable to know Him. How? Because he

did not want to know or understand the true God, saying to himself, "What is God? God does not exist. And what then am I? I do not know what I am!" He who says these things is a fool, for he has not the true wisdom by which God is known. But anyone who has really known God, reigning in power, is wise even if a sinner. Hence anyone who has despair of God's mercy fixed in his heart, saying, "God is nothing; I know Him not because He has not known me, and I deny Him because He has denied me;" such a one will not rise again to life or inherit joy, for since he regards the Creator as nothing, all creatures will desert him.

And one who despairs because of his sins and believes that their great weight makes it impossible for him to be saved is faithless; he shall not attain to life, for he contradicts the One Who gives life to all. But if any of these is led by penitence and truly seeks Me, he shall find Me, for I reject no one who comes to me with a sincere heart.

58 Anyone who resists blasphemous despair is quickly helped by God

And if the blackest tempests of blasphemy and despair fall on anyone, and he does not consent to them in his heart or his will or any perverted taste but struggles against them in great torment; then if he perseveres in the fight and strongly resists, I will quickly help him. And let him not doubt because he must struggle, for I say he is a strong warrior against the greatest of storms, and I will help him most speedily and hold him as a friend; for, patiently enduring, he has nobly conquered great misfortunes for love of Me.

59 One who separates his body and soul, which God has joined, is damned

But just as one who does not choose to know Me, the true God, in faith or hope, does not rise again to life, as has been said; so one who throws himself into bodily death, not waiting for the separation I appoint for everyone but dividing himself without hope of mercy, will fall into perdition, for he has killed the thing with which he should have done penance. For one who separates from a person what I have placed in the person incurs great guilt, as My Son shows in the Gospel, saying:

60 Words of the Gospel

"You have heard that it was said of old, 'You shall not kill. And whoever shall kill will be in danger of the judgment' " [Matthew 5:21]. What does this mean? You who want to stand upon the rock, note that the voice that comes

from the Root of all reason tells you that Scripture, interpreted for you by the finger of God, forbade your ancient predecessors to divide in a person what divine arrangement united in him. What does this mean? That He Who forbade Adam the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, saying, "In whatever day you eat of it, you shall die the death" [Genesis 2:17], also said to Adam's race through Moses, "You shall not kill" [Exodus 20:13]; so you shall not destroy what is made in the image of God. And, just as Adam in transgressing God's command deprived himself and his progeny of the life of salvation, so also the person who destroys God's creation in human form cuts off from his soul and body faithful generations of works of salvation; and, thus incurring the judicial sentence, goes into the exile of misery.

Therefore one who has made such a cruel separation in a person casts himself into calamity. He has separated what is Mine, for I placed body and soul together in humans, and who is he to dare to separate them? And if one who kills another is weighed down with immense sin, what will he be who gives himself to death and lays in the dust the thing with which he should have wiped out his crimes?

For one who kills himself imitates that lost angel who found wickedness in the beginning and gave himself to damnation by killing himself. How? By envying God, Who has no beginning and no end and Who rules all things that are in Heaven and on earth. And as the Devil in his pride chose not to look at Me when he cast himself into perdition, so the person who violently cuts himself asunder does not deign to know Me, and so falls into death, like the other who brought perdition on himself. For before he fell he tried to uplift his iniquity on the wings of the wind and to fly in the heavenly places like a bird flying in the air; and in this presumption he cast himself down from beatitude to misfortune.

But I formed Man from earth to ascend from lower to higher things, and to begin and perfect good works and thus build the splendid virtues needed for hard tasks. Therefore let Man, who has both a body and a soul, not kill himself when he can do good works and repent, lest he reach that place where he can have neither work nor penitence, like the Devil who killed himself and was cast into Hell.

But let the one who sees with watchful eyes and hears with attentive ears welcome with a kiss My mystical words, which proceed from Me Who am life.

CHRIST'S SACRIFICE AND THE CHURCH

THE FOOD OF LIFE

VISION SIX
Christ's Sacrifice and the Church

And after these things I saw the Son of God hanging on the cross, and the aforementioned image of a woman coming forth like a bright radiance from the ancient counsel. By divine power she was led to Him, and raised herself upward so that she was sprinkled by the blood from His side; and thus, by the will of the Heavenly Father, she was joined with Him in happy betrothal and nobly dowered with His body and blood.

And I heard the voice from Heaven saying to Him: "May she, O Son, be your Bride for the restoration of My people; may she be a mother to them, regenerating souls through the salvation of the Spirit and water."

And as that image grew in strength, I saw an altar, which she frequently approached, and there each time looked devotedly at her dowry and modestly showed it to the Heavenly Father and His angels. Hence when a priest clad in sacred vestments approached that altar to celebrate the divine mysteries, I saw that a great calm light was brought to it from Heaven by angels and shone around the altar until the sacred rite was ended and the priest had withdrawn from it. And when the Gospel of peace had been recited and the offering to be consecrated had been placed upon the altar, and the priest sang the praise of Almighty God, "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts," which began the mystery of the sacred rites, Heaven was suddenly opened and a fiery and inestimable brilliance descended over that offering and irradiated it completely with light, as the sun illumines anything its rays shine through. And, thus illuminating it, the brilliance bore it on high into the secret places of Heaven and then replaced it on the altar, as a person draws in a breath and lets it out again; and thus the offering was made true flesh and true blood, although in human sight it looked like bread and wine.

And while I looked at these things, suddenly there appeared before my eyes as if in a mirror the symbols of the Nativity, Passion and burial, Resurrection and Ascension of our Savior, God's Only-Begotten, as they had happened to the Son of God while He was on earth. But when the priest sang the song of the innocent Lamb, "O Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world," and prepared to take the Holy Communion himself, the fiery brilliance withdrew into Heaven; and as it closed I heard the voice from thence saying, "Eat and drink the body and blood of My Son to wipe out Eve's transgression, so that you may be restored to the noble inheritance." And as other people approached the priest to receive the

sacrament, I noticed five modes of being in them. For some were bright of body and fiery of soul, and others seemed pale of body and shadowed of soul; some were hairy of body and seemed dirty in soul, because it was pervaded with unclean human pollution; others were surrounded in body by sharp thorns and leprous of soul; and others appeared bloody of body and foul as a decayed corpse in soul. And all these received the same sacraments; and as they did, some were bathed in fiery brilliance, but the others were overshadowed by a dark cloud.

And when these mysteries were finished, as the priest withdrew from the altar the calm light from Heaven, which, as said, had shone round the whole altar, was drawn up again into the secret places of Heaven. And again I heard the voice from the supernal heavens, saying to me:

1 The Church was joined to Christ in His Passion and dowered with His blood

When Jesus Christ, the true Son of God, hung on the tree of His Passion, the Church, joined to Him in the secret mysteries of Heaven, was dowered with His crimson blood; as she herself shows when she often approaches the altar and reclaims her wedding gift, carefully noting with what degree of devotion her children receive it when they come to the divine mysteries. Therefore *you see the Son of God hanging on the cross, and the aforementioned image of a woman coming forth like a bright radiance from the ancient counsel; and by divine power she is led to Him.* For when the innocent Lamb was lifted up on the altar of the cross for human salvation, the Church suddenly appeared in Heaven by a profound mystery, in purity of faith and all the other virtues; and by the Supreme Majesty she was joined to the Only-Begotten of God. What does this mean? That when blood flowed from the wounded side of My Son, at once salvation of souls came into being; for the glory from which the Devil and his followers were driven out was given to humanity when My Only-Begotten suffered temporal death on the cross, despoiled Hell and led the faithful souls to Heaven. Therefore, in His disciples and their sincere followers faith began to increase and strengthen, so that they became heirs of the celestial Kingdom. Hence that image *raises herself upward so that she is sprinkled by the blood from His side; and thus, by the will of the Heavenly Father, she is joined with Him in happy betrothal.* For when the strength of the Passion of the Son of God flows burningly forth and rises to the height of the celestial mysteries, as the perfume of spices diffuses itself upward, the Church, fortified by that strength in the pure heirs of the eternal Kingdom, is faithfully joined by the high Father's decision to the Only-Begotten of God. How? As a bride, subjected to her bridegroom in her offering of subordination and obedience, receives from him a gift of fertility and a pact of love for procreating children, and educates them as to

their inheritance. So too the Church, joined to the Son of God in the exercise of humility and charity, receives from Him the regeneration of the Spirit and water to save souls and restore life, and sends those souls to Heaven.

Therefore *she is nobly dowered with His body and blood;* for the Only-Begotten of God conferred His body and blood in surpassing glory on His faithful, who are the Church and her children, that through Him they may have life in the celestial city. How?

2 God conquered the ancient serpent by His Son's humility, not His power

By giving His body and blood to sanctify those who believe; and so the Heavenly Father delivered Him up to the Passion for the redemption of the peoples and conquered the ancient serpent through Him in humility and justice. He did not want His Son to conquer by His power and strength, for God is just and does not will iniquity, as the Psalmist declares, saying:

3 Words of the Psalmist

"Blessed is the man who has not walked in the counsel of the ungodly, or stood in the way of sinners, or sat in the seat of the pernicious" [Psalm 1:1]. What does this mean?

God is the Father of all the bliss and happiness of His creatures and shows many and various signs in them; and the Incarnation of His Son dripped with the sweet taste of delight, for in Him the heavenly virtues built many mansions through which humanity can return to the supernal Kingdom, which is darkened by no shadow of death. And thus the strongest powers of virtue were shown to be in the Heavenly Father, for it was He through His Only-Begotten who slew death and broke Hell; and on the last day He will make the world anew and better.

Therefore, He has not, through any wavering of His heart, wandered away into the paths of the evil spirits, who forsook the truth and seized on the lie. How? They wanted to use the lie to divide the truth. How? By trying to overthrow the Ancient of Days, Who was before days and hours began; and by yearning to make a partner for Him of the ancient serpent, who before time began was not. But that could not and should not be, for there is one God. And therefore the Devil is a liar, for he withdrew from God and forsook life to find death. And so, indeed, God did not stand in the path that sinners walk; He condemned Adam's choice and did not love his sin, but when he was seduced by the Devil He drove him from Paradise. And He did not reign in any seat of wicked power, as does the whole human race, which is bound up with death and sits in its shadow because it arrogantly deserted

the truth. What does this mean? That God did not oppose either devilish presumption or human disrespect by His power or cast them out by His strength. Why? If there were two fighters, one stronger than the other, surely the stronger would show the weaker how much more he was capable of, conquering and confounding him and not yielding to him in any way. But God did not act thus; He resisted the work of iniquity by supreme goodness, sending into the world His Son, Who in His body brought back His lost sheep to Heaven with great humility. How? The blood that came forth from His body appeared in Heaven as soon as it flowed from His open wounds, pleading that the salvation of souls should be granted. How? Every creature who lives in the Son of God shows that through His Passion and death lost humanity was restored to life. How? Because the Only-Begotten of God, Who is life, offered Himself for His Passion on the altar of the cross for the redemption of the human race; and, as you have truly heard proclaimed by the voice from Heaven, in that place He chose the Church as His Bride, to be a mother to the believing peoples to restore salvation and by spiritual regeneration send them without stain to the celestial realms.

4 The growing Church offers her dowry to God and shows Him the sacraments

But as that image grows in strength, you see an altar, which she frequently approaches, and there each time looks devotedly at her dowry and modestly shows it to the Heavenly Father and His angels. For when the Church, as mentioned, suddenly increased in strong and blessed virtues, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit the mystical altars were sanctified by the deep longings of the faithful, as is clearly shown to you. And the Church, with steady purpose, turns her footsteps there by example and devotedly offers her dowry, which is the body and blood of the Son of God, to the Creator of all in humble obedience, in the presence of those living and burning lights who are the citizens of Heaven. Why is this? Because as the flesh of My Only-Begotten came into being in the pure womb of the Virgin Mary, and then was delivered up for human salvation, so now His flesh, augmented by the incorrupt purity of the Church, is often given to sanctify the faithful.

5 Analogy of gold

For, as the goldsmith first unites his gold by melting it in the fire, and then divides it when it is united, so I, the Father, first glorify the body and blood of My Son by the sanctification of the Holy Spirit when it is offered, and then, when it is glorified, distribute it to the faithful for their salvation.

6 When the priest approaches the altar, the angels bring a brightness there

Hence *when a priest clad in sacred vestments approaches that altar to celebrate the divine mysteries, you see that a great calm light is brought to it from Heaven by angels.* For when he who has the charge of souls is girded with the sacred cincture and approaches the life-giving table to immolate the innocent Lamb, at once the great light of the heavenly inheritance drives away the darkness, shining with the help of celestial spirits from the secret places of Heaven. And it completely illumines the plan of sanctification, for here is the food of the soul by which believers are saved. How? Because the Church in the voice of the priest seeks her dowry, which is the body and the poured-out blood of My Son, in order to be fit for blessed childbearing in saving souls; for when that precious blood was poured out she was increased by a great multitude of peoples. And so then I, Who am the unfailing Light, illumine the place of that consecration with My holiness, to the honor of the body and blood of My Only-Begotten.

7 In the sacrament of the altar God remembers His Son's Passion

For when the priest begins to invoke me on the sanctified altar, and I consider that My Son offered Me bread and wine at the supper of death just before leaving the world; then I see that My Son did this in the hour of His death, as he was about to perish on the wood of the cross, so that when the blessed offering of the holy sacrifice is offered to Me by a priest I might always have His Passion in My sight, never blotting it from My sharp vision. For He too offered Me bread and wine in the outpouring of His blood, when He cast down death and raised up humanity.

8 Why in the sacrament bread, wine and water are offered

But because He Who went into and came out of the cloister of virginal purity was not of human nature but of divine power, the flesh of My Only-Begotten can be produced by consecration from wheaten bread and His blood from grape wine mixed with water, as I have shown through My faithful servant the prophet Joel, saying:

9 Words of Joel

"And the floors shall be filled with wheat, and the presses shall overflow with wine and oil. And I will restore to you the years that the locust and the

canker-worm and the rust and the caterpillar have eaten, My great host which I sent upon you; and you shall eat in plenty and shall be filled, and praise the name of your God, Who has dealt wondrously with you; and My people shall not be confounded forever" [Joel 2:24–26]. What does this mean? Through the miraculous arrangement of God the floors of the faith of the believing Church will be filled with all good things. For I will make the grain of the wheat into the body of My Son, though for their true salvation, to call My faithful back to their rightful land, I will also make adversities abound, through which for My name's sake they will crush the desires of their flesh. And likewise I will transform the juice of the grape for them into the blood of My Only-Begotten and give them the oil of mercy. How?

I will restore to you in another form, changed into salvation for you, that time consumed by the locust of forgetfulness in ignorant unbelief in a round of vanities, when villianies first arose among the children of Adam; they forgot the fruitfulness of My justice, as a person forgets his necessary food after he has put it in his stomach, and in their impiety they tore apart My justice as the locust gnaws the fruit. How? When the locust of negligence with slothful mind destroys the utility of good fruit, the canker-worm of foulness also wraps itself around it in filth; for people like this wrap themselves in the filth of idolatry and other schisms, and probings into diabolism, and magical arts, and the search for auguries in the Creator's creatures as to future happenings in human life, and vile deeds of murder and fornication, and feed on them as the canker-worm feeds on mud. How? Wherever the canker-worm of shame cherishes the stench of filth, the rust of bitterness will consume the metal of shining faith; and these people, opposing God's justice, labor to obscure it, as rust is wont to take away the beauty of metals. How?

Where the rust of biting speech stains the brilliance of good deeds, there also the caterpillar of harmful actions will rob the flourishing green crops of their usefulness; for these people cast away in wicked malice such noble virtues as simplicity, chastity and virtuous constancy, illumined by the Holy Spirit in fresh beatitude, and try to destroy them as the caterpillar destroys the crops. But in all these things My exceeding strength is declared, which in its great power conquered the opposition of the Devil when I sent it among you for your salvation. How?

I the Father sent My Son into the world, physically born of the Virgin, that through Him I might redeem you from the perdition of death; so that I might dwell in you and you in Me, since My own Son underwent the Passion and gave you His flesh to eat and His blood to drink. Hence you shall eat this sacrament devotedly for your salvation and feed blessedly upon it; and thus, through the oil of My mercy, the hunger of your souls' perdition shall be satisfied. For My Son brought you penitence as a medicine for your wounds,

and My Son's Bride was adorned with all justice and truth. And therefore you shall faithfully praise My name; for I am one God in true Trinity, and I govern you and display My wonders in you, miraculously snatching you from the power of the Devil. And therefore, My people, whom I have brought forth so wonderfully from the jaws of Hell, shall not be confounded by death in the eternity that is to come.

10 God does not leave the priest until he has completed the mystery

And you see that *the calm light shines around the altar until the sacred rite is ended and the priest has withdrawn from it*. For that light is an eternal sight, and shows itself by miracle with great brightness until the mysteries of this hallowed office are finished and the dispenser of the sacred rites, having completed them, withdraws from the holy spot. Why is this? Because it is fitting that the Divine Majesty manifest Its power most fully in these blessed rites, and because as long as a person remains within these things that belong to God, God's help will never leave him.

11 When the mystery of the sacrament begins, an unknown light shines on it

And when the Gospel of peace has been recited and the offering to be consecrated has been placed upon the altar, and the priest sings the praise of Almighty God, "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts," which begins the mystery of the sacred rites, Heaven is suddenly opened and a fiery and inestimable brilliance descends over that offering. For when the fresh and living breath of the royal kiss has been given, and the fruit of noble life, which is to be sanctified and purified, has been put as a stone into God's wall, and the messenger of truth utters the sweet sound of the threefold invocation of the Lord of Hosts in praise of the Creator of all and thus begins the mystery of the shining dawn, the Incarnation of the Son of God in the Virgin; then suddenly the glorious tabernacle opens on the mystery of the sacrament, and an inconceivably calm and lofty brilliance shines down. *And it irradiates* [*the offering*] *completely with light, as the sun illumines anything its rays shine through;* in the power of the Father the holy heat so strikes the sparkling circle of that oblation that the radiant splendor wholly enters into the thing it falls upon. What does this mean?

The Bride of My Son offers the gift of bread and wine on My altar with a most devoted purpose. How? To remind Me in faithful memory by the hand of the priest that in this same oblation I delivered up the body and blood of My Son. How? Because the sufferings of My Only-Begotten are seen perpetually in the secret places of Heaven; and thus that oblation is united to

My Son in My ardent heat in a profoundly miraculous way and becomes most truly His body and blood. And thence the Church is quickened with blessed strength.

12 The divine light bears the oblation on high and makes it flesh and blood

For, thus illuminating it, as was said, the brilliance invisibly bears it on high into the secret places of Heaven; for that fiery brilliance, which streams through and illumines the sacrament, bears it upward with invisible power to those places mortal eye cannot see. *And then it replaces it on the altar,* for with gracious condescension it sweetly puts it back upon the table of sanctification; as a person draws in a breath and lets it out again, when by the wonderful arrangement of God he draws into himself the breath that makes him quicken and live, and then, also that he may live, expels it. *And thus the offering is made true flesh and true blood, although in human sight it looks like bread and wine;* for God is truthful and without illusion, and His sacrament also is firmly fixed on high where no one can throw it down, and is true flesh and blood without deception. For, just as a soul truly exists within flesh and blood while a person is alive in body, so too this mystery exists within bread and wine when it is worshipped in the true celebration and appears before people. And as the blind human eye cannot fully see God, so too a person cannot physically perceive these mysteries; as a person sees another's body but not his soul, so also a person can see the bread and wine but not the sacraments. Why is this?

The calm light that shone over the body of the Son of God when He was buried in the tomb, and raised Him to life again from the sleep of death, also shines on the altar over the sacrament of the body and blood of God's Only-Begotten, covering it from human sight so that people cannot see its holiness except as bread and wine, the form in which the oblation is placed on the altar. In just this way the Divinity that was in the Son of God was so concealed from people by His Humanity that they could see him only as a human being, living with them as a human being even though He was without sin. What does this mean?

I, Who created all things, benignly accept the oblation when it is offered to Me by the Church at the hand of the priest; for as Divinity displayed its wonders in the womb of the Virgin, it shows its secrets also in this oblation. How? Because here are manifested the body and blood of the Son of God. How?

13 Analogy of ointment and sapphire

That oblation, by the power of God, is invisibly borne on high and brought back again in an instant, and so warmed by the heat of the Divine Majesty that it becomes the body and blood of God's Only-Begotten. People do not perceive this mystery with their bodily senses; it is as if someone encased a precious unguent in simple bread and dropped a sapphire into wine, and I then changed them into a sweet taste, so that in your mouth, O human, you could not taste the unguent in the bread or the sapphire in the wine, but only the sweetness—as My Son is sweet and mild. What does this mean? The unguent symbolizes My Son, born of the Virgin, Who was anointed with precious ointment. How? He was clothed with holy humanity, which is a precious unguent, pouring so sweetly over the deadly wounds of humans that when they turn back to Him they will no longer putrefy or stink with Adam's perdition. And the sapphire symbolizes the Divinity in My Son, Who is the Cornerstone; He is meek and humble, for he did not grow from the root of human flesh begotten by a man and a woman, but was miraculously incarnate by My fire in the sweet Virgin, and therefore his body and blood are sweet and delightful for believers to take in.

14 Why humans cannot take this spiritual gift in visible form

But you, O human, cannot take this spiritual gift visibly, as if eating visible flesh and drinking visible blood; for you are filth of filth. But, as the living spirit in you is invisible, so also the living sacrament in that oblation is invisible and must be received invisibly by you. For, as the body of My Son came about in the womb of the Virgin, so now the body of My Only-Begotten arises from the sanctification of the altar. What does this mean? The human soul, which is invisible, invisibly receives the sacrament, which exists invisibly in that oblation, while the human body, which is visible, visibly receives the oblation that visibly embodies that sacrament. But the two are one, just as Christ is God and Man, and the rational soul and the mortal flesh make up one human being; and so a person who contemplates Me in right faith receives the sacrament faithfully to make him holy. What does this mean?

My Son was miraculously born from the most pure Virgin, whose body was untouched and never burned in the sweetness of lust, for the virginal vessel in which I willed My Only-Begotten to be incarnate was the purest possible. Thus I did not permit this sweet Virgin's vessel to melt in fiery ardor, since in it My Son miraculously took on a human body.

15 Offered by a faithful priest the oblation becomes Christ's body and blood

But the Blessed Virgin heard true words of consolation from the angel in secret, and believed; she uplifted the sighs of her soul and said, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to your word" [Luke 1:38]. Thus she conceived the Only-Begotten of God. This indicates that the priest who is performing this office must invoke with his words Almighty God, faithfully believing in Him, offering Him in devotion of heart a pure oblation and speaking the words of salvation in the service of humility; then the Supernal Majesty will receive this oblation and transmute it with miraculous power into the body and blood of the Holy Redeemer. How? As My Son miraculously received humanity in the Virgin, so now this oblation miraculously becomes His body and blood on the altar. Therefore this sacrament is wholly perfect, being invisible and visible, as My Only-Begotten is wholly perfect, Who is invisible as to His Divinity and visible on earth as to His Humanity.

16 Analogy of a chick and a butterfly

For as a chick emerges from an egg, or a butterfly springs from a cocoon, and the living creature flies away while the thing it came from remains, so also in this oblation the truth that My Son's body and blood are there must be held by faith, though the oblation appears to human sight as bread and wine.

17 In the sacrament of the altar Christ's mysteries appear as in a mirror

And therefore, *while you are looking at these things, suddenly there appear before your eyes as if in a mirror the symbols of the Nativity, Passion and burial, Resurrection and Ascension of our Savior, God's Only-Begotten, as they happened to the Son of God while He was on earth.* For, as you see in a true vision, the mysteries of Him Who came to earth to save humanity—His birth from the Virgin, suffering on the cross, burial in the tomb, rising again from the dead and ascension into Heaven—shine brightly in the sacrament of the altar, since when God's Only-Begotten lived for a time among people in the world, these things happened to Him in His body by the will of the Father for the redemption of the human race. What does this mean? Before My eyes it is manifest that My Son suffered in the world for the love of humanity, for the Nativity, Passion, burial, Resurrection and Ascension of My Son slew the death of the human race. Hence these mysteries shine before Me in the

heavenly places; for I have not forgotten them, but they will appear before Me in great brightness like the dawn until the end of the world. What does this mean?

18 When the Lord's Prayer is said Christ's Passion will move God to mercy

Until the world ends I will see in that Passion all who will believe in it or reject it. For it will always shine before me, as long as people are obliged to recite what My Son taught His disciples to say in praying to God: "And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors" [Matthew 6:12]. What does this mean? You Who have all things in Your power, look upon the outpouring of the blood that was shed for the human race, and forgive us, who are children of transgression, the debts we should have paid you but have not because of the baseness of our hearts. What does this mean?

We have not fulfilled what we promised in baptism, for we have transgressed Your precepts and thrown away our innocence, just as Adam in paradise disobeyed you and spoiled the garment of innocence. But because You are kind, do not punish us according to our wickedness, but forgive us our transgression according to Your loving-kindness; as we also who are transgressors, although we have much malice in us, for fear and love of our Savior forgive those who wrong us for the injuries they have done us. How? There are those who should love us because we are human, but instead trouble us, failing to love You and ignoring Your precepts. But we do not persecute them, as they deserve for their malice toward us; we contemplate Your just judgment and do not swiftly avenge ourselves on them, so that You too, O God, Who are just and good, may be gracious to us.

Hear, then, O human! As long as you need help, and as long as you can succor others, My Son's Passion will appear before Me in mercy, and His body and blood will be consecrated on the altar to be received by believers for their salvation and the purgation of their crimes. For when My Only-Begotten was in the world in the body, His body was physically sustained by wheat and wine; and therefore His body and blood is now consecrated on the altar in the oblation of wheat and wine, that the faithful may be refreshed in soul and body. For My Son miraculously redeemed humanity from Adam's perdition and now mercifully absolves people from the daily evil into which they often lapse. For whatever My Son suffered physically in His body for the redemption of humanity appears when the oblation is consecrated; and My will is not to hide this, for I draw His elect on high to the heavenly places, that through them His body may be perfected in its predestined members.

19 The oblation never appears as flesh except by miracle in great necessity

Thus I miraculously show all these mysteries in that oblation, since when it is placed upon the altar the oblation becomes the body and blood of My Son; but it appears in human eyes to be bread and wine, for human frailty is so delicate that people would shudder at receiving bleeding flesh and trickling blood. For, as long as a person is mortal, he cannot contemplate Divinity. And therefore the mystery that is the whole of Divinity is for humans covered with obscurity, and they perceive it invisibly; namely, that My Only-Begotten, being immortal, dies no more. And so, O human, I give you His body and blood in the oblation of bread and wine, so that by true faith you may perceive by that which is visible that which is invisible. And by divine power you receive this sacrament with true certainty, yet so that it is not visible to you, except in cases of great necessity; it has sometimes been shown to My elect at times when they were in great affliction. And I do all these things to be loving and helpful to humanity. But, though every creature is subject to My precepts, you, O human, are always rebellious against Me; so you are blind and deaf. Yet you cannot rebel against Me. Do I not do what I will without your seeing it? You do not see with your physical eyes or hear with your physical ears how I send a human soul into the body and how I take it out of the body; but your soul will understand Me when it has left its mortal body. And so also I give the body of My Son to be eaten and His blood to be drunk, and I do this by My power, O human, without your seeing it.

20 As the song of the Lamb is sung the faithful communicate for their good

Therefore, as you see, *when the priest sings the song of the innocent Lamb, "O Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world," and prepares to take the Holy Communion himself, the fiery brilliance withdraws into Heaven;* for as that minister announces the praise of Him Who in His mild innocence bore the wickedness of humanity, and opens his inmost heart and his outward devotion to these mysteries, the unconquered serenity that is here showing its power withdraws itself into the supernal secret. *And as Heaven closes, you hear the voice from thence saying* that believing and faithful people should eat and drink with true devotion the body and blood of their Savior, Who for them suffered temporal death, to wash away the contamination our first parents brought into the world when they transgressed God's precept; so that those people, cleansed from this transgression, may be faithfully restored to the rightful inheritance that by obstinacy they had lost.

For, as the Only-Begotten of God gave His body and blood to His

disciples at the Supper, so now on the altar He gives His flesh and His blood to His faithful ones, donating it for human use, as a person does when he has finished the work he wanted to do. For the Son of God, fulfilling the precepts of His Father, offered Himself for people's salvation and gave His body and blood to be eaten and drunk for their sanctification, as the Bridegroom declares to his friends in the Song of Songs, saying:

21 Words of Solomon in the Song of Songs

"Eat, my friends; drink, and be inebriated, my dearly beloved!" [Song of Songs 5:1]. What does this mean? Eat in faith, you who through holy baptism have come to My friendship; for the spilled blood of My Son has purged you from Adam's fall, and as you chew the true medicine in the body of My Only-Begotten, the repeated deeds of crime and injustice you have done will be mercifully wiped out for you. And also drink in hope from this Vine, which has brought you out of eternal punishment; receive the cup of salvation, that you may firmly and strongly believe in that grace by which you have been redeemed, for you are bathed in the blood that was shed for you. And be inebriated with love, you who are so dear to Me, and flow with brooks of Scripture so that you will know best how to break away from carnal desires; and then I will awake in you splendid virtues pleasing to Me and give you the blood of My Only-Begotten. He Himself gave this sacrament to His disciples, as is written in the Gospel:

22 The meaning of the Lord's words to His disciples about this mystery

"And while they were at supper, Jesus took bread, and when He had blessed it, He broke it and gave it to His disciples, saying, 'Take and eat: This is My body.' And He took the chalice, and when He had given thanks He gave it to His disciples, saying, 'Drink of this, all of you. This is My blood of the New Testament, which will be shed for many for the forgiveness of sins. And I say to you: I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I shall drink it with you new in the Kingdom of My Father'" [Matthew 26:26–29]. What does this mean?

When the Son of God celebrated with His disciples that consummation by which He was to pass out of the world, no longer, as before, living among the events of the world but enduring the Passion of the cross in accordance with His Father's will, with supreme devotion He took the bread in remembrance of His body for human salvation. With all His longing He reminded His Father how He came forth from Him and wanted to return to Him, and prayed Him to consider whether it was possible, because of the weakness of

His flesh, for the chalice He was to drink to pass from Him; but this was not to happen. And therefore He blessed that bread in remembrance of the sweat of His body; for in the anguish of His Passion, as He submitted to His Father's command and was willing to die on the cross, He gave His body and blood to His disciples, so that they would not forget His example.

And he broke it for them; for that Passion was hard for His body to bear. But nonetheless He obeyed His Father and conquered cruel death by the death of His body; and so He showed that His body and blood were also to be given to believers in Him in the mystery of the oblation.

And He gave it to His disciples for true salvation, that they too might do such things in His name as He was doing for love of them; thus He was saying in a gentle voice, "You who humbly wish to follow Me, take with ardent love this example I leave you, My Passion and My works I have done at My Father's command, when He sent Me to teach and to manifest His Kingdom; and eat faithfully what I give you, for it is My body." What does this mean? "Eat My body, for you must imitate My works in your spirits and your flesh, whenever the Holy Spirit inspires them in your hearts, as a person swallows the food he is sending to his stomach; as you and all who wish to keep My precepts should follow Me in My works, so too you should eat My body."

And then the Son of God, taking for salvation the saving cup, gave thanks to His Father; for when the blood poured out from His side, grace was given to believers that was so strong that it conquered the ancient serpent, delivered lost humanity and strengthened the whole Church in faith. How? The Savior in the sweetness of His love gave His precious example to all His faithful, summoning them with gentle inspiration by saying, "Drink with confidence from this saving cup, all you who desire to follow Me faithfully, that for love of Me you may chastise your bodies by privation and restrain your blood by toil, and deny yourselves to strengthen the Church; even as I submitted Myself to the Passion, and shed My blood for your redemption, not thinking of the tenderness of My flesh but thirsting for your salvation. For this blood, which is shed for you, is not that blood of the Old Testament, which was shed in shadow, but My blood of the New Testament, which was given for the salvation of the peoples. How? I Who am the Only-born of My mother, the Son of the most pure Virgin, shed My blood on the cross to redeem people who contemplate Me by faith. And as I then gave it for the deliverance of the human race, so now I give it on the altar for humanity, to cleanse those who faithfully receive it.

"For in the Supper of My Passion I gave you My body and My blood to be eaten and drunk; and so now you may do the same on the altar in memory of Me. Therefore I unfold the truth and say to you, my faithful followers: I will not again drink this cup of anguish in this oppression I now suffer from

the Jews until that day when I rise from the dead and Death is overthrown, and I bring in the day of salvation. Then I will drink with you the cup of your redemption and show you who are Mine your new reason for rejoicing: that the perdition of the ancient crime is taken away, and the Kingdom is opened to you that My Father has prepared for those who love Him. What does this mean? That by My death, which I suffered on the cross, you will know the salvation of souls; and when I ascend after My Resurrection, you will receive the Spirit, the Comforter, and you will newly understand true doctrine. And then for My name's sake you will endure many tribulations, and I will endure them with you; not because I will suffer any miseries in the body after this, as I did when I was in the world in the body, but because you will endure them in My name. Therefore I will endure them with you, since you are in Me and I am in you."

And thus, as was said, you who faithfully believe in Me shall receive the body and blood of My Son to wipe out your sins, so that, gladdened by this sacrament, you may attain supernal strength, as My servant David exclaims by My burning will, saying:

23 Words of David

"The earth shall be filled with the fruit of your works, bringing forth grass for cattle and green crops for the service of people, that you may bring forth bread out of the earth, and wine may rejoice the human heart; that faces may be gladdened with oil, and bread strengthen the human heart" [Psalm 103:13–15]. What does this mean?

O God, Whose magnificence is above everyone, by the faith that is the fruit of virtue in Your wisdom, and by which You are truly known, Man shall be filled; one who adheres to faith shall end the hunger of unbelief by taking the way of justice, though he had not known the truth before and had fainted from a dearth of rectitude. Now he will fulfil his mind's contrition by doing good works and offer to the simple, knowing their weakness, an example of humility. He will grow and flourish in virtue and show in abundant security a fertility of true righteousness, by which he will serve those who now long for earthly things. For he will labor to be useful to them, and by his services of support and defense lead faithful souls to heavenly joys, as do all who in their strength and protectiveness firmly defend those whom they are set to guard. And these works prevail in people by Your will, O God, so that when they are adorned with these virtues You may miraculously give them, out of the fruit of the pure fertility of the earth, the body of Your Son; as Your Only-Begotten, coming in the body out of the womb of virginal chastity, mercifully gave the bread of life to those who believe in Him.

And You perform a further miracle: that the blood of Your Only-Be-

gotten, which was shed for the salvation of souls, gladdens the internal strength of people, their souls, by remitting their sins. How? Because, as once the body of Your Son was offered on the cross for the redemption of the human race, so now his flesh and blood are consecrated on the altar for the salvation of those who believe. And when this is miraculously accomplished in Your will, then this sacrament will gladden the face, which is to say the Church, sprinkling it with the oil of mercy. For those who believe and embrace mercy with joyous faith appear beautiful in the eyes of the Lord; and when the Salvation of the world hung on the cross and mercifully delivered humanity from the snare of the Devil, He also generously freed people from the bonds of sin, that they might faithfully believe in God with joyful and sincere hearts and never cease with devoted ardor to help the wretched.

And the faithful should burn in this love, so that the bread that offers life to its tasters may strengthen the minds of those who are wavering in inconstancy; and thus the purpose of their hearts may not decline to evil, but ascend in strength to that which is life.

24 This cleansing sacrament is to be worshipped by all up to the last

This bread is the flesh of My Son, which is obscured by no shadow of sin and clouded by no stain of iniquity, so that they who receive it are bathed with heavenly light in soul and body and cleansed by faith from their inner uncleanness. And therefore let there be no doubt about this most sacred flesh; for He Who formed the first man neither from flesh nor from bone is certainly able to produce the sacrament in this way. Therefore, O virginal Origin, You arise, grow, spread out and produce a great branch with many shoots from which to build the heavenly Jerusalem, beginning not in a man's semen but in a mystical breath. You are bound by no stain of sin at Your beginning, but developed in miraculous virtue, for You arose in an unplowed field, a flower so excellent that it will never wither from any accident of mortality, but in full freshness will last forever. Wherefore this sacrament of Your body and blood must be worshipped in the Church in a true service, until the last person to be saved by the mystery appears at the end of the world. For it comes from the secret mind of God to bring salvation to believers, as David testifies, saying:

25 Further words of David

"And He commanded the clouds from above, and opened the doors of Heaven, and rained down manna upon them to eat, and gave them the bread

of Heaven. Man ate the bread of angels; He sent them provisions in abundance" [Psalm 77:23–25]. What does this mean?

From the heights of Heaven the Celestial Father showed this to the patriarchs and prophets in the power of His glory and in the secrets of His mysteries to prepare human minds; for in the Holy Spirit they truly foretold His Son, and in the precepts of the Law, the blood of goats and other demonstrations they miraculously foreshadowed Him to the people. And thus, opening the sweetness and affection of His heart in mildness and burning charity, He sent them His Son, that through Him they might be refreshed from the hunger of unbelief and fed on heavenly things that would satisfy their faith and give them the fullness of happiness and beatitude. And so, when the Supreme Father sent those blessed refreshments in abundance of spiritual joy, through the humanity of the Son of God Man received that bread with whose sweetness the angels of Heaven who contemplate God can never be sated. And therefore let the faithful faithfully listen:

O you faithful people, who are the fruits of the Church! Listen and understand your souls' remedy, by which you are not children of the Devil but heirs of the celestial Kingdom; and consider how I, the mild and benign Father, have surrounded you with the manifold happiness of your salvation. Pay heed therefore to the goodness of your Father, by Whom the thing that will save you has been arranged, for though you are vile ashes the Humanity of My Son still implores for your salvation. How? My Son was born of the incorrupt Virgin, who knew nothing of any pain, but remained in the fresh purity of her integrity, like grass that flourishes in verdant glory when the dew falls on it from Heaven.

26 Why bread is offered in the sacrament of the altar

And because it was from the pure Virgin that My Son took on flesh without sin, it is fitting that His flesh should now be made from that fruit which is without the sap of bitterness. How? The grain of wheat is the strongest and best of all the fruits there are; it has in its stalk no sap or pith like other trees, but its stem rises to a spike that leads to the fruit, and it never produces bitter juice either in heat or in cold, but yields dry flour. So too the flesh of My Son was dry, with no filth of the human pollution that produces the human race through the lustful embraces of a man and a woman. Not so was My Only-Begotten born, for He came forth in verdant integrity as the stalk brings forth the clustered grains of wheat. For as a stalk of wheat, flourishing without pith, produces dry grain at the end of its pure spike, so too the Blessed Virgin, conceiving without male power, brought forth her most holy Son in simple innocence. He drew from His mother no sap of sin,

because she conceived Him without the pith of a man; as the stalk gives no sap to the grain, because it flourishes not by the pith of a tree but by the sun and rain and gentle breeze. So the pure Virgin brought forth her Only-Begotten in sweet chastity, not because of a man but because she was overshadowed by the power of the Most High and imbued by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

Therefore, though the Virgin herself originated in the will of a man and a woman, she did not thus bring forth her Son, but without the will of a man bore in her wholeness Him Who came from Heaven, true God and purest Man. As she bore Him in her virginity to be pure and stainless, now the bread that is truly consecrated as His flesh and is pure in its integrity should be received by the faithful in purity of heart and without any element of contradiction. This I predicted to the children of Israel, as by My will it is written:

27 Words of Moses

"Remember this day in which you came forth out of Egypt, and out of the house of bondage; with a strong hand has the Lord brought you forth out of this place, so look that you eat no leavened bread" [Exodus 13:3]. What does this mean?

You who wish to be imitators of My Son, turn your eyes from death to life and keep in mind the salvation of that Day which is My Son, Who trampled death and gave life, so that you went forth from the wretched exile of perdition; you threw off the thick darkness of infidelity and tore yourselves away from the house of the Devil, to whom Adam's transgression had given you. Turn your eyes from earthly to heavenly actions, for by divine power I the Lord have led you out of evil; I Who rule over all with such strength that no obstacle can stand against My might, but I sharply penetrate all things. So through My Son I have snatched you from the place where you shamefully lay in your wickedness, serving death by your infidelity instead of doing good works.

And now that you are freed in My Only-Begotten from that oppression, go from strength to strength and take care not to admit into your consciences the infidelity, which does not strengthen but bitterly weighs down your heart. What does this mean? Do not follow the arts of the Devil or the other fictions people devise for themselves, corrupted by philosophers, pagans and heretics; but imitate My Son as a mirror of faith, Who delivered you from the prison of Hell when He gave Himself for you to the suffering of the cross. And, that you may more carefully follow in His steps, strengthen your hearts with the celestial bread, and so with faithful devotion receive His

body. For he came from Heaven and was born of the sweet and pure Virgin, and, by suffering for you on the cross, gave you His very self; so that now you may receive the sweet and pure bread, which is His body, consecrated on the altar by divine invocation, without any bitterness but with sincere affection, and thus escape from humanity's inner hunger and attain to the banquet of eternal beatitude.

28 Why wine is offered in the sacrifice of the altar

And in the wine that comes from the vine I also will show wonders, making it by the same invocation the sacrament of His blood. What does this mean?

The blood of My Son flowed from His side as the grape drips from the vine. And as the grape is trodden by feet and is crushed in the winepress, and sweet strong wine flows out to strengthen human blood, so too when My Only-Begotten in the sweat of His agony was bruised by blows and scourges, and pressed to the wood of the cross, noble and precious blood issued from His wounds and sprinkled the believing peoples with life-giving freedom. And the grape is unlike other fruits, which can be eaten out of hard shells, while people usually suck grapes rather than eat them; so too My Son was different from all other people in the matter of sin. For they are weighed down by wickedness and subjected to passions, while My Only-Begotten, miraculously born of the chaste Virgin, lacked all contamination of sin. Therefore, and because the grape is so delicate in texture, I will that wine should be consecrated as the blood of My Son.

For as wine flows out of the vine, so My Son went forth from My heart; and My Only-Begotten too was the true Vine, and many branches went forth from Him, for in Him the faithful have been planted who through His Incarnation are fruitful in good works. And as that liquor comes out of the sweetest and strongest fruit of the vine, all merciful and true justice appears out of the Incarnation of My Son, and all who faithfully seek Him find these virtues in Him. How? Those who faithfully cleave to Him are made by Him green and fruitful, so that they bring forth noble fruits of virtue; as He too, being sweet and mild, brought forth precious offshoots in holiness and justice and cleansed those who believed in Him from every stain of infidelity, as is written of Him in the Song of Songs:

29 Words of the Song of Songs

"A cluster of grapes of Cyprus is my beloved to me in the vineyards of Engedi" [Song of Songs 1:13]. What does this mean?

BOOK TWO

The Son of God, Who saved me the exile by His Passion, also mercifully gave me in His Resurrection the cup of life. How? As a cluster of grapes of Cyprus has in itself a strong fullness of drink, so too the excellence that is in God's Only-Begotten has in itself an unfailing magnitude, so that the Son of God will never be exhausted, but will always give the drink of life to those who thirst. For He is the Savior of Life. And we, who formerly fell short, now are strengthened by the manifestation and the knowledge of the true holiness of good works; and through Him we eat the food of life and go on through knowledge of God to life. In the Old Testament we endured great hunger and were unable to rise to salvation, for it was shadowed and did not show the full explanation but displayed many different meanings. But now we are satisfied, for we drink in Him the saving cup, tasting Who God is in true faith; Whom we cannot see with the outer and carnal vision, but Whom we have within by spiritual understanding, as strong wine shows its power in people's veins, though the people do not feel it but only know that it is within them.

And so the Bridegroom of souls is the cluster of grapes of Cyprus, Whose fruit will not fail. How? A blind man who has come in through the door asks for his sight. How? The person who did not have the vision of faith attains to faith and enters by the squeezing of the winepress into the dew of the blood of Christ. How? Just as we have life in our souls through His commands, so too we receive cleansing in our bodies through His gift; for we were born in Adam's transgression and are unclean, but in Christ's blood we are sanctified. Hence the betrothed soul says of Him in the Holy Spirit, "My Beloved, Who is sweet and lovable to my heart, is to me like strong wine in the full sanctification of His blood. For though I am unclean in that I am planted in flesh, as a vineyard lies in thorns when it is as yet uncultivated, He, the Fountain of Salvation, mercifully washes sinners clean of their stains and gloriously sanctifies them in His secret mysteries. As He came sweetly forth from the heart of His Father, He now sweetly displays His blood as wine; and as He was miraculously born of the Virgin, so His body is miraculously manifested in bread, for He is the cluster of grapes that will never suffer defect or loss."

And by the will of the Father He is trodden on the altar as if in the winepress, so that Man, who cannot subsist by himself, may not fall in his frailty and weakness. For as human blood is replenished by drinking, humanity is sanctified by the blood of the Son of God. And as people must refresh themselves by drinking lest their blood without watering dry up, so wine must not be lacking for consecration as the blood of the Son of God, but in the sacrament of that mystery will always be upon the altar.

30 Why water must be present with the wine in the sacrament

But note clearly also, O human, that in this consecration water must be mixed with the wine, because blood and water issued from My Son's side; His Divinity is understood by the wine, and His Humanity is seen in the water. And thus, since there is both Divinity and Humanity in Him, there must be water and wine in that consecration; for as the wine symbolizes His Divinity, the water indicates His Humanity, which is pure and clean without the admixture of the blood of a man. For My Only-Begotten, the fountain of living water, when He came into the world for human salvation cleansed people by the regeneration of the Spirit and water from the ancient sin of Adam and transported them to Heaven, as it is written:

31 Words of Wisdom

"I, like a river channel and like an aqueduct, came forth from Paradise" [Ecclesiastes 24:41]. What does this mean? God strengthened Man with the faculty of reason and gave him many mystical gifts; breathing the breath of life into him, by reason he exalted him. But then he was seduced and was falling into death; so I, the Son of God, came to free him, flowing forth in the beauty of the stream of abiding charity and issuing in an outpouring of true and unfailing purity. I came forth from the secret place of celestial delight so that humanity, which was perishing because of its guilt, might be mercifully snatched from perdition. How? By pouring out for its sake in the agony of the Passion the unoffending blood of supreme innocence. How? When Adam transgressed and was expelled from Paradise, because he was guilty his blood was driven to overflow with anguish, and in that anguish was diluted and mixed with watery sweat. And thus water is present in human blood through sweating.

Therefore, O human, as the Only-Begotten of God began to be distressed in His body, when He willed to suffer for the human race, His blood came forth in drops of sweat; and later, when He hung on the cross, water flowed with blood from the wound in His side. And therefore, in the sacrament where the mystery of His Passion is celebrated, water must be present with the wine, because water and blood flowed from the wound in the Son of God's side. But in that sacrifice the wine must be more abundant than the water; for blood surpasses the liquid that dilutes it, just as milk exceeds the watery substance that moistens it. So let those who celebrate this mystery do so in the way that was shown them, as the people exhort who speak by My inspiration in the words of Wisdom, as it is written:

BOOK TWO

32 More from the Book of Wisdom

"Come, eat My bread, and drink the wine that I have mixed for you" [Proverbs 9:5]. What does this mean? You who wish to lay aside folly, come out of that ignorance which makes you disdain God, and that defilement which sent you into exile, and return into the pure place that is yours, shown to you in the mirror of faith in the fountain of living water; and with gentle devotion eat My bread, not sown in the field by a man or given growth by the earth, but issuing from God and remaining in Him. For as bread is eaten but earth is trampled, so the Son of God Who is the Living Bread excels the children of humanity; for the Son of God is steadfast in the power of His Divinity, while the children of humanity are unbalanced due to the weakness of their flesh. The Son of God, while physically in the world, did not have in His flesh any weak tendency to sin; for as a fire which bakes bread dries it and leaves no soft moisture in it, so the Only-Begotten of God, conceived by the mighty fire of the Holy Spirit and born of the chaste Virgin, had no contamination of sin in His body. And as bread nourishes people, the Son of God nourishes believers in faith, for He is the strong fruit that shall never fail.

Therefore, O ye faithful who eat this bread, drink also with pure purpose this wine, which is devoid of every uncleanness and which never enters that state of futility in which corruption devours noble innocence and turns it to poison.

33 Adam began with pure blood but his sin turned it to impure filth

When he was created, the first man was pure in this respect: He was not divided within himself but was pure in flesh and blood. But after he committed his transgression, he was ruined, and always after that poured out his blood in stinking and unclean adultery. For he had cast away his innocent honor, and therefore his blood lost its red color and was perverted in the act of conception into the liquid of pollution. In that liquid there is no form, until blood is engendered again; that blood takes on a new form, and after its beginning lies dormant, until it comes to its full strength and is secretly quickened to sensation. And then clean flesh and blood appear again, purified from poison, until it is struck by harmful heat, which produces the scum of uncleanness. But the Son of God was pure in respect to all these things: He had clean flesh and blood and was never touched by harmful heat, so that He remained in a holy and honorable state of verdant chastity, never profaned by contamination. But when He was in the agony of the Passion, He poured out water with the blood from His side; for blood is not poured out without water, but their proportions are such that the blood thickens the water rather than the water diluting the blood.

34 Those who take Christ's body and blood are most sweetly vivified

Therefore, you who wish devoutly to worship God because you love salvation, receive this cup of sanctification; I have so tempered it for you with mild forgiveness that you will never feel harsh punishment. For in the supernal Son there is both Divinity and Humanity, and through His Passion you are delivered from death and quickened by His body and blood, so as to have a part in the eternal habitation. But I, Who am the Beginning and the End, again say to you, O human, that My noble Son is the flower of roses and lilies of the valley, born of the chaste Virgin who brought Him forth in wholeness, and that birth was such as to appease Me for the wickedness of the first parents of the human race, who by their transgression provoked Me to wrath.

Therefore, when I see My Son's body and blood daily consecrated on the altar in My name, and you, O human, being sanctified by that sacrament, eating His flesh and drinking His blood, I always contemplate that birth. For when the priest does his office as is appointed him, invoking Me in sacred words, I am there in power, just as I was there when My Only-Begotten, without discord or stain, became incarnate. Thus His body was pure and sweet and all-holy; and they who now faithfully receive His flesh and blood will be so sweetly enlivened that they will never be despised or rejected. As it is written in the Song of Songs:

35 Words of Solomon

"Who shall give you to me for my brother, sucking the breasts of my mother, that I may find you out of doors and kiss you, and no one will despise me?" [Song of Songs 8:1] What does this mean? With groans and devotion and with sure faith the people of the Church say, "Who will be merciful and give me, a miserable human in tribulation, You, the Bridegroom of the Church?—You, Whom I name my brother because of Your Incarnation, and Who sucks the mercy and truth that nourish humanity from the Divinity, which is my mother in my creation, giving me life and growth?" What does this mean? "The nourishments of the Church too are full of Your grace, for You Who are the Living Bread and the fountain of living water make her fully abound in the sacrament of Your body and blood. And this You do that I may surely find You out of doors, knowing that You are the Son of God in Heaven but seeing You as a man on earth, for my mortal eyes cannot perceive You in Divinity; and that I may find You in the bread and wine of the divine mystery, the sacrament without deception or artifice. And thus I may kiss You, for You were incarnate for my salvation, and You now make me a

sharer in Your body and blood; no creature that is subject to You and follows Your precepts can despise me now for being a rebel against Your commands and opposing You, for You came into the world for my sake and have given me Yourself."

36 At the priest's invocation at the altar the sacrament is perfected

Now therefore, O human, as you see, when the sacrifice has been offered at the altar and the priest begins to invoke Me in those words appointed for him by the Holy Spirit, verily I say to you that I am there in My burning heat, and with full will I perfect that sacrament. How? To effect this mystery I extend over this offering My ardent charity at the moment when the priest invokes Me and remembers that My Son blessed bread and wine in the agony of His Passion as the sacrament of His body and blood, giving them to His disciples that they might do the same for the salvation of the people. Truly I say to you that there will never be an invocation over such an offering in remembrance of My Only-Begotten without the mystery of His body and blood being perfected in it; though the carnal eye cannot see it, as long as it is mortal dust, except by the perception of humble and devoted faith. How? As a bird sees that an egg has been laid in its nest; it eagerly flies to cover it and nurtures it with its warmth until the chick emerges; and then the shell remains, and the chick flies away. What does this mean?

When the offering of bread and wine has been laid on the altar and dedicated to My name in memory of My Son, I the Almighty miraculously illumine it with My power and glory and transform it into the body and blood of My Only-Begotten. How? By the same miracle through which My Son took on a body from the Virgin, the consecrated oblation becomes His flesh and blood. How? As when My Son lived in the world with people, He was also with Me in Heaven; and so now, living with Me in Heaven, He also remains with people in earth. But this is a spiritual and not a physical phenomenon.

37 God exercises the power of His will in every creature as He wishes

I the Father am present to every creature and withdraw Myself from none; but you, O human, do withdraw yourself from creatures. For instance, when you look into water, your face appears in it, but your reflection can exercise none of your powers, and when you turn away you no longer appear in the water. But I do not appear to creatures thus changeably; I am present to them in a true manifestation, never withdrawing My power from them but doing in them by the strength of My will whatever I please. And so too I truly

display My majesty in the sacrament of the body and blood of My Son, and wondrously perform My miracles there from the beginning of the priest's secret words until the time when that mystery is received by the people.

38 The Mass may be said from the first to the ninth hour as necessary

And this priestly office may be done for the faithful from the first to the ninth hour of the day, according to the time made necessary by the habits of the people; for Adam arose in the morning and was seduced in the ninth hour, and the Passion of My Son began at daybreak and was completed in the ninth hour, when He expired on the cross and overcame Death by His death. And the Church stood by My Only-Begotten in that place and received her wedding gifts; and these must now be celebrated by the children of the Church.

39 All must communicate fasting except in danger of death

But this office of sacrifice is to be celebrated by the priests with empty stomachs and not in repletion, lest the digestion of the food destroy spiritual desire; spiritual feasting should precede physical refection, thus honoring the spirit and reviving the body. For this sacrament is to be received with spiritual desire, not with carnal greed, and therefore it should be taken fasting and not after a meal except in an emergency, if a person is thought to be about to leave the world. My Son gave His body and blood to His disciples around the end of the day and brought them the morning of true life; and at the end of the world, death will pass away from temporal humanity, and the elect will shine like the sun in My Kingdom.

40 God raised fallen Man and not the Devil because Man was tempted

Thus My Only-Begotten in His Resurrection drew the souls of the just out of Hell and restored the human race to eternal life, which the reprobate angels lost when without temptation by another they chose death; for they were seduced by no other tempter but themselves, since they had in themselves no taste of sin as a human has in his weak body. Therefore, Man, who was physically weak and seduced by a tempter, was restored to life by the Uplifter; but the Devil, who had not been hampered by a body, was left in his perversity. And Man was given true and salutary refreshment in receiving the body and blood of My Son; invisibly revived in soul by this sacrament, he can arise and manfully resist his invisible adversary.

41 In this sacrament not quantity but holiness must be considered

But let those who receive this sacrament in greater or lesser quantity understand that the receivers of more and of less have received the same amount of power, for the sacrament consists not in quantity but in holiness. It saves those who receive according to their faith, as is written of the manna:

42 Analogy of the manna

"And the children of Israel did so and gathered, some more and some less. And they measured by the measure of an omer, and the one who gathered more had nothing over, and the one who gathered less did not lack; but each had gathered according to what he could eat" [Exodus 16:17–18]. What does this mean? The children of election, who ardently desire to see God, long for the supernal sacrament as has been commanded them, and as their teachers instruct them they gather it in their hearts. And in their souls they scrutinize it as they have learned to do; but in their secret hearts one person has more devotion and another a lesser resolve, and in their thoughts they measure by the measure of what they feel in their souls. They determine how much faith in God they have, which is not divided but remains whole, and think about the degree and kind of devotion with which they receive the body and blood of their Redeemer. So this sacrament will not be holier for the one who receives more of it, or of lesser effect for one who receives less of it; but it will illumine the recipient according to his faith. Therefore, O human, it need not be taken in great quantity, for our mighty God is present as much in a small offering of this mystery as in a great one; so let those who receive it take care only that they have God, the Three and One, in their hearts with firm and perfect faith. And let each of the faithful collect the powers of his soul with sincere and righteous heart, as his capacity for faith permits, and beware of searching into Divinity more exaltedly or profoundly than his senses or thought can grasp, but do it soberly as the Holy Spirit teaches; let him be subject to the fear of the Lord, since Man is only poor ashes.

43 What is on the altar is the true body and blood of Christ

But do not doubt, O foolish people, that this sacrament which is thus manifested to you is the body and blood of My Son. Remember from what I created the flesh and blood of Adam—from earthly mud. How, then, does it seem to you: Is it easier for Me to make the flesh and blood of My Son from this oblation, or to make Man from the mud of the ground? A man pours forth semen from his blood, and a woman receives it; what else do they add?

Nothing at all toward the formation or the body of the little baby; and who then forms the person in its flesh and bones and marrow and its beautiful face but I, the Father of all? But the father and mother have no power to make or create the little baby, except to send forth their blood in burning lust; after that they have no role in forming it. Can you see how it is done, when you cannot perceive the methods?

But you say, O human, "I do not see that this oblation is flesh and blood the way I see that a person is body and blood." To which I answer: You saw My Son in His body and blood when He was mortal on earth, as He is now immortal in Heaven; so you cannot see Him now with bodily eyes. Nor can you see how His flesh and blood are consecrated on the altar in a sacrament that exists for the glory not of a priest but of My Only-Begotten, Who did the office in the Supper with His disciples. As long as you are mortals, you cannot see Me in My glory; and so also with your physical eyes you cannot physically see the flesh and blood of My Son, because you cannot perceive that which is invisible, but with your mortal gaze can take in only that which is visible.

44 In the sacrament three things must be offered in honor of the Trinity

This sacrament must be offered to Me in three forms. What? Bread, wine and water, for the honor of the Trinity. If any of these three is lacking, the Trinity is not truly worshipped, for the Father is understood by the wine, the Son by the bread, and the Holy Spirit by the water. Thus one who offers wine without bread or water worships the Father but denies the Son and Holy Spirit; one who gives bread without wine or water holds the Son but casts away the Father and Holy Spirit; and one who uses water without wine or bread heeds the Holy Spirit but refuses the Father and the Son. One who gives wine and bread without water holds the Father and the Son but casts away the Holy Spirit; one who offers wine and water without bread worships the Father and the Holy Spirit but denies the Son; and one who uses bread and water without wine heeds the Son and the Holy Spirit but denies the Father. Therefore, let no division take place in this sacrament, as I, remaining undivided in Three Persons, am One Indivisible God; in the same way that thought, will and deed are in one human being, and without them that person is not.

45 A priest who neglects, refuses or forgets to offer these must be punished

But if there is a defect in the sacrifice, so that either bread or wine or water is left out of it, truly the one by whose neglect it happened will be

liable to grave punishment. If it is done knowingly in negligent apathy, or faithlessly because of doubting unbelief, I will cast the guilty one out of My sight unless he comes to himself and punishes himself with severe penitence. And if it happens unknowingly through forgetful neglect, the guilty one will be answerable to Me for his fault and subject to penance, because he was not acute enough in ensuring that everything pertaining to My sacrifice was there. For when My Son hung upon the cross, nothing that pertained to salvation was lacking there, since He brought salvation to humanity by the outpouring of His blood; and so nothing must be absent in the celebration of His mystery. For this sacrament is the all-holiest sanctification, and so this flesh and this blood must be received with all faith and devotion.

46 How the body and blood of Christ should be distributed to the people

But let not anyone who receives this sacred flesh refuse to take the blood of the mystery too; for My Son is pure above all things and a mirror of virtue, and so His noble blood must be received. An exception is made if the recipient is weak in mind, and the priest fears the danger of spilling; in that case the recipient is given the treatment accorded to the simplicity of children, to whom bread is given and wine is denied. So let the sacrosanct flesh be granted to such a person, but the flowing blood be withheld, lest a greater danger arise from giving it; for the holy flesh is united with the blood and the blood with the flesh in one sanctity. But if the person has enough discernment to keep the mystery safe, when the sacred flesh is given him to eat let him also be given the blood of that flesh to drink.

47 The priest must use the vestments and words instituted by the Fathers

Let the priest who celebrates this sacrament take care to be clothed in those vestments that the early Fathers, instructed by the Holy Spirit, appointed to be worn at this office; and let him take great care to speak those words which the Holy Spirit gave those Fathers for the celebration of the mystery, and not omit anything from them, or go beyond the example of My Son when He took bread and the chalice and gave them to His disciples to eat and drink. One who unknowingly does something wrong in forgetful neglect as to vestments or words pertaining to this office must be corrected by a severe and salutary penance; but if he seeks My mercy he shall find it, for he did not perpetrate the transgression voluntarily in malice of heart. But if one

transgresses knowingly in these sacramental rites, either from mental apathy or from wickedness of heart, I will be offended, and say to him:

48 Words of the Lord to the negligent priest

"You wicked servant, why were you not rightly clothed in the priestly vestment, when your great early teachers instituted it for you in the Holy Spirit, and your spiritual office has the same meaning as the ministry of My angels to Me? And why have you ignored the form of words your fathers bequeathed to you in the Holy Spirit for the consecration of the body and blood of My Son and the salvation and glory of the human race?" And thus he who is guilty of such a charge must answer for it to Me, unless he punishes himself by inflicting on himself a severe penance.

49 The priest who offers the sacrament must take it himself

And let not a priest who offers this feast at My altar withdraw from it fasting himself, but let him receive his soul's refreshment in the body and blood of My Son. If he knows himself to be weighed down by grave burdens and unworthy of the feast, let him not presume to approach My table or touch My Son unwashed from the filth of his sins; as those people contaminated the table and the glory of the king's birthday who cruelly cut off the head of the shining light [John the Baptist]. Let the contaminated man therefore show the nature of his sickness to the High Priest, My Son, and accuse himself before another priest who is mortal; the latter will give him the remedy of comfort and penance, and so, purified at last, he may return to his office.

50 The priest at the altar must use the words instituted

But I, the Father of all, will that the secret order of sacred words by which the priest invokes Me at the altar must not be inflated and long, but as the ancient teachers rightly ordained it who taught how to address Me by the Holy Spirit. It should not be multiplied by foolish wisdom, but kept in simplicity of heart, for I delight not in long speech but in the purity of heart of those who seek Me devoutly and embrace Me willingly in burning charity. Everywhere else I give My grace to My elect by the exchange of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, but here in this sacrament I show Myself wholly: My Son in Me, and I in Him, and the Holy Spirit in Us, and We in Him, One in Divinity, as the body and soul and powers of anyone make up one living

person. Therefore, let anyone who approaches this sacrament take care not to come in such a state as to offend the glory of Divinity.

51 On the five states of those who communicate

But you, O human, as other people approach the priest to receive the sacrament, notice five modes of being in them. For those who wish to receive the divine mystery from their priest should cleanse the five senses of their body from the dregs of their sins and worthily and laudably keep themselves from furtive uncleanness, that they may healthfully receive the sacrament.

52 Those who are bright of body and fiery of soul

Therefore, of those you see approaching this sacrament, *some are bright of body and fiery of soul.* For these are clear in faith about the sacrament and do not doubt that it is the true body and the true blood of My Son. And so, perceiving this by faith, they are strengthened and made holy in body, and because they are sanctified by this mystery they will appear in this same body in Heaven after the resurrection of the dead; and their souls are transformed and enkindled by the fiery gift of the Holy Spirit, so that, flooded with enlightenment, they reject earthly things and long for heavenly ones. How? As a fire is stirred to a blaze by the wind, they are inspired by this sacrament to burn with celestial love.

53 Those who are pale of body and shadowed in soul

But others seem pale of body and shadowed of soul. For these are weak in faith and do not firmly believe in this sacrament, but find it as hard to understand wisdom as a child whose deeds are done in foolishness. They hear outwardly with the hearing of the ear and perceive with sluggish hearts what is said to them about the sacrament, and would gladly embrace it in perfect faith; but because of the doubt that is in them they cannot understand the great holiness it has. Therefore too their inner being is plunged in darkness, for they cannot lift their minds to that perfection; conceived in sin, they are too borne down by the weight of bodily weakness to be perfect in belief, though their spirit may consent to it, and they would gladly have understanding of faith if their apathy of heart would let them.

And indeed those who are not yet weighed down in their deeds by grave burdens of sin should consent to the Spirit, even as it were unwillingly; for the soul is not yet destroyed by sin in such a case, and still has power to subject the body to its will. For the body and the soul fight with each other; the soul seeks to dominate the body, since the desire for sin in the flesh goes

against its wishes, and the body disdains the righteousness that is the desire of the life-loving soul. What does this mean? What is dead longs for what is dead, and what is living desires what is living. How? The flesh loves sin, and the soul loves justice, and so they oppose each other and rarely agree. But as a child is fed and satisfied without working or understanding, so these people are revived by the sacrament almost in ignorance; for they do not madly or wickedly scorn it, but only embrace it with simple minds.

54 Those who seem hairy in body and dirty in soul

Some are hairy of body and seem dirty in soul, because they are pervaded with unclean human pollution; for they are evil and unchaste in flesh, shamelessly polluting themselves with the ordure of vice, and contaminating their souls with the stains of filthy human sin as a swine rolls its body in the mud. And because they do not fear to approach the sacrament of the body and blood of My Son unwashed after staining themselves with these vices, they must be cleansed from their presumption by a severe scrutiny. But when they are thus purged, I do not deny them My mercy, because I see worthy penitence arising in their minds.

55 Those surrounded in body by sharp thorns and leprous of soul

But others are surrounded in body by sharp thorns and leprous of soul. For these are surrounded in their hearts by anger, hate and envy, and by these thorns of iniquity they drive out of themselves gentleness, sweetness and charity; and, desiring evil and abandoning good, and troubling other people with mockery and invective, they make their souls as impure as if covered with terrible sores. And those who approach the divine mystery in such a state gravely injure themselves; but nevertheless, if they then bitterly punish themselves and seek My grace by repentance, I turn My eyes toward them.

56 Those bloody in body and foul as a decayed corpse in soul

And others appear bloody of body and foul as a decayed corpse in soul. For they make divisions among people with bloody hand and render their souls foul with the putrefying corruption of cruel wickedness; they have no thought of fearing Me, but in their cruelty reject the part I placed in Man. And if they do not fear to receive the body and blood of My Son while defiled by this contamination, they destroy themselves with severe wounds, for they presume to touch the sacrament in their uncleanness. But the fountain of salvation will still flow for them if they take care to wash themselves from this wickedness of theirs by worthy penitence.

57 Those who take the sacrament with pure faith and with wavering mind

And all these receive the same sacraments; and as they do, some are bathed in fiery brilliance, but the others are overshadowed by a dark cloud. For as believers approach to take the mystery of My Son's body and blood, those who are radiant with good deeds and receive it with devout mind and pure faith are illumined by the gift of the Holy Spirit for the salvation of body and soul; while those who eat it wallowing in bad deeds with contrary hearts and wavering minds bring on themselves the darkness of misfortune to their outer and inner detriment, because they have rashly presumed to unite themselves to sanctity while impure. For one who is so rebellious and stubborn that he does not fear to pollute himself, either by fornicating with himself by touching and pleasuring his own body, or by doubly fornicating in producing seed with a man or a woman, or by tearing himself with anger, hatred or envy of other people, or by staining himself with the blood of others in acts of murder, and who then presumes to approach the body and blood of My Son unpurified and uncorrected, without being purged by confession or rectified by penance, that one by his misdeed knowingly and consciously enters the fire of judgment. How? He will be tried as to his presumption and his sin like gold in a furnace, and no dust of that presumption will be left in him by which he approached the communion of the innocent Lamb polluted and uncorrected. For, as was said, whoever shall approach the holiness of My Son's body and blood unwashed and thus receive the sacrament will receive it to his own condemnation. How? As My most loving Paul says:

58 Words of the Apostle

"Therefore whoever shall eat this bread or drink this chalice of the Lord unworthily shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. Let a person test himself, and then let him eat of that bread and drink of that chalice. For he who eats and drinks unworthily eats and drinks judgment on himself, not discerning the body of the Lord. Therefore are there many infirm and weak among you, and many sleep" [1 Corinthians 11:27–30]. What does this mean?

Truly I say to you, anyone who, being unworthy and foul with sin, eats the bread of life or receives the cup of salvation, which is the sacrament of Him Who is the Lord of Heaven and earth, shall feel himself at fault for it. How? Because he receives the body and blood of the Lord, the Savior of the world, snarling and dying; inclined to evil and polluted with uncleanness, he

forgets the fear of the Lord and approaches the palace of healing redemption in a state of contamination. And so he commits murder there. How? By treating the sacrament presumptuously, concealing his crimes without cleansing or washing them by penance; and so with many wounds he tears himself to pieces.

Therefore I say to him: "O most miserable and most bitter one! How did you dare to cast your Lord, Whom the citizens of Heaven always long to see, into such a lake of misery? You will be tried in body and soul by bitter penance; and if you do not correct your guilt, you will still be found wanting after the resurrection of the dead." And so let anyone who wants to purge himself examine himself faithfully, and in that devout self-knowledge partake of the bread of sanctity and taste of the cup of sweetness, and so escape from the hunger of his soul's weakness and attain to the unfailing nourishment. For one who mistreats this sacrament and receives it unworthily, without purging himself from the filth of iniquity, passes on himself a sentence of vengeance for eating and drinking it unpurged; he cannot injure or obscure the mystery by his presumption, but he condemns himself. And when you presume to approach the sacrament when foul with vice, there are many infirm in your company, those who choose not to seek medicine for their souls in that holiness but impose on themselves bitter infirmity, receiving those sacraments to judgment; as well as other weak people, who are so infirm in God's law that they refuse to know Who He is Whom they are so unworthily receiving. What does this mean? They do not want to think how they should fear and worship their Lord, or how they should punish with bitter penance their flesh, which they have nourished on vice. And since they are so negligent, many of them fall asleep in forgetful neglect, not knowing or wishing to know how they should be lamenting their sins, as a sleeping person does not know or understand the state of his body.

Therefore, O human, if you receive the body and blood of My Son unwashed, not self-purified by confession or penance, in the terrible day of inquiry you will be tried for your presumption about your filthy sins, as new wine when it ferments throws off and is purged of the impurities in it.

59 The sacrament must be treated carefully by priest and people

This sacrament must be treated and guarded with great care and solicitude both by the priest and by the people, so that it does not fall to the ground by accident. For if due to apathetic neglect it falls to the ground, I in My wrath will avenge that arrogance either on the ground or on the person, unless that person punishes himself by penance and bitter blows; for flesh and blood must make restitution to flesh and blood. How? Human flesh and

blood shall groan in that person because the flesh and blood of My Son have been carelessly treated by that person, as the earth quaked and people were shaken by fear when My Son gave up His spirit on the cross.

60 The mystical secrets of the Lord's body and blood must not be looked into

But if you, O human, say to yourself in your vacillating heart, "How did the oblation on the altar become the body and blood of God's Son?" I will answer you: Why, O human, do you ask this, and for what purpose do you inquire about it? Do I require you to know it? Why do you peer into My secrets about the body and blood of My Son? You should not seek out these things, but only keep them diligently and accept them in fear and veneration. Do not pause at this mystery any longer, for you must not tempt Me so rashly. What are these things to you? Only seek after Me by sure faith. For when I look into all your faith, I do not ask you to know what is the nature of the body and blood of My Son, or how this mystery is consecrated on the altar. And who asks you, O human, to stand in fire and not feel its burning? No one. So do not rashly peer into My secrets, lest you be wounded thereby. But if in your devout mind you wish to seek them, do so in diligent prayer and weeping and fasting, as your early Fathers certainly sought and often found them. And when you have thus sought and found, you will give what is left to the Holy Spirit.

But let those who approach those sacraments come not by devious paths but by the right way, lest they be cast out from them and suffer ruin in soul. How?

61 Churchmen who go in by wrong ways imitate the Devil, Baal and crucifiers

The evil deceiver who wrongly usurps the chair of the episcopal office without being elected or properly anointed, and the wicked robber who expels his pastor by the whispers of his henchmen and violently invades his throne, will either undergo grave expiation by their own will or incur serious condemnation by My wrath. For they are in the worst possible state of bitterness, imitating the one who wanted the highest honor for himself and was cast out of glorious happiness into death, and following Baal, who so deluded himself that he wrongly named himself a god and was given over to destruction. And if in their lying and presumptuous wickedness they pretend to confer My holy orders, those who receive from them ordure rather than orders are accounted in My sight no more than those who are jestingly appointed by children in their games to be laughed at by people. As this kind

of thing is nonsense among people, so what these intruders pretend to do in their deceit is mockery to Me.

Thus their edifice is wicked and cannot stand, for it is a void. And if they appeared to set up anything in My temple in holy orders, it must be abolished, for it has no righteousness and is thus worthless. Let them, therefore, turn back from their temerity, lest they share the punishment of him who sought more than he should have and was thrown from the summit into the abyss. And the butcher who insanely approaches My altar without the anointing of the priestly office, as if I were as great an impostor as he is a jester, and rashly touches the table consecrated to My name to offer the sacred oblation without having the qualifications, does not fear to wound My Son with dire torment. How? As the unbeliever assails God with his incredulity, and the madman in his insanity runs into burning fire, so this one, not knowing that I am God or feeling My burning fire, casts off his fear of Me and does not love My mercy; but, with unanointed lips, he dismembers those words My Only-Begotten gave His bride when He dowered her with His body and blood, and thus wounds My Son. And it will be said to this rash attacker: "Who touches My Son, so arrogant and unanointed?"

But he who thus approaches My altar and presumes to invoke My Son with the secret words tries to wound Him not because he can put him to any pain, but because he fearlessly and presumptuously touches Him. If he persists without penitence in this contempt, he will stand in the place of punishment among those who causelessly wounded My Son. Lest he feel these torments, then, let him adopt as his own the lamentation of affliction and never again presume to approach the ministry of My altar. And let those who hold some church office that involves serving under a priest never presume to usurp his ministry unjustly, for if they wrongfully claim that righteousness for themselves, they may justly be judged unformed and rough and rejected for the construction of the edifice of the Church. For I will that My ministers shall be pure in My sight, without deceit and without stain. How? They should be duly chosen to approach My altar, and once there they should serve Me without impurity. How?

62 Priests should observe chastity like the apostles

Let them not look to an earthly marriage, for they have chosen a spiritual one. How? By entering upon My service. And if any of them suffers from the burning lust of the flesh, let him subdue his body with abstinence and fasting and chastise himself with cold and scourging. And if after all he defiles himself with a woman, let him fly from that contamination as from a burning fire or a deadly poison and cleanse his wounds with bitter penance; for I wish to be served in chastity. How? Because My Son was the height of

chastity, and He represented in Himself all ecclesiastical ranks. How? Those that serve, proclaim, preach and offer. How? He touched service in His circumcision, proclaimed by His prophecies, preached Himself to humanity, and at last offered Himself as a living sacrifice on the altar of the cross. And He gave Himself as a burnt-offering in chastity; so let those who seek to offer a burnt-offering to Him on the altar imitate His chastity.

They must not only guard chastity in others but preserve it in themselves. How? As a priest should keep himself from contamination with a woman, let him also keep himself from himself; let him take care not to arouse defilement in himself by the touch of his hands, so that the clamor of lust may not make a sinful tumult within him. For the crime of Adam, which brought death to Man, aroused his senses to fornication; so let people restrain their flesh so as not to undergo a shameful death. How? My Son conquered death and gave them life; and since He assumed flesh in the integrity of virginal chastity, those who desire to serve Him ought also to be chaste, as is written in the divine command:

63 Words of Moses on this subject

"Be ready against the third day, and come not near your wives" [Exodus 19:15]. What does this mean? You who wish to serve God alone, be prepared with willing hearts for the day of His serenity, when the holy and ineffable Trinity will truly appear and show Its wonders in a great miracle. And if you wish to be worthy to draw near to Him, take care not to join in carnal unions of physical love, so as not to mingle your blood with blood that is deemed weaker. You, O My priests and other ministers, who fight under a spiritual name, beware of this, for the apostles to whom you have succeeded did not divide themselves between opposites or leave you such an example.

64 A priest should not have two marriages

For I do not want priests to have two unions, one of spiritual and one of carnal desire; the priest should be married to the justice of God, and treat it as his wife, with which to nourish and teach the rest of the people as a father brings up and teaches his children. How is it appropriate for a priest to maintain in the right proportions two different and opposing marriages? How? One carnal and the other spiritual.

65 How the Devil may be the priest of bad priests

The priest is the pastor and father of the people who have physical marriages; so if he has one to the same extent, who will be his priest? No

other priest could be his superior, since all priests are ministers of a single office, except the Devil, who is appropriate as his priest because he has imitated the Devil in hiding poison under honey. How? As the Devil hides evil under good, so do such priests, who love their own dishonor better than chastity, try to hide a carnal union under a spiritual marriage, like poison under honey. But, since My Son is wholly chaste, those who touch His body and blood on the altar should also love chastity, as it is written:

66 Words of the Law on this subject

"A priest shall not take to wife a harlot or a base prostitute or a woman repudiated by her husband; for he is sacred to his God and offers the bread of God" [Leviticus 21:7–8]. What does this mean? Let one who is appointed to offer sacrifice to God not love the Devil, the common author of all filth and wickedness, or degrade his senses in such a way that when he tries to bear My yoke he will instead have to follow the will of his flesh, contrary to the justice of God and the examples of the ancient saints; lest he come by bad deeds to the impurity that was spurned by those ancient fathers, who knew it to proceed from the breath of the ancient serpent. Let him therefore leave this filth and become a lover of the righteousness of God; for he is sacred to God in holiness, and thus removed from carnal desire and the deeds that bring children into the world. And so, sober and unpolluted, he may offer that bread which is placed on the table of consecration for human salvation. What does this mean? That sacrifice, which is the life of the living and the refreshment of souls and the mirror of all the virtues, which shine in holy innocence through chastity, is free from every stain; and therefore those who offer the sacrifice should be free of filthy pollution and hold themselves back from feasts and drunkenness, jesting and laughing, and light and undisciplined behavior. Let them be held in the reverence that becomes successors of the ancient fathers who set them up and in the dignity proper to their honorable patrons. So let them not live doubly in two roles, and walk at the same time in the secular and the spiritual way; for it is hard to serve two masters at once, as My Son testifies in the Gospel, saying:

67 Words of the Gospel on this subject

"No one can serve two masters" [Matthew 6:24]. What does this mean? No one who is clothed in mortal flesh can offer two masters similar and equal service, because of the weakness of his senses and his body. What does this mean? He cannot serve at once the Lord of Righteousness and the lord of injustice. Why? Because righteousness casts out injustice, and injustice as-

sails righteousness. And so too a priest cannot at once and with equal devotion have the handmaid and the mistress, carnal marriage and spiritual companionship, for these two cannot exist side by side in perfection; for the carnal assails the spiritual, and the spiritual bears down the carnal. Thus My friend Paul, knowing this to be so, shows My will when he says:

68 Words of the Apostle on this subject

"A bishop therefore should be blameless, the husband of one wife" [1 Timothy 3:2]. What does this mean? One who is superior to others in a spiritual office must regulate his life so that no scandal of offense or reproach will be found in it. How? A priest should not have two roles and be at the same time the husband of a physical wife and of a spiritual spouse; but he should be the husband of one wife, namely the holy Church, which is one in My Son because she arose as one Church in Him. But though the Church is one, she has many husbands, entering into marriage with the priests of My Son who are daily in His service; yet she remains an intact virgin, for in her the faith is uncorrupted. And therefore Paul, My vessel, did not say she was the wife of one husband; for she is joined in marriage to all those priests who will arise in My Only-Begotten till the last day, when the immortal and unfailing nuptials will take place. And those who minister to the altar under the priests are also husbands of the same wife, as Paul said, offering My faithful doctrine to humanity:

69 Again Paul on this subject

"Let deacons be the husbands of one wife, who rule well their children and their houses" [1 Timothy 3:12]. What does this mean? Let those who render service to the priests and assist them be the husbands of one wife by faithful marriage. And who is this wife? The chaste Bride who can be injured by no corruption, as a woman is corrupted when she loses the flower and innocence of virginity, which she had at the beginning of her marriage when not yet corrupted by her husband. So let these bridegrooms live so faithfully with this righteous wife as to offer good examples of virtue to those regenerated by their help in the Spirit and water; let them live to labor in their office, which lies within the rampart of the Church, with faithful care, as a secular man devotes his care to maintaining his children and his house.

For My friend Paul displays that Bride to the priests and the other ministers of My altar so that they will choose her as their wife and not seek a carnal spouse. For neither Paul nor My Son's other disciples nor the rest of the Fathers who were their followers ever served as an example to them that they should take a carnal spouse and desert the spiritual wife, who had been

their first choice. For a priest who is so stubborn in sin that he does the will of his flesh and illicitly takes a wife commits adultery; for he deserts his true wife, the Church, who was betrothed to him by his spiritual office, and as his will pleases unchastely marries another. It may be difficult for him to restrain his ardor, but let him restrain himself from these desires for the sake of heavenly love, as My Son shows in the Gospel, saying:

70 The three kinds of eunuchs

"There are eunuchs who were born so from their mothers' wombs; and there are eunuchs who were made so by other people; and there are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the Kingdom of Heaven's sake. He that can receive this, let him receive it" [Matthew 19:12]. What does this mean? There are some men who have come forth from their mothers' wombs with a bodily coldness or impotence, which makes them unable to have wives; and so they will receive no reward for this continence, except in suffering no penalties for the deeds of sin they did not do. And there are some men who are maimed in body by the will of others, and so cannot give pleasure to their flesh in the deeds of marriage; but they also do not deserve praise for containing themselves, for although they cannot do the burning deed they often burn with wickedness in their wills. And there are other men, those who take the spiritual way, who deprive themselves of what their bodies might easily accomplish, because they scorn and reject carnal bonds for the glory of the celestial inheritance; and these shall have the greatest praise and the blessed reward.

And My priests and all who do service to My altar should imitate these last with all their hearts, that they may receive the crown of continence amid the rapture of celestial joy. So if a person can follow this example in his heart, desiring beatitude enough to conquer the body and cast out carnal desire, let him with ardent devotion repress his flesh and abandon the idea of carnal union; and so he will capture heavenly companionship.

71 He who cannot contain himself must not become a priest or minister

But he who cannot contain himself, and burns with carnal desire, should not become a priest or any other kind of minister for the sake of pride or avarice, lest he then fall into carnal delights and so sustain great damage. For those who approach My altar as ministers shall keep their bodies from contamination with women, and never for any reason enter into marriage, but voluntarily keep themselves chaste in My righteous service. If they are otherwise, they should avoid the holy service of My altar.

72 Why the primitive Church let married men become priests but does not now

It is true that certain people who had previously subjected themselves to the world were at one time allowed to minister. But these were people who had received the carnal yoke before and not after entering My service; and afterward they cast off this yoke, and then the Holy Spirit by His miracles brought about in them praise and celebration. This was granted as an unusual measure at the beginning of the Church's rise, because there were so few priests; but now the Church is adult and strong, and her ministers are many. This is like Church opinion on another prohibition of the same sort: At the beginning of the world it was granted to men to marry women most closely related to them, because there were so few people, whereas now that people are so multiplied it is forbidden. For the shapeless and rough stones are customarily laid in the foundation of a building, and afterward the beautiful and well-formed stones are chosen for the walls. And so in the Church's infancy the priests who were available were installed in office, but now the whole complement can be obtained among the spiritual people who are fitted for the priesthood, not being occupied with the secular burden of earthly bonds. For it is not fitting that the father of a family, following the rules for earthly marriage, should be called as My messenger in the priesthood. Therefore hear this comparison:

73 Analogy of the king

A certain very powerful king gathered a small army and carefully observed its performance. Seeing that it was untrained in an army's business, he chose out of it some men of the common people whom he perceived as suitable for leadership, and set them over the army, for the offspring of the nobles had not yet matured. But later, when the army was larger and there were adult noblemen in it, the king set that army in order and promoted dukes and counts from the nobler classes to command it, as justice required. What does this mean?

The King of Heaven, Whose power is over all, started the Church by gathering a little army of believers. Scrutinizing it most closely, He saw that it was as yet infirm and weak with regard to suffering in body for His name; so He set Peter over it to bind and loose, who had been one of those who had lived an earthly life. And after Peter, He cleansed others who had imbibed the taste of the earthly and been stained by temporal things, and set them up in the office of judgment and mercy; for He knew that, having embraced the Catholic faith, they were wise and faithful both in caring for souls and in sustaining bodies. For the glowing dawn that burns up human contagions in

the fire of love for chastity had not yet diffused its flowers of sweetness widely among people. But now the churchly race has been multiplied and widely disseminated through the whole length of the world, and the glory of the Church's honor has been nobly strengthened; and so the supernal King has benignly and fittingly bestowed both secular and spiritual gifts on people, and chosen those who most honorably preserved their sobriety and chastity by Church law and God's justice to be priests and other ministers of the divine offices.

Wherefore, O human, many spiritual people have now arisen who want to fight the world and the Devil, and who hasten to approach My altar in chastity and bodily restraint; and so I will that My priests should appear in My sight uncontaminated by earthly marriage. For in the Old Testament priests were commanded to keep themselves from contamination with women when they approached My altar; and in the New Testament that command was brought to full perfection for My priests, so that whereas the ancient priests observed chastity for an hour, these new ones will fulfil it from the beginning of their boyhood to the end of their old age. And as I refused to receive the sacrifice from the ancients when polluted by connection with women, much more do I want My Son to be handled by the new priests only in a state of chastity.

74 Immature and unconsecrated men must not receive churches

Let no one who is immature and unconsecrated receive a church; and let him not presume to seek several churches. For if one who is young in years and without priestly consecration dares to take a church or, having one, tries to subjugate several, he is a transgressor against justice and a destroyer of strict judgment; he is like one who dares to commit fornication before the lawful time and without lawful marriage, or who has a legitimate wife but hastens to defile himself in adultery with other women.

75 Priests should be elected by Christian people from the good and healthy

Priests of wise thoughts and manly minds are to be chosen from every people that calls itself Christian, such that they will come to My service in right order with proper anointing and willing mind. Those who are crippled in any of their members should not approach the office of My altar, for in the Kingdom of Heaven there will be no trace of disabilities in human souls; and therefore I do not want anyone defective in limb to stand at My altar. But these will not be separated from the Kingdom of Heaven because they are weak in body and defective in members, as long as their souls are healthy and

they seek Me in the purity of good works. I do not wish, however, that they should take part in the ministry of My altar, but that they should humbly fulfil their virtue in good works.

76 Women should not approach the office of the altar

So too those of female sex should not approach the office of My altar; for they are an infirm and weak habitation, appointed to bear children and diligently nurture them. A woman conceives a child not by herself but through a man, as the ground is plowed not by itself but by a farmer. Therefore, just as the earth cannot plow itself, a woman must not be a priest and do the work of consecrating the body and blood of My Son; though she can sing the praise of her Creator, as the earth can receive rain to water its fruits. And as the earth brings forth all fruits, so in Woman the fruit of all good works is perfected. How? Because she can receive the High Priest as Bridegroom. How? A virgin betrothed to My Son will receive Him as Bridegroom, for she has shut her body away from a physical husband; and in her Bridegroom she has the priesthood and all the ministry of My altar, and with Him possesses all its riches. And a widow too can be called a bride of My Son when she rejects a physical husband and flees beneath the wings of My Son's protection. And as a bridegroom loves his bride with exceeding love, so does My Son sweetly embrace His brides, who for love of chastity eagerly run to Him.

77 Men and women should not wear each other's clothes except in necessity

A man should never put on feminine dress or a woman use male attire, so that their roles may remain distinct, the man displaying manly strength and the woman womanly weakness; for this was so ordered by Me when the human race began. Unless a man's life or a woman's chastity is in danger; in such an hour a man may change his dress for a woman's or a woman for a man's, if they do it humbly in fear of death. And when they seek My mercy for this deed they shall find it, because they did it not in boldness but in danger of their safety. But as a woman should not wear a man's clothes, she should also not approach the office of My altar, for she should not take on a masculine role either in her hair or in her attire.

78 God will judge all perpetrators of fornication, sodomy and bestiality

Let those who approach My altar appear in My sight in chastity, as also should those who desire to receive the sacrament of the body and blood of

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My Son, lest they should fall into ruin. For many are found among both spiritual and secular people who not only pollute themselves in fornication with women but also assume a heavy burden of condemnation by contaminating themselves in perverted forms. How? A man who sins with another man as if with a woman sins bitterly against God and against the union with which God united male and female. Hence both in God's sight are polluted, black and wanton, horrible and harmful to God and humanity, and guilty of death; for they go against their Creator and His creature, which is in them. How?

God united man and woman, thus joining the strong to the weak, that each might sustain the other. But these perverted adulterers change their virile strength into perverse weakness, rejecting the proper male and female roles, and in their wickedness they shamefully follow Satan, who in his pride sought to split and divide Him Who is indivisible. They create in themselves by their wicked deeds a strange and perverse adultery, and so appear polluted and shameful in My sight.

And a man who sins with a woman by this same method of perverted fornication is a voracious wolf of wickedness. How? A person would seem perverted and harmful to other people if he threw away beautiful clean food and ate the ordure that comes out of the body in digestion; and these are in My sight equally unworthy and unclean, since they forsake the proper way of uniting with a woman and seek in her an alien sin. And a woman who takes up devilish ways and plays a male role in coupling with another woman is most vile in My sight, and so is she who subjects herself to such a one in this evil deed. For they should have been ashamed of their passion, and instead they impudently usurped a right that was not theirs. And, having put themselves into alien ways, they are to Me transformed and contemptible.

And men who touch their own genital organ and emit their semen seriously imperil their souls, for they excite themselves to distraction; they appear to Me as impure animals devouring their own whelps, for they wickedly produce their semen only for abusive pollution. And women who imitate them in this unchaste touching, and excite themselves to bodily convulsions by provoking their burning lust, are extremely guilty, for they pollute themselves with uncleanness when they should be keeping themselves in chastity. Hence both women and men who elicit their own seed by touching themselves in the body do a filthy deed and inflict ulcers and wounds on their souls; for they will not keep themselves in a state of chastity for love of Me. What does this mean? When a person feels himself disturbed by bodily stimulation, let him run to the refuge of continence, and seize the shield of chastity, and thus defend himself from uncleanness. How? Let him cast out the tares from the wheat, which is to say, let him separate the clamor of lust from the sweetness of chastity.

And whoever thus casts out of himself the taste for lust is very sweet and lovable to Me. But, O humans, you cast away chastity and love lust when you fornicate not only with other people but even with animals; thus you send your seed not into what lives but into what is dead, and you forsake what is equal to you and desire what is subject to you and serves you. Therefore the elements cry out against you, saying, "Alas, alas! our rulers join with us in the mingling of their seed!" And thus they show their grief at My anger against your deeds. Why then do you, knowing yourselves human, convert your intelligence into bestial stupidity? Did I create you to join with animals? Never. And when you unite with them, the guilt of the most bitter crimes falls upon you, because you scorn the plan I made for the joining of male and female. For whoever transforms himself by his deeds into a depraved follower of his own desires, and pours out his semen with an animal, brings on himself great ruin, as Satan cast himself down by his perversity when he tried to be like God.

Therefore, all you who contaminate yourselves with perverted pollutions, resist your desires; chastise your bodies, and give yourselves over to true and bitter penance with weeping and fasting and torture of your flesh and severe blows, lest you send yourselves impenitent into an excess of cruel guilt.

79 Pollution that occurs in sleep

I want men not only to keep themselves clean of impurity while awake, but also to purify themselves properly from the pollution that happens to them in sleep. For if the semen of a man who sleeps and dreams is stirred up unawares, I do not want him to approach the sacramental office of My altar in that condition of ardent heat; he should first calm that ardor in himself, as it is written:

80 Words of Moses on this subject

"If any man among you is defiled in a dream by night, he shall go forth out of the camp, and not return until he washes himself with water in the evening, and then he shall return into the camp after sunset" [Deuteronomy 13:10–11]. What does this mean? If among the laborers in My service there is anyone who is defiled in a dream while he sleeps at night, he should separate himself from the company of those who serve My altar and not presume to join in the mystery until his injurious heat has passed and he has cleansed himself from the fire of his lust in the bath of penance, with confession and compunction of heart. And after that penance has done its work and illumined his heart, let him return in love of chastity among those who faithfully

defend themselves against impurity, and worthily and honorably approach that sacrament, which is wholly in sanctity.

81 One who burns strongly should not add flame to his fire

But one who burns strongly in lust either asleep or awake should take care not to add flame to his fire. How? Let him not inflame himself by those foods that stir up lust. He should humbly abstain from the flesh of animals that come forth from their mothers naked and without covering, that is, beasts; for there is a fire of heat in them that is not as great in the flesh of birds, which are not born uncovered but as an egg covered with a shell, and therefore have less inflammatory power. And he should also abstain from excessive wine, lest by too much drinking his veins become filled with noxious blood and wickedly heated with ardent fire.

82 One who is weighed down by vices should seek God's mercy in confession

But if anyone labors under too great a number of these tendencies and is not able to resist them by himself, let him with devoted purpose seek Me and humbly uncover to Me the wounds of his heart. How? Let him lay bare these wounds to Me by making a humble confession to a priest. And why this? Because true confession is a second resurrection. How? The human race was slain by the fall of the old Adam; the new Adam by His death raised it up. And so the resurrection of souls arose in the death of the new Adam. And so a person should confess his sins, as the old Adam did not; for he concealed his transgression instead of confessing it. How? He did not confess it by repenting, but concealed it by accusing the woman. Hence confession was instituted, to raise people up after they fall. And so anyone who confesses his sins to a priest for love of Me rises again from death to life; as the woman who purged herself from her impurity with tears at the banquet in the presence of My Son was snatched away from uncleanness.

83 The remedy of purgation was long prefigured in the ancient fathers

This remedy of purgation was long prefigured in the ancient fathers. How? Before the Law the patriarchs and prophets were the consolation of humanity; under the Law the high priests and the ordinary priests were its instruction; and then the apostles came and brought true righteousness in My Son, so that many people hastened to them and devoutly implored their help. And thus from the time of Adam to the time of the apostles there were always

some who by celestial inspiration consoled and instructed people and helped them in their miseries. And the apostles also showed people, by their preaching and many miracles, that Man had fallen by the Devil's tempting into death and could never rise again by himself, but was snatched from death by My Son. How? By His being in the world and performing many labors in the body, and at last being nailed to the cross for the world's redemption.

So faithful people, to gain salvation, should follow this pattern with their priests. How? They should seek the help of My Son, because when they repeat the ancient crime of Adam after baptism they cannot rise from their fall by themselves. And therefore they should seek counsel as if from the patriarchs and prophets, and derive instruction as if from the high priests and the ordinary priests, and accept help as if from the apostles, laying bare their wounds and displaying their sins truly and purely. How?

They should confess their sins to the priest, who is the minister of My Son, with devoted heart and mouth. And then the priest will give them a remedy of penance and bury their sins in the death of My Only-Begotten. And then they will rise again to life and glorify the Resurrection of My Son.

84 One who refuses to confess his sin deceives himself

But one who refuses to lay bare the wounds of sin, and follows his own wishes by trying to cure them himself in silence without the help of another, is deceiving himself. For he wishes to be his own priest, but without the help of another he cannot rise; as Man did not rise up and stand by himself but was saved by My Son. Hence let one who desires to be saved never despair of confessing his sins, even at the end of his life.

85 A dying man without a priest may confess to another person or to God only

And if someone in the hour of death seeks a remedy for his wounds of sin but does not have a priest near to whom to confess them, let him show them to any other person who is there at the time; or, if he is dying so suddenly that there is no one there, let him lay them open to Me with his heart's utmost affection, while he is still in the body with which he did them, and I will regard the devotion of his heart and not reject his penitence.

86 No one should despair at the weight of his sins

Therefore, let no one despair because of the weight of his iniquity; for if he despairs of My mercy, he shall not rise again to life. One who struggles

with despair and at last reduces it to nothing has delivered himself; he has been strong, and manfully conquered. But one whose mind is so inflamed that he does not seek the remedy of salvation is not to be helped; for when he could have found Me, he refused to seek Me. And so, let each person not neglect himself while he has time, but seek the refuge of pure confession, as My Son commanded the leper in the Gospel, saying:

87 Words of the Gospel

"Go, show yourself to the priest, and offer your gift, which Moses commanded for a testimony to them" [Matthew 8:4]. What does this mean? You who are foul with sins and want to cleanse yourself of them, go with good intention and show them to the priest, My minister, by pure confession; and offer with devout heart the gift of true penitence, which by God's will was foreshadowed by the man who was removed by divine power from the many floods of earthly iniquity. And thus those who formerly saw you befouled with evil deeds may now testify that you are purged from them by bitter penitence as in the furnace of trial. But, O human, if a sinner conceals his deeds in his secret heart, who will be a witness to his penitence? No one. Therefore let each person manifest his sins, that he may have a witness to his penitence.

88 Sins should be blotted out by alms and by bodily satisfaction

And let one who desires to practice penitence for his sins turn to alms as a source of help. How? When a person's weak body falters in the work of penitence, his alms will hasten to help him. And because it is hard for a person to practice penitence with just and proper harshness, let him take alms as his mother, so as to accomplish with her what is so laborious for his body. For a mother does not cease to help her child in time of need, even when he has been brought up already; and so too alms give aid to a weak body when a person is penitent, even if he seems to be strong in doing penance and punishing his body. So let a person punish in his body the evil works he has done in his body through the lust of the flesh, so as to wash away from his body by bitter penance the deeds that were dear and sweet to his flesh. For bitter penance, with its helpmeet alms, heals in people the deadly wounds of sin. How? A person represses himself by castigation, but he can refresh himself by alms. How? Because alms represent My mercy. How? When a faithful person helps the poor with his substance for love of Me, he keeps My commandments, because he devotes his mercy to the needy for the honor of My name; just as I do not withdraw My grace from those who seek me in

purity of heart. And whoever helps the poor in this way, refreshing them with alms for mercy's sake, is exceedingly lovable to Me, for he has a merciful heart; which fulfils what is written:

89 Words of the Book of Wisdom

"Place your treasure in the commandments of the Most High, and your alms shall bring you more profit than gold" [Ecclesiastes 29:14]. What does this mean?

Think justly and rightly, and take some of your material wealth, which you hold in your bosom and embrace in your heart; as the One Who is above all people commands, divide it, for God has ordered you to turn aside from evil and do good. Let your heart's good will overflow, so that you will not be among the lost sheep; sanctify yourself before God by giving of your substance to refresh those in want, and God will give you His mercy in your misery. And if you do this, the compassion you have on one without treasure will be worth more to you than if you could ascend a high mountain and in your pride possess its gold. How? Because it is better for you to give a little to the little ones in humility than to possess and enjoy the kingdom of the world; if you did the latter, God's reward of mercy could never be yours because of the weight of your pride, for you would not have had pity for the poor in your heart.

90 The elements of the world are the pit of human pleasures

Hence the elements are the pit of human pleasures, as they show by their ways. How? By bringing God's vengeance upon those who are sinning. Therefore, O human, renounce the empty avarice which will wreck you, for your true inheritance is eternal life; leave evil and do good, and so renounce harsh malevolence. And, to follow the way of mercy, give of your substance to the poor, and thereby imitate God Who is merciful.

91 One who gives or receives alms must not do so in vain

Therefore, O human, no liar can deny that you who thus help the poor are fulfilling My will. How?

You should give your alms to the poor as I mete out My grace to you. But let not those who receive alms take them vainly or avariciously. What does this mean? There are many who love laziness and do not want to labor with their bodies to feed themselves, or to do good works with their spirits to help their souls; they are like the beasts, who understand justice neither

with their souls nor with their bodies. And if they persevere in this, without correction and without penitence for their apathetic wickedness, they are unworthy in My sight. But there are also many who suffer bodily necessity and receive alms in fear of Me, and pray and work for those who weigh out mercy to them, and avoid filthy and evil deeds. And among these are many from whom I have withdrawn earthly riches in order to give them celestial wealth.

92 Seekers of poverty, riches and honor are rewarded by their intention

Those who gladly suffer poverty for My name's sake are extremely lovable to Me; but those who are greedy and would gladly possess earthly riches but cannot lose the reward of this labor. And one who seeks riches in order to satisfy not his greed but My will has a good intention, and I will reward him with honor. One who desires the power of an office for his own boastful pride and not for the glory of My name is to Me like a putrid corpse; but one who seeks it desiring from it not his pride but My honor will be glorious in My kingdom. And so priests should take on the office of spiritual government not for their own sakes but for Mine, that they may rule more surely and devoutly over My people. How?

93 Priests should admonish the people about confession

They should teach, admonish, exhort and urge My people to keep the law of God worthily and fittingly. And pastors should always be thinking this over; and they should warn and exhort the people not to continue in their sins without confession and without penitence, but to tread evil deeds underfoot and do good ones. And if the people do not obey their priests when they so admonish, the people will incur the guilt and the priests will not be blamed for negligence.

94 Priests who do not use their office's authority are not priests but wolves

But if priests do not show the people the authority of their office, they are not priests but ravenous wolves, for they hold their office by robbery as a wolf cruelly snatches a sheep, doing their own will instead of caring for the sheep. And, because they live perversely, they are afraid to teach true doctrine to the people; they consent to iniquity as to a lord, for they harbor

carnal desires, and they close the door of their heart to a helper as if to a stranger; for justice is of God.

95 The elements wail to God at the iniquity of priests and Heaven notes it

Therefore, O ye pastors, wail and lament your crimes, which proclaim your iniquity in dire tones, so that the very elements hear their clamor and join in their wailing before My presence. How do you dare to do your office and touch your Lord with bloody hands, in perverse filth and adulterous wickedness? By your uncleanness you shake the foundations of the earth. How? Because you do not fear to touch your Lord while foul with such crimes, I bring great griefs and oppressions upon the earth; and so I avenge the flesh and blood of My Son, for in this horror you not only cruelly shake the earth but by your filth contaminate Heaven. How?

When you touch your Lord in the stench of uncleanness, as a swine tramples pearls into the mire, the heavens receive your iniquity and shower upon the earth the sentence of My judgment. You should have gone before the people in true justice and with divine law, shining for them with good works, so that when they followed you they would avoid tripping on any stumbling-block; and instead you stain My people with greater iniquity than that with which they stain themselves, giving them a bad and evil example. You should have been a shining jewel, by whose light they could have perceived and entered the path of rectitude; but your example is death to them, and they can find no measure in your iniquity. How can you be their shepherd when you seduce them so? And how will you answer for them, when you cannot give an answer for yourselves? Therefore weep and howl, before Death carries you off. For why do you not consider your own honor, which is given you for the sake of other people? What does this mean?

96 Priests have the power of binding and loosing

That you, rather than others, have received in My Son the keys of Heaven; which are righteous decisions of just judgment made in the knowledge of the Scriptures, as long as you consider rightly what it is you should bind. What does this mean?

When people stubbornly oppose themselves to My Law, you must inspire them with fear of My judgment. And if they do not then correct themselves, extend over them your power of binding. How? You will bind these rebels in My words with a clear voice, and show them the power of the

binding; for their stubbornness they are bound in My sight, as My Son showed to the Church's first pastor, saying:

97 Words of the Gospel

"I will give you the keys of the kingdom of Heaven. And whatsoever you shall bind on earth, it will be bound also in Heaven; and whatsoever you shall loose on earth, it will be loosed also in Heaven" [Matthew 16:19]. What does this mean? I, Who have all power in Heaven and earth, by My grace give to you, My devout imitators, those judgments that touch the dignity of the Kingdom of Heaven. As you see people sin on earth, you will bind the wicked deed on earth with just judgment, and it will be entangled in its wickedness and bound in Heaven; it will be separated and driven out from Heaven, for in the heavenly mansions there is no freedom and no place for iniquity. But after I withdraw a person's soul from his body, you will not extend your judgment over him, for that judgment is Mine. Likewise, if a transgressor is penitent, you will loose on earth the chain you fastened on him in his rebellion, and it will be loosed in the secret places of Heaven, for God does not reject the groans of a devout heart. But after the person's death you will pray for his soul, but you cannot then absolve it from being bound.

98 No one is to be bound without a grievous fault

But, O priests, who have received this power thus from My Son, you shall not in anger of heart bind any person in My words unless he has committed a grievous fault; you will consider most carefully before you bind anyone. You will use My words of ecclesiastical censure to separate from My church anyone who cannot be restrained by shame before other people, or by fear of Me, or by your prayers and precepts, but seeks to persevere in his iniquity. But you shall not bind an innocent person; for when you bind such a one you bind yourselves in bonds of dire guilt.

99 One who is bound when innocent must ask to be loosed for God's honor

And if anyone has been bound while innocent, contrary to right, he must ask to be loosed for the honor of My Name; yet humbly and submissively, for if he is stubborn he might incur the guilt of pride. But this is the purpose of that binding: that one who perversely refuses to obey Me or the precepts of his superiors may be separated by My word from celestial things. Thus Adam, when he disobeyed Me, was by My command cast out of Paradise.

And until he repents and obeys, he shall not be received into the company of the faithful; as the human race was recalled to the celestial country by the martyrdom of My obedient Son.

100 Rebels who refuse to return to Christ and ask mercy imitate the Devil

But one who rebels and refuses to return to Christ in humility, and continues in this arrogance, will join the company of those who keep a stone for a heart and remain in infidelity; and such people refuse to know the glory of the Church's beatitude. For one who is so obdurate that in his wickedness he will seek no mercy imitates the ancient serpent, who, when he deceived the first man in Paradise, was saying within himself:

101 Words of the Devil

"I was thrown out of Heaven when I tried to fight with my angels against the army of the Most High; I could not resist Him, and He conquered me. But now I have found Man on earth, and I will avenge myself mightily by working my wrath on him. For I will accomplish in Man on earth that which I tried to do in Heaven, and make myself like the Most High. And if God is just, that power will not be taken from me, for Man will consent to me and disobey God."

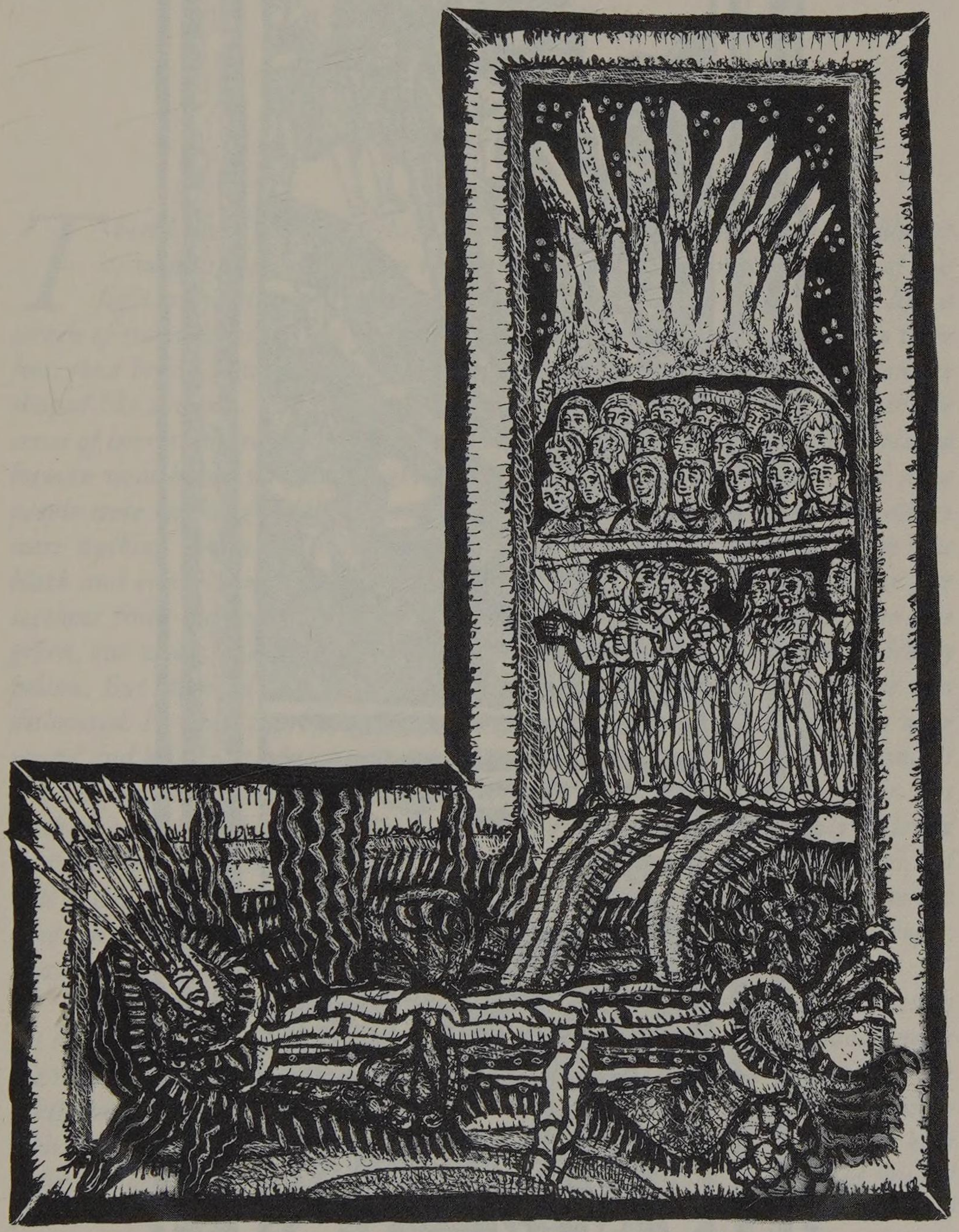
Saying these things to himself, the Devil arrayed all his arts against Man, and Man withdrew from God and adhered to the Devil; and the Devil bound him so closely to himself that Man worshipped him instead of God and denied God, his Creator.

102 By the Son of God's Incarnation humanity was led out of the darkness

But when humanity was lying in a great darkness of infidelity and could not raise itself, I sent My Son for its salvation, miraculously incarnate of the Virgin, true God and true man. What does this mean? That His Divinity truly came forth from Me, the Father, and His Humanity truly took flesh from the Virgin Mother. What does this mean? O human, you are soft and delicate of body, but hard and inflexible in your incredulity. For a stone can be smoothed for a building, but you are unwilling to be soothed by the faith. Yet listen. As a person who has a beautiful jewel in a box puts it in a metal setting to show it to people, so I, Who had My Son in My heart, willed him

to be incarnate of the Virgin to save the lives of those who believe. But if I had given Him a physical father, who would He be then? Not My Son, but My servant; and that could not be. He, born of the Virgin, ate, drank, lay down to sleep and experienced bodily miseries, but He never felt the taste of sin in His flesh, for He had assumed flesh not through a lie but through truth. What does this mean? Other people, because of Adam and Eve's transgression, are born from the taste of delight, which is to say through a lie and not the truth. But My Son did not originate so, but was born in sanctity from the most chaste Virgin to redeem humanity. For like cannot loose like from a chain; a greater one must come who can save him. What does this mean? That no person born in sin could deliver sinful humanity from the perdition of death. Therefore My Son came, without sin; He conquered death and mercifully delivered humanity therefrom.

But let the one who sees with watchful eyes and hears with attentive ears welcome with a kiss My mystical words, which proceed from Me Who am life.



THE DEVIL BOUND

THE TEMPTER

VISION SEVEN
The Devil

Then I saw a burning light, as large and as high as a mountain, divided at its summit as if into many tongues. And there stood in the presence of this light a multitude of white-clad people, before whom what seemed like a screen of translucent crystal had been placed, reaching from their breasts to their feet. And before that multitude, as if in a road, there lay on its back a monster shaped like a worm, wondrously large and long, which aroused an indescribable sense of horror and rage. On its left stood a kind of market-place, which displayed human wealth and worldly delights and various sorts of merchandise; and some people were running through it very fast and not buying anything, while others were walking slowly and stopping both to sell and to buy. Now that worm was black and bristly, covered with ulcers and pustules, and it was divided into five sections from the head down through the belly to its feet, like stripes. One was green, one white, one red, one yellow and one black; and they were full of deadly poison. But its head had been so crushed that the left side of its jawbone was dislocated. Its eyes were bloody on the surface and burning within; its ears were round and bristly; its nose and mouth were those of a viper, its hands human, its feet a viper's feet, and its tail short and horrible. And around its neck a chain was riveted, which also bound its hands and feet; and this chain was firmly fastened to a rock in the abyss, confining it so that it could not move about as its wicked will desired. Many flames came forth from its mouth, dividing into four parts: One part ascended to the clouds, another breathed forth among secular people, another among spiritual people, and the last descended into the abyss.

And the flame that sought the clouds was opposing the people who wanted to get to Heaven. And I saw three groups of these. One was close to the clouds, one in the middle space between the clouds and the earth, and one moved along near the earth; and all were shouting repeatedly, "Let us get to Heaven!" But they were whirled hither and thither by that flame; some did not waver, some barely kept their balance, and some fell to the earth but then rose again and started toward Heaven. The flame that breathed forth among secular people burned some of them so that they were hideously blackened, and others it transfixed so that it could move them anywhere it wanted. Some escaped from the flame and moved toward those who sought Heaven, reiterating shouts of "O you faithful, give us help!" But others remained transfixed. Meanwhile, the flame that breathed forth among spiritual people concealed them in obscurity; but I saw them in six

categories. For some of them were cruelly injured by the flame's fury; but when it could not injure one of them, it burningly breathed on them the deadly poison that flowed from the worm's head to its feet, either green or white or red or yellow or black. But the flame that sought the abyss contained in itself diverse torments for those who had worshipped Satan in place of God, not washed by the font of baptism or knowing the light of truth and faith.

And I saw sharp arrows whistling loudly from its mouth, and black smoke exhaling from its breast, and a burning fluid boiling up from its loins, and a hot whirlwind blowing from its navel, and the uncleanness of frogs issuing from its bowels; all of which affected human beings with grave disquiet. And the hideous and foul-smelling vapor that came out of it infected many people with its own perversity. But behold, a great multitude of people came, shining brightly; they forcefully trod the worm underfoot and severely tormented it, but could not be injured by its flames or its poison. And I heard again the voice from Heaven, saying to me:

1 God strengthens the faithful so that the Devil cannot conquer them

God, Who disposes all things justly and rightly, calls His faithful people to the glory of the celestial inheritance; but the ancient deceiver lurks in ambush and tries to hinder them by using all his wicked arts against them. But he is conquered by them and is confounded as his presumption deserves, for they possess the celestial country, and he suffers the horrors of Hell.

Therefore, *you see a burning light, as large and as high as a mountain, divided at its summit as if into many tongues.* This is the justice of God, which burns in the faith of believers, displaying the greatness of His power, sanctity and glory, and wonderfully declaring in that glory the diverse gifts of the Holy Spirit.

2 The multitude of the faithful and the divine law displayed before them

And there stand in the presence of this light a multitude of white-clad people, a cohort of people in the presence of God's justice, shining with faith and well and honorably constituted in good works. *Before them what seems like a screen of translucent crystal has been placed, reaching from their breasts to their feet;* for, from their decision to do good actions to their completion, they have before their eyes the strong and splendid sight of the divine law. And thus they are so strengthened in these actions that no cunning or deception of false persuasion can conquer them.

3 The deceptions of the Devil lie in the path humans take in this world

And before that multitude, as if in a road, there lies on its back a monster shaped like a worm, wondrously large and long. This means that the ancient serpent is well-known to humanity in the course of the pilgrimage of the good and the bad through the world, not in that visible form but in its inner meaning. Its mouth is gaping upward in order to pull down by deception those who are tending toward the celestial regions; but it is lying down, because the Son of God destroyed so much of its strength that it cannot stand up. *And it arouses an indescribable sense of horror and rage;* for the mental capacity of mortal humans is insufficient to understand the manifold variations of its poisonous fury and malicious exertions.

4 The Devil offers fraudulent riches and delights, and some buy them

On its left stands a kind of marketplace, which displays human wealth and worldly delights and various sorts of merchandise. For the left hand of the destroyer signifies death, and there is seen a marketplace composed of Death's evil works: pride and vainglory in corruptible riches, licentiousness and lust for transitory pleasures, and trafficking in all kinds of earthly desires. Thus those who would be terrified by the horror of the Devil if they met it openly are deceived by these things; they are lightly offered persuasions to vice as a merchant displays his diverse wares to people, and delighted by the display so that they buy what is offered. So the Devil offers humanity his lying arts; and those who desire them buy them. How? They throw away a good conscience as if selling it, and they collect deadly wounds in their souls as if buying them.

5 The strong resist the Devil's offers, the apathetic consent to them

And some people are running through it very fast and not buying anything; they know God, and so they carry the treasure of good will and the sweet spices of virtue and eagerly accumulate more of them, and quickly pass by the pleasures of the world and the filth of the Devil, obeying God's commands and despising the sweetness of their flesh. *But others are walking slowly and stopping both to sell and to buy;* they are slow to do good works and apathetic of heart, and so they smother their own desire for Heaven as if selling it, and nurture the pleasures of their flesh as if buying them.

Therefore, the former will receive the reward of good works, and the latter will suffer the punishment of iniquity, as Ezekiel shows, saying:

6 Words of Ezekiel on this subject

"The justice of the just shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him" [Ezekiel 18:20]. What does this mean? The shining works of the pure person bathe him in sanctity and surround him like a thousand eyes that see into the heights and the depths; as the Holy Spirit inspires him, they bear him aloft to great honor and leave his wrong desires behind for dead, as a bird is borne aloft in the air by its wings whenever it pleases. But the person who faithlessly follows the wickedness of the savage viper who hisses at Heaven, covering the pearl with mud and raging at the Most Beautiful among all the beautiful, is degraded by its snakelike poison; he is cut off from the noble work of God's hands, from all honor and from the beatitude of the celestial vision, and exiled from the Living Fruit and the root of the Just Tree.

7 The Devil labors to deceive the five senses of humanity

But you see that *that worm is black and bristly, covered with ulcers and pustules.* This shows that the ancient serpent is full of the darkness of black betrayal, and the bristles of concealed deception, and the ulcers of impure pollution, and the pustules of repressed fury. *And it is divided into five sections from the head down through the belly to its feet, like stripes;* for from the time of his first deception when he tried to put himself forward until the final time when his madness will end, he does not cease to inspire the five human senses with the desire for vices. Simulating a deceitful rectitude, he draws people to the downward slopes of his unclean arts. *One is green, one white, one red, one yellow, and one black; and they are full of deadly poison.* The green indicates worldly melancholy; the white, improper irreverence; the red, deceptive glory; the yellow, biting envy; and the black, shameful deceit, with all other perversities that bring death to the souls of those who consent to them.

8 The Devil's pride was overthrown by the Incarnation

But its head has been so crushed that the left side of its jawbone is dislocated. This means that his pride was so overthrown by the Son of God that even the enmity of Death is already destroyed and cannot exert its full strength of bitterness.

9 What the eyes and ears and nostrils of the serpent signify

Its eyes are bloody on the surface and burning within; because his wicked intent outwardly inflicts harm on human bodies and inwardly drives a fiery

dart into their souls. *Its ears are round and bristly;* for the bristles of his arts pierce a person all around, so that if he finds anything that is his in that person, he may quickly throw him down. *Its nose and mouth are those of a viper;* for he shows people unbridled and vile behavior, through which, transfixing them with many vices, he may cruelly slay them.

10 Its hands and feet and tail and what they signify

Its hands are human, for he practices his arts in human deeds; *its feet a viper's feet,* because he ceaselessly ambushes people when they are journeying and inflicts devilish lacerations on them; *and its tail short and horrible,* for it signifies his power in the short but most evil time of the son of perdition, whose desire to run wild exceeds his power to do it.

11 The might of God has broken the Devil's strength to do what he wants

And around its neck a chain is riveted, which also binds its hands and feet; which is to say that the strength of the Devil was so broken and crushed by the power of Almighty God that he cannot freely work his evil and accost humans in the way. *And this chain is firmly fastened to a rock in the abyss, confining it so that it cannot move about as its wicked will desires;* for the power of God abides unfailingly and immovably for eternity, and by saving souls oppresses the Devil so forcibly that he is not able by inner or outer means to take away redemption from the faithful, or keep them from that place of joy from which he perversely exiled himself.

12 The Devil sends his fire to lead astray all kinds of people on earth

Many flames come forth from its mouth, dividing into four parts. This means that in his rapacious voracity he sends forth in cruel flames the terrible and manifold evil of his wicked counsels; he breathes it into all four corners of the world, that the people there may follow him.

One part ascends to the clouds; for the sharpness of the Devil's breath drags down those who with all their mind's longing seek Heaven. *Another breathes forth among secular people;* for its many forms deceive those who live among earthly affairs. *And another among spiritual people;* for its pretence infects those who labor in spiritual disciplines. *And the last descends into the abyss;* for its persuasions put the faithless who consent to it into the torments of Hell. For they have walked the way of falsity and deception and left the way of rectitude, and they have not shown the reverence due to the true God, as David testifies, saying:

13 Words of David

"Destruction and unhappiness in their ways, and the way of peace they have not known; there is no fear of God before their eyes" [Psalm 13:5]. What does this mean?

People who expel God from their hearts by their wicked and damnable deeds are overwhelmed by His innocent and mighty works, which arise in the pure living Fountain, as a great rain submerges an object so that it is no longer visible. And so they are not formidable in the sight of God, for misery is in their ways wherever they go, and most unhappy companionship, and the food of death. How? They taste and eat what is evil. Hence in their deeds they do not know the way that ascends in the sunlight, and do not taste in honor or in love the sweetness of God; they cast away their fear of Him as if it were fear of another person, desiring neither to see Him nor to look Him in the face.

14 The Devil assails spiritual and secular people in many ways

Hence you also see that *the flame that seeks the clouds is opposing the people who want to get to Heaven.* For when that wicked flame feels that the minds of the faithful are tending upward, it rages against them most cruelly with its arts, so that they may not come to the celestial places to which they aspire.

15 The three groups of these people

And you see three groups of these; for they do not cease to worship the true and ineffable Trinity, although greatly fatigued by their struggles. *One is close to the clouds;* these are fighting most strongly against the Devil and raising their thoughts from earthly deeds to heavenly things as a cloud floats above the earth. *And one is in the middle space between the clouds and the earth.* These people control themselves moderately well, but their whole mind is not set on heavenly things nor their whole desire on earthly ones; they take a middle way, seeking inner qualities but not refusing outer ones. *And one moves along near the earth;* for these people have not perfectly renounced the transitory but cling a little to passing things, and so have great labor and suffer much fatigue. But, with the help of Heaven, they are all victors; for *all are shouting repeatedly, "Let us get to Heaven!"* And so the former and the latter people, with sighs of desire, exhort themselves to move toward the secret places of Heaven, even though tired out by the arts of the ancient serpent. *But they are whirled hither and thither by that flame,* being driven to various actions by the wind of the Devil's temptation. *Some do not waver,* for they are exceedingly

strong fighters and manfully defend themselves from these illusions. *Some barely keep their balance,* for they keep their feet in the path of rectitude and persevere in God's commandments, but are worn out by their labors and can scarcely conquer the Devil's arts; and *some fall to the earth but then rise again and start toward Heaven,* for they fall into different ways of vice but are then raised up by penitence and place their hope in God and good works.

16 The temptations of secular people

Now *the flame that breathes forth among secular people burns some of them so that they are hideously blackened.* This is to say that the flame of evil deception aims itself at those who pursue worldly affairs and subjects some of them to its perversity; it stains them with dark and iniquitous vices, so that they despise the brightness of the true faith. Thus they slay themselves by a bitter death, and fall to the ground and there do evil deeds. *And others it transfixes so that it can move them anywhere it wants;* for it dominates them by its wickedness and bends them to all the vices of its own depravity, seducing them into the embrace of worldly pleasure, so that according to their desires they have different ways in their speech, hair, clothing, gait and other such things. Therefore they become confused and neglect the justice of God, breaking the law and failing to circumcise their minds; they seek excess in lust and do not observe the times of the Law God constituted for them. And as the sea is stirred into turbulence by the wind, they are stirred into diverse vices by the breath of the ancient dragon. *Some of these escape from the flame and move toward those who seek Heaven, reiterating shouts of "O you faithful, give us help!"* For they withdraw themselves from shameful and harmful companionship and imitate those who fix their mind on celestial things, desiring with heart and voice their solicitude and help. *But others remain transfixed,* continuing to be ensnared in evil actions by their various vices.

17 The six ways of temptation of the spiritual

But the flame that breathes forth among spiritual people conceals them in obscurity. This means that the breath of the Devil's persuasion, when it flames toward those who should be assenting totally to the Spirit, beclouds them with the perversity of its vices, so that they long for the flesh more than for the Spirit.

And you see them in six categories; for the ancient enemy strives to pervert both their five exterior senses and the sixth inner one, the devotion of the heart. *Some of them are cruelly injured by the flame's fury;* for the Devil unlooses his arts on them and inspires them with carnal desires and pleasures, and so enkindles them to lust and unclean pollution. *But when it cannot injure*

one of them, it burningly breathes on them the deadly poison that flows from the worm's head to its feet, either green or white or red or yellow or black. How? When they refuse the delights of pollution, he pours into them the sprouting green of mundane sadness, so oppressing them that they have no strength for spiritual or worldly matters; or he sends against them the empty whiteness of vicious irreverence, so that they do not hide their shame before God or Man; or he displays to them the bright red of earthly glory, giving them bitterness and anxiety of heart; or he puts into them the dull yellow of contempt for their neighbor, and thus they become whisperers and hypocrites; or he imposes on them the horrid blackness of feigned justice, through which their hearts are wretchedly darkened.

All these are deadly plagues; they have proceeded from the destroyer from the beginning of his time of deception, and will do so until the end of time, when his madness will end in the world. And through them he injures and burns people up with vices.

18 Concerning the unbaptized

But the flame that seeks the abyss contains in itself diverse torments for those who have worshipped Satan in place of God, not washed by the font of baptism or knowing the light of truth and faith. This is to say that the fire that accompanies perdition inflicts dire and bitter torments on those souls who were not washed clean in the font of salvation and did not see the brightness of the celestial inheritance or the faith instituted by the Church, and who continue to venerate the lurker in ambush who tries to kill human souls, rather than the One Who granted humanity life and salvation.

19 What is meant by his mouth's arrows, breast's smoke and loins' fluid

And you see sharp arrows whistling loudly from its mouth; these are the terrible and evil thrusts of the Devil's rage, which issue forth in madness and iniquity; *and black smoke exhaling from its breast,* which is the outpouring of his malicious impulses of hideous wrath and envy; *and a burning fluid boiling up from its loins,* which is the effusion of his uncleanness in ardent lust.

20 What is meant by his navel's whirlwind and bowels' uncleanness of frogs

And a hot whirlwind is blowing from its navel, which is the suffocating wind of fornication that proceeds from his voracity to dominate; *and the uncleanness of frogs issuing from its bowels,* which is the fetid excrement of his

obduracy in desperation and his perverse concentration on it. For the ancient waylayer hopes to subjugate those who follow him completely to his will. *And all of these things affect human beings with grave disquiet;* for such perversities bring those who fix their hope in the earthly and not the heavenly, and so most miserably become involved with them, into extreme ruin.

21 The Devil makes the foolish believe what he falsely shows them

And the hideous and foul-smelling vapor that comes out of it infects many people with its own perversity. This means that the black wrong of a fetid conscience proceeds from the Devil and disturbs the foolish with wicked unbelief. How?

From the time of the beheading of John the Baptist, who declared that the Son of God is the One Who heals the wounds of sin, most evil error arose, whereby the Devil seduces different people by different false images; so that they think that what he shows them, each according to his understanding, is true. And many are deceived thus, because their faith is constantly weak and wavering.

But you, O My children, if you wish to live justly and devoutly, fly from this most wicked error, lest death catch you in your unbelief.

22 Heretics who worship the Devil for God must be avoided and excommunicated

And fly from those who linger in caves and are cloistered supporters of the Devil. Woe to them, woe to them who remain thus! They are the Devil's very viscera, and the advance guard of the son of perdition.

Therefore, O you My beloved children, avoid them with all devotion and with all the strength of your souls and bodies. For the ancient serpent feeds and clothes them by his arts, and they worship him as God and trust in his false deceptions. They are wicked murderers, killing those who join them in simplicity before they can turn back from their error; and they are wicked fornicators upon themselves, destroying their semen in an act of murder and offering it to the Devil. And they also invade My Church with their schisms in the fulness of vice; in their shameful plots they wickedly scoff at baptism, and the sacrament of My Son's body and blood, and the other institutions of the Church. Because they are afraid of My people, they do not openly resist these institutions of Mine, but in their hearts and their deeds they hold them as nothing. By devilish illusion, they pretend to have sanctity; but they are deceived by the Devil, for if he were to show himself to them openly they would understand him and flee him. By his arts he shows them things he pretends are good and holy, and thus deludes them. O woe to those who persevere in this death!

But because the Devil knows he has only a short time for his error, he is now hastening to perfect infidelity in his members: you, you evil deceivers, who labor to subvert the Catholic faith. You are wavering and soft, and thus cannot avoid the poisonous arrows of human corruption, which you employ as you wish against the Law. And after you pour out your lust in the poisonous seed of fornication, you pretend to pray and falsely assume an air of sanctity, which is more unworthy in My eyes than the stinking mire.

And thus for certain the punishment of all the schisms shall fall upon you: The one that arose in Horeb when the Jewish people made a graven image and played before it in devilish mockery, as some wantonly do to this very day; and the one about Baal, in which many perished; and the one about fornications, where the Midianites did shameful deeds; and all the others. For you have part in all of them by your evil actions; but you are worse than the earlier people, because you perceive the true law of God but stubbornly abandon it.

But, O you who desire to be saved and have received baptism and form the holy mountain of God, resist Satan, and do not descend from the height of your salvation.

23 God's grace forsakes His despisers but mercifully helps His seekers

The Devil ceaselessly sets his snares against a person who is so hard-hearted as to despise God's help in resisting him; for then he sees a blackness of iniquity rising up in that person, bringing such bitterness into his whole body that its strength dries up. Hence, when a person begins to contemplate his evil and so crushes himself in despair, deeming it impossible for him to avoid evil and do good, the Devil sees this and says, "Behold a person who is like us, denying his God and turning to follow us. Let us hasten and run swiftly to him, urging him by our arts so that he cannot escape us. For to leave God and follow us is what he wants."

But a person who is assailed by these evils through the Devil's agency, and polluted by murder, adultery, voracity, drunkenness and excess of all vices, will fall into death if he continues in them impenitent; while one who resists the Devil and withdraws repenting from these vices will rise again to life. For if a person follows the longing of his flesh and neglects the good desires of his spirit, the Maker of this globe says of him, "He despises Me and sinfully loves his flesh, and rejects the knowledge that he should turn away from perdition. And therefore he must be cast out." But if a person loves the virtuous ardor of his spirit and rejects the pleasure of his flesh, the Creator of the world says of him, "He looks toward Me and does not nourish his body on filth, and desires the knowledge of how to avoid death. And

therefore help will be given him." How? As Solomon says, in accordance with My will:

24 Words of Solomon

"Evil pursues sinners; and to the just good shall be repaid" [Proverbs 13:21]. What does this mean? Those who fall into error and slide into ruin are invaded on all sides by deadly sickness; and so they do not wisely regard what is true, but carelessly abandon it. And, because they reject God and choose the Devil, they are not worthy to look at God or take any pleasure in God or other people, and the evil they do brings them much adversity. But in good people, right sense and just thoughts erect a tall building; they receive in their bosom the inheritance of the Father, for they long for the celestial light. For they are not among the deceivers in the derisive marketplace, where this or that is sold without regard for its value, but in God they possess that which is true.

25 True worshippers of God crush the ancient serpent

But you see that *a great multitude of people come, shining brightly; they forcefully tread the worm underfoot and severely torment it.* This is to say that those who are born into human misery, but who constitute the faithful army of believers, hasten to attain their desire for Heaven by the faith of baptism and blessed virtues, which are beautiful adornments; and by their deeds they cast down the ancient seducer. They are virgins, martyrs and all other kinds of worshippers of God, who in full knowledge tread worldly things underfoot and desire the heavenly; and they surround the Devil and crush him with force, weakening him with dire suffering. But *they cannot be injured by its flames or its poison;* for they are protected by God with such strength and constancy that neither the open flame nor the hidden persuasion of the Devil's wickedness can touch them. For they forsake all vain fictions, and with great strength in virtue hold fast to sanctity.

But let the one who sees with watchful eyes and hears with attentive ears welcome with a kiss My mystical words, which proceed from Me Who am life. Amen.

Book Three

THE HISTORY OF SALVATION SYMBOLIZED BY A BUILDING

Book Three

THE HISTORY OF SALVATION SYMBOLIZED BY A BUILDING

THE ONE SITTING UPON THE THRONE

THE FALLEN STARS

VISION ONE
God and Man

And I, a person taken up from among other people—though unworthy to be called a human, since I have transgressed God's law and have been unjust when I should have been just, except that by God's grace I am His creature and will be saved—I looked toward the East. And there *I saw a single block of stone, immeasurably broad and high and the color of iron, with a white cloud above it; and above the cloud a royal throne, round in shape, on which One was sitting, living and shining and marvellous in His glory, and so bright that I could not behold Him clearly. He held to His breast what looked like black and filthy mire, as big as a human heart, surrounded with precious stones and pearls.*

And from this Shining One seated upon the throne extended a great circle colored gold like the dawn, whose width I could not take in; it circled about from the East to the North and to the West and to the South, and back toward the East to the Shining One, and had no end. And that circle was so high above the earth that I could not apprehend it; and it shone with a terrifying radiance the color of stone, steel and fire, which extended everywhere, from the heights of Heaven to the depth of the abyss, so that I could see no end to it.

And then I saw a great star, splendid and beautiful, come forth from the One seated on the throne. And with that star came a great multitude of shining sparks, which followed the star toward the South, looking on the One seated on the throne like a stranger; they turned away from Him and stared toward the North instead of contemplating Him. But, in the very act of turning away their gaze, they were all extinguished and were changed into black cinders.

And behold, a whirlwind arose from those cinders, which drove them away from the South, behind the One sitting on the throne, and carried them to the North, where they were precipitated into the abyss and vanished from my sight. But when they were extinguished, I saw the light, which was taken from them, immediately return to Him Who sat on the throne.

And I heard the One Who sat on the throne saying to me, "Write what you see and hear." And, from the inner knowledge of that vision, I replied, "I beseech you, my Lord, give me understanding, that by my account I may be able to make known these mystical things; forsake me not, but strengthen me by the daylight of Your justice, in which Your Son was manifested. Grant me to make known the divine counsel, which was ordained of old, as I can and

should: how You willed Your Son to become incarnate and become a human being within Time; which You willed before all creation in Your rectitude and the fire of the Dove, the Holy Spirit, so that Your Son might rise from a Virgin in the splendid beauty of the sun and be clothed with true humanity, a man's form assumed for Man's sake."

And I heard Him say to me, "Oh, how beautiful are your eyes, which tell of divinity when the divine counsel dawns in them!" And again I answered from the inner knowledge of the vision, "To my own inner soul I seem as filthy ashes of ashes and transitory dust, trembling like a feather in the dark. But do not blot me out from the land of the living, for I labor at this vision with great toil. When I think of the worthlessness of my foolish bodily senses, I deem myself the least and lowest of creatures; I am not worthy to be called a human being, for I am exceedingly afraid and do not dare to recount Your mysteries. O good and kind Father, teach me what to say according to Your will! O reverend Father, sweet and full of grace, do not forsake me, but keep me in Your mercy!"

And again I heard the same One saying to me, "Now speak, as you have been taught! Though you are ashes, I will that you speak. Speak of the revelation of the bread, which is the Son of God, Who is life in the fire of love; Who raises up everyone dead in soul and body, forgives all repented sins in His serene clarity, and awakens holiness in a person and sets it growing. Thus God, the magnificent, glorious and incomprehensible, gave Him as a great intercessor by sending Him into the purity of the Virgin, who had no corruptible weakness in her virginity. No pollution of the flesh should or could have been in the mind of the Virgin; for when the Son of God came in silence into the dawn, which was the humble maiden, Death, the slayer and destroyer of the human race, was deceived without knowing it as if in a dream. Death went on securely, not realizing what life that sweet Virgin bore, for her virginity had been hidden from it. And that Virgin was poor in worldly goods, for the Divine Majesty willed to have her so. Now write about the true knowledge of the Creator in His goodness."

1 The faithful should venerate the magnitude of the fear of the Lord

God, Who created all things and appointed humanity to that glory from which the lost angel and his followers were cast out, should be worshipped and feared by every creature of His with the greatest honor and awe; for it is just that His creatures should worship the Creator of all things and faithfully adore God above all beings. This is symbolized by that stone that you see. For in this mystery it represents the magnitude of the fear of God, which should always arise and live in the hearts of the faithful with purest purpose.

You see it as *a single block of stone, immeasurably broad and high and the*

color of iron; this shows how firmly the fear of God must be held. For God is to be dreaded by every creature with single-heartedness, so that they know He is the one true God, without Whom is no one and like Whom there is no one. *It has immense breadth,* because He is incomprehensible; *and height,* because Divinity is above all else and the highest pitch of any creature's senses cannot understand or attain to it. *Its iron color* means that it is burdensome and hard for human minds to fear God; for this is a heavy burden for soft and fragile dust, and the human creature rebels against it.

2 Every soul that wisely fears God becomes by faith God's throne

The white cloud above that stone is the clear wisdom of the human mind; and *the royal throne above the cloud, round in shape,* is the strong faith of the Christian people. In it, God is faithfully recognized; for wherever the fear of the Lord takes root, human wisdom will also appear, and then God's help will set faith above it, and prepare His rest in it. For when God is feared, He is understood by faith with the help of human wisdom, and these will touch Him as a seat touches its owner. And in them God prepares a seat for Himself, supreme above all else; for neither power nor force can comprehend Him, but He resides in single-minded and pure faith, One above all things.

3 God's mystery is incomprehensible unless He gives faith to do so

And One is sitting on that throne, living and shining and marvellous in His glory, and so bright that you cannot behold Him clearly. He holds to His breast what looks like black and filthy mire, as big as a human heart, surrounded with precious stones and pearls. This is the Living God, Who reigns over all things, shining in goodness and wondrous in His works. The deep mystery of His immense glory can never be perfectly contemplated by anyone, unless faith allows that person to comprehend and bear Him, as a seat contains and surrounds its owner. As the seat is subject to its owner and cannot rise and throw him off, so faith has no proud desire to look upon God, but only touches Him in intimate devotion.

4 In the Father's wisdom the perfection of the elect is revealed

And to His breast, that is in the wisdom of His mystery, for love of His Son He holds that poor, weak, infirm mire that is Man: black in the blackness of sins and filthy in the filthiness of the flesh, but the size of a human heart, which is the breadth of the profound wisdom with which God created Man.

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For He has looked upon those who are saving their souls through penitence, and no matter how in their persistent weakness they have sinned against Him, they will come to Him at last. They are surrounded by ornaments, those great ones who rise up among them: martyrs and holy virgins like precious stones, and innocent and penitent children of redemption like pearls; so that by them the mire is surpassingly adorned, and the virtues, which so gloriously shine in God, shine also in the human body. For He Who put breath and life in Man was scrutinizing Himself. How?

Because He foreknew and decided in advance that His Son would be incarnate to bring redemption; therefore, every stain of sin must be washed away from His body. And so too He knows the souls which, after many and great sins while they are still in the body, will end by being justified; which, after their several errors will walk in God's justice, will be steadfast in Him and shake off their forgetfulness, turning from the vices that wounded them in the earthly places where they fell into sin. And He will also take note of the fact that many peoples have arisen from their erring ways and were brought back from the deadly stench of sin, though they were walking covered with wounds and most dreadful sores; but many will arise who have been wounded so severely by the bitter and harsh pains of sin that their crimes are beyond measure and their evil habits are ingrained, and they are too ill even to summon the energy to do their deadly works, murder and adultery and all the other evils.

5 Example from the Gospel

O wretches! Do they not approach like pilgrims from a far-off land? As the Scripture says in the Gospel, the younger son said, "I will arise and go to my father and say to him, 'Father, I have sinned against Heaven and before you, and am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me as one of your hired servants' " [Luke 15:18]. This is to say: A person who, admonished by the Holy Spirit, comes to himself after a fall into sin says, "I want to rise up from the unendurable sins whose heavy guilt I can no longer bear. I will retrace my steps in memory, lamenting and sorrowing over my sins, until I come to my Father, Who is my Father because He created me. And I will say to him, 'Father, I have sinned against Heaven, wronging the celestial work that is myself; You formed me by Your will, and touched me in creating me, so that I should be only celestial in my deeds, but I have belittled myself by shameful actions. And I have sinned before You, because I have forsaken the humanity of my nature. How? By my many abominations.

" 'Therefore, I am guilty both of losing myself and insulting You, and am not worthy to be called Your son; for in the wickedness of my heart I have led Your creature in me in a path You did not appoint for me. But now,

let me be as Your servant, redeemed at the price of Your Son's blood. You gave Him at a price so great that not even death can ever repay it; but that price allows penitence to arise from Your Son's Passion, and so sets sinners free. I have lost my rightful inheritance as a child of Adam, for he, who was created a son in justice, was stripped of that joyful glory; but now the blood of Your Son and penitence have redeemed the sins of humanity.' "

And thus all should speak who have repeated Adam's fall but then return through penitence and attain to salvation. They should remember the many warnings they have heard told from the Scriptures about the suffering and the blood of their Redeemer, and recall with lamentation how they have transgressed the rules of keeping God's word instead of receiving them with longing. For they neglected His law, which was set up for them to keep when the commandments were instituted, and refused to think about what things they should have done and left undone for fear of the Lord. But they come to the truth nonetheless, remembering what they heard and learned from God; even though they previously were blinded, not desiring to know His justice and avoiding whatever would set that justice they despised above their sins; even though they turned their back on God's word and rejected His law.

Many of these will be superabundant in good things; they will not find it sufficient to feast in the house of the Lord, to celebrate His Divine Office and work His justice to the fullest, but will always be weeping and woefully remembering the evils they did when they cherished unlawful works and ignored the deeds God's law allowed.

6 The meaning of the mire on the breast and why the angels may not spurn Man

This is the filthy mire that you see on the breast of the loving Father. How? The Son of God went forth from the Father's heart and entered into the world; He is surrounded by the people who believe, and by their decision to believe in Him hold to Him. And therefore they also appear on the breast of the gentle Father; and thus neither angel nor any other creature may spurn a human being, since the incarnate Son of the Most High God has human form in Himself. For the blessed choir of angels would regard Man as unworthy, for he stinks of vice and sin, while those heavenly angels themselves are invulnerable and free from any deed of injustice; except that they continually see the face of the Father, and love in the Son what is loved by the Father. What is this? That the Son of God was born as a human. For I, the Father, established My Son, born of the Virgin, for the salvation and restoration of humanity, as My servant, the prophet Isaiah, says to you:

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7 Words of Isaiah

"He shall feed His flock like a shepherd, He shall gather up the lambs with His arm and raise them to His bosom; and He shall carry those who are with young" [Isaiah 40:11]. Which is to say: As a shepherd feeds his flock, so My Son, the Good Shepherd, feeds the flock of His redeemed. How? He feeds it by His law, which He planted through Me. Because My Son is human, He will extend His power like His arm, and gather together the lambs, who by the innocence of baptism, which strips from them the old man and his works, are innocent of Adam's sin; and by His virtues and His law He will take them up into His bosom. How? By lifting them above the height of the heavens and making them members of Himself.

Therefore the human form is to be seen in the inmost nature of the Deity, where neither angels nor any other creatures appear; because My Only-Begotten, to redeem the human race, assumed human form in the flesh of a Virgin. And He will carry in His heart those who are with young. How? My Son carries human beings in His blood, and saves them by His five wounds, for whatever sins they have committed by means of their five senses are washed away by supreme justice when they repent; and He carries them so because He was incarnate, and suffered wounds on the cross, and died and was buried, and rose again from the dead.

And He has stretched out His hand to them and drawn them back to Himself. How? When He assumed humanity for them, though they thought they were lost when Adam fell. For My Only-Begotten conquered death, and it could no longer triumph over them; and so He knew them in the power of His glory, and knew that they were to come to Him by the purgation of penance.

And you see them appear in the bosom of the Father. This means that the Son of Man is perfected with all His members in the secret heart of His Father. How? Because when the world reaches its end, the elect of Christ, who are His members, are to be perfected. O how beautiful is He! As the Psalmist says:

8 Words of David

"Beautiful of form above the children of men" [Psalm 44:3]. This is to say: In Him shines forth beauty beyond beauty, the noblest form free from any spot of sin, without a splash of human corruption, and lacking all desire for the sinful works demanded by fleshly human weakness. None of these ever touched this Man. And the body of the Son of Man was born more purely than other people, for the stainless Virgin bore her Son in ignorance

of sin, and thus ignorant of the sorrow of childbirth. How? She never felt any stubborn urge to sin, and therefore the pains of childbirth were unknown to her; but the wholeness of her body rejoiced within her. Oh, how beautiful then His body!

But let the people know that His bodily beauty was no greater than the profound wisdom that established His human form; for the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, one God in Three Persons, does not delight in the beauty of the flesh but in the humility with which the Son of God clothed Himself in humanity. And in His form there were no exterior blemishes. Sometimes an ordinary person is given by God an ugly appearance as bodies go, as when his limbs are distorted and misshapen and he is a cripple. This is not because nature so forms human bodies, but because of God's judgment; a strong nature is expressed in a proper form, and a weak one in various deformities. But the latter was not the case with My Son.

Humans, I say, are widely divergent in bodily form; they can be black, ugly, polluted, leprous, dropsical and full of defects; they can also be persuaded by devilish art into becoming inflamed with sorcery, stupid, blind to the good things of the Lord or forgetful of what they should praise and what they should blame. For they should do the works of justice, but they do the works of evil and omit the good, despising the cross and the martyrdom of their Lord. But God the Father contemplates this work of mire with the purpose of His goodness, as a father looks at his children when he hugs them to his breast. And, because He is God, He has the love of a tender father for his children. For so great is His heart's inmost love for people that He sent His Son to the cross, like a meek lamb that is carried to the slaughter. And so the Son brought back the lost sheep, bearing them on His shoulder by assuming humanity; which caused Him great sufferings, for He deigned to die for His flock.

But among these people there are many surrounded by ornaments and adorned pricelessly with virtue. They are the martyrs, the virgins, the innocents and the penitents, as I said before, and those who have obeyed their masters, and those who accuse themselves of their sins and tirelessly strive to punish themselves for them, denying the self in them. And who or where these elect are must not be stated; for the numbers of them all have been reckoned.

Does anyone think it possible to see into the deep wisdom of the Most High and into the discernment of His knowledge, and count the number of those who are to be saved? His judgments are incomprehensible to all people. Your task is to run; for the kingdom of God is prepared for you. For as great as is the zeal of the faithful, washed in baptism and known in faith, to fulfil God's justice, so great also shall be their reward.

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9 The Father does, ordains and perfects all His works through His Son

But you see that *from the One seated upon the throne extends a great circle colored gold like the dawn, whose width you cannot take in.* This means that from the Almighty Father there extends a supremely strong power and action, whose might encircles all things; and He works it through His Son, Who is always with Him in the majesty of Divinity, ordaining and perfecting all His works through Him before all worlds and in the world from its start. His Son glows with the brilliant beauty of the dawn; for He was incarnate in the wisest Virgin, whom the dawn signifies, by the hand of God Which is the Holy Spirit, in Whom also each work of the Father is done. You can never comprehend the full extent of His glory, for no creature has, will have or should have a standard of goodness or power with which to measure His power or His deeds; God's power is inestimable and incomprehensible, and His works are invincible and marvellous.

10 On the revolving circle

And that circle wheels about from the East to the North and to the West and to the South, and back toward the East to the One on the throne, and has no end. This is to say that God's power and His work encircle and include every creature. How? All creatures arose in the will of the Father, Who is One God with the Son and the Holy Spirit, and all feel Him in His power. How? They all feel Him in their creation: He wheels around from the East, the origin of all justice, to the North, where the Devil is confounded, to the West, where the darkness of death tries to extinguish the light of life but the light conquers it and rises again, and to the South, where the ardor of God's justice burns in the hearts of the faithful; and so back to the rising of justice as to the East. What does this mean?

When in God's foreordained time His work shall have been completed in the people of this world, then the circuit of the world will have been made, and the perfection of time and the last day will arrive; and then each work of God, seated in His throne without end, will shine resplendent in His elect. For God is perfect in His power and His work, Who was and is and ever shall be, and His Divinity had no beginning; so that it is not that He will have been, but that He is.

11 God's power is greater than Man can know, and why the angels praise Him

And that circle is so high above the earth that you cannot apprehend it. This is to say that the Supreme Power is so far exalted above the lives of all

creatures and above the sense and intellect of Man, and so incomprehensible in and above all, that no creature's senses can grasp it, except to realize that this Power is much higher than it can know. And therefore the angels sing to God in praise; for they see Him in His power and glory, but they also cannot understand or sense Him completely, and they can never have enough of His magnitude or His beauty.

12 God is manifest justice, true and just without alteration

But that *it shines with a terrifying radiance the color of stone, steel and fire;* this means that the divine power radiates formidable and severe virtue against iniquity that is dissimulated, impenitent or unpunished. This strength is like steel, because God's manifest justice yields nothing to weak injustice; whereas dust, as the saying goes, is unjust and does not please God. His justice, like steel, strengthens all other justice, which is weaker than it as iron is weaker than steel. And this strength is like fire; for He Himself is the Fire of Judgment, burning up all sin and injustice, which refused to bow down before Him and seek His mercy.

And God is like the rock in Man; for He is true and just without any alteration, as stone cannot be changed into softness. He is like steel, piercing everything with His all-penetrating gaze, never changing but remaining God of all things. And he is also like fire, because He inflames and enkindles and illuminates all things without changing over time; for He is God.

13 God's strength, justice and judgment have no boundary Man can sense

And you see that *this radiance extends everywhere, from the heights of Heaven to the depth of the abyss, so that you can see no end to it.* This is to say that the strength of God's power and work, His justice and His upright judgment are everywhere, and neither in the heights of Heaven nor in the depths of the abyss is there any boundary to them that human senses can comprehend.

14 Why and how the first angel and his followers fell

Then you see a great star, splendid and beautiful, come forth from the One seated on the throne, and with that star come a great multitude of shining sparks. For, by the command of the Almighty Father, the angel Lucifer, who now is Satan, came forth from his beginnings adorned with great glory and clothed with brightness and beauty; and with him came all the lesser lights that were his followers, who then shone with brightness but now are extinguished in

darkness. But he was inclined toward evil and did not look on Me the Perfect One; he trusted in himself and thought he could begin anything he wished and finish anything he began. Thus the great honor he owed to the One on the throne, Who was his creator, he gave to himself, and so descended into sin.

But all the sparks that follow the star toward the South look on the One seated on the throne like a stranger; they turn away from Him and stare toward the North instead of contemplating Him. This is to say that Lucifer and all his company, who were miraculously created by the ardent goodness of God, had a secret sin, which was that their pride disdained the One Who reigns in Heaven. All of them, formed at the beginning of Creation, tasted the impiety that leads to perdition, and contemplated God not in order to know His goodness but in order to exalt themselves above Him as if He were a stranger; in their open elation they turned away from knowledge of Him in His glory and hastened toward their fall. *But, in the very act of turning away their gaze, they are all extinguished and are changed into black cinders.* Which is to say that as soon as they disdained to know God, the splendid brilliance with which the divine power had clothed them was extinguished in Lucifer himself and all the followers of his malice; as he destroyed in himself the inner beauty that was his consciousness of good, and gave himself over to impiety, he was erased from eternal glory and fell into eternal loss. Therefore they were all changed into black cinders; stripped of their bright splendor along with their leader, the Devil, they were smothered in darkness and deprived of the glory of beautitude, like a dead coal without its smoldering spark.

Then a whirlwind arises from those cinders, which drives them away from the South, behind the One sitting on the throne, and carries them to the North, where they are precipitated into the abyss and vanish from your sight. This is to say that when these angels of iniquity tried to prevail over God and oppress Him with their pride, the wind of impiety that arose in them was belched forth in bitter perdition, and blew them backward from the South, which means from goodness, into the North, which means into forgetfulness of God the Ruler of all. Thus when they tried to exalt themselves in pride, they were confounded and met their downfall, and were precipitated by their pride into the abyss of eternal death, which is their doom, never again to be seen in brightness. Even so did I tell the noonday forest, which should ardently have borne the fruit of justice and did not, by My servant Ezekiel:

15 Words of Ezekiel

"Behold, I will kindle a fire in you and will burn in you every green tree and every dry tree. The flame of the fire shall not be quenched; and every

face shall be burned in it, from the south to the north. And all flesh shall see that it is I the Lord Who have kindled it; and it shall not be quenched" [Ezekiel 20:47–48]. Which is to say: O fool, who raised yourself up in pride against Me! I Who have neither beginning nor end will bring this to pass: In My zeal I will kindle in you the fire of My wrath, and burn up all your vigor with which you tried to begin a work, trusting in your false energy more than in Me, and choosing to act as your pride dictated on your own foolish wisdom. And I will burn up in you all your dryness, that aridity which belongs to your sin and that of the other lost ones, and in which you tempt humanity, which is ashes, to sin; and this temptation will not bring you back salvation, but will become in you eternal fire. There is no reward of salvation for you or those who follow your example. And that fire of punishment shall not be quenched or abate its tortures, but will burn up that headlong pride in which you looked upon the face of honor and tried to seize it for yourself. And thus were you ejected from all your glory; you rose in the South in clear and ardent light, but you set in the darkness of the North, which is to say in Hell.

And everyone shall see this and know Gehenna, both the elect and the reprobate. The elect will know Gehenna because they have escaped it, and the reprobate because they will remain in it and be punished; knowing that it is the place that I the Lord Almighty have kindled in retribution for your crimes, O Devil, and it will not be extinguished by your evil deeds or those of your followers. So the sin of diabolical pride has cast Satan and his angels into the outer darkness of eternal torment, without any comfort from light; so that there is no place for them in the eternal light, and you, O frail human, cannot see them there any longer. As Ezekiel, imbued with My Spirit, says with mystical significance to the King of Tyre:

"All who see you among the nations will be astonished at you; you are brought to naught, and you shall not be forevermore" [Ezekiel 28:19]. Which is to say: All the upright of heart, O Devil, will be astounded at your filthiness, seeing you drunken with the vices of the nations who embrace you and transgress the laws of God and wither away; for you pollute with temptation God's temple, which is Man. And so, through your pride you are brought to naught and fall from the glory of salvation; for you have no honor and no felicity, and no glory shall be yours in the eternity of Heaven; you are lost from them forever, without end.

16 The glory lost by the Devil and the others was saved by the Father

But when they are extinguished, you see the light that was taken from them immediately return to Him Who sits on the throne. This is to say that

when the Devil, because of his pride and obstinacy, lost his exceeding brilliance (for Lucifer was of purer light than all the other angels), and when the seeds of death entered into him and all his followers, that brilliance returned to God the Father to be kept in His secret heart; for the glory of that splendor was not allowed to go for nothing, but God kept it as a light for another of His creations.

For God, Who commanded one variety of His creatures to arise without flesh yet bright in splendor, namely the Devil and all his company, kept this splendor for the mire that He formed into Man, who arose covered with a vile earthly nature, that he might not exalt himself into the likeness of God. For the one created in bright splendor, and not clothed in a miserable form as humans are, could not sustain his self-exaltation; there is only one Eternal God, without beginning or end. And thus comparing oneself to God is the wickedest of all crimes.

And so I, the God of Heaven, kept the illustrious light, which departed from the Devil because of his crime, and hid it within Myself until I gave it to the mire of the earth, which I had formed in My image and likeness; as does a human being when his son dies and his inheritance cannot pass to children of his. When he has no children to inherit, a father holds the inheritance and plans to give it to children yet unborn, and when they are born from him he gives it to them.

17 The Devil fell without leaving an heir, but fallen Man had one

For the Devil fell without leaving an heir, which is to say without the intention of doing good works; he never accomplished or began anything good, and therefore another received his inheritance. This other also fell, but did have an heir, which was the beginning of obedience; and he received this inheritance with devotion, even though he could not complete the work that went with it. But then God's grace completed that work in the Incarnation of the Savior of the nations, and restored the good inheritance. So Man receives his inheritance in Christ, because he did not reject God's commandments when they were first given; whereas the Devil did not want to serve the Creator for good, but to vaunt his own pride, and so was deprived of the glory and perished in perdition.

18 Example of Goliath and David

As Goliath rose up despising David, so the Devil rose up presuming upon himself and wanting to be like the Most High. And as Goliath was unaware of David's strength and despised him as nothing, so the Devil's towering pride despised the humility of the Son of God's humanity, when

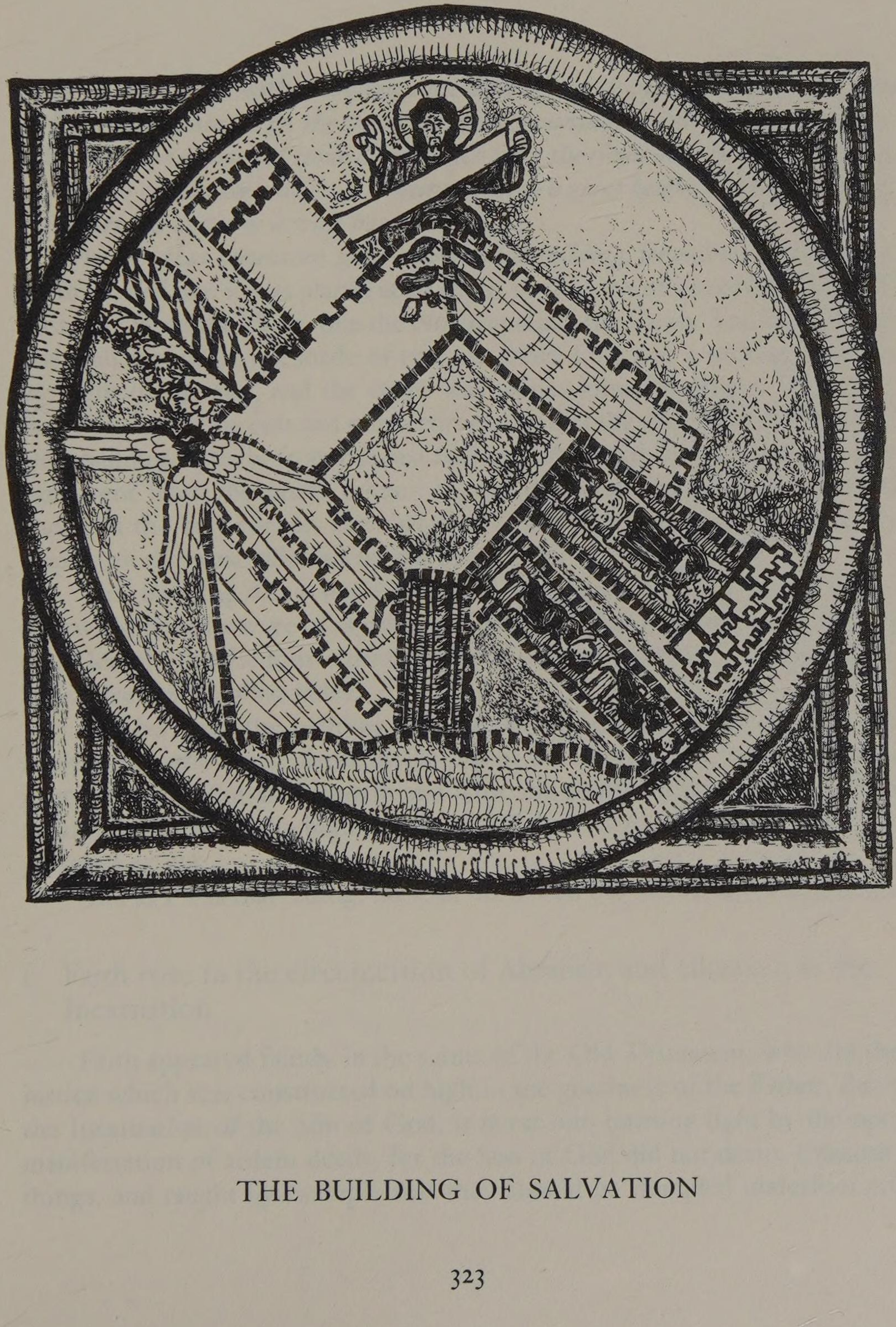
VISION ONE

He was born into the world and sought not His own glory but in all things the glory of the Father. How? The Devil did not seek to imitate this example and submit himself to his Creator as the Son of God submitted Himself to His Father. But David, with the secret strength given to him by God, cut off Goliath's head, as is written by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit:

"And David, taking the head of the Philistine, carried it into Jerusalem; but his arms he placed in his own tent" [1 Kings 17:54]. This is to say: My Son took the spoils and booty of the Devil with His great power and deprived the ancient serpent of his head. Where? In the womb of the Virgin, who crushed that head. Through whom? Through her Son. What is this crushing? The holy humility, which appears both in the Mother and in the Son, and struck at the origin of pride, which is the head of the Devil. And so, in His humility My Son in the body carried that head into the holy Church, which is the vision of peace, and showed it that the pride of the Devil had been slain. The strong arms are the Devil's stubborn vices, by which he had overcome the human race and made them worship him as God; for he had terrified them by his vices as people are terrified by arms. But My Son broke them and placed them in His tent; that is, in the Passion of His body while He suffered on the cross.

So now He lets the battle continue among the tents, which are the bodies of His chosen members, that they may divide with Him the Devil's arms. How? As He conquered the Devil in His Passion, they too may conquer him by restraining themselves from their desires and not being in harmony with his vices. And, to extend the metaphor, as the glory of Goliath was given to David, so the glory that was taken from the first angel was given by Me to Adam and his race, which confesses Me and keeps My precepts, after the Devil's pride was destroyed.

But let the one who has ears sharp to hear inner meanings ardently love My reflection and pant after My words, and inscribe them in his soul and conscience.



THE BUILDING OF SALVATION

VISION TWO
The Edifice of Salvation

Then I saw, within the circumference of the circle, which extended from the One seated on the throne, a great mountain, joined at its root to that immense block of stone above which were the cloud and the throne with its Occupant; so that the stone was continued on to a great height and the mountain was extended down to a wide base.

And on that mountain stood a four-sided building, formed in the likeness of a four-walled city; it was placed at an angle, so that one of its corners faced the East, one faced the West, one the North and one the South. The building had one wall around it, but made of two materials: One was a shining light like the light of the sky, and the other was stones joined together. These two materials met at the east and north corners, so that the shining part of the wall went uninterruptedly from the east corner to the north corner, and the stone part went from the north corner around the west and south corners and ended in the east corner. But that part of the wall was interrupted in two places, on the west side and on the south side.

This building was a hundred cubits long and fifty cubits wide, so that the two side walls were of equal length and the front and back walls were of equal length. But the four walls were equal in height except for the bulwarks, which were somewhat taller.

And between the building and the light of the circle, which extended from the height to the abyss, at the top of the east corner there was only a palm's breadth; but at the north and west and south corners, the breadth of separation between the building and the light was so great that I could not grasp its extent.

And as I was marvelling, the One seated on the throne again said to me:

1 Faith rose in the circumcision of Abraham and climaxed in the Incarnation

Faith appeared faintly in the saints of the Old Testament, who did that justice which was constructed on high in the goodness of the Father. But at the Incarnation of the Son of God, it burst into burning light by the open manifestation of ardent deeds; for the Son of God did not desire transitory things, and taught by example that they should be trampled underfoot and

only celestial things loved. The early patriarchs did not flee or separate themselves from the world, for it had not yet been shown them that they should forsake all things; but they worshipped God with simple faith and humble devotion.

Therefore, *you see within the circumference of the circle, which extends from the One seated on the throne, a great mountain, joined at its root to that immense block of stone above which are the cloud and the throne with its Occupant; so that the stone is continued on to a great height and the mountain is extended down to a wide base.* This is to say that the mountain, which signifies faith, stands within the mighty and strongly built power of the Supreme Father; this faith, great in virtue, first appeared in the circumcision of Abraham and progressed until the coming of the Supreme God's Son. Since the ancient serpent was ruined, this faith has been inspired in people by the Holy Spirit; faithfully working in the Father, they can believe that God is almighty, Who could conquer so great an enemy, and uplifted by this belief, they can attain to that glory from which the Devil was cast out for his pride.

2 Faith and fear of the Lord are joined to one another

And this mountain is rooted in that immense stone, which holds the mystery of the fear of the Lord; for faith is connected to constant fear of the Lord, and fear of the Lord to the strength of faith. This is because the Son was sent from the Father to be born of the Virgin, and from the Son came forth true faith, which was the first foundation of the good works that fear of the Lord brings forth with all the virtues, whose height touches God. And so, in the wise minds of the faithful, God Who reigns over all things is faithfully worshipped. How? Because fear of the Lord, with its sharp contemplative sight, penetrates the secrets of Heaven; for fear is the beginning of a just intention, and when that flowers into sanctity by good works, it joins with blessed faith and reaches God in full perfection.

3 The faithful build good works on faith in all four corners of the earth

And on that mountain stands a four-sided building, formed in the likeness of a four-walled city; which is to say that the goodness of the Father builds good works on faith. Gathering multitudes of the faithful from the four corners of the earth, he draws them to celestial things and fortifies them in constancy of virtue; then the Heavenly Father graciously places them in His bosom, which is to say in His inner power and His mystical counsel, in four categories of faith. How?

4 On the four categories

I Who am the Most High ordained in My work the first category of people, the race of Adam; which race, after his death, went on weakened by great discord until the second arose. This was at the coming of Noah, when the Flood took place; in which, by the Ark, I foretold the mysteries of My Son. But in the time of Noah, by My commands I showed the shining part of the wall of the building; by drowning sinners in the flood, I implied to people that they should flee death and seek life, and thus opened to them the knowledge of the choice between the two ways. What does this mean?

A person flourishes and thrives in the living life, which is the soul, and in it he contemplates and sees two ways, good and evil; either way is open to him, so that while he is in the body he can do good or evil with soul and body, starting with his mental choice and perfecting his will in his deeds. And so, in Noah, by My command there was shown the knowledge of the choice between the two ways, and a sharp warning to spurn evil and love good. And, with the decree of circumcision, this anticipation of God's will leads to the third category, in which Abraham and Moses were united in circumcision and the Law. Circumcision and the Law continued until the fourth category, the time of the Holy Trinity, when the Old Testament was openly fulfilled in the Son of God. And so, through the Son of God an inner shoot arose in the Church; He was born and suffered for human salvation, rose again and returned to the Father, and so restored that corner of the wall that had been obscured and weakened by Adam's fall, building it up again with saved human souls.

5 People must go forward humbly and wisely flee the Devil's snares

But the fact that *the building is placed at an angle* means that Man, who is the work of God, is too weak to go forward by conquering the Devil by force, without fear of sin or bodily harm; he must humbly avoid the Devil and wisely flee his snares, and faithfully unite himself to good works. Thus he will be established on the Son of God, Who sits in the corner and is the Cornerstone, and thus join himself to the work of human salvation.

6 The four corners of the building and what they mean

But one of its corners faces the East, one faces the West, one the North and one the South. This means the following. The Son of God was born of the Virgin and suffered in the flesh that justice might arise and humanity be restored to life with all justice; and that is the eastern corner. From it arose the salvation of souls when in His Son God fulfilled justice; which was

prefigured from the time of Abel till the coming of the Son Himself, and in Him was ended the physical observance of the laws in the Old Testament. Then came the salvation of faithful people by their faith, which in the last times the Son of God Who was sent by the Father brought into the world, which is the western corner. In Abraham and in Moses justice raised itself against the Devil, and they foreshadowed the promised grace through which Man was saved, though the Devil had deceived him and slain him like a robber in Adam's fall, which is the northern corner. And the wretched and fatal fall of the human race was at last through heavenly grace nobly and beautifully restored, and the ardent work of God and man bore full fruit, which is the southern corner.

7 Another meaning for the corners

The southern corner also means that the first man, Adam, was created by God. But the knowledge of the choice of the two roads does not come from this corner; which means that from Adam on the human race was disorderly and did not worship God in wisdom by eager service to the Law, but did its own will in great evil. It did not glow with knowledge of God or true beatitude, but lay in death; but what the Father willed to do with the human race lay hidden only in His heart. The eastern corner designates Noah, in whom justice began to show itself; thus there was openly manifested and foreshadowed the knowledge of sanctity that would later be perfected in the Son of God. And because in the Son of God, Who is the true Orient, every kind of justice began, and for the sake of His sanctity and honor, first truly declared in Noah, the building should always be named starting from the east.

The northern corner also means Abraham and Moses, who, working against Satan, surrounded that knowledge as if with precious stones and roofed it in with the golden roof of God's manifest justice, which was circumcision and the Law. For, before circumcision and the Law, justice was naked and without deeds.

And the fourth, the western corner, also means the true Trinity, which showed Itself when the Savior was baptized; and He returned to Heaven with all his work to save souls, and built there the true holy city Jerusalem.

8 God gives people fortifications and defenses of their good works

The building has one wall around it, but made of two materials: One is a shining light like the light of the sky, and the other is stones joined together.

These two materials meet at the east and north corners. This is to say that the goodness of the Father gives people unbroken security, in the form of a fortification and defense of their good works; and thus, surrounded and strengthened by them, people may forsake the lusts of the flesh and fly to the One God Who is their protection.

The wall is of two materials. The first is the knowledge of the choice of the two roads, which is given to people when they speculate and think clearly with their minds, to make them circumspect in all their affairs; and the second is earthy human flesh, for people were created by God to do active deeds.

9 On the reflective knowledge

And the knowledge shines as brightly as daylight, because through it people know and judge their actions, and the human mind that is carefully considering itself is radiant. For this beautiful knowledge appears in people like a white cloud, and passes through human minds as swiftly as the cloud moves through the air; and it shines like daylight, because when God graciously does His most splendid work in humans and they avoid evil, the good they accomplish is as bright in them as the day.

And every human deed proceeds from this knowledge. How? Each person can have two ways. How? With his sensibilities he knows good and evil; and when he moves away from evil by doing good he imitates God, Who works good in Himself, Who is just and knows no injustice. But when he does evil, the wily Devil entangles him in sins, for the Devil seeks iniquity and flees sanctity, and will not rest until he holds the person bound by evil deeds. But if the person breaks free of evil and does good, the Supreme Goodness will receive him; for he has conquered himself for the love of God, Who handed over his Son for him to the death of the cross.

This knowledge is reflective because it is like a mirror; for as a person sees his face in a mirror and discerns beauty or blemishes, so too in the finished deeds he ponders within himself, he can knowingly discern good and evil. For this discernment is part of the reason with which God inspired Man when He breathed life and soul into his body. The life of animals is deficient, because it is not rational; the human soul is never deficient, but because of its rationality it will live forever. And so a person contemplating good and evil knows whether a deed is wicked or good; he was formed by the grace of God and given reason at the beginning of creation, and in the choice of baptism and the salvation of souls in the New Testament he is restored by that same grace. As My most loving Paul says about this election of grace:

BOOK THREE

10 Words of Paul

"There is a remnant saved according to the election of grace. And if by grace, it is not by works; otherwise grace is no longer grace" [Romans 11:5–6]. This is to say: The remnant, who are not inside the snare of death, shall not stoop to the Devil's example, for they were openly saved when God sent His Son to become incarnate; and this is the election of grace, manifested for human salvation. How?

The grace of God created Man, but by evil works he fell. Then the election of grace was shown in the chosen vessel; for the Son of God was born from the Virgin, and it was not possible for Him to lapse. For if a person makes something useful for himself and it is taken away from him by someone else, he will get himself something even more useful that no one will take, and be content with it. And this is the way the grace of God acted. It made Adam, the first man, and the Devil drew him away from innocent deeds; but then grace brought the fullness of good works and the salvation of souls through the Son of God. But if the grace of God was the cause of salvation, then it was not caused by the merit of any human deeds. How?

There was no justice in Adam's deeds; therefore, humanity would never have returned to salvation by the merit of its works, except that it was restored by grace through the works of the just Son, Who was obedient to His Father, and cleansed by baptism, which the Son of God gave to humanity along with good works. So in this work the grace of God collaborates with humanity, and humanity with it. And therefore the grace of God goes with this work, and the work has arisen from grace.

But if salvation arose from human merit, and righteous human deeds stemmed from the people themselves and not the grace of God, grace would no longer be grace. How? Because then Man would stem from himself and not from God, and no creature would give thanks to God, and the grace of God would be nothing. But as it is, the grace of God has given people the support of reason, that they may work justice in the knowledge of good and evil; and by this knowledge they can seek the good and cast away evil, and so know life and death and choose which one to stay with. As Solomon says in his knowledge of wisdom:

11 Words of Solomon

"He has set before you water and fire; stretch forth your hand to whichever you will" [Ecclesiasticus 15:17]. This is to say: When the soul awakens God gives it a great and acute power, the knowledge of evil and good, which are water and fire. For as water overflows and conceals in its

depths deadly creatures and useless things, so a person overflows with evil deeds and conceals them lest he be discovered. And as fire burns and leaves no impurity unconsumed, or as a craftsman purifies jewelry by fire to remove its rust, so too does good purify a person, melting the rust of wickedness off him. Now water and fire are inimical, extinguishing or evaporating each other. And so too does a person: He kills good by evil, or evil by good, and either way he silently hides his desires within himself and turns them over in his mind.

12 On the working of the two motives

And while he is mulling over these desires, the person's will makes its choice of the way he wants to go, and he stretches out his hand to it and moves along it by his deeds. He does good work by God's help through grace, and he does evil by the Devil's craft and his artful temptations; and the person himself observes his deeds by the exercise of his reason. With this reason he contemplates good and evil, and the desire rises in him to choose between the two ways, good and evil, according to his will. What does this mean?

The person has the choice in that his mind's desires reflect different things to him like a mirror, and he says to himself, "If only I could do this or that!" He has not yet done them in actuality, but he has thought about them. So he stands at the fork of two roads, with knowledge of the motives of good or evil; and as he desires so at last he does, and travels upward or downward.

13 Righteous institutions arose in Abraham and Moses

And the other part of the wall, as you see, is like stones joined together; which symbolizes the human race, but also designates the righteous institutions that came from the minds of people like Abraham, Moses and the others, who were the preliminary offshoots of the Law of God and all its just additions up to the end of time. How? God works in Man and through Man; thus He sent His Son to save humanity at the end of the time of the Law, working in a sinless human body. And He took the foundation of faith on Himself, and carried the whole human race with Him, even the first man who was cast out of Paradise for transgressing justice. And He achieved this wondrous deed for humanity through His Law, in which He embraced all Christians; and they make up this building in the goodness of the Father, because Man will live in the celestial Jerusalem.

BOOK THREE

14 Reflective knowledge began in Noah but iniquity reigned uninterrupted

So the two kinds of wall join each other on the east and on the north. For reflective knowledge and human labor join together to end the injustice in which the human race was entangled when it forgot God. From Adam arose the raging injustice of the world before the flood; and because of that world's iniquity, the injustice was drowned with the people in the flood of waters. And then reflective knowledge first appeared, by My inspiration, in Noah's knowledge of good as in the east corner, as was foretold. But though God's admonition flourished in Noah, bold and greedy evil arose again and marched triumphantly to the North. And the iniquity of division from God was not trodden underfoot until Abraham, in whom, as in the north corner, it was choked off and the penetrating light of God's justice arose.

And truly the shining part of the wall goes uninterruptedly from the east corner to the north corner. This is to say that reflective knowledge to fortify human minds first appeared in the east corner, that is, in the days of Noah. Before Noah, iniquity sought to do all it could to mock God, and so people followed their own lusts instead of loving to worship God; and the first descendants of Adam were completely devoured by the Devil, because the knowledge was hidden from them, until in Noah that knowledge was displayed openly. This had been foreshadowed even when the Devil was confident that the whole human race was in his power. But iniquity went on as far as the north corner, that is, until the coming of Abraham and Moses; for before them, iniquity still reigned almost supreme, not yet interrupted or defeated by the established justice of God's Law, since circumcision and the Law had not yet been given. But by these fathers the Devil began to be confounded, where previously he had reigned confidently in the world; in the words of Paul, My light-giving vessel of election:

15 Words of Paul

"Death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who had not sinned in the same way as Adam, who was a type of Him Who was to come" [Romans 5:14]. Which is to say: Death reigned, with no competitors or conquerors, from the time of Adam to the time of Moses. How? Before Moses the severity and dignity of the Law had not yet been given, except the small preview of it in the circumcision Abraham accomplished at God's command; and so deathly vice went from error to error as it pleased. But then, by God's will, there arose the strong soldier Moses, and he prepared stout weapons of justice, which destroyed the worship of death by means of the Law, which contained in itself the complete salvation of souls, because it

foreshadowed the Son of God. Death indeed even ruled the innocent, who were simple and moderate and did not repeat in their actions the deeds of Adam. And Adam was a type of Him Who was to come. How? God created Adam just and innocent of all thought or deed of sin; and so too the Son of God was born of the Virgin Mary, with no stains of sin.

16 Righteousness is shown in Abraham and Moses, justice in the Incarnation

But you see that *the stone part goes from the north corner around the west and south corners and ends in the east corner.* This means that the righteous works of humans, with which God fortified them, came forth from the north corner, which is to say from the circumcision of Abraham and the Law of Moses and the justice they inspired in people. They continued to the west corner, where open justice arose in the Incarnation of the Son of God; went on from there to the south corner, where through baptism and the other just works of the new-chosen Bride of the Son of God ardent deeds were enkindled to restore Adam to salvation; and at last returned to the east corner, to end restored to the Supreme Father. How? The Supreme Father in His mystery ordained every work of justice that would bring the first, fallen man back into salvation by a return to God. How? Man had fallen, and so I arose in mercy and sent My Son to restore salvation to souls, as My servant the psalmist David shows, saying:

17 Words of David

"His will is in the law of the Lord, and on that law he shall meditate day and night" [Psalm 1:2]. Which is to say that the will of the Father to save is contained in the law of justice His Only-Begotten showed to the world: Who is One God with the Father and the Holy Spirit and rules the whole globe. And He, the Son of the Father, was incarnate and seen as a visible Man, and in the flesh was uplifted above all creatures. How? The Son of God was begotten of His Father before all worlds and later, in the last times, born into the world of a mother; but while He was not yet incarnate He remained invisible within the Father as the will is invisible in a person before it is shown in a deed, and then later appeared visibly in the flesh for human salvation.

So the Almighty Father meditates with His Son upon an act of justice to counter the original fall of Adam. Where? In the love of His Son, Who was before time began in the Father in the glory of divinity, and then became miraculously incarnate at the appointed epoch of the world, when the Father sent Him from His heart into the world as the High Priest of all justice.

Therefore the Son embodied the law of justice, as He received it from the Father when Christian law was made.

And on that law, which the Father willed to establish and make through His Son, He meditates by day. How? He Himself is the Day; and in that Day, before He made any transitory creature and while no darkness or iniquity existed in any creation of His, He meditated on His Son's law.

And also by night. How? Because when evil arose in His creatures, which is like the darkness of night in angels and people, the Father continued to meditate, and will do so until the last day, as long as His ineffable works shall last; He shows and reveals the law of His Son when in Him He perfects all the good deeds that are to be perfected in Man.

18 Christ's members and the Church still lack the perfection they will have

But you see that *the stone part of the wall is interrupted in two places, on the west side and on the south side.* This is to say that the work of the human race to fortify its defenses is still unfinished in two areas. The members of the Son of God, His chosen, remain imperfect, which is to say that the west side is interrupted, since from there the Son of God was sent in these last times into the world. And the Church is also still imperfect in virtue, not as she will be set up and established in the celestial Jerusalem, so that the south side is interrupted, for the Church will be perfected in Heaven.

19 The number ten, diminished by Adam, is multiplied again by Christ

This building is a hundred cubits long, which means that the mystical number ten was diminished by humanity when it transgressed, but was restored by My Son and multiplied by ten to a hundred, as virtues were multiplied in the salvation of souls. And from the hundred, again multiplied by the ten, there will come the perfect number one thousand, referring to the virtues that will completely destroy the thousand arts of the Devil, which now seduce the whole flock of Almighty God's lovely sheep. What does this mean?

I, the Omnipotent, in the beginning made lights that burned and lived, shining in splendor, some of which stood fast in My love, but some despised Me their Creator and fell. But it did not befit Me, the Creator, to discard what I had made as useless and ruined. How? A part of the angelic creation grew proud of the good the Creator gave it that it might know Him, and decided that it could take on false glory and be like its Creator; and so it fell

into death. Then God foresaw that what had fallen in this lost group could be more firmly restored in another. How? He created Man from the mud of the earth, living in soul and body, to attain to that glory from which the apostate Devil and his followers were cast out. Man is thus exceedingly dear to God, Who made him truly in His own image and likeness; he was to exercise all the virtues in the perfection of holiness, as indeed God formed all creatures to do, and to work in humble obedience to do acts of virtue, and so to fulfil the function of praise among the more glorious orders of angels. And thus, in this height of blessedness he was to augment the praise of the heavenly spirits who praise God with assiduous devotion, and so fill up the place left empty by the lost angel who fell in his presumption.

And so Man symbolizes the full number ten, perfecting these things by the power of God. But in this figure ten is multiplied to a hundred. For Man was seduced by the Devil and fell away from God; but at last he was admonished by divine mercy and inspiration, began to acknowledge God in the law and prophecy of the Old Testament, and then attained more insight by the sanctity and the means of constancy in virtue given by the Church.

And so, starting with Abel, Man began to practice all the virtues, and will continue to perfect them until the day of the last just person; and this is why the length of the building is the number one hundred, which God shows to humanity in a mystical figure that it may not despair if it falls back into iniquity, but rise above it and vigorously do the work of God. For anyone who falls into sin but then rises from it again will be stronger than he was before, as God gave greater and stronger virtues to humanity by sending His Son into the world to raise up the prostrate human race than it had had before.

And therefore people work more strongly in soul and body than if they had no difficulty in doing it, since they struggle against themselves in many perils; and, waging these fierce wars together with the Lord God Who fights faithfully for them, they conquer themselves, chastising their bodies, and so know themselves to be in His army. But an angel, lacking the hardships of an earthly body, is a soldier of Heaven only in its harmonious, lucid and pure constancy in seeing God; while a human, handicapped by the filth of his body, is a strong, glorious and holy soldier in the work of restoration, which he does in soul and body for the sake of God. And so by the number one hundred of his present labor he attains to the one thousand of future repayment; on the last day he will receive his full and eternal reward, and rejoice in soul and body without end in the celestial habitations. And so the diminished ten is recovered through My Son, Who was born of the Virgin and suffered on the cross, and brought back humanity to the realms of Heaven. As My Son says in the Gospel:

20 Words of the Gospel

"What woman who has ten coins, if she loses one of them, does not light a candle, and sweep the house until she finds it? And when she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbors, and says, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my coin that was lost' " [Luke 15:8–9]. Which is to say: The Holy Divinity had ten coins, namely ten orders of the heavenly hierarchy, including the chosen angels and Man. It lost one coin when Man fell into death by following the Devil's temptations instead of the divine precepts. Hence the Divinity kindled a burning lamp, namely Christ, Who was true God and true Man and the splendid Sun of Justice; and with Him He swept the house, namely the Jewish people, and searched the Law for all the meaning of salvation, and established a new sanctification, and found His coin, Man, whom He had lost. Then He called together His friends, namely earthly deeds of justice, and His neighbors, namely spiritual virtues, and said, "Rejoice with Me in praise and joy, and build the celestial Jerusalem with living stones, for I have found Man, who had perished by the deception of the Devil!"

21 The five wounds of Christ wipe out human sins

And you see that *the building is fifty cubits wide*, which is to say that the whole breadth of the vices of humanity, which should have built on and revered the work of God but instead followed its own lusts, is mercifully wiped out and forgiven by the five wounds that My Son suffered on the cross. So the wounds of His hands obliterated the deed of disobedience done by the hands of Adam and Eve, and the wounds of His feet cleared the path of exile for humanity to return, and the wound of His side, from which sprang the Church, wiped out the sin of Eve and Adam after Eve was made from Adam's side. And therefore My Son was nailed to the tree, to abolish what had been done through the tree that occasioned sin; and therefore He drank vinegar and gall, to take away the taste of the harmful fruit.

22 The Holy Spirit made Man's five senses able to know good and evil

The wall is five cubits high, which refers to the virtue of divine knowledge of the Scriptures, which imbue Man's five senses for the sake of the work of God. The Holy Spirit breathed on them for people's good; for with the five senses people can regard the height of Divinity, and discern both good and evil.

23 Soul and body must work to avoid evil and do good in all circumstances

Thus *the two side walls are of equal length;* for, contained within the edifice of God's goodness, people must work with great constancy with the two side walls of soul and body flanking them. How? To avoid evil and do good. How? The profound and incomprehensible power of God created Man to worship God with all his strength and all his might and with all the devotion of his intelligent reason; and it is right that the Creator of all things should, before and above everything, be worshipped worthily as God.

24 The mind must have the wisdom and discernment to know God

Therefore *the front and back walls are of equal length;* for in the work of God wisdom and discretion are like two walls, with wisdom as the higher part and discretion as the lower. And God imbues the whole of the human mind with these, an equitable and just gift, that the mind may know Him.

25 People should gain devout faith from considering the four elements

But *the four walls are equal in height, except for the bulwarks, which are somewhat taller.* This is to say that Man, living as he does among the four elements, should hold high the Catholic faith with constant devotion and veneration through the goodness of the Father; he should worship the Son with the Father and the Holy Spirit, as the Son does all Their works in Them. How? Every work that the Son of God has done and is doing, He perfects through the goodness of the Father in the Holy Spirit. What does this mean? According to the will of the Father, the Son in His great goodness redeemed humanity through His Incarnation; for the Father ordained that the Son should be born of the Virgin, conceived by the Holy Spirit, and assume humanity for love of Man to bring him back to restored life. Therefore Man has a part in God, and can enter into salvation with Him, if he has the true Catholic faith and knows the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit as the one true God.

26 The faithful person ascends from virtue to virtue

The bulwarks are much higher. How? Because when a person regards the height of goodness in his mind, he then builds a high wall of faith by virtue of the work of God. Then he ascends above that rational faith, which

shows him God in the power of His Divinity, and on it he builds bulwarks of virtue higher than the wall. How? He finds that it is not enough to have faith in God, and so builds virtues that rise higher; and so he grows, like a flourishing palm tree, from virtue to virtue, and by these virtues his righteous faith is exalted and adorned as bulwarks do a city.

27 The Father sent His Son into the world to do His will and redeem Man

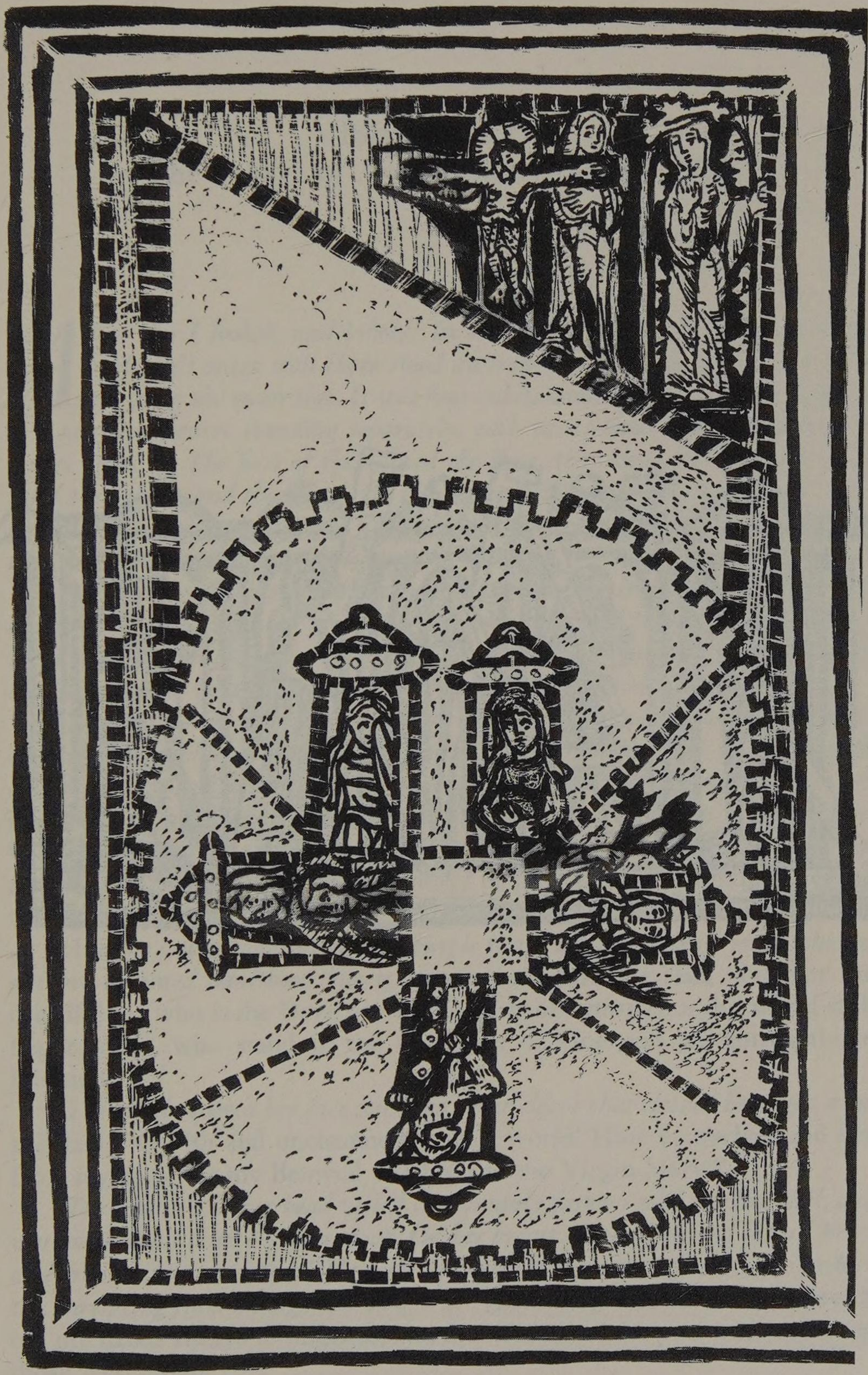
And between the building and the light of the circle, which extends from the height to the abyss, at the top of the east corner there is only a palm's breadth. This is the width of the heavenly secrets that lie between the work of the Son of God when He lived in the world and did divine works, here shown as a building, and the power of the Father, which expands in mighty splendor into the places below and the places above. He sent His Son into the world to be the capstone of the corner that faces east, made up of the justice first prefigured in Noah and perfected in the Incarnation of the Son. Thus these secrets were, so to speak, just a hand's breadth wide, the distance from the thumb to the little finger of the flat hand; and that was the time ordained in the heart of the Father when He willed to send His Son. He sent Him with a strong hand, and surrounded Him with all the joints of His fingers, which are His works in the Holy Spirit, that He might accomplish the will of His Father and suffer upon the cross for the wretched and contemptible disobedience with which the Devil inspired the first man. To redeem that man from that sin God's mercy bent down to earth, and the incomprehensible height of divinity was contained in the humanity of the Son of God.

28 The defeat of evil and the goals of justice are secrets of God's will

But at the north and west and south corners the breadth of separation between the building and the light is so great that you cannot grasp its extent. This is to say that no one weighed down by a mortal body can understand the elation of evil in the heart of the Devil in the North; or its consummation in active creatures in the West of fallen Man; or the beginning or end of the supernal justice, which is the ardent South. Nor can such a one see how these things are worked out and differentiated between the deeds of all peoples and the power of My knowledge. Both the elect and the reprobate are subjected to a just scrutiny and examined most diligently and strictly on their [obedience] to My precepts; and all should trust in Me to feed them in all their needs. But all these things are so hidden in My secret counsels that human

senses and understanding can never take in or understand the extent of their profundity, except as far as is granted by My permission.

But let the one who has ears sharp to hear inner meanings ardently love My reflection and pant after My words, and inscribe them in his soul and conscience.



TOWER OF GOD'S ANTICIPATING WILL

FIVE VIRTUES

VISION THREE
The Tower of Anticipation of God's Will

After this I looked, and behold! In the middle of the shining part of the building's outer wall there stood an iron-colored tower, which was built out from the outer side. It was four cubits wide and seven cubits high. In it I saw five figures standing separately, each in its own arch with a conical turret above it. The first of these faced the East, the second the Northeast, the third the North, and the fourth the pillar of the Word of God at whose foot was the patriarch Abraham; and the fifth faced the tower of the Church and the people who were hastening here and there in the building.

And the five figures resembled each other in being dressed in silk garments and white shoes, except the fifth, who was armored at all points. The second and third were bareheaded, with loose white hair, and wore no cloak; the first, third and fourth wore white tunics; and this was all the difference between them.

The first figure wore on her head a bishop's miter, and had loose white hair; and she wore a white pallium, whose two borders were adorned on the inside with embroidered purple. In her right hand she held lilies and other flowers, and in her left hand a palm. And she said, "O sweet life, O sweet embrace of eternal life, O blessed happiness, in which consist the eternal rewards! For You are always in true delight, and so I can never be filled or sated with the inner joy that is in my God."

And the second was clothed in a purple tunic, and stood like a youth who has not yet attained adulthood but is very serious. And she said, "Neither the dreadful foe who is the Devil nor the hostility of humans nor this world shall frighten me, who stand in the discipline of God and am constantly in His sight."

The third covered her face with the white sleeve that clothed her right arm, and said, "O filth and uncleanness of this world! Hide yourselves and flee from my eyes, for my Beloved was born of the Virgin Mary."

The fourth had her head veiled in womanly fashion with a white veil, and was hung about with a yellow cloak. On her breast was a picture of Jesus Christ, and around it was written, "Through the depths of the mercy of our God, in which the Dayspring from on high has visited us" [*Luke 1:78*]. And she said, "I stretch out my hands always to pilgrims, and the needy, and the poor and weak, and those who groan."

But the fifth was armed and arrayed with a helmet on her head, and a

breastplate and greaves, and iron gloves; a shield hung from her left shoulder; she was girded with a sword and she held a spear in her right hand. And under her feet a lion lay, its mouth open and its tongue hanging out, and some people also stood; some were blowing trumpets, some fooling with instruments used in shows, and some playing different games. And that figure trampled the lion under her feet, and at the same time pierced these people with the spear she held in her right hand. And she said, "I conquer the strong Devil, and you also, Hate and Envy and Filth, with your deceptive jesters."

And inside the building I saw two other figures standing opposite this tower. The first stood on the floor of the building, in a niche of fiery splendor whose inside was painted with pictures of various evil spirits and which was across from the tower. The other figure stood next to this niche but was outside it and had no niche of its own. Both figures looked sometimes at the tower and sometimes at the people who were entering and leaving the building. These figures were also dressed in silk garments and veiled in women's fashion in white head-coverings, and wore no cloaks but had on white shoes.

And the first of these had on her head a three-sided crown, of a glowing red like a hyacinth, and was clad in a white tunic, with green embroideries in all the folds. And she said, "I conquer in the East with the mighty Son of God, Who went forth from the Father and came into the world to redeem humanity, and afterward died in great suffering on the cross, rose from the dead, ascended into Heaven and returned to the Father. Therefore I shall not be confounded, but will flee from the miseries and pains of this world."

And the second was clad in a white tunic, which was slightly tinged with color; and on her right arm she carried a cross with the image of the Savior, over which she bent her head. And she said, "This child bore many sorrows in this world, and therefore I will weep and know sorrow always for the sake of eternal joy, into which the good sheep will be led by the Son of God."

And I saw that all these figures were uttering their individual speeches through the mystery of God, to admonish humans. And again the One sitting on the throne, Who was showing me all these things, said to me,

1 The divine virtues put forth by the Law bear fruit in the Gospel

By the strength and constancy of God's will, the divine virtues sprang up gradually in the Old Testament; but to those who revered them almost in ignorance, they did not yet taste completely sweet and delightful. For then, the Law was seen only in austerity, sharply correcting the delinquent; but afterward, these virtues by the grace of God brought forth much fruit in the new Law, showing the hungry the sweetest, strongest and most perfect food, the love of celestial things. Previous to this, as was said, certain hidden

things were a sign of what was to come; and so this miraculous vision appropriately shows.

For *this tower you see standing in the middle of the shining part of the building's outer wall* is the image of the anticipation of God's will, shown in many different ways and meanings in the circumcision; so that by the sign of circumcision God displayed the Law, and by the Law the grace of the Gospel. For by the faith manifested in Abraham, there arose in him also the circumcision, a true prefiguration of the mystery; beginning in him, the divine power built up strong virtues, as it were in the middle of the road of the knowledge of the two ways, defended by the goodness of the Supreme Father. And these virtues were by God's will destined to appear openly; they foreshadowed His will before He displayed it manifestly in His deeds.

It is iron-colored, and built out from the outer side. This is God's justice, strong and invincible, which first showed itself outwardly in reflective knowledge by means of the circumcision, which was apparent in the outer flesh. And it is established with the blessed virtues among the spiritual things of that spiritual wall that God built within people.

2 Virtues are brought about in people by God's will

The tower is four cubits wide; for these virtues, by God's will, are brought about in people by placing them in the world of the four elements, from which, while they are in the body, they get physical nourishment. *It is seven cubits high;* for there were seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, which are so firm and tall that the tower raised itself on them until, after the Incarnation of My Son, which was prefigured in the circumcision of the Old Testament, the Church came forth from it.

3 On the states of Heavenly Love, Discipline, Modesty, Mercy and Victory

In it you see five figures standing separately, each in its own arch with a conical turret above it. This is to say that in this tower, that is in the strength of the circumcision, there are five strong virtues; not that any virtue is a living form in itself, but a brilliant star given by God that shines forth in human deeds. For humanity is perfected by virtues, which are the deeds of people working in God.

Hence these five virtues stand in this tower in the likeness of a person's five senses. They seized with great zeal upon the circumcision, and cut it off from all iniquity, as the five human senses are circumcised in the Church by baptism. But they do not work in a person by themselves, for the person

works with them and they with the person; just as the person's five senses do not work by themselves, but the person with them and they with the person, to bear fruit together. And so each of them works hard, as much as it can, and thus has a turreted apex of authority, the surpassing dignity of virtuous constancy.

The first of these faces the East; for this virtue looked forward with sobs of love to the Son of God whenever He was to come, and spoke openly about the eternal life the circumcision was hiding.

The second looks to the Northeast; for this figure divided her attention between the East and the North, regarding God in the East with great discipline, but also disdaining the behavior of the people in the North, who manifested undisciplined licentiousness and did not regard God or His Law with worthy reverence.

The third faces the North; for she destroys unlawful fornication with great strength, despising it and shielding herself from it by the Law.

The fourth looks toward the pillar of the Word of God at whose foot is the patriarch Abraham; for she cleaves to the Incarnation of the Son of God, touching it through the beginning Abraham made, that miraculous foreshadowing of the ram caught in the thornbush.

And the fifth faces the tower of the Church and the people who are hastening here and there in the building; for this image rises up victorious, and destroys every injustice that originated in Adam. She looks to the strength of the Church to help her conquer the vices of the Devil; she shows herself to the people who are hastening to and fro in the Church and all behaving differently, inspiring them to be the flock of God's justice and worship Him with reverent zeal.

4 Their dress and what it signifies

And *the five figures resemble each other,* which is to say that they worship God in human deeds with equal devotion. *Each of them is dressed in silk garments;* for each of these virtues is sweet and delightful, never weighing people down or constraining them, but softly instilling into their minds the sweetness of the heavenly kingdom as balm distils from a bush, with no crusted filth of injustice. And *they are shod in white shoes,* for they follow My justice in righteousness and celestial purity, trampling down surrender to the Devil and stamping out his traces in human beings.

But *the fifth virtue is armored at all points;* for she looks to the Church, where the fiercest wars are waged against the Devil's vice; she extends her victory everywhere in it, wearing the priceless armor, which is God's invincible strength; and this strength slays all injustice and confounds the deceit of the Devil.

The second and third are bareheaded, with loose white hair. This means that, for love of Me, they avoid assuming burdens of labor or wealth or lust; bareheaded, which is to say with a clear conscience, they open to Me all their secret mind. They cast away all confusion and license of the desires of the flesh; and the first sign of this is their white hair, which symbolizes the purity of the mind that desires good works. *And they wear no cloak;* for they reject the customs of the pagans and the lust and filth of the Devil, and abandon all secular cares, because the wisdom of the world is foolishness with God.

The first, third and fourth wear white tunics. This means they hold fast to innocence, which prefigures with sweet chastity the Incarnation of My Son, Who withdrew humanity from death and clothed it with life in salvation. *And this is all the difference between them;* for each gets her strength from the Holy Spirit, but they use different paths of the soul to attain their one desire in God. And so by them the celestial Jerusalem will be perfectly built, for these virtues are the deeds people do to reach God.

5 On Celestial Love's dress and what it means

Therefore *the first figure* signifies Celestial Love, for this love must exist in people before anything else. She *wears on her head a bishop's miter, and has loose white hair;* for this virtue was crowned in the High Priest Jesus Christ, but also in the high priests of the Old Testament and in those who called to the Son of God, "Would that You would rend the heavens and come down!" [Isaiah 64:1]. She stands without a woman's head-covering, so that her hair flows free and its whiteness is seen; and by this hair she prefigures the freeing of the priesthood from the ties of marriage through the advent of My Son. For His priests should, for the sake of salvation, imitate Him in chastity; they should always hold to the perfect heavenly love and shake off the evil actions of sin-stained humanity, and thus form the clear, white part of God's spiritual gift.

And she wears a white pallium, whose two borders are adorned on the inside with embroidered purple. This is to say that the grace of God surrounds her in gentle purity, its boundaries of protection fortified and adorned with the beautiful ornaments of charity. For divine grace will extend to every good deed, which is made up of two parts, God's love and the doer's.

And in her right hand she holds lilies and other flowers, which means that for her good works she has the reward of the lilies of eternal life and light and holiness. These are her companions, who have joined themselves to her by heavenly love.

And in her left hand she carries a palm, which has grown out of the secret place of blessed virtue in remembrance of death; and with it she can stop

death as if by rolling stones in its path. And this she declares in the words, already quoted, that she speaks to the children of God.

6 On Discipline's dress and what it means

And the second represents Discipline; for after the love of the celestial life has arisen, carnal lusts must be restrained by the discipline of contrition. She *is clothed in a purple tunic*, for she is surrounded by My Law and the mortification of human flesh, and the purple garment is the example of My Son, Who was born of the Virgin in charity and gave it every means of working.

She stands like a youth who has not yet attained adulthood but is very serious. For Discipline is always full of childlike fear, the fear of a child under restraint who respects his schoolmaster. I, the Almighty, am the Master of discipline; in Me she appears not as an adult, for she does not try to wield power to do her own will, but faithfully and reverently fears. And she shows this in her words, quoted above.

7 On Modesty's dress and what it means

The third represents Modesty, for modesty appears after discipline to blush and drive away sin. Therefore she *covers her face with the white sleeve that clothes her right arm;* for she protects her inner conscience, which is, as it were, the face of her soul, by flying from fornication and the Devil's pollution. She defends herself with the white garment of innocence and chastity, on the right hand of which is the salvation coming from her deeds. For contempt and utter rejection of the filth of Satan is entwined strongly round her conscience, as she declares in the words of her admonition quoted above.

8 On Mercy

And *the fourth* signifies Mercy; for after modesty appears the virtue of mercy to help the needy. In the heart of the Father is true mercy of His grace, which He ordained in His eternal counsel and mercifully showed to Abraham in the circumcision. For He led him forth from his land and commanded that he and his race be circumcised, and showed him great wonders in the true Trinity; and through this He symbolically foreshadowed His Son, and foreshadowed mercy to Abraham in the sacrifice of Isaac.

And she *has her head veiled in womanly fashion with a white veil*, which is the roof and foundation of salvation, inasmuch as one who has mercy can bring back lost souls to the pure protection of the holy veil from out of the exile of death. It makes souls white and people radiant to be covered with

God's mercy; and so those who disdained God while they were in sin will find Him shining on them like a gentle sunbeam when Mercy is brought to them from Heaven. And so Mercy, in the figure of a woman, is a fruitful mother of souls saved from perdition. For as a woman covers her head, so Mercy averts the death of souls; and as women are sweeter than men, so Mercy is sweeter than the rabid insanity of crime in a sinner before his heart is visited by God. And the virtue of Mercy also appears in feminine form because, when one virginal body was enclosed by womanly chastity, sweetest Mercy arose in the womb of Mary; Mercy had always dwelt in the Father, but now the Father showed her as visible through the Holy Spirit in the Virgin's womb.

She is hung about with a yellow cloak; for she is surrounded by the shining sun, the sign of My Son, Who shines on the world from Heaven as the sun's splendor shines on the earth. For My Son is the true Sun, lighting up the world by the sanctification of the Church.

And on her breast she has a picture of My Only-Begotten, which means that I put My Son on the breast of Mercy when I sent Him into the womb of the Virgin Mary.

And therefore, *around it is written, "Through the depths of the mercy of our God, in which the Dayspring from on high has visited us"* [Luke 1:78]. What does this mean? That everywhere My power extends, the secret of what is on the breast of Mercy shows that My Son is the true Mercy. How? As it was foretold in the words of My servant Zacharias in the Gospel, for it was he who said, "Through the depths of the mercy of our God, in which the Dayspring from on high has visited us." Which is to say that salvation comes from the depths of the Father's mercy; for it was hidden in His heart, as the viscera are hidden in a person, that His Son was to be incarnate and God visit humanity at the end of times. How? In the celestial bread, which is His Son, born in the flesh of the Virgin Mary and come forth from the heart of the Father on high to offer the greatest mercy to those who seek Him, as that virtue tells the children of God in her words quoted above.

9 On Victory's dress and what it means

And *the fifth figure* foreshadows Victory; for after the mercy I showed by the circumcision when I willed to send My Son into the world, the same circumcision gave rise to victory, which then went on with increasing strength till the coming of My Son, and goes on with Him until the last day. For in My Son I defeated the ancient serpent, which had exalted itself over His head and bound the human race by a thousand evil deeds like a chain. My Son triumphed over those evil deeds with all the arms of war that, like flowers of virtue, arose in His Incarnation. What does this mean? That after

mercy arises victory in people too, as soon as they conquer themselves and their harmful vices. How? Among the five virtues the first is celestial love, which consists in a person knowing and loving God above all things. Then the person, because of his faith, is bound by the law of discipline; and from there he goes on to repress his tendency to sin through good and righteous modesty. And so by these three powers the person will attain a just heart, and be able to see the next thing, the suffering of his neighbor; and then he will provide all necessities for him as for himself.

And with these three powers the person soon becomes a strong soldier, perfected in mind by imitating My Son, the true Samaritan, in mercy. And then he wins victory over the power of the Devil with the arms of virtue; he conquers himself and governs his neighbor, and by these virtues slays all evil, rejecting the pride that drove Adam from Paradise.

And this fifth virtue *is armed with a helmet on her head;* for Man in the fullness of celestial desire should long for God, Who is the Head of all things, and so attain eternal salvation. *She is arrayed with a breastplate;* this is so that Man may resist the Devil by justly restraining the will of his carnal desires. For he has become subject to God in true fear and trembling, faithfully dreading His stern judgment, as the psalmist David says, instructed by Me:

"Your lightnings lit up the world; the earth shook and trembled" [Psalm 76:19]. This is to say: Your wonders and secrets, O Lord of all, shone forth and miraculously appeared. How? Like lightning, which is partly seen and partly concealed, just as Your mysteries are sometimes understood but sometimes unknown. For throughout the whole world, wondrously created by Your will, there is no race to which the name of Your glory and the power of Your majesty will not come; they will come miraculously by different paths with remarkable signs, even to those whom the light of faith and truth has not yet illumined for their salvation. Therefore, people will turn, shaken by sighs, away from their own will; they will forsake their lusts, trembling at the judgment of Heaven. Formerly Man forgot himself and walked in earthly deeds; but now he will be wise and come to himself.

This virtue *is also arrayed with greaves,* so that when she sees the right path she can leave the paths of death by way of chastisement of the body. And *she has iron gloves,* so that through mental circumcision and right faith she may escape the works of the Devil, believe in God and so evade the snares of the cruel enemy. *A shield hangs from her left shoulder;* for the left is the side of the Devil's combat with Man, and so she is surrounded there with the grace of God's mighty precepts. Man by these is surrounded and defended with such strong faith that the Devil cannot corrupt him by temptations, and he will not succumb to the Devil's vices as long as God's protection circles his

shoulders; for God's grace binds the high and strong soul to Himself with the bond of love of God and neighbor.

And *she is girded with a sword,* because people must keep themselves in the austere power of God's words by chastising their bodies and cutting away iniquity both from themselves and from others. *And she holds a spear in her right hand;* which is to say that a person who trusts in God may attack and overcome the Devil's filth with the great peace of the Lord. And this is true justice in the evil combat of Devil against Man, which the latter can hardly win without the help of God.

And under her feet a lion lies, its mouth open; this is the Devil, laid low by Victory at the foot of the righteous path of life and truth as he was gaping with bitter cruelty to swallow the human race. *Its tongue is hanging out,* which represents his plan wickedly to devour the whole race of people descended from Adam.

And some people also stand under her feet. These people, brought to a standstill by her fighting force, are the flutes of the Devil, who are supple that evil may be played upon them. And she, acting righteously in God's zeal, justly strikes them, because their many and various perverse tricks aid and serve the Devil.

Some of them are blowing trumpets. For they are drunk with the sound of evil, and rave in the exaltation of a burning mind; in great pride they hate God's justice, race upon race. *Some are fooling with instruments used in shows;* for they try to deceive with the Devil's fantastic illusions, and stubbornly hold to their twisted pride and envy God's discipline. *And others are playing different games;* they are caught in the perverse filth of vice not by the choice of their own will, as they suppose, but by the snares of the Devil.

And that figure tramples the lion and all these people under her feet; for with great zeal and divine justice she crushes all these vanities of human art and diabolical persuasion. *And at the same time she pierces them with the spear she holds in her right hand;* for, with the confidence and daring she derives from God, she pierces, conquers and wounds all these uncleannesses. For by God they are mocked and judged as naught, as she says in the words of admonition previously seen.

10 On Patience and Longing and what they mean

And inside the building you see two other figures standing opposite this tower. This is to say that in the work the Heavenly Father did through His Son, which showed clearly and visibly the One prefigured in the circumcision, two other virtues sprang up. One of these was to see the example of Christ and how to follow in His steps, and the other was to anticipate with

fortitude and reverence the will of God; and they are the fruit that was foreshadowed in the circumcision.

The first of these stands on the floor of the building, in a niche of fiery splendor whose inside is painted with pictures of various evil spirits and which is across from the tower. For this virtue is perfected amid earthly things and treads them underfoot in the goodness of the Father, when it follows the example of the Son of God and passes beyond the desires of the flesh. How? By great endurance it bypasses the worldly misery, depicted in this niche, which is the might of secular power, fierce and terrible in its detaining pride. The Devil's company follows it, and the Devil himself draws to his will the inner desires of the souls of the secular, who love carnal things; and the niche, in its earthly power, often opposes itself to justice and resists the true testament built on God. But Patience is victorious, and in good people conquers everything with the help of God, no matter how they are opposed and exhausted by the snares of the evil spirits.

The other figure stands next to this niche but is outside it and has no niche of its own. For after the first virtue patiently conquers the power of arrogance, even though it inflicts pains on her, the second one surpasses this power, for it arises outside the range of the pains dealt out by arrogance and escapes its rage. Longing stands next to Patience, in remembrance of the griefs from which she took her origin; but she is outside all niches, for she is free from the power of this world and openly carries the cross of Christ.

Both figures are looking sometimes at the tower; which is to say that the work prefigured in God's provident will is completed in them, and so they regard its roots in the circumcision of the Old Testament. They are greater than their start in the circumcision, because the radiant deed excels the beginning of the thought. *And sometimes they are looking at the people who are entering and leaving the building.* This means that they are admonishing in the Holy Spirit both those who are treading the path of justice toward God and those who are entering the orbit of the Devil's crimes and leaving the just path; and they are telling the latter to imitate them in good.

11 Their dress and what it means

These figures *are also dressed in silk garments;* for they possess great sweetness, so that people may not groan under a heavy weight of labor when persecuted. *They are veiled in women's fashion in white head-coverings;* for people should justly be subject to God as their Head, and wrap Him around their minds in pure love, and embrace Him in joy and gladness, as a wife holds her husband according to God's ordinance in fearful and loving honor.

They wear no cloaks; for they lack all care for secular things, but lean only toward the things which are eternal in God and the life to come. *But they*

have on white shoes; for they shine in the path of justice by the purity of faith in human minds, so that people may follow their steps and their example.

12 On Patience's dress in particular and what it means

The first figure designates Patience, who arose in the horn of Abraham, which is to say in the time his obedience to God began; and this, with his circumcision, was the first sound of obedience that had occurred after the fall of Adam. It preceded the work of obedience in the true Word, which is in the Son of God, as sound precedes a word; and it came in the North, the side facing the wicked deeds and turbulence of the ancient serpent. And she *has on her head a three-sided crown, of a glowing red like a hyacinth;* for she was first crowned through the faith in the Holy Trinity of the faithful people, who despise their flesh and do not hesitate to shed their blood for the love of God and the true faith. For the Son of God appeared in the flesh to conquer death with the redness of His blood, and it adorned the Church like the glowing red beauty of the noble hyacinth.

She is clad in a white tunic, with green embroideries in all the folds. For she has clothed herself in the garment of God's work in the whiteness of perpetual light, whose folds are embroidered with the sorrows and laments of one who says, "Oh, when shall I come to the sight of the true Light?" And this desire is suffered happily in the present life by thinking of what it foreshadows: The very adversities and calamities of the faithful adorn their souls with greenness, and their suffering them in patience for the sake of God embellishes them. Which, indeed, this virtue declares, in her words already quoted.

13 On Longing's dress in particular and what it means

And *the other figure* represents Longing. For after patience in adversity, there arises among My elect the longing for the remembered life, springing from My admonition that I sent My Son from My heart because of the longing of My people. For My people of both the Old and the New Testaments had and have this remembrance of mind, which ornaments its longing with groans, for it is true compunction of heart.

And so she also stands in the North quarter, to repulse the dissolute uncleanness of the Devil's snares. And she *is clad in a white tunic, which is slightly tinged with color;* for the purity of faith surrounds her with good works, but nonetheless she is pale and troubled, because her faith always sighs and sobs for eternal felicity. *On her right arm she carries a cross with the image of the Savior, over which she bends her head;* which is to say that with her right hand, the hand that strongly does her noble task, she embraces My

Son's Passion. She longs for Him, and bends over Him with her whole desire and intent, imitating Him in suffering and grief; as she shows in the words of her exhortation, already quoted.

And so you see that *all these figures are uttering their individual speeches through the mystery of God, to admonish humans;* for in all the virtues, God's tenderness sweetly instructs the minds of the peoples and exhorts them to put aside evil and raise themselves up to good.

But let the one who has ears sharp to hear inner meanings ardently love My reflection and pant after My words, and inscribe them in his soul and conscience.

PILLAR OF THE WORD OF GOD

THE VIRTUE OF KNOWLEDGE OF GOD

VISION FOUR
The Pillar of the Word of God

And then, beyond the tower of anticipation of God's will, one cubit past the corner that faces the North, attached to the outside of the shining part of the main wall of the building, I saw a pillar the color of steel, most dreadful to behold, and so big and tall that I could not form an idea of its measurements. And the pillar was divided from bottom to top into three sides, with edges sharp as a sword; the first edge faced the East, the second the North and the third the South, and the latter was somewhat merged with the outside wall of the building.

From the edge that faced the East, branches grew out from the root to the summit. At the root I saw Abraham sitting on the first branch; then Moses on the second; then Joshua on the third; and then the rest of the patriarchs and prophets, one above the other on each branch, sitting in the order in which they succeeded each other in time. They were all looking toward the edge of the pillar that faced the North, marvelling at the things they could see with spiritual vision going on there in the future.

But between the two edges, the one facing the East and the one facing the North, the side of the pillar to which those patriarchs and prophets turned their faces was from bottom to top as round as if turned in a lathe, and wrinkled like the bark of a tree that puts forth shoots.

And from the second edge, facing the North, there went forth a marvellously bright radiance, which shone and reflected as far as the edge that faced the South. And in the radiance which was so widely diffused, I saw apostles, martyrs, confessors and virgins and many other saints, walking in great joy.

And the third edge, facing the South, was broad and wide in the middle, but thinner and narrower at the bottom and top, like a bow drawn and ready to shoot arrows. And at the top of the pillar I saw a light so bright that human tongue cannot describe it; and in this light appeared a dove, with a gold ray coming out of its mouth, which shed brilliant light on the pillar.

And as I looked at this, I heard from Heaven a terrifying voice, rebuking me and saying, "What you see is divine!" And at this voice I trembled so much that I dared not look there any longer.

Then I saw inside the building a figure standing on the pavement facing this pillar, looking sometimes at it and sometimes at the people who were going to and fro in the building. And that figure was so bright and glorious that I could not

look at her face or her garments for the splendor with which she shone; I saw only that, like the other virtues, she appeared in human form.

And around her I saw a beautiful multitude, with the appearance and wings of angels, standing in great veneration, for they both feared and loved her. And before her face I saw another multitude, with the appearance of human beings, in dark clothes; and they stood immobile with fear.

And the figure looked upon the people who came in from the world and in the building put on a new garment; and she said to each of them, "Consider the garment you have put on, and do not forget your Creator Who made you." And as I wondered at these things, the One seated on the throne spoke to me again.

1 The austerity of the Law was sweetened by the Incarnation of the Word

The Word of God, by Whom all things were made, was Himself begotten before time in the heart of the Father; but afterward, near the end of time, as the Old Testament saints had predicted, He became incarnate of the Virgin. And, assuming humanity, He did not forsake Deity; but, being one and true God with the Father and the Holy Spirit, he sweetened the world with His sweetness and illumined it with the brilliance of His glory.

Hence, *the pillar you see beyond the tower of anticipation of God's will* designates the ineffable mystery of the Word of God; for in that true Word, the Son of God, all the justice of the New and Old Testaments is fulfilled. This justice was opened to believers for their salvation by divine inspiration, when the Son of the Supreme Father deigned to become incarnate of the sweet Virgin; and the virtues showed themselves to be powerful in the anticipation of God's will, which was the beginning of the circumcision. Then the mystery of the Word of God was also declared in strict justice by the voice of the patriarchs and prophets, who foretold that He would be manifest in justice and godly deeds and great severity, doing the justice of God and leaving no injustice free to evade the commands of the Law.

2 The patriarchs in a mystery showed that the Law was near

And you see that the pillar *is standing one cubit past the corner that faces the North;* which symbolizes in human terms how very near the patriarchs who announced the strict justice of the Word of God were in their meaning to the Law, thus resisting the Devil in the North.

3 No pride can resist the strength of God

The pillar *is the color of steel, and attached to the outside of the shining part of the main wall of the building;* for the power of the Word of God is

unconquered and unconquerable, and no one can resist Him by vain rebellion or vile pride. And so the Old Testament fathers were united with the reflective knowledge, as it were, on the outside, by their bulwarks and deeds of justice; but they were not yet imbued with the fiery perfection of the work that arose in the Son of God, and which they but foreshadowed outwardly in their words.

4 God's justice is dreadful and exceeds every creature in height

It is most dreadful to behold; for the justice in the Word of God is fearful to humans, who know only the impious judgment of unjust judges judging according to their own whims. *It is so big and tall that you cannot form an idea of its measurements;* for the Word, Who is the Son of God, exceeds all creatures in paternal majesty by the magnitude of His glory and the height of His divinity, and no human in a corruptible body can fully understand Him.

5 The Word of God has three divisions: Law, Grace and exposition of scripture

And the pillar *is divided from bottom to top into three sides, with edges sharp as a sword;* which is to say that the strength of the Word of God as prefigured in the Old Testament and declared in the New, circling and turning in grace, showed in the Holy Spirit three points of division. These were the old Law, the new Grace, and the exposition of the faithful doctors; and by these the holy person does what is just from the beginning, starting with the good and moving upward to end with the perfect. For all that is just was, is and will be forever in the simple Deity, which is in all things; and no power can stand firm in malice, if He wills to conquer it by the glory of His loving kindness.

6 The knowledge of Law, the work of the Gospel and the wisdom of the doctors

The first edge faces the East, which signifies the start of the knowledge of God through the divine Law, before the perfect day of justice. *The second looks to the North,* for after this good and chosen work was started there came the gospel of My Son and the other precepts of Me, the Father, which rose up against the North where injustice originated. *And the third faces the South, and is somewhat merged with the outside wall of the building.* This is to say that when the works of justice had been confirmed, there came the profound and rich wisdom of the principal doctors, who through the fire of the Holy Spirit

made known what was obscure in the Law and the prophets, and showed their fruition in the Gospels. Thus they made these things fruitful to the understanding; they touched on the outward content of the Scriptures in the work of the Father's goodness, and sweetly ruminated on their mystical significance.

7 God worked from the beginning of the Law to the manifestation of His Son

And from the edge which faces the East, branches grow out from the root to the summit. This is to say that when God first became known through the just Law, branches appeared on that eastern edge, which was the time of the patriarchs and prophets. For this sharp-edged pillar of Divinity carries on the work from its root, which is the good beginning in the minds of the elect, to its summit, which is the manifestation of the Son of Man, Who is all justice.

And therefore, *at the root you see Abraham sitting on the first branch;* for the time of inspiration by God began with Abraham, when he obeyed God and with a tranquil mind departed from his country. *Then Moses on the second;* for after this, God inspired Moses to plant the Law, and so foreshadow the Son of the Most High. *Then Joshua on the third;* for he afterward had the spirit of the Lord in him in order to strengthen the custom of the Law as God commanded.

And then you see *the rest of the patriarchs and prophets, one above the other on each branch, sitting in the order in which they succeeded each other in time;* for God inspired each patriarch and prophet in his own time to nurture his particular shoot toward the height of His commands, and all in their day reposed on the disposition and order of the justice He showed them, faithful and obedient to the divine majesty as it showed itself in their times.

8 The patriarchs and prophets marvelled at the Incarnation

They are all looking toward the edge of the pillar that faces the North, marvelling at the things they can see with spiritual vision going on there in the future. For they were all alerted in their souls by the Holy Spirit, and so turned and saw how the Gospel doctrine repulsed the Devil by the strength of the Son of God. They spoke of His Incarnation, and marvelled at how He came from the heart of the Father and the womb of a virgin and showed Himself with great wonders both by Himself and by His followers, who wonderfully imitated Him in new grace and trod the transitory underfoot, greatly thirsting for the joys of the eternal.

9 The Word of God was hidden by prevision in the souls of the elect of old

But between the two edges, the one facing the East and the one facing the North, the side of the pillar to which those patriarchs and prophets are turning their faces is from bottom to top as round as if turned in a lathe, and wrinkled like the bark of a tree that puts forth shoots. This is to say that between the two edges, which are the manifest knowledge of Me and the teachings of My Son, the One Word, which is My Son, was hidden as a foreshadowing image in the souls of the ancient fathers who abided in My laws, from the first chosen one until the last holy one. Thus they were decorated all around with mystical ornaments, for He carefully arranged and polished all His chosen instruments and showed Himself to them all with swift grace. He was loving to them all, as is prefigured in the wrinkles of the circumcision, which was the shadow of things to come; for it contained, hidden in the austerity of the Law, the apposite meaning of the most righteous offshoot, the high and holy Incarnation.

10 The words of the Son go from and return to the Father through the doctors

And from the second edge, facing the North, there goes forth a marvellously bright radiance, which shines and reflects as far as the edge that faces the South. This is to say that from the second edge, which is the New Testament and stands opposed to the Devil, there issue the words of My Son, which come forth from Me and return to Me. For when the sun, which is My Son, stands forth in the flesh, the light of the holy Gospel shines in His preaching, and pours itself out from Him and His disciples as fruits of blessing, and then returns into the fountain of salvation, where it reaches the guides, those who profoundly search into the words of the Old and New Testaments. And they show how wisdom is raised up in that Sun, Who enlightens the world and burns like noonday in His elect.

11 The apostles, martyrs and other elect were made so by Christ's teaching

And in the radiance, which is so widely diffused, you see apostles, martyrs, confessors and virgins and many other saints, walking in great joy. For in the clear light in which My Son preached and spread the truth there have grown up apostles who announce that true light, and martyrs who faithfully shed

their blood like strong soldiers, and confessors who officiate after My Son, and virgins who follow the Supernal Branch, and all My other elect, who rejoice in the fountain of happiness and the font of salvation, baptized by the Holy Spirit and ardently going from virtue to virtue.

12 Gospel knowledge was limited, is now broad and will grow weak at the end

And the third edge, facing the South, is broad and wide in the middle, but thinner and narrower at the bottom and top, like a bow drawn and ready to shoot arrows. This is to say that, as the Gospel was spread, the wisdom of the saints broadened; they burned in the Holy Spirit, seeking It in depth so as to find through It the deepening of their understanding of the Word of God, strengthened by the faith of the Christian people. And so the sense of the Scriptures that went forth from the mouth of the holy doctors broadened too; they searched the depths of the Scriptures' astringency and made it known to the many who learned from them, and thus they too enlarged their senses by knowing more of the wisdom and knowledge of the divine writings. At the beginning of the Church's institution—as it were, at the bottom of the edge—this knowledge was narrower and less studied, for the people did not yet embrace it with the love they gave it afterward. And at the end of time—as it were, at the edge's summit—the studies of many will grow cold; divine wisdom will not be lovable to them as deeds are lovable, but they will hide their knowledge and keep it for themselves, as if they had no obligation to do good works. For they will know it only on the outside, as in a dream.

13 People must begin good works timidly, continue strongly and finish humbly.

And therefore *the edge is widest and sharpest in the middle.* For the austere works of the worship of God were denuded of their Old Testament darkness and grew from their narrow beginning to their middle, which consists of the strongest virtues and the loftiest zeal. For the people were then swifter against iniquity, wounding the Devil with words from God and casting out and trampling down all his vices with the great austerity of God's justice. But then the people forgot themselves and declined, and as the end of the world drew near lived in a narrower fervor for the Holy Spirit. So, as a bow is stretched tight by the bowstring in time of war, a person must rise up against vice in body and soul, more constricted at each end and broader in the middle; so that the beginning and the end of his work may be circumspect with fear and humility, while its middle is strong and constant, sending forth by the gift of the Holy Spirit the darts of good deeds against the ambushes of

the Devil. For when a person begins to do good, his strength is fragile; then when he continues to work good he grows stronger, because the Holy Spirit has poured Itself out in him; but since that power cannot come often, at the end of his good work he will be less in strength again because of the weakness of the flesh. And so the bow should always be bent for defense against the vices of the Devil.

14 God shows people the mysteries of the Son of God by foreshadowing

But at the top of the pillar you see a light so bright that human tongue cannot describe it. This is to say that the Heavenly Father, in His highest and deepest mysteries, made known the mystery of His Son, Who shines in His Father with glorious light, in which there appears all the justice of the giving of the Law and the New Testament. And the latter *is of such clarity and brilliance of wisdom that it is not possible for any earthly person to express it in words,* as long as he is in corruptible flesh.

And in this light appears a dove, with a gold ray coming out of its mouth, which sheds brilliant light on the pillar; for in the heart of the radiant Father, in the brilliance of the light of the Son of God, burns the Holy Spirit, Who comes from on high and declares the mysteries of the Son of the Most High to redeem the people seduced by the ancient serpent. And so the Holy Spirit inspires all the commandments and all the new testimonies, giving before the Incarnation of the Lord the law of His glorious mysteries, and then showing the same glory in the Incarnation itself. And the Spirit's inspiration is a golden splendor and a high and excellent illumination, and by this outpouring It makes known, as was said, the mystical secrets of God's Only-Begotten to the ancient heralds who showed the Son of God through types and marvelled at His coming from the Father and His miraculously arising in the dawn of the perpetual Virgin. And thus the Spirit in Its power fused the Old Testament and the Gospels into one spiritual seed, from which grew all justice.

And so you cannot contemplate the divine glory because of the immense power of Divinity; no mortal can see it except those to whom I will to foreshadow it. Therefore take care not to presume rashly to look at what is divine, as the trembling that seizes you shows.

15 The virtue of the knowledge of God

And you see inside the building a figure standing on the pavement facing this pillar. This is to say that a virtue shows itself within the work of God the Father, which declares the mystery of the Word of God, for it has revealed

all the justice in the city of the Omnipotent to the people of the Old and New Testaments. She is standing on the pavement, which is to say above all earthly things in the work of the loving Father, for everything in earth and heaven are foreseen by Him.

And she looks sometimes at the pillar and sometimes at the people who are going to and fro in the building. This is to say that she is contemplating in the Word of God the mystery put forth by His power, and also the people who are working in the Father's goodness, and which of them are succeeding or not succeeding in the work, for she knows the nature of each one at will.

And *this image* signifies the knowledge of God; for she oversees all people and all things in heaven and earth. And she *is so bright and glorious that you cannot look at her face or her garments for the splendor with which she shines.* For she is terrible with the terror of the avenging lightning, and gentle with the goodness of the bright sun; and both her terror and her gentleness are incomprehensible to humans, the terror of divine brilliance in her face and the brightness of her beauty in her garments, as the sun cannot be looked at in its burning face or its beautiful clothing of rays. But she is with everyone and in everyone, and so beautiful is her secret that no person can know the sweetness with which she sustains people, and spares them in inscrutable mercy; spares even the hardest stone, which is a hard and incorrigible person who never wants to turn aside from evil, until it can be penetrated no farther.

But, like the other virtues, she appears in human form. For God in the power of His goodness profoundly imbued Man with reason and knowledge and intellect, that he might dearly love Him and devotedly worship Him and spurn the illusions of demons, and adore Him above all Who gave him such high honor.

16 The angels that surround her and why they are winged

And around her you see a beautiful multitude, with the appearance and wings of angels, standing in great veneration, for they both fear and love her. Which is to say that all the blessed and excellent spirits in the heavenly ministry worship the Knowledge of God with inexpressibly pure praise, as humans cannot worthily do while they are in mortal bodies. These spirits embrace God in their ardor, for they are living light; and they are winged, not in the sense that they have wings like the flying creatures, but in the sense that they circle burningly in their spheres through the power of God, as if they were winged. And so they adore Me the true God, and persevere in proper fear and true subjection, knowing My judgments and burning in My love; for they behold My face forever, and desire and will nothing but those things they see are pleasing to My penetrating vision.

17 On the human beings who are called "compelled sheep"

And before her face you see another multitude, with the appearance of human beings, in dark clothes; and they stand immobile with fear. These are people who live in the Knowledge of God. How? That person whom God foresees will belong to Him stands in great honor in His sight, but one who chooses to stay in perdition rather than in God is lost. Those people you see in this multitude are called "compelled sheep"; they have a human form because of their human deeds, and dark clothes because they have done sinful works in doubt, but they fear the judgment of God with a stringent fear. They are called "compelled sheep" because I compel them by many means to come to life and be snatched from death through My Son's blood. Thus "compelled sheep" are those people who are compelled by Me against their will, by many tribulations and sorrows, to leave their iniquities. These they gladly embraced in the desire of their flesh and the flower of their youth as long as they held to the world, wanting to retain the heat of lust until the fire of the flesh departed from them in cold age; but I forced them all in different ways, according to what I saw in them, to cease from their sins.

18 God constrains some gently, some by a strong lash, some by extreme pain

Some of these, in whom desire for the world does not burn so fiercely, I force with a lighter rather than a heavier scourge; for I do not perceive in them the great bitterness I see in others, since when they feel My correction they renounce the pomps of the world and hastily leave their own will and come to Me. Others I correct with heavier blows, since they so burn and yearn for the sins of their vicious flesh that they would not be fit for the Kingdom unless I forcibly compelled them. And My knowledge sees and knows these, and constrains them in proportion to their bodily excesses.

And others, again, I conquer by the greatest and sharpest misery of mind and body; for they are so rebellious and so extreme in their carnal pleasures that if they were not constrained by the heaviest calamity the wantonness of their flesh would lead them to unceasing crime. These never turn to God while their wills prosper; some fall into desperation through timidity of mind, but others are mocked by prideful ambition, and the former allow despair to trample them underfoot, while the latter cannot contain themselves for the overabundance of their spirits. So, when those who belong to Me resist Me by their deeds, I force them as My knowledge of them directs; and so, through the physical and spiritual calamities they suffer, they are

compelled to come to Me and be saved. Thus Pharaoh, having been greatly terrified, finally made the Israelites go forth from his land, as it is written:

19 Example of Pharaoh, Moses and Aaron

"And Pharaoh, calling Moses and Aaron by night, said, 'Rise up, go forth from my people, both you and the children of Israel. Go, sacrifice to the Lord as you say. Take your flocks and your herds as you asked, and as you depart bless me' " [Exodus 12:31–32]. Which is to say: The heavy and burdensome crimes inseparable from this world weigh people down with sorrows and miseries; they say in their hearts, "Alas, alas! Whither shall we flee?" Then these sorrows clash and drive the people away from them, and the people hasten to withdraw; for their bodies are shriveling up from the weight of the scourge in the hand of God, and they cannot live with joy amid the pleasures of the world. For God claims them, calling the just by the many calamities of the dark deeds of the night of sin.

Hence Pharaoh, which is to say the vices of the Devil, amid the clamor of grief and misery calls Moses, which means those people whom God constrains by the keenest spiritual or physical sorrows, and Aaron, that is those people whom He compels by lighter adversities and calls out of the night of evil deeds; and the vices say from amid the oppression of human pleasure, "Arise from your carnal habits, and go forth from the ancient dwelling place you had with us; separate yourselves from the common people whom we possess and who worship us. Separate yourselves from the secular affairs to which we gladly cling, you who were terrified by us when you were our prisoners; and take the children of God with you, who see and acknowledge Him.

"Go therefore by another way; leave us, and offer yourselves to God by means of those invincible fights in which you say you have conquered us by your will. In the newness of mind you now seek, assume the gentleness of the sheep, which prevents you from acting with us because you choose the sorrows of following the Lamb; and assume the victorious arms of the strength of herds, which we cannot resist and which have conquered us. Separate yourselves from us, as you wished when you fiercely fought us; go to the country you long for in your minds, embrace the new life that takes you from us, and bless and praise God for that battle by which you have torn yourselves away from worldly matters and cares."

20 How God, scrutinizing people, chastises and consoles them

And I, Almighty God, in compelling these sheep to come over to Me, strengthen My pillars, which are the strong heirs to Heaven, on a foundation

of chastisement. I chastise them according to the degree of wickedness by which they are assailed and implicated in the sin of Adam; for if I do not confirm them by My grace, they cannot stand. Some, who are not weighed down by a very great burden of vice, I punish more lightly; for if I were to correct them with a sharper blow, their spirits would entirely fail and they would fall into desperation. For they are not bound by the force of the great whirlwind of the Devil's temptations.

But others, who in the battle with the Devil are burdened with a greater weight and have savage ways and excessive lusts, I constrain harshly with heavy sufferings, so that they will not withdraw from My covenant; for they belong to it, and wish with all their hearts to lay hold on Me and observe My precepts. But if I chastised these as lightly as the first, they would count My corrections as nothing; for they are assailed by the ancient's serpent's most heavy attack.

And there are also certain people whom I do not know, exiles from the heavenly country, for they completely abandon Me, seducing themselves in the greed of their thoughts with devouring rage. These do not seek Me or desire to know Me, but choke off their good desires; and so they ask no help from Me, but greedily feast on their own goods and please themselves in carnal lusts.

Now some of these latter express their will in excesses and pleasures of the flesh, but do not live in hatred and envy; they are simply engulfed in sweet joys and carnal delights. To these I give the fruits of the earth in prosperity, and do not let them lack and be poor; for they were created by Me, and they do not devour My people with malice. And so what they choose is given to them.

But others are fierce and bitter, full of gall and hatred and envy, rendering evil for evil and suffering no injury to be inflicted on them; and if these obtain worldly honor and riches, they destroy the heavenly virtues in others, and do not let them grow. And so from these I take fruits and riches, and throw them into great miseries, so that they cannot do as much evil as they would want to; for, if they could, they would do the works of the Devil.

And so by a just measure I mark out the ways of good and bad people, and weigh their wills according to what My eye sees of their desires, as Wisdom testifies through Solomon, saying:

21 Words of the Wisdom of Solomon

"All human ways are open to His eyes; the Lord is the weigher of spirits" [Proverbs 16:2]. Which is to say: To the sight of Almighty God all roads are open that the living human mind can choose in the present state of its wisdom; for each person possesses the knowledge of fruitful utility and of

vain foolishness. Thus God sees all things, and nothing is hidden from His divine sight; He knows and observes all things, and so He can deal rightly with each and every case. How? He is the weigher of spirits; He treats them tenderly with sweet caresses and peace, or He chastises them with the tribulations of misery and sorrow that they may be conformed to the right measure. They cannot escape Him by running or fleeing, unless He so wills it in accordance with their merits; for they are weighed, both in this world and in the world to come, by the way in which they worshipped God.

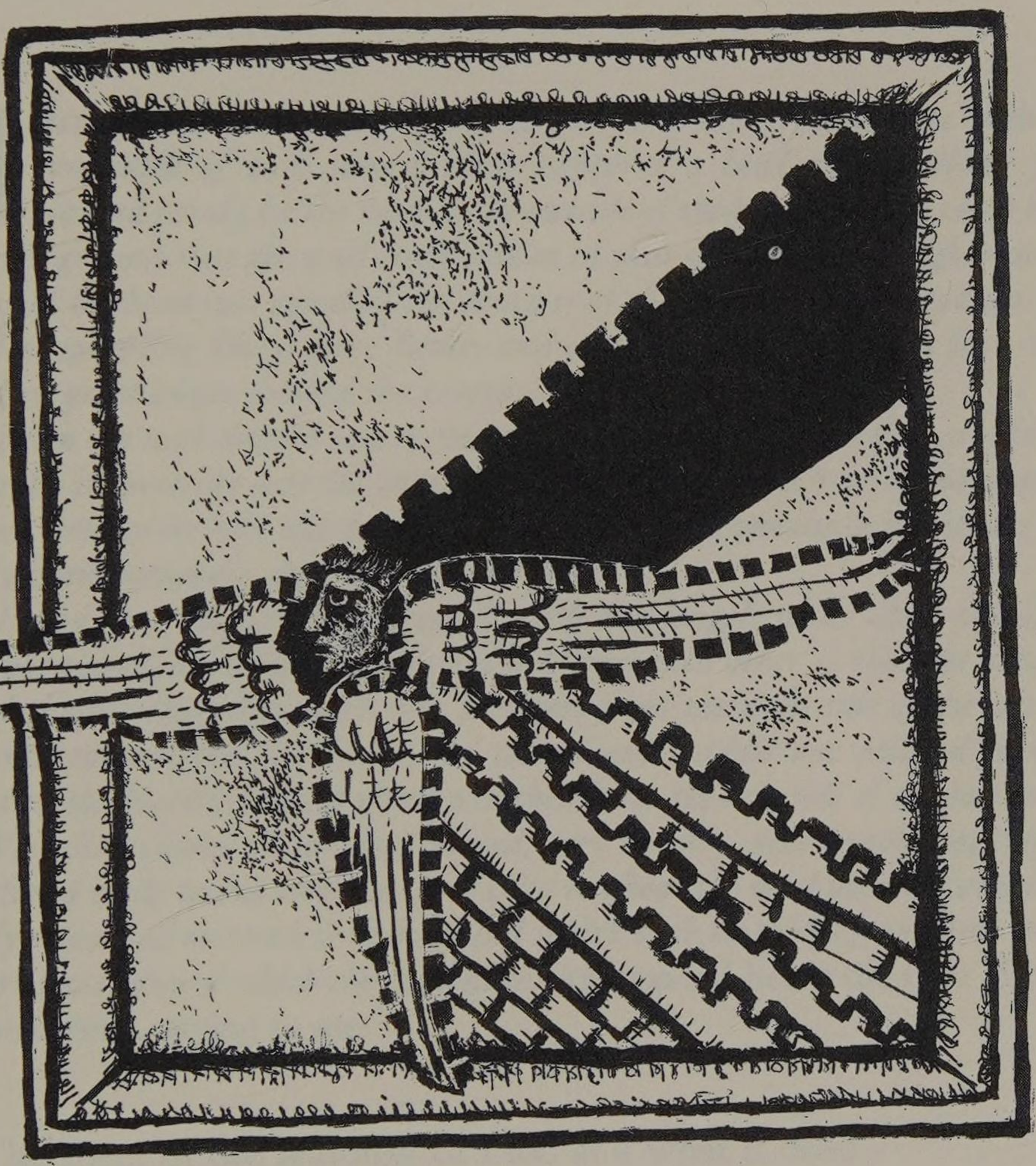
And so these spirits are weighed justly, and a person's mind is uplifted to higher things or sunk to lower things exactly as far as God's just judgment requires. No soul has enough power to fight against God, Who resists their attempts; for He judges all things most righteously, and opposes them with His irresistible justice, so that they can do no more than He permits.

And as the leaden counterweight weighs money correctly, so God in His equal scales counterbalances the good and the bad with obstacles, so that they can never escape the equity of His judgment; and the good receive for their merits the glory and joy of life, and the bad the pain and grief of death, according to what God's vision sees in them.

22 How the Knowledge of God scrutinizes those clothed in a new garment

And the figure looks upon the people who come in from the world and in the building put on a new garment. This is to say that the Knowledge of God knows those who leave the wickedness of infidelity and, by the power of God's work, put on the new self in baptism for the sake of eternal life. And she warns them not to turn backward and go toward the Devil, or, if they do thus stray, that they should return to God their Creator, as she says to each of them in the words of her admonition quoted above.

But let the one who has ears sharp to hear inner meanings ardently love My reflection and pant after My words, and inscribe them in his soul and conscience.



THE ZEAL OF GOD

VISION FIVE
The Jealousy of God

After this, I looked, and behold! In the north corner, where the building's two kinds of wall joined, there appeared a head of marvellous form, planted firmly by the neck at the outside of the corner, at the same height from the ground that the wall itself rose to in that corner and no higher, so that the top of the head just equalled the summit of the wall. And this head was fiery in color, sparkling like a fiery flame; and it had a terrible human face, which looked in great anger toward the North.

From the neck down I saw nothing of this figure's body, for the rest of it was hidden by its pressing into the corner. But I saw its head, a bare human head. It was not covered by hair like a man's or by a veil like a woman's; but it was more manly than womanly, and very terrible to see.

It had three wings of wondrous breadth and length, white like a cloud; they were not raised, but extended straight out from each other so that the head was slightly higher than they were. The first rose from the right side of the jaw, and stretched toward the Northeast; the second and middle one pointed from the throat to the North, and the third stretched from the left side of the jaw toward the West. Sometimes these wings moved, very terribly, and struck these regions, but after a while ceased striking. And I did not hear the head uttering any words; it only remained motionless in body and struck with its wings from time to time in the places toward which they extended. And again I heard the One Who sat on the throne, saying to me:

1 The form of the Jealousy of God and what it does

God worked His jealousy very severely on the people of the Old Law; but toward those of the New, for love of His Son, He was mild and sweet. This is not because He overlooked and carelessly dismissed the sins of those who transgressed, but because He was mercifully awaiting the true inner penitence of the pure heart; and at the same time He refused to tolerate the iniquity of the hardened, but punished them with just judgment.

Therefore, *the head that you see in the north corner, where the building's two kinds of wall join,* symbolizes the Jealousy of the Lord, which punishes that inflexible iniquity that desires no curing. This jealousy was prefigured in

the symbols of the patriarchs and prophets, and arose openly in the mystery of the Word of God.

So too the Jealousy of God is in the form of a head; for, of all the fear it inspires, it is known best for the severity of its vengeance, as a person is known by his face. And it flames out against the North because it is most swift and sharp in God to slay the Devil and all evil. For in Abraham and in Moses the defense of those who labor, which is to say the knowledge of the two choices, the ways of good and evil, is joined to the human race in the work of God; for in all things, through the goodness of the Father, Man must work strongly against the Devil in the knowledge of good and evil.

But the Jealousy of the Lord avenges sin, the choice expressed in the deeds of people who do not observe God's precepts; for this work is not deserving of remission. Where does this happen? Where there is no acknowledgment of God and therefore no fear of God or Man. And when a heart is thus hardened and deadened by the filth of iniquity, which fears neither the judgment of God nor the countenance of Man, the Jealousy of the Lord confounds it by just judgment and throws it down by vengeance in the Law of God. How?

2 God examines sins to punish or pardon in a person's body and soul

When the commandments were established, it was jealousy that, by righteous judgment, removed the injustice whenever there was transgression of the Law. In the Old Testament injustice was wiped out by a severe reprisal upon the outer person, in whom transgression of the Law caused bodily sores; after the grace of the Gospel, jealousy works through penance; and, after a person's death, it will work in the pains and torments of Hell. For I so examine human iniquities, conceived and brought forth and twisted by the doers of deeds, that I avenge them either physically in the person's body or in the pains of the world to come; or else the person himself will purge them through penance and remission while he is still living with the soul and body that performed them. As My servant Job says, speaking in My Spirit:

3 Words of Job on this subject

"I change my face, and I am twisted with sorrow. I feared all my works, knowing that You do not spare the offender. But if I am wicked, why have I labored in vain?" [Job 9:27–29]. This is to say: I will change my interior aspect. How? I will overthrow the thing I am: changeable, overcome by the blood in my veins, at one time full of delight and at another time anger and at another time unbearable sadness. For I look into myself as one who sees a delightful face, when I gladly pursue these things. But against my will I will

change this, and turn myself to good works. And when I do so, I am tortured as by a scourge, for I am forcing myself and tearing myself away from my familiar face, which is my will toward perverse delights; I am joining myself to meditation, and in my good conscience attaining the vision of God, Who cannot be reached by the lusts of the flesh. And, because of these two choices, I fear all my works. How?

When I do a good work, I fear that it is not perfect before God; for I do not see it clearly, but as in a glass darkly. Sometimes I know it in the spirit, but sometimes I do not know it because of being weighed down by the body. But when I do an evil work, my spirit's conscience is in confusion, for I know within me that those who knowingly sin are not spared; that is, when a person understands that his deed is contrary to God, he must be purged either by a penalty in the body, or by penance, or by punishment through tortures in the life to come. And so a transgressor is not spared if he does not repent; he is not given the power to sin in order to use it, and if he does he must be chastised either here or hereafter.

Therefore, if I am so wicked and obstinate that I do not want to give in and turn from my own things, which are my sins; and if I am so weak that I cannot face the great struggle against myself; and if I am always contrary to God in my motives, conceived in sin and desiring to work iniquity and not fearing the Lord's judgment on me; why am I forced to labor in vain, often opposing the evil in myself through my knowledge of God? For I am not so weak that I do not know good from evil. Thus if I drive out my understanding and say, "I do not know God," I am a liar; for the knowledge of my debt to God convicts me when I start to do wickedness. But when I oppose evil with a good conscience I do not labor in vain; for I am the work of God, and so I turn to Him and receive the good reward.

4 Sinners can receive grace by penance or suffer future punishment

Therefore, I Who am the Lord of all things say again that it is needful that each person pay for his sins, either by groaning sorrow or by contrite penitence or by a proper punishment, in this world or the world to come. How? Those who fear their sins and repent in sorrow deserve to rise by God's grace from the sins to their purgation; and when they are not fully purged in this world, they will have purgation unto life in the world to come.

But those who are so hardhearted that they do not wish to acknowledge their sins or repent them in fear and sorrow, but continue to defy God by their wickedness, are not purged of their sins either in this life or in the life to come, but will suffer pains without the consolation of purgation unto life. For they were created by Me with rational minds, yet did not give the proper reply to disobedience. How?

BOOK THREE

5 Human reason can counter evil with good or good with evil

Human reason can understand two ways to the knowledge of good and evil, and choose two replies, also good and evil. How? Good replies to evil when by God's help it resists it; but evil replies to good when with the Devil's help it attacks it. Those who live in goodness answer evil by refraining from it and taking no pleasure in their own delight. But those who live in evil answer good by not withdrawing from bad deeds; they feast on their own lusts and refuse to answer evil's challenge. How?

6 Man is called two ways, one leading to life and the other to death

Each person has in himself two callings, the desire of fruit and the lust for vice. How? By the desire of fruit he is called toward life, and by the lust for vice he is called toward death. In the desire of fruit a person wishes to do good, and says to himself, "Do good works!" And this is the reply to evil, to avoid it and bring forth useful fruit. But in the lust for vice, a person wants to do evil, and says to himself, "Do the work of your own pleasure!" And this is the reply to good, the refusal to resist iniquity and the delight in attaining to vice, whereby the person despises Me and by not honoring Me treats Me as an impostor. And because he turns away from good, and puts himself into no sorrow or affliction through fear of Me, such a one turns celestial things to scorn, as, enlightened by Me, the psalmist David says:

7 Words of the Psalmist

"They have set their mouth against Heaven, and their tongue has passed over the earth" [Psalm 72:9]. This is to say: Many people are foolish in understanding and unwilling to admit the infinite fear of the Lord. They cast away the good desires they should have for Me and the knowledge of the true God, and refuse assent to the good knowledge that assists people to perform good works in God; and they embrace bitterness and contradict the good, and so despoil themselves and steal from themselves the good treasures, laying up for themselves instead a treasure of multiple iniquities.

And in those iniquities they apply their twisted minds to celestial works, and, opening their mouths in an evil way, destroy those works in rage and mockery, saying in their hearts, "We can do the works of our own will as lawfully as those that are called celestial; for those were established without our knowledge by the people of the Old Testament according to their own pleasure." And thus they mock the words and institutions of the Old Testament fathers, which were established by Me in heavenly works.

And so, tasting wicked deeds as if with their tongues, they excite and

surpass themselves in the greatest possible audacity; they boldly fulfil their own wills and have no desire to restrain their bodies from vice. And so, without their minds working, they are, as it were, rolled on the ground by the desires of their flesh, which are the seductions of the Devil.

8 God's wondrous judgments were seen in the Old Testament to make Him feared

So you see this head *of marvellous form*, which is to say that in the Jealousy of the Lord are marvels and wondrous divine judgments, such as no person weighed down by sins can know.

It is planted firmly by the neck at the outside of the corner; this means that, as was shown through Abraham and Moses in the Old Testament, My jealousy against the Devil is plain to the sight of the peoples in reflective knowledge and in human deeds, that they may fear Me and stand face to face with My terror. And My justice faces the North to threaten Satan's cruel iniquity.

9 God's rectitude in judging is not moved by deceitful or adulatory words

It remains immovable, for God cannot be moved, or His righteous judgment of unatoned sins softened, by deceitful or adulatory words. And so it renders to each person who does not observe the precepts of the Law the punishments he deserves for the evil deeds that have sunk him in filth; it is set up by God to establish laws for humans according to their works, and with its excelling strength, like the strength of its neck, it resists the Devil and his followers and opposes itself to their injustice.

10 Supernal vengeance does not exceed the gravity of the deed it punishes

It is at the same height from the ground that the wall itself rises to in that corner; for God, in His supreme avenging justice, towers above all earthly things, and His vengeance exactly matches human deeds, as shown by the Law in the foreshadowing of Abraham and Moses. For divine judgment is as high as any mystical speculation or deed of the people, to throw down their ignorance if they refuse to know God.

But it is no higher, so that the top of the head just equals the summit of the wall. For heavenly vengeance does not surpass human deeds, or punish their evil more than is deserved; it only judges all things equitably and righteously

in excelling justice. This the psalmist David knows in the Spirit, when he says:

11 Words of David

"I have known, O Lord, that Your judgments are equity, and in Your truth you have humbled me" [Psalm 118:75]. This is to say: By Your goodness, O Lord, I have experienced in myself that you do not judge the knowing or the ignorant in Your power or Your anger more than they deserve; for you have not slain me for my sins, or taken the power to act from my soul or body.

For I do good to my adversaries, but I do evil in the desires of my flesh; and therefore You reward the good and judge the evil. But You judge only as is equitable and just. How? If You were harshly inflexible about the nature of human deeds, it would not be equity of judgment. But if You carelessly neglected spurring us to penance, and did not try to purge our iniquities, then, O just God, you would be condoning and encouraging injustice. Death, indeed, was a most bitter judgment for the sin of Adam; but now You recall Man to life by the grace restored in penitence, and this would be impossible for anyone but You, Who are God.

And this purgation unto life in grace is Your just and equitable judgment, for Your judgments are meted out in right measure for each case. All that You do is in the truth, and so You never wrongfully exceed the measure; for both excess and deficiency in justice are wrongful. And You use Your power sparingly and in mercy, never slaying anyone just because Your glorious power can do so, but rather choosing to spare by penitence. Therefore I have humbled myself on account of Your mercy, giving glory to Your name; and I am troubled over what my faults deserve in Your judgment.

12 God sees every injustice, and no human can understand His judgment

And you see that this head *is fiery in color, sparkling like a fiery flame;* this is because God's Jealousy is a fierce obstacle to evil, glowing red in the powerful fire of His vengeance. And *it has a terrible human face;* for the eyes of the Lord see all injustices face to face, and no guilt of crime is unsearched by His terrible gaze. He examines all by His just judgment, and turns a human face toward the acting of carnal desires because it is human actions that are thus monstrous and horrifying.

And *it looks in great anger toward the North;* for God in His vengeance scorns all evil that rises from the temptation of the Devil. *And from the neck down you see nothing of this figure's body, for the rest of it is hidden by its*

pressing into the corner; which is to say that the righteous judgments with which the Jealousy of God scatters the evil works of the wicked cannot be fully seen by any human sense, for they are hidden and covered by the corner of reflective knowledge and human deeds. Thus they cannot be seen or understood by investigation, except sometimes when something is shown to be a case of God's judgment, which appears as a human face according to His will. And so in such a vengeance there is nothing automatic, except that people always receive just judgment according to their sins; for their crimes, as was said before, are not left unexamined, but are probed by the Jealousy of the Lord.

13 The Jealousy of God, justly judging human acts, is awful to all creatures

And you see its head, *a bare human head;* which is to say that the Jealousy of the Lord is not subject to mortality but is bare of all weakness, justly judging human acts. *It is not covered by hair like a man's or by a veil like a woman's;* for it feels no masculine anxiety about being conquered by one superior in strength, nor has it any feminine weakness as of a timid mind afraid that it cannot conquer its opponents.

But it is more manly than womanly; for the mighty power of God resembles manly virility more than it does soft womanly weakness. *And it is very terrible to see;* for jealousy is terrible and fearsome to all creatures when they feel its vengeance in their case.

14 The Holy Trinity judges all people rightly according to their intentions

It has three wings of wondrous breadth and length, white like a cloud. This symbolizes the expansion of the ineffable power of the Holy Trinity. No one can comprehend the extent of Its glory and the limits of Its power as It shines with the immense sweetness and brightness of Divinity; in Its righteous vengeance it subdues all human minds, as they flit hither and thither diffusely like clouds.

These wings *are not raised, but extend straight out from each other so that the head is slightly higher than they are.* For the vengeance of the Lord is not puffed up by any arrogance, but adapts itself to each case according to its merits; and so it stretches forth within the boundaries of righteousness in the just judgment of its correction, and God's potential strength, like the head of His vengeance, exceeds it in power. And so those human deeds, which the true Trinity does not let go unexamined, are not punished or crushed as severely as that power could if it willed.

BOOK THREE

15 God's Jealousy beats the Devil by Christ and the elect, and in Antichrist

The first wing rises from the right side of the jaw, and stretches toward the Northeast; for God in His just judgment conquered the Devil and all evil first by His Son, Who is at His right hand for salvation. *The second and middle one points from the throat to the North;* for after salvation was wrought by the Son of God, in the middle times when the faith was already strengthened and its sweetness tasted by the elect, God put the roaring enemy to flight by their means, and snatched them from his jaws. *And the third stretches from the left side of the jaw toward the West;* for Satan, having been put to flight by the elect of God, will be completely crushed and consigned to the perdition on God's left hand, in the person of the son of perdition, when the world approaches the end of its days.

Sometimes these wings move, very terribly, and strike these regions; for the Jealousy of the Lord is moved to vengeance by its terrible and formidable judging of every creature. It exercises its judgments and strikes wherever in their justice it pleases the Divine Majesty. For where fear and love and honor of God are held in faith and reverence, God shows Himself mild and gentle and does not exercise His vengeance; but He chastises terribly those who are hard and rebellious.

16 The hardened who despise God and Man's warnings are lost

And therefore, the first wing of My vengeance strikes and casts into the abyss of perdition those people, hardened more than stones, who ignore their inner faculties and despise My justice; they look to their own intellects, and consent to carnal desire and diabolical temptation rather than seeking true justice. They refuse to turn away from their iniquity by their own decision, or by My admonitions, or by human exhortations; and so they outrage the spirit of their own knowledge, for they seek and perform the injustice of the Devil instead of My justice. They pour, so to speak, melted lead into their hearts, which is to say dissolute desires of evil decadence; and so they make them as hard as iron in forgetfulness of God, and are themselves hardened like iron, and then they spare no one in their wickedness for the sake of God or Man.

17 The elements complain of the hardness of the impenitent, who are punished

And against them the elements and all creation cry out and complain that vile and short-lived human nature is so rebellious against God while they

themselves are doing God's will with fear and reverence. And so they are loud and terrible on the subject of Man. How? It is not that the elements cry out with a voice or complain in the words of rational creatures; but that they cry out according to their nature with noisy sounds, and complain by inspiring fear with their terrors. So God's just judgment moves them and the rest of creation to react to humanity, which is ever rebellious; while the elements themselves never go against or swerve from what the Divine Power commands them to do. And so these hardened people cruelly imitate Satan, who in the hardness of his iniquity refused to be subject to God his Creator; and therefore he perished from all beatitude, and those who follow him will perish with him.

18 God brings the punishment of past villains on conscious sinners

And the middle wing of My Jealousy strikes people who rave and the presumptuous and evil deeds that they knowingly and rashly commit. The first such deed cried out in the blood of Abel, whom his brother hated because he was dear to God for offering his substance. Another was Pharaoh's, who was warned by My miraculous deeds and terrified by fear of Me, and so let My people Israel go; but then, in his madness, he tried to bring them back, and therefore My Jealousy swallowed him up. Another arose among that same people of Mine; though they knew Me and saw My miraculous deeds, they adored the idol in Horeb, and therefore the crown fell from their head. And the law of God on the two stone tablets was corrupted by them and others like them, and therefore they fell from their glory and happiness, and My vengeance fell on them. For My servant Moses, in jealousy for Me, meted out punishment to this contrary people who opposed Me so often; he sternly told My chosen that every man should kill his brother and friend and neighbor. And later, he forcefully ordered the judges of that same people to kill their neighbors who were initiated into the rites of Belphegor; and so I avenged Myself, and the iniquity that fought against Me was slain.

19 God's Justice, developing from Abel to Christ, is avenged by His Jealousy

And when God's Justice had first arisen in Abel, in all these evil and perverse generations many other elect were found; they collected and honored My smallest precepts like true children of Israel, and among them rose sorrow and longing for the humanity of My Son. And when My Son appeared, born of the Virgin, all the justice of the Law was baked and salted and became pleasing food for all the people who believed in Me when the apostles showed them the truth. And so, in all those generations, My Jealousy

has avenged and will avenge My Justice upon its conscious transgressors; for God was and is and will be, and His Justice, which scours off all the rust of injustice, will not end until all tribes and peoples cease to be.

20 The Jealousy of God will cast down all who harm the Church or its property

Therefore, in My Jealousy, I remove and cast out the iniquity of anyone who, like a dog, despises the Church, which flowers in Me, and of anyone who in insane wickedness destroys a place consecrated to Me or any rights which properly belong to My temple. For these rights were instituted by foreshadowing by My servant Jacob, as the Scripture narrates:

21 Jacob's action prefigured the dedication of churches

"And Jacob, arising in the morning, took the stone he had laid under his head, and set it up as a marker, pouring oil upon the top of it. And he called the name of the city Bethel" [Genesis 28:18–19]. That is to say: Jacob arose in the morning, because he got up as a timely lover of true Justice in the newly constituted Temple. On it he conferred a befitting name, since from it was to arise the most upright of temples, the Virgin Mary, from whom the Sun of Justice would shine forth. And he took the stone, which prefigured an altar, which he had placed under his Head, which is Christ, and sanctified it in the name of Him Who is the true rock, and, having sanctified it, named it. For every sanctification of an altar is under the power of Almighty God, the Head of all the faithful. And he set it up as a marker of the Book of Life, to mark out and prefigure the odor of the heavenly Jerusalem; for as in the heavenly Jerusalem Christ is the Head of His members, so every sanctified altar is the most excelling part of the temple, for oil was poured over it to symbolize the chrism, which is the grace of Almighty God outpoured in holy baptism. And he called that holy place the house and temple of God, which is the name of the city of the heavenly Jerusalem, the living temple of the Living God.

22 A sealed stone legitimizes Communion even without a temple around it

Therefore, by this example and foreshadowing, when a temple is planned in My name, a stone must be erected; for the temple itself is signified by a stone, since I am the firm rock of all justice and Christian law. And wherever the body of My Son is to be sacrificed, there must be a sanctified place where a stone is sealed with My Name, even if by some impossible

chance there cannot be a temple there. For I am the strength of truth, and My servant Jacob erected his stone in foreshadowing, as was said, of My Son becoming incarnate of his race.

23 The work of the people should justify the building of a temple

Such a temple, dedicated to Me, should not lack the activity which was the reason for its being put up, but be associated with the work of the people who minister to it; for the celestial Jerusalem, whose Head is Christ, does not lack His justice, but is always mindful of the works of her children whom she will receive in God. How? They are to withdraw from the service of the Devil, restrain themselves from the desires their flesh craves, and for love of the heavenly cut off their own natures and afflict themselves against their own interests. Thus they should not use all they possess, but withhold some and offer it to God in His honor, as My exemplary servant Jacob appointed tithes of all his substance. For, as again it is written, he said:

24 How and why Jacob gave a tenth of all his possessions

"Of all things that You shall give me, I will offer a tenth to You" [Genesis 28:22]. Which is to say: Of all that You give me, I will offer the tenth part to You, because this is Your law; first I will tithe my soul, O my God, and cut away my own will from it, offering You Your own justice against myself, and then I will tithe all the goods I have on earth. What does this mean? That every faithful person who is numbered in the tenth order of the citizens of Heaven should give My temple the tenth of his substance, to reflect the redemption by which he is counted in that tenth order of those numbered in God's knowledge; for they live in and belong to the true temple, that of the celestial Jerusalem.

25 Woe to destroyers, defilers, despisers and cheaters of churches

But those who forget their fear of Me and in insane wickedness destroy temples dedicated in My name, or defile that dedication originated by Jacob by polluting holy places with murderous blood or the impure seed of adultery or fornication, or when offering the supernal sacrifice ignore the Old Testament fathers and neglect to do it in the presence of a sealed stone like Jacob's, or fail to give the tithes or the property to My temples that I justly decreed: O woe to those wretches! O woe to those wretches! O woe to those wretched people who so shamefully misguide themselves and so perversely before My face neglect My institutions, translated out of the old Law! For the new Law was brought forth out of the Old Testament by My Son in the

mercy of grace, and all the justice of the Law and the prophets was increased in My Son, since all the signs the ancient fathers uttered secretly in obscurity were in Him shown clearly in total justice.

26 Those who share church property with the wicked are thrown down by God

Those who divide the property of the Church with dogs and swine and other beasts, which is to say with evil people, shall be cast down by the Jealousy of God from the highest to the lowest degree. As for those who despise and disdain the food of life derived from both Testaments, treading it underfoot like mud and using it for their own purposes, I will also despise them and their posterity, casting them down from the highest to the lowest and from riches to poverty in the vengeance of My Jealousy.

27 How God's vengeance strikes both believers and unbelievers

The third wing of My vengeance strikes both believers and unbelievers in their wicked and unjust works. It strikes believers who do not use their will to do good and just works; who clearly see the faith and know God's justice, but nonetheless sit in the gloom of evil deeds, foolishly long for the darkness of iniquity, and perversely will to give themselves to madness. But God does not let them do their will, for He cuts it off from them by His vengeance as long as they forget Him and cover themselves in obscurity and freely avoid Him.

But it strikes unbelievers in their unbelief, so that even their iniquity is taken from them by the retribution of vengeance, and they cannot do the evil they would gladly do. And so the malicious Devil, conquered by the blessedness of the fruitful souls who shine before God's eyes, wants in his wickedness to draw the faithless into the darkness of death; but he has no hold on them greater than their deeds warrant.

28 How fearfully God's vengeance consumes those who gain power by injustice

And there is another kind of people on earth who are rich in a spirit of intelligence; since their minds are illumined they are wise enough to remember God if they would. But because of their intelligence they presumptuously seek to know wisdom for themselves and do whatever they want with it; and so they mingle justice with iniquity. But they are fools in their

wisdom, for they think of themselves as completely able to possess and lay hold of and acquire their full wishes, whatever they are.

But as they are seeking to lift their wings in power in the provinces and the cities and the other places and things they are busy governing, and wilfully ignoring the fact that God watches and measures what they do, they are dismissed and cast out from before God's eyes; for they judged with wicked and unjust judgments, and did not make the wise choice of fearing the Lord.

And so, through this My Jealousy, they will become a great lamentation, and speak tearfully before all people, who will see and hear the day when their iniquity is judged. Some of them will go on living in great misery and deprivation, and some will die a terrible death with diverse sufferings. By such a variety of fates, My Jealousy punishes and consumes all injustice, for it is repugnant to Me.

29 God's Jealousy does not loudly warn, but firmly and justly judges

But you do not hear the head uttering any words; it only remains motionless in body and strikes with its wings from time to time in the places toward which they extend, as was mentioned. This is to say that in the Jealousy of the Lord there is no clamorous voice of warning raised in its pride, but a motionless persistence in strength and righteous judgment. It punishes the mad deeds that merit its vengeance, deeds done without fear of the Lord; it confounds and crushes them to the full extent of its justice, as was shown to you, O human, in this most true vision. And because God is just, it is needful to examine all injustice by the standard of His justice; for God Himself knows well the capacity of Man's knowledge to scrutinize all things.

30 Man's knowledge is like a mirror reflecting the desire for good or evil

For knowledge in Man is like a mirror in which lies latent his desire to do good or evil. And each person, standing between these two choices, inclines himself by his will toward the one he desires. The person who turns toward the good and with God's help embraces it in works of faith will be praised and blessedly rewarded, for he has spurned evil and chosen good. But the one who turns toward evil, and absorbs its nature into himself by the perverse conduct suggested by the Devil, will wretchedly undergo a just retribution, for he has neglected good and done evil. Therefore, one who submits himself to God in devotion and humility will faithfully work out his salvation, which comes from the Supreme Good; his soul will be joyfully

filled with inner holiness, for he is serving his Creator in well-disposed and ordinate single-heartedness. How?

31 Compunction leads to fear and fear to trembling, and they work justice

Compunction, which is the beginning of anguish, causes fear; fear produces trembling; and by these three a person should do what is just. How? The person feels compunction, and therefore begins to be in anguish, for by the gift of the Holy Spirit his reason tells him to; it means that he cannot refuse to know God, and his knowledge of God causes fear in him so that he respects the things that are of God. And if he knows God and desires these things, the fiery grace of Christ strikes him and tells him to tremble and be terrified in his conscience; and then he may faithfully work God's justice.

32 The first root of human choice and the fiery grace of Christ

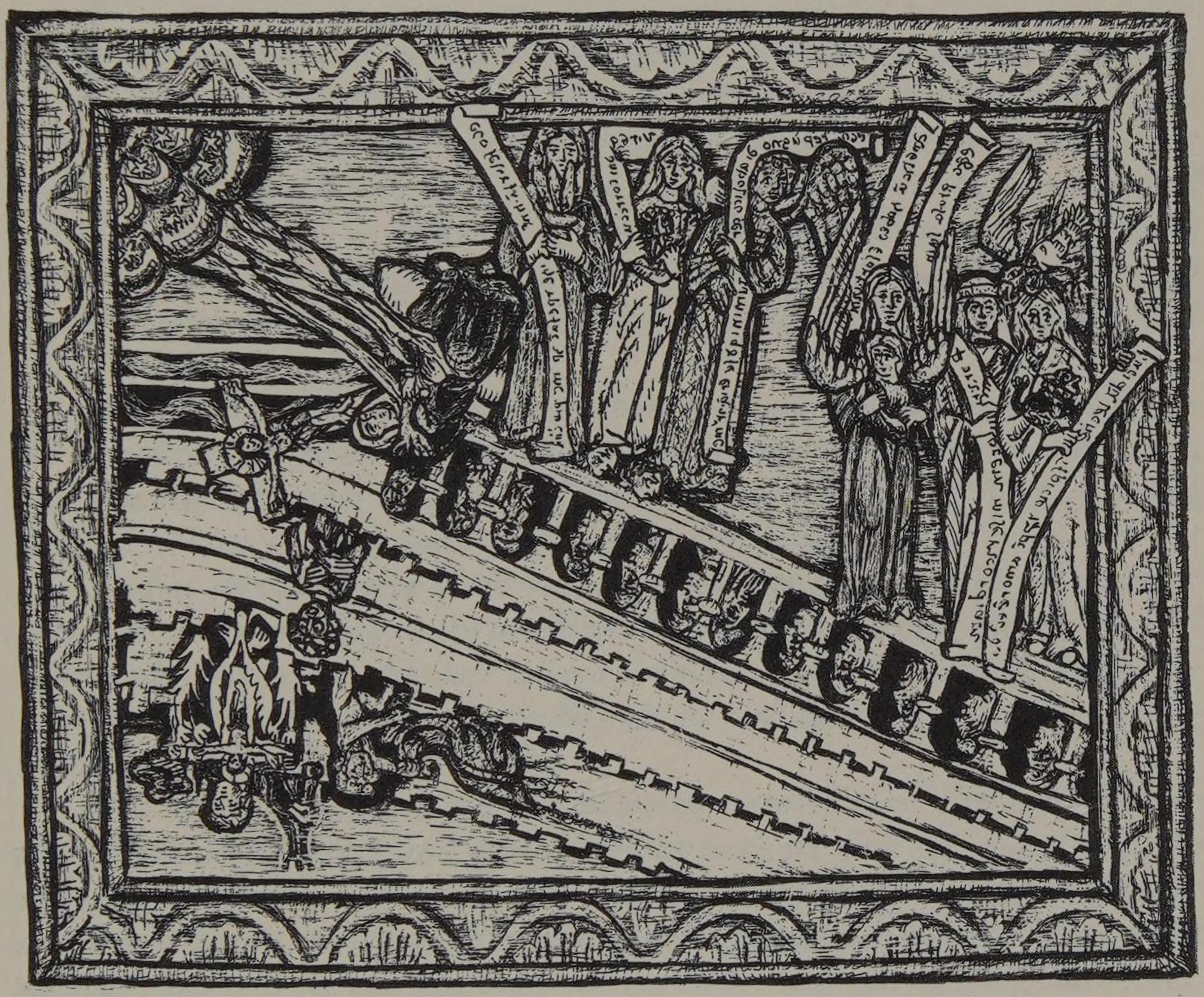
Now, therefore, O human, understand and learn. From whence do these things come? What does this mean? It is God Who works in you what is good. How? He has so constituted you that, when you act with wisdom and discretion, you feel Him in your reason. For the irrational animal does all its deeds without intellect or wisdom, without discretion or shame; it does not know God, being irrational, though it feels Him, being His creature. But the rational animal, which is Man, has intellect and wisdom, discretion and shame, and does rational deeds, which is the first root fixed by God's grace in every person given life and soul. These powers flourish where there is reason, for all of them make people know God, so that they may choose what is just. Therefore, the deed that a person embraces in his Savior, the Son of God through Whom the Father does His works in the Holy Spirit, is productive and perfect and prosperous; and the fiery grace of Christ Jesus calls this to the person's mind and kindles his enthusiasm anew.

33 No sinner may murmur against his Creator

Therefore let each person perform works of justice in the joy of the Holy Spirit, and not hesitate and perversely murmur; let him not say that he lacks anything, when he has the first root placed in him by God's gift and the fiery grace of the Holy Spirit, which touches that root by admonition. For if he were thus to fall into perversity, his reprehensible urge would bring him into anguish; his interior root would be diminished, and he would fall farther into compulsion. And then he would truly murmur to himself, "Alas, alas! What have I done, not being able to discern my works in God?" So let him

also go forward without the burden of unbelief; let him not distrust God in his works, but avoid evil deeds and thus be safe from tearful lamentation.

But let the one who has ears sharp to hear inner meanings ardently love My reflection and pant after My words, and inscribe them in his soul and conscience.



THE TRIPLE WALL

VISION SIX
The Stone Wall of the Old Law

And after this I saw the wall of the aforementioned building, which ran between the north and west corners, and its inner side was all arched like a chancel, except that it was not open like chancel arches but unbroken, and each arch had the picture of a human being in it. And on the outer side of this wall I saw two smaller walls, extending from the north to the west corner, and joined to these corners at each end like a vault. The height of these two lesser walls was three cubits. The distance between the inner, arched wall and the middle one was one cubit; between the middle one and the outer one it was one palm, and that a child's.

And inside the building I saw six figures standing on its pavement before the arched wall: three were grouped together before the wall near the north corner, and three were together at the end of the wall that looked to the West. And they were all looking at the pictures in the arches of the wall.

And at that same end of the wall I saw another figure within the building, sitting on a stone resting on the pavement for a seat, and leaning against the wall to her right, but turning her face toward the pillar of the true Trinity. And at the same end I saw another figure, standing on the wall above the first, also turning toward the pillar of the true Trinity.

And in these figures I saw the following resemblances. The last two were clothed in silk garments and white shoes, as were the first six; except that the right-hand figure in the group of three standing at the end of the wall was so pure and bright that I could not discern any detail about her because of her great splendor, and that the one who was standing on the wall was wearing black shoes. And none of these wore a cloak except the middle one of the three who stood at the beginning of the wall; she was wearing a cloak.

And two of these same three, the ones to the right and the left of the middle one, and two of the other three, the middle and the left figures, did not have women's veils on their heads, but stood with bare heads and white hair. But the middle one of the first three and the one who sat on the stone next to the wall had white head-veils in the manner of women. And the middle and the right-hand ones of the second three were clothed in white tunics. And I saw the following differences between them:

The figure who stood in the middle of the three first ones had a yellow circlet like a crown on her head, with this inscription carved on the right side: "Always

burn!" And I saw that a dove was flying at the right side of this figure and breathing out this writing from its beak. And that figure was saying:

1 Words of Abstinence

"I am poured forth from inner compassion, from which springs the river of mercy, which never tries to hide money or precious stones or pearls from the poor and needy under any pretense, for they do not have the necessities of life and thus are weeping. I will console them and forever refresh their poverty for the love of the sweet and mild Son of God, Who distributes His goods in the souls of the just, and heals the wounds of their sins because of their penitence."

And the second figure, standing at her right, had a lion on her breast that gave off light like a mirror; and hanging from her neck to her breast on a twisted, flexible rod was a pale-colored serpent. And she said:

2 Words of Liberality

"I contemplate the light-giving Lion, and I give for the sake of His love. I flee from the fiery serpent, but I love the serpent hanging from the rod."

And the third figure, on the left, was clad in a tunic of hyacinth red. On her breast was the picture of an angel, a wing out on either side, so that its right wing stretched to the figure's right shoulder and its left wing to her left shoulder. And this figure said:

3 Words of Piety

"My companionship is with angels, and I do not choose to walk with dissembling hypocrites, for I feast with the just."

Now the figure who stood in the middle of the three second ones was dressed in a yellow tunic. Above her right shoulder hovered a dove of exceeding whiteness, breathing into her right ear. On her breast was the picture of a monstrous and shapeless human head; beneath her feet lay the likenesses of people trodden down and crushed by her. In her hands she held a document, fully unrolled; on one side, the side that faced Heaven, there were seven lines of writing. I tried to read it, but could not. And she said:

4 Words of Truth

"I choose to be the rod and scourge of bitter correction against that liar who is the son of the Devil; for the Devil is the persecutor of the ineffable justice of God. Hence I oppose him and trouble him; I am never found in his

mouth, and I spit him out of my mouth like a deadly poison, for with all his cunning he has never found me. He is to me the worst and most troublesome of all evils, since all evil originated from him. Therefore, I cast him out and tread him underfoot in the lovable justice of God, which I love unceasingly and without end, and support and lead. For on me the whole edifice of God's virtues, which build on high, is stabilized and will stand. O God, Who art strongest and noblest, hearken!"

The second figure, on her right, had an angelic face and wings capable of flying stretched out to each side. But she was in human form, like the other virtues. And she said:

5 Words of Peace

"I rebuff the attacks of the Devil, which come against me saying, 'I will not suffer tribulation, but I will rid myself of all my adversaries. I am not willing to fear any. Whom should I fear?' But those who utter this evil speech are cast out through me; for I have been appointed always to be glad and rejoice in all good things. For the Lord Jesus abates and consoles all pain, He Who bore pain in His own body.

"And, because He is the restorer of justice, I choose to unite myself to Him and sustain Him always, free of hatred and envy and all evils. And I also choose to present a joyful face to Your justice, O God."

And the third figure, on the left, was clothed in a white tunic, picked out with green; she had in her hands a small vase, pale and shining, which gave off bright light like lightning, and this light shone on the face and neck of the figure. And she said:

6 Words of Beatitude

"I am happy. For the Lord Jesus adorns me and makes me beautiful and white, because I have flown from the deadly counsel of the Devil, which always reverts to misery, seeking by evil deeds what God rejects. I fly from this Satan, I reject him, and I hold him as an enemy forever, for I desire that Lover Whom I may fervently embrace and joyfully possess in and above all things."

Now the figure who sat on the stone at this end of the wall was clothed in a black tunic. On her right shoulder she bore a small cross with the image of Jesus Christ, which turned hither and thither. And as from the clouds there shone on her breast a wondrously bright light, divided into many rays as is the splendor of the sun when it shines through an object's many small openings. In her right hand she held a small branch like a fan, from the top of which three twigs had wonderfully sprouted forth into flower. And in her bosom she carried some

minute stones, jewels of all kinds, which she looked at very carefully and diligently as a merchant looks over his goods. And she said:

7 Words of Discretion

"I am the mother of virtues, and I have God's justice in all things. In spiritual war and in secular tumult, within my conscience I always wait upon my God. I do not condemn, I do not trample, I do not spurn kings and dukes and counts and the other secular ruling powers who were ordained by the Ruler of all things. How were it lawful for ashes to spurn ashes? The crucified Son of God turns Himself to all people, admonishing them by His justice and mercy; and I choose to submit to each of His ordinances and institutes according to His will."

And the figure that stood on the wall at the same end was bareheaded, with curly black hair and a swarthy face. She was dressed in a tunic of many different colors. And I saw that she took off the tunic and her shoes, and stood naked; and suddenly her hair and her face gleamed newly white, like a newborn baby, and her whole body shone like light. And then I saw on her breast a splendid cross with the image of Christ Jesus; it was depicted above a little bush with two flowers on it, a lily and a rose, which reached upward toward the cross. And I saw her vigorously beat the tunic and shoes she had taken off, so that a great deal of dust flew out of them. And she said:

8 Words of Salvation

"I take off the Old Testament, and I put on the noble Son of God with His justice in holiness and truth. And thus I am restored to my good deeds and stripped of my vices. Therefore, O my God, I beseech you, 'Do not remember the sins of my youth and my ignorance, and take not revenge on my sins' " [Psalm 24:7, Tobias 3:3].

And as I looked attentively on these things, the One seated on the throne again spoke to me:

9 No Christian should refuse to submit to government, prefigured of old

Let none of the faithful who humbly wish to obey God hesitate to submit to human institutions of government. For through the Holy Spirit the authority of the Church has been ordained for the use of the people while they live; and it was prefigured in the people of the Old Testament that human government is included in churchly authority and should be kept faithfully and firmly.

Hence *you see the wall of the aforementioned building, which runs between the north and west corners, and its inner side is all arched like a chancel, except that it is not open like chancel arches but unbroken.* This symbolizes the time from Abraham and Moses, who resisted the Devil, as it were, in the northern corner, until the open declaration of the true Trinity in the true and Catholic faith, when the Son of God was sent into the world by God the Father in the last days and set forth His doctrine in abundance, as it were, in the western corner. In that period the wall, which is to say the Israelite people, was set up in the law of God's justice, which built the building of the goodness of the Almighty Father. That is, in the Old Testament the Israelite people were curbed and united, and after the harshness displayed by the Jealousy of God because of the deeds of the early rulers, the reign of the new dignities was foreshadowed.

For the Old Testament extended till the time of the New, and from it sprang the greater precepts of the law of the New Testament. Thus from the lesser the greater was born, the greater and broader new doctrine from the lesser doctrine of the old commands; for the Old Testament was only the foundation, laid down that the profoundest wisdom of all might be built on it, the wisdom manifested in the Incarnation of the Son of God. So the old wisdom lasted from the law of circumcision to the new rule of baptism, which was adorned with greater commands.

10 The Incarnation made clear by the grace of the Spirit what the Law hid

And the wall, which is to say the Jewish people in their inner understanding by which the human soul knows God, was all arched, which is to say surrounded on all sides by their predecessors' wisdom which proclaimed the commands of the Law of God, and walled in and protected by that wisdom, as lesser people are wont to be guided by greater ones. This is the meaning of the structure of the chancel, which is to say the foreshadowing in a type by the Holy Spirit. For, by the Incarnation of the Son of God, Who manifested the archways of His mercy as a refuge to all who ask, the Spirit elucidated the difficult writings.

But the wall was not opened by the Doorkeeper, that is to say the Holy Spirit, Who laid bare the spiritual meaning of the old Law; the archways of mercy were opened in the flesh of the Son of the Most High when He was made manifest, but the old wall remains closed in the harsh precepts of the Law, even though that Law was later made clear through the Holy Spirit in the Fountain of Living Water.

11 A person invested with a government dignity represents God

And each arch has the picture of a human being in it. For as these pictures show human images, so a person in a triumphal arch, which is to say a government dignity, stands in the place of God. How? Because, by the grace of God, profound and excelling wisdom is placed in the mouth of human reason, and so a human being, in the name of God, can exercise an office of instruction as a representative of the justice and mercy of the Most High Himself.

12 A spiritual office is the greater, one which rules the people is lesser

And on the outer side of this wall you see two smaller walls; which is to say that in outward affairs there is an intermittent establishment of greater and lesser people set up by God's authority like two walls. The outer one is people of high birth who by My ordinance have the might of secular power; the middle one is the lesser people who live under the power of both spiritual and secular persons, and thus are between the arches of the inner wall, which is spiritual government, and the outer wall, which, as said, is secular power. And so there are two walls outside the circumference of the inner arched wall; for secular persons in earthly affairs have more outward than inward qualities. And yet they are part of My appointed order. How?

13 The outer authority is an allegory of the inner

Through outward things the inner ones are understood; and so, when people see from the visible and exalted dignity of one in power how he should be feared and honored and loved, they should also understand by the same insight how the invisible and most high God is to be dreaded and worshipped and loved above all things. For by outward and secular dominion people are taught about the inward and spiritual power of the Divine Majesty, which is so concealed and hidden from humanity that no fleshly eye can see it unless faith grasps it. So God is invisible to mortal creatures; but at least through visible authority people can learn to fear and worship the Most High, Who established it. How?

14 Why God lets one kind of person excel and another be subject

God's inspiration gave the human mind, by means of its reason, a sense that great persons should rule the people and be feared and honored by them.

For God has allowed one kind of person to rule and another to be subject so that people would be divided into groups and so would not kill each other off and perish; or because if the example were not given by fearing and honoring human beings, the people would be lazy, and not know how to acknowledge God.

Therefore, the Holy Spirit led the people to the inner spiritual law, which could rule them inwardly and outwardly until the Fountain sprang up and flowed forth in the world in the fullness of justice to rule both body and soul. So secular powers are set up to order earthly things, that the body may seek refreshment and not faint; and spiritual authority is established that the soul might long for celestial things and aspire to the service of God. And so both these things are established by My order, as Isaac said to his son Jacob:

15 Words of Isaac to Jacob

"Be the lord of your brethren, and let your mother's children bow down before you" [Genesis 27:29]. Which is to say, be the lord of your brothers, powerful over them in honors and triumphs, blessed by the benedictions given me by God; and let all the children of your mother's children bow down before you, subject to you because of your exceeding blessing. For out of you shall come forth the great race from which will arise the man most strong and mighty, whom his brothers shall persecute and drive away. But he will escape them like a lion in his strength and rule them with most excellent rule. And he will restrain them in the name of his power, and never dwindle into a mere appendage like a tail; his brothers will become the tail.

And thus too I, the Heavenly Father, said to My incarnate Son, "Be the Lord of all who are born of human seed, who were created by Me through You. For You were born miraculously of a virgin, not conceived by the seed of a man; You went forth from Me as a flaming fire, and appeared on earth as a true man, but the seal of the untouched and chaste Virgin remained closed.

"You, therefore, in the supernal light of divinity, are the Lord of those who by Your Incarnation as a man are Your brothers. And so let the children of the mother of Your Incarnation bow down and be subject to You, and all people born of humanity serve You in loving devotion."

And since the Son of God is thus Lord of all creatures, by the will of the Father and the touch of the Holy Spirit He also established the order of the different powers in the world. How? Thus: There was excess and vaunting because no people honored any other people, and everyone was doing as he pleased; and this would have continued if God, in His infinite wisdom, had not done away with it. Therefore, He made distinctions between one people and another. He made the lesser subject to the greater in the service of

obedience, and made the greater help and serve the lesser with intelligence and devotion; just as it was granted to Jacob by his father, inspired by the Holy Spirit, to be lord of his brothers.

16 This means that there are three orders: rulers, free people and servants

And by his being made lord, it was shown that in secular affairs there is a kind of person who is to rule over others' freedom. They honor him for his authority, and thus he spares them and does not oppress them by claiming service from them, but cherishes them with fraternal love. But when it says they are made to bow before him, it symbolizes the services due from those who are released from the bonds of servants, but remain children of the flesh with fleshly cares.

But later, Jacob stole the lordship from his brother through his father's blessing. He then gained heavenly renown by the stone he set up as a sign, and the tithes he vowed to give, as was said; and so he symbolizes each protagonist in the spiritual army. For every faithful person must ascend from the lowest rank to the highest; that is, he must learn from the secular power the higher authority and clearer light of the spiritual life. For in the latter is fulfilled the office of ruler by the way of the immaculate Lamb, Who has lifted Man on high in the plenitude and goodness of justice, raising him up from the snares of the wicked robber who laid him low.

17 How secular and spiritual people are each divided into four categories

And hence the two ways of life, concerned with earthly and with heavenly things, are divided into four parts each. And God gave Man the great power of reason that, inspired by the Holy Spirit, he might know these parts in himself by the pattern of the four elements. And thus he adds variety to the two ways, which I do not spurn or reject; for he who in My name multiplies what is less is worthy of reward and not of rejection. And these four parts pertain as much to the secular as to the spiritual life. For in secular affairs there are lesser and greater nobles, servants and followers; and in spiritual matters there are the excellent and the superior, the obeyers and the enforcers.

18 No one may seize, steal or buy either a spiritual or a secular office

And I do not will that these offices, which I established, should be seized or stolen or put up for sale; I want them given for reasonable cause, that those

who receive them may be useful to God and humanity. But there are poisonous scorpions who ignore My justice, and in the deadly venom of their avarice and their pride usurp these positions; and this not just in secular but also in spiritual offices.

The usurping of secular offices, in which the earthly confronts the earthly, will be harshly judged in the wrath of the Jealousy of God; but the usurping of spiritual ones is more serious and more punishable. For secular people are flesh of flesh in outward things, but spiritual people are inwardly joined to the Spirit. Secular people indeed, though occupied with outer things and earthly cares, should seek to be guided by the inner Spirit in their duties; but spiritual people are within the ranks of religion and must scorn earthly things and rest fully in the heart of the Almighty Father, and so they have a much greater obligation to be ardent in imitating the priesthood of the Son. For as the Son went forth from the heart of His Father, so the Father in His Son set up people to be His officials, arrayed in their high rank to serve the Church and be united to God in good works. How?

19 Those worthy of office are intelligent, moral, eloquent and modest

There are those who have compunction and well-searched hearts and mature minds, and all else that is good to Me. They have good consciences, so that they do not seek office wickedly by conflict, or try to obtain it by devilish arts, or buy it with money or with secular power, or seek it for the sake of fleeting words of human praise. Rather, they receive it in humility by My true choice and the election of the people. And these are My most dear and proved guardians, and My surest friends.

20 Those who flee God and seize office devilishly will be punished later

But there are those who go backward and get power in the dark, not caring how; they snatch the celestial mysteries by craft, by secular and earthly means. And such people fly from My face and in bitterness slay their own souls; they deride Me and deny Me, and kick against My will. How?

By despising Me; they do not desire to attain to office through Me, or raise their inner heart's vision to Me and say, "Does this please God or not?" But each of them says within himself, "Even if this is bad in God's sight, I will accept it; I will trust in the Lord, and at some point while I still live I will repent." And thus they get the authority without Me, the Living God, and never ask Me for it or trust to attaining it by My will; in their impatience

they flee before My face, snatching at office and running aground from the sea of My mercy.

These people therefore are not inside the heart of the Supreme Father; they are outside, wandering in the region of the North, which rules them in these matters. They choose not to seek Me, the Creator of all, but to seek their own will and hold it in place of God, and follow it and abandon Me. They do not wish to know Me, nor I them; their desires prompt them to do what they wish. And, because they refuse to fear Me, I choose not to stop them at once by the terror of My wrath; and so their deeds will be held against them on that day when they can no longer prevail. If I let them go in this life, they will have to answer in the fearful Last Judgment for what they have done; for they had knowledge of Me in faith, yet chose to ignore Me in the deeds they did.

21 By the ordination of Providence, these human distinctions exist forever

But you see that *the two lesser walls extend from the north to the west corner.* This is to say that when the greater and lesser orders of people were established, from the time of Abraham and Moses as in the North to the manifestation of the Catholic faith of the true Trinity taught by My Son as in the West, the distinction between people and their rulers was set up in My Law. And this was the germ and the prototype of the people of the New Testament, shown in advance and lasting till the time My Son by My Zeal was born in the flesh. So these distinctions were and are and always will be, between people of inner and outer life, spiritual and secular people, and greater and lesser people.

They are joined to these corners at each end like a vault; for the peoples are united in honor and teaching to the Old Testament at the beginning and the New Testament at the end. And it is like a vault because, by the workings of divine Providence, they are well and worthily conformed to the structure of the heavenly Jerusalem.

22 There are three kinds of secular people, greater and lesser

The height of these two lesser walls is three cubits, which indicates that when the two secular conditions are rightfully upheld, there are three divisions between the people: the rulers, those who are free from bonds of servitude, and the common people who are subject to their governors.

23 Spiritual rulers should excel in unity of faith

And so *the distance between the inner, arched wall and the middle one is one cubit;* for that is the distance between the dignity of those high in spiritual authority and those who hold the lesser titles of earthly government, appointed in the unity of faith according to God's will to hold in check those subject to them.

24 The secular rulers and the people must have innocent and loving relations

And between the middle one and the outer one it is one palm, and that a child's; for between the lesser power of the secular government and the servitude of its subjects there must be thoughtful justice, and the two must touch each other with the hands of their joint labor in the single-minded and simple devotion of childlike innocence.

25 In the work of God, six virtues prefigure all the others

And inside the building you see six figures standing on its pavement before the arched wall. This is to say that when God works goodness six virtues appear, which prefigure all the other virtues, as in six days God created His creatures. These virtues stand before the wall as a preview of things to come; they stand before the Israelite people, who were bridled by the divine law and walled about by the authority and defense of their forerunners, and they tread underfoot the pavement of earthly cares, which forms the floor of the Supreme Father's building, to signify that the army of Christians through them can fight the Devil.

26 The positions of these six virtues and the other two

Therefore, *three are grouped together before the wall near the north corner;* for when the Old Testament was begun by Abraham and Moses to oppose the Devil, the holy and inseparable Trinity, in the power of Its majesty, was symbolized by divers secret figures.

And *three are together at the end of the wall that looks to the West;* for when the Son of God was born in the flesh at the end of the time of the Law to redeem the people who looked to the West, the Trinity, which reigns in the Unity of the Divinity, was preached openly by name.

And they are all looking at the pictures in the arches of the wall; for all with

equal devotion look to the authority of God's decrees for humanity, designated by His power in the law of the Old and the New Testament, and ponder how those decrees may be perfected in them.

But at that same end of the wall you see another figure within the building, sitting on a stone resting on the pavement for a seat. This is to say that, when the old law of the Old Testament was laid by and the new faith in the true Trinity was begun, and God established all the constant virtues of the Church, this virtue also appeared to do His work and will work through Him in humans until the end of the world.

And therefore she sits on the strongest of rocks, which is to say on God's only Son; for He is the seat and the repose of all the faithful who despise the transitory and with pure faith believe in Him.

And she leans against the wall to her right; for she rightfully reposes on the hope that this people, both the greater and the lesser, who by God's disposition have been placed under authority, may honor her in their works.

But she turns her face toward the pillar of the true Trinity; for she directs her intention toward that Trinity in everything, with sharpest vision and mental powers, as all who worship God must contemplate Him in their deeds, diligently and ceaselessly, as the eternal Trinity inviolably in Three Persons.

But at the same end you see another figure, standing on the wall above the first. This is to say that when the shadows of the old Law were transmuted by the faith of the Holy Trinity into the true light of justice, this virtue was elevated by the authority of rulers and the faithful people to the higher place, the desire for heavenly salvation. She stands there fighting against vice, upright in the Son of God, for she had her origin from Him, and she shall remain with Him in the heavenly Jerusalem when the world has ended.

And she also turns toward the pillar of the true Trinity; for it is in her strength derived from the holy and ineffable Trinity that she brings back souls to their true country.

27 On the virtues' clothing and what it means

And in these figures you see certain resemblances, for the virtues are of one mind though diverse in the gifts of God. *The first six and the last two are clothed in silk garments,* which are the sweet works the worshippers of God offer to Him in divine law and true justice; *and white shoes,* which are their eagerness to follow in purity the example of good human actions.

But *the right-hand figure in the group of three standing at the end of the wall is so pure and bright that you cannot discern any detail about her because of her great splendor.* For this virtue, by the gift of the Holy Trinity, rose up in the true strength of salvation at the end of the ancient severity; so she is

completely translucent and pure, devoid of all devilish impurities and shining with the joy of human gladness, and she has in the heavenly places such abundance of glory and honor that no excercise of reason by any mortal can comprehend her incomparable harmony, unless God wills to reveal it.

And the one who is standing on the wall is wearing black shoes; for, before My Son's Incarnation, the sign and footprint of death were in all people both of the higher dignity and of the lesser.

And none of these wears a cloak, which means that they have cast off care for the things of Earth and the outer garments of the Law's commands, and are inwardly contemplating true justice. *But the middle one of the three who stands at the beginning of the wall is wearing a cloak,* for she did her work under God's protection at the beginning of the period of severity. But she is surrounded by the love of God and hides in it her heavenly treasure, rejecting the desire for carnal things.

And two of these same three, the ones to the right and the left of the middle one, and two of the other three, the middle and the left figures, do not have women's veils on their heads, but stand with bare heads and white hair. For Law and Prophecy, which came forth from the power of the Supernal Majesty, displayed in their strength life and death, followed the twofold ways of love and in their inner wisdom were constant against adversity and rejoiced in sweet divinity; and in their Head, Who is Christ My Son, they were faithfully freed from subjection to pain or the noose of death. Their hair is bright with the purity of virginity, for the Divinity greatly loved the virginal nature in the Virgin Mary.

But the middle one of the first three and the one who sits on the stone next to the wall have white head-veils in the manner of women; which is to say that in the height of Heaven and in the constancy of blessed repose they are pleasantly and sweetly bound by the strong bond of subjection. They venerate God, the Head of all the faithful, with a pure and loving devotion, as with sincere love a wife should venerate her husband.

And the middle and the right-hand ones of the second three are clothed in white tunics; for their shining and pure works go forth among people by the power of the Divine Majesty in sweetest beatitude, ordained by the law of the Lord to Whom they are united.

But you also see differences between them; which is to say that, although they worship God in concord, He has given them different powers.

28 Abstinence and her appearance

Therefore, *the figure who stands in the middle of the three first ones* symbolizes Abstinence; for she, in the fight, is like a city and a foundation and an ornament to the virtues near her. By her grave conduct she keeps

herself from sin, and having no wantonness in herself she scrutinizes and reproves all childish wrongdoing. She appears like a mother in the midst of those virtues, which showed the glory of the Trinity at the beginning of the time of the Law in the Old Testament.

And *she has a yellow circlet like a crown on her head, with this inscription carved on the right side: "Always burn!"* For she was crowned by the Supreme Head with the yellow ray of the brilliant sun, the Son of God. In His brightness she exists totally, desiring no one but Him; and indeed, He always inflames her from the direction of salvation, which is the right.

And thus, as you see, *a dove is flying at the right side of this figure, and breathing out the writing from its beak.* For the right hand of heavenly bounty gives the gift of true simplicity, which is the Holy Spirit, and It enkindles all good things in Abstinence by divine inspiration, for the purpose of saving souls; and so this virtue shows in the words of her admonition, already quoted.

29 Liberality and her appearance

Now *the second figure, standing at her right,* symbolizes Liberality; she is of childlike simplicity, with no over-subtlety or hardheartedness with respect to human suffering. Together with Abstinence she withdraws herself from all harshness and takes the right path to God; for when Abstinence decides on a work, Liberality begins to carry it out.

She has a lion on her breast, which gives off light like a mirror; which is My Son Christ Jesus, the mighty lion, enclosed in her heart like a tender and wonderful mirror of affection.

And hanging from her neck to her breast on a twisted, flexible rod is a pale-colored serpent. This symbolizes the fact that My wise Son bent His neck, which is to say His patience, to bear the pale agony of the body and the twisting of His pains when He was raised on the cross to heal all wounds. Liberality impresses this upon her heart with heavenly love and causes it to be contemplated in human minds; and so she says in the words of her already quoted declaration.

30 Piety and her appearance

And *the third figure, on the left,* manifests Piety, who never cherishes hatred or envy of human happiness, but always rejoices at and embraces human good fortune. By her freshness and her outpouring of generosity, Abstinence is able to resist the Devil, who whispers to her from the left. For in the struggle for the banner, Piety is the full work of Abstinence, and always is the victor.

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Hence *she is clad in a tunic of hyacinth red;* for her splendid work surrounds her, yet in her beautiful patience she hides bloody injuries beneath it, suffering all of them according to My Son's example in His Passion. *On her breast is the picture of an angel, a wing out on either side.* This means that each person should imitate the angels in his mind by loving each of God's ordinances, and lift himself up into flight on one wing and on two, which is to say by the One God and by twofold virtue; meeting the good and the bad on both sides, not unduly exalted by the good or prostrated by the bad. He should gaze on God in purity of heart, and therefore rise upward and not cast himself down to earth.

And therefore *its right wing stretches to the figure's right shoulder;* for on the right, the side of salvation, human happiness comes to the help of Piety, because My Son brought back Man to his true country. And *its left wing stretches to her left shoulder;* for on the left, the side of the Devil's snares, a faithful person casts off the work of darkness by extending his wing for a flight upward to the refuge of My Son. And thus he is strong against all adversity and imitates the life of the just, as this virtue declares in her already quoted words.

31 Truth and her appearance

The figure who stands in the middle of the three second ones depicts Truth; for in every case, after Abstinence and the virtues that cleave to it have been established, Truth arises. The other figures stand by her because she is their tower and their strong protector; she is at the heart of the virtues that prefigure the Holy Trinity when Jewish custom sets and true faith rises.

Above her right shoulder hovers a dove of exceeding whiteness, breathing into her right ear. This signifies the amazing power of the Holy Spirit, Who appears at the upper right, the direction of the blessed restoration through the Incarnation of the Son of God; Its touch breathes into her right ear, which is to say into the hearts of believers, that they may understand the divine power of God.

On her breast is the picture of a monstrous and shapeless human head; which is to say that God allows the hearts of His elect to be troubled by the miseries and persecutions of rulers, just as His Son chose to suffer at the hands of the chief priests. And, because God is in the hearts of the faithful, they should suffer persecution patiently for the love of God; and, because death arose from the fall of the Devil, they must sustain many struggles and sufferings, often hard and adverse for the body, against the Devil's villainies. For something clings to Man that the ancient serpent always pursues. What is this? The lust of the flesh, which can be ensnared from ambush by that malignant enemy.

And beneath her feet lie the likenesses of people trodden down and crushed by her. This is to say that the lies of the Devil, which reside in human deeds, are reduced to naught under the feet of Truth. She loves the edifice of the Church, where all the virtues shine clearly to be tested by her; before all ages she was hiding invisibly in the heart of the Father, but at the end of time she appeared visibly in the true flesh of the Son of God.

And therefore *in her hands she holds a document fully unrolled, and on the side that faces Heaven there are seven lines of writing.* For in all works of Truth, by God's grace a pattern is unrolled of the law established for the Christian people; and it should be observed with open worship on the side turned toward heavenly desire, and feared on the side of carnal lusts. And it contains the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, the unassailable bulwark against the Devil's snares of death. *And you try to read it, but cannot.* For though Man yearns to know the mysteries and secrets of God's gifts, it is not possible for him to understand or grasp God's will in His wonders as long as he is burdened with a mortal body. But let Man embrace and truly comprehend those mysteries by faithfully following God's precepts, as this virtue says in her words already quoted.

32 Peace and her appearance

The second figure, on her right, symbolizes Peace, which has the heavenly mark and the company of angels. For she puts forth buds in the full fruitfulness of Truth. Truth is surrounded by marvellous gifts of Heaven, which come from the right, the side of salvation, and so, through the Son of God, she brings Peace. How? As it is written in the angelic song: "Glory be to God on high, and on earth peace to people of good will" [Luke 2:14]. Which is to say: Because the Son of God was miraculously incarnate, humanity shines forth in the Most high God and God in humanity. And therefore God is worthy to be praised and glorified in Heaven by His whole creation. And so will there also be on earth the peace of salvation to those who receive the will of the Father with devotion and faith; for the peace of good will is the will of all the goodness of the Father, His Son, Who is God and Man at once.

And how is He peace? He is the Peace of humans, and defends them from the snares of the ancient serpent. That serpent was the first false one, and lost the light of life and was cast down into darkness; and then the true Peace, which is the true Son of God, brought light to people, so that they became partakers of the Kingdom of God and stood in the blessed place that the Devil had lost.

So, as you see, this virtue *has an angelic face;* for she flies from all evil, and beholds God, as it were, face to face with holy mind and angelic desire. Hence too *she has wings capable of flying stretched out to each side;* for, faced

with either tranquillity or trouble, she flies upward to God. She does not deal in terror or bitterness, but remains calm and harmonious; by the joint effort of her two wings she embraces the one God, and persists only in serenity, which is not shaken by changeful tempests either in good or in evil case.

And she is in human form, like the other virtues. For she shines miraculously through the Son of God, and all the other human virtues are made true in her. For she never seeks contention or dispute, but always leniency; and so she opposes the attacks of the Devil, as is manifested in the words of her discourse above.

33 Beatitude and her appearance

And the third figure, on the left, depicts Beatitude, yearning for eternal life. By her faithfulness and quiet gentleness Truth can oppose on her left hand all the craft of the serpent's temptations, which deceive the person who consents to him. For Beatitude is the unconquered serenity of true glory, and fears no miseries in death. Therefore *she is clothed in a white tunic, picked out with green;* for she is surrounded by faithful works, which are bright with celestial desire and fresh with the freshness of the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

She has in her hands a small vase, pale and shining; which is to say that her deeds depict the way Man apprehends God by faith in a small container, the interior of his contrite heart. It is pale with the weakness of human flesh, because faith must be held to even in this mortal life where misery is always with humanity. Therefore *it gives off bright light like lightning, and this light shines on the face and neck of the figure.* For knowledge of eternal light is diffused by both fear and love of God, which reaches from a person's inner heart to his face, which is to say it makes him begin righteous deeds that show his good intent. And then it shines on the neck, which means that the completed work includes strength, and through Beatitude shines before God more brilliantly than the sun, as this virtue declares in her speech quoted above.

34 Discretion and her appearance

But *the figure who sits on the stone at this end of the wall* denotes Discretion. For when the Old Testament observances were fulfilled, she appeared in Christ; she is the wise sifter of all things, holding what should be held and cutting off what should be cut off, as the wheat is separated from the tares.

And *she is clothed in a black tunic;* for she is surrounded by mortification of the flesh, and has cast off all vain levity. And *on her right shoulder she bears a small cross with the image of Jesus Christ;* which is to say that, when Almighty God gave His Son to be miraculously incarnate and humbly suffer,

this virtue was firmly rooted in the power of God's strength, which is the right. Discretion united with His love when she was manifested by Him, and through her all justice is decided. And as God determines the stature that best befits Man, Discretion's office is to imitate Him; that is, she fulfils her works in the Giver, His crucified Son, and exists in both His states, divinity and humanity.

It turns hither and thither; for in the sign of the holy cross Discretion moves unceasingly in a round among good and bad people. *And as from the clouds there shines on her breast a wondrously bright light;* which is to say that from God's mercy, the brightest cloud above, divine love is instilled and enkindled in human minds, waking discretion and enlightenment in them.

Therefore, *this light is divided into many rays as is the splendor of the sun when it shines through an object's many small openings.* For the Holy Spirit, with heavenly power, emits diverse rays, which are gifts to humans; and these rays, more brilliant than the sun, diffuse and penetrate the recesses of humility in the clear vision of faithful souls. And thus It enlightens their minds and senses, that they may gain a deep understanding in everything of what they should rightly do in God.

In her right hand she holds a small branch like a fan; which is to say that Discretion, on the right side, which is the side of salvation, contemplates her work in humans through the gifts of the Holy Spirit. These humans are in the flesh, which is fragile like wood; but the flesh has in it her sign, and so by God's help drives away the Devil's temptations, which come like a cloud of flies. Thus Discretion is not dissipated in them by vanities. *And so from the top of this wood three twigs have wonderfully sprouted forth into flower,* that the faithful may believe above all that the Holy Trinity perpetually flowers in wonder and gloriously reigns in the Unity of the Divinity. Thus they must not rashly contemplate the celestial secrets in themselves, but dispose all their actions well and rightly through the power of Discretion, as God disposes His works justly and with discretion in all His creatures.

And in her bosom she carries some minute stones, jewels of all kinds, which she looks at very carefully and diligently as a merchant looks over his goods. This is to say that in the bosom of the human mind she encloses everything that is apt and suitable, that its most minute thoughts and deeds may be jewels of virtue. And with cautious and diligent scrutiny she seeks all God-ordained justice, and influences all human hearts with a sharp awareness of the reward of their work, the recompense from God, which indeed she herself says, as mentioned above.

35 Salvation and her appearance

And *the figure that stands on the wall at the same end* signifies the Salvation of souls, which appeared in the authority of the new grace when

the old severity had set. Thus Discretion is the foundation, and Salvation appears above her, who arose in the Son of God when He was born of the Virgin for human salvation. She *is bareheaded, with curly black hair.* For she is bare of subjection or servitude, and remains free in status, because she openly cleaves to the Son of God, Who mercifully raised her up; but her hair is black, because among the Jewish people Salvation was obscured, not shining in true brightness but existing in great diversity of observance, like curls in hair.

She also has a swarthy face; for before the Incarnation of the Son of God, she was in the shadow of death, and seemed not to hope for the happiness of eternal salvation. Therefore, too, *she is dressed in a tunic of many different colors;* for among the people of the Old Testament she was surrounded by many works, including many vices.

But you see that *she takes off the tunic and her shoes, and stands naked.* This is to say that when death was banished by the Passion of My Son, and when the Holy Spirit came and the sound and words of the apostles were heard in the world, Salvation awoke; she spurned evil works and rejected wrong paths and stripped herself bare of the Devil's power. And thus she spoke within herself: "O you most shameful Devil! You would never leave me, except that I am redeemed in the blood of the Lamb. For you wanted to keep me in the pit of Hell, but now by God's grace I am delivered."

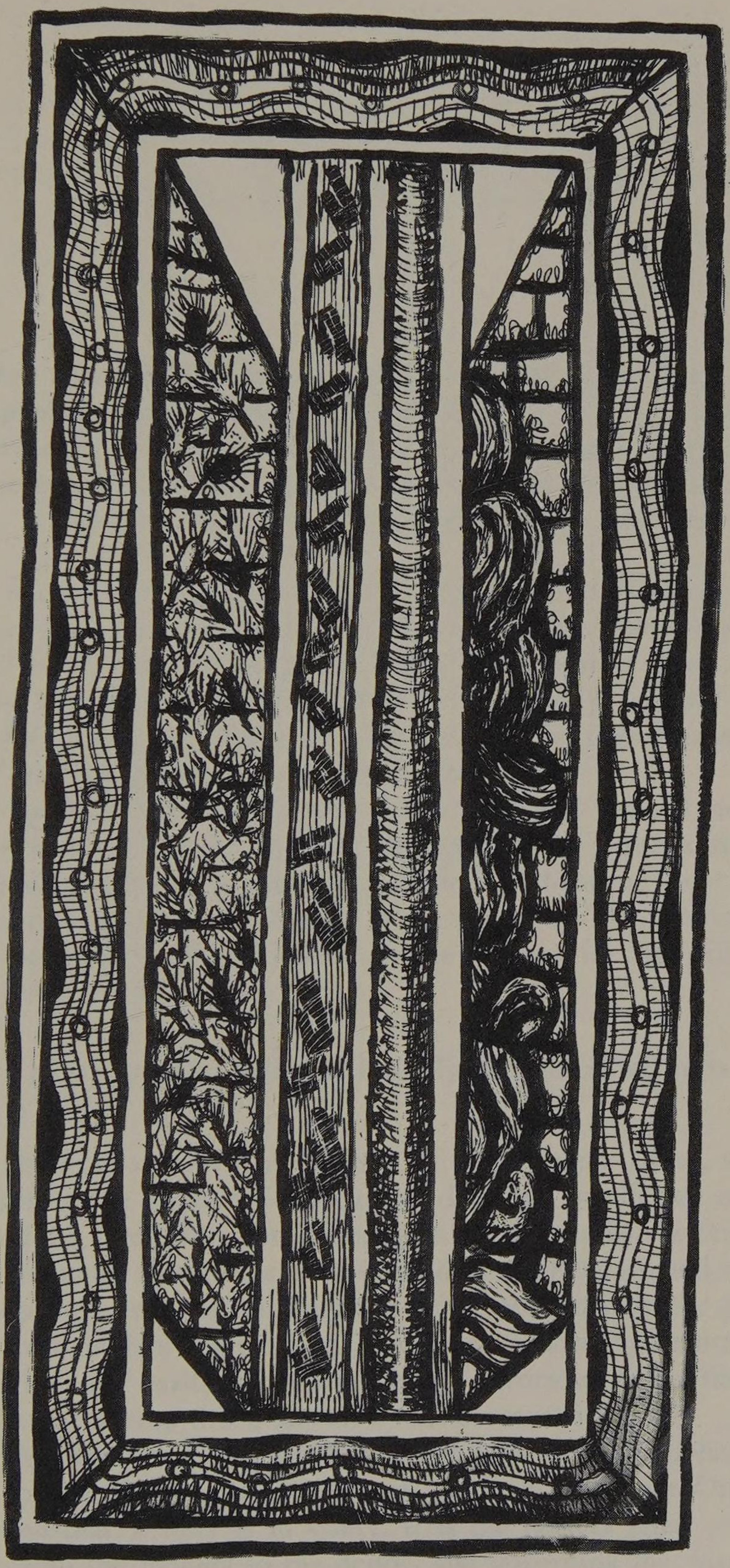
And thus *suddenly her hair and her face gleam newly white, like a newborn baby.* For after the Incarnation of My Son, the people represented by her hair increased, well-enlightened in the inner face of their souls. They grasped true and splendid justice and sought eternal happiness, trusting in life's brightness and the liberation of the faithful members who adhere to Christ the Head; and so they are saved in celestial life through regeneration and the innocence of childhood. *And her whole body shines like light;* for she in all her members, the faithful people subject to her through My Son, was made pure in dovelike simplicity and bright in the lucent beauty of the justice of God.

But *you see on her breast a splendid cross with the image of Christ Jesus, which is depicted above a little bush with two flowers on it, a lily and a rose, which reach upward toward the cross.* This is to say that in the Passion of Jesus, this virtue became the strong heart of the believing people. For the Savior Jesus, by His martyrdom and the steps of His righteous example, cast down and broke the tree of Adam's death and perdition, against which the two Testaments had also fought, the Old in white and the New in red. By God's will, then, and in the lofty understanding of the spirit, they turned from the perdition of death to the Passion of that noble and loving Redeemer and all His justice.

So *you see her vigorously beat the tunic and shoes she has taken off, so that a great deal of dust flies out of them.* For Salvation shows, in new and righteous

human deeds, that the tunic of early custom and old vice is removed and the evil example of Adam's transgression beaten out of it. She brings these things to naught by vigorous scrutiny, and despises and rejects the dust of vainglory and other sins, as she makes known about herself in the words given above.

But let the one who has ears sharp to hear inner meanings ardently love My reflection and pant after My words, and inscribe them in his soul and conscience.



PILLAR OF THE TRINITY

VISION SEVEN
The Pillar of the Trinity

Then I saw in the west corner of the building a wondrous, secret and supremely strong pillar, purple-black in color. It was so placed in the corner that it protruded both inside and outside the building. And it was so great in extent that neither its size nor its height was clear to my understanding; I only saw that it was miraculously even and without roughnesses.

The outside part had three steel-colored edges, which stood out like sharp sword-edges from the bottom to the top. One of these faced Southwest, where a great deal of dry straw lay cut and scattered by it; another faced Northwest, where a lot of little wings had been cut off by it and had fallen; and the middle edge faced West, where lay many decaying branches that it had cut away. All of these had been cut off by those edges for their temerity.

And again, the One Who sat on the throne and showed me all these things said to me, "To you I explain these mystical and miraculous unknown gifts in all their fullness, and grant you to speak of them and show them; for, O human, they appear to you clearly in the true light. This I do to enkindle the fiery hearts of the faithful, who are the pure stones that will build the celestial Jerusalem."

1 The Trinity is to be believed humbly and not pried into more than is licit

For the holy and ineffable Trinity of the Supreme Unity, which was hidden from those under the yoke of the Law but manifested in the new Grace to those freed from servitude, must be believed by the faithful with simple and humble heart, One True God in Three Persons; and it must not be rashly scrutinized, nor must anyone be dissatisfied with the gift he has received from the Holy Spirit. If such a one seeks more than is fitting, in the temerity of his self-exaltation he will fall into a worse state, not find what he improperly seeks. And this is shown by the present vision.

For *this pillar you see in the west corner of the building* symbolizes the true Trinity; for the Father, the Word and the Holy Spirit are One God in Trinity, and that Trinity is in Unity. It is the perfect pillar of all good, reaching from the heights to the depths and governing the whole terrestrial globe.

BOOK THREE

It stands in the west corner because the Son of God was incarnate in the sunset of the world; and He glorified His Father everywhere and promised the Holy Spirit to His disciples. So too, the Son, in undergoing death by the will of the Father, gave a noble example to humans, so that they too could rightfully enter the edifice of the Supreme Father by performing true and just works in the Holy Spirit.

And it *is wondrous, secret and supremely strong.* For God manifests Himself in His creatures so wondrously that they can never exhaust His presence; and so secretly that they cannot scrutinize him by any willful knowledge or sense; and so strongly that all their strength is directed by Him and cannot be compared with His strength.

2 Christ's blood saves the world and shows the Trinity, but incomprehensibly

It is purple-black in color, and is so placed in the corner that it protrudes both inside and outside the building. This is to say that, by the will of the Father, His only Son poured out His purple blood on behalf of humans with their black sins; and thus He saved the world by His Passion and brought the true and right faith to believers. And when the old rituals failed and the new holiness arose, the worship of the Holy Trinity was most plainly proclaimed; for it was openly believed that the Heavenly Father sent His Son, conceived by the Holy Spirit, into the world. And the Son sought the glory of His Father and not His own, and disclosed the profound consolation of the Holy Spirit, as had been foretold; and thus it was hidden on no side, but was proclaimed both to the faithful, who abode in God's work, and to the unbelievers, who stood outside the faith.

But *it is so great in extent that neither its size nor its height is clear to your understanding;* which is to say that the Trinity is of such ineffable glory and power that its greatness of majesty and its altitude of divinity cannot be bounded by any twist or presumption of the human mind. *But it is miraculously even and without roughnesses;* for, wonderful to relate, it is mild and benign in grace, and smooth in its sweet justice to all those who hasten to it, so that no rough place of injustice is in it, but justly and beautifully it confers salvation.

3 The Trinity is manifest in power and pierces even unbelievers' hearts

The outside part has three steel-colored edges, which stand out like sharp sword-edges from the bottom to the top. This is to say that the ineffable Trinity stands against the darkness of the world, appearing openly in the Unity of

Deity. Its sovereignty and power are hidden from none of its creatures except the hearts of unbelievers; from them it is concealed because of their unbelief. Therefore, God's judgment in due recompense deservedly slays them like sharp steel; it yields to no prideful opposition, but extends from one end to the other, which is to say from the creation to the end of the world. And all that exists it has penetrated and does penetrate like a sword of division, in profound Divinity and in all wisdom and power.

4 Unbelief opposes the Catholic faith, and God cuts it down in confusion

And one of these faces Southwest, where a great deal of dry straw lies cut and scattered by it. This is to say that among the Christian people the just and divine Trinity cuts down and burns up all who raise the aridity of heterodoxy and negation and rejection against the righteous Catholic faith. They are utterly confounded, like the grass that is trodden underfoot and burned in the fire, separated from the fruitful grain of the wheat. For faith and works stem from knowledge of Scripture; and all that is contrary to the true faith, though the foolish people follow it like stupid cattle, is scattered and annihilated.

5 God casts down the boasting of the Jewish people

And another faces Northwest, where a lot of little wings have been cut off by it and have fallen. This is to say that the Divinity rejected the high vanity of the Jewish people, which was flying in great pride and mental exaltation, trying to be just in itself and not in God; like the Pharisees, who tried to ascend into the heights of the heavens, trusting with confidence in themselves. But by God's just judgment they fell, rent in pieces for their presumption and their bad conduct.

6 The devilish divisions of the Gentiles are cut down by God and destroyed

And the middle edge faces West, where lie many decaying branches that it has cut away. For by the Trinity the heinous and diabolical schisms of the pagans, who stray from the right faith into the sunset of infidelity, are cut off. And as decaying branches are a nuisance, unfit for human use, so this people, who followed the Devil's lies and not the divine commands, was cut off and rejected from the joy of life.

And therefore all of these have been cut off by those edges for their temerity. For in all these cases, the true and holy Trinity allows the unfaithful people who boldly try to break away from it or stubbornly do not believe in it to cut

themselves off from it and go to perdition; for in their madness and ignorance they attack the Divinity, and choose not to yield to the faith that the Son of God brought in Himself. This faith He transmitted to humanity through His disciples, as the following parable shows:

7 Parable on this subject

A certain lord who owned a fire-producing flint decided to command a numerous people to do a necessary thing, both personally and through messengers. But the messengers did not understand their lord's words, and were foolish and inexperienced at fulfilling his command, stupidly nattering. So while they were trying there arose a tumult; there was a great tempest, with rain and violent thunder, so that the earth quaked and the rocks were rent. And a vessel that had lain in the earth with its mouth facing away from the heavens, and which had a lot of small vessels within it, was rooted out of the earth with great force and its mouth turned to face Heaven.

And then the lord used his flint to produce a violent fire, which ran through those messengers with such heat that all their veins were inflamed and all timid indolence was stricken from them, as quickly as something poured over a dry skin runs off it. And so at last they remembered all the things they had learned and heard from their lord; and they went forth to the rootless people, whose cities had been destroyed, and announced to them their lord's command. For some of these they reconstructed their roots and rebuilt their cities; but others they did not treat so, but slew them like pigs and divided them. And therefore that flint is respected by the whole world, and terrifies and slays all the sins of human flesh.

This means the following. That lord is the Father Almighty, with Whom is His Only-Begotten, the cornerstone conceived by the ardent Holy Spirit and born as a man from the intact Virgin, the fairest and most beautiful flower of all fair and beautiful holiness. For the Son of God in His Divinity was before all time and all creation with the Father and the fiery Comforter; and then, when it pleased the Father, He was sent as was foretold, that he might be conceived by the Holy Spirit, truly incarnate and born of the Virgin, and bestow on believers the fairness and beauty of life.

When He was incarnate, the Father benignly proclaimed through Him and His disciples the necessary thing, the deliverance and salvation of those who believed in Him. But His disciples, while the Son was with them in the world in His body, were foolish and unknowing and unresponsive, slow to understand His words in the Spirit and to fulfil them in work. For they heard them only as in a dream; they were simple, timid and frightened, and had not yet been strengthened.

And meanwhile there came the time of the raging hearts; the Jews,

causing a tumult, sought to stir up many charges against the Son of God and in that great tempest kill Him. And they carried out their malignity even as they wished; in that violent storm a murder was done such as was never seen before and will never be again. And the earth quaked, which is to say that earthly human minds and all of creation were terrified, and because of their criminal deed the laws of the Jews, written on stone, were cracked.

Then the first man, in whom is signified all of creation, and who lay buried in death, bending all his will toward the things of earth and turning his back on Heaven and God, was uprooted from the dust of death, in which he slept with his children, by the great power of the Son of God. And thus he sighed with all his heart and mind and turned to face the celestial country; for he heard Christ, the Son of God, Who was slain for his sake.

But after the Son of God had ascended to the Father, through the Son and according to His promise the Holy Spirit descended. For now the whole earth was full of heavenly dew because the Bread of Heaven had been in it; the faithless had ignored Him like a false rumor, but the faithful had received Him with all their devotion. And so, because the true Word had become incarnate, the Holy Spirit came openly in tongues of fire; for the Son, Who converted the world to the truth by His preaching, was conceived by the Holy Spirit. And, because the apostles had been taught by the Son, the Holy Spirit bathed them in Its fire, so that with their souls and bodies they spoke in many tongues; and, because their souls ruled their bodies, they cried out so that the whole world was shaken by their voices.

And the Holy Spirit took their human fear from them, so that no dread was in them, and they would never fear human savagery when they spoke the word of God; all such timidity was taken from them, so ardently and so quickly that they became firm and not soft, and dead to all adversity that could befall them. And then they remembered with perfect understanding all the things they had heard and received from Christ with sluggish faith and comprehension; they recalled them to memory as if they had learned them from Him in that very hour.

And so, going forth, they made their way among the faithless peoples who did not have roots, which is to say the sign of the knowledge of holy innocence and justice, and whose city, which is to say the instruments of God's law, had been destroyed by faithlessness. And to these they announced the words of salvation and of the true faith in Christ. And thus they brought back many of this throng to the knowledge of God and led them to the center, which is to say the font of baptism, where they received the holiness they had lost by their proud transgressions. And they built the holy city of the commandments of God, thus rebuilding the city which that seducer the Devil had taken from them in Adam, and restored it to them in the faith that leads to salvation.

But there were some who did not believe, and did not choose to receive the faith of baptism and the protection of God's command; and these, reading the signs, the apostles passed by and condemned to death for their hardness and unbelief. For in their crimes and the filth of their carnal pollutions, wallowing in fornication and adultery as a pig wallows in the mud, they were not willing to be converted to the true faith, and therefore they were divided and separated from life.

And thus the Son of God was shown throughout the whole world by many and wondrous signs, ineffably begotten of the Father in His Divinity and then miraculously born of the Virgin in time. And so the hearts of all who hear these things should be alarmed and agitated by fear and trembling, so that the vain and deceitful works they have been pleased to do may be negated in them by contempt of death. For the true Word of God bears testimony to the Holy Trinity and to life-giving salvation through the water of regeneration, as the beloved John shows in the words of his exposition, when he says:

8 Words of John

"And it is the Spirit Which testifies that Christ is the Truth. There are three that give testimony on earth: the spirit, and the water, and the blood; and the three are one. And there are Three Who give testimony in heaven: the Father, the Word and the Spirit. And the Three are One" [1 John 5:6–8; Hildegard has reversed the order of the heaven and earth parts]. This is to say that the human spirit is spiritual; it does not come from the blood, nor is it born out of the flesh, but it emerges from the secret places of God, invisible to the mutable flesh. Therefore it bears testimony to the Son of God, Whose glory is wondrous in mystical breath; no person can perfectly understand that glory, or know how the Only-Begotten of God was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born into the world, just as no person can fully know how the soul permeates the human body and blood to make up one life.

And, as the human spirit is the certain cause of the knowledge granted a person by God, and permeates everything else God gives him, being true and faithful life and not false or deceptive; so too Christ is the perfect Truth, in Whom life has risen and the light of salvation has shone, and from Whom death, which is deceptive, has fallen away.

So three, which signify the Holy Trinity, give testimony on earth, showing and granting in this world the remedy of life-giving salvation; for through that salvation the heavenly things without end must be attained, and in mortal flesh they are only awaited in hope and not possessed in actuality.

Thus the human spirit in itself testifies to Me, for it will not live fully in restored salvation unless it rises again through Me in the water of regenera-

tion. For humanity is deficient in the light that shines in Me, since it was expelled from felicity because it was corrupted into crime and increasingly bloody deeds.

And water testifies to Me, for it purifies all filthy things in it, and clearly purges the fatal pestilence of death; it is joined to the spirit before the blood is, because as the spirit is spiritual, so the water brings spiritual sanctification. It stands in the middle between the spirit and the blood, because its confirming carries both soul and body through spiritual regeneration to life.

And blood too testifies; for it alters its poisoned course toward the house of holiness through the water of salvation, which is the medicine that arises in My Son and remains in His life. For blood by itself carries shameful crimes and turbulent injustice, and runs through uncertain paths, in a twisted sweetness that leads to burning lust and frightful vices, which choke innocence, increasing in appetite by what they feed on; all this by the temptation of that seducer the Devil.

And these three are one. For the spirit without the bloody material of the body is not the living person, and the bloody material of the body without the soul is not the living person; and these two are not strengthened unto life in the grace of the new Law except through the water of regeneration, or perfected in salvation as long as they are separated from this saving water. For then the transcendent honor of life is wanting to the person's reason; the redeemed must always make perfect praise resound in the presence of God, Who gave him that reason.

For God by His own will created Man for that honor, which is consummated in the body of His Son in eternal life; when lost Man lives again in the honor of life, redeemed in God by healing grace. And the spirit, which is invisible to bodily eyes, symbolizes the Father, Who is incomprehensible to every creature; and the water, which purges filth, symbolizes the Word, the Son of God, who by His Passion wiped out human stains; and the blood, which surrounds and warms people, is a symbol of the Holy Spirit, arousing and enkindling the brightest human virtues. So these three, the spirit and the water and the blood, are in one and one in three, and, as was said, one in salvation; and they signify the Trinity in Unity, and the Unity in Trinity. How?

The holy and heavenly Trinity gives heavenly testimony; It is not taken from something else but originates by sure faith in Itself. How? The Father testifies that before the ages He begot His one fruitful Word, through Whom all things were made; and then, at the appointed time, the Word gloriously flowered in the Virgin. The Word testifies that He went forth from the Father and stooped to enter a human nature, becoming incarnate in the purity of virginity. He went forth from the Father a Spirit and returned again to the Father in fruitful flesh; and so He stands in the middle, since He

was invisibly begotten by the Father before time began, and conceived in the body within time by the Holy Spirit in the womb of the Virgin. And the Holy Spirit testifies that It quickened the intact Virgin so that she conceived the Word of God, and that It strengthened the doctrine of the same Word in tongues of flame, permeating the apostles so that they proclaimed the true Trinity throughout the world. How?

They cried aloud that God the Father had completed the work whereby He created Man for heavenly happiness, of which he was then robbed. Man was made from the mud of the earth to stand upright, but by his own will had bent down toward the earth again; but now by grace he is able to stand upright a second time through the incarnate Son of God. And, enlightened and confirmed by the Holy Spirit, so as not to perish in perdition but be saved in redemption, he has been restored to eternal glory.

9 On the distinction and unity of the Three Persons

Thus the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit testify that they are in no way disunited in power, even though they are distinguished in Persons, because they work together in the unity of the simple and immutable substance. How? The Father creates all things through the Word, Who is His Son in the Holy Spirit; the Son is He by Whom all things are perfected in the Father and the Holy Spirit; and the Holy Spirit is He by Whom all things flourish in the Father and the Son. And so these three Persons are in the unity of inseparable substance; but They are not indistinct among themselves. How? He Who begets is the Father; He Who is born is the Son; and He Who in eager freshness proceeds from the Father and the Son, and sanctified the waters by moving over their face in the likeness of an innocent bird, and streamed with ardent heat over the apostles, is the Holy Spirit.

For the Father had the Son before time began, and the Son was with the Father, and the Holy Spirit was co-eternal with the Father and the Son in the Unity of Divinity. Hence it must be seen that if one or two were lacking of these Three Persons, God would not be in fullness. How? They are one Unity of Divinity; and so, if any of Them were lacking, God would not be. For though these Persons are distinct, They are nonetheless one substance, whole and immutable and of indescribable beauty, and remain undivided in unity. How?

10 Three similes for the Trinity

Power, will and fire are the three peaks of a single height of work. How? The will is in the power, and the fire is in the will, and they are

inseparable, like expelled human breath. How? The indivisible emission of human breath is the whirling air currents, the moisture and the warmth. So too is the complete human eye. How? The circuit of your eyesight has two transparent parts, but they form one housing for all that is within them. Hear and understand, O human.

Even so there are Three Persons in one immutable essence of Divinity. In the Father is the Son, in both the Holy Spirit, and They are one, and work inseparably with each other; for the Father does not work without the Son, nor the Son without the Holy Spirit, nor the Holy Spirit without Them, nor the Father and the Son without the Holy Spirit, but They are undivided unity. Thus God is Three Persons, eternal before all ages; and the assumption of the flesh by the Son did not occur before the beginning of the world, but at the preordained time near the end of times when God sent His Son. And when the Son became incarnate and the virginal flower blossomed in her intact virginity, God was still in Three Persons and willed to be so invoked; and therefore, no Person was added to the ineffable Trinity, but the Son of God simply assumed flesh.

Hence also these Three Persons are one God in Divinity. And whoever does not believe this will be cast out of the Kingdom of God, for he tears himself away from the wholeness of Divinity in faith, as it is written:

11 Words of the Book of Kings

"And on the third day there appeared a man who came out of Saul's camp with his garments torn, and dust strewed on his head" [2 Kings 1:2]. This is to say: On the day when the Catholic faith arose by the manifestation of the Holy Trinity, humanity, which had now emerged from the camp of the army of death, broke out into many schisms and perversely sought what it was not possible for it to know. Therefore, seduced by the Devil's artful persuasions, some now imagine that they are ascending above the heights, and choose to know more than they should about the incomprehensible Divinity. And therefore the garment of salvation and justice is torn from them, because they oppose God, and they are defiled by the strewing of divisions on the head of their faith. For they lack complete faith, but scatter among many sects the honor due solely to the Deity, and they diminish His high honor by mocking it in schisms. And so God will judge them all, as is clear from the following verses:

"And David said to the young man who told him, 'Where do you come from?' He answered, 'I am the son of a stranger, an Amalekite.' And David said to him, 'Why did you not fear to put out your hand to kill the Lord's anointed?' And David called one of his servants and said to him, 'Go near and

fall upon him.' And he struck him so that he died. And David said to him, 'Your blood be upon your own head; for your mouth has spoken against you, saying "I have slain the Lord's anointed." ' " [2 Kings 1:13–16].

This is to say: The Victorious One, incomprehensible to every creature, speaks to the childish and self-exalting ignorance of humanity, which tries to know what it should not know; for in its folly it accosts God and announces to Him with temerity, "Lord, I know You well!" And God answers it thus: "Where do you come from, who, having a beginning, seek to know the Whole, which lacks a beginning?" And the folly that has arisen in the creature with a beginning says, as if it knew: "I am the son of a stranger, who comes from the accursed land; for the first man fell by the taste of the fruit, and journeyed into exile from his country, and I am his descendant."

Then God says to him: "Because you are a person from the accursed land, driven out as an exile from your country, why did you not fear presumptuously to seek out what is not for you to know? This madness chokes your deeds and makes them unable to give hope, and approaches in wickedness to murder. For anyone who rashly searches out what God was before the creation of the world, or what God will do after the last day, is to be cut off from a share in the blessed communion, which is not to be known by a creature with a beginning who is in a state of sin. And so he will be miserable, torn away from the good knowledge that saves, because he obstinately sought out what he should not have sought out.

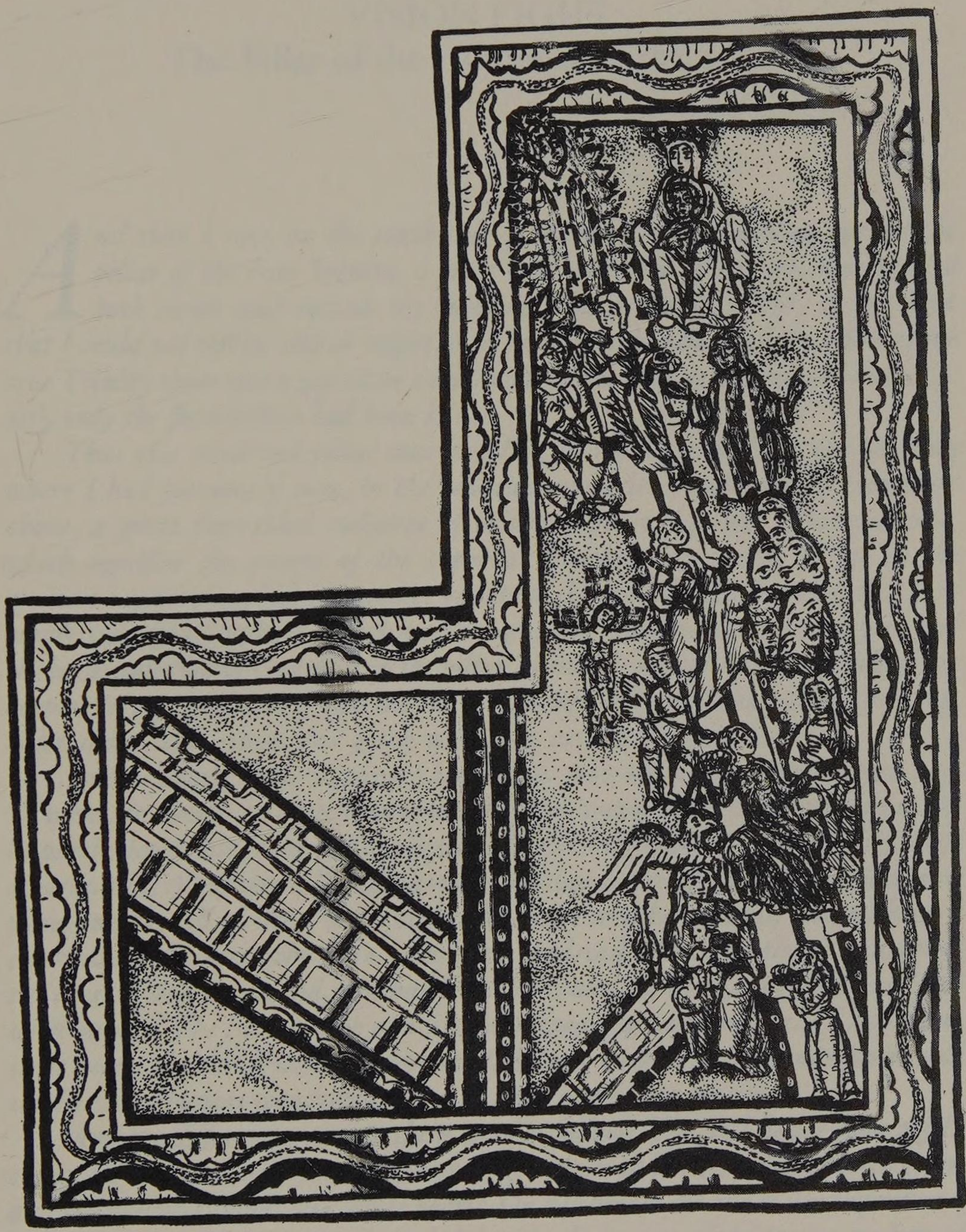
"And so you, who do these things with presumption and the cruelty of murder, are slaying within yourself the blessed understanding of King David's prophecy; for your soul should seek only pure knowledge, and believe faithfully in God with appropriate simplicity."

And then God commands the Jealousy of His pure justice, which has in it no spot of iniquity, and says to it in the righteous unity of His judgment: "Make haste and fall on him, and take from him the knowledge of good, which he had; let him never repose in any happiness of the senses, since he never prepared his heart for Me to repose in."

And so the blow of the Jealousy of the Lord strikes that creature, so that no spark of eyesight remains to him to see and know God. And so he dies to the justice of life-giving comfort, because he was not able to rule himself. And then God says to him, "Your bloody wickedness, by which you raise yourself to heights you cannot understand, recoil upon your own mind, which you unjustly raised against Me. May evil trample you underfoot in the mud, from which you cannot raise yourself to a right measure of faith, for you did not follow the right paths but sought division in your mind. May words of wisdom forsake your mouth, which spoke against your salvation when you deceitfully sought out the secret and incomprehensible Divinity, and presumed to know what is not to be known. You said rashly within

yourself, 'I know well what God is!' and through this temerity you destroyed your inner salvation; you did not choose to believe in God with discretion, but proudly raised yourself against Him."

But let the one who has ears sharp to hear inner meanings ardently love My reflection and pant after My words, and inscribe them in his soul and conscience.



PILLAR OF THE SAVIOR'S HUMANITY

VISION EIGHT
The Pillar of the Humanity of the Savior

And then I saw, on the south side of the wall of the building beyond the pillar of the true Trinity, a great and shadowed pillar, which protruded both inside and outside the building; and it was so obscure to my sight that I could not tell its size or height. And between this pillar and the pillar of the true Trinity there was a gap three cubits wide in the wall, as mentioned above [p. 325]; only the foundation had been laid.

Thus this shadowed pillar was standing in the same place in the building where I had previously seen, in the celestial mysteries vouchsafed by God from above, a great four-sided radiance of brilliant purity [p. 109]. This radiance, which signifies the secrets of the supernal Creator, was shown to me in the greatest mystery; and in it, another radiance shone forth like dawn, with a deep purple light glowing in it, which was a mystical manifestation of the mystery of the incarnate Son of God. But in the pillar, there was an ascent like a ladder from bottom to top, on which I saw all the virtues of God descending and ascending, laden down with stones and going with keen zeal to their work.

And I heard that Shining One Who was seated on the throne say, "These are God's strongest labourers!" *And among these virtues I saw seven in particular whose form and appearance I especially noted. They resembled each other in this. All of them, like all the other virtues described so far, were clad, as it were, in silk. All of them went with white hair and bare heads, and without a cloak except the first, who wore a woman's head-veil and a mantle like transparent crystal, and the second, who had black hair, and the third, whose form did not seem human. The first, fourth and fifth were wearing white tunics. All had white shoes except the third, who, as mentioned, did not seem to be in human form, and the fourth, who was wondrously shod in shoes of shining crystal.*

And the differences among them were as follows. The first figure wore a gold crown on her head, with three higher prongs; it was radiantly adorned with green and red precious stones and white pearls. On her breast she had a shining mirror, in which appeared with wondrous brightness the image of the incarnate Son of God. And she said:

BOOK THREE

1 Words of Humility

"I am the pillar of humble minds and the slayer of proud hearts. I began at the lowest point and ascended the steep slope to Heaven; but Lucifer raised himself above himself and fell beneath himself. Whoever wishes to imitate me and be my child and embrace me as a mother and carry out my work, let him start at the foundation and gradually mount upward from virtue to virtue, with a sweet and tranquil mind. For anyone who tries to ascend by taking hold of the highest branch of the tree first will more often than not swiftly fall. But anyone who begins his ascent at the root will not fall so easily, if he proceeds with caution."

And the second figure was a deep sky-blue like a hyacinth, both in person and in tunic. Into her tunic two stripes were marvellously woven and incomparably adorned with gold and gems, so that one stripe descended to the figure's feet over each shoulder in both front and back. And she said:

2 Words of Charity

"When Lucifer in Heaven devoured himself with hatred and pride, I was provoked to indignation. Oh! Oh! Oh! Humility would not tolerate this; and therefore he was cast into great ruin. But when the human race was created, oh! oh! oh! the noble Seed, and oh! oh! oh! the sweetest Offshoot, the Son of God, was born human at the end of times for the sake of humanity. Lucifer wanted and intended to rend my garment and my integrity, but I appeared as a most brilliant splendor in God and in Man. Nowadays the blind and the dead declare that the reality behind my name is brothels and harlots and incest; but just as filth cannot touch Heaven, this filthy accusation cannot touch my will. And so I will make myself wings of the other virtues, and cast out these harmful things Lucifer has scattered throughout the world. Where, O Virtues, is Lucifer? He is in Hell. So let us arise and draw nearer to the true Light, and build high and strong towers throughout all provinces; so that when the Last Day comes we may bear much fruit, both carnal and spiritual. And when the full number of the Gentiles has come in, then we too shall be perfect on earth and in Heaven. O shameful Lucifer, what did your hasty temerity avail you? In the primal splendor in which God created you, you raved and gave yourself over to madness, and tried to tread me underfoot and cast me out of Heaven; but you fell into the abyss and I stayed in Heaven, and later descended to earth in the incarnate Son of God. And through me is perfected the multitude of the faithful, armed with a thousand soldierly arts of justice and goodness; though, had you been able to, you would long since have snatched them away. O Humility, who lifts to the stars the oppressed and the crushed! O Humility, glorious queen of the virtues! What a strong

and victorious protector you are to all who are yours! No one falls who loves you with a pure heart. And I too am a valuable and desirable defense to those who are mine; for I am very slender and subtle, and I seek out in those who revere me the smallest openings, and deeply penetrate them."

The third figure I saw in the same form as I had seen her in my previous vision: greater and taller of stature than the other virtues, and non-human in form. She was covered with eyes all over her body, for she lived wholly in wisdom; she wore a shadowy garment through which the eyes could look out. And she trembled in fear before the Shining One seated on the throne. And she said:

3 Words of Fear

"Oh, woe to the miserable sinners who do not fear God but hold Him as an impostor! Who can evade fear of the incomprehensible God, Who allows the wicked who do evil to perish? Therefore I will fear the Lord God much and much. Who will help me in the presence of the true God? And who shall deliver me from His fearsome judgment? No one at all, except God Himself. Therefore I will seek Him, and fly to Him for refuge."

And the fourth was wearing a snow-white chain around her neck, and her hands and feet were chained together with white fetters. And she said:

4 Words of Obedience

"I cannot run in secular paths according to my will, or be infected by human desire; but I choose to return to God the Father of all, Whom the Devil rejected and chose to disobey."

And the fifth had a red chain around her neck. And she said:

5 Words of Faith

"God is One, to be adored in Three Persons of one substance and equal glory. Therefore I will have faith and confidence in the Lord, and never blot out His name from my heart."

And the sixth was clad in a pale-colored tunic. Before her in the air was the cross of the Passion of the crucified Son of God; and toward it she raised her eyes and hands with great devotion. And she said:

6 Words of Hope

"Spare those who sin, O loving Father! You have not forsaken the exiles, but have raised them up upon Your shoulders. And so we do not perish, who have hope in You."

BOOK THREE

And the seventh was dressed in a tunic more brilliant and pure than crystal, which shone resplendent like water when the sun reflects from it. And a dove was poised over her head, facing her with its wings spread as if to fly. In her womb, as if in a clear mirror, appeared a pure infant, on whose forehead was written "Innocence"; and in her right hand she held a royal scepter, but she had laid her left hand on her breast. And she said:

7 Words of Chastity

"I am free and not fettered, for I have passed through the pure Fountain Who is the sweet and loving Son of God. I have passed through Him, and I have come forth from Him. And I tread underfoot the Devil with his limitless pride, who has not prevailed to fetter me. He is alien from me, because I am always in the Heavenly Father."

Now at the summit of the shadowed pillar I saw another beautiful figure, standing bareheaded; it had curly black hair, and a manly face so ardently bright that I could not look on it clearly like a human one. It was clad in a tunic of purple and black, with a stripe of red over one shoulder and a stripe of yellow over the other, which fell to its feet in front and back. Around its neck it had a bishop's stole, wonderfully adorned with gold and precious gems. But a pure radiance so surrounded it that I could not look at it, except from head to foot in front; its arms and hands and feet were concealed from my sight. And that radiance around it was full of eyes on all sides, and was all alive, changing its form like a cloud and becoming now wider and now narrower. And the figure cried with a loud voice in the world, and said to humanity:

8 Words of the Grace of God, to admonish humans

"I am the Grace of God, my little children; therefore hear and understand me, for my admonition makes radiant the souls of those who do. I keep them in blessedness, so that they will not return to iniquity. And because they have not despised me, I choose to touch them with my admonition so that they will do good works; those, that is, who seek me in simplicity and purity of heart.

"So I admonish and exhort humanity, and grant it pearls of goodness; when a person's mind is touched by me, I am his beginning. That is to say, when a person understands my admonition with his sense of hearing, and his senses consent to my touching his mind, I initiate good in him. And it is needful that he begin thus, with me helping him. Then a struggle follows: Will my gift attain its end or not? How? Understand thus. When I admonish a person, so that he begins to lament and weep for his sins, then if his will consents to my admonition—for he will feel the change in his mind, and

according to his mind's desire he will raise his eyes to see and his ears to hear and his mouth to speak and his hands to touch and his feet to walk—his mind will raise itself to conquer his senses, so that they will learn things their habits could not teach them. How?

"They will change themselves, for they must, though unwillingly, follow the will that is set over them. They are subject to it in service, being its inferiors; they will follow it, willing or not. Thus I initiate good, and kindle it in the mind, and give the will work to accomplish; and this I do by admonition, exhortation and the fire of the breath of the Holy Spirit. But if the will resists these gifts, all that I have mentioned comes to naught. And therefore, while a person can still make a start, inflamed by the pre-eminent gifts that come from me, let him hasten to do so; let his will quickly come to good and end its work in splendor.

"For this is why Man has the knowledge of good and evil, that he himself in all his works may know God better by avoiding evil and doing good. For thus he worships God with fear and embraces Him with perfect charity. How? Thus: by opening the inner eyes of the spirit to good, and denying and cutting off the evil that the outer person can do. And so the earthly creation is subject to his power, that he may understand and love God the more, and with that understanding do in Him the work of his knowledge; by which knowledge he fears and loves the Almighty, Who has given him this great honor of having the creatures serve him. Thus Man must wisely distinguish between the creatures, knowing which are to be loved and hated, which are useful and which are useless; and thus all his works will be concluded in faith, through which he understands God, and pleases God and His angels.

"And sometimes I touch a person's mind to warn him to begin to work justice and avoid evil, but he disdains me and thinks he can do what he wants. He postpones the time of repentance until his body is reduced to old age enough to obey him, and he is so old he is tired of sinning. And then I admonish and urge him again to do good and resist in his mind. If he ignores me, he is often brought to the pass of doing good as it were unwillingly and in spite of himself, by monetary and other troubles that come upon him. And, with his mind thus troubled, he has little delight in doing what he planned to do when he was prosperous and unopposed, when he thought he could act as and when he pleased. And such a person receives me in doubt; but yet I choose not to forsake him, for though it was thus he received me, he did not wholly despise me. And so I do not labor vainly in him.

"For I do not find it loathsome to touch ulcerated wounds surrounded by the filthy, gnawing worms that are innumerable vices, stinking with evil report and infamy, and stagnating in habitual wickedness. I do not refuse to close them gently up, drawing forth from them the devouring poison of

malice, by touching them with the mild fire of the breath of the Holy Spirit. But often, such a wound grows hardened by old irritation, so that sin grows hot and burning in the person's mind; and in the clotted mass of this filth new wounds of sin appear, swelling and rising from the defilement of worms and the application of dark muck, from which come the deadly poisons of scorpions, serpents, frogs and other poisonous vermin. And such wounds become as hardened as stone, a hardness no one dares try to break open. These things burden such people with insupportable loads; and what happens then? People of little faith cannot believe it is possible for such a one to be converted to God from his iniquity; they see him as already food for the Devil. But I will not forsake this person; I choose, by my help and action, to be on his side in the struggle. I start by gently touching the strong and stony crust of his sin, which is so hard to break, for it stinks so vilely of horrible crimes, which have caused his great filth and wickedness and are like a rotting corpse and the food of the Devil; and he has certainly swallowed them into his stomach. How? The Scripture states that the Son of God said, 'My food is to do the will of My Father' [John 4:34]; and so the opposite is the Devil's food, by which he pulls people down into death, inspiring those who consent to his will and turn aside to follow him. And this is the desire and the continual study of the Devil, for from this filth all evil arises.

"But many of these people recognize me. How? When I begin to touch them, one of them may say to himself, 'What is happening to me? I know nothing of good and am incapable of thinking of it.' And then, in his ignorance, he sighs and says, 'Alas for me, a sinner!' But he feels nothing more, because he is weighed down by his huge weight of sin, and the darkness of iniquity troubles him. Then I touch his wounds again. And, having been admonished by me before, he understands me better this time, and looks at himself, saying, 'Woe is me! What shall I do? I do not know and cannot think what will become of me for my many sins. Oh, where shall I turn, and to whom shall I flee, who can help me cover over my shameful crimes and efface them by repentance?'

"And again he looks at himself, with the same turbulence that formerly propelled him into sin; and then he turns to true repentance, with a desire as great as his former eagerness to sin. And as this person, by my warning, thus wakes from the sleep of death, which he had preferred to life, he no longer desires to sin by thought, word or deed, which before were ardently directed toward crime. And in strong repentance he rises to me; and I wholly receive him, and from henceforward discharge him as free. He will no longer be troubled by the aforesaid things, which I use to warn my dearest children to hold out against the fiery arrows of the Devil's persuasion; for he no longer needs them. For he will always sorrow at the sins he has committed, and in his self-scorn he will do such severe penance that he will deem himself

unworthy to be called human. And this victory comes out of the stench of those filthy people, whom I choose not to cast out; for after sinning they have sought me. I am prepared to do anything they ask for those who do not spurn me but receive my admonition and devoutly seek me. But those who despise and reject me are dead, and I do not know them.

"For there are many people who, feeling my presence and understanding that my admonition has touched their minds, fly from me by the evil ways of the sins they conceive, which they have swallowed by their choice, consent and deeds. And therefore they are to God as nothing, with no being at all, since they choose not to know what they can do when I touch them. I do not want to be near the pollution of those sinners, who will not receive my admonition or purify themselves by my exhortation and turn from their sins; they do not desire to eat that food which is the Scripture of the Gospel, with which all the faithful should be satisfied, or to taste the gift of its savor. They flee from the Grace of God; for they do not want to see or hear or think of what they should do when goodness admonishes them. They flee the good admonition like a worm burrowing into the earth. The worm hides itself from all the beauty of the world; and so do the wicked, flying from the commands of God and wrapping themselves in ordure, pollution and death, and hiding in it, afraid to come out of the stench of evil into the light. Such as these do not belong to me, for I do not choose to be apportioned here and there amid the mire. How? I choose to be with those who understand me and repent in purity; and then I join myself to human corruption in order to purge it. But those who refuse to receive me I cast from me, choosing not to be with them; I have no part with them, for their part is that of stupid folly, which will not hear me. And I have no wish to take part in the work that builds up the obdurate perversity that ends in death.

"And those who spurn me thus imitate the lost angel, who saw God but did not want to contemplate and humbly acknowledge Him; and thus suddenly fled from heavenly glory and, trying to gain equal honor with God, fell into death. These people despise me because their deeds are wicked and their pleasures call for illicit carnal desires. And because they despise me, they do what they will. They set little value on God, and so neglect His command. And therefore, I often condemn them in my indignation to do their full will, and so the life of eternal happiness eludes them as if they counted for nothing. And often they fall short in happiness both in this life and in the life to come, because they are hard and unmoved by the happiness that comes from good. For I forsake the obstinate sinner who perseveres in his evil deeds, but I impart life to one who looks at himself and in pure repentance turns to me from his sins.

"For I am the firmly founded pillar, and I never forsake one who seeks me; one who understands me and intimately and faithfully unites with me

will never fall into perdition. But one who forgets me in his mind and in his pride raises himself above me is trusting in himself rather than me; he scorns to have faith in me, counting the Grace of God as nothing. I inhabit his mind like a whirlwind, but he regards me with careless mockery, desperately exalting himself in pride. And because of his pride, not because of the gravity of his sins, he mocks me thus: "What is the Grace of God?" And I will cast him down and slay him and never raise him up by my choice; for he is dead to eternal joy.

"And people who do not have confidence that they can rise from a grave state of sin reject Almighty God and His grace; they despair miserably as if they cannot be saved from the enormity of their crimes, and so they fail and are rejected by me. And they run bitterly into death, and live their eternal death in the lowest part of Hell.

"But now I shall speak of my beloved children, who receive me with open senses and willing mind and clear intellect, and touch me with sighs and tears, and follow me with joy to embrace me. O my flowers, who when they feel my presence rejoice in me, and I in them! They are more sweet and pleasant to me than precious stones and pearls to the people who most fervently desire them. They are to me, indeed, the finest cut stones; for in my sight they are always lovable. I will polish and refine them without ceasing, that they may rightly and fitly be placed in the heavenly Jerusalem, for in their minds they are always feasting with me in goodwill, never sated with my justice. When they feel my touch, they hasten to me like the hart to the water-brook. I often withdraw from them, so that it seems to them that they are without help; this I do that their outer person may not be puffed up with pride. Then they weep aloud and lament, thinking I am offended with them; but it is thus I scrutinize their faith.

"And I still hold them with a strong hand, taking away their pride and forcing them to be ignorant of what they are in their secret good deeds; for thus I will to produce in them the fruits of grief and sorrow. And sometimes I let the Devil try to seduce them with the fiery arrows of impurity and burning fornication, which wound their frail bodies; this I permit that they may be imbued with the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and so become great messengers, glorious in virtue. They are tested like gold in the furnace, tried by mockery and provocation and set at naught; very often they will be stripped of their substance by robbers, and torn like lambs by wolves in the adversities of popular dissensions. But as sheep scattered by the wolf do not die, so these people do not perish in soul but live more fully, purified by their troubles. For a good tree is watered and pruned and dug about that it may bear fruit, and worms are removed from it lest they eat the fruit. What then?

"Let good people, then, not grow hardened or embittered toward God's justice; let them be mild and prepared to receive every good, cutting off evil

from themselves and scrutinizing their works so as to repel the hurtful attacks of their enemies. For before a person feels me in his mind and his intellect knows that I am within him, I am his Head, planting fruitfulness and power within him; I establish in him the strength of the city built on the firm rock. Let every faithful person therefore hear me saying to him:

"O human! Is it proper and fitting that a rational person should be mindless like an irrational beast, which does nothing but what it wants? O wretched people, who refuse to know the great glory that God gave them when He made them in His likeness! But they cannot have their wish and freely do all the evil they desire by right, as if their bodily nature gave them permission; they forget that they have that nature so that they can do good. God in His ordinances established all things justly; and who can oppose Him? What then? Can anyone compare himself with God's ordinance, or compete with Him in wisdom or discretion about anything? And why then do they wish to give up the ability that was given them to act rightly or wrongly? How? When I warn those who understand me with my touch, and they feel my presence, by my help they can carry out their good desires; but those who despise me fall into weakness and evil. But the wicked try to excuse themselves, and claim they cannot do good works, so that they can freely work the will of their outer persons.

"So now, my dearest children, sweeter in fragrance to me than spices, hear me admonishing you. While you have time to do good and evil, worship your God with true devotion. Again, O my dearest children, who are rising like the dawn, and who must burn in charity like the sun; run and make haste, dearest ones, in the way of truth, which is the light of the world, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, Who redeemed you in the last days by His blood so that when you die you may joyfully attain to Him."

And again I heard the One Who was seated on the throne saying to me:

"Those who desire heavenly things must faithfully believe, but not wrongfully examine, the Son of God's being sent into the world by the Father and born of the Virgin. For the human mind, weighed down by the frail mortal flesh and the grave burden of sin, cannot know the secrets of God, beyond what the Holy Spirit reveals to those It wills."

9 The humanity of the Savior appears in the works of the faithful people

So, in a mystical mystery, *the pillar you see on the south side of the wall of the building beyond the pillar of the true Trinity* signifies the humanity of the Savior, Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the sweet Virgin, the Son of the Most High; for He is the strong pillar of sanctity and holds up the whole edifice of the Church. His humanity is manifested in the ardent

faith of its stones, which are the faithful people who work hard by the goodness of the Supernal Father when the Trinity has been revealed to them. For when the Trinity in One God was made known to the believing people, the belief also appeared that the incarnate Word of God must be worshipped as true God with the Father and the Holy Spirit in the unity of the divinity of the One True God.

10 The Incarnation, shadowy to the mind, is known to faith and works

It is a great and shadowed pillar, which protrudes both inside and outside the building. For the great and incomprehensible holiness of the true Incarnation is so obscure to human minds that it cannot be contemplated, except insofar as it can be done by faith. It can be understood in faith and works by those who labor in the divine cult, that is, inside the building; and those who stand idle outside can know it by words and sounds.

And it is so obscure to your sight that you cannot tell its size or height. For My Son came among humans in the mortality of the flesh to undergo death for the people, and thus was in shadow because He was mortal; but He came without any spot of sin, so that His true incarnation exceeds all the power of the human intellect, incomprehensible in the mystical greatness of God's mysteries and incalculable in the might of His divine power.

11 God alone knows who and how many will make up the body of Christ

And between this pillar and the pillar of the true Trinity there is a gap three cubits wide in the wall, as mentioned above. This is to say that the incarnate Son of God, Who is true God with the Father and the Holy Spirit, is now inherent in His members; that is, the faithful people who will be born up till the end of the world and made members of their Head through living works, as miraculously and symbolically you were shown above. But who, how many and what kind of people they will be in the long ages to come, who will adore the Trinity in the Unity of Divinity with faithful and devout worship, resides in the mystery of the ineffable Trinity; for the place of those yet to be born is empty, and the wall of their good works has not yet been built.

But the foundation has been laid, which is to say that they are in God's foreknowledge, and the faith that will save them is already strongly established; and so Man must not hope and trust in anyone except God, and never despair of His mercy, since He is the strong foundation of the faithful soul.

12 All the works of the Son and the Church are in the Father's will

But this shadowed pillar is standing in the same place in the building where you had previously seen, in the celestial mysteries vouchsafed by God from above, a great four-sided radiance of brilliant purity. This radiance, which signifies the secrets of the supernal Creator, was shown to you in the greatest mystery. This is to say that the incarnate Son of God did all His works and suffered all His injuries in the body in the world according to the Father's secret will. That great radiance expresses this, in that its four-sidedness is a symbol of God's mysteries; for many who are born in the four corners of the world are to attain to the knowledge of Christ. So does its brilliant purity, for no darkness can obscure the lucent Divinity; and so here the nature of the supernal and glorious Majesty, the Creator, Who made everything in His profound and mysterious knowledge, is revealed to you in symbols. Thus you see that no one helped that Creator, and no one resisted and opposed Him; He created everything through His Word by His will and goodness. *So in it another radiance shines forth like dawn, with a deep purple light glowing in it, which is a mystical manifestation of the mystery of the incarnate Son of God.* For thus God displays in His secret places the purity of the dawn, which is to say the Virgin Mary, who bore in her womb the Son of the Celestial Father. And the Son shed His purple blood, which glowed with the light of salvation, so that by this secret vision, the Incarnation of the Son is shown to you in mystical obscurity.

13 In Christ all virtues work fully and are openly manifested

But in the pillar, there is an ascent like a ladder from bottom to top. This is to say that in the incarnate Son of God all the virtues work fully, and that He left in Himself the way of salvation; so that faithful people both small and great can find in Him the right step on which to place their foot in order to ascend to virtue, so that they can reach the best place to exercise all the virtues. How? In the fine places which are good hearts, the virtues join in the holy work of perfecting the Son of God in His members, the people who are His elect. And so in Him is the example of perfection for all the faithful who concern themselves with the law of God and try to ascend from good to better. They see the manifestation of the true Incarnation, in which the Son of God was truly shown in the flesh; and that is where the certain ascent to the heavenly places is to be found. Therefore, *you see all the virtues of God descending and ascending, laden down with stones;* for in God's Only-Begotten the lucent virtues descend in His Humanity and ascend in His Divinity.

They descend through Him to the hearts of the faithful, who with good heart and eagerness leave their own will and betake themselves to righteous deeds, as a workman bends down to lift a stone that he must carry to a building site. And they ascend through Him when they offer to God the heavenly works that people have done with rejoicing, that the body of Christ may be perfected as quickly as possible in His faithful members. And so they carry stones to the higher places; these are the winged and shining deeds people do, with their help, to win salvation. For each action is given wings by God to rise above the filth of the human mind and gain bright splendor with which to shine before God; for what flows from the fountain of eternal life cannot be obstructed or hidden. And as a fountain should not be concealed, but in plain sight, so that everyone who thirsts may come to it and draw water and drink, so too the Son of God is not obstructed or hidden from the elect, but is in plain sight, preparing to requite all deeds and show by just rewards which ones are done for the sake of His will. Therefore let the faithful person walk to God in his faith and seek His mercy, and it will be given to him. But those who do not seek it will not find it, as a fountain does not flow for people who know of it but do not come to it. They have to approach it if they want to draw its water. Thus let Man do. Let him approach God through the law God established for him, and he shall find Him, and the bread of life and the water of salvation will be given to him, that he may no longer hunger or thirst. Therefore, *these virtues are going with keen zeal to their work;* for they run zealously to their divine labor like torrents of water, that the members of Christ may shine brighter than the sun and be nobly perfected in splendor and united to their Head. And therefore, as you have heard, they are called God's strongest laborers, because they are always active in the good deeds of the faithful.

14 The seven virtues represent the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit

And among these virtues you see seven in particular whose form and appearance you especially note. This is to say that among all virtuous deeds these seven virtues best designate the seven fiery gifts of the Holy Spirit. For it was by the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit that the glorious Virgin conceived the Son of God without sin, sanctified by these holy virtues; they were clearly shown in God's Only-Begotten and illumine the hearts of the faithful as if in His form. And by this appearance they take their place in the unity of faith, as My servant Isaiah testifies, saying:

15 Words of Isaiah

"And there shall come forth a branch out of the root of Jesse; and a flower shall rise up out of his root. And the Spirit of the Lord will rest upon

him; the spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the spirit of counsel and of fortitude, the spirit of knowledge and of piety; and the spirit of the fear of the Lord shall fill him" [Isaiah 11:1–3]. This is to say: The Virgin Mary came forth from the troubles of earthly oppression into the sweetness of moral life, as a person might come forth from a house in which he was imprisoned, not by rising above the roof but by walking in the designated path; or as a trickle of wine is pressed from the winepress, not by spurting up above the winepress but by flowing gently down in its proper channel. And why a branch? Because it is not thorny in its manner, or knotted with worldly desires, but straight, unconnected with carnal lusts; arisen, therefore, from the root of Jesse, who was the foundation of the royal race from which the stainless mother had her origin. And so from the root of that branch arose the sweet fragrance of the Virgin's intact fecundity; and when it had so arisen, the Holy Spirit inundated it so that the tender flower was born from her. How? Like a flower born in a field though its seed was not sown there, the Bread of Heaven arose in her without originating in a mingling with a man and without any human burden; it was born in the sweetness of divinity, untouched by unworthy sin, without the knowledge and utterly without the influence of the devious serpent. Hence this Flower deceived the serpent; He ascended on high and lifted up with Him the sinful human race, which the serpent had seduced and drawn down with him into perdition. And because this Flower was the Son of God, the Spirit of the Lord rested upon Him; which is to say, the Spirit of the eternal Divinity. How?

When Humility was exalted by the ascent of the Flower, scorn and disaster overtook Pride; for the first woman had listened to it when she strove to know more than she should have, but the second woman submitted to God's service and confessed Him, acknowledging herself to be small and humble. And so the Holy Spirit ardently rested on Him in Whom was hidden the surpassing charity that saved the lost people and effaced human crime and wickedness. For the fullness of sanctity was in Him, and the living light shone upon Him, and that light withered the fruit of sin and the evils that followed from it; and in that light the dead were healed, and the banner that conquered and destroyed death was raised. Sanctity was completely fulfilled in Him, because He was conceived with no mixture of sin, unlike human children who are born in many different sins. And when that Flower breathed forth a perfume of justice by deed and word, the Holy Spirit brought forth its fruit in fullness; for the Son of God, now clothed in flesh, clearly showed in His deeds what in time past the Holy Spirit had awakened in human minds by Its inspiration mystically and secretly.

The Holy Spirit is said to have rested on the Flower in a sevenfold manner, as God created all things through His Word in the Holy Spirit and on the seventh day rested from His work. But these gifts go in pairs in their

meaning; for body and soul are joined together in twofold love by the unction of the Holy Spirit, yet should work as one in fear of the Lord, since fear venerates charity with trembling and adores One above all. And so the Spirit of the Lord is known by the strong virtues that shine forth from It, as branches grow out from a root; so also there is one God from Whom all good things come and through Whom all things are wisely disposed. And, since the Spirit of the Lord rested upon that Flower, the spirit of wisdom was also with Him; for where the Spirit of the Lord was present, wisdom could not be lacking.

And so the spirit of wisdom and understanding was in Him; for when God created all things by His Word, great wisdom appeared, for it was so diffused in the Word that He was Wisdom. That Word was invisible when He was not yet incarnate, but when He was incarnate, He became visible; the Word, Who was in the heart of the Father before all creatures, by Whom all things were made and without Whom nothing was made that was made, shone forth within time as a Flower, visible as a human being and offering good understanding to all humans by His words. What then? Understanding and wisdom should go together; for Man was created by God with wisdom and should worthily have understood his Creator. Thus, before the Virgin Birth, God was to be understood as God without qualification; and after the Virgin Birth, which brought forth the Flower in the flesh, he was to be understood with amazement as both God and Man. And thus what was previously invisible to the intellect became visible and was seen in the Flower; for He was the tangible reason why Man can now understand God in His actions. How? When a person wisely worships his God, his wisdom is the origin of good works. And understanding follows; for when a person does a good work through wisdom, that work shines forth to others, and they apprehend with joy the sweet scent and taste it has because of him.

And in this virginal Flower counsel follows understanding; for Man, who had understanding, had to be freed by divine counsel. Therefore the spirit of counsel and of fortitude rested upon Him; for the Father held the counsel outside of time that His Word would be incarnate within time, perfecting all His works according to the Father's will and showing in Himself obedience, so that when it shone on people through Him they might learn to imitate Him in their actions.

And so, in the great virtue arising from His Divinity, fortitude arose; but by counsel it lay concealed in Him, that it might the more strongly vanquish the Devil. How? Fortitude rightly follows counsel; for God's counsel destroyed the kingdom of the Devil through the fortitude of His Son. The Son of God, the strong Lion, crushed fatal infidelity by the shining light of faith; for it is by great fortitude that people believe through counsel what they cannot see with their bodily sight. What does this mean? Counsel

united to fortitude pierces the hardness of stony hearts obdurate in their evil habits; it so overrides that senseless hardness that the work of the flesh is abandoned and the work of God fittingly performed. And so, in the aforesaid Flower, knowledge accompanies fortitude; for, by the fortitude God gives them, people attain to the knowledge of Him. And in His supernal sweetness, the spirit of piety resided in Him along with the spirit of knowledge. For He knowingly has compassion on human miseries, and is the hope by which people enter into salvation; and He knowingly wiped out the sin of the world in great piety by His death. What then?

Piety is rightly linked with knowledge; for the Son of God fulfilled the will of His Father knowingly and in great piety. For He, the only Son, born of the Virgin, scattered among the peoples the seed of heavenly virtue; and so He made it possible for them to follow the company of the angels in the modesty of chastity, since this virtue arose in supernal piety. And so, in the branch that came forth from Jesse, the virtues of this Flower put forth buds. The first woman had fled from these virtues by consenting to the counsel she heard from the serpent, and the whole human race fell in her and was cut off from supernal joy and glory; but the blossoming of this branch uplifted the human race in knowledge through piety to the holiness of salvation. How? The fortitude that conquers the Devil and is joined to knowledge is inspired by the Holy Spirit when faithful people devoutly acknowledge God with ardent desire and embrace Him eagerly in the very depths of their souls.

And in the virginal Flower piety is followed by fear of the Lord; for when the faithful have piety, they fear the Lord in order to fulfil His commands. And so the fear of the Lord filled that Flower. For He Himself was so full of virtues that there was no room in Him for deathly pride or pleasure in honor or transgression of the Law; he was completely full of fear of the Lord, and never sought what was not His like the first of the angels and Adam, but honored his Father in all His works and offered Him fitting obedience. And thus the fear of the Lord is the beginning of all justice, for it is the end and the beginning of the other virtues; as the seventh day of rest was both the end and the origin of all the creatures. How? Fear releases trembling, and trembling stimulates the growth of the buds of fruitful virtues. And therefore this Flower is full of fear of the Lord; for all the buds of good works are attached to Him and draw their material from Him. And the Flower gives fruitfulness in all virtues, filled as He is beyond all others with their fruit and able to perfect all good things, as the Scripture says of Him:

16 Words of Solomon

"As the apple tree among the trees of the woods, so is my beloved among the children. I sat down under the shadow of him whom I desired; and

his fruit was sweet to my palate" [Song of Songs 2:3]. Which is to say: The Son of the Virgin is the sweet Lover in chaste affection; and the faithful soul grasps Him to crown her integrity with His sweet embrace, renouncing an earthly husband. She unites herself to Christ, loves Him with binding certainty and regards Him in the mirror of faith. He is the most beautiful fruit of the fruitful tree; which is to say that the Son of the Virgin comes forth from virginal modesty as its fruit, giving refreshing food to those who hunger and sweet drink to those who thirst. And thus He excels all the trees of the woods, which is to say the human children who are conceived and live in sin, not yielding the fruit He yielded; for He came from God bearing the fruit of the sweetness of life, while others have no fruit or fecundity of their own, but only that derived from Him. How? He gave salvation to the world through his Incarnation; he appeared as the beloved Son of God among the sons of men, who through His fervor flourished and bore fruit, but were not fruitful with His great fullness. For He came from God, all-holy, and was born of a virgin. And why is He beloved? Because he treads underfoot whatever obstructs the faithful soul, which is hastening to the heavenly places.

And therefore the faithful soul most rightly calls Him beloved; for she denies herself in faithful love, and strives after Him with devotion, struggling against carnal pleasures and rebuking herself for her desires. And she is close to Him, like a wife to a husband whom she married willingly and joyfully. And so, when she begins to keep herself chaste and sigh for the Son of God, she says to herself, "I want to overthrow carnal desire and unite with this Bridegroom; He has fired me with ardent desire for Him and so kept me from the opposite fire, and under the shadow of His love I sit down." How? "Because my desire is inflamed by His love, my soul consents to my keeping down the fiery love of the flesh. And therefore His sweetest fruit, which I tasted in my soul when I sighed for God, is sweeter to me than all the sweetness of carnal delights I used to feel." And why sweet? Because He was born of the Virgin, and so has the sweetest savor and the strongest unguent, which He distils like balsam; which is the resurrection unto life, by which the dead have been raised. And that unguent has the healing in it that through His incarnation cleanses the wounds of sin; for the Incarnation is full of sanctity and sweetness and all the virtues of virginity.

Therefore, O Virginity, which by the ardent enkindling produced the greatest fruit, which shone in the star of the sea and fights the savage darts of the Devil and despises all shameful filth, rejoice in celestial harmony and hope for the company of angels. How? The Holy Spirit makes music in the tabernacle of Virginity; for she always thinks of how to embrace Christ in full devotion. She burns for love of Him and forgets the human frailties, which burn with carnal desire; she is joined to the One Husband Whom sin

never touched, without any lust of the flesh, but flowering perpetually with Him in the joy of the regal marriage.

17 On the appearance and dress of the aforesaid virtues and what it means

So, now, *you see a resemblance in the aforesaid virtues: All of them, like all the other virtues described so far, are clad, as it were, in silk.* This is to say that each of these shining lights in its own rank prepares a devout unanimity in human minds; and, like the rest of the virtues in God, they have soft garments, which is to say gentleness and affection in judging holy souls and an absence of the thorns or hardness of vice. *Some of them go with white hair and bare heads, and without a cloak;* which is to say that the virtues, which are joined in pure innocence in human minds, are without a veil of evil habits, and are not surrounded by worldly leanings, but entirely flee the influence of vice.

But *the first wears a woman's head-veil and a mantle like transparent crystal;* for she wears the chains of humble subjection to God and throws down the pride of the Devil with supernal care. She cleaves to the merciful Head, Who is Christ, and imitates in lucent purity that humble and pure Priest; and so she is without any taint of sins, restrained and humble and pure as befits the priests of that Most High Priest.

And the second has black hair; which clearly shows that through Christ her Head she cleanses the blackness of human sins.

And the third seems to have a non-human form; for her function is to alarm people and make them tremble in terror. And therefore she does not have a human appearance; for humans often disregard God and forget to fear Him, and she never does.

The first, fourth and fifth are wearing white tunics. For they are surrounded by the garment of innocence, which Adam lost when he transgressed the righteous command; it was recovered for salvation in the white Lily, Which flowered from virginity, Who assumed the work of obedience to God. And that work shines before God as the brightest star in the sky to human eyes.

All have white shoes, except the third, who, as mentioned, does not seem to be in human form. For these virtues are the most beautiful deeds of humans, who nullify in themselves the desires of the flesh, following the most splendid example of their Savior. But one does not resemble a human being, because a human is often careless and forgets himself in arrogance, but she is always careful and never takes refuge in audacity; and so she is the dispenser of just warnings, that the faithful may carefully heed God's judgment. *And the fourth is wondrously shod in shoes of shining crystal;* for she constrains

herself by her own will to pursue the shining path of Christ, and chokes death within her by the ardent flame of the Holy Spirit.

But there are differences among these virtues; which is to say that, though they are unanimous in their desire, they work diverse works in people.

18 Humility and her appearance

So *the first figure* designates Humility, who first manifested the Son of God when God, Who holds heaven and earth in His power, did not disdain to send His Son into the world. Thus she *wears a gold crown on her head, with three higher prongs,* because she surpasses and sweetly precedes the other virtues, and so is crowned with the gold crown of the precious and resplendent Incarnation of the Savior. For He adorned her head with this mystery when He became incarnate. The crown is triangular, for the Trinity is in the Unity and the Unity in the Trinity; the Son with the Father and the Holy Spirit is One True God, excelling all things in the height of Divinity. *It is radiantly adorned with green and red precious stones and white pearls.* For the Humanity of the Savior manifests the high and profound goodness of His works; the Son of God wrought them in the greenness of the blossoming of the virtues in His teachings, and in the redness of His blood when He suffered death on the cross to save humanity, and in the whiteness of His resurrection and ascension. And with all of these the Church is lighted and adorned, like an object set with precious stones.

And on her breast she has a shining mirror, in which appears with wondrous brightness the image of the incarnate Son of God. This is to say that in Humility, who stands in the heart of the sacred temple in blessed and shining knowledge, gratefully and humbly but splendidly and permanently, there shines forth the Only-Begotten of God, in all the works He performed in the body in which He showed Himself to the world. And so the noblest impulses of the hearts of the faithful elect are sealed by this figure, who sets up her tribunal in them and rules and directs all their actions. For she is the solid foundation of all human good deeds, as she shows in the maternal admonition already quoted.

19 Charity and her appearance

And *the second figure* designates Charity; for, after the Humility with which the Son of God deigned to become incarnate, the true and ardent lamp of Charity was lighted when God so loved humanity that for its love He sent His Only-Begotten to take a human body. She *is a deep sky-blue like a hyacinth, both in person and in tunic;* for through His humanity, the incarnate

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Son of God enlightened faithful and heavenly people, as a hyacinth illumines any object on which it is put down. And so He inflamed them with Charity that they might faithfully assist all the needy, and this virtue is clothed with the tunic of God's sweetness that she may shine upon all people with true light for their devotion, use and profit.

Therefore, *into her tunic two stripes are marvellously woven and incomparably adorned with gold and gems.* These are the two commandments of Charity, which issue from the sweetness of God; they are adorned with His good and noble will as if with gold, and by just works as if by bright gems, by the wonderful gift of the Supreme Giver. So that *one stripe descends to the figure's feet over each shoulder in both front and back;* for she carries those commandments very carefully, the one regarding God as on her right shoulder and the one regarding one's neighbor as on her left. As Scripture says, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself" [Luke 10:27]. This is to say:

You should love the Lord your God, Who is your Lord because He has dominion over every creature, and Who is your God because He has no beginning but only is, the Creator of all things. For the sake of the love of Him in your heart, you should overcome and throw down your material body, which is exceedingly hard to do, because if the flesh has been conquered, the spirit will reign in you, and then you will understand God in your soul. And then you will wisely keep His commandments, and not fulfil them grudgingly. And thus all the powers of your soul and body will be subject to God; for when the first victory is gained in your body, you will understand God securely in your mind in everything you propose to do. For He is a firm bulwark for you against the snares of your enemies, so that no enemy can surpass His strength; and your mind should contain these things, to confirm and consolidate everything you do.

You shall therefore do these things with all your heart, and all your soul, and all your strength, and all your mind, that nothing may be wanting to you in faith, and you may not consent to anything contrary to God; you shall not waste yourself in matters alien to Him, but collect yourself in the sweetness of His love. You shall also love yourself. How? If you love God, you love your salvation. And, loving yourself in all this, you shall also love your neighbor, who is each faithful person who is joined to you by the Christian name and faith; you shall rejoice in his righteous prosperity and heavenly salvation, and his steadfast preservation in faith, in the same way you rejoice in your own salvation.

And this therefore is the double work of Charity in humans, descending to their very feet, which is to say to the appointed end; and it shows before

them in loving God, and behind them in helping other people and thus following Charity. And then Death is rejected, and the people may attain the perfection of life, as Charity declares in her words already quoted.

20 Fear of the Lord and her appearance

And *the third figure* signifies Fear of the Lord, who arose in the minds of the faithful after the Charity God showed humanity when He willed His Son to undergo death for its sake. And this Fear arose that people might understand the heavenly commands more fully and perfectly than they previously had when doing them. Now *you see her in the same form as you did in your previous vision;* for the immutable God, as was declared to you before, must be held in equal and similar honor and reverence in every thing and creature of His. And *she is greater and taller of stature than the other virtues, and non-human in form;* for she above all the others brings people anguish and trembling. They look with sharp vision upon the greatness of the Supreme Majesty and the loftiness of His Divinity, and they grow afraid; for God is to be dreaded and venerated by all people, since they were created by Him and not another. For which reason this virtue does not resemble a human being; for, as was mentioned, she rejects the perverseness that opposes God with evil deeds, and fixes her inner eye on God alone and walks the righteous paths of His will. Thus *she is covered with eyes all over her body, for she lives wholly in wisdom.* For, with the eyes of good understanding, she looks all around her and contemplates God in all His wonders, so as to pick out the right path of good works and bypass the Devil's morass of evil works by that knowledge of God. She shines with wisdom, for she despises the deadly things that harm the spirit; she flees death and abandons iniquity, and wisely builds herself a house in life.

She wears a shadowy garment through which the eyes can look out. For she is surrounded by the severe abstinence that destroys carnal desire in humans; and in that abstinence she looks toward the light of life, in which Man is wondrously brilliant in beatitude. *And she trembles in fear before Me.* For into the hearts of ardent people she infuses anguish and trembling, so that they will always hold in dread the turbulence and weakness of their flesh; and thus they will not slide into sin, or place their confidence in themselves or other people, but in Him Who reigns for all time. And so she avows in her speech already quoted.

21 Obedience and her appearance

And the fourth designates Obedience; for when Fear is shown to Me in reverence, it is next fitting that My commands be obeyed. Thus she *is*

wearing a snow-white chain around her neck; for when people forsake the strength of the neck of their own wills and join with the innocent Lamb, My Son, she makes their minds pure by the subjection of faithful obedience. *And her hands and feet are chained together with white fetters;* for she is bound by the purity of true faith to the work of Christ and the way of truth. And she does not act or walk as she wishes, but as God the Ruler tells her, as she demonstrates in her words already quoted.

22 Faith and her appearance

And the fifth designates Faith; for when the people have Obedience, and obey My commands upon hearing them, they will become believers in Faith, and faithfully fulfil in deeds what they learn by wisdom and admonition.

She *has a red chain around her neck;* for she perseveres faithfully and steadily, and is adorned with the martyrdom of blood. So she trusts not in deceptive vanities but in God, and this, as already quoted, she declares about herself.

23 Hope and her appearance

And the sixth represents Hope, who rises to life after Faith and belief in God. Her life is not on earth, but hidden in the heavenly places until the time of the eternal reward, for which Hope longs with her whole desire, as does a servant for his pay or a youth for his inheritance. Thus she *is clad in a pale-colored tunic;* for her trust is as yet pallid, because she has not yet been rewarded, but wearily awaits the coming of her longed-for desire.

But *before her in the air is the cross of the Passion of the crucified Son of God; and toward it she raises her eyes and hands with great devotion.* This is to say that she causes in the minds of the faithful a celestial desire, as if it hovered in the air, for the martyrdom of My Only-Begotten, so that they may raise to Him with humble and sincere minds this inner vision of faith and the glorious results of their labor. And so she says in her prayer already quoted.

24 Chastity and her appearance

And the seventh designates Chastity. For after people have placed their hope fully in God, the perfect work increases in them, and then by Chastity they start wanting to restrain themselves from the desires of the flesh. For abstinence in the flower of the flesh feels strongly, as a young girl who does not want to look on a man nonetheless feels the fire of desire. But Chastity renounces all filth and longs with beautiful desire for her sweet Lover, the sweetest and loveliest odor of all good things, for Whom those who love

BOOK THREE

Him wait in timid beauty of soul. Thus she *is dressed in a tunic more brilliant and pure than crystal, which shines resplendent like water when the sun reflects from it.* It is brilliant because of her simple intent, and pure because not covered with the dust of burning desire; miraculously strengthened by the Holy Spirit, she is enwrapped in the garment of innocence, which shines in the bright light of the Fountain of living water, the splendid Sun of eternal glory.

And a dove is poised over her head, facing her with its wings spread as if to fly. This is to say that Chastity at her beginning, at her head, as it were, is protected by the extended and overshadowing wings of the Holy Spirit; and so she can fly through the Devil's snares, one after another. For the Spirit comes with the ardent love of holy inspiration to wherever Chastity shows her sweet face.

Therefore too, *in her womb as if in a pure mirror appears a pure infant, on whose forehead is written "Innocence."* For in the heart of this purest and brightest of virtues there lives inviolable, beautiful and sure integrity. Its form is immature because it is simple infancy that has integrity; and its forehead, which is to say its knowledge, shows no arrogance and pride but only simple innocence.

And *in her right hand she holds a royal scepter, but she has laid her left hand on her breast.* This is to say that on the right, the side of salvation, life is shown in Chastity through the Son of God who is the King of all people. And through Him as defender, Chastity confounds the left, the side of lust, and reduces it to nought in the hearts of those who love her. How? She allows no liberty to lust; as a fierce bird snatches a rotting corpse and tears it and reduces it to naught, she rejects and crushes stinking lust in God's sight. And, defeated by her, it cannot survive, as she hints in her words, already quoted.

25 The Grace of God and its appearance

But *at the summit of the shadowed pillar you see another beautiful figure.* This is to say that, by the supreme and surpassing loving kindness of the Almighty in the Incarnation of the Savior, another resplendent virtue was manifested, namely the Grace of God. And it is powerful and full of God, admonishing people to repent, so that all their villainies may be forgiven through it.

It stands bareheaded; for its dignity and glory are revealed to all who seek it. *It has curly black hair;* for the Only-Begotten of God clothed Himself in virginal flesh without a stain of sin in the time of the Jewish people, who were tangled and knotted up in their black unfaithfulness.

And *it has a manly face so ardently bright that you cannot look on it clearly*

like a human one. For God's Grace, in the powerful might of Divinity, appeared to give life in life, and it burns so ardently in that glorious Divinity that no human being can see it with inner or outer sight while he is still weighed down by the heaviness of the body. So it does not stand with its secrets revealed to human judgment, but is mysterious; for the judgments of divine grace are hidden.

It is clad in a tunic of purple and black, which is to say that the work of Grace, which burns in charity, leans down over the blackness of sins as if it were clothing people. How? It warns people toward salvation, and lifts them from the mire of sin toward the vision of the light by means of penitence. For, as day puts the darkness to flight, it builds up sinners toward life by taking away their misdeeds through repentance.

This tunic has a stripe of red over one shoulder and a stripe of yellow over the other, which fall to its feet in front and back. For the Grace of God, in its strength and piety, bends down to the faithful and lifts them on high to heavenly places. How? By the two ways of the stripes. It grasps the anguish of the frail flesh, worn out by bloody battle, and the strength of the soul, grown tepid in the body, and draws them up to love of heavenly things by the red and yellow splendor of the Humanity and the Divinity of the Son of God, the most serene Sun. And so the faithful person who is touched by the integrity of Grace can resist his own sinful desires; he can put virtue in front of him and mortify vice behind him, and thus courageously consummate his works and be clothed in them as in lovely and delightful clothes.

And *around its neck it has a bishop's stole, wonderfully adorned with gold and precious gems.* This is to say that Christ, the Son of God, Who is the High Priest of the Father, has the high power of the priestly office everywhere in the world; and so that office should be adorned by the Grace of God with the gold of wisdom and the gems of virtues by the faithful who are His imitators and members. But *a pure radiance so surrounds it that you cannot look at it, except from head to foot in front;* for the Grace of the Omnipotent is surrounded by the serene whiteness of His mercy. In the times before the Humanity of the Savior, Grace was hidden, invisible and unknown, in the mystery of the Divinity; only from the time of His Incarnation down to the last of His members, who will live at the end of the world, does Grace show forth as far as possible to human understanding, openly manifested in its works.

But *its arms and hands and feet are concealed from your sight;* for the true power and deeds and goal of the Grace of God working in humans can be fully known to no one who is weighed down by a body.

And *that radiance around it is full of eyes on all sides, and is all alive.* This is to say that the divine pity, which dwells in the Grace of God, manifests His many mercies and His abundant compassion in the form of many eyes,

which look upon the sorrows of the people who try to follow God. And that radiance is all alive to console and save their souls, and does not prepare perdition for them, but life.

And that radiance changes its form like a cloud; for Grace goes before the just, that they may watch themselves and not fall, but follows sinners, that they may repent and rise again. And *it becomes now wider and now narrower;* for to the miserable and weeping hearts of the faithful Grace comes in great abundance and fruitfulness, while in the profligate and hard minds of sinners it often contracts itself to a trickle because of their aridity.

And so God's Grace precedes and follows, touches and warms people, as was said; and those who desire to be the children of God can ardently receive and fulfil its words, despising fleeting things and embracing lasting ones. And so this virtue encourages the children of God to do, in its exhortation already quoted.

But let the one who has ears sharp to hear inner meanings ardently love My reflection and pant after My words, and inscribe them in his soul and conscience.

THE TOWER OF THE CHURCH

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VISION NINE
The Tower of the Church

After this I saw, in front of the pillar of the humanity of the Savior, a tower of brilliant splendor, set into the stone wall on the south side of the building so that it was visible both inside and outside the building. Its breadth was five cubits across any radius of its interior, but its height was so great that I could not make it out.

And between that tower and the pillar of the humanity of the Savior there was nothing but a foundation laid, on which the wall had not yet been built. Thus there appeared an empty gap, as mentioned [p. 325], which was one cubit long. And this tower was not yet finished, but was being diligently constructed, with great skill and speed, by a great many workers. Around its summit there were seven bulwarks, built with wonderful strength.

And I saw a ladder, which reached from the inside of the building to the summit of this tower, with a multitude of people standing on the rungs from the bottom to the top. They had fiery faces and white garments, but black shoes; and among them were some who were similar in form but taller and more splendid, who looked at the tower with great concentration.

And then, to the north of the building, I saw the world and the people who descended from Adam going to and fro between the building's shining wall of reflective knowledge and the circumference of the circle that surrounded the One seated on the throne. Many of these people went into the building, between the tower of the anticipation of God's will and the pillar of the divinity of His Word, entering and leaving through the wall of reflective knowledge like clouds, which are diffused here and there. And each one who entered the building was clothed in a white garment. Some of them rejoiced with great joy in the smoothness and softness of this garment, and kept it on; but others seemed bothered by its weight and confining nature, and tried to take it off. And that virtue whom I had previously heard called the Knowledge of God often graciously stopped them, and said to each one, "Consider, and keep the garment with which you are clothed."

And I saw that some of them accepted this rebuke, and though the garment seemed to hinder them, they made a great effort and kept it on; but others scoffed at these words, furiously pulled off the garment and threw it away, returning to the world from which they had come. And there they tried out many things and learned a lot about useless worldly vanities. And some of them at last returned into the building, took up the garment they had thrown away and put it on again;

but others did not try to return, but remained ignominiously in the world, stripped of it.

And I saw that some, who were very dirty and black and acted insane, came from the North and burst into the building; they invaded the tower, carrying on and hissing at it like serpents. And some of them left off this madness and were made pure, but the others persevered in their wickedness and filth.

And I also saw, inside the building facing the tower, seven white marble pillars, completely smooth and round, seven cubits high. They supported a round dome of iron, which rose nicely to a fair height. And on top of this dome I saw a very beautiful figure standing and looking out at the people in the world. Her head shone like lightning, with so much brilliance that I could not look directly at it. Her hands were laid reverently on her breast; her feet were hidden from my sight by the dome. She had on her head a circlet like a crown, which shone with great splendor. And she was clad in a gold tunic, with a stripe on it from the breast to the feet, which was ornamented with precious gems; they glittered in green, white, red and brilliant sky-blue. And she cried out to the people in the world, saying:

1 Words of Wisdom

"O slow people, why do you not come? Would not help be given you, if you sought to come? When you begin to go in God's ways, gnats and flies buzz and hinder you; but take up the fan of the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and drive them away as fast as possible. You should run, and you should hope for God's help. Show that you are unfeignedly in God's service, and you will be strengthened by His hand."

And on the pavement of the building I saw three other images; one of them leaned against the marble pillars, and the other two stood before her on each side. All of them were directing their attention toward the pillar of the humanity of the Savior and the tower that was being built. She who was leaning against the pillars seemed to be as broad as five people standing side by side, and so tall that I could not take in all her height; and thus she could see everything in the building. She had a large head and clear eyes, with which she was looking acutely into the heavens; and she was as white and translucent as an unruffled cloud. But I could see no other human attributes in her. And she cried out in a voice that rang through the whole building, saying to the rest of the virtues:

2 Words of Justice

"Let us swiftly arise; for Lucifer is spreading his darkness through the whole world. Let us build towers, and strengthen them with heavenly bulwarks, for the Devil is the adversary and opponent of the elect of God.

VISION NINE

Lucifer began by wanting and trying to get too much in his glory; and now he wants and tries to get too much in his darkness. For he blows and scatters his malice and wickedness all over, and never ceases. And we are the soldiers of Heaven against him, to conquer him in his malice and wickedness; for otherwise, because of his enmity, people will not be able to be saved in the world. And as he, when he first revolted, tried to resist the Divinity, so too will his imitator, the Antichrist, try to resist the Lord's Incarnation in the last days. Lucifer was thrown down at the beginning of time; Antichrist too will fall, at the end of time. Then it will be known Who is the true God; it will be seen Who He is, Who has never fallen. But as Lucifer had demons as supporters, who followed him from the height of Heaven as he fell to damnation, so even now he has people on earth who follow him to the ruin of perdition. So we virtues are appointed to fight his subtleties and mockeries, which he sends into the world to devour souls; and so we will reduce all his arts to naught in the souls of the just, until he is confounded in every respect. And so we acknowledge God, Who is just in all things, and so must not be concealed but made manifest."

And the first of the figures who stood before this one on each side appeared to be armed; she was arrayed in a helmet, breastplate, greaves and iron gloves, and held an unsheathed sword in her right hand and a spear in her left. And she trod a horrible dragon under her feet, sticking the spear into its mouth so that it vomited forth unclean spume. And she held the sword as if to strike with it, brandishing it vigorously. And she said:

3 Words of Fortitude

"O mighty God! Who can resist or oppose You? The ancient serpent, the devilish dragon, cannot. Hence, with Your help, I too choose to resist him so that no one may prevail over me or throw me down, be he strong or weak, prince or outcast, noble or baseborn, rich or poor. I choose to be the strong steel that makes all the arms to be used in God's wars unconquerable; I am the sharp edge of those weapons, and because of You, O mighty God, no one can dash me in pieces. Through You I arise to overthrow the Devil. Hence I am a sure refuge for weak humans, and give their softness a cutting sword for their defense. O merciful and benevolent God, help the broken-hearted!"

The other figure had three heads; one was in the normal place and one was on each of her shoulders, but the middle one was a little higher than the other two. The middle and the right-hand one shone so brightly that their brilliance dazzled my eyes, so that I could not quite see whether their faces were masculine or feminine; the one on the left was a little bit shadowed, and veiled with a woman's white veil. The figure was dressed in a white silk tunic and white shoes. On her

breast was the sign of the cross, about which a great radiance shone like the dawn. In her right hand she held a naked sword, which she laid with great devotion against her breast and the cross.

And I saw written on the forehead of the middle head, "Sanctity," and on that of the right-hand one, "The root of goodness," and on that of the left-hand one, "Self-sacrifice." And the middle one looked at the other two, and said:

4 Words of triple-headed Sanctity

"I spring from holy Humility, born of her as an infant is born of its mother. By her I was raised and strengthened, as a child is cherished and strengthened by a nurse. My mother Humility bears down and conquers all opposition, even that which is unbearable to others."

And the right-hand head looked at the middle one, and said:

5 Words of the right-hand head

"I rise from my root in the lofty-headed mountain Which is God. And therefore, O Sanctity, I must be attached to your body to enable you to stand."

And the head at the left also looked at Sanctity's middle head, and said:

6 Words of the left-hand head

"O woe, O woe, O woe! How could I be so rigid and inflexible as not to conquer myself, O Sanctity, and come to your aid? For if I fled, you could not stand without me. Alas, alas, alas for the neglecter of good! I must root out the painful thorn that would prick me toward perdition, and pluck it out before it is completely buried in me and inflames me with foul corruption. O Sanctity, I seek to evade and break, with God's help, the Devil's entangling snare, that you may freely persevere in your work."

And again the One Who, as described above, was seated on the throne, showed these things to me and said:

7 After the Incarnation a new people built a new wall of virtues

When the Son of God became incarnate, a new people was called and arose, supported by His doctrine of salvation in the Holy Spirit. They were fortified against the fearsome enemy, whom no one can resist without the help of God's grace, by the exhortations of the strong toward blessed virtue. And, with God's help, they were so unconquerable that no art of that seducer could tear them or take them away from God. Therefore, *this tower you see in*

front of the pillar of the humanity of the Savior represents the Church. It arose when My Son's Incarnation was accomplished, newly built out of all good works and the lofty strength of heavenly deeds; it is a strong and fortified tower, standing against the Devil and resisting his iniquity.

8 The Church, illumined by Christ's humanity, displays all human knowledge

Therefore *this tower is of brilliant splendor, set into the stone wall on the south side of the building so that it is visible both inside and outside the building.* For the Church is illumined by the steady light of the humanity of the Son of God. To construct the divine edifice, she joins together living stones enkindled by the fire of the Holy Spirit; and thus her part in the work the Supreme Father is doing through His Only-Begotten is manifest both to believers and to unbelievers, to the inner understanding that comes from heavenly knowledge of Scripture and to the outer foolishness of secular affairs.

9 The Church gives all her adornments to her Bridegroom

Its breadth is five cubits across any radius of its interior; for the Church honors the Lamb, her Bridegroom, by giving Him all her inner thoughts and meditations, which ornament her by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, on what she receives through the five senses. And she also gives Him all the virtues the true Lamb shows her.

10 The human heart cannot comprehend what divine wisdom works in the Church

But its height is so great that you cannot make it out; for the height and depth of divine wisdom and knowledge in the work of the Church is too great to be understood by the fragile mortal human heart.

11 The Church is moving toward perfection but only God knows what it will be

And between that tower and the pillar of the humanity of the Savior there is nothing but a foundation laid, on which the wall has not yet been built; thus there appears an empty gap, as mentioned, which is one cubit long. This is to say that the knowledge of God, that firm foundation, conceals from the Church, the betrothed of My Son, that great praise she will have; for she is not yet radiant in complete perfection, and lies in human hearts without fully flowering in

them. But the gap is one cubit long, narrow enough to reach across; for the human senses are in the power of the One True Almighty God, and thus people can know good and evil and grasp through their intellect whatever is useful for them. And this was clearly shown you above.

And this tower is not yet finished, but is being diligently constructed, with great skill and speed, by a great many workers. This is to say that the Church has not yet come to the direction and status she will have; but, with great diligence and industry, she incessantly hastens toward her full beauty through swiftly passing time and by means of her children.

12 The Church is surrounded by the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit

And the tower *has around its summit seven bulwarks, built with wonderful strength.* For the Church is surrounded in her high celestial labors by the seven impregnable gifts of the Holy Spirit; and they are so strong that no adversary can destroy them, or even lift his mind so far as to touch them.

13 The Church is fortified by its doctors, flowering in apostolic doctrine

And *you see a ladder, which reaches from the inside of the building to the summit of this tower.* This is to say that the work the Supreme Father worked through His Son in His divine counsel had many stages by which the Church was set up and progressed. These stages, by the simple unity of the plan for the Church, lead to the height of the secret places of Heaven, strengthening and fortifying the Church as they go.

So *a multitude of people are standing on the rungs from the bottom to the top.* For throughout the Church's progress, from her first betrothal to the nuptial day when she will openly rejoice with her Bridegroom in the full number of their children, the shining apostles stand on the rungs of God's commands, giving light and protecting her from the darkness of infidelity.

14 The doctors of the Church have brought back the erring to true faith

And thus *they have fiery faces and white garments, but black shoes.* For in the minds of these apostolic guides the flame of the Holy Spirit kindled wondrous faith in the One God, so that they were resplendent before God and the world in the bright garment of good works. But they have black shoes, because they walked on the roads of infidelity and the filthy crimes of

the unbelievers; and they won them over by their example, and finally, with great difficulty, converted them to the way of justice.

15 The apostles and their successors tenderly care for the Church

And *among them are some who are similar in form but taller and more splendid.* This is to say that the apostles stand out among those defenders of the Church as its first founders; after the Son of God, they built her by their preaching. They and their followers who imitate them had the same ideas, which the apostles preached and their successors believed; but the apostles are outstanding, since they had no predecessors from whom to draw the example of the new grace except the Son of God Himself, from Whose mouth they heard the words of life. And they also surpass the others in glory, because it was they and not the others who saw the splendor of the Incarnation. *And they are looking at the tower with great concentration;* for they are always there to help the Bride of God in divine love and solicitous piety, so that she can continue in perfect strength. As it is written:

16 Words of Solomon

"Your neck is like the tower of David, which is built with bulwarks; a thousand bucklers hang upon it, all the armor of the valiant" [Song of Songs 4:4]. This is to say:

The Incarnation of the strong Lion, the Son of the Supreme Ruler, Who arose from the blooming of the Virgin, is the strongest instrument of the new grace; and so too the strength of your incorrupt faith, O Bride, is set as the sure rampart of the faithful people. How? All your children stand and join themselves into walls around your strength, nourished by the new light that trickles from the pure living Fountain. And in this strong joining they hold you as the neck holds the head to the rest of the body; and so you cannot be destroyed or dismembered, anymore than the victorious weapons of true David could be defeated. How?

The strong tower is the strength of Christ Jesus the Son of God, and in it the conquering hosts of the faithful are tested without defeat. No adversary can boast of prevailing over them, for they hold fast to Christ, true God and Man, through Whom in the Second Coming all your children will gloriously attain adulthood in salvation. To this end the pure Incarnation was foretold by the prophets and adorned by precious gems of virtue. And it was manifested through the world for the salvation of believers through those bulwarks of apostolic doctrine who planted the justice of the True Light, as the following parable shows.

17 Parable on the same subject

A certain lord had a marble city; he cried out upon it with a loud voice, and inscribed writings on its inner walls, from which the scrapings of the stone trickled down. And he spoke a single word to the waters of the sea, commanding them to rise above the mountaintops. And, this being done, he told the flames of the fire to burn on the altars of small tabernacles; and when they did, the tabernacles grew so high that they rapidly overtopped the city. Which is to say:

This lord is the One Whom no other ever excelled in dominion. He alone is over all things and in all things, for nothing is before Him or after Him; and so He is Lord of all. He had in His power this noble city, the company of the prophets, who were strong and constant against the raging tempests of the world. And when the Lord cried out upon them, He filled them with the Holy Spirit, and stirred them up to bring forth His mysteries in obscure words, as a distant sound is heard when the words cannot yet be made out. But the true Word, the incarnate Son of God, followed on the sound of their prophecy. And when the Lord infused their understanding richly with the spirit of wisdom, He inscribed many things in their hearts; and thus they prophesied by their sense of the Spirit the mysteries of God in the present and future, and uttered in the Spirit harsh words against wicked human behavior. And so they moved the hard hearts of the Jews to mildness and compassion and good works.

But after the Word of God became incarnate, the Heavenly Father gave a sign to His apostles, who, though human, were set apart from the common people, like pure streams diverted from the other waters that flow in a plain. He told them to flow forth into the world in a flood of true faith, overturning and wearing away the great divisions of pride and idol-worship, that all by their preaching might know the true God and forsake their infidelity. And when this faith was strengthened in the people, the Provider for all gently spoke to His elect, whose minds glowed with the flame kindled by the glowing hearts of those touched by the fiery tongues of the Holy Spirit. And He told them to despise the world and contemplate celestial life, and not to refuse to be humble and poor in spirit, but to dwell in humility so as to prepare for themselves treasure in Heaven. And those martyrs and virgins and other self-rejecters who did despise transitory things and worked in humility, meditating in lofty zeal on God's wise precepts, ascended in that self-denial to the love of heavenly things. And so in the eagerness of their good works they surpassed the vinedressers who worked in the vineyard of the Old Testament, for they counted themselves as nothing and strove with their whole desire toward Heaven.

And so a thousand bucklers, perfect defenses of the perfected faith,

hang from the Son of God. And the first shepherds of the Church follow His example and despise themselves for the hope of Heaven; they pour out their blood to protect the Catholic faith from the fiery darts of the Devil, which wound human souls. And the other elect, who follow them, also form a heavenly militia and take arms to establish the love of God in this world. How? The ancient serpent infused into the first man the evil stench of contempt for God, and so the Devil himself is now pierced with the darts of Heaven: the perfume of the spices of charity and continence, and the fetters of God's commandments, and the yoke of Christ's company. And thus, cast out from the city of God, confounded and trodden down into his clear damnation, he is abhorred by all the faithful.

18 Those who live according to the flesh await the knowledge of God's power

But now *to the north of the building you see the world, and the people who descend from Adam going to and fro between the building's shining wall of reflective knowledge and the circumference of the circle that surrounds the One seated on the throne*. This is to say that by the sin of the first parent the world and worldly people are subject to carnal desires, which are centered on earthly weaknesses and worldly longings. But, for one thing, the knowledge of good and evil has been given them, that they may draw near to God by good and fly from evil; and, for another, God has shown them His power, that they may know they are under His rule and all their deeds are judged by Him.

19 The different kinds of people who enter and leave the Church

Many of these people are going into the building, between the tower of the anticipation of God's will and the pillar of the divinity of His Word, entering and leaving through the wall of reflective knowledge like clouds, which are diffused here and there. For some approach the divine work through reflective knowledge, admonished by the Old and New Testaments and renouncing carnal desires. But some follow their pleasure and go out of it in the same way due to their evil desires; their will for good or evil propels them as swiftly as clouds, and they withdraw, carried passively by their thoughts. *And those who enter the building are clothed in a white garment;* which is to say that those who approach God's work with good will are clothed by His mercy in a pure and shining garment of the true faith that knows God. *Some of them rejoice with great joy in the smoothness and softness of this garment, and keep it on*. For they are imbued with sweet and mild Catholic faith and have a

contrite and humble spirit, and they are bathed in inner holiness; so they rejoice with their inner vision in heavenly things, and devoutly do and keep what the Holy Spirit inspires in them. *But others seem bothered by its weight and confining nature, and try to take it off.* For they feel weighed down by a heavy burden and impeded by the difficulty of the path; so they tear and torture themselves inwardly by their restless and bitter habits and forbidden desires, and end by trying to reject faith in works and refusing to listen to the divine precepts. *And that virtue whom you heard called the Knowledge of God often graciously stops them, admonishing them in the words already quoted.* For the Most High God, as you saw, knowing how hard human hearts can be softened, in His mercy inclines Himself to them. He reminds them often to pray to Him and inwardly lament and weep, that He may deliver them from their perilous iniquity, to which they came by the Devil's persuasion. And by this penitence He tells them to return to knowing what good will is, and remembering the garment of innocence they received by the regeneration of the Spirit and water.

And you see that some of them accept this rebuke, and though the garment seems to hinder them, they make a great effort and keep it on. This is to say that, when the Holy Spirit admonishes them and they receive the warning in faith, they choose the path that is harsh and difficult for them; and finally, not letting their weariness make them despairing or apathetic, with great labor they complete it.

But others scoff at these words, furiously pull off the garment and throw it away, returning to the world from which they have come; and there they try out many things and learn a lot about useless worldly vanities. These are the people who hold God's law and justice in derision; in their vain error they strip themselves of the Catholic faith and deny it by wicked works, which lead to death, and turn aside to the worldly vanities that they earlier pretended to leave. And there they use perverse arts to probe into lustful deeds, and so learn the strong savor of the world; and the Devil deceives them into perversions and mockeries. *And some of them at last return into the building, take up the garment they threw away and put it on again;* for they return from the way of error to the divine path, and reject the schisms the Devil had imposed on them. And so they resume the dress of true faith, which they received in baptism and threw away in error when they scorned the true God; and they praise Him again with pure and simple heart. *But others do not try to return, but remain ignominiously in the world, stripped of it.* For they disdain to return to God in pure penitence, and remain despoiled of the garment of innocence and stripped of the good that would come from works of faith. And so, full of the Devil's vicious arts in the evil vanities of the world, they live impenitent till death, and so are confounded both in this world and in the life to come.

20 On simoniacs, and the hidden divine judgment on them

And you see that some, who are very dirty and black and act insane, come from the North and burst into the building; they invade the tower, carrying on and hissing at it like serpents. This is to say that there are wicked people, willful and blithely careless, who are blackened by the Devil's point of view, and so despise God. Therefore, they seek what they desire not through the gift of the Holy Spirit, but inspired and incited by devilish arts. So they come from the direction of Hell and craftily get into the divine edifice; and by secret intrigues and open seizure, they insanely ingest the offices ordained by God by means of execrable, horrible, devilishly black money. And by their mad folly they throw the Church into disorder, and so hiss at her with the deceiving hisses of the ancient serpent. How? With diabolical cleverness they mislead the unwary and conquer them with deadly bribes; and their boastful hissing corrupts the Church, for they are stealing the powers God constituted in her. And because they do these things, they are banished from My sight; I do not recognize them as holders of these offices, for they got them by themselves and not through Me. And so My servant Hosea indicates, saying, "They have reigned, but not by Me; they have been princes, and I knew not; of their silver and their gold they have made idols for themselves, that they might perish" [Hosea 8:4]. This is to say:

People who do their own will set up for themselves whatever their own desires dictate. What is that? Their lustful will, which persuades them that they can rule people by offices they have stolen or seized, though they never asked or got them from or were set up in them by Me. Sometimes I allow this to happen, so that their wills may bring them to judgment, punishing them for not seeking Me. What will it profit them? For it will produce nothing in them but aridity; it is not rooted, and will give rise to a useless weed without a trunk. For fruitless plants spring up easily by themselves from the ground; but fruit-bearing ones must be sown and planted with great labor. And so I sometimes allow a person's earthly desires to blossom, if they have no root in evil, though they also seek no root in good and so will lack summer fertility. I also sometimes allow a virtuous desire, well-rooted in good, to bear fruit in misery; for I love to water with sanctity all that lacks winter sterility. And so the vile often surpass the useful common people in power, as weeds are sometimes taller than useful plants; but these people are appointed only by their own desires, not rooted firmly in My planting or touched by My gift of knowledge. And I permit this to happen by just judgment; for they established themselves by themselves and did not ask Me, and they will answer for it in the judgment.

For these people pervert to their vain opposites the felicity of good

doctrine, which should be mentally purified from unworthy unbelief as silver is purified from dross, and the utility of deep wisdom, which should make their faith splendid and show them how to worship, venerate and confess God. How? They turn this felicity to profound infelicity, for they give the reason they have from God over to the insatiable lusts of the flesh as if that stinking and putrid flesh were God. They do not seek to raise their eyes to the God Who made them, but they hold their own will as God, living by what they ordain for themselves. And they do this not to possess the field that bears the crop of eternal life, but to flee it and lose themselves forever in impenitence. That which they worship as God is dead, and so they too are dead, these buyers and sellers of spiritual things who wanted to be something without asking Me. For how can one who insanely usurps power and makes the rational gift of the Holy Spirit a thing to be sold get anything out of the sale? For one who sells his substance to others no longer has the use of it. And how can the buyer use the salvation he bought? For he did not try to receive it from God, but hastened to buy it for money. But God in His righteous judgment allowed him to buy it.

For God, in His anger at certain people, allows them to become thieves; but yet He punishes them for it by a secret judgment now and not in the future. He allows them to be confounded by the very thing they loved in place of the Holy Spirit, so that they will be brought by this disaster to penitence, and return to God for forgiveness. And other people He tolerates and does not afflict in the present, but justly delays His judgment till the future; for they hold their wills in place of God, and so God in future will demonstrate to them what their wills are worth amid torments. And still others He punishes both now and in the future; for they willfully make their brilliant minds vile and contemptible, and imitate the evil deeds of the Devil. He allows some to go this far that their evil may be negated by penitence, and that they may punish themselves bitterly and cast away their wrong like a putrid corpse. But He mercifully stops others from reaching this point; for if they did, they would do things that merited the pains of Gehenna, and would not escape them.

Now if someone dishonors and usurps a chair of power by means of his spiritual father, money—for in that transaction money becomes his bishop—he buys himself perdition, and both he who gave and he who received the money must be cast out of their dignities. For if a person's animal is stolen from him and sold to another, the one from whom it was stolen has every right to demand it back if he finds it, while both he who sold it and he who bought it must give it up. And so too an office that should be held according to My rules is governed strictly by those rules; and if by some secret bribe it is stolen and wickedly given to an alien, the one who put it up for sale and the

one who bought it shall both justly be deprived of the use of it. For they have made the temple consecrated to My name a den of thieves. How?

The wisdom and counsel I put into their hearts they have put up for sale in the marketplace, and so they are getting the wages of iniquity by the perdition of others. So they must renounce this traffic with bitter penance or they will answer to Me for it in the unquenchable fire. For one who tries to juxtapose a living dignity, vivified by the Spirit, with the stench of corruption by buying it for dead money will be lost, unless he hastens to repent that perverse presumption. As Peter, the son of the Dove, who deserted all error when enkindled by the Spirit, said to the fleeting whirlwind who tried to absorb the light into hideous blackness:

21 Words of Peter the apostle on this subject

"May your money perish with you, because you have thought that the gift of God could be purchased with money. You have no part or lot in this word; for your heart is not right in the sight of God" [Acts 8:20–21]. Which is to say:

This is money with which you falsely believed you could become the master of a thing alien to you, but which regards you as a servant or as nothing at all. May it go with you into the perdition of the fires of Gehenna if you do not repent, and if you keep the gift of the ardent Holy Spirit, which you purchased with money. For in your transitory wisdom you have thought that you could have for money the enkindling of your soul by the great Searcher of Hearts; and you did not trust to get it by God's gift. But if you repent of this wrong, you must give up what you bought, and hold the money you gave for it as lost; for you tried to buy an eternal thing with mud from Him Who created you from the mud. And as long as you keep this purchase, you will never share in the light of the company of the supernal angels; for by your speech you have revealed your heart's rapacity, coveting a thing not desired by the citizens of glorious eternity. And so your heart in this wickedness is unjust in God's sight, for it wants to have by a money purchase what should be given freely by God. And My just judgment likens those who will not seek this divine concord by the free gift of the Holy Spirit to vain idols. For idols are the work of hands, and have no truth in them, but they are worshipped by the infidels instead of God; and so too those who use gifts not illumined by the Holy Spirit are teachers of deceit. For they do not take an office sighing in their souls as being unworthy of it, but receive it with eager pride from other people, and ignore My will about it.

Therefore, I know not whence they come, and hold them as alien to Me; and if they persevere in their injustice, they are cut off from Me. But if they

repent with their whole heart, I will receive them; and the angels will rejoice in them.

22 Offices of power are set up by God, and one who resists them resists God

But, though those who strive after these dignities with perverse ardor act unjustly, and, as mentioned, consent must not be given to their usurpation, nonetheless government itself is good for human welfare and well-ordained by God. And so it must not be stubbornly resisted, but obeyed for love of Me. So let no faithful person who wants to obey God oppose himself to the authority that governs him; for, in keeping and feeding God's sheep, it imitates Him in honor, and must not be destroyed by an alien who is a thief and a robber. So, as no one should oppose God, no one should foolishly resist His authorities.

Therefore, everyone who lives in soul and body should obey the offices superior to him and subject himself to them, whether they maintain corporeal or spiritual justice. Human laws should be guided by fear of the authorities, lest people should turn from the right path and follow their undisciplined wills to become laws unto themselves. This would be going astray from the way of the Lord; for powers from God exist to keep people from straying. How?

Human governments are set up by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, that through them people may learn to fear the Lord. If people pervert them into anarchy by their wills, God does not will it but only permits it, that these people's twisted wants may be satisfied to their ruin.

And thus the powers of office are inspired by God for human advantage, justly ordained by Him of necessity; for otherwise the people of God would live like flocks without a shepherd, and follow every winding path of disorder. Hence he who resists them out of pride and refuses to obey them in just humility opposes not people but Me, the Creator, Who disposes all things justly. He follows Adam's transgression in so opposing Me, and thus increases the darkness of his condemnation; he is driven out of joy into sorrow. This does not mean a person who humbly refuses his consent to perverse wickedness, for if he does so properly he increases God's justice and does not diminish it; it refers to one who tries to overthrow an office improperly because of his exalted pride. For, as mentioned, these offices were constituted by Me for the advantage of the living; and one who proudly defies them resists My inspiration. Nonetheless, some people, in mad ignorance and forgetting to fear Me, obtrude themselves upon these dignities, and transgress the divine commands by their wicked wills. And, by My just

judgment, I let it be as they wish; but they will answer for it in a just judgment, either by severe penance or in the fires of Gehenna.

23 On simoniacs who repent and those who do not

But you see that *some of them leave off this madness and are made pure, but the others persevere in their wickedness and filth.* This is to say that some of them, by divine inspiration, come to themselves out of their wickedness and, by pure and true penitence, earn the right to be cleansed and saved. But others are obdurate and impenitent, and remain in their crafty impurity till the end of their life; and therefore they will die miserably by choking, a painful and cruel death.

24 God gave the gifts of the Holy Spirit to defend and adorn the Church

And you see, inside the building facing the tower, seven white marble pillars, completely smooth and round. This is to say that the Omnipotent Father, Who has supreme power without beginning or end in the perfect round of eternity, has worked for the protection and beauty of the new Bride by manifesting the seven modes of the purifying inspiration of the Holy Spirit, which drive away all adverse storms. *And they are seven cubits high,* because these gifts surpass in strength and height all human intellect, and thus show that He Who created all things must be worshipped in pure faith.

They are supporting a round dome of iron, which rises nicely to a fair height. For these pillars, in their excelling glory, manifest the profound and incomprehensible power of the Divinity; and by their perfect straightness, they protect and support in Heaven the people who, by the gifts of the Holy Spirit, separate themselves from carnal pleasures here below.

25 Wisdom and her appearance

And *on top of this dome you see a very beautiful figure standing.* This is to say that this virtue was in the Most High Father before all creatures, giving counsel in the formation of all the creatures made in heaven and earth; so that she is the great ornament of God and the broad stairway of all the other virtues that live in Him, joined to Him in sweet embrace in a dance of ardent love. And *she is looking out at the people in the world;* for she protects and guides the people who want to follow her, and keeps with great love those who are true to her. And this figure represents the Wisdom of God, for through her all things are created and ruled by God. *Her head shines like lightning, with so much brilliance that you cannot look directly at it;* for God,

Who is terrible or mild to every creature, sees and judges all things as a human eye assesses what is before it, but no human can understand fully the profound mystery of the Divinity.

Thus *her hands are laid reverently on her breast;* this represents the power of Wisdom, which she wisely holds to do her work so that no one can oppose her by craft or might. *Her feet are hidden from your sight by the dome;* for her depths are hidden in the heart of the Father and invisible to humans, and her secrets are naked and manifest to God alone. *She has on her head a circlet like a crown, which shines with great splendor.* This is to say that the Majesty of God is without beginning or end and bright with incomparable glory, and the Divinity is so radiant that mortal sight cannot look on it. *And she is clad in a gold tunic;* which is to say that Wisdom is often thought of as pure gold. *It has a stripe on it from the breast to the feet, which is ornamented with precious gems; they glitter in green, white, red and brilliant sky-blue.* For from the beginning of the world, when Wisdom first openly displayed her workings, she extended in a straight line to the end of time. She is adorned with the holy and just commandments, which are green like the first sprouts of the patriarchs and prophets who sighed in their tribulations for the Incarnation of the Son of God, and white like the virginity of Mary, and red like the faith of the martyrs, and brilliant blue like the lucent love of contemplation, which, by the ardor of the Holy Spirit, mandates love for God and one's neighbor. And so she will proceed even to the end of the world, and her admonition will not cease, but will spread as long as the world endures; and so Wisdom declares, in her already-quoted exhortation.

26 The appearance of Justice, Fortitude and Sanctity

And on the pavement of the building you see three other images. This is to say that these virtues, which do the divine work by treading the earthly underfoot and following the heavenly, are the three instruments by which the Church strives toward eternity in her children: nourishment from their teachers, and the fight of the faithful against the Devil, and the rejection of consent to vice. *One of them is leaning against the marble pillars;* for the doctors of the Church, imbued with the gifts of the Holy Spirit, find rest in their strength. *And the other two are standing before her on each side;* for, as the exhortation says, the love of God and of neighbor resides in the united and cooperative action of these virtues.

Therefore *all of them are directing their attention toward the pillar of the humanity of the Savior and the tower that is being built.* For they are showing by their unanimity that the Son of God, true God and true Man, is devoutly worshipped and adored in the Church; and they are raising up justice, dem-

onstrating the way of salvation in the Old Testament saints, the Most High God and the Incarnation of His Son.

27 Justice and her appearance

So *this figure who is leaning against the pillars* represents God's Justice; for she arises after Wisdom, and by the Holy Spirit works in all the justice of human beings. She *seems to be as broad as five people standing side by side;* for she takes in all five human senses and uses them to abide in the law of God, and she contains and keeps all the commandments God instituted for those who love her. *And she is so tall that you cannot take in all her height, and thus she can see everything in the building.* For she is greater than the human mind, and extends up into Heaven, just as she bent down from Heaven in the Incarnation of the Savior when He Who was the Son of God came forth from the Father, Who is true Justice. And so she looks at all the attributes of the Church, for they are made and contained by her, and thus are the higher bulwarks joined to confirm the strong tower. *She has a large head and clear eyes, with which she is looking acutely into the heavens;* for Justice, in her supreme goodness, has shown people a bright vision in the incarnate Son of God, Who showed Himself in a human body to darkened mortal eyes, teaching heavenly things to save their souls. And *she is as white and translucent as an unruffled cloud;* for she dwells in the purity of the minds of the just, who direct all their desire toward obeying the justice of God, and so is as white as a cloud. And thus she prepares for herself a pleasant habitation in just hearts.

But you can see no other human attributes in her; which is to say that she remains heavenly and not terrestrial, as was declared to you. That is, those human deeds that weigh people down do not cling to her, but only those that lead them to justification and life. For God is just; and she, fighting against the Devil, shows it in her exhortation, already quoted, to the other virtues, which work for God.

28 Fortitude and her appearance

And *the first of the figures who stand before this one on each side* represents Fortitude. For Fortitude arises after God's Justice like a prince under the rule of a supreme king, to repel by righteous and holy labor all traps set for humans by their enemies. For she is armed by the power of Almighty God, and, strong in faith, repels the advances of the Devil. Therefore, she *is arrayed in a helmet,* which is to say with supernal power to save believers; *and in a breastplate,* which is to say in Christian law, which can never be

destroyed by the Devil's arrows because it is full of justice; *and in greaves*, which is to say in righteous paths walked by the main teachers in their doctrines; *and in iron gloves*, which are the strong and noble works the faithful do in Christ.

She holds an unsheathed sword in her right hand; which is God's admonitions in the divine Scriptures, whose inner meaning the Son of God disclosed when He opened the Law to show the sweetness of its kernel. *And she has a spear in her left hand;* for when carnal desires for the pleasure of the flesh afflict the faithful, they resist by thinking of the eternal.

And she is treading a horrible dragon under her feet; which is to say that, by the path of righteousness, she subjugates to her power the ancient and frightful serpent. *She is sticking the spear into its mouth, so that it is vomiting forth unclean spume;* for, with the mighty daring of chastity, she pierces the gaping jaws of foul and devilish lust, and wrings from it the burning venom with which it polluted humans.

And she holds the sword as if to strike with it, brandishing it vigorously; for God has displayed the vast strength of His pervasive Word to slay all unfaithful idol-worship and other schisms of unbelief. And so this virtue shows, in her admonition already quoted.

29 Sanctity and her appearance

The other figure signifies Sanctity; for when the Devil is repelled by Fortitude, Sanctity arises in the good to adorn them in the heavenly host. She *has three heads;* for three attributes make up her condition. *One is in the normal place and one is on each of her shoulders;* for God, the Head of all dignities, is to be respected and venerated in prosperity and adversity, in human joy and sorrow. *But the middle one is a little higher than the other two;* for He Who is the Judge of the good and the evil rises in His equity above all things. *The middle and the right-hand one shine so brightly that their brilliance dazzles your eyes, so that you cannot quite see whether their faces are masculine or feminine;* which is to say that Sanctity is so honorable and sweet and full of heavenly grace that the depth of her mystery exceeds the human intellect, and, weighed down by mortality, that intellect cannot discern her liberty or her subjection in Christ, except what is seen in Him Himself.

But the head on the left is a little bit shadowed, and veiled with a woman's white veil. For this perfection, sternly constraining itself for love of God, is anxious and careful to defend itself by God's help when attacked by the Devil and people; and so, in the sighs of faithful hearts, it commends itself humbly to the Supreme Redeemer in the purity and beauty of the Christian fight.

The figure *is dressed in a white silk tunic;* which is to say that she is surrounded by works of sweet and lucent zeal, in which perfect Sanctity

imitates My Son. *And she is protected by white shoes;* for she shines brightly in human minds, through the death of Christ and the pure regeneration of the Spirit and water, that they too may imitate His death.

On her breast is the sign of the cross, about which a great radiance shines on her breast like the dawn. For Sanctity awakens, in the minds of believers who lovingly embrace her, the repeated remembrance of the Passion of Christ Jesus. She declares with bright faith that He Who obeyed the Father and suffered so much in His holy human state was born without stain of sin from the beautiful dawn, the Virgin Mary.

In her right hand she holds a naked sword, which she lays with great devotion against her breast and the cross. This is to say that her holy works show how much she loves the Scriptures revealed by the Holy Spirit, which the chosen recall to mind as they sweetly remember the Passion of their Redeemer.

And you see written on the forehead of the middle head, "Sanctity"; for Sanctity is known by the inner face of the soul, full of joy in life and without unworthy shame. *And on that of the right-hand one is "The root of goodness";* for that is clearly the beginning and the foundation of Sanctity unto salvation. *And on that of the left-hand one is "Self-sacrifice";* for she sternly restrains herself from sluggishness, softness and vain earthly pleasures, and adorns herself with the other virtues that she may be perfected and persevere.

And the middle one looks at the other two, and they look at it, and they all consult together for their advantage; for they are strongly united in inner vision and in love, and none of them can last without the help of the others. And so they direct their words and adminitions to people, to help them go forward.

But let the one who has ears sharp to hear inner meanings ardently love My reflection and pant after My words, and inscribe them in his soul and conscience.

THE SON OF MAN AND THE FIVE VIRTUES

VISION TEN
The Son of Man

And after this, I saw on the summit of the eastern corner of the building, where the shining part and the stone part of the wall came together, seven white marble steps, which rose like an arch up to the great stone on which the Shining One sat on the throne.

And on these steps a chair was placed, on which sat a man of youthful appearance. His face was manly and noble, but pale; he had black hair down to his shoulders, and was clad in a purple tunic. He was visible to me from his head to his navel, but from the waist downward he was hidden from my sight. And he looked on the world and cried out loudly to the people in it, saying:

1 Words of the Son of Man

"O foolish people! You languidly and shamefully shrink into yourselves, and do not want to open an eye to see how good your souls could be. You constantly burn to do the evil your flesh desires, and refuse to be of good conscience and think rightly. It is as if you did not know good and evil, or have the glory of knowing how to avoid evil and do good. Hear Me, the Son of Man, saying to you: O human, regard what you were when you were just a lump in your mother's womb! You were mindless and powerless to bring yourself to life; but then you were given spirit and motion and sense, so that you might live and move and come to fruitful deeds.

2 Man has the knowledge of good and evil and so has no excuse

"So you have the knowledge of good and evil, and the ability to work. And so you cannot plead as an excuse that you lack any good thing that would inspire you to love God in truth and justice. You have the power to master yourself and not want and take pleasure in injustice; you can punish yourself and flee from the illicit lusts you delight in, and so honor My martyrdom by fighting against your burning desires and bearing My cross in your body. And why have you this great power? So that you may avoid evil and do good. And you will answer to Me for your knowledge of good and evil, as you know yourself to be human. But you despise good and do evil, and burn with

carnal desire; good seems grievous to you, and evil is easily awakened in you. And so you choose not to restrain yourself, but to sin freely.

"What did I not do for you when I, the Son of Man, suffered on the cross in frail flesh, and trembled in great anguish? Because of that, I require of you a self-martyrdom; you must suffer for the lusts of your flesh and your other unruliness, your illicit desires contrary to My will and the bad actions that come from them. And you cannot excuse yourself by saying you do not know your good from your bad actions.

3 Admonition to the married

"But I do not reject the chaste coupling of legitimate marriage, which was set up by divine counsel when the children of Adam were fruitful and multiplied. But it is to be done for the true desire of children and not for the false pleasure of the flesh, and only by those to whom it is allowed and harmless by divine law, those allied to the world and not set apart for the Spirit. You should love the good you have from Me better than yourself. You are heavenly in spirit but earthly in flesh; and so you should love heavenly things and tread the earthly underfoot. When you do heavenly things I show you a supernal reward; but when you seek to do what is unjust by the will of your flesh, I show you My martyrdom and the pains I endured for your sakes, that you may fight your wrong desires for love of My Passion.

"You have been given great intelligence; and so great wisdom is required of you. Much has been given to you, and much will be required of you. But in all these things I am your Head and your helper. For when Heaven has touched you, if you call on Me I will answer you. If you knock at the door, I will open to you. You are given a spirit of profound knowledge, and so have in yourself all that you need. And, this being so, My eyes will search you closely and remember what they find.

"Therefore, I require of your conscience a wounded and sorrowful heart; for thus you can restrain yourself when you feel drawn toward sin and burn in it to the point of suffocation. Behold, I am watching you; what will you do? If you call upon Me in this travail, with a wounded heart and tearful eyes and fear of My judgment, and keep calling on Me to help you against the wickedness of your flesh and the attacks of evil spirits, I will do for you all that you desire, and make My dwelling-place in you.

4 Analogy of the field

"Now therefore, my child, note how much work and sweat goes into a field before it is sown with seed. But after it has been sown, it brings forth

the crop. Attend and consider these things. Do I not refuse to let the earth bring forth a crop without the sweat of labor? But when I choose, it bears so abundantly that people have the fullest sufficiency, or even more; and when I choose, it bears so meagerly that people can hardly survive their hunger, or even pine and die. And so too are people sustained by Me. To a person who willingly and with good heart receives the seed of My word, I grant the gifts of the Holy Spirit in superabundance, as to a good field. One who now receives My word and now refuses to accept it is like a field that is sometimes green and sometimes dried-up. But this person does not perish utterly; his soul suffers hunger, but he has some greenness, though not much. But one who never chooses to hear My words, or waken his heart to good by the admonition of the Holy Spirit or by human instruction, will die completely. You wonder at this, O human, and want to know why.

5 Man must not look into what he is not meant to know

"But, just as you cannot look on Divinity with your mortal eyes, you cannot grasp its secrets with your mortal minds, except insofar as God permits you. Your wavering mind turns this way and that; and as water is evaporated by the heat of a furnace, your spirit is dried up by the turbulence of your foolish mind. For you want to know what cannot be known by the sinful seed of Man. Will you raise your finger and touch the clouds? This cannot be done; and neither can this search into what is not for you to know. As plants cannot comprehend the nature of the earth because they lack sense and intellect, and know not what they are or how they bear their fruit, though in their usefulness they encompass the earth; or as gnats or ants or such small creatures do not seek to rule their own kind, or to know or understand the power and nature of lions or greater animals; so you cannot know what is in the knowledge of God.

"Where were you and what were you doing when Heaven and earth were made? He Who created them did not need your help, nor does He now. Why do you search into God's judgment? You are touched by the rain of salvation from above; show Me how you labor in the field of your heart to cultivate it. If that labor pleases Me, I will give you good fruit; the fruit with its reward shall be according to your labor. Do I give the fruits of the earth without labor? Neither, O human, do I give to you without the sweat I ask of you. For through Me you have in yourself all the means to work.

"Exercise yourself therefore diligently in labor, and you shall have the fruit thereof. And when you have the fruit, you shall have its reward. But now what? Many seek me with a devout, pure and simple heart, and having found Me never let Me go.

BOOK THREE

6 No one may too quickly come into the way of holiness

"But many joke and play and try to approach Me without mental labor or cogitation. They are unwilling to deliberate their course first, calling on Me and examining the habits of their body; they wish only to seize upon Me like one awaking from deep sleep, and take the way of sanctity by their own will with a sudden and deceiving motion. Some therefore take My yoke on their shoulders by rejecting secular affairs, others by fleshly continence, others by modest virginity; and they think it possible to be what they wish without recognizing what they are and what they are capable of. But they remain unaware of Who made them and Who their God may be, wishing only to have Him as their servant and do their will.

"To the person who tries to unite himself to Me thus vainly, while in his ignorance he does not know Me, I will not give My gift; I will not sow an empty field. Therefore his foot will often stumble. And I say to him: 'O human, why have you not examined the field of your mind, and rooted out the weeds and thorns and thistles? Why have you not called on Me and examined yourself? For before you come to Me you are as one drunk and insane and ignorant of self; you can do no shining deed without My help. And, after seeking Me in inconsiderate haste as if in a dream, you grew weary in My service, and remembered your other dream of habitual sins; and so you returned to your former crimes, insane and ignorant of the good, and deprived yourself of the help and consolation of the Spirit, the Paraclete.

" 'But what was your guide and helper in this? Your fallacious and deceitful mind; it led you foolishly into aridity, without the fruitful memory in your intellect that you can do nothing good without Me. And so what do you have? You will be wretched and empty, and will fall down before Me and before the people and be trodden into the vain dust. If you work against Me, what can you do? Nothing. And with Me, what can you do? The most shining works, which are more splendid than the light of the sun and sweeter to taste than honey and milk to the desiring people. For when you seek Me in your inmost soul, as you were taught through faith in baptism, do I not do everything you desire?'

"But some who should have sought Me out before they fell seek Me, sighing and sorrowing, after they fall. And to them I offer My hand, saying, 'Why did you not seek Me before falling? Where was I, and where did you seek for Me? And when you sought Me, did I reject you?' And I say, 'O human! If you stood on a bridge over deep water, and foolishly boasted and forgot yourself the way you have despised Me in these matters, thinking all things were possible to you and you did not need My help; if then you said proudly, "I choose to avoid this bridge and walk on the water!" would you be acting wisely? If you act so presumptuously and foolishly toward this cre-

ation, which was made for your profit, you will perish. But this will not happen, because you have a present and visible fear of the water and of drowning, and are on your guard. Or if you saw a large tree that had been sawn through and was falling, would you not flee to avoid being injured by it? Or if you saw lions or bears or wolves coming your way, would you not for fear hide in the ground if you could? But since you flee thus from physical injury, why do you not flee the cruel death of the soul by fearing your Creator? Have you ever seen or heard of one who could rebel against Me? For he who is not with Me will be dissolved, and he upon whom I fall will be broken in pieces. Where were you when Heaven and earth were created, which go on as they were meant to? But you, who were formed by God's counsel and touched by His illumination, transgress His commands. Oh, great mindlessness! For the sake of the creation that serves you, you despise your God, though you tread the earth and watch the heavens, which fear their Creator and fulfil His commands; this you foolishly do not do, for you choose not to know Him in your thoughts or your deeds, or to look toward Him and know Him as you should.

" 'Therefore, if you do not repent, Hell will justly receive you, for you have imitated the one who was thrown in his obduracy down from Heaven. But if you fall, seek Me with a constant outcry, and I will lift you up and receive you. O human, you sometimes try to touch the highest things, when you cannot understand even the lowest.'

7 How virgins and celibates should draw near to sanctity

"Therefore, hear me when I tell you this. If because of My words you wish to bear My yoke, and renounce secular business or abstain from the things of the flesh, before you come to that, cry out and persevere in seeking Me; and I will help you. And if, touched by My admonition, you wish to imitate Me, recognizing that I was born without male seed in modest virginity as a flower is born in an unplowed field, humbly show Me the field of your mind and speak to Me with a flood of inner tears. And say, 'O my God, I, an unworthy human, do not have it in me to carry out my undertaking to keep my virginity unless you, Lord, help me. For I am guilty of upsurges of burning desire and wallow in misery, wondering about the reason for my weakness. By my own strength I cannot vanquish my taste for the sweetness of the flesh, for I am a tree conceived and born in sins. Therefore, O Lord, give me by Your might the fiery gift that will extinguish this perverse kindling and burning in me, that with righteous breath I may drink of the water of the living Fountain that will make me rejoice in life. For now I am dust and ashes, regarding the works of darkness more than the works of light.' And if you are zealous and constant in this supplication, I will prepare

for Myself in you the field Isaac saw in his son, when he said, 'See, the smell of my son is as the smell of a plentiful field, which the Lord has blessed' [Genesis 27:27]. And I will bless that field of Mine in My heart. And as Isaac went on to say, 'Be lord of your brethren, and let your mother's children bow down before you' [v. 29], so too you will be a generation raised above the common people. And I will sow in that field roses and lilies and other perfumes of virtue, and I will water it constantly with the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and I will uproot what is useless and tear out what is evil in it, so that I may survey it with my eyes and feast them on the greenness and the blossoming of this uncorrupt field.

"But this will be My doing and through Me, not yours or through you, O human. For I am the Flower of the field; as a field engenders a flower without being plowed, so I the Son of Man was born of a virgin without her coupling with a man. And therefore this gift is Mine and not yours, for you were conceived in sins and born of corruption. But if you faithfully ask this gift of Me, you may expect it confidently from Me; I will grant that in the sight of My Father you may participate with Me in virginity. But because of the weakness of your body, you will not have it without suffering from your desires; for your weak human nature will often manifest itself in you, and, since you are flesh of flesh, you cannot escape it.

"But in this you should bear My cross and imitate My martyrdom; you should restrain yourself and conquer yourself through Me, which is always pleasing to Me. For I know you are a fragile vessel, and so I choose to share in and pity your pains. But if, because of those pains, you fall, rise up quickly and do penance from the heart; and I will receive you and save you.

8 Inner continence of mind and examples pertaining to it

"But certain people, deceived by the Devil and obdurate in evil, think they are sanctified if they keep their outer selves from marriage; but they remain uncircumcised in mind and spirit, overflowing with impure thoughts and bringing forth evil in their words and works. They ignore the fact that this is disgraceful; they tepidly keep their bodies intact from fornication, but they reject the virginity of the spirit. Hence they are unworthy in My sight, outside both the physical and the spiritual law; for they have lived according to God's justice neither in the flesh nor in the spirit. They have not kept either the law of marriage, which was appointed for them, or what is more than the law's command, the love of virginity. Therefore they are unworthy in My eyes, and I know not what they are. For I have not seen them either walk in the command of the Law or do more than was commanded them; and they are rejected from My sight. I compare them to waste ground, which

brings forth thorns and thistles and useless weeds, though their height and color is that of roses and lilies and the other useful flowers and herbs that have healthy sap and sweet fruit and healing fragrance. And I compare them to copper, which pretends to be gold, but is secretly only an imitation and counterfeit of gold. For in the same way these people masquerade as wise virgins, but are inwardly full of craft and unworthiness.

"Therefore they are also in My sight like a tepid breeze, with no briskness of heat or cold. For their mental heat makes them unfit to persevere in the virginity they began in; and in the cold of secular affairs they cannot proceed as they would like. They do not wander outside the confines of the law like the publicans, or sin within it like the unjust, but are inwardly tepid, neither just nor unjust. But, as the young of unclean animals are cast out before they are conscious of living or grown into strength, so these people are cast into death; for they do not know how to live unto life, or know in themselves the strength of the virtues, which are in the house of wisdom. And so I spew them out of My mouth, for if they remain impenitent they are unworthy of My sight. So now, O human, look into yourself.

9 Analogy of the treasure

"If someone who loved you very much gave you a treasure, and said to you, 'Profit from this, and enrich yourself, that it may be known who gave you this treasure,' you would have to consider very carefully. You would have to ponder on how to make the best gain out of it, and say to yourself, 'I should make the best profit possible with my lord's treasure, that he too may be praised for it.' And after it was thus increased to advantage and you had multiplied it, a good report would come to the ears of the one who had given it to you. And he would think of you because of it, and love you more, and confer greater gifts on you.

"This is what your Creator does. He loves you exceedingly, for you are His creature; and He gives you the best of treasures, a vivid intelligence. He commands you in the words of His Law to profit from your intellect in good works, and grow rich in virtue, that He, the Good Giver, may thereby be clearly known. Hence you must think every hour about how to make so great a gift as useful to others as to yourself by works of justice, so that it will reflect the splendor of sanctity from you, and people will be inspired by your good example to praise and honor God. And when you have justly multiplied it to advantage, this praise and thanksgiving will come to the knowledge of God, Who by the Holy Spirit inspired these virtues in you. And He Himself, in the sweetness of His love, will give you grace to overflowing; He will make you burn yet more for love of Him, so that, strengthened by the Holy

Spirit, you may wisely discern the good and do greater deeds, and ardently glorify your Father, Who gave you these things.

"Let My sheep hear these words, and let those who have the inner ears of the spirit lay hold of them; for it pleases Me that people who know and love Me should understand what to do by the gifts of the Holy Spirit."

And in the eastern part of the building, I saw three figures standing on the pavement before that youth; they stood next to each other, and looked at him devotedly. And, opposite the North, between the building and the great circle, which extended from the Shining One Who sat on the throne, I saw a wheel hanging in the air; in it was a human figure who could be seen from the breast up, looking with penetrating gaze on the world.

And in the southern corner of the building, another figure appeared standing on the pavement inside, turning most joyfully toward the youth. And all these figures resembled each other in the following ways. Like the other virtues I had seen, they were all clad in silk garments. All of them were veiled with white head-veils, except the right-hand one of the three mentioned above, who was bareheaded and had white hair. None of them wore a cloak except the middle one of these three, who had a white one. But they were all clothed in white tunics except the one in the wheel, who had a black tunic, and the left-hand one of the three, whose tunic was pale-colored. All were shod in white, except the middle one of the three, whose shoes were black and painted with different colors. But this was the divergence between them:

On the breast of the middle figure of the three who stood together were two little windows. Above them was a hart, facing the right side of the figure, so that its forefeet were above the right window and its hind feet above the left, poised to run. And this figure said:

10 Words of Constancy

"I am the strong pillar, who cannot be moved by light changefulness; a blast of wind cannot shake me like the leaf of a tree, for I abide in the true Rock, which is the true Son of God. Who can prevail to move me? and who can harm me? Neither strong nor weak, prince nor noble, rich nor poor will ever be able to keep me from persevering in the true God, Who will not be moved forever.

"And I will not be moved, for I was founded on the strongest foundation. For I do not choose to be with flatterers, who are blown here and there and all ways by the wind of temptation, and who are never at rest in constancy but always fall to the lower and worse. I do not act so; for I am set on the firm rock."

And the figure on her right contemplated the hart, and said,

11 Words of Celestial Desire

" 'As the hart pants after the water-brook, so my soul pants after You, O God' [Psalm 41:2]. Therefore, I will skip over the mountains and hills, and bypass the sweet weakness of this transitory life, and with pure heart regard only the Fountain of living water. For He is full of immeasurable glory, with whose sweetness no one can ever be sated."

And the figure standing on the left looked at the little windows, and said,

12 Words of Compunction of Heart

"I always gaze on and think of the true and eternal Light; and neither thought nor desire nor contemplation will make me sated with the perpetual sweetness that is in Supernal God."

And the figure who was opposite the North in a wheel had a blossoming twig in her right hand. The wheel revolved without ceasing, but the figure within it remained motionless. And on the perimeter of the wheel was written, "If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there also shall My servant be" [John 12:26]. And on the breast of the figure was carved, "I am the sacrifice of praise in all lands." And that figure said,

13 Words of Contempt of the World

" 'To him who overcomes, I will give to eat of the tree of life which is in the Paradise of my God' [Revelation 2:7]. For the fountain of salvation has drowned Death, and poured its stream into me to make me blossom in redemption."

And the figure who stood in the southern corner was so bright of face that I could not look fully at her. She had a white wing on either side, each broader than the figure herself. And she said,

14 Words of Concord

"Who is so strong as to try to oppose God? And who is so audacious that he would dare to strip me naked and corrupt me into shameful hatred and envy? God is just, and alone in power and glory. I want to embrace Him always with pure and joyous face, and rejoice in all His judgments. And I do not want to change, but to remain always in one mind and praise God continually. Therefore neither the Devil nor envious Man could ever weaken me or degrade me to the insanity of deceit, or make me stop persevering in peace and concord. And when the world passes away, I will appear more gloriously in the heavenly vision."

BOOK THREE

After this I looked, and behold, all the pavement of the building appeared like white glass, which shone with a calm splendor. But the splendor of the Shining One seated on the throne, Who was showing me all these things, shone brightly through that pavement even into the abyss. And between the building and the circle where it extended from the One on the throne the earth was visible, sloping downward, so that the building suddenly seemed to be placed on a mountain. And the Shining One seated on the throne spoke to me again:

"The Son of the Living God, born of the Virgin, is the Cornerstone, rejected by those who should have built their salvation on the law of God and refused; for they loved darkness more than light and death more than life. But the Son reigns mightily in those who burn with the touch of the Holy Spirit, tread their outer selves under foot and hasten with full consent to the inner things of the Spirit, in fullness of virtue and good works."

15 God's work in humans is consolidated by the gifts of the Holy Spirit

Therefore, *you see on the summit of the eastern corner of the building, where the shining part and the stone part of the wall come together, seven white marble steps.* For the sevenfold ascent of pure fortitude rises in high justice from the true East, which is the Cornerstone of the divine work, where the two parts of the wall of necessity, reflective knowledge and human deeds, hold to each other in secure repose. This ascent is full of the righteous actions God works and perfects in humans, as He worked on six days and rested on the seventh.

16 God unites the deeds of the faithful to Fear of the Lord

These steps *rise like an arch up to the great stone on which the Shining One sits on the throne;* for every act that is done by the faithful in faith and work is fittingly united by God's providence to the Fear of the Lord, upon which He Who rules all things is enthroned in supreme omnipotence.

17 The Son of God guides those who seek to persevere, and destroyed death

And on these steps a chair is placed, which is to say that the firm foundation of protection is set above the works God works in humans, to guide and help them. And whoever chooses to persevere in Him will not sink into error, for He is the mighty support on which all justice is established.

And on the chair sits a man of youthful appearance. This is the constant ruler, the Son of Man, Who reigns as One God in all justice with the Father

and the Holy Spirit. His face is manly and noble, for He is the strong Lion Who has destroyed death and the noble Sinless One Who was visibly born of the Virgin. But he is pale; for He did not seek earthly honor by earthly means, but was gentle, poor and humble with a holy humility.

18 The birth and Passion of the Son of God ended the shadow of the Law

He has black hair down to his shoulders; for the Jewish people did not seek the clarity of faith displayed in the Incarnation of My Son, and so they remained in the darkness of the shadow of the mere outward understanding of the Law, and wasted away in obstinacy and faithlessness. They arose from the head of justice, but they only reached as far as the shoulders of fortitude; and when the perfect work blossomed in the humanity of My Son, they ended in unbelief.

And he is clad in a purple tunic; for He poured out His blood in charity to save people who had perished.

19 God's past deeds for the Church can be seen by people but not the future

He is visible to you from his head to his navel; which is to say that from His Incarnation to the present time the works He has done in the Church have been manifest to the faithful. *But from the waist downward he is hidden from your sight;* for the things that will be in the Church from the present time to the end of time are not for people to see or know, except by divine revelation and Catholic faith. For the great splendor of virtues that will be manifested in people before the last day still lie hidden, unknown to humanity.

20 God looks on humanity with mercy and tells them to imitate the saints

And he looks on the world, because the Son of God directs a merciful gaze toward people, *and speaks* faithful words of warning to them about things past and things to come; He tells them to imitate the heavenly army of saints, flee from the dangers of sin, and fight with great strength to attain supernal felicity and escape the punishments of the wicked.

21 Constancy, Celestial Desire, Compunction, Contempt of the World, Concord

And in the eastern part of the building you see three figures standing on the pavement before that youth; they stand next to each other, and look at him

devotedly. This is to say that when justice arose and bore down carnal desire, which occurred when by the decision of the Almighty Father the Son of God appeared in the flesh, these three virtues showed themselves unalterably unanimous in their devotion in the power of the Trinity; and they direct their gaze to the Son, because they desire Him and seek Him in all the faithful. Hence also, *opposite the North, between the building and the great circle that extends from the Shining One Who sits on the throne, you see a wheel hanging in the air; and in it is a human figure who can be seen from the breast up, looking with penetrating gaze on the world.* This wheel is the circle of divine mercy, which fights the arts of the Devil by the secret power of God, and builds a spiritual structure in human minds. It rolls in the air, now touching the power of God's justice and now confirming His work in people. And in it appears Contempt of the World, a Christian perfection, seen as far down as the breast of her fortitude. For this virtue, trusting in God in the severest of struggles, reminds people who are living in the secular world with her penetrating warnings to imitate the example of the Son of God, Who went before them, rejecting worldly things and desiring Him with an unalterable mind. *And in the southern corner of the building, another figure appears standing on the pavement inside, turning most joyfully toward the youth.* For when fallen Man was restored to life and fruitful ardor through the goodness of the Supernal Father, this virtue showed itself openly in sweet affection, trod secular things underfoot and turned toward the Son of God in company of the angels and faithful people. For she blossomed by the power of Heaven in the Incarnation of the Savior.

22 Their appearance and dress

And all these figures resemble each other; for with similar devotion they manifest God in those people who magnify Him in their works. So, *like the other virtues you have seen, they are all clad in silk garments.* For they are equal in power to the other virtues you were truly shown before, and they are equally tending upward toward God in the gentle activity of their sweet work in the faithful.

All of them are veiled with white head-veils; which is to say that they all consecrate themselves before God their Head with great devotion to the pure propositions of the Law, as a wife veils herself before her husband. *Except the right-hand one of the three mentioned above, who is bareheaded and has white hair;* for she manifests herself in strength and felicity through the Heavenly Trinity, not weighed down by any earthly care, and in the purity of her heavenly desire seeks only to depart and be with Christ. *None of them wears a cloak,* for they have been divested of all duties of servitude that might hinder them from the duties of freedom: to gaze perpetually into Heaven and

long for God, desiring nothing unless it is separate from earthly things. *Except the middle one of these three, who has a white cloak;* this signifies her perseverance in the divine beauty of the conscious keeping of the blessed Law. For this virtue is wrapped and covered in this work as a person is wrapped in his cloak.

But they are all clothed in white tunics; which is to say that they live in the purity of good works, without the blackness of depraved habits darkened by the villainies and vices of blind infidelity. *Except the one in the wheel, who has a black tunic;* for she moves with the swiftness of divine clemency, and lives amid the deeds whose stringency is difficult for the flesh. *And the left-hand one of the three, whose tunic is pale-colored;* for she is surrounded and defended by God's supreme Majesty in adversity, and protected by the sorrow of the work she does, weeping and wailing and sighing to God. *All are shod in white;* for they glow with the death of My Son and prepare the way of peace in human minds so that those minds can desire celestial things. *Except the middle one of the three, whose shoes are black and painted with different colors;* for she, though she remains under God's protection, bears the divisions of the faithless, who turn aside into black mockery from the way of truth. But she is in the path of righteousness, and trusts in the death of My Son; and so she perseveres in strength and beauty through the many attacks of the Devil and the many tribulations of the human spirit, and makes her way toward heavenly things.

But there is a divergence between them; for, though they are of one mind and join to do their work, each one separately shows her powers over the people subject to her in heavenly fervor and clarity.

23 On Constancy

So *the middle figure of the three who stand together* symbolizes Constancy, who is the pillar and rampart of the virtues who join with her. She reveals herself to people in the center of this number, which signifies the Holy Trinity, showing them that they should be constant in good works. For indeed Christ, Who was God and Man, crowned His works in the world with a good end; and so this virtue is the foundation of the other inner virtues in people, and by her discipline leads them to God. And so *on her breast are two little windows;* which is to say that in human hearts the things of Heaven are manifested in two mirrors of faith. For there must be faith in both the divinity and the humanity of the Son of God, through Whom the virtue of Constancy, perfected by the strength of His righteousness, shall not be removed from people. *Above these windows is a hart, facing the right side of the figure.* For the Son of God is elevated by the belief of the Christian people above the faith that He is God and Man, and in His swiftness, which

represents Celestial Desire, He faces the right side of Constancy. For eternal life is to be found by perseverance in good works. Therefore *the hart's forefeet are above the right window and its hind feet above the left, poised to run;* for when He hastened with great suffering to the Passion of the Cross, His course brought Him the salvation of souls and true life to those who persevere. And so this virtue points out, in her already quoted words of avowal.

24 On Celestial Desire

And *the figure on her right* prefigures Celestial Desire, who always looks up to Heaven and moves toward salvation, even as Constancy does not seek the joys of the transitory but desires the felicity of the eternal. She *contemplates the hart;* for she continually longs for the Son of God and His shining work, and cannot be sated with His sweet embraces. And so she affirms in her discourse on her desire, already quoted.

25 On Compunction of Heart

But *the figure standing on the left* indicates Compunction of Heart, and that memory in the mind that bemoans and weeps for its exile with intense contrition. By her blessed lamentations Constancy turns away from the left, the side of the soul's perdition, and hastens from death to life. And so she *looks at the little windows;* for, acting in the hearts of the faithful, she directs all her intention to the Son of God, Who reigns in Humanity and Divinity. And she delights in the sweetness of this continuous vision, as she shows openly in her words, already quoted.

26 On Contempt of the World

And *the figure who is opposite the North in a wheel* indicates the perfection of Christ in Contempt of the World; for the Son of God most clearly shows the fullness of virtue in the rejection of secular things. For He, living among humans, did not pant for earthly things; and so He admonished His imitators to strive eagerly after the heavenly. She *has a blossoming twig in her right hand;* for, in the happiness of a saved soul, she holds fast the fresh and beautiful shoot of blessed virtues, bathed in the breath of the Holy Spirit. And so *the wheel revolves without ceasing, but the figure within it remains motionless;* for the mercy of God bends down to humans and has compassion on their miseries, and so is always available to those who seek it, but the perfection of Christ in Contempt of the World has no instability or fickleness, but always turns to what is immutable.

And on the perimeter of the wheel is written, "If anyone serves Me, let him

follow Me; and where I am, there also shall My servant be." This is to say that the abundant mercy of God has this quality: Whoever does service to the Son of God by imitating His example will rejoice in heavenly beatitude, and will attain to the endless company of the angels.

And so on the breast of the figure is carved, "I am the sacrifice of praise in all lands." For Christ wisely taught disdain for secular things, and imparted to the hearts of His elect that every faithful soul should venerate and adore Him with deepest devotion as the sacrifice of the Father, offered on the wood of the cross. For the voices and tongues of all the faithful continually make His glory and praise resound through the whole world, thanking Him for their restoration to life, as this virtue clearly manifests in her already quoted discourse.

27 On Concord

And *the figure who stands in the southern corner* signifies Concord, who flies from the madness of the evil spirits and embraces the company of the blessed angels; for love of God she avoids the quarrels of the faithless, and longs for the vision of eternal peace. Hence *she is so bright of face that you cannot look fully at her;* for she is devoid of deadly hate and envy, and so brings greater glory to human souls than the mortal mind, weighed down by the frail body, can grasp. *She has a white wing on either side, each broader than the figure herself;* which is to say that this virtue extends the protection of her shining goodness to those who tire themselves out in righteous work both in prosperity and in adversity. Her charity to human beings is broader than the whole expanse of the multitudes of people who are yet to be born. And when the world has ended, she will fly above the heaven of heavens in greater glory than she appears in now; for then nothing earthly and transitory will be sought, but what is celestial and eternal will be sweetly embraced, and all glorious and beautiful things will endure while all clouds of injustice are dispersed. And this is truly predicted in this virtue's words.

28 Good deeds are shown in the strong faith and perfect works of believers

And you see that *all the pavement of the building appears like white glass, which shines with a calm splendor.* This is to say that the strength of true faith supports and expands the work and the city of God, shining pure and clear in its candor and mirror-like simplicity. Faith watches and builds the city of God with all the works done in her. And so when people begin to do good works with a calm and bright intention, they touch God; and when they perfect the works, their souls are saved and they know Him profoundly. For

when the work is accomplished, faith herself shows the devotion with which each soul has sought God.

29 God cast down the ancient serpent by the fortitude of faith

And the splendor of the Shining One seated on the throne, Who is showing you all these things, shines brightly through that pavement even into the abyss. For the grace of Almighty God, Who rules all and manifests to you all the things you are learning in this vision, reduced the Devil to nothingness and the perdition of death through the fortitude of faith. How? When the Son of God charged His faithful to publish to the world the teachings received from Him, God in His power pierced the darkness of unbelief with the pure faith that is in the regeneration of the Spirit and water, and cast down the ancient serpent and the eternal death of perdition he brought into the abyss of chaos.

30 Pagans, Jews and false Christians are expelled from the Church on high

But *between the building and the circle where it extends from the One on the throne the earth is visible, sloping downward, so that the building suddenly seems to be placed on a mountain.* This is to say that between the strong power of Almighty God and the chosen works of His goodness there stand people who deny the true faith and follow the temporal instead of the eternal. Such are pagans, Jews and false Christians; they descend from evil to evil, and, ignoring the teaching of the Catholic faith about the transitory, try in their pleasures to draw out wicked deeds into the deepest sins. But the great and beautiful work of God, in the height of His supreme goodness, shines out clearly amid this dark misery to anyone who seeks it, as the beloved Evangelist John testifies by divine revelation, saying:

31 Words of John on this subject

"And he took me up in the spirit to a great and high mountain; and he showed me the holy city Jerusalem, coming down out of Heaven with the glory of God" [Revelation 21:10–11]. This is to say: The Spirit lifts up the spirit. How? The Holy Spirit, by Its power, draws the human mind out of the heavy flesh, that it may share in the vision of the Spirit, Whose eyes are not obscured by the blindness of carnal pleasure, and Who sees the inner things. What does this mean? The Holy Spirit lifts the human spirit upward to the mountain of heavenly desires, that it may clearly see the works to be done in the Spirit, the great works of God. A thousand deeds of the Devil lie prostrate before these works, and they tower over them as a mountain rises

above the level surface of the earth; they have an immovable foundation, like a mountain, which does not leave its place; they are so high that mortals cannot encompass them by their reason, for they surpass the most excelling human wisdom, which springs from minds that are of the earth and earthly.

And thus the work of the Spirit is shown to the faithful and holy soul: The heavenly Jerusalem is to be built spiritually, without the work of physical hands, through work given by the Holy Spirit. The greatness and loftiness of these works of the Spirit are manifest, for that city will be adorned by good works performed by people touched by the Holy Spirit. It will be situated upon a hill, with countless buildings assembled from the most noble of stones: the holy souls in the vision of peace, purified from all taint of sin. And so, with these precious stones it will shine like gold; for wisdom displays her brightness in good people. But where did they come from—these works performed in righteous justice, which adorn the celestial Jerusalem? From the height of Heaven; for, as the dew descends from the clouds and sprinkles the earth with its moisture, good works descend on people from God, watered by the rain of the Holy Spirit. And so the person of faith brings forth good sweet fruit, and attains to the company in the supernal city. And the heavenly works, which descend on humans by the gift of the Holy Spirit, have the brightness of Him from Whom they emanated. How? The glory of God shines in the good works of the just, making Him known, adored and worshipped the more ardently on earth. And through the virtues the holy city is adorned with their ornaments, because people who with God's help do good works worship Him in His countless wonders. And so by this revelation the eyes of the spirit see and know that by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit righteous human works appear before God in the regions of Heaven.

32 God will bring the Church to her consummation and confound the Devil

And so, as has been shown, God works from the East to the North to the West to the South, and brings to that consummation which is the last day, for love of the Church in His Son, all that was predestined before the creation of the world. He produces His work through Himself, and draws it back to Himself confirmed and adorned and completed in the highest perfection. And this is mystically symbolized by the aforesaid towers and virtues. How? When Adam fell, the justice of righteous actions was revived in Noah, surrounded with many miracles, and extended throughout time till the last day. And God did not cease to manifest this by His elect in different times: in the preparation of Noah [east corner], the manifestation in Abraham and Moses [north corner], and the consummation in His Son [west corner].

BOOK THREE

How? Before time began the desire was in the heart of the Celestial Father to send His Son into the world at the end of time, to save and redeem lost humanity. And the Son, born of the Virgin, fulfilled with a perfect work all things foretold by the Old Testament saints, inspired by the Holy Spirit. It was as when, to perform an action, first the human arm bends and then the hand works. What does this mean? When Adam, by God's just judgment, was cast out of the flowering land, justice first began to move in Noah, like the joint of the shoulder. Then it broadened into more definite manifestations in Abraham and Moses, like the more flexible elbow joint. And finally it came to perfection in the Son of God, through Whom all the signs and marvels of the old Law were publicly fulfilled, and through Whom all the virtues, which will adorn the heavenly Jerusalem in her children, are declared in the regeneration of the Spirit and water, as the hand with its fingers accomplishes and puts the final touches on a work. And thus I perfect My work, to My glory and your confusion, O Devil! I have opposed you by the strength of My arm in the North and the West, and resisted you from the East to the South, as far as the sun's course runs. And in the West I have so undermined you that you are utterly confounded. For in My Church, which is the mountain of fortitude, I do the work of justice and sanctity, and destroy you, O shameful impostor. You wanted My people to be destroyed; and you yourself will be conquered and destroyed utterly.

But let the one who has ears sharp to hear inner meanings ardently love My reflection and pant after My words, and inscribe them in his soul and conscience.

THE END OF TIMES

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VISION ELEVEN
The Last Days and the Fall of the Antichrist

Then I looked to the North, and behold! five beasts stood there. One was like a dog, fiery but not burning; another was like a yellow lion; another was like a pale horse; another like a black pig; and the last like a gray wolf. And they were facing the West. And in the West, before those beasts, a hill with five peaks appeared; and from the mouth of each beast one rope stretched to one of the peaks of the hill. All the ropes were black except the one that came from the mouth of the wolf, which was partly black and partly white. And lo, in the East I saw again that youth whom I had first seen on the corner of the wall of the building where the shining and stone parts came together, clad in a purple tunic. I now saw him on the same corner, but now I could see him from the waist down. And from the waist down to the place that denotes the male he glowed like the dawn, and there a harp was lying with its strings across his body; and from there to the width of two fingers above his heel he was in shadow, but from there down to the bottom of the feet he was whiter than milk. And I saw again the figure of a woman whom I had previously seen in front of the altar that stands before the eyes of God [p. 169]; she stood in the same place, but now I saw her from the waist down. And from her waist to the place that denotes the female, she had various scaly blemishes; and in that latter place was a black and monstrous head. It had fiery eyes, and ears like an ass', and nostrils and mouth like a lion's; it opened wide its jowls and terribly clashed its horrible iron-colored teeth. And from this head down to her knees, the figure was white and red, as if bruised by many beatings; and from her knees to her tendons where they joined her heels, which appeared white, she was covered with blood. And behold! That monstrous head moved from its place with such a great shock that the figure of the woman was shaken through all her limbs. And a great mass of excrement adhered to the head; and it raised itself up upon a mountain and tried to ascend the height of Heaven. And behold, there came suddenly a thunderbolt, which struck that head with such great force that it fell from the mountain and yielded up its spirit in death. And a reeking cloud enveloped the whole mountain, which wrapped the head in such filth that the people who stood by were thrown into the greatest terror. And that cloud remained around the mountain for a while longer. The people who stood there, perceiving this, were shaken with great fear, and said to one another: "Alas, alas! What is this? What do you think this was? Alas, wretches that we are! Who will help us, and who will deliver us? For we know not how we were deceived. O

BOOK THREE

Almighty God, have mercy on us! Let us return, let us return; let us hasten to the covenant of Christ's Gospel; for ah, ah, ah! we have been bitterly deceived!" And lo, the feet of the figure of the woman glowed white, shining with a splendor greater than the sun's. And I heard the voice from Heaven saying to me:

1 The five ferocious epochs of temporal rule

All things that are on earth hasten to their end, and the world droops toward its end, oppressed by the weakening of its forces and its many tribulations and calamities. But the Bride of My Son, very troubled for her children both by the forerunners of the son of perdition and by the destroyer himself, will never be crushed, no matter how much they attack her. But at the end of time she will rise up stronger than ever, and become more beautiful and more glorious; and so she will move sweetly and delightfully to the embraces of her Beloved. And this is mystically signified by the vision you are seeing. For *you look to the North, and behold! five beasts stand there.* These are the five ferocious epochs of temporal rule, brought about by the desires of the flesh from which the taint of sin is never absent, and they savagely rage against each other.

2 The fiery dog

One is like a dog, fiery but not burning; for that era will produce people with a biting temperament, who seem fiery in their own estimation, but do not burn with the justice of God.

3 The yellow lion

Another is like a yellow lion; for this era will endure martial people, who instigate many wars but do not think of the righteousness of God in them; for those kingdoms will begin to weaken and tire, as the yellow color shows.

4 The pale horse

Another is like a pale horse; for those times will produce people who drown themselves in sin, and in their licentious and swift-moving pleasures neglect all virtuous activities. And then these kingdoms will lose their ruddy strength and grow pale with the fear of ruin, and their hearts will be broken.

5 The black pig

And another is like a black pig; for this epoch will have leaders who blacken themselves with misery and wallow in the mud of impurity. They

will infringe the divine law by fornication and other like evils, and will plot to diverge from the holiness of God's commands.

6 The gray wolf

And the last is like a gray wolf. For those times will have people who plunder each other, robbing the powerful and the fortunate; and in these conflicts they will show themselves to be neither black nor white, but gray in their cunning. And they will divide and conquer the rulers of those realms; and then the time will come when many will be ensnared, and the error of errors will rise from Hell to Heaven. And then the children of light will be pressed in the winepress of martyrdom; and they will not deny the Son of God, but reject the son of perdition who tries to do his will with the Devil's arts.

And these beasts are facing the West; for these fleeting times will vanish with the setting sun. For people rise and set like the sun, and some are born, and some die.

7 The five peaks and the five ropes

And in the West, before those beasts, a hill with five peaks appears; for in these peaks is symbolized the power of carnal desire. *And from the mouth of each beast one rope stretches to one of the peaks of the hill;* for each of those powers will extend throughout the period in question. *All the ropes are black except the one that comes from the mouth of the wolf, which is partly black and partly white.* For the length of the ropes indicates how far people are willing to go in their stubborn pleasures; but though the one that symbolizes greed is partly black and puts forth many evils, yet some will come from that direction who are white with justice. And these latter will hasten to resist the son of perdition by ardent wonders, as My servant Job indicates about the righteous doer of justice, when he says:

8 Words of Job

"The innocent shall be raised up against the hypocrite, and the just shall hold to his path; and to clean hands he shall add strength" [Job 17:8–9]. Which is to say:

One who is innocent of bloody deeds, murder and fornication and the like, will be aroused like a burning coal against one who deceives in his works. How? This latter speaks of honey but deals in poison, and calls a man friend but stifles him like an enemy; he speaks sweet words but has malice within him, and talks blandly to his friend and then slays him from ambush.

But one who has a rod with which to drive away vile brutes from himself walks in the light of the shining sun on the righteous path of his heart; he is raised up in the sight of God as a bright spark and a clear light and a flaming torch. And so, bearing in himself the strongest and purest works, he puts them on like a strong breastplate and a sharp sword, and drives away vice and wins virtue.

9 The Church will shine in her justice until the time of Antichrist

And therefore, *in the East you see again that youth whom you first saw on the corner of the wall of the building where the shining and stone parts come together, clad in a purple tunic, now standing on the same corner.* For here is the Sunrise of Justice, the Son of Man, manifest to you to confirm the truth afresh through His mysteries and miracles; still presiding over the union of reflective knowledge and human deeds, having shed His blood by the will and goodness of the Father for the salvation of the world. So *now you can see him from the waist down;* for now you see Him in the strength of His members who are His elect, and He will flourish as Bridegroom of the Church, with many obscure signs and wonders, until their number is complete. *And from the waist down to the place that denotes the male he glows like the dawn;* for until the time of the son of perdition, who will pretend to be the man of strength, His faithful members will be perfected in fortitude and He will be splendid in the justice of His righteous worshippers. *So, in the same place, a harp is lying with its strings across his body;* which signifies the joyful songs of those who will suffer dire torments in the persecution that the son of iniquity will inflict upon the chosen, torturing their bodies so much that they are released from them and pass over into rest.

10 The Church's faith will be in doubt until the witness of Enoch and Elijah

And from there to the width of two fingers above his heel he is in shadow. For, from the time of the persecution the faithful will suffer from the son of the Devil until the testimony of the two witnesses, Enoch and Elijah, who spurned the earthly and worked toward heavenly desires, faith in the doctrines of the Church will be in doubt. People will say to each other with great sadness, "What is this they say about Jesus? Is it true or not?"

11 Before the end of the world the Devil will perish and the truth be known

But from there down to the bottom of the feet he is whiter than milk. That is to say that, by the testimony of those same witnesses who await the eternal

reward when the son of perdition is defeated, before the world ends the Son of Man will be brilliantly and beautifully seen in the Catholic faith. The truth will be plainly shown in Him, and the falsity of the son of iniquity rejected in every way, as My servant David testifies when he says:

12 Words of David

"The king shall rejoice in God; all they that swear by Him shall be praised; for the mouth of them that speak wicked things is stopped" [Psalm 62:12]. Which is to say: The profound knowledge of the beautiful human language that gives voice to the will and disposition of God is a great measure of human stature; and it makes music at the altar of God, for it knows Him. And when the hissing and gaping of the Devil, which taints human minds with shame, is forsaken in the time of desperation, the blessed will be praised in minds that sing, and they will make a flowing path of words to the pure fountain of the mighty Ruler.

13 When justice grows cold the Church will undergo suffering and persecution

And you see again the figure of a woman whom you previously saw in front of the altar that stands before the eyes of God, standing in the same place. For the Bride of the Son of God is shown to you again, to reveal the truth, always present to the pure prayers of the saints and, as was said before, offering them up devotedly to the eyes of Heaven. *But now you see her from the waist down;* for you see her in her full dignity as the Church, replete with the full number of her children, in the mysteries and wonders by which she has saved so many. *And from her waist to the place that denotes the female, she has various scaly blemishes.* This is to say that, though she is now flourishing worthily and laudably in her children, before the time in which the son of perdition will try to perfect the trick he played on the first woman, the Church will be harshly reproached for many vices, fornication and murder and rapine. How? Because those who should love her will violently persecute her.

14 Antichrist will horribly rend the faithful and cruelly tear humanity

And thus in the place where the female is recognized is a black and monstrous head. For the son of perdition will come raging with the arts he first used to seduce, in monstrous shamefulness and blackest wickedness. *It has fiery eyes, and ears like an ass', and nostrils and mouth like a lion's;* for he runs

wild in acts of vile lust and shameful blasphemy, causing people to deny God and tainting their minds and tearing the Church with the greed of rapine. *It opens wide its jowls and terribly clashes its horrible iron-colored teeth;* for with his voracious and gaping jaws he evilly infuses those who consent to him with his strong vices and mordant madness.

15 The son of perdition, unable to be gentle, will try to persecute

And from this head down to her knees, the figure is white and red, as if bruised by many beatings; for the son of perdition will try to seduce people by evil deceptions, and at first speak to them flatteringly and gently, but then try cruelly to pervert and force them. And then the Church will know purity of faith in her children, but anguished and bloody terror and the tribulations of many sufferings for herself.

16 The Church near the end of the world will be bathed in righteous blood

And from her knees to her tendons where they join her heels, which appear white, she is covered with blood. For at the time near the end of the world when she must endure assault, until the coming of the two witnesses of Truth who will keep the Church together by their strength, she will suffer most terrible persecutions, and the blood of those who despise the Destroyer will be most cruelly shed. What does this mean? When the son of perdition is strengthened through deceit, and derives confidence from his perverse teachings, the Church, as she hastens on, will be bathed in the noblest blood; and then she will be fully constructed as the celestial dwelling. For you, O streets of Jerusalem, will then shine with the purest gold which is the blood of the saints; the Devil will be extinguished for persecuting the members of the Supernal King, and his great terror will be reduced to naught.

17 We are now in the seventh millennium

But, O ye people who desire to dwell in those streets, flee from the Devil and adore God, Who created you! For in six days God completed His works, and on the seventh day He rested. What does this mean? The six days are the six numbered epochs; and in the sixth epoch the latest miracles were brought forth in the world, as God finished His work on the sixth day. But now the world is in the seventh epoch, approaching the end of time, as on the seventh day. How? The prophets have completed their utterances, My Son

has accomplished His will in the world, and the Gospel has been preached openly throughout all lands; and throughout the times of this full number and more years after it, despite the diversity of human customs, the world has remained as it was well-established by Me.

18 Why God now utters new mysteries by the mouth of an unlearned person

But now the Catholic faith wavers among the nations and the Gospel limps among the people; and the mighty books in which the excelling doctors had summed up knowledge with great care go unread from shameful apathy, and the food of life, which is the divine Scriptures, cools to tepidity. For this reason, I now speak through a person who is not eloquent in the Scriptures or taught by an earthly teacher; I Who Am speak through her of new secrets and mystical truths, heretofore hidden in books, like one who mixes clay and then shapes it to any form he wishes.

19 God's warning to the learned not to spurn these words but exalt them

O fruitful and rewarding teachers! Redeem your souls and loudly proclaim these words, and do not disbelieve them; for if you spurn them, you contemn not them but Me Who am Truth. For you should nurture My people under My law, and care for them until the time for their supervision is past, and all cares and labors cease. But from now on the predestined epoch is approaching, and you are hastening toward the time when the son of perdition will appear. Grow therefore in vigor and fortitude, My elect! Be on your guard, lest you fall into the snare of death; raise the victorious banner of these words, and rush upon the son of iniquity. For those who forerun and follow the son of perdition whom you call Antichrist are in the way of error; but as for you, follow the footsteps of Him Who taught you the way of truth, when He appeared with humility and not with pride in the world in the body. Hear therefore and understand.

20 The words of the Holy Spirit to the Church about the last days

For the Spirit speaks to the Church about the time of the final error. In the end of times death shall rush upon the Church, when the accursed, the son of the curse, shall come; and he is the curse of curses, as My Son testifies in the Gospel about the worst city of error, saying:

21 The Gospel on this subject

"And you, Capernaum, will you be exalted up to Heaven? You will go down into Hell" [Matthew 11:23]. Which is to say: O you cave of iniquity, you concealing ditch, with your wings of hypocrisy and pretense! How can you stand on the high place of the walls, when your eyes devour the wickedness of vice, hiding the burning light under a bushel of excrement? You say, "Who is as great as the hypocrite and murderer, since the foolish call him Lord?" Will you have the signs and wonders of Heaven, when you dip your finger in Hell? How? Your works probe the bottom of Hell, and in its voracity you will lie swallowed up; and Hell will vomit forth your stench, so that the world may see the bitterness of death for the destroyer who has destroyed.

22 When the world is dissolved in the elements, the Church will be completed

But a head without a body or other members should not be. The Head of the Church is the Son of God; the body and the other members are the Church and her children. The Church is not yet perfect in her members and her children; but on the last day, when the number of the elect is filled up, the Church will also be full. And on that last day the whole world will be confounded; I, God, will take away the four elements and all that is mortal in human flesh, and in the consummation of the world there will be full joy for the offspring of the Church.

23 The world is in its seventh epoch, and Man cannot know what will follow

For, as was said, God completed His work in six days. Five days represent five numbered epochs; and in the sixth, new wonders were manifested on earth, as on the sixth day the first man was created. And now the sixth number is complete and the seventh has come, and the course of the world is fixed in, as it were, the seventh day of rest. For now that work which the mighty doctors kept sealed in the holy Scriptures is revealed; it is openly expounded in gentle words, like the words of this book, as if on a Sabbath of rest. For there are six days of work and a seventh of rest; there is no other number of days. And what lies beyond cannot be known to you, O human, but is in the keeping of the Father. But you, O humans, have a time to traverse from now on, until the coming of that murderer who will try to pervert the Catholic faith. But as to what may happen then, it is not for you to know the time or the moment, even as you cannot know what comes after

the seven days of the week; for only the Father knows this, Who has placed these things in His power. And about the days of the week and the times of the ages, it is not for you, O human, to know more.

24 How God willed His Son to be incarnate

But after five numbered epochs I brought forth heavenly miracles for the world, as in five days the other creatures were created before Man and subjected to Man. For up to then there was a large population of pagans and Jews, and various schisms and evils were increasing among both the Gentile and the Jewish peoples. The Law and the prophets had finished their work, and all the peoples had been tested for evil and for good, before my Only-Begotten took flesh from the Virgin. For I did not will to send Him until all these things had first taken place, so that all justice might be tried by Him and all injustice offended by Him. If My Son had come earlier, it would have been premature, like a person who wants to gather his fruits before they ripen; and if His Incarnation had been postponed until the very end of the world, He would have come too abruptly, like a fowler who catches birds by trickery, so that they know not how they fell into his nets. But My Son came, as it were, at the ninth hour, when the day is turning to evening; when the heat of the day is declining, and the cold is setting in. And so after five epochs of the world, My Son showed Himself to the world as it began to move toward its end. What then? He came and laid bare the essence of the Law, changing its water into the wine of the Gospel; and so He caused floods of virtue to stream forth. And He came opportunely to do this, when the churchly virtues the Holy Spirit enkindled could take root and grow in humans, and the virginity He brought in Himself could bud and flower.

25 Antichrist and his mother

But the insane murderer, the son of perdition, will come soon, when the last times descend and the earth forsakes its course; as if at the time when day departs and the sun goes down to its setting. O My faithful ones, hear this testimony, and understand it with devotion that you may be safe, lest the terror of the destroyer should come upon you unawares and cast you into the ruin of infidelity and perdition. Arm yourselves therefore, and prepare yourselves for the most strenuous battle, forewarned with firm defenses. For the time will come in which this vile deceiver will horribly appear. The mother who will bring this deceiver into the world will be nurtured in vice from her infancy to her girlhood by the arts of the Devil, living among the most abominable people in the vilest of waste places. Her parents will not recognize her, and those with whom she stays will not know her; for the

Devil, pretending to be a holy angel, will persuade her to go away from them and guide her deceptively as he wishes. She will separate herself from all people, so as to conceal herself more easily; and then she will secretly engage in vile fornication with men, though only a few, defiling herself with them with a great appetite for wicked doings, as if her holy angel commanded her to do this deed of shame. And in the burning heat of this fornication, she will conceive the son of perdition without knowing which man's semen engendered him.

And Lucifer, the ancient serpent, will take delight in this turpitude, and by My just judgment will breathe on the embryo and possess it with all his power in its mother's womb. And so that destroyer will issue from the womb of that mother full of the Devil's spirit. Then she will stop her habitual fornications and declare to the unwise and foolish people that she has no husband, and knows not the father of her infant. And she will call the fornication she has done holy, and the people will think and call her holy.

And the son of perdition will be nurtured by the Devil's arts until he comes to full adulthood, always withdrawing from people who know him.

26 Antichrist will learn magic from his mother and God will allow it

And throughout this time, his mother by magic arts of hers will show him both to the worshippers and to the non-worshippers of God, and he will be seen and loved by them. And when he reaches maturity, he will teach a doctrine that is clearly perverse, thus fighting against Me and My elect; and he will gain such strength that in his great power he will try to raise himself above the clouds. But it is by My just judgment that I will permit him to do his will on various creatures. For as the Devil said in the beginning, "I will be like the Most High," and fell, I will lead him to fall in the last days, when he will say through this son of his, "I am the savior of the world!" And as every age of the faithful knew that Lucifer was a liar when he tried at the beginning of time to be like God, so now every person of faith will see that the son of iniquity is a liar, making himself like the Son of God before the last day.

27 The power of Antichrist and the miracles he will seem to do

For he is the evil beast, who kills those who deny him; he will join with kings, dukes, princes and the rich, crushing humility and exalting pride, and by the Devil's arts subjecting the whole world to himself. His power will issue forth like the wind; he will seem to set the air in motion and bring forth

fire and lightnings from heaven, and raise thunders and hailstorms, to uproot mountains and dry up water, to take the greenness from forests and give it back again. In many parts of Creation he will display his illusions, in moisture and freshness and dryness. And he also will cause unceasing deceptions in people. How? He will seem to make the healthy sick and the sick healthy, to cast out devils, and sometimes to raise the dead. How? When someone departs from this life whose soul is in the power of the Devil, by My permission he will sometimes perform illusions on his corpse, making it move as if alive; but he is allowed to do this only occasionally, for a very short time and no longer, lest his presumption bring God's glory into scorn. Some people who see this will trust in him; and others will wish both to keep their earlier faith and to win his favor. And, choosing not to afflict these latter too severely, he will bring illness upon them. They will seek medicine from doctors, but will not be cured; and so they will return to him to see whether he can cure them. And when he sees them he will take away the weakness he brought upon them; and so they will love him dearly and believe in him. And so many will be deceived, for they will blind their own inner vision with which they should have regarded Me. For they will use their minds to probe this novelty their outer eyes see and their hands touch, and despise the invisible things that abide in Me and must be understood by true faith. For mortal eyes cannot see Me, but I show My miracles in the shadows to those I choose. No one shall see Me while he remains in a mortal body, except in the obscurity of My mysteries; for so I spoke to My servant Moses, as it is written:

28 Words of Moses on the vision of God

"For no one shall see Me and live" [Exodus 33:20]. This is to say that no one who is mortal shall fix his mortal gaze on the glory of My Divinity and continue to live his mortal life in his corruptible ashes; for he changes with passing time, leaving one life and passing to another, while I, Who established all living things, live without change. And as a gnat cannot live if he plunges into a flame, so a mortal could not remain alive if he were to see the glory of My Divinity. And so I show Myself to mortals in obscurity as long as they are weighed down by their mortality; like a painter showing people invisible things by the images in his painting.

But, O human, if you love Me, I embrace you, and I will warm you with the fire of the Holy Spirit. For when you contemplate Me with a good intention and know Me by your faith, I will be with you. But those who despise Me turn to the Devil, and choose not to know Me; and therefore I too reject them.

29 Dupes of the Devil show omens in creatures, but cannot control them

But the Devil makes sport of these people, and deceives them however he likes, so that they think that what he shows them is true. And the Devil imparts this art of deceiving to those who trust in him, so that they can at will show people by this fallacious art various portents in creatures. But they cannot in any way alter the elements or other creations of God; they simply feign monstrosities like nebulous apparitions to deceive those who believe in them. And as Adam, seeking more than was right for him to have, lost the glory of Paradise, so these people let slip their inner vision and hearing, forsaking God and worshipping the Devil.

30 How Antichrist will deceive his followers and why it will be allowed

And in this way the son of perdition will practice his deceitful arts on the elements, and show in them the beauty and sweetness and delight desired by those he deceives. And this power will be permitted to him for one purpose: that the faithful may perceive in their faith that the Devil has no power over the good, but only over the evil, whose lot is eternal death. For whatever this son of iniquity brings to pass, he will do with power, pride and cruelty, for he has no mercy, humility or wisdom; he will incite people to follow him by his domination and the wonders he shows. And he will acquire for himself many peoples, telling them to do their own will and not restrain themselves by vigils or fasting; he will tell them that they need only love their God, Whom he will pretend to be, and then they will be delivered from Hell and attain to life. And they, being so deceived, will say, "Oh, woe to the wretches who lived before these times! For they made their lives miserable with dire pains, not knowing, alas, the loving kindness of our God!" He will show them his treasures and riches, and allow them to feast as they will, confirming his teaching by deceitful signs so that they think they need not restrain or chastise their bodies in any way. He will command them to observe circumcision and the Jewish laws and customs, but will alleviate for them as much as they want the stronger commands of the Law, which the Gospel, by worthy penance, converts into grace. And he will say, "When anyone is converted to me, I will blot out his sins, and he shall live with me forever." He will throw out baptism and the Gospel of My Son, and scorn all the precepts handed down to the Church. And he will say, with devilish mockery: "See what a madman that was, Who through His falsehoods decreed that the simple people should observe these things!

31 The pretended death of Antichrist, and his accursed scripture afterward

"But I will die for you and to your glory, and rise again from death; and so I will deliver my people from Hell, that you may live gloriously with me in my kingdom, as that deceiver pretended He had done before." And he will tell his beloved ones to run him through with a sword and wrap him in a clean shroud, until the day of his resurrection. And he will delude them into thinking they are killing him, and so they will fulfil his commands. Then he will pretend to rise again, and bring out a writing as if for the salvation of souls, which is really a dire curse. And he will give this to people for a sign and command them to adore him. And if any person of faith refuses for love of My name, he will kill that person in great suffering and torture. And thus all who see and hear this will be struck with great wonder and doubtful amazement, as My beloved John shows, saying:

32 Words of John

"And I saw one of his heads as if slain unto death; and his death's wound was healed. And all the earth marvelled at this beast" [Revelation 13:3]. This is to say:

I, the lover of God's mysteries, saw the deceiver and the accursed surrounding the holiness of the saints with great and countless iniquities, and wearying them with many vices. By his lying arts he will pretend he is pouring out his blood in death and perishing; he will be thought to be stricken and dying, but he will not fall in the body but in a deceiving shadow. And, having deceived people with these false wounds and pretended to be dead, he will pretend to come back to life as if from the sleep of death. And everyone in the world will stand in terrible amazement, horrified at this accursed man as the people were amazed at the great size and strength of Goliath when he appeared before them armed for war.

And so, as you see, the pillars of My elect will be troubled by great wonder, both by their torments and by the perverse and marvellous and horrible signs that the son of perdition will produce; and they will lament in mournful anguish.

33 Enoch and Elijah, and why they are reserved to this time

But then I will send forth My two witnesses, whom I will hold back until this time in My secret will: Enoch and Elijah. They will resist him and bring back those who err to the way of truth. They will show the faithful the strongest and solidest virtues; for when the words of their witness in each of

their mouths agree with each other, they will augment the faith of their hearers. For these two witnesses of the truth were reserved so long by Me so that now, when they will appear, their discourse may be held and confirmed in the hearts of My elect, and through it the seed of My Church may survive in humility. And to the children of God whose names are written in the book of life, they will say:

34 Their words to the children of God

"O ye who are righteous and elect and gloriously praise the graces of the blessed life, hear and understand what we confidently tell you. This accursed one was sent by the Devil to lead into error the souls who submit to his commands. We have been secluded from this world and reserved in the secret places of God, so that we have had no human care or anguish; and we were reserved and sent to you now so that we may contradict the errors of this destroyer. See therefore if we are like you in bodily stature or age."

35 Their true signs by which the Antichrist will be cast down

And all who choose to know and confess the true God will follow these two aged witnesses of truth, carrying the banner of God's justice and abandoning the iniquitous error. For they will be radiant with praise before God and the people; they will hasten through the villages and roads and cities, wherever the son of perdition has breathed out his perverse doctrine, and perform in them signs by the Holy Spirit, so that all who see them will marvel greatly. These great signs, founded on the firm rock, will be given to them that they may reject the perverse and false signs. For as lightning kindles and burns, so does the son of perdition do his wicked acts in iniquity, burning the people with his magic arts as lightning burns; but Enoch and Elijah will terrify and cast out his whole cohort with the thunderbolt of righteous doctrine, and so fortify the faithful.

36 How they will be killed by God's permission and receive their reward

But by the consent of My will, Enoch and Elijah will at last be killed by Antichrist; and then they will receive in Heaven the reward of their labors. And the flowers of their doctrine will fade because their voices have ceased in the world; but they will bear fruit among the elect, who will despise the words and the ravings of the Devil's arts because they are set on the hope of a heavenly inheritance. Solomon tells this of a good and perfect person, saying,

"The house of the just is in great strength, but in the fruits of the wicked is trouble" [Proverbs 15:6]. Which is to say:

In the righteous person, the reflection of the eye of God is a vivid inner dwelling where weariness and misery are not; and God's eye sees His wonders in this person like a sword eager to strike. But the deeds that come forth like growing fruits from the proud heart, which erects ruins on its pleasures, will bring only sadness; for the proud heart does not trust in that hope which blossoms in the fullness of Heaven.

37 Antichrist, trying to learn the secrets of Heaven, will strike the Church

Now you see that *that monstrous head moves from its place with such a great shock that the figure of the woman is shaken through all her limbs.* This is to say that the son of perdition, the head of iniquity, will raise himself in his great arrogance and pride from the small error of his inherent wickedness, and seize upon a greater one, wanting to be exalted above all people. And when his deceptions are thus about to end, the whole Church and all her children, great and small, will be cast into extreme fear, as they watch his mad presumption. *And a great mass of excrement adheres to the head, which raises itself up upon a mountain and tries to ascend the height of Heaven;* for the mighty arts of the Devil, which bring with them so much filth, will help the son of iniquity, give him the wings of pride, and raise him to such great presumption that he will think he can also penetrate the secrets of Heaven. How? When he has completely fulfilled the Devil's will, and by God's just judgment his great power for iniquity and cruelty is no longer allowed to increase, he will assemble all his cohort and tell those who believe in him that he wants to go to Heaven. But, even as the Devil did not know that the Son of God was born to redeem souls, so also this worst of men, entangling himself in the evil of evils, will be ignorant that the mighty hand of God is about to strike him a blow.

38 God's power will strike the son of perdition and send him to damnation

And behold, there comes suddenly a thunderbolt, which strikes that head with such great force that it falls from the mountain and yields up its spirit in death. For God's power will manifest itself and destroy the son of perdition, striking him with such jealousy that he will fall violently from the height of his presumption, in all the pride with which he stood against God. And, so ending, he will vomit forth his life in the death of eternal perdition. For, as

BOOK THREE

My Son's temptations ended when He said to His tempter, "Begone, Satan!" and the Devil fled in terror, so now those trials the son of iniquity inflicted on the Church will be ended by My jealousy.

39 The place of pride will become so fetid that the deceived will turn back

And a reeking cloud envelops the whole mountain, which wraps the head in such filth that the people who are standing by are thrown into the greatest terror. For the impure and hellish stench will fill the whole place of his pride, in which that worst of criminals boiled with such uncleanliness. And, by God's just judgment, neither his beginning nor his end will be remembered, and the people, seeing his corpse prostrate on the ground, voiceless and rotting, will know that they were deceived. *And that cloud remains around the mountain for a while longer;* for the smell of that devilish pride will show it to be impure, and thus the people seduced by him will perceive that stench and that impurity, and turn from their error and come back to the truth. *For the people who stand there, perceiving this, are shaken with great fear; when they see these things the greatest horror will assail them, and they will pour out doleful words and tearful plaints, and admit that they have grievously sinned.*

40 When Antichrist is dead the Church will shine to recall the erring

And lo, the feet of the figure of the woman glow white, shining with a splendor greater than the sun's. This is to say that when the son of perdition is laid prostrate, as was said, and many of those who had erred return to the truth, the Bride of My Son, standing on a strong foundation, will manifest purity of faith and the beauty that surpasses all the beauty of the glories of earth.

41 None but God can know the day of judgment

But after the wicked one has fallen, let no mortal ask when the last day and the dissolution of the world will come. For he cannot know it, because the Father has hidden it as a secret. Prepare yourselves therefore, O humans, for the judgment. But, as was said, the son of perdition and his father the Devil with all his arts will be conquered in the last days by My Son, the mighty Warrior. This was prefigured when the enemies of the mighty Samson were cast down, as it is written:

42 Example of Samson

"And when he strongly shook the pillars, the house fell on all the princes and the rest of the multitude that was there. And he killed many more at his death than he had killed before in his life" [Judges 16:30: cf. chaps. 14–16 complete]. This is to say:

The Son of God, symbolized by the mighty Samson, first wed the Synagogue; to her He gave the secrets of His wonderful doctrine, which were hidden in the Old Testament, and benignly disclosed to her the inner sweetness of the Law, which was stronger than a lion. But the Synagogue deceived Him and caused His secrets to be mocked; she refused to respect His doctrine, but despised it in arrogant pride. Troubled by this, He foretold that the kingdom of God would be taken from the Synagogue and given to another nation. Thus, amid many prodigies and amid a great crowd, He went up to Jerusalem; and the unbelief of those who spread their garments in the way came to an end when He paid by miracles what He had promised those to whom His bride had betrayed Him.

And in this turbulence He left His bride, prophesying that her house would be left desolate. But the father of His bride, Seduction of the Devil, married her to another husband, Infidelity. Then the Son of God sent out wise foxes, the apostles, who burned the standing corn of His enemies with the fire of the Holy Spirit; that is, they turned the precepts of the Law to spiritual insight. And so the Synagogue was burned with her father, which is to say that her perverse infidelity was overthrown.

Then, with great signs and wondrous miracles, He struck down the unbelieving, so that all trembled in great amazement. And they said they feared the Romans would come and take away their country and people; and therefore they gathered their cohort to destroy Him. And He hid on a hill, and prayed, if it might be, for this cup to pass from Him.

But Judas Iscariot betrayed Him, delivering Him into the hands of His enemies. And He concealed the might of His strength, which was in His hair, which is to say in His Father; which was unknown to all the people except those who grasped it by faith, as hair can be grasped on a human head. But He showed the might of His strength afterward, when He chose to suffer, wielding as it were the jawbone of an ass; for He told the daughters of Jerusalem to weep not for Him but for themselves, and thus "killed" them by predicting to them the terror of the evils to come.

And in His affliction on the cross, when He thirsted a fountain of faith sprang from the Gentiles; and He did not blush to drink from it, declaring that so it was accomplished. And when He gave up the ghost, He descended

into Gehenna, as it were, to the harlot; and His enemies tried to take Him by setting guards at His sepulchre. But He rose again from death, carrying away the two doors, His special elect and the common people whom He freed from Hell. And so He sought the heavenly kingdom. And then His beautiful Bride, the Church, asked Him diligently after their marriage how she might know His strength. And He revealed His powers to her not all at once, but little by little, discreetly.

How? When the faithful first received the Catholic faith, some of them thought to walk in both the old and the new Law until they had reached perfect rectitude; as it were, in sinews still moist and not yet completely dried. And the Church, still inexperienced, said to the crowds, "This is the strength of my Bridegroom!" And the people, hearing these words, wanted to come and worship God all at once by the book and not to live by the promptings of the Holy Spirit. But His strength is not in this. Then virginity was nobly constituted, which had never before been deemed glorious, like new ropes, which had never bound anything. And this binding strongly held the Son of God, but did not capture Him fully. But the Church raised herself and said, "O my friends, these are the greatest powers of my Bridegroom!" And all at once, with great tumult, many people rushed upon Him, saying, "We have seized Him in His greatest strength!" But not thus is His strength manifested. And then the Church was assured of the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, as it were His seven locks of hair, fastened by a strong nail to the apostolic preachers as a foundation. And when she had thus woven faith, the Church cried out, "Oh, how strong is my Bridegroom in His seven locks of hair!" And all the peoples who heard her seized upon Him, thinking that this was the limit of His strength. But again, His strength is not thus known.

And so the Church shed many tears, because she did not know the strength of the Holy Trinity; she said that she had indeed seen the humanity of the Son of God, but had not yet perfectly understood His Divinity. Moved by this, He manifested by His beloved John such secrets of the Holy Trinity as it was lawful for Man to know, in the honor of the Father and the fire of the Holy Spirit. And He laid His head upon the heart of His Bride; and He will rest there until the great schisms that will come with the son of perdition. And then His strength will be cut off as He is robbed of His hair; for people in that time will choose to follow the son of perdition and not Him, saying, "How is this, O God, that we see such wondrous miracles?" And so His strength will be cajoled, and true faith clouded with the blindness of infidelity. But when Enoch and Elijah appear, His strength will return to Him; and He will shatter by force all pride and presumption. He will hurl down the son of perdition with all the arts and vices of the Devil; and when the Church and the Christian name have passed over from the present temporal age to eternity, He will crush the Devil's evil much more severely

than He did when divine worship flourished in the world within time. What does this mean? That when time ends, the temporal persecutions of the Devil and deeds of human virtue will both cease.

But let the one who has ears sharp to hear inner meanings ardently love My reflection and pant after My words, and inscribe them in his soul and conscience.

THE DAY OF JUDGMENT

THE NEW HEAVEN AND THE NEW EARTH

VISION TWELVE
The New Heaven and the New Earth

After this I looked, and behold, all the elements and creatures were shaken by dire convulsions; fire and air and water burst forth, and the earth was made to move, lightning and thunder crashed and mountains and forests fell, and all that was mortal expired. And all the elements were purified, and whatever had been foul in them vanished and was no more seen. And I heard a voice resounding in a great cry throughout the world, saying, "O ye children of men who are lying in the earth, rise up one and all!"

And behold, all the human bones in whatever place in the earth they lay were brought together in one moment and covered with their flesh; and they all rose up with limbs and bodies intact, each in his or her gender, with the good glowing brightly and the bad manifest in blackness so that each one's deeds were openly seen. And some of them had been sealed with the sign of faith, but some had not; and some of those signed had a gold radiance about their faces, but others a shadow, which was their sign.

And suddenly from the East a great brilliance shone forth; and there, in a cloud, I saw the Son of Man, with the same appearance He had had in the world and with His wounds still open, coming with the angelic choirs. He sat upon a throne of flame, glowing but not burning, which floated on the great tempest which was purifying the world. And those who had been signed were taken up into the air to join Him as if by a whirlwind, to where I had previously seen that radiance which signifies the secrets of the Supernal Creator; and thus the good were separated from the bad. And, as the Gospel indicates, He blessed the just in a gentle voice and pointed them to the heavenly kingdom, and with a terrible voice condemned the unjust to the pains of Hell, as is written in the same place. Yet He made no inquiry or statement about their works except the words the Gospel declares would be made there; for each person's work, whether good or bad, showed clearly in him. But those who were not signed stood afar off in the northern region, with the Devil's band; and they did not come to this judgment, but saw all these things in the whirlwind, and awaited the end of the judgment while uttering bitter groans.

And when the judgment was ended, the lightnings and thunders and winds and tempests ceased, and the fleeting components of the elements vanished all at once, and there came an exceedingly great calm. And then the elect became more

splendid than the splendor of the sun; and with great joy they made their way toward Heaven with the Son of God and the blessed armies of the angels. And at the same time the reprobate were forced with great howling toward the infernal regions with the Devil and his angels; and so Heaven received the elect, and Hell swallowed up the reprobate. And at once such great joy and praise arose in Heaven, and such great misery and howling in Hell, as were beyond human power to utter. And all the elements shone calm and resplendent, as if a black skin had been taken from them; so that fire no longer had its raging heat, or air density, or water turbulence, or earth shakiness. And the sun, moon and stars sparkled in the firmament like great ornaments, remaining fixed and not moving in orbit, so that they no longer distinguished day from night. And so there was no night, but day. And it was finished.

And again I heard the voice from Heaven, saying to me:

1 In the last days the world will be dissolved in disasters like a dying man

These mysteries manifest the last days, in which time will be transmuted into the eternity of perpetual light. For the last days will be troubled by many dangers, and the end of the world will be prefigured by many signs. For, as you see, *on that last day the whole world will be agitated by terrors and shaken by tempests, so that whatever is fleeting and mortal in it will be ended.* For the course of the world is now complete, and it cannot last longer, but will be consummated as God wills. For as a person who is to die is captured and laid low by many infirmities, and in the hour of his death suffers great pain in his dissolution, so too the greatest adversities will precede the end of the world and at last dissolve it in terror. For the elements will then display their terrors, because they will not be able to do so afterward.

2 All creation will be moved and purified of all that is mortal in it

And so, at this consummation, *the elements are unloosed by a sudden and unexpected movement:* all creatures are set into violent motion, fire bursts out, the air dissolves, water runs off, the earth is shaken, lightnings burn, thunders crash, mountains are broken, forests fall, and whatever in air or water or earth is mortal gives up its life. For the fire displaces all the air, and the water engulfs all the earth; and thus all things are purified, and whatever was foul in the world vanishes as if it had never been, as salt disappears when it is put into water.

3 The bodies of the dead will rise again in their wholeness and gender

And *when, as you saw, the divine command to rise again resounds, the bones of the dead, wherever they may be, are brought together in one moment and covered with their flesh.* They will not be hindered by anything; but if they were consumed by fire or water, or eaten by birds or beasts, they will be speedily restored. And so the earth will yield them up as salt is extracted from water; for My eye knows all things, and nothing can be hidden from Me. And so all people will rise again in the twinkling of an eye, *in soul and body, with no deformity or mutilation but intact in body and in gender; and the elect will shine with the brightness of their good works, but the reprobate will bear the blackness of their deeds of misery.* Thus their works will not there be concealed, but will appear in them openly.

4 The risen who are signed and unsigned

And some of them are sealed with the sign of faith, but some are not; and the consciences of some who have faith shine with the radiance of wisdom, but the consciences of others are murky from their neglect. And thus they are clearly distinguished; for the former have done the works of faith, but the latter have extinguished it in themselves. And those who do not have the sign of faith are those who chose not to know the living and true God either in the old Law or in the new Grace.

5 The Son will come to the judgment in human form

And then the Son of God, in the human form He had at His Passion when He suffered by the will of the Father to save the human race, will come to judge it, surrounded by the celestial army; He will be in the brightness of eternal life, but in the cloud that hides celestial glory from the reprobate. For the Father vouchsafed to Him the judging of the visible things of the world, because He had lived visibly in the world; as He Himself shows in the Gospel, saying:

6 The Gospel on this subject

"And He has given Him power to judge, because He is the Son of Man" [John 5:27]. Which is to say:

The Father has borne witness to His Son. What does this mean? The Father gave power to the Son, because He remained with the Father in

divinity but received humanity from a mother; and, because He is human, He received also from the Father that every creature should feel Him as the Son of God, for all creatures were created and formed by God. And therefore all deeds will be judged by the Son, whatever their nobility or baseness, and He will put them in their proper order. For, as He was a man palpable and visible in the world, He can justly distinguish all that is visible in the world. And He will appear in His power of judging terrible to the unjust but gentle to the just, and judge them so that the very elements will feel the purgation.

7 The signed will be taken up easily to meet their Judge

And those who are signed are taken up to meet the Just Judge not with difficulty but with great speed, so that in them, who had faith in God, the works of faith may clearly be seen. And, as was shown you, *the good are separated from the bad,* for their works are dissimilar. For here it is apparent how both the bad and the good have sought God, in infancy and childhood and youth and old age.

8 All God's flowers, the great heroes of the Church, will appear radiant

And here all the flowers of My Son will shine out in radiance; that is to say, the patriarchs and prophets who lived before His Incarnation, the apostles who lived with Him in the world, the martyrs, confessors, virgins and widows who have faithfully imitated Him, the holders of high office, both secular and spiritual, in My Church, and the anchorites and monks who chastised and mortified their flesh and imitated the humility and charity of the angels in their garments, thus belittling themselves for My Son's name. Those who seek Me in the contemplative life because they think that life is more glorious than another are as nothing to Me; but any who seek Me in humility in that life because the Holy Spirit inspired them to do so, I will put in the first ranks in the celestial homeland.

9 Amid the silence of Heaven, the Son will give sentence on all

Then the heavens will subdue their praises and remain awhile in silence, while the Son of God pronounces judicial sentence both on the just and on the unjust. And they will give ear with reverence and honor to how He decides; and *He will gently grant supernal joys to the just, and terribly consign the unjust to the pains of Hell. And there will be no further excuses or questions about human works,* for here the consciences of both the good and the bad are naked and revealed.

10 Why the good and the bad need to be judged

Now the just, who will receive the words of the most equitable Judge, have indeed done many good works, but while they lived in the world they did not act with fullness of perfection, and therefore their deeds must now be judged. And the unjust, who will suffer a severe judgment against them, have indeed done much evil; but they did not act in ignorance of the Divine Majesty, in the wicked unbelief that would damn them without judgment. And so they will not escape the Judge's sentence, for all things must be weighed equitably.

11 Unbelievers are already judged and so will not come to the judgment

But those who are not signed in faith, because they did not believe in God, *will tarry in the North, the region of perdition, with the Devil's band, and not come to this judgment. But they will see it all in obscurity and await its end, groaning deeply* within themselves because they persevered in unbelief and did not know the true God. For they neither worshipped the living God in the Old Testament before the institution of baptism, nor received the remedy of baptism in the Gospel, but continued under the curse of Adam's fall, with its penalty of damnation. And therefore they are already judged, for the crime of infidelity.

12 When the judgment is finished, a great calm will arise

And when the judgment is ended, *the terrors of the elements*, the lightnings and thunders and winds and tempests, *will cease, and all that is fleeting and transitory will* melt away and *no longer be*, like snow melted by the heat of the sun. And so, by God's dispensation, *an exceedingly great calm will arise.*

13 Glory will receive the elect and Hell swallow up the damned

And thus the elect will become splendid with the splendor of eternity, *and with My Son their Head and the glorious celestial army will embrace glory and the heavenly joys; while the reprobate, together with the Devil and his angels, will wretchedly direct their course toward eternal punishment*, where eternal death awaits them for following their lusts instead of My commands. And so *Heaven will receive the elect* into the glory of eternity, because they have loved the Ruler of the heavens; and *Hell will swallow up the reprobate*, because they did not renounce the Devil. And then *such great joy and praise will resound in the glory of Heaven and such great groaning and howling will arise in*

Hell as to exceed the grasp of the human understanding. For the first have eternal life and the second eternal death, as My Son declares in the Gospel, saying:

14 The Gospel on this subject

"And these shall go into everlasting punishment; but the just into life everlasting" [Matthew 25:46]. Which is to say: Those who befoul themselves in the house of evil passions, and do not thirst to drink justice from the Supreme Goodness, will come in the course of their infidelity and wickedness to submersion in the pains of eternal perdition, and according to their deeds will receive the torments of Hell. But the builders of the heavenly Jerusalem, who faithfully stand in the gates of the daughter of Zion, will be radiant in the eternal life, which the fruitfulness of the chaste Virgin miraculously gave to all believers.

15 How the elements and heavenly bodies will be changed, and night ended

And, as you see, *when all these things are over the elements will shine out with the greatest brightness and beauty, and all blackness and filth will be removed from them.* And *fire, without its raging heat,* will blaze like the dawn; *air without density* will be completely limpid; *water without its power to flood or drown* will stand transparent and calm, and *earth without shakiness* or roughness will be firm and level. And so all these will be transformed into great calm and beauty.

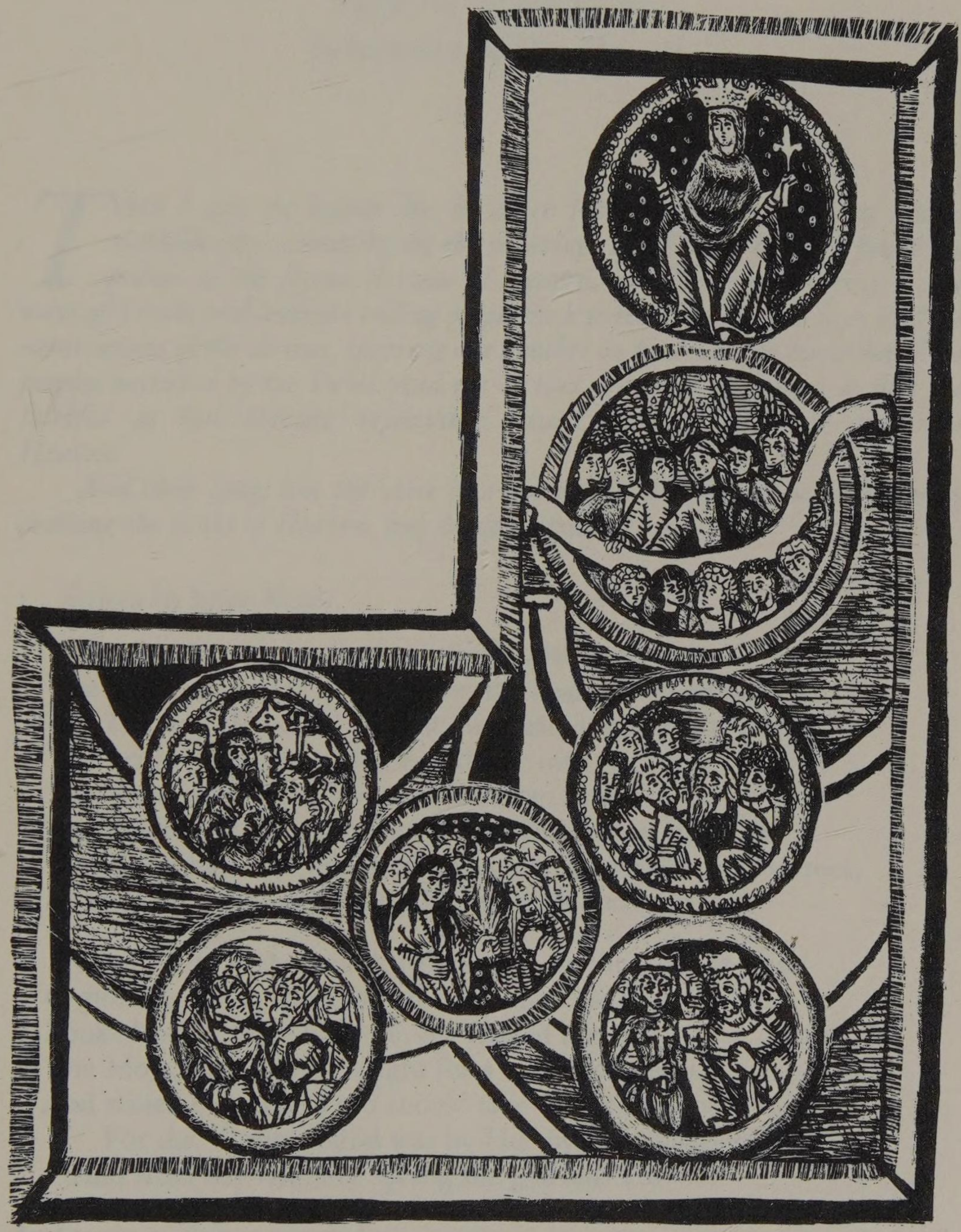
And *the sun and moon and stars will sparkle in the firmament* like precious stones set in gold, with great glory and brilliance; and *they will no longer restlessly revolve in orbit* so as to distinguish day from night. For the world will have ended and they will have become immutable; and from that time on *there will be no darkness, and day will be perpetual.* As My beloved John witnesses, when he says:

16 Words of John

"And there shall be no more night, and they will not need the light of the lamp or the light of the sun; for the Lord God will illumine them" [Revelation 22:5]. Which is to say: One who possesses a treasure sometimes hides it and at other times shows it, and even so night conceals the light, and day drives out the darkness and brings light to humanity. But it will not be so when time is transformed; for then the shade of night will be put to flight and its darkness will not appear from that time on. For in this transmutation the

light people now light to dispel the darkness will not be needed; and the sun will not move and by its motion bring times of darkness. For then the day will be without end; for the Ruler of all, in the immutable glory of His Divinity, will illumine those who in the world have by His grace escaped the darkness.

But let the one who has ears sharp to hear inner meanings ardently love My reflection and pant after My words, and inscribe them in his soul and conscience.



THE CHOIRS OF THE BLESSED

VISION THIRTEEN
Symphony of the Blessed

Then I saw the lucent sky, in which I heard different kinds of music, marvellously embodying all the meanings I had heard before. I heard the praises of the joyous citizens of Heaven, steadfastly persevering in the ways of Truth; and laments calling people back to those praises and joys; and the exhortations of the virtues, spurring one another on to secure the salvation of the peoples ensnared by the Devil. And the virtues destroyed his snares, so that the faithful at last through repentance passed out of their sins and into Heaven.

And their song, like the voice of a multitude, making music in harmony praising the ranks of Heaven, had these words:

1 Songs to holy Mary

O splendid jewel, serenely infused with the Sun!
The Sun is in you as a fount from the heart of the Father;
It is His sole Word, by Whom He created the world,
The primary matter, which Eve threw into disorder.
He formed the Word in you as a human being,
And therefore you are the jewel that shines most brightly,
Through whom the Word breathed out the whole of the virtues,
As once from primary matter He made all creatures.

O sweet green branch that flowers from the stem of Jesse!
O glorious thing, that God on His fairest daughter
Looked as the eagle looks on the face of the sun!
The Most High Father sought for a Virgin's candor,
And willed that His Word should take in her His body.
For the Virgin's mind was by His mystery illumined,
And from her virginity sprang the glorious Flower.

And again a song resounded:

2 To the nine orders of heavenly spirits

O glorious living light, which lives in Divinity!
Angels who fix your eyes with ardent desire

BOOK THREE

Amid the mystical darkness surrounding all creatures
On Him with Whom your desires can never be sated!
O glorious joy, to live in your form and nature!
For you are free from every deed of evil,
Although that evil first appeared in your comrade,
The fallen angel, who tried to soar above God,
And therefore that twisted one was submerged in ruin.
And then for himself a greater fall he prepared
By his suggestions to those whom God's hand made.

O angels with shining faces who guard the people,
O ye archangels, who take just souls into Heaven,
And you, O virtues and powers, O principalities,
Dominions and thrones, who by five are secretly counted,
And you, cherubim and seraphim, seal of God's secrets,
Praise be to you all, who behold the heart of the Father,
And see the Ancient of Days spring forth in the fountain,
And His inner power appear like a face from His heart.

And again they sang:

3 To the patriarchs and prophets

O eminent men, who traversed the hidden ways,
And looked with the eyes of the spirit, and in lucent shadows
Announced the Living Light that would bud from the stem
Which blossomed alone from the Light that rooted within it!
O ancient saints, you foretold the souls' salvation
Who were sunk in death; like wheels you turned and circled,
And wondrously spoke of the Mount That touches Heaven.
And then He came, and anointed the many waters,
And so the shining light arose among you,
And, going before Him, displayed the Mount Himself.

O happy roots, from whom miracles and not vices
Grew in the burning way of lucent shadow!
And you, O fiery voice of meditation
Who went before the abyss-sealing Cornerstone;
Rejoice in your Head, in the One Whom so many among you
Invoked with ardor, yet never on earth beheld.

And another song was sung:

4 To the apostles

O warrior cohort of the thornless Flower!
Your sound fills the world, traversing the realm of the senses,
Where madmen feast and defile themselves with swine;
And you, infused with the Comforter, conquered them.
O noble race of the Savior, whose roots are fixed
In the tabernacle of the Word's complete labor,
You take by the Lamb the path of the water's salvation.
He sent you armed with a sword amid dogs most savage,
Who with the work of their fingers destroyed their glory,
Subjecting the Handlessly Made to their hands' own makings.

O lucent crowd of apostles, in truest knowledge
You rose to open the Devil's mighty prisons
And cleanse his slaves in the fount of living waters.
You are the glorious light in the blackest darkness,
The pillars that prop the jewelled Bride of the Lamb,
Whose banner-bearer first was the Virgin Mother,
For joy of the Lamb, Who weds the immaculate Bride.

And another song resounded:

5 To the martyrs

O ye who have poured out your blood in triumph,
And conquered a share in the blood of the Lamb who perished,
Feasting upon the slain calf's sacrifice,
And so built the Church, what a great reward is yours!
Alive, you followed the Lamb, and despised your bodies,
Adorned His pains, and so recaptured your portions.

O rose blossoms, blessed in the joy of your blood's effusion!
Your fragrant blood flowed forth from the inner counsel
Of Him Who has been always, without beginning,
And planned before time began His great redemption.
Your company is honor, whose blood abounded
To build the Church in the stream from your noble wounds.

And another song was sung:

6 To the confessors

O ye who succeed and serve the mighty Lion,
And rule between the temple and the altar,
The angels sing praises and stand to help the peoples,
And so do you, in the Lamb's service careful.

O ye who imitate the Most Exalted,
In His most precious and glorious Sacrament!
How great is your glory, in which the power is given
To loose and bind the indolent and the straying,
To beautify white and black, and lift their burdens.
Yours too is the office of the angelic order,
And yours is the task of knowing the firm foundations
And where to lay them; and therefore great is your honor.

And another song resounded:

7 To the virgins

O lovely faces who look on the face of God
And build in the dawn; O noble blessed virgins!
The King took thought for you, sealing you to His purpose
And decking you with all ornaments of Heaven,
And so you are a garden adorned in sweetness.

O noble verdure, which grows from the Sun of splendor!
Your clear serenity shines in the Wheel of Godhead,
Your greatness is past all earthly understanding,
And Heaven's wonders surround you in their embrace.
You glow like dawn, and burn like the Sun in glory.

And another song was heard, like the voice of a multitude breaking out in melodic laments over the people who had to be brought back to that place:

8 The lament over the ones to be recalled

Oh, this is a voice of sorrow and great lamenting!
Ah! ah! what a wonderful victory has arisen:
The desire for God, while carnal pleasure flees!
But oh, alas! how few were the wills that were sinless,
How few the desires that fled from lust to You!

VISION THIRTEEN

Mourn, mourn then, Innocence, you whose modest goodness
Has never failed, nor craved what the Serpent showed you,
For people respected, though they neglected you.

O Living Fountain, how great is Your sweet compassion!
You never lost sight of the face of the straying people,
But saw in advance the way that You would save them
From the fallen angels, who thought they had reft them from You.
O daughter of Zion, rejoice that God restores you
So many cut off from you by the ancient serpent,
Who now shine brighter than ever they shone before.
The Living Light now says of the ones He rescued,
"The guileful serpent I flouted in his seduction,
His work was not so perfect as once he thought it.
I swore by Myself, and I did more, far more,
For them than he did to them. And so your joy
Is ended, your snares destroyed, and all your greed
Is come to nothing, O wickedest of impostors!"

And again a song was heard, like the voice of a multitude, exhorting the virtues to help humanity and oppose the inimical arts of the Devil. And the virtues overcame the vices, and by divine inspiration people turned back to repentance. And thus the song resounded in harmony:

9 The exhortation of the virtues and the fight against the Devil

THE VIRTUES: We virtues are in God, and there abide; we wage war for the King of Kings, and separate evil from good. We appeared in the first battle, and conquered there, while the one who tried to fly above himself fell. So let us now wage war and help those who invoke us; let us tread underfoot the Devil's arts, and guide those who would imitate us to the blessed mansions.

SOULS (in the body, lamenting): Oh, we are strangers, wandering off toward sin! What have we done? We should have been daughters of the King, but we fell into the darkness of sin. O living Sun, carry us on Your shoulders into the just inheritance, which we lost in Adam! O King of Kings, let us fight in your battle!

A FAITHFUL SOUL: O sweet Divinity and O lovely Life, in Whom I may put on a robe of glory, and receive what I lost in the beginning! I long for You, and I call upon the virtues.

VIRTUES (answering): O blessed soul! O sweet creature of God, who were formed in the depths of God's profound wisdom, you have loved much.

BOOK THREE

THE SOUL: Oh, I come to you gladly; give me the kiss of the heart!

VIRTUES: We must join with you in the battle, O daughter of the King.

THE SOUL (burdened and complaining): Oh, burdensome labor! Oh, heavy load I must endure while garbed in this life! It is most hard for me to fight against the flesh.

VIRTUES: O soul created by God's will, O happy instrument! Why are you so weak against the thing God has crushed by the Virgin? Through us you must conquer the Devil.

THE SOUL: Help, support me, that I may stand firm!

KNOWLEDGE OF GOD: See what it is that you are clothed with, O daughter of salvation, and stand firm! Then you will never fall.

THE SOUL: Oh, I know not what to do or where to flee! Woe is me! I cannot use rightly that which clothes me. I want to tear it off!

VIRTUES: O bad conscience, O wretched soul! Why do you hide your face in the presence of your Creator?

KNOWLEDGE OF GOD: You do not know or see or taste Him Who created you.

THE SOUL: God created the world; I do Him no wrong if I want to enjoy it.

THE DEVIL (whispering to the soul): Fool, fool! What good is your labor? Regard the world, and it will embrace you with honor.

VIRTUES: Alas, alas! Virtues, let us loudly lament and mourn; for a sheep of the Lord is fleeing from life.

HUMILITY: I, Humility, queen of the virtues, say: Come to me, all of you virtues, and I will strengthen you, so that you can seek the lost coin and give it the crown of blessed perseverance!

VIRTUES: O glorious queen, O sweetest mediator! We come gladly.

HUMILITY: Beloved daughters, I keep you in the King's wedding chamber. O daughters of Israel, God raised you under His tree, so now remember your planting. Rejoice, O daughters of Zion!

THE DEVIL (to the virtues): What good is it that there should be no power but God's? I say that I will give everything to the one who follows me and his own will; but you and all your followers have nothing to give, for none of you knows who you are.

HUMILITY: I and my companions know well that you are the ancient dragon, who tried to fly higher than the Most High, and was thrown into the deepest abyss by God Himself.

VIRTUES: But all of us dwell on high.

THE SOUL (in the body, repentant and lamenting): O royal virtues! How beautifully you shine in the Supreme Sun! How sweet is your dwelling! Oh, woe is me, I fled from you!

VISION THIRTEEN

VIRTUES: Come, O fugitive, come to us! and God will receive you.

THE SOUL: Alas, alas! Burning sweetness plunged me into sins; I dare not enter with you.

VIRTUES: Do not fear or flee; the Good Shepherd seeks you, His lost sheep.

THE SOUL: Now I need you to take me back, for I fester with wounds the ancient serpent has dealt me.

VIRTUES: Run to us, and follow with us that path in which you will never fall; and God will heal you.

THE SOUL: I am a sinner who fled from Life; I must come to you full of sores, that you may offer me the shield of redemption.

VIRTUES: O fugitive soul, be firm, and put on yourself the armor of light!

THE SOUL: O soldiery of the Queen, O white lilies and crimson roses, look gently upon me! I have lived as a stranger and an exile from you; help me to rise up in the blood of the Son of God! O Humility, who are true healing, help me; for Pride has broken me with many vices, and wounded me with many scars. Now I fly to you; oh, receive me!

HUMILITY (to the virtues): O virtues all, for the sake of Christ's wounds receive this mourning sinner, scarred as she is, and bring her to me.

VIRTUES (to the soul): We will bring you back, and we will not desert you; the whole celestial army rejoices over you! And so we will sing a song of rejoicing.

HUMILITY (to the soul): O unhappy daughter, I will embrace you; for the great Physician for your sake suffered deep and bitter wounds.

THE DEVIL (whispering to the soul): Who are you, and whence do you come? You embraced me, and I led you forth; and now you return and confound me! But I will throw you down in battle.

THE SOUL (to the Devil): I recognized that all your ways are evil, and so I fled from you. And now, O impostor, I fight against you! (To Humility): O Queen Humility, help me with your healing remedy!

HUMILITY (to Victory and the other virtues): O Victory! You conquered the Devil in Heaven; run now with your companions, and all bind this Devil!

VICTORY (to the virtues): O strong and glorious soldiers, come and help me conquer this deceiver!

VIRTUES (to Victory): O sweetest warrior in the flowing fountain that engulfed the ravenous wolf! O you crowned with glory, we gladly fight with you against the deluder of souls.

HUMILITY: Bind him, O splendid virtues!

VIRTUES: O queen, we will obey you, and do your commands in all things.

BOOK THREE

VICTORY: Rejoice, comrades! The ancient serpent is bound!

VIRTUES: Praise be to you, O Christ, King of the angels! O God, Who are You Who had this great counsel in You? It destroyed the hellish drink, which poisoned the publicans and sinners; and they now shine in celestial goodness. Praise therefore be to You, O King! O Father Almighty, from Your ardent heat flows the fountain; guide your children with a favorable wind on the waters, that we may lead them into the celestial Jerusalem.

And these voices were like the voices of a multitude lifting up its sound on high. And their song went through me, so that I understood them perfectly.

And I heard a voice from the shining sky, saying to me:

10 God must be unceasingly praised for His grace with heart and voice

Praises must be offered unceasingly to the Supernal Creator with heart and mouth, for by His grace he sets on heavenly thrones not only those who stand erect but those who bend and fall.

Thus, O human, *you see the lucent sky*, which symbolizes the brilliance of the joy of the citizens of Heaven; *in which you hear different kinds of music, marvellously embodying all the meanings you heard before. You hear the praises of the joyous citizens of Heaven, steadfastly persevering in the ways of Truth, and laments calling people back to those praises and joys.* For, as the air encloses and sustains everything under the heavens, so the wonders of God, which you have already been shown, are enveloped for you in a sweet and delightful song. It sings with joy of the wonders of the elect who dwell in the heavenly city and eternally express their sweet devotion to God; and it laments over the wavering of those the ancient serpent is trying to destroy, but who will be led to blessed joy by the divine power, and know the mysteries no human mind can know that bows down to the earth. *And you hear the exhortations of the virtues, spurring one another on to secure the salvation of the peoples ensnared by the Devil; and the virtues destroy his snares, so that the faithful at last through repentance pass out of their sins and into Heaven.* For the virtues in the minds of the faithful resist the vices by which the Devil wearies them, and redeem them; and when their mighty strength conquers these vices, the people who fell into sin return by God's will to repentance, diligently examining and weeping over their former deeds, and weighing and considering their future ones.

11 The song is sung in unity and concord

And so that song, like the voice of a multitude, makes music in praise among the ranks of Heaven. For the song of rejoicing, sung in consonance and in

concord, tells of the glory and honor of the citizens of Heaven, and lifts on high what the Word has shown.

12 The words are the body and the music the spirit

And so the words symbolize the body, and the jubilant music indicates the spirit; and the celestial harmony shows the Divinity, and the words the Humanity of the Son of God.

13 By this song the sluggish soul is aroused to watchfulness

And as the power of God is everywhere and encompasses all things, and no obstacle can stand against it, so too the human intellect has great power to resound in living voices, and arouse sluggish souls to vigilance by the song.

David shows this by his songs of prophecy and rejoicing; and Jeremiah shows it by the sorrowful voice of his lamentation. And you also, O human, with your poor and frail little nature, can hear in the song the ardor of virginal modesty embraced by the blossoming branch; and the acuity of the living lights, which shine in the heavenly city; and the profound utterances of the apostles; and the outpouring of the blood of the faithful who offer themselves; and the secrets of the priestly office; and the procession of virgins, blooming in the verdancy of Heaven. For the faithful creature rejoices to his Creator in a voice of exultation and gladness, and returns Him perpetual gratitude. *And you hear another song, like the voice of a multitude breaking out in melodic laments over the people who have to be brought back to that place.* For the song does not only harmonize and exult over those who persevere in the path of rectitude, but also exults in the concord of those who are resurrected from their fall out of the path of justice, and are at last uplifted to true beatitude. For the Good Shepherd has brought back to the fold with joy the sheep that was lost.

And again you hear a song, like the voice of a multitude, exhorting the virtues to help humanity and oppose the arts of the Devil. And the virtues overcome the vices, and by divine inspiration people turn back to repentance; and so their song resounds in harmony. For the sweet alliance of the virtues draws the faithful to true beatitude, though the vices the Devil uses as snares accumulate direly. But the virtues do not merely conquer the vices, but destroy them; and so they lead people who consent to be helped by God to eternal reward by true penitence. And this is shown by the words of their song.

14 The song of rejoicing softens the hard heart and summons the Holy Spirit

For the song of rejoicing softens hard hearts, and draws forth from them the tears of compunction, and invokes the Holy Spirit. And so *those voices you hear are like the voice of a multitude, which lifts its sound on high;* for jubilant praises, offered in simple harmony and charity, lead the faithful to that consonance in which is no discord, and make those who still live on earth sigh with heart and voice for the heavenly reward.

And their song goes through you so that you understand them perfectly; for where divine grace has worked, it banishes all dark obscurity, and makes pure and lucid those things that are obscure to the bodily senses because of the weakness of the flesh.

15 The faithful should rejoice without ceasing

Therefore, let everyone who understands God by faith faithfully offer Him tireless praises, and with joyful devotion sing to Him without ceasing. As My servant David, filled with the spirit of lofty profundity, exhorts on My behalf, saying:

16 Words of David

"Praise Him with the sound of trumpets; praise Him with psaltery and harp. Praise Him with timbrel and dance; praise Him with stringed instruments and flute. Praise Him on high-sounding cymbals; praise Him on cymbals of joy; let every spirit praise the Lord" [Psalm 150:3–5]. This is to say:

You know, adore and love God with simple mind and pure devotion. Praise Him, then, with the sound of trumpets, which is to say by the use of the reason. For when the lost angel and his consenters fell into perdition, the armies of the blessed spirits stood firm in the truth of reason, and with faithful devotion adhered to God.

And praise Him on the psaltery of deep devotion, and the honey-toned harp. For when the trumpet sounds the psaltery follows, and when the psaltery sounds the harp follows; as first the blessed angels stood fast in the love of truth, and then after the creation of Man the prophets arose with their wonderful voices, and then the apostles followed with their words of sweetness.

And praise Him with the timbrel of mortification and in the dance of exultation. For after the harp sounds, the timbrel exults, and after the timbrel, the dance; as after the apostles preached words of salvation, the martyrs

endured many bodily torments for the honor of God, and then arose the truthful doctors of the priestly office.

And praise Him with the stringed instruments of human redemption and the flute of divine protection. For after the dance of joy, the voice of the stringed instruments and the flute emerge; as, after the doctors who served beatitude showed the truth, there appeared the virgins, who loved the Son of God, Who was true Man, like stringed instruments and adored Him, Who was true God, like flutes. For they believed Him to be true Man and true God. What does this mean? When the Son of God assumed flesh for human salvation, He did not lose the glory of Divinity; and so the happy virgins chose Him as their Bridegroom, and knew Him with faithful devotion as true Man in betrothal and true God in chastity.

And praise Him too on high-sounding cymbals, which is to say by loud and joyful declarations, whenever people who lay in the depths of sin are touched by divinely inspired remorse and raise themselves from those depths to the height of Heaven.

And praise Him on cymbals of joy, which is to say by statements of praise, whenever the strong virtues gain the victory and overthrow human vice, and lead people who persevere in good works and holy desires to the beatitude of the true recompense.

And so let every spirit who wills to believe in God and honor Him praise the Lord, Him Who is the Lord of all; for it is fitting that anyone who desires life should glorify Him Who is Life.

And again I heard a voice from the lucent sky, saying: "O King most high, praise be to You, Who bring these things to pass in a simple and untaught person!"

And another voice cried out from Heaven with a great shout, saying:

Hear and attend, all you who desire to have heavenly recompense and bliss. O ye people who have believing hearts and await the heavenly reward, take these words and lay them up in your inmost hearts, and do not reject this admonition that comes to you. For I the Living and True Witness of Truth, the speaking and not silent God, say and say again: Who shall prevail over Me? He who tries it I will overthrow. Let not anyone lay hold of a mountain, which he cannot move, but let him abide in the valley of humility. Who walks a road without water? The one who is swayed by the whirlwind, and divides fruit but does not eat it. And how can My tabernacle be there? My tabernacle is the place where the Holy Spirit pours forth His overflowing waters. What does this mean?

I am in the midst. How? Whoever lays hold of Me worthily shall not fall, either as to height or as to depth or as to breadth. What does this mean?

I am that Charity which emulous pride cannot cast down, a fall into the depths cannot dash to pieces and the wide expanse of evils cannot crush. Can

BOOK THREE

I not build as high as the footstool of the sun? The strong despise Me, who show their strength in the valleys; the apathetic leave me at the sound of the tempest; and the learned refuse My food; and so do they all who build towers for themselves according to their own will. But I will confound them through the small and the weak, as I overthrew Goliath by a boy, and conquered Holofernes by Judith. And therefore, if anyone rejects the mystical words of this book, I will draw My bow against him and transfix him by the arrows from My quiver; I will knock his crown from his head, and make him like those who fell in Horeb when they murmured against Me. And if anyone utters curses against this prophecy, may the curse that Isaac uttered come upon him. But anyone who embraces it and keeps it in his heart and makes its ways plain, I will fill with the dews of Heaven.

And whoever tastes this prophecy and fixes it in his memory will become the mountain of myrrh, and of frankincense, and of all aromatical spices, and the diffusion of many blessings; he will ascend like Abraham from blessing to blessing. And the new spouse, the Bride of the Lamb, will take him to herself, for he is a pillar in the sight of God. And the shadow of the hand of the Lord will protect him.

But whoever rashly conceals these words written by the finger of God, madly abridging them, or for any human reason taking them to a strange place and scoffing at them, let him be reprobate; and the finger of God shall crush him.

Praise, therefore, praise God, ye blessed hearts, for the miracles God has wrought in the frail earthly reflection of the beauty of the Most High; as He Himself foreshadowed when He first made Woman from the rib of the man He had created.

But let the one who has ears sharp to hear inner meanings ardently love My reflection and pant after My words, and inscribe them in his soul and conscience. Amen.

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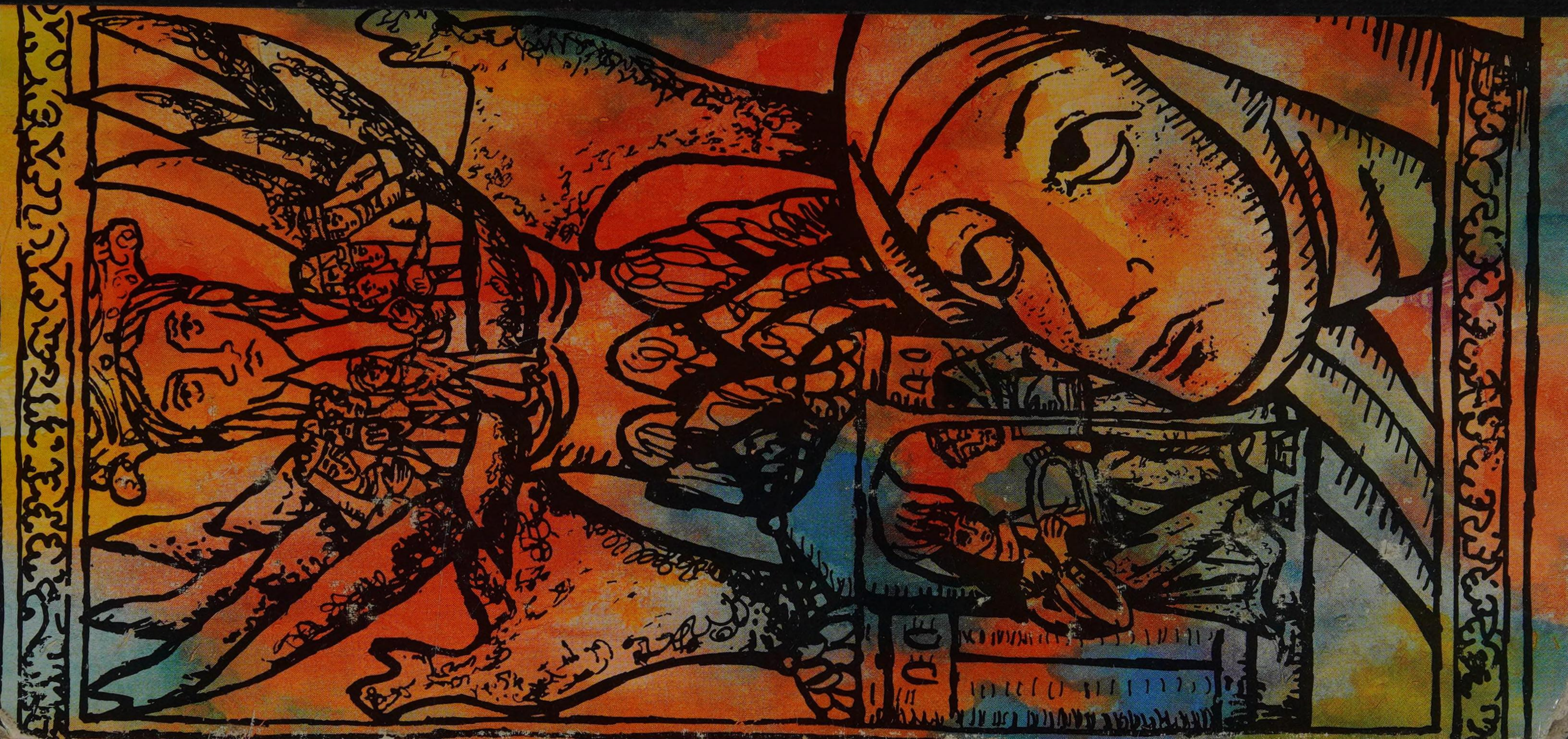

Book of the First Monks

Jump to navigationJump to search

The Book of the First Monks (Latin: Decem Libri – Liber de Institutione Primorum Monacharum)[1] is a medieval Catholic book in the contemplative and eremitic tradition of the Carmelite Order, thought to reflect the spirituality of the Prophet Elijah, honored as the Father of the Order.

Contents

1 Overview
2 Imitation of the Prophet Elijah
3 Influence on Carmelites
4 See also
5 References
6 External links

Overview

The book is one of the most important documents of the Order because it influenced many of the Carmelite Saints according to the spirituality of the first Carmelite hermits. Some medieval Carmelites thought it antedated the Carmelite Rule of St. Albert, although this is disputed due to a lack of evidence. It is this dispute that has caused this manuscript to be questioned today.[citation needed]

Imitation of the Prophet Elijah

Part of a series on

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Transfiguration of Jesus

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ApophaticAsceticalCataphaticCatholic spiritualityHellenisticMystical theologyNeoplatonic Henosis

Practices

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Meditation

MeditationLectio DivinaInvoking of Mystic Saints

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Contemplation HesychasmJesus PrayerQuietismStages of Christian perfectionHesychiaDivinization

CatharsisTheosisKenosisSpiritual drynessReligious ecstasy

Passive asceticism

Abstinence

Esoteric

CharismaticEsoteric

People (by era or century)

Antiquity

Ancient AfricanOrigenThomasinesGregory of NyssaPseudo-Dionysius

Desert Fathers

Paul of ThebesAnthony the GreatArsenius the GreatPoemenMacarius of EgyptMoses the BlackSyncleticaAthanasiusJohn ChrysostomHilarionJohn Cassian

11th · 12th

Bernard of ClairvauxGuigo IIHildegard of BingenSymeon the New TheologianSaint Sava of Serbia

13th · 14th

Dominican

Dominic de Guzmán

Franciscan

Francis of AssisiAnthony of PaduaBonaventureJacopone da TodiAngela of Foligno

English

Richard RolleWalter HiltonJulian of NorwichMargery Kempe

Flemish

Beatrice of NazarethLutgardisHadewijchJohn van Ruysbroeck

German

Meister EckhartJohannes TaulerHenry Suso

Female

Beatrice of NazarethBridget of SwedenCatherine of SienaMechthild of MagdeburgMarguerite Porete

15th · 16th

Spanish

Ignatius of LoyolaFrancisco de OsunaJohn of ÁvilaTeresa of ÁvilaJohn of the Cross

Others

Catherine of Genoa

17th · 18th

French

Margaret Mary AlacoquePierre de BérulleJean-Jacques OlierLouis de MontfortCharles de CondrenJohn EudesJohn of St. Samson

Others

Mary of Jesus of ÁgredaPaul of the CrossAnne Catherine EmmerichVeronica GiulianiFrancis de Sales

19th

Dina BélangerCatherine LabouréMélanie CalvatMaximin GiraudBernadette SoubirousConchita de ArmidaLuisa PiccarretaMary of the Divine HeartThérèse of LisieuxGemma Galgani

20th

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Lingua ignotaOrdo VirtutumSciviasAscent of Mount CarmelDark Night of the SoulSpiritual CanticleWay of PerfectionBook of the First MonksThe Interior CastleAbbey of the Holy GhostA Dialogue of Comfort against TribulationFrom Willow Creek to Sacred HeartThe Glories of MaryThe Imitation of ChristThe Ladder of Divine AscentPhilokaliaRevelations of Divine LoveThe Story of a SoulTheologia GermanicaDevotio ModernaFatima in Lucia's Own WordsCalls from the Message of FatimaThe Miracle of Our Lady of FatimaSol de FátimaThe Cloud of UnknowingOn the Consolation of PhilosophyThe Mirror of Simple SoulsSister Catherine TreatiseTractatus de Purgatorio Sancti PatriciiThe Vision of AdamnánDivine Comedy InfernoPurgatorioParadisoFatima

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The original charism of the Carmelite hermits, which still animates the spirituality of many contemporary Carmelites and the cloistered contemplative life of other hermits, monks, and nuns, was in imitation of the Prophet Elijah. Carmelite tradition relates that Elijah inspired the early hermits who settled near the spring on Mount Carmel, Palestine which bears Elijah's name. Most often quoted from the Book of the First Monks is the following passage in which Elijah is named as the spiritual father of the Order:

> The goal of this life is twofold. One part we acquire, with the help of divine grace, through our efforts and virtuous works. This is to offer God a pure heart, free from all stain of actual sin. We do this when we are perfect and in Cherith, that is, hidden in that charity of which the Wise Man says: "Charity covers all sins " [Proverbs, 10: 12]. God desired Elijah to advance thus far when [H]e said to him: "Hide yourself by the brook Cherith" [First Kings, 17: 3-4].
>
> The other part of the goal of this life is granted us as the free gift of God: namely, to taste somewhat in the heart and to experience in the soul, not only after death but even in this mortal life, the intensity of the

divine [P]resence and the sweetness of the glory of [H]eaven. This is to drink of the torrent of the love of God. God promised it to Elijah in the words: "You shall drink from the brook." It is in view of this double end that the monk ought to give himself to the eremitic and prophetic life.[2]

The book also gives one of the oldest explanations of the Carmelite habit and what each part of the habit signified.

Influence on Carmelites

Exemplars of the contemplative and mystical spirituality described in the book include the Discalced Carmelite Sts. Teresa of Ávila, John of the Cross, Thérèse of Lisieux, and Teresa Benedicta of the Cross (Edith Stein).

See also

Carmelite Rule of St. Albert
Constitutions of the Carmelite Order
Byzantine Discalced Carmelites
Carmelite Rite

References

The Order's History of Discalced Carmelites

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Official site of the Order of Carmelites
For a recent translation (in English) of the '"Institutione Primorum Monachorum" with an introduction, see: Felip Ribot, O.Carm., The Ten Books on the Way of Life and Great Deeds of the Carmelites, ed. and trans. by Fr. Richard Copsey, O.Carm., 2nd edn(Kent: St. Albert's Press, 2007). Only Book 1 is currently available online
"Institutione Primorum Monachorum" in the History of the Carmelite Order
Book of the First Monks in John of the Cross' writings
For a recent translation (in French) of the '"Institutione Primorum Monachorum" with an introduction, see: Philippe Ribot, L'institution des premiers moines, trad. par Sr Pascale-Dominique Nau op, révisée par Yves-Marie du Très-Saint-Sacrement ocd, et introduction de Jean-Philippe Houdret ocd (Éditions du Carmel,

2013).

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Carmelites

A list of all the congregations, notable members, priories, churches, and convents of the Order of the Brothers of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel (Carmelites)

General

Attributes

ElijahElishaSaint JosephSaint JoachimSaint AnneAlbert of JerusalemRule of Saint AlbertBook of the First MonksScapular of Our Lady of Mount CarmelOur Lady of Mount CarmelMount CarmelFlos CarmeliSabbatine Privilege

Orders

and groups

Discalced Carmelites (also known as Teresian Carmelites)Monks of the Most Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount CarmelHermits of the Most Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount CarmelCarmelites of Mary ImmaculateCarmelites of the Holy Face (Palmarian)

Tertiary

Third Order of CarmelitesSecular Order of Discalced Carmelites

Liturgy

Rite of the Holy Sepulchre

Spiritual classics

The Interior CastleWay of PerfectionDark Night of the SoulAscent of Mount CarmelThe Living Flame of LoveThe Practice of the Presence of God

Members of the Carmelite Order

Beatified Carmelites

Francesco LippiJohn SorethJane of ToulouseBartolomeo FantiBaptist Spagnoli of MantuaMaria Crocifissa CurcioAnne of Saint BartholomewCandelaria of San JoséFrancisco PalauGiovanna ScopelliKuriakose Elias ChavaraAngelo Agostini MazzinghiFrançoise d'AmboiseTeresa Maria ManettiElia of Saint ClementMaría Guggiari EcheverríaMaría López de Rivas MartínezMarie-Eugène de l'Enfant-Jésus

Congregations of sisters

Carmelite Sisters of CharityCarmelite Sisters for the Aged and InfirmCarmelite Sisters of the Most Sacred Heart of Los AngelesSisters of the Apostolic CarmelCarmelite Daughters of the Divine Heart of JesusSisters of the Virgin Mary of Mount CarmelCarmelite Sister of the Divine ProvidenceCarmelite Missionaries Sister of Saint Therese of Child JesusCarmelite Sister of Mother CandelariaCorpus Christi CarmelitesInstitute of Our Lady of CarmelCongregation Of Our Lady Of Mount CarmelCarmelite Sisters of Our Lady

Carmelite pope

Pope Telesphorus

Carmelite bishops

Inácio de São CaetanoRobert MascallPierre de CasaFilippo Iannone

Carmelite cardinals

Girolamo Maria GottiJoaquín Lluch y GarrigaAdeodato Giovanni PiazzaAnders Arborelius

Carmelite martyrs

Angelus of JerusalemLuigi RabatàTeresa of St. Augustine & CompanionsMarie-Geneviève MeunierRedemptus of the CrossDenis of the NativityHilary JanuszewskiTeresa Benedicta of The CrossIsidore BakanjaJacques RetouretAlfons Maria MazurekElvira Moragas CantareroMaría Pilar de San Francisco de BorjaMaría Ángeles de San JoséTeresa del Niño Jesús y de San Juan de la CruzAngel Prat i Hostench and 16 companionsTitus Brandsma

Carmelite saints

Pope TelesphorusCyril of ConstantinopleSimon StockNuno Álvares PereiraAndrew CorsiniPeter ThomasAlbert of TrapaniEuphrasia EluvathingalGeorge PrecaKuriakose Elias Chavara

Carmelite mystics & doctors of the church

John of the CrossTeresa of ÁvilaThérèse of LisieuxMary of Jesus CrucifiedSerafina of GodMaria PetytMary Magdalene de' PazziTeresa of the AndesJohn of St. SamsonCatalina de Balmaseda y San MartínAna de JesúsElizabeth of the TrinityArchangela GirlaniMaria Candida of the EucharistMarianna FontanellaMarie of St PeterMarie of the IncarnationAnna Maria Redi

Venerable Carmelites

Ana de JesúsVeronica of the PassionThérèse of Saint AugustineMariana of the PurificationMaría Luisa JosefaMargaret of the Blessed SacramentFulton SheenTeofilo CamomotLúcia de Jesus Rosa dos Santos of Fátima

Carmelite Servants of God

Catalina de Balmaseda y San MartínCamille de SoyécourtMary of Saint PeterMaria Francesca of the Holy SpiritGiovanni Antonio GuadagniRaffaele RossiAnastasio Ballestrero

Louise de La VallièreAnne WorsleyMargaret MostynAgnes Mariam de la CroixJessica PowersAnn Teresa MathewsCatharine BurtonNatividad ZialcitaTadea de San JoaquínJosefina Constantino

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Lawrence of the ResurrectionBrother John of Saint Samson

Carmelite scholars

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Carmelite theologians

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the Blessed TrinityFranciscus Bonae SpeiPedro Cornejo de PedrosaWilliam BadbyJohn Beston

Carmelite tertiaries

Maria Crocifissa CurcioMaria de DominiciTeresa of St. Rose of LimaKuriakose Elias Chavara

Filippo Lippi

Carmelite churches, convents, and monasteries

Carmelite churches

Whitefriar Street Carmelite ChurchSt. Joseph's Carmelite Church, Berkeley RoadChurch of Our Lady VictoriousSanta Maria del Carmine, FlorenceAnnunciation Church, MdinaSanta Maria del CarmineMonastery of The Holy Spirit, Sheffield

Carmelite convents

Aylesford Priory

Carmelite basilica

Santa Maria del Carmine, NaplesSan Martino ai MontiSan Martino, BolognaBasilica-Sanctuary of Maria Santissima Annunziata

Carmelite monasteries

Convento de San José (Ávila)Berdychiv Carmelite MonasteryMuhraqa Carmelite MonasteryStella Maris MonasteryCarmelite Monastery Church of the AnnunciationMonastery of Mary, Mother of GraceMarylake Carmelite MonasteryMonastery of The Holy Spirit, SheffieldDöbling Carmelite Monastery

Carmelite education

Colleges and universities

Whitefriars CollegeCarmelite Institute of Britain and Ireland

Pontifical universities

TeresianumInstitutum Carmelitanum

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The Flowing Light Of The Godhead

In today's fast-paced, mobile-centered world, accessibility is no longer optional — it's essential. **The Flowing Light Of The Godhead** was designed with that philosophy in mind, offering a seamless learning experience that travels with you across devices, screens, and environments.

The modern reader expects flexibility. You might start reading on a desktop, continue on a tablet, and finish on your phone. **The Flowing Light Of The Godhead** anticipates this reality by using adaptive formatting and responsive design so that every word, chart, and image remains crystal-clear regardless of screen size.

Each page is lightweight, optimized for fast loading even under limited connectivity. This ensures that learning never stops, whether you're on the train, at a café, or between meetings.

The interface of **The Flowing Light Of The Godhead** is intentionally uncluttered. Minimal visual noise, logical navigation, and balanced contrast make it comfortable to read for extended periods — an experience that respects your attention span and eyesight.

One of its strongest features is offline accessibility. You can download and open **The Flowing Light Of The Godhead** without an internet connection, preserving your ability to learn even in remote areas or during travel.

For those with accessibility needs, **The Flowing Light Of The Godhead** adheres to inclusive design principles. Screen readers, adjustable text sizes, and high-contrast color schemes make the content equally accessible to all users.

We understand that productivity tools today extend beyond hardware. That's why **The Flowing Light Of The Godhead** integrates smoothly with mobile reading apps, allowing you to highlight, annotate, and synchronize your notes across cloud platforms.

Every heading and paragraph has been structured semantically to improve navigation. Readers using assistive technologies can skip, jump, or search content effortlessly, ensuring an intuitive flow through the material.

Mobile learners often multitask, so **The Flowing Light Of The Godhead** includes audio-friendly formatting. You can convert it to text-to-speech easily, turning study sessions into hands-free learning experiences.

File size and optimization were major priorities in development. The entire document compresses efficiently, consuming minimal bandwidth without sacrificing visual fidelity or content depth.

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Data privacy remains a top concern. All downloads and updates occur through encrypted protocols, ensuring your information stays protected on any device or network.

To enhance usability in varying light conditions, **The Flowing Light Of The Godhead** supports both day and night viewing modes. These adjustable themes reduce strain during extended reading sessions.

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For visually impaired users, all graphics and illustrations within **The Flowing Light Of The Godhead** include descriptive alt text. This ensures that no information is lost, regardless of how it’s accessed.

Educators can leverage these accessibility features to distribute materials equitably among diverse audiences. The document’s compatibility across devices means no learner is left behind due to technology limitations.

Battery optimization was also considered. The minimal color palette and static design reduce energy consumption, extending reading time on portable devices.

For organizations managing teams remotely, **The Flowing Light Of The Godhead** simplifies content distribution. The same version can be shared across different operating systems, ensuring consistency between departments and devices.

Each improvement in **The Flowing Light Of The Godhead** reflects a single goal: to remove friction from learning. The more accessible knowledge becomes, the more people it can empower.

By merging portability, accessibility, and design integrity, **The Flowing Light Of The Godhead** stands as a model of what digital education should look like — universal, reliable, and human-centered.

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Hildegard of Bingen

HILDEGARD OF BINGEN: SELECTED WRITINGS

TRANSLATED WITH AN INTRODUCTION AND NOTES BY
MARK ATHERTON

l. Letter to Bernard of Clairvaux

Bernard of Clairvaux was an obvious person for Hildegard to appeal to for support as she pondered a radical change of course in her life and career. A widely known author and by then a venerable figure, Bernard was the abbot of the principal Cistercian monastery and head of the Cistercian order. He was also well placed to intervene on her behalf with a former monk of Clairvaux, Bernardo Pignatelli of Pisa, who had been elected Pope Eugenius III in the previous year. Bernard was an influential figure in the politics of Church and state, particularly in Finance and Germany, and at the time of her letter to him he had been preoccupied with preaching journeys in which he sought to gather support for the Second Crusade.

Hildegard to Bernard of Clairvaux, 1146 [Letter 1][1]

Venerable Father Bernard, you are held wonderfully in high honour by the power of God. You are a terror to the unlawful foolishness of the world; you burn in the love of God's son; you are eager to win men for the banner of the Holy Cross to fight wars in the Christian army against the fury

[1] [Letter l]: The standard numbering of the letters follows the edition of the letters by Lieven Van Acker, *Hildegardis Bingensis Epistolarium* CCCM 9i-9ia (Turnhout, 1991 and 1993) and the translation by Joseph L. Baird and Radd K. Ehrman, *The Letters of Hildegard of Bingen*, 2 vols (Oxford, 1994 and 1998). This in turn follows the original manuscript arrangement of the collected correspondence in which the letters are ordered hierarchically according to the rank and importance of the correspondent. Bernard's letter is clearly significant, for it is placed first, even before the various letters to the popes.

of the pagans.[2] Father, I ask you, by the living God, to attend to my questions.

I am very concerned by this vision which has appeared to me in the spirit of mystery, for I have never seen it with the external eyes of the flesh. I who am miserable and more than miserable in my womanly existence have seen great wonders since I was a child. And my tongue could not express them, if God's Spirit did not teach me to believe.

Most gentle Father, you are secure; in your goodness please answer me, your unworthy servant, for since I was a child I have never felt secure, not for a single hour! Could you search your soul, in your piety and wisdom, and discover how you are instructed by the Holy Spirit, and pour consolation upon me, your servant, from your heart?

For in the text I know the inner meaning of the exposition of the Psalter and the Gospel and other books shown to me in this vision, which touches my heart and soul like a consuming fire, teaching me these profundities of exposition. But it does not teach me writings in the German tongue — these I do not know — and I only know how to read for the simple meaning, not for any textual analysis.[3] Give me an answer as to what you think,

[2] *the banner of the Holy Cross... pagans:* A reference to the preparations for the Second Crusade, fought between 1147 and 1149. To 'preach the cross' meant to obtain military support for the Crusade by preaching in towns and cities throughout the country. An account of such preaching (for the Third Crusade 1189-92), and the fervent support it could inspire, is given in the first chapter of *The Journey through Wales* by Gerald of Wales, trans. Lewis Thorpe (Harmondsworth, 1978), pp. 74-7.

[3] *the simple meaning... textual analysis:* Hildegard claimed a reading knowledge of Latin, as acquired perhaps gradually and subconsciously by many years of participation in the liturgy and by meditated reading of the scriptures and the Fathers of the Church. Other than learning to read the Latin psalms, she had not had access to any formal study of Latin grammar or rhetoric. For a discussion of the ways in which Hildegard could have acquired Latin, see the article by M. Atherton, 'The Visions of Hildegard and the Silent Period. A Case Study of Language Acquisition', *System* 21, no. 4 (1993), pp. 503-508.

for I am a person ignorant of all teaching in external matters; I am taught inwardly, in my soul. Therefore I speak as one in doubt.

Hearing of your wisdom and piety I am comforted. Because there is so much divisiveness in people I have not dared to speak of these things to any other person except for one monk — whom I tested with regard to the integrity of his monastic life. I revealed all my secrets to him and he consoled me and convinced me that these are great secrets and things to be feared.

Father Bernard, I want you to reassure me, and then I will be certain! In a vision two years ago I saw you as a man able to stare at the sun without flinching, a courageous man. And I wept because I blush so much — because I am so timid! Good Father, through your kindness I have found a place in your soul, so that now, if you will, you can reveal to me through your word[4] whether you want me to say these things openly or whether I should keep quiet. For I have great trouble with this visionary gift about how much I should say of what I have seen and heard. And sometimes, because I keep quiet, I am laid low by the vision and confined to my sickbed, unable to raise myself up. So I am sad, I lament before you: I am unstable with the movement of the wooden beam of the wine-press in my nature, the beam which grew at the prompting of the devil from the root in Adam (for which he was cast out as a wanderer in this exile world).[5] But now I raise myself up, I run to you, I speak to you. You are not unstable, you ease the pressure of the wooden beam, you gain the victory in your

[4] *through your word:* Hildegard hopes to receive an answer to her letter which she will 'hear' when Bernard's letter is read aloud.

[5] *wooden beam... world:* The wooden beam of the wine-press (itself a common image in Hildegard) is linked by a chain of association with ideas of the tree of the Garden of Eden in Genesis and the root of the race of Adam. The associative method is typical of early medieval approaches to the exegesis and interpretation of scripture but is particularly common in Hildegard. It leads to her characteristic 'mixed metaphors', which occur particularly frequently in her songs.

soul! And it is not only yourself alone: you raise up the whole world to salvation! You are the eagle staring at the sun![6]

And so I entreat you: by the brightness of the Father, by his wonderful Word, by the sweet humour of compunction, by the Spirit of Truth, by the sacred sound through which all creation resounds, by the Word from which all the world was created, by the height of the Father who through the sweet power of green vigour sent the Word to the Virgin's womb where it took on flesh like the honey in the honeycomb! May the sacred sound, the power of the Father, fall upon your heart and raise up your soul so that you are not passive and indifferent to the words of this correspondent, as long as you seek all things from God, from man or woman, or from the mystery, until you pass through the doorway in your soul and know these things in God.

Farewell. Be well in your soul, and strong in your certainty in God. Amen.

[6] *the eagle staring at the sun:* The eagle is an image from the tradition of the bestiary, the class of book popular in the medieval period in which natural history is mixed with allegorical explanation. In Hildegard's thought, the eagle represents people who have the strength and maturity to understand the ways of God, who in turn is symbolized by the brightness of the sun and referred to traditionally as the 'Sun of Justice'. In a short letter of c.H50(?) to an Abbot at Busenberg [Letter 71], Hildegard uses similar imagery: 'The light in the light speaks to you. Be a good servant in your mind. Watch with a good will. Imitate the eagle that gazes at the sun rather than at the shadow of the shadow. Do not become tired of good works either! Instead, keep your hand on the plough with the strength of your mind. Feed your flock justly, as well as you can, with God's help. With all your strength, run with the eagle that gazes at the light so that you are not snatched away by listlessness. Flee also the darkness of impiety, just as God makes things clear in the cause of good will. For God wants you dead to the things of the world and alive to the life of sanctification. Now live for ever.'

2. The Action of the Will (from *Scivias* I, 4)

In a series of images based on her concept of 'greenness', this digression in the middle of Scivias *1, 4 presents some of Hildegard's ideas on anthropology. Perhaps written before the letter to Bernard, it has been compared to writings by Hugh of St Victor and Honorius of Autun and reveals how widely read she must have been, especially as she did not base the passage on one particular identifiable source. Drawing on wide knowledge, Hildegard describes her understanding of such ideas as the relation of soul and body, human understanding and the action of the will.*

How the soul reveals its capabilities according to the capabilities of the body

The soul reveals her capabilities according to the capabilities of the body, so that in childhood she brings forth simplicity, in youth strength, and in the fullness of age, when all the veins of the human being are full, she brings forth her greatest strength in wisdom. In the same way a tree in its first growth brings forth tender shoots, goes on then to bear fruit and finally ripens that fruit to the fullness of utility. But afterwards in old age when a human being's bones and veins incline to weakness, then the soul reveals gentler strengths, as though tired of human knowledge. In the same

way, at the onset of wintertime, the sap of the tree withdraws from the leaves and branches as the tree begins to incline towards old age.

The human being contains three paths

A human being contains three paths: namely, soul, body and senses. On these three paths, human life runs its course. The soul fills the body with life and brings forth the senses; for its part the body attracts the soul to it and opens the senses; in turn the senses touch the body and draw the soul to them. The soul provides the body with life like fire flooding the darkness with light; it has two major powers like two arms: the understanding and the will. Not that the soul has these limbs to move herself about; rather she reveals herself in these two powers like the sun manifesting itself in the splendour of its light. Therefore human being, you are not a bundle of veins; pay attention to the knowledge of the scriptures.[7]

Human understanding

Human understanding is connected to the soul like the arms to the body. For just as the arm is joined to the hand and the hand to the fingers, so also there is no doubt that understanding proceeds from the soul and activates the other powers of the soul, by which it knows and recognizes human actions. For over all the other powers of the soul it is understanding which distinguishes what is good from what is bad in human actions. Understanding is therefore a teacher through whom all things are known, for in this way he shakes out all things just as the wheat is separated from the stalks and husks; he examines what things are useful and what are useless, what things are lovable and what are hateful, what things belong to life and what to death.

Just as food without salt is bland, so also the other powers of the soul are weak and unknowing without it. Understanding is in the soul like the shoulders in the body, acting as the moving force behind the other powers of the soul, giving them strength like the shoulders give strength to the body. It is flexible, like the bend of the arm, discerning both the divine and the human in God. Thus human understanding works with true faith, for like the articulation of the fingers of the hand it can distinguish between many diverse actions. It therefore operates differently from the other forces of the soul. Why is this?

The will

The will warms an action, the mind receives it, and thought bodies it forth. The understanding, however, discerns an action by the process of knowing good and evil just as the angels also have an understanding that loves good and hates evil. And just as the body has a heart, so too the soul has understanding, which exercises its power in one part of the soul just as the will does in another.

How does this happen? The will in fact has great power in the soul. How does this come about? The soul stands, so to speak, in the corner of the house, that is, in the firm support of the heart, like a man standing in the corner of a house in order to survey the whole house and supervise its running. He raises his right arm to give a sign and points out things useful to the house as he turns towards the east. The soul does likewise on the

[7] *you are not a bundle... knowledge of the scriptures:* Hildegard appears to mean: 'As a human being you are more complex than you imagine, and you will learn this when sacred writings are explained to you.' The phrase 'you are not a bundle of veins' translates the Latin 'quae non es sarcina medullarum'. The expression is an example of where Hildegard's words and images remain obscure and allusive. In the previous section (I, 4, 17) she has been speaking about old age and how the 'bones and veins incline to weakness', which perhaps gives a hint of her meaning.

roadways of the whole body when she looks towards the rising of the sun. The soul uses the will, as it were like her right arm, as a firm support for the veins and the bones and the movement of the whole body, for the will directs every action, whether for good or ill.

The parable of the fire and the bread

The will is like a fire baking every action in an oven.[8] Bread is baked in order to feed people and strengthen them so that they can live. The will is the force behind the whole of the action. It grinds the action in a mill, it adds yeast and kneads it firmly and thus carefully prepares the action, like a loaf of bread which the will bakes to perfection in the heat of its zeal. In so doing it provides human beings with a better food than bread for the activities they do. For while food is taken into the human body and used up, the action of the will endures within the human being until the separation of the soul from the body. And although the action will vary greatly in childhood, in youth, in maturity and in the declining years, nevertheless the will directs it stage by stage and brings it to perfection.

[8] *oven*: The transforming effect of intense heat is a basic assumption behind this image of the will as a fire in an oven.

5. The Trinity (Scivias II, 2)

The illustration accompanying this vision of the Trinity in the Rupertsberg codex shows a series of three concentric coloured circles with a large figure of a man standing in the middle. The subtlety with which Hildegard uses imagery to explain the mysteries of the Trinity should be compared with her letter to Odo of Soissons on the same subject.

Scivias Part II, vision 2

Then I saw an extremely bright light and in the light the figure of a man the colour of sapphire, and it was all burning in a delightful red fire. And the bright light flooded through all the red fire, and the red fire through all the bright light, and the bright light and the red fire shone together through the whole figure of the man so that they were one light in one strength and power. And again I heard the living light speaking to me.

The three persons

Therefore you see 'an extremely bright light', which signifies the Father, who is without the stains of illusion, failure or deceit. And in the light is 'the figure of a man the colour of sapphire', which represents the Son, who is without the stains of hard-heartedness, envy or evil, and who before all time, according to his divinity, was begotten of the Father, but af-

terwards, in time, according to his humanity, became incarnate in the world. And 'it was all burning in a delightful red fire'; this is the fire without the stains of aridity, mortality or darkness, which represents the Holy Spirit, by whom the Only Begotten of the Father was conceived in the flesh, born in time of the Virgin and poured out his light, truth and brightness over all the world.

'And the bright light flooded through all the red fire, and the red fire through all the bright light, and the bright light and the red fire shone together through the whole figure of the man so that they were one light in one strength and power.' This means that the Father, who is supremely just uniformity, is not without the Son or the Holy Spirit; and that the Holy Spirit, who inflames the hearts of the faithful, is not without the Father or the Son; and that the Son, who is the fullness of fruitfulness, is not without the Father or the Spirit; for they are inseparable in the majesty of divinity, because the Father is not without the Son, nor the Son without the Father, nor the Father or the Son without the Holy Spirit, nor the Spirit without them; so these three persons exist as one God in one integral divinity and majesty, and the unity of divinity thrives inseparable in the three persons, because divinity cannot be separated, since it remains always unchanged without any mutability. But the Father is revealed through the Son, the Son through the beginning of created things, and the Holy Spirit through the incarnate Son. How is this? It is the Father who before time engendered the Son; it is the Son through whom all things were created by the Father at the beginning of creation; and it is the Holy Spirit who appeared in the form of a dove at the baptism of the Son of God towards the end of all time.

May the human race never cease to call fervently upon the one God in three persons

Therefore may the human race never cease to call upon me the one God in three persons, for I have revealed this to human beings in order that they might blaze all the more fiercely in love of me, since I sent my Son into the world through my love for them, just as John, my loved one, witnesses, saying: 'The love of God was disclosed to us in this: that he sent his only begotten Son into the world that we may live through him. His love is in this, not as we loved God but that he first loved us and sent his Son as a propitiation for our sins.' What does this mean? Because God loved us another salvation arose different from the one we had at our first origins, when we were the heirs of innocence and sanctity. For the heavenly Father revealed his love to us in our danger of punishment; for through his heavenly power he sent his Word alone and full of sanctity into the darkness of the world. And there the Word perfected all good things and through his mildness led us back to life. He led us back when we had been rejected for the impurity of our wrongdoing and were unable to return to the sanctity we had lost. What does this mean? It means that God's loving maternal embrace came to us through the fountain of life; his love nourished us for life; and in times of danger his love is our help, a deep and gentle love leading to penitence. How is this?

God has mercifully remembered his great work and his most precious pearl — the human being — whom he fashioned from the soil of the earth and inspired with the breath of life. How did he do this? He drew us to life through penitence, which never fails in its effectiveness, because the cunning serpent deceived us through his proud persuasions; but God cast him down through the penitence which reveals humility, a humility which the devil did not know or practise, for he did not know how to raise himself up to the path of righteousness.

Therefore the salvation of love did not originate in us, for we neither knew nor were able to love God for our salvation; rather, it came from our Creator and Lord, who loved his people so much that he sent his Son for our salvation, as leader and Saviour of the faithful, who washed all our wounds. Thus also he shed that sweet balm from which all the good things of our salvation flow.

Therefore, O human creature, you too should know that God is not affected by any adverse mutability, for the Father is the Father, the Son is the Son, the Holy Spirit is the Holy Spirit; these three persons exist indivisibly in the unity of the godhead. How does this come about?

The three powers of a stone

There are three powers in a stone and three in a flame and three in a word. In a stone there is moist greenness, palpable strength and red-burning fire. It has moist greenness so that it will not fall apart and disintegrate, and palpable strength so that it can provide habitation and defence, and red-burning fire so that it can be warmed and strengthened in its durability. Its moist greenness signifies the Father, who will never dry out or reach a limit to his power; its palpable strength signifies the Son, since he was born of the Virgin and could be touched and grasped; its red-burning fire signifies the Spirit, who is the fire and illumination of the hearts of the faithful. What does this all mean?

Imagine someone who comes into contact too often with the moisture and greenness of a stone and so weakens and falls ill;[9] in the same way a foolhardy person who tries — in the instability of their thoughts — to look

[9] *who comes into contact... and falls ill:* In medieval science, stones were believed to contain varying proportions of energy and moisture (fire and water), while in the medical lore of the period it was believed that an imbalance of the four elements in the human body could lead to ill-health (see 22).

upon God will perish in their faith. Imagine a people taking the palpable strength of stones to build their habitations and protect themselves against their enemies; in the same way the Son of God, who is the true cornerstone, is the habitation of the faithful people, protecting them against evil spirits. And imagine also the red fire, burning bright and lighting up the darkness; in the same way the Holy Spirit puts unbelief to flight, removing all the rust of iniquity.

Just as the three powers are contained within the one stone, so the true Trinity is contained within the true Unity.

The three powers of a flame

And just as there are three powers in the glowing heat of a flame, so the one God is in three persons. How is this? The flame consists of splendid brightness, purple vigour and fiery glow. It has a splendid brightness so that it can shine its light, a purple vigour so that it can maintain its existence, and a fiery glow so that it can burn. Consider the Father in the splendid brightness, for he sends out his brightness to the faithful through the goodness of his fatherhood; and in the purple vigour held within the flame and containing its strength, consider the Son, who assumed a body from the Virgin in which the godhead declared its marvels; and in the fiery glow perceive the Holy Spirit, who pours his fire over the minds of believers. But the flame will not be seen if there is no splendid brightness, or purple vigour, or fiery glow; in the same way, God is not worthily honoured in any place where neither the Father, Son, nor Holy Spirit is venerated.

Therefore just as three powers are discerned in the one flame, so three persons are to be understood in the unity of the godhead.

The three components of the human word

Three components may be noted in the human word, just as the Trinity may be considered in the unity of the Godhead. How is this to be done? A word is composed of sound, force and breath. A word has sound in order to be heard, force in order to be understood, and breath in order to be completed. In the sound of the word consider the Father, who expresses all things by his ineffable power; in the force of the word consider the Son, marvellously engendered of the Father; in the breath of the word consider the Holy Spirit, who burns gently within them. But if the sound is not heard, then the force does not operate and the breath is not raised; hence the word is not understood; because the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are not to be divided, for they function as one unanimous activity.

Therefore just as there are the three components of the word so also the heavenly Trinity is in one heavenly unity. And just as no moist greenness can exist or function in the stone without the palpable strength or the red-burning flame, and no palpable strength without the moist greenness or burning flame, and no burning flame without moist greenness or palpable strength; and just as no splendid brightness can exist or function in the flame without the purple vigour or the fiery glow, and no purple vigour without the splendid brightness or the fiery glow, and no fiery glow without the splendid brightness or purple vigour; and just as no sound can exist or function in the word without force or breath, and no force without the sound or the breath, and no breath without the sound or the force, for they act indivisibly in unison; so also the three persons of the Trinity exist inseparably in the majesty of the Godhead and cannot be divided from each other.

Human creature, understand that the one God is in three persons! But you imagine in the foolishness of your mind that God is so powerless that it is impossible for him truly to exist in three persons, but only barely to exist in one! What are you thinking? God is truly God in three persons, the first and the last.

The unity of being

But the Father is not without the Son, nor the Son without the Father, nor the Father without the Son and the Holy Spirit; nor is the Holy Spirit without them, because the three persons are inseparable in the unity of divinity. How is this possible? The word sounds from the mouth of a human being, but the mouth does not make a sound without the word, and the word itself does not sound without life. And where is the word located? In the human being. And where does the word come from? Again, from the human being. And how does this happen? Through a living human being. Thus the Son is in the Father, and he is sent by the Father to this dark earth for the salvation of humankind and conceived by the Virgin through the Holy Spirit. He is the only begotten Son in the deity and the only begotten Son in the virginity; and he is both the only Son of the Father and the only Son of the Mother; for just as the Father engendered him alone outside time, so the Mother engendered him alone inside time, and she remained a virgin after the birth.

Therefore, O human creature, understand that there is one God in three persons, who created you in the strength of his divinity and who redeemed you from your lost state. Do not forget your Creator, as Solomon urges you, and as it is written.

9. Song for Saint Ursula

Hildegard reserved a special devotion for the martyrs of the faith such as Ursula, killed with her many companions at Cologne by the Huns during the Dark Ages, and she wrote two songs to be sung in her honour in church. The sequence as a type of song was intended to be inserted into the liturgy of the mass; divided into stanzas, its form gave scope for longer meditations on a particular theme. The exact date when the following sequence was composed is not known, but the lines spoken by Ursula's detractors ('In the innocence of her girlish ignorance, she does not know what she is saying') have an obvious application to Hildegard and the opposition she experienced in the early years of her life and work. Whether consciously or unconsciously, Hildegard may have identified with the pilgrim Ursula in her own plans for departure to a new community at the Rupertsberg.

O Ecclesia oculi tui. Sequence

O Church, your eyes are like sapphire,[10]
and your ears like Mount Bethel,[11]
your nose is like a mountain of myrrh and incense,[12]
your mouth the sound of many waters.

[10] *like sapphire:* Cf. Ezekiel 1:26, a vision of four-winged creatures: 'Above the expanse over their heads was what looked like a throne of sapphire…'

[11] *like Mount Bethel:* See Genesis 28:11-22, the story of Jacob's dream at Bethel, where he saw a stairway reaching from earth to heaven on which angels were ascending and descending; in the same vision he heard a voice promising that all peoples on earth would be blessed through his descendants.

[12] *a mountain of myrrh and incense:* Song of Songs (or Song of Solomon) 4:6: 'I will go to the mountain of myrrh and to the hill of incense.' See also Song of Songs 4:1-5, where the lover praises the various aspects of his bride in a series of similes which probably influenced the first few lines of Hildegard's poem. In the medieval commentary tradition, the lover of the Song of Songs was interpreted allegorically as Christ, while the bride was seen as the Church.

In a vision of true faith,
Ursula loved the Son of God,
she abandoned husband and worldly life
and gazed at the sun,
calling the fair youth and saying:

'I have eagerly desired
to come to you at the heavenly nuptials
and sit with you,
running to you on the pilgrim way like a cloud
racing through the purest air like a sapphire.'

And after Ursula had said this,
a rumour went through the people.

And they said: 'In the innocence of her girlish ignorance,
she does not know what she is saying.'

And they began to make fun of her,
singing their songs,[13]
until the fiery burden fell on her.

Then they all acknowledged her,
for rejection of the world is like Mount Bethel.
And they acknowledged also
the pleasant fragrance of myrrh and incense,
since rejection of the world had descended upon all.

[13] *make fun of her, singing their songs:* The Latin has 'luder', 'to play', 'in magna symphonia', 'in great harmony'. As *The Book of Life's Merits* I, 5-6 shows (27), 'playfulness' is a fickle, malicious mockery, a vice to be remedied and defeated by true 'shame'. Sabina Flanagan, in *Hildegard of Bingen* 1098-1179: A Visionary Life (London, 1989), p. 137, interprets the passage differently, suggesting that the term *ludere* refers to games played on board ship as Ursula and her companions travelled on their pilgrimage.

Then the devil sent out his troops
to murder the most noble behaviour in their bodies.

And all the elements heard this with a loud cry
and they shouted before the throne of God:

'Alas the red of the Lamb's innocent blood
has flowed
at this betrothal.'

May all the heavens hear,
may they praise the Lamb of God in highest harmony,
because the ancient serpent's throat
has been choked with necklace of pearls[14]
made of the material of the Word of God.

[14] *necklace of pearls:* I.e. Ursula and her companions.

14. Three Political Letters

As Hildegard became established at Rupertsberg, she began to gain a reputation for prophecy and political wisdom as well as theological understanding, and it was in this role as adviser and prophetess that she became known as the 'Sibyl of the Rhine'. Soon her direct advice was being sought, and given, in the current affairs of the German Empire and the Church. The letters here, though difficult to date precisely, illustrate aspects of this activity.

The letter to Pope Eugenius III is markedly different in tone from her earlier one to the same correspondent; the language is more apocalyptic, with the sword of divine justice circling in the air, and there is some intriguing animal imagery. It is tempting to relate the image of the bear to the new king of Germany, Frederick Barbarossa, who signed a political agreement with Eugenius at the Treaty of Constance in 1153.

The letter to Henry (Bishop ofLiege 1145-64) is similarly urgent, with its imagery of dark clouds ominously threatening the mountain of flowers and gentle breezes. The dark clouds are a less precise kind of metaphor than that of the bear, but the implication is that the Church is somehow threatened. Henry was loyal to Barbarossa and took part in the first Italian expedition of1154, attending the Emperor's coronation by Pope Hadrian IV in 1155.

Hadrian IV was an Englishman and vigorous politician who at first honoured the Treaty ofConstance by ousting the leader of the Senate, Arnold of Brescia, from Rome and by crowning Barbarossa as Emperor. But his agreement with King William I ofNorman Sicily in 1156 brought a radical change of policy. In October 1157 a letter from Hadrian, delivered by his legates to the Diet of Besanqon, provoked a bitter row with Barbarossa and his chancellor Rainald Dassel, who interpreted its requirements as a threat to imperial power. Hildegard's letter to Hadrian presents a series of apocalyptic images and metaphors which, although bafflingly unclear, are of undoubted relevance to the events of Hadrian's pontificate.

Hildegard to Pope Eugenius III, 1148-53 [Letters]

He who is not silent speaks — because of the weakness of those who are too blind to see, too deaf to hear, too dumb to speak — that robbers lie in wait by night with death-dealing weapons! And what does he say? The sword circles and turns, killing those who are evil in mind!

You in your person are a shining breastplate,[15] the primary root, the presider at Christ's nuptials with the Church. But you are divided in your attentions. On the one hand your soul is renewed in the mystic flower that is the companion of virginity[16] on the other, you are the branch of the Church.[17] Listen to the One who strikes with his name and flows in the torrent; listen to him speaking to you: do not cast the eye from the eye, do not cut off the light from the light; but stand on the even path, lest you be accused for the sake of those souls who have been placed in your bosom. Do not allow them to sink in the lake of perdition through the power of the feasting prelates!

A jewel lies on the path, but a bear[18] comes along. Seeing the beautiful jewel, he stretches out a paw to seize it and place it in his bosom. But suddenly an eagle appears, snatches the jewel, wraps it in the cover of his wings and bears it away to the inner courtyard of the palace of the king. That very jewel shines out its radiance in the presence of the king. And for love of

15 *breastplate*: Cf. the 'breastplate of righteousness' in Isaiah 59:17 and Ephesians 6:14; the 'breastplate of faith and love' in I Thessalonians 5:8; the 'breastplates of fire' in Revelation 9:17

16 *the mystic flower... virginity:* Eugenius was originally a Cistercian monk from Clairvaux, a monastic order with a strong interest in the contemplative life.

17 *the branch of the Church:* i.e. the Papacy.

18 *bear*: On a theological level, the bear could be a symbol of the devil, but on a political level, this is likely to be a reference to the Emperor Frederick Barbarossa, as Joseph L. Baird and Radd K. Ehrman suggest in the notes to their translation *The Letters ofHildegard of Bingen*.

the jewel, the king presents the eagle with golden shoes[19] praising him highly for his goodness.

You now, the viceroy of Christ, seated on the throne of the Church, choose for yourself the better part that you may be the eagle overcoming the bear! Adorn the inner courtyard of the Church in the souls entrusted to you, so that in your golden shoes you may come to the heights and remove yourself far from the intruder's grasp!

Hildegard to Henry, Bishop of Liege, 1148-53 [Letter37R]

The living light says: the paths of the scriptures lead directly to the high mountain,[20] where the flowers grow and the costly aromatic herbs; where a pleasant wind blows, bringing forth their powerful fragrance; where the roses and lilies reveal their shining faces. But because of the shadows of dark living air, that mountain did not appear until the Son of the most High had enlightened the world. On that day, the sun rose from the dawn, illuminating this world so that all the people could see its aromatic herbs. That day was very beautiful, and sweet tidings came forth.

But O shepherds, now is the time for mourning and weeping, because in our time the mountain has been covered with a very black cloud so that it no longer sends forth its gentle fragrance. You, Henry, must be a good shepherd, noble of character. And just as the eagle gazes at the sun, ponder and consider how you can call back the wanderers and exiles and bring some light to this mountain, so that you will live, and so that you will hear

19 *golden shoes:* The idea is perhaps biblical; cf. Ephesians 6:15, where shoes are associated with the 'gospel of peace'.

20 *the high mountain:* An image with many connotations. The basic idea is the place of salvation, which separates light and darkness and divides good from evil. The same image occurs in the vision of the man on the mountain in *Scivias* (25) and in the vision of the cosmic egg in *Scivias* I, 3 (20).

the most loving voice of the Judge on high: 'Well done, good and faithful servant.' Then your soul will shine with light like a soldier brilliant in the fight, who rejoices with his comrades because he has gained the victory.

Therefore, teacher of the people, fight for the good victory. Correct those in error, and so wash the mud from the beautiful pearls. Prepare them for the high king. Let your mind pant with great eagerness to call those pearls back to the mountain where the gift of God had its origin. May God protect you now and free your soul from eternal punishment.

Hildegard to Pope Hadrian IV, 1155 [Letter 9]

The one who gives life to the living says this. O man, you will sustain the fearful rage of lionesses and the great strength of leopards. You will experience shipwreck in the taking of spoils. For you have been given over to all those who seek refuge with you in their state of exhaustion. Nevertheless you have a ready understanding with which to pit yourself against the fierce behaviour of men. In raging at them you hang on firmly to the manes of the galloping horses which run ceaselessly along the tracks of plunder. But you fight against yourself when at times you favour the apparent probity of certain people if you hide the treasure-chests of those killed in conflict on the open roads. Therefore you will suffer a fierce battle. But you will destroy the movable goods of the rest, who will fall into the pit because of their asperity. Yet you have the power of the strong key[21] which does not go willingly in the form of a ruby to the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

[21] *the power of the strong key:* Cf. Matthew 16:19. 'And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.'

In your heart, therefore, seek the salvation of waters so that you do not fall into the whirlwind, and so that you may remain gentle to the distress and pain of those who are afflicted by the torment of many wounds, thus imitating your Saviour, who will redeem you. And God will not leave you, but you will see in his light.

IN PRAISE OF CREATION

20. The Cosmic Egg (from *Scivias* I, 3)

A famous image in Hildegard's work is that of the 'cosmic egg', a survey of the cosmos which forms the third vision oft he first book of Scivias. This vision is descriptive, but also highly allegorical, and it is worth noting that although each detail of the description represents a physical object in Hildegard's universe, she also attaches a further significance to it in the life of faith and the events of history. In so doing she implies that human life and the universe are closely and inextricably connected, as microcosm and macrocosm. This ties in with her exalted view of the human being in Scivias 1, 3,17 (translated below), a characteristic attitude of the twelfth-century Renaissance.

The cosmic egg

After these things I saw a huge form, rounded and shadowy, and shaped like an egg[22] it was pointed at the top, wide in the middle and narrower at the bottom. Its outer layer consisted of an atmosphere of bright fire with a kind of dark membrane beneath it. And in that outer atmosphere there was a ball of red fire so large that all the huge form was lit up by it. Directly above the fireball was a vertical row of three lights which held it with their fire and energy and prevented it from falling.

At times the fireball rose upwards and was met by more fire, which caused it to shoot out great long flames. At times, however, the fireball moved downwards and encountered a region of great cold that caused it quickly to retract its flames.

From the outer atmosphere of fire, a wind blew storms. And from the dark membrane beneath, another wind raged with further storms which moved out in all directions on the globe. The dark membrane contained also a dark fire of such horror that I was unable to perceive it properly. The horror buffeted the dark membrane with a massive impact of sounds and storms and sharp stones great and small.[23] Whenever the noise arose it set in motion the layer of bright fire, winds and air, thus causing bolts of lightning to presage the sounds of thunder; for the fiery energy senses the first agitations of the thunder within it.

Below the dark layer, however, was the purest of ether with no membrane beneath it. Here also I saw a fireball, of great magnitude, filled with white-shining energy; it had two lights placed above it which held it and prevented it from passing beyond the circuit of its course. Situated everywhere throughout the ether were many bright spheres, into which the white fireball discharged its energy at regular intervals. It then rose up again to the red fireball where it recharged its fires and sent them forth again into the bright spheres. The ether also contained a wind, which poured out its storms and extended them all over the cosmos.

[22] *shaped like an egg:* The twelfth century did not believe in a flat earth. The image of the cosmos as an egg is not original to Hildegard, but she was clearly fascinated by it.

[23] *The horror... stones great and small:* As Frances Beer suggests, 'the vision is ultimately reassuring because it reveals how evil can exist and, at the same time as it is part of the creation, be counterbalanced and controlled by the forces of good'. See her *Women and Mystical Experience in the Middle Ages* (Woodbridge, 1992), p. 46.

Beneath the ether I could see a layer of watery air, which had a white membrane beneath it. It spread out everywhere, giving off water to the whole of the world. At times it accumulated quickly and sent out a sudden fall of rain with a great crash. But when it spread gently it sent forth soft rain with only gentle agitation. But from it there came a wind and storms which spread all over the globe.

And in the middle of these elements there was a sandy ball of great size which was so surrounded by these elements that it could not move in any direction. However, when the winds collided with the elements, the force of their impact set the whole world in motion a little.

And I saw between the north and the east the likeness of a great mountain, which showed great areas of darkness towards the north and a great light towards the east.[24] The darkness could not affect the light nor the light the darkness.

And again I heard a voice speaking to me from heaven.

Invisible and eternal things are made known through visible and temporal things

God, who created all things in his will, made them so that his name would be known and honoured. Through his creation ion he not only makes known visible and temporal things but also invisible and eternal things.4 Such matters are shown in this vision which you see.

[24] *between the north and the east... a great mountain... towards the east:* The great mountain separates good in the east from evil in the north.

The significance of the cosmos made in the likeness of an egg

'I saw a huge form, rounded and shadowy, and shaped like an egg; it was pointed at the top, wide in the middle and narrower at the bottom.' The large form which you see represents, on the level of faith, the omnipotent God, incomprehensible in his majesty, inconceivable in his mysteries, the hope of all the faithful. It was pointed at the top because at first human activity was naive and simple; later in the Old and New Testaments it became more wide-ranging; finally towards the end of the world it is to endure the narrow constriction of many troubles.

The position of the sun and the three stars and their significance

'And in that outer atmosphere there was a ball of red fire so large that all the huge form was lit up by it.' With the splendour of his brightness he shows that in God the Father is his ineffable firstborn son, the Sun of Justice, shining with burning love in such glory that all of creation was lit up by the brightness of his light.

'Directly above the fireball was a vertical row of three lights which held it with their fire and energy and prevented it from falling.' The function of the three lights is to show that when God's Son descended from heaven to earth leaving the angels above him, he made known the things of the heavens to human beings existing in soul and body. By following his light they glorify him, casting all harmful error from them. They praise him as the true Son of God, who became incarnate of the true Maiden when the angel proclaimed him to them and when the human being — alive in soul and body — received him with faith and joy.

The sandy ball of the earth and its significance

'And in the middle of these elements there was a sandy ball of great size which was so surrounded by these elements that it could not move in any direction.' The ball represents humanity endowed with the gift of pro-

found contemplation, made in a wonderful manner from the clay of the earth, and living in the strength of the creatures of God. Human beings are so surrounded by the power of God's created things that they cannot be separated from them. The elements of the world are thus created for human beings and render them their service.[25] In the midst of the elements is the human being presiding over them by divine ordinance. As David says, inspired by God: 'Thou hast crowned him with glory and honour. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands. This means that you, O God, have wonderfully created all things. You have crowned the human being with the splendid golden crown of the understanding and clothed him with the honourable robe of visible beauty. You have made him the ruler over your exalted and perfect works, which you have distributed justly and well throughout your creation. Over all other creatures you have granted the human being high worth and admirable dignity.

The meaning of the earthquake

You see in the vision that opposing winds come together, and the force of their impact sets the whole globe in motion a little. For when at any given time the creatures of God become involved with the knowledge of their Creator, so that with the sounding of the words one wonder follows another, then human beings, struck by the grandeur of this miracle, tremble in body and soul, pondering, in their wonder at this miracle, their own weakness and frailty.

[25] *The elements... render them their service:* The elements in medieval science are earth, air, fire (i.e. energy) and water; all are involved in human physiology, and for Hildegard the human being is seen as being at one with the world, as part of a positive view of nature and ecology.

The Unknown Language

The Unknown Language (Latin *Lingua ignota*) presents something of a puzzle. It was compiled in the middle period 1151-8, before work began on *The Book of Life's Merits*. As in many medieval glossaries, the words are classified rather like a thesaurus, and arranged in a hierarchical list beginning with expressions for God, angel and human being, and finishing with the names of trees, plants, herbs and animals. For an impression of the style of the language, the following examples are of interest:

ENGLISH	LATIN	LINGUA IGNOTA
God	Deus	Aiguonz
angel	angelus	aieganz
saint	sanctus	ziuienz
Savior	Salvator	Liuionz
devil	diabolus	diuueliz
spirit	spiritus	ispariz
Human	homo	Inimoiz

In this small sample, a few patterns of word formation emerge which would repay further study.[26] As to the question of how the 'unknown lan-

[26] *word formation:* The root *aieg* seems to be important, as do the endings *-nz* and *-iz*. Other examples not listed above suggest influence from Latin or German, e.g. *vanix*, 'woman', perhaps from Latin *vanitas*, 'vanity', *falschin*, 'poet', perhaps from Middle High German *valsch*, 'false', and *sonziz*, 'apostle', possibly related to the *sonus* or 'sacred sound' to which Hildegard frequently referred. For more information on Hildegard's language, see Marie-Louise Portmann and Alois Odermatt (eds), *Worterbuch der unbekannten Sprache* [Dictionary of the Unknown Language] (Basel, 1986).

guage' was used, a satisfactory answer has not yet been offered. It has been suggested that it was a secret language for communication between the nuns at the Rupertsberg. Alternatively, as a passage in *The Book of Life's Merits* indicates, it may have been purely a sacred language, and this conjecture is supported by a text in which words from the language occur. In a song on the dedication of a church, Hildegard replaces standard Latin words with her own expressions from the *lingua ignota*. Although the theme and inspiration for the piece is the well-known vision of Revelation 21:2, And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband', the result has an additional sense of mystery appropriate to a vision of heaven.

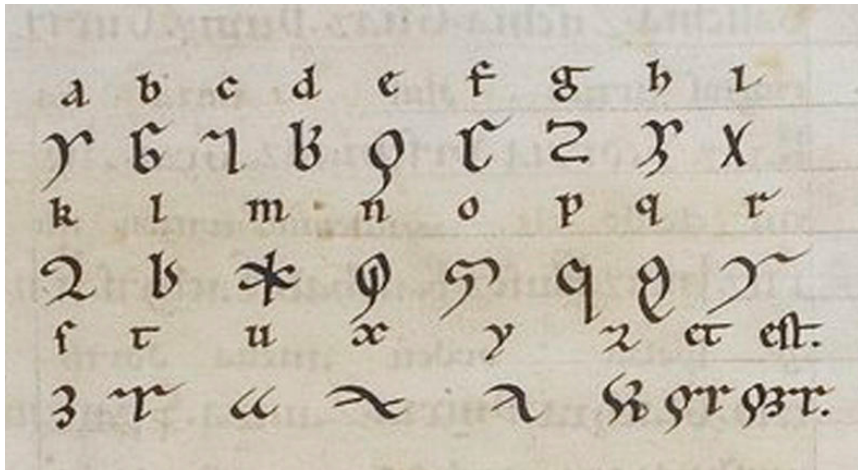
The original text of the song is as follows, with non-Latin words in italics, and a modern English translation:[27]

O *orzchis* Ecclesia
armis divinis praecincta
et hyazintho ornata,
tu es *caldemia* stigmatum *loifolum*
et urbs scientiarum.
O, o, tu es etiam *crizanta*
in alto sono et es *chorzta* gemma.

[Church *immeasurable*,
protected by divine armour,
and decorated with hyacinth,
you are the *perfume* of the wounds of the peoples
and the city of all kinds of knowledge.

[27] *The original text... English translation:* Pudentiana Barth and Immaculata Ritscher (eds), *Hildegard von Bingen. Lieder* (Salzburg, 1969), no. 67 and Barbara Newman (ed.), *Hildegard of Bingen. Symphonia*, 2nd edn (Ithaca, 1998), no. 68; for a discussion of the song, see Newman, *Symphonia*, pp. 316-17.

Oh you are also *adorned*
in deep music, a *gleaming* gemstone.]



A Vision of Love (from the Book of Divine Works I, i)

This excerpt from The Book of Divine Works*, written in the period 1163-73/4, sees Hildegard's visionary gifts at their height. Beginning with a vision reminiscent of the prophet Ezekiel, Hildegard moves to a paean of divine immanence as embodied in a figure who is at once Love, Wisdom and Power. Its nearest equivalents are the sapiential tradition of the Old Testament Apocrypha, notably Wisdom of Solomon 7-8, and its theme is summed up in Ecclesiasticus 24:1, which states that 'Wisdom shall praise herself, and shall glory in the midst of her people'.*

1. And I saw as amid the airs of the South in the mystery of God a beautiful and marvellous image of a human figure; her face was of such beauty and brightness that I could more easily have stared at the sun. On her head she had a broad band of gold. And in that golden band above her head there appeared a second face, like an old man, whose chin and beard touched the top of the first head. Wings protruded from behind the neck of the figure on either side, and rising up clear of the golden band their tips met and joined overhead. On the right, above the sweep of the wing, was an image of an eagle's head, and I saw it had eyes of fire in which there appeared the brilliance of angels as in a mirror. On the left, above the

sweep of the wing, was the image of a human face, which shone like the brightness of the stars. These faces were turned towards the East.

But from each of her shoulders, a wing extended down to the knee. And she wore a tunic like the glory of the sun and in her hands she carried a lamb like the bright light of day. But beneath her feet she trampled a monster of dreadful appearance, black and venomous, and also a serpent, which had fixed its teeth into the right ear of the monster and wound the rest of its body across its own head, and had stretched its tail on the left side.

2. The figure spoke: I am the supreme fire and energy. I have kindled all the sparks of the living, and I have breathed out no mortal things, for I judge them as they are. I have properly ordained the cosmos, flying about the circling circle with my upper wings, that is with wisdom. I am the fiery life of divine substance, I blaze above the beauty of the fields, I shine in the waters, I burn in sun, moon, and stars. And I awaken all to life with every wind of the air, as with invisible life that sustains everything. For the air lives in greenness and fecundity. The waters flow as though they are alive. The sun also lives in its own light, and when the moon has waned it is rekindled by the light of the sun and thus lives again; and the stars shine out in their own light as though they are alive.

I established the pillars that support the whole circle of the earth. I made the winds, and, subject to them, the wings of the winds, which are lesser winds. Through their gentle force, these contain the stronger winds and prevent them from showing their full strength with great danger; in the same way the body covers the soul and contains it lest it breathe out and expire. And conversely also, just as the breath of the soul strengthens and sustains the body so that it does not weaken, in the same way the stronger winds energize the subsidiary winds to carry out their appropriate tasks.

Thus I am concealed in things as fiery energy. They are ablaze through me, like the breath that ceaselessly enlivens the human being, or like the wind-tossed flame in a fire. All these things live in their essence, and there is no death in them, for I am life. I also am rationality, who holds the breath of the resonant word by which the whole of creation was created; and I have breathed life into everything, so that nothing by its nature may be mortal, for I am life.

And I am life: not the life struck from stone, or blossoming from branches, or rooted in a man's fertility, but life in its fullness, for all living things have their roots in me. Reason is the root, through which the resonant word flourishes.

Therefore as God is rational, how could it be that he did not act, since he allows all of his works to flourish through the human being whom he created in his own image and likeness and in whom he marked out all creatures according to their measure? But it was in eternity that God wished to create his great work - the human being - and when he had completed that work he entrusted human beings with all creation so that they could create with it in the same way that God created his work, that is, humanity.

So I am the helper, for all living things burn through me; and I am steady life in eternity, without beginning or end, the same life which is God in motion and activity; and yet this one life has three powers: eternity is the Father, the word the Son, and the breath connecting the two the Holy Spirit, and similarly God signified the same in human beings in whom there is body, soul and rationality.

The fact that I 'blaze above the beauty of the fields' means this: the earth is the matter from which God makes man and woman. The fact that 'I shine in the waters' signifies the soul, for - just as water flows through all the earth - the soul permeates all of the body. 'I burn in sun and moon'; this refers to rationality, and the 'stars' are the innumerable words of rationality.

'And I awaken all to life with every wind of the air, as with invisible life that sustains everything.' This signifies that whatever grows and matures is animated and preserved through air and wind, and it deviates in no way from the power within.

3. And again I heard a voice from heaven, which spoke to me:

God, who created all, made humanity in his own image and likeness, and in them he marked out both the higher and lower creatures. He had such love for humanity that he destined them to take the place from which the falling angel had been ejected, and he ordained them for the glory and honour which the angel in his bliss had lost. This is shown by the vision you see. For when you see 'as amid the airs of the South in the mystery of God a beautiful and marvellous image of a human figure', this signifies the Love of the heavenly Father in the strength of his unceasing divinity, beautiful in its selectivity, and marvellous in its gifts of mysteries, appearing in the human figure because, when the son of God assumed human flesh, he redeemed lost humanity through the service of Love. This is why the face was 'of such beauty and brightness' that you 'could more easily have stared at the sun', because the abundance of Love emanates in such brightness of gifts that it far surpasses all exercise of human understanding (by which it can discern diverse ideas in the soul) - so far, in fact, that no person can grasp such abundance with their senses. This signifies symbolically that things may be perceived through faith that cannot be seen visibly with the eyes.

4. 'On her head the human figure had a broad band of gold', because only universal faith, diffused round the whole ambit of the earth and originating in the bright splendour of the first dawn, can encompass in all devotion the great abundance of true Love, namely that God in the humanity of his son redeemed human beings and confirmed them with the downpouring of the Holy Spirit, so that one God is acknowledged in the Trinity who without temporal beginning before eternity was God in the Godhead.

'And in that golden band above her head there appeared a second face, like an old man'; this signifies the all- surpassing goodness of the deity, without beginning or end, who succours the faithful, because his 'chin and beard touched the top of the first head', and so by his disposition and protection of all, God touches the height of utmost Charity, in which the Son through his humanity leads lost men and women back to the heavens.

5. 'Wings protruded from behind the neck of the figure on either side, and rising up clear of the golden band their tips met and joined overhead.' This means that the love of God cannot be separated from the love of neighbour, since they proceed from the virtue of Charity in the unity of faith, and through great longing they encompass that faith. And the holy Godhead covers the immeasurable splendour of his glory from human beings for as long as they remain in the shadow of death, deprived of the heavenly tunic which they lost with Adam.

6. 'On the right, above the sweep of the wing, was an image of an eagle's head', and you saw it had 'eyes of fire in which there appeared the brilliance of angels as in a mirror'. At the heights of triumphant subjection, then, when a person submits to God and conquers the devil, she is carried aloft in the joy of divine protection. And, fired by the Holy Spirit, when she raises up her mind and fixes her gaze upon God, then the blessed spirits appear in her in plain sight and offer to God the devotion of her heart. The eagle thus symbolizes the spiritual men and women who in full devotion of mind and in contemplation frequently gaze upon God like the angels. Therefore the blessed spirits, who ceaselessly contemplate God, rejoice in the good works of just people, and they show these works to God with their own natures, and so they continue their praise of God and never come to an end, for they will never exhaust his fullness. Could anyone ever count all the innumerable wonders which God brings about through his power and might? Indeed for the angels there is a brightness as of many

mirrors, and through this brightness they see, but no one is as active or as powerful as God, since no one is like him, and he is not subject to time.

7. Before the beginning of time, God held in his foreknowledge everything that he has since made. Outside of any moment or passing of time before eternity, all things visible and invisible appeared in the pure and sacred godhead, as trees and other created things when close to water are reflected in it; and though they are not actually in the water physically, nevertheless an accurate shape appears there. When God said 'Fiat, let there be...',[1] at once all those things that did not have bodies assumed a physical shape - all those things which he had seen in his foreknowledge before the beginning of time. Just as in a mirror all things are reflected that stand before it, so all his created works appeared in holy divinity outside the passage of time. And how could God be empty of the foreknowledge of his works, since each of his creatures — once it has assumed physical form — is whole and perfect in its designated function; for the holy Divinity knew in advance how he would be present as thought, knowledge and function. A beam of light reveals the form of a created thing through its shadow, and likewise God's pure foreknowledge perceives the form of every creature before it is embodied. Each thing that God intended to create in his foreknowledge, before it was bodied forth, shone out according to his likeness; and in the same way a man or woman will catch sight of the sun's splendour before they actually see its substance. And just as the splendour of the sun indicates the sun itself, so also the praise of the angels reveals God, for it cannot ever be that the sun is without its light, and in the same way neither can the deity be without the praise of the angels. So the foreknowledge of God came first, and his work of creation followed; and if his foreknowledge had not preceded, then his work would not have appeared, for you can tell nothing by looking at a person's body until you see their face: but when you see the person's face, then you can praise their body. In this way a human being contains within him or her both the foreknowledge of God and the activity of God.

Visiones pulcherrime virginis
religiose femine que Scintas in
titulātur

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Subsolanus
Caurus
Aurora
Fulgur
Sol in piscibus
Sol in aquarium
Sol in arietem
Sol in taurum
Sol in capricornum
Sol in gemines
Sol in sagittarium
Sol in libram
Sol in virginem
Sol in leonem
Sol in cancrum
Auster
Auster
Auster

Tres partes ſt̄ huius libri.

In ꝑma parte vi. s̄ uiſiones. In q̄rū ꝑma ꝯtinet̄ de fortitudine & cōtinuatione regni di. de timore. de cuſtodia pauꝑū ſpū. et q̄d dñs nichil latet.

In ii. de beatis angliſ. de lucifero de iechonē unq̄ infernus factus ē de coniugio & cauſis eī. de pollutiōne de paradyſo. de ada. et aliis q̄ib. dā. de duarū excellentia uirtutū.

In iii. de poſitione firmamēti. ſolis. lune. ſtellarū. uentoꝝ. et imbrium. de trē motu. et q̄d iſta ſignificent.

In iiii. de tabernaculo et peregrinatione anime. de ſcientia dī. de idoliſ. de meḡlū pertinatione hominū. & cauſis eī. de ſenſu. de anima. de intellectu. de uoluntate. de ratione. de ūbis dī ad hoīes. & de aliis q̄b. dā.

In v. de forma et colore & ecclīa ſynagoge & q̄d iſta ſignificent.

In vi. de mirabili ꝯmone creaturē. de habitu. et mira laude. viii. ordinū & q̄d ſignificēt.

In ſexta parte. vii. ſt̄ uiſiones. in q̄rū ꝑma ꝯtinet̄ de incōprehenſibili igneo iii. patris. De uerbo. de diſtinctione ꝑme mat̄ie. De ada et abraha. et reliq̄s. p̄ archiſ. & ioh̄e baptiſta. De amicis. et ſecreto cōſilio dī. de morte. ſepultura. reſurrectione. aſcenſiōe.

In ii. de trib. ꝑſonis in una eſſentia. p uarias ſimilitudines.

In iii. de forma & generatione ecclīe ſponſe dī. De apl̄is. martyrib. ſacerdotib. De ſacramēto uere uri nitatis et filiis alienis.

In iiii. de dulcedine flagraniū donoꝝ. s. ſp̄ſ. et de multimoda diuerſitate filioꝝ ecclīe.

In v. de apl̄is et pigmentariis & regularib. & uirginitatis multiplici corona. De his q̄ odor uitis dñi. et nouitate uestiū. de trina ecclāſtica inſtitutione. De infamib. et aliis q̄ plurimis.

In vi. de x̄o in cruce pendente et ecclīe deſponſatione. de obſequio angloꝝ et coruſca luce & aqua celo ſup altare dū ſacerdos miſteria celebrat. De v. diuerſitatib. cōmunicantiū. De corpore dñi. De introitu & caſtitate miniſtroꝝ ecclīe. et eunuchis de diuerſis peccatis hominū. et aliis multis.

In vii. ꝯtinet̄ de iuſticia et fide lib. de lege dī de horribili ſerpente. De foro ſeli de diuerſitate ſpūaliū et ſeclāriū in foro cōiugali.

In octaua parte. s. xiii. uiſiones. in q̄rū ꝑma ꝯtinet̄ de uno lapide. et de nube candida ſup ipſū de throno rotundo ſup nubē exiſtente. De uiuente lucido in throno ſedente. de circulo in cōprehenſibili abipſo procedente. De ſtella magna & ſeptem aliis ſeptē ſeptemb. et de eunuchis & q̄d ſignificēt.

In ii. de monte lato cōiuncto p̄ dicto lapidi. De quadrangulo edificio ſup eundē obliq̄ poſito. et de muro unius cubiti. de ꝓpugnaculis. In iii. de v. imaginib.

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uirtutū unuscui suo. hec de duab; uitia
stanub; q̄d statuis et habituis earū
significet. In iii. de colūna tribi
li tres acutos angulos habente.
De patriarchis pphis de aplis et
martyrib; de multitudine, & hu
mana. De septima di. de triplici fla
gello. De modis castigationū et cō
solationū di. In v. de capite mira
bilis formę et terribilis. De querimo
nia dominoq; de ecclā et dedicatio
ne. de decimis. et reb; ecclāsticis et
de aliis quā plurimis. In vi de
spūali magisterio. et de potes
tate sclārī tpalia. hec de spūalib;
et sclārib; inq̄uor et iii. diui
sis. De diuisis causis et differentiis
eoq;. De viii uirtutib; et q̄d stat?
et habitus earū significet.
In vii. de mirabili colūna in esti
mabilis q̄ntitatis de trinitate
et differentia triū psonarū.
In viii. de colūna maxima et
umbrosa. De ubis octo uirtutū.
et pcipue de melliflua et suaui
admonitione gr̄e di. De vii. do
nis sci spūs. et q̄d statuis & habit?
p̄dictarū uirtutū significet.
In viiii. cantic. tres lucidissi
ma et uerba. iii. uirtutū. et mul
ta de cūsanub; in eccla & statuis
et habit? p̄dictarū uirtutū. et
q̄d significet. In x^ma^ s vii. gradus.
& sup hos sedes posita. sup q̄m
unicus. & ei uba dulcisona ad
hoies i mundū. De iii uba. v. uir
tutū. & q̄d stat? & habit? earū signif

x. alia quedā. In xi^ma^ de v. bestiis. pfv
nes. v. ad apices. v. sup collē ligatis.
De p̄dicto iuuene et muliebri ima
gine de capite monstruoso. De filii
p̄dmonis crudeli psecutione. & mi
raculis et potestate de helia et enoch.
et fine mundi. In xii^ma^ de cōcussione
elementoq; de triplici fulgurū et tonitruū.
de casu montiū et siluarū. et resur
rectione. De signatis & nō signatis.
de floribus di. De iudicatis et iudi
candis. de mutatione elementorū.
In xiii cantic. de lucidissimo ae
re. De mirabili et diuiso genere
musicoq;. De simphonia i laudib;
s. marie & cuiuis supnoq; gaudioq;
et omniū scoq;.

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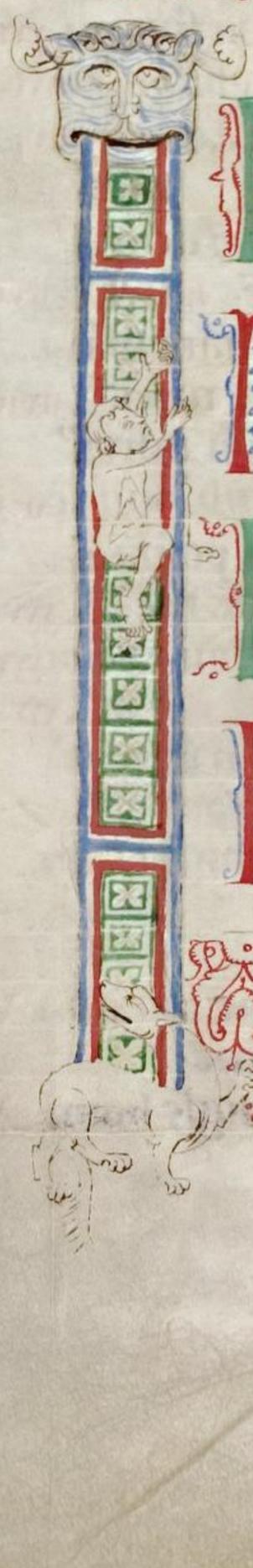
INCIPIUNT
CAPITULA
SCIUAS: SI
mplicis: h'
OMNIS



INCIPIU
NO CAP
KULA: P
RIMEP
ARTIS

CAPITVLA ꝑme uisionis pri
me partis.

i. De formidine et stabilitate ẽtis regni di.
ii. De amore dñi.
iii. De his qui pauꝑes spũ s.
iiij. Qd uirtutes a dõ uenientes timorem dñi et pauꝑes spũ custodiunt.
v. Qd agnitionem di abscondi ñ possint studia actiuũ hominũ.
vi. Salomon de eadẽ re.

CAPLA SCDE uisionis ꝑme partis.

i. Qd beatus anglus nullo impulsu iniustitie tũ ab amore et laude di abstrahuntur.
ii. Qd lucifer decore ẽ unus fortitudinis sue ẽsiderans superbiuit. et ido cũ sibi ꝙsentientib; a celesti gla excluꝺ ẽ. ¶ Sec.
iii. Qd ds iniustus ẽt si cũ ñ deceat
iiij. Verba iob ad eandẽ re. ¶ Facꝺ ẽ.
v. De inferno q̃ inuocatitia sua sub mersionẽ animarũ uenit.
vi. Qd in decachone diaboli infernũ
vii. Qd gehenna ipsis tribuit obuia ẽ purgandis certa tormẽta posita s.
viii Verba ezechielis de eadẽ re.
ix De diabolica fraude ꝓmũ hoiem ꝙsequentẽ decipiente. ¶ Eue.
x Qd diabolus nesciuit arborẽ illa intẽdictã ee ñ ex responsione
xi. Que tenenda t que uitanda sint in coniugio.
xii. Verba apli de eadẽ re.
xiii. Curante incarnationẽ dñi q̃da plures uxores haberent.
xiiij. Cur nec homo nec angls homi
xv. Verba sapientie de eadẽ re.
xvi. Qd ẽ sanguinei in ẽiugio ñ copu
xvii. Exemplũ de lacte.
xviii. Qre in uetẽ testamẽto ẽinguũ uitio sanguineos ẽcessu sit in nouo phibi
xix. Qd uir ñ ñ in forti etate ñ ñ nubi lẽ uxorẽ ducat. ¶ Pollutione
xx. Deuitanda illicita et libidinosa
xxi. Qre mulier post partũ tactu corrupta mocculto maneat et abingressu tẽpli abstineat.
xxii. Qui in coitu pgnantis se polluunt homicide s. ¶ Munuit.
xxiii. Osee de eadẽ re. ¶ Posuit.
xxiiii. De cõdamone castitatis.
xxv. Iobs eadẽ re. ¶ In ecclo.
xxvi. Qd expulso ada de paradyso sũ qd qa homo do rebellis extitit creatura et pri subiecta se illi op
xxvii. Deamentate paradysi que sucũ et ũ tre tribuit ut aia corpori.
xxviii. Qre ds hominẽ talẽ fecit qd pecare potuit. ¶ Et ad hominẽ.
xxix. Qd ho ñ debet sũma pscrutari cũ nec infima ualeat examinare.
xxx. Qd ho nẽ clarior fulget qm pri
xxxi. Similitudo horti. ouis. et margarite
xxxii. De cõdamone humilitatis et caritatis. que clariores ceteris inuenit.

CAPLA TRIE uisionis ¶ istum.
prime partis.

i. Qd pusibilia et tẽpalia que in uisibilia et ẽna s manifestantẽ.
ii. De firmamẽto ad similitudinẽ ouis facto. et qd sigꝛet. ¶ et qd signifi.
iii. De lucido igne et de ũbrosa pelle

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iiij. De posmone solis ⁊ ꝙrũ stellarũ ⁊ q̄d ſ.
v. De ascensu solis ⁊ q̄d significet.
vi. De descensu eiꝺē ⁊ q̄d signficet.
vij. Verba act̄ apl̄oꝝ ad idē.
viij. De p̄mo uentō ⁊ turbinib; ei⁹ ⁊ q̄d significet.
ix. De ii uentō ⁊ tbinib; ei⁹ ⁊ q̄d signi-
x. De tenebroso igne ⁊ somnu ⁊ de accensis lapidib; ⁊ q̄d significet.
xj. De purissimo etherē ⁊ de posmone lune ⁊ duarũ stellarũ ⁊ q̄d signi-
xij. De posmonē aliarũ stellarũ ⁊ q̄ ſ.
xiij. De iii uēto ⁊ tbinib; ei⁹ ⁊ q̄ significē.
xiiij. De aq̄so aere ⁊ alba pelle ⁊ q̄ sig.
xv. De iiii uento ⁊ tbinib; ei⁹ ⁊ q̄ significē.
xvj. De barenoso globo ignē ⁊ q̄d signi-
xvij. Verba dī ad eandē rē.
xviij. De ignē mouū ⁊ q̄d significē.
xix. De maximo monte int̄ aq̄lonē ⁊ orientē ⁊ q̄ significet. ca arte.
xx. De his q̄ p̄ua arte in creatis fruntur. Verba eugelii.
xxj. Q̄ꝺ diabol⁹ hoib; illudit p magi-
xxij. Parabola de eadē re.
xxiij. Cui salus hoīs et multas cōpleta fuerit selm mutabit.
xxiv. Verba iob de eadē re.
xxv. Verba dī de eodē.
xxvj. Q̄d dē auguria i stellis ⁊ i cet̄is ere aut̄s ampli⁹ tolerare nō uult.
xxvij. De stultitia ⁊ rumacia hoīs.
xxviij. Similitudo ꝺ bedo ⁊ cerno ⁊ lupo.
xxix. Conpacio ꝺ medico. ſus.
xxx. Verba iobis. ſumus.

Capla q̄rte uisionis p̄me par'

l. Querela aīe de ira erroris p gr̄am dī ad matrē syon rede-

ii. De pennis aīe. ſio in mmur.
iii. De tabnaculo q̄d ingressa ē ⁊ cet.
iiij. Querela aīe diabolicas tbinib; auxilio dī fortē repugnamus.
v. De turbinib; q̄s diabolica p sua
vi. Qua de causa errores ih excitant.
vij. Qua ratione ira ꝺ diū supbia ēpescit.
viij. Querela aīe ꝺ tabnaculo suo cū timore egredientis.
ix. Q̄d scientia dī nulla obscuritate ulli⁹ rei obnubilat. ostendi.
x. Q̄d inpulchritudine iustic dī nulla iniustica inueniri pōt.
xj. De sculptilib⁹ ⁊ q̄ deserenda s.
xij. Ezechiel ppha de eodē ⁊ suas oīnat.
xiij. De inq̄sitate humani seminis ⁊ de diuīsitate hominū iū pertax.
xiiij. Iba moysi ad eandē rē. ⁊ tat.
xv. Q̄re ydē et diuortia nascant.
xvi. Quom̄ ifans iuuo mat̄s uunificat ⁊ iñ eiꝰ abaīa solidat ⁊ sustentat.
xvij. Q̄m aīa sedm uires corpis uires
xviij. Q̄d ho uires semitas in se hē.
xix. De intellectu. xx. De uoluntate.
xxi. Similitudo de igne ⁊ pane.
xxij. Qu̇ admodū i tabernaculo uo limatis i iaio ōs uires aīe calefiunt et se inuicē ⁊ iungūt.
xxiij. De ratione. xxiiij. De sensu.
xxv. Q̄d aīa ē magist̄a caro ancilla.
xxvi. Similitudo de arbore ad aīam.
xxvij. Q̄d aīa ad pecca īclinata p dony dī ꝺ puncta peccata deserit.
xxviij. Q̄d aīa diabolicis insidiis tēptata supna īspiratione a se iacula diaboli expellit.
xxix. Q̄d aīa habitaculū corpis sui ꝺ

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Beatificatio ueratuum uisionum. a deo fluentium.

Capla primę uisionis primę partis. De synagoga matre in carnatione filii dei. Vba salomonis. ii. Vba esaie ppbe. iii. De diuso calore synagogę. iiii. De ecclesia et de quodam corde abrahę in pectore moysi et in uentre et re liquo ppbe quod significet. v. Quod magna ut uis huius seculi in capite simile aurorę. vi. Vba cherubin. vii. Copatio de samsone et de saul et de dd ad eandem rem. viii. Tuonc.

Capla sexte uisionis in partis. Quod ds creaturam suam mirabiliter condidit et disposuit. ix. De habitu angelorum et ei significatione. x. De habitu archangelorum et ei significatione. xi. De habitu uirtutum et ei significatione. xii. De habitu potestatum et ei significatione. xiii. De habitu principatuum et ei significatione. xiv. De habitu dominationum et ei significatione. xv. De habitu thronorum et ei significatione. xvi. De habitu cherubin et ei significatione. xvii. De habitu seraphin et ei significatione. xviii. Quod per hec ostenditur miribilibus uocibus miracula illa resonant quod ds in beatis animabus operatur. xix. Psalmista de eadem re. Explicit capitulum primę uisionis. Incipit liber secundus.

Simplicis hominis

quadragesimo ⁊cio ⁊poralis cur-
sus mei anno. cū celesti uisiom
magno ⁊more & ⁊remula m
⁊monc inhe⁊ē. udi maxi
mū splendorē in quo facta ē
uox de celo ad me dicēs. O hom̄
fragilis & cinis cineris. & puru
do puruedimis. dic & scribe que
uides & audis. S; qa timida es
ad loquendū. & simplex ad ex
ponendū. & indocta ad scriben
dū ea dic & scribe illa nō scdm
os hoīs nec scdm intellectū hu
manę ad inuentionis. nec scdm
uolūtatē humane cōpositio
nis. s; scdm id. q̄d ea in celestib;
desup in mirabilib; dī uides &
audis. ea sic edisserendo p ferens.
quēadmodū & audisti ūba
p̄ceptoris sui p capiens. ea scdm
tenorē locutionis illi. ipso uo
lente ostendente. & p̄capiente
p palat. Sic q̄ & tu o homo dic
ea que uides & audis. & scribe
ea nō scdm te nec scdm aliū ho
minē. s; scdm uolūtatē scien
tis, & disponentis oīa in secre
tis misteriq; suis. Et iterū audi
ui uocē de celo mihi dicentē. Dic
q̄ mirabilia . hec. & scribe
ea hoc modo. edocta & dic.
factū ē in millesimo centesimo
quadragesimo p̄mo filii dī ihy
xp̄i incarnationis anno. cum
quadraginta duos annos esse.
maxime coruscationis ignei
lum̄ a p̄to celo uenies totū
rebrū meū transfudit & totū cor-
totūq; pect⁹ meū. uidit flama. nō in
ardens s; calens ita inflamauit. in
solē aliquā calefacit sup quā
radios suos ponit. Et repente in
tellectū expositionis libros unde
licet psalterii euglii et alios ca
tholicos. tā uetis quā noui testa
mti. uoluminū sapieba. nō autē
intp̄tationē uerboꝝ textꝰ eos. nec
diuisionē sillabarū. nec cognitio
nē casuū aut tēporū. habebā. Vir-
tutē autē & mysteriū secretarū.
et admirandarū uisionū apud
lari etate. scilicet a tēpore illo
cū q̄nquennis esse usq; ad p̄sens
tēpus mirabili m̄ in me sensera. sic
& adhuc. q̄d tam nulli hominū
exceptis quib; da paucis et reli
giosis q̄ in eade conuersatione
uiuebam. qua & ego eā mani
festau. s; intim usq; ad id tēpis
cū illud dns sua gra manifestari
uoluit. b quieto silentio depssi-
siones ū quas udi nec eas in som
nis nec dormiens nec in frenesi
nec corporeis oculis aut auribus
exteriorib; hoīs nec in abditis locis
p̄cepi. s; eas uigilans et circum
specta. in pura mente oculis & au
ribus interioris hominis mapuis lo
cis scdm uolūtatē dī accepi. Qd
quom̄ sit carnali homini p q̄re
re difficile ē S; puellari meta
transacta. cū ad p̄fatā etatē p fec
te fortunidimis puenisse. audiui
uocē de celo dicentē. Ego lux ui

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uens et obscura illuminans. ho
minē quē uolm. et quē mirabilīt
scdm qd m placuit excussi in
magnis mirabilib. transmeā
antiquoꝝ hominū q̄ mihi
multa secreta uidet posui-
s; mihi ānā stranu illū q̄d se nō ci
geret nulla clamore mus suc.
cūbus quoq; nō habuit mecō
gaudiū nec lasciuiā nec exer-
citationē in reb; illis que ad
mundū pertinent. qa eū de pu
naci audacia abstraxi timo
rē habentē. et in laboribus suis
pauentē. Ipse enī in medullis
et in uenis carnis sue doluit
constrictū animū et sensū ha
bens. atq; multā passionē cor-
poris sustinens. ita q̄d in eo di
uersa securitas nō latuit. s; in
omīb; causis suis se culpabilē
estimauit. Nā rimas cordis eī
circūspexi. ne mens ipsi p̄sup
biā aut p̄gl̄am se elevaret. s;
ut magis in omīb; his timorē
et dolorē quā gaudiū aut
quā peculiāmā haberet. Unde
inamore meo securatus ē in
animo suo. ubi illū inuen
ret q̄ uiā salutis curreret. et
quenda inuenit et eū ama
ut agnoscens q̄d fidelis ho
ēt. et similis sibi mali qua-
parte laboris illi q̄ ad me
uenit. Tenensq; eū simul cū
illo in omīb; his p̄ supnū stu
diū comendit. ut absconsa
mirabilia mea reuelarentur. Et ide
homo sup semetipsū se nō posu
it. s; ad illū ascensione humi
litatis. et in mansione bone uo
luntatis quē inuenit se in mul.
tis suspiriis inclinauit. Tu q̄ ō
homo q̄ hec nō iniquitudine
deceptionis. s; in puritate simpli
citatis accipis. ad manifestatio
nē abscondita q̄ recta. scribe
que uides et audis. S; ego quam
uis hec uidere et audire. tamen
p̄pter dubietatē et malā opinio
nē et p̄pter diffinitatē uerboꝝ hoīv.
tā diu nō inp̄tinaula. s; i humilita
tis officio scribere recusaui. quo
usq; intellectū eg̃ uidimus flagello
di depssa cadere. ita q̄d tande
mutus i firmitatib; ēpulsa. testi
monio cuiꝰdā nobilis. et bonoꝝ
morū puelle et hoīs illiꝰ quē oc
cultē ut p̄fatū. ēquestrā et i ue
nerā. manū adscribendū apposui.
q̄d diu facere. alia p̄fundatē ex
positoris libroꝝ ut p̄dixi semes.
uerib; q; receptus de egestate me
erigēs uix opꝰ istud decē annis ē
sūmans ad finē p̄duci. Indiebꝰ ayr.
Henrici magūtini archi epi. et
Cōnradi romanoꝝ regis et Cōnonis
abbatis īmonte . beati Disibodi
pontificis. sub papa eugenio he
uisiones et ūba facta s. Et dixi et
scripsi hec. nō scdm adiuentionē cor-
dis mei aut ulli hoīs. s; ut ea ī ec
lesiis audi audiui et p̄cepi p̄secre
ta mysteria di. et ut ea audiui uo
cē dc

cē de celo m̄ dicentē. Clama ḡ & ex
scribe sic. Prima uisio p̄me partis.

IDS QVASS
montē magnū ferreum colorē habentē & sup ipsū quendā tamq̄ clarita tis sedentē. ut clarit as ipsi⁹ uisum meū reuerberaret. de quo abundaq̄ parte sui lenis umbra uelut ala miserē latitudinis et longitudinis extendebat. Et ante ipsū ad radicē eiusdē montis quedā yma go undiq̄ plena oculis stabat. cui⁹ nullā humanā formā p̄ ipsis oculis discernere ualebā. & ante istā imago alia. puerilis etatis. pallida tunica. s; albis calciamentis induta. sup cui⁹ caput tanta claritas de eodē sup montē ipsū sedentē descendit. ut faciē ei⁹ intueri n̄ possē. S; ab eodē q̄ sup montē illū sedebat. multe uidentes scintille exibāt. q̄ circa ipsā imaginē magna suauitate circū uolabant. In ipso autē monte q̄si plurime fenestelle uidebant. in quib; uelut capita hominum quedā pallida. et quedā alba apparebāt. Et ecce idē q̄ sup montē illū sedebat. fortissima. et acutissima uoce clamabat dicēs. O ho que fragilis es de puluere tu. & cinis decinere. clama et dic de intrinseca incorrupte saluationis. quantū hi erudiantē q̄ medullā literarū uidentes. ea nec dicere nec p̄dicare uolunt. q̄a timidi et hebetes ad cōseruandū iusticiā dī s; quib; clausurā mysticā rese ra quā ipsi timidi mabscondito agro sine fructu celant. Ergo in fontē abundantie tua dilatare et ea in mystica erudītione effluē. ut illi ab effusione irrigationis tue concutiant. q̄ ut ppt̄ p̄uaricationē eius uolunt contēptibiles ee. Nā tui acumen hui⁹ p̄fundatis abhoīe n̄ capis. s; a supno & tuēndo iudice illud de sup accipis. ubi p̄clara luce hec serenitas int̄ lucentes fortit̄ lucebit. Surge ḡ clama et dic que fortissima uirtute diuini auxilii manifestantē. quo ille q̄ omn̄i creature sue potentē et benigne imperat ipsū tantis & ipsi suauissima dilectione in spū humilitatis famulantes. claritate supne illustrationis p̄fundit et ad gaudia eterne uisionis in uia iusticie p̄ficere ualeamus p̄ducit. Vnde etiā ut uides. mons iste magni⁹ ferreū colorē habens designat fortitudinē & stabilitatē eiusdē regni dī. que nullo impulsu labentis mutabilitatis potest exterminari. et sup ipsū q̄dā tanquā clarissimus sedens. ut clarissimus ipsi⁹ uisū tuū refulgentē ostendit in regno beatitudinis ipsi⁹ qui in fulgore ineficiens sem-

1.

nnans wu orbi ūtarū impans·
supna dnumnatr humanis nnu
bus inconp̄hensibilis ē·S; abuq;
parte sui lenis umbra·udit ala
mire latitudinis et longitudi
nis extendit·q̄d ē ad monitionē
et in castigatione beate
defensionis·suauis et lenis pte
tio·ineffabile iusticiā impleue
ratia uere eq̄tatis iuste et pie
demonstrans· Et tamē ipsū
ad radicē eiusdē montis quedā
imago undiq; plena oculis stat·
quia coram dō in humilitate regi
nū dī inspiciens timor dñi·ual
latus p̄spicuitate bone et iuste
intentionis studiū et stabilitatē
suā in hoīb; exercet·ita q̄d ei nul
la humanā formā p̄ipsis·oculis
discernere ualeā·quō omnē ob
liuionē iusticie dī quā sepi ho
mines medio nnis sue semiun
pacatissimā acie inspectionis
sue ita abiecit q̄d mortalis in q̄
stio·uigilantia ei indebilitate
sua ñ discernit· Vnde et an ista
imago alia puerilis tantis pal
lida tunica·s; albis calciamentis
induta appareat·q̄a p̄cedente
timore dñi·illi q̄ pauper spū s
subsequit·quō timor dñi in
deuotione humilitatis·beatitu
dinē pauperis spūs formit tenet
que ñ iactantia nec clamorē
cordis appetit·s; simplicitatē
et sobrietatē nnis diligit·ñ si
bi s; dō uelut in pallore subiec

tionis iusta·opa sua·q̄si in du
mentū·pallide tunice tribuens·
et serena uestigia filii dī fideliter
subsequens·Sup cui caput tan
ta claritas de eode sup montē
ipsū sedentē descendit ut facie
ei intueri ñ possis·q̄a potestatē
et formidinē eide beatitudi
nis·tanta serenitas ustionis
illi·q̄ omī creature laudabiliter
impat infundit ut in memorionē
ipsi mortali et infirma·ēsidera
tione capere ñ ualeas·quō et il
le q̄ celestes diuitias habet paup
tatu humiliter se subdidit· Sed
q̄d ab eode q̄ sup montē illū se
det·multe uuuemes scintille ex
eunt que easde imagines mag
na suauitate circūuolant·hoc
ē q̄d abompte dō diuise et for
tissime uirtutes in diuina· clari
tate fulminantes uenium·que
illos q̄ dm ueraciter timent·et q̄
pauperiē spūs fideliter amant
suo adiutorio et custodia·cir
cūdantes ardenter amplectuntur
et defendunt· Vnde et in ipso
monte q̄si plurime fenestelle
uidentur in q̄b; uelut capita ho
minū queda pallida queda
alba apparent·q̄a in sūma al
titudine; p̄fundissime et acutis
sime agnitioni dī nec celari
nec abscondi possunt studia
actuū hominū cū et ut porte et
candore in semetipsis sepissi
me demonstrent·quō et modo

11.

111.

1111.

v

homines et in cordib; et in fac
tis suis fatigau. in contumelia
dormiant modo exsuscitau. i
honore
cuiglam. quēadmodū salomon
in uolumine mea testat dicens.
Egestatē opata ē man remissa.
vl. dumtas
man aū fortis, parat. Q d dr. Debi
lem et paupertē se homo ille fe
cit. q nolunt iusticiā opari. nec
iniquitatē delere. nec debitū re
mittere. ubi amiraculis opū be
atitudinis ociosis pmansit. Q
autē opatē fortissima opa salu
tis. uā uermans curiens. fomtē
saluatis gle capit. inq pciosis
simas diuicias intra cū celo si
bi parat. Vnde quicūq; sciam
inspū scō. et pmas in fide habet
iste admonitionē meā n̄ uerscen
dat. s; ea inqustu animē sue am
plectendo pcipiat. Secā uisio pme par

DISCEDVS
DIVERSVS etc.

maximā multitu
dinē uiuentiū la
padarū. multā cla
ritatē habentiū
que igneū fulgorē accipientes.
ita serenissimū splendorē adepte
st. Et ecce lacus multe latitudi
nis et pfunditatis apparuit os
uelut os putei habens. et igneū
fumū cū multo fetore emittens.
de quo etiā tenebrima nebula se
extendens. qsi uenā ustū decep
tabile habentē tetigit. et in q dā
clara regione candidā nubē
que de quada pulchra forma
hoīs plurimas plurimasq; stellas
inse continens exierat. p eā affla
uit. ac illā eandeq; formā hoīs
de eadē regione ita eiecit. Quo
facto lucidissim splendor eandē
regionē circūdedit. et ita oīa
elementa mundi que pri in magna
quiete constituerant in maximā
inquietudinē usa horribiles uo
res ostenderēt. et tonitrū audiū illy.
qui pri in loco fuerat dicentē.

Deū fideli deuotione subse
quentes. et in dilectione ei dig
no amore ardentes. a gla supne
beatitudinis nullo impulsu in
iusticie tm abstrahuntē. cū illi
qui dim fidē adtendunt. n̄ solū
ad maiora n̄ pmouentē s; etiā
ab his que se habere fallacē pu
tant iusta examinatione deci
dentē. Q d et hec maxima multitu
do uiuentiū lampadarū multā
claritatē habentiū ostendit. que
ē plurim excercit supnę spūum
in beata uita fulgentiū. ac in mul
to decore et ornatu existentiū.
quo cū ad eo creati s n̄ superbā ela
tionē arripuerē s; in diuino amo
re fortē pstitere. Nā ipsi igneū
fulgorē accipientes. ita serenissi
mū splendorē splendorē adep
ti s. qa cū lucifer cū suis supno
creatori rebellare conatē ista
helū di in casu illi et sibi con
sentientiū habentes ingilan
tiā diuine dilectionis in ducē.

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cū illi corpore ignoramꝰ qua
dm scire noluerit amplexari sim.
Quomodo. In casu diaboli. mil. iii.
lis anglicis spūb; qui cū dō in
rectitudine psteterāt. maxi
ma laus exorta ē. qm acutissimo
usu cognouerit. qd ds immobi
lis sine ulla mutatione ulli mu
tabilitatis impotentia sua pse
uerat. ita qd a nullo bellatore
superari posset. Et ita inamore
ei exardescentes. et in rectitudi
dine pseuerantes. omnē pulue
rē mundicie contēpserūt. Sed ii.
lucifer. q ob superbiā suā de cele
sti gratia excidit. nūcio erat mo
nis suę talis actatus exortus.
qd nullū defectū nec in decore
nec in formositate sua sensit.
Vnde cū decorē suū inspiceret
et cū illum formositatis suę in
semet ipso cōsideraret. superbiā
inuenit. quę ipsi promisit ut in
cipere qd uellet. quia pficere
posset qd incepisset. Et uidens
locū ubi se subsistere posse pu
tauit. ibi decorē et formositatē
suā ostendere uolens. in semet
ipso sic de dō dicebat. Volo sul
gere illic. quēadmodū et iste
hic. Cui omnis acies ei assensū de
dit dicens. Qd tu uis. hoc et nos
uolumus. Et cū in superbiā elatꝰ
illud pficere uellet qd cogita
uerat. beluis dni se extendens
insignia ingredine illū cū oi
comitatu suo decerit. ita qd
ipsi feruidi contra fulgorē et ni
gri contra serenitatē quā habu
erant effecti s. Qd ē hoc. Quia
si ds psumptionē illius nō detexisset.
minus ei erat quō illos foueret
qui in negritatē diuinitatis di
uidere uolebant. s; eos decere
et impietatē ipsoꝝ ad nihilū re
degit. sic etiā et omnis a conspectu
claritatis sue auferit. q se ipsi
opponere conant. ut seruus mis
iob ostendit dicēs. Lucerna im iiii.
pioꝝ extinguet. et supueniet eis
mundanis et dolores diuidet
furoris sui. Erit sic palee ante
faciē uenti. et sic fauilla quā
turbo dispgit. Qd dī. flagrans
spurcicia. petulantis neq; fal
se pspitatis. qsi lucē honoris in
uoluntate carnis illoꝝ precedens.
qui dm nō timent. s; qui illū in
puersa rabie spnunt contēnen
tes scire qd illius eos ualeat ex
pugnare. cū in igne ferociatis
sue uolunt excurrere quecūq; ex
agitant hec in hora ultionis di
cunt. ita conculcat. et de supno
iudicio sup eos de impios cadet
abiecto indignationis omnipotē
que subcelo s. ita qd et dō et ho
minib; molesti erāt. Vnde qa ds
nō sinit eos habere qd uolunt.
ido undiq; cū dolore macerati
in hominib; spargunt. prabiē
in same sue. cū ardent hoc pos
sidere. qd ds nō pmittit eos de
uorare. Et cū hoc modo adō re

cedum magne in ultimam assimilam. ita q̄d nec in dō nec in hominib; quicquā bom facere ualem de grano unq; inp̄uidem oculo inspecho ms dī abusi. Quapp̄ et huīmodi cārnalem tradun tur q̄d intrepido sapore inqu rumoris dissipam. cui sup uem emē umbrē spūs sci ñ susc̄piunt.

Sed lacus ille multe latitudinis .v. et profunditatis q; ubi apparet ē infernus latitudinē uicio; et profunditatē p̄dnationū ut unde inse comunem. os ema uelut os puteī habens. et igneū fumū cū multo fetore emittens. q; a nuo racionis sua submersionē am marū trahens. cui eis suauitatē et dulcedinē ostendit. eas ad p̄dnatiō nē tormēto; p̄uersa decep̄tione p̄ducit. ubi ardor ignis cū fusius one tetrimi fumi et cū ebullien te mortifero fetore emanat. q̄m hec dira tormēta diabolo et eū subsequentib; q; se de sūmo bono auertert. nec illud scire aut intelligere uoluert. p̄parata s. unde et de omī bono abiecti s. ñ q; illud nesciert. s; q̄m illum in magna supbia contēpsert. Q̄d ē hoc. Indeiectione, be exterio diaboli .vi. res tenebre omīe genus penarum in se habentes ponit s. quia hi maligni spūs contra q̄lam que ip sis p̄parata fuit miseriā diuīsarū penarū susceperit. et contra cla ritatē quā habuert. densissimā tenebras acceperit. Quomodo. cū supb; angli; colubet se sursū ert exire carcere infernī accepit. quia ee ñ potuit. ut ullus dō p̄ ualeret. Et quomodo conuenī ens cert. ut in uno pectore duo dūi cor da ceūt. Sic nec in eo; duo; ee debuert. S; quō ide diabolus cū suus supbā p̄sūptionē arripuit. ido lacū p̄dnationis sibi paratū inuenit. Sic et hoīes ista q; eos in achāb; suis imitant. participes penarū eo; sc̄dm merita sua efficiunt. Sed queda aīe s quę .vii. cumulū dāpnationis habentes a sciencia di p̄iecte s. et ido infernales penas sine consolatione ereptionis habebunt. queda autē in obliuione di ñ existentes. s; tamē in superioribus examinationib; purgationē peccatoꝝ suoꝝ in quib; plapse s recipientes. tande absolutionē uinculoꝝ suoꝝ sentiunt. ad requiē ereptę p̄uenientes. Q̄d ē hoc. Gehenna his obuia ē. qui dīm in obliuione cordis sui sine penitentia habent. ceta ỹ tormēta. his qui quā uis mala opa faciant. s; tande addīm in gemitib; suis respiciunt. Qua p̄pter fideles diabolū fugiant et dīm diligant mala opa abiciantes. et bona cū decore penitentię ēplentes. ut seruus mīs ezechiel p̄me in spiratus hortat dicens. Con .viii. uertimini et agite penitentiam

cū in eis usq; ad finē utrę ī p̄sentem

cia abomīb; iniq̄tatib; uris: ce
ñ erit uobis in ruinā iniq̄tas:
Qd dr: O uos homines q̄ hactenꝰ
in peccatis iacuistis: recordami
ni xpiani nominis uri conuer-
tentes uos aduiā salutis et faci
te alia opa in fonte penitencie
qui prius fecistis multa scelera in
innumerabilib; uicis: et ita a
mala consuetudine uia surgen
tes: ñ deprimet uos in ruinam
mortis iniq̄tas illa: in qua sor-
duerat is: qua illā in die salua
tionis uře abiecistis: Vnde etiā
hoc modo gaudiū angloꝝ sup
uos erit: quō a diabolo recessi
stis: et addīm cucurristis: eū sic
melius in bonis achib; cognoscen
tes quā prius eū seruistis: cū mutri
sione antiqui seductoris iustis:
Qd v de eodē lacu de ūrima ne
bula se extendens: q̄si uenā uisv
decepcibile habentē tangit:
hoc ē qd de profundissima pdi
tione diabolica fraus emanans:
serpentē: uirulentū nefas frau
dulenter in temptationis in se comu
nentē: addecipiendū hominē
inuasit: Quom: Quia cū diabo
lus hominē in paradiso uidit:
cū magno horrore exclama
uit dicens: O quis tangit me
in mansione uere beatitudinis:
Et ita in semet ipso sciebat: qa
malicia suā quā in se habuit
ñ dū in alia creatura cōpleuerat:
s; ada et eua puerili innocen
tia in ortu delitiarū ire uidens:
cū magno stupore exultit se ad
decipiendū eos p serpentē: Quare:
Qm serpentē magis sibi assimilari
quā aliud animal intellex: studes
uit indolositate illi hoc occulte
p ficere: qd in forma sua apte
complere ñ posset: Vnde cū ada &
eua ab īmōdicta sibi arbore se auer
tere: et aīa & corpore conspexit:
in semet ipso intellex eos ibi diui
nū p ceptū habere qd in primo ope
ri incepent ipsos facillime dece
pit: Nesciebat enī eos arborē il
lam imōdictā ee: ñ qd hoc secm
pbationē dolose interrogationis
sue: et secm responsa eox adinue
nit: Qua ppt in ipsa clara regione
candida nubē: que de qua da
pulchra forma hoīs plurimas q;
stellas in se continens exierat p
eā afflauit: qm in eode loco ame
nitatis eua innocentē animū ha
bentē: que de innocente ada om
nē multitudinē humani generis
in pordinationē di lucentē: in
suo corpore gestans: supta fue
rat: pseductionē serpentis adde
ceptionē ei inuasit: Cur hoc: Qa
sciebat mulieris mollicie: facili
us incenda: qua uiri fortitudinē:
uidens eua: qd ada incarnate
eue ta fortit ardebat: ut si ipse di
abolus eua uicisset: q̄ q̄d illa ade
diceret: ada ide p ficeret: Vnde
diabolus illa candeq; forma ho
minis de eade regione ita exiit:

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VIIII. Qd v de eodē lacu de ūrima ne
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quō idē antiquus seductor eua
anq; adā de sede beatitudinis
sua deceptione expellens. eos in
tenebras subūsionis misit. Quoꝝ
videlicet eua pmū seduxit. ut
ipsa adę blandiret. quatinꝰ ei as
sensū pberet. qa ipsa ceteris adā
quā alia creatura ad inobedien
tiā pducere potuit. qm de costa
illi facta fuerat. Qua ppt mulier
uirū sicꝰ decet. cū ille eā ñ abhor
rens uerba eiꝰ facile assumit. Sed sic
sicut ñ paruo puero s; pfecto u
ro. scilicet adę pfecta mulier da
ta ē. ita eua modo cū uir imperfec
ta etate sua fertilis ē. pfecta ei my
lier coniungenda ē. uelut cū ar
bor flores incipit emittere. debi
ta cultura ei adhibenda ē. Nā de
costa in sino calore & suco adę eua
formata ē. acido nunc de fortī
tudine uiri et de calore eiꝰ semen
mulier concipit. plē in mundū
pducere. Vir enī seminator ex
iste mulier autē suscepti; ꝛ semi
nis ē. unde & mulier sub potesta-
te uiri manet. qm ut duricia la
pidis ad teneritudinē cere ē. ita
eua ad fortitudo uiri ad mollicie
mulieris ē. Q̄d autē pma mulier
de uiro formata ē. hoc ē coniunc
tio desponsationis mulieris ad
uirū. Et hoc sic intelligendū ē.
Coniunctio ista ñ ē uana. nec in
obliuione dī exercenda. qa q̄
mulier ē de uiro tulit coniunc
tionē istā bene et honeste con
stituit. videlicet carnē de carne
formans. Qua ppt ut adā et eua
caro una existerēt. sic et nūc uir
et mulier caro una in coniunctī
one carnali. ad multiplicandū
genus humanū efficiuntur. Et ido
pfecta caritas in his duob; ee de
bet. quēadmodū et in illis prioribꝰ
Adā eni uxorē suā culpare poꝰ
set q̄d ei consilio suo mortē in
tulit. s; tamen eā ñ dimisit. quādiu
in hoc scło uixit. quo illā sibi
p diuinā potentiā datā ee cog
nouit. Vnde ppt pfectā carnalē
ñ relinquat homo uxorē suā.
nisi ppt rationabilē causā. illā.
quā sibi fidelis ecclā ponit.
Nec omnino diuisio inter illos fit.
nisi ambo in una mente in filiū
mei uoluerint respicere. sic
in ardente amore illi dicentes.
Volumꝰ mundū relinquere. et
illū sequi q̄ pnobis passus ē. Q̄d
si hi duo in una deuotione dis
serunt. ut mundū relinquan-
te se omnino abinuicē ñ sepa
rent. qa ut sanguis a carne sepa
rari ñ potest quādiu spūs in illa
manet. ita eua nec maritꝰ nec
uxor se abinuicē diuidant. s;
simul in una uoluntate ambu
labunt. S; si ibi in fornicatione
p uaricatio legis aut in uiro aut
in uxore ē. tē aut a semetipsis
aut a sacerdotib; suis publicam
censurā spālis magisterii sedm
q̄d iustū ē sustinebunt. Q̄ar tꝰ

ēm̄ de uxore et uxor de marito
cora ecclā et p̄lam̄ ipsi de trans
gressione comunchonis suę sedm
iusticiā di inclamabūt. nī tam̄
ita. q̄d aut mar⁹ aut uxor aliā
copulā queratur. ſ; ipsi aut simul
in rectitudine comunchonis p
manebunt aut se a comunchio
ne ista simul abstinebunt. nec
ta id q̄d eis p disciplinā ecclāstice
institutionis demonstrat. nec se xiii
uipera lacerationē dilaniabunt. ſ;
pura dilectione diligent. q̄m et
uir & mulier ee nī possunt nisi
ista copulatione pereant. quēad
modū paulus amicus m̄s testat
dicens. xii. Sic̄ mulier de uiro.
ta et uir p mulierē. oīa aut̄
ex deo. Q̄d dr. Q mulier ppt̄ uir
creata ē & uir ppt̄ mulierē facti
ē. q̄m ut illa de uiro. ta et uir
de illa ne alterū abalterō disce
dat in unitate facto; nato; suo;.
qua in uno ope unū opant.
quēadmodū aer et uent⁹ opa
sua inuicē complicant. Quom⁹
aer de uento mouet. et uentus
aeri implicat. ita q̄ mambitu
eo; queq; uiridia illis subdita s.
Q̄d ē hoc. Q mulier uiro et uir mu
lieri in ope filio; coopant. Vnde
maxima crimina flagitia; ibi
s ubi formicatio indieb; creatio
nis filio; diuisionē facit. quo
pprīū sanguinē de fundamento
loci sui uir et mulier ibi ab
scidunt. in alienū locū eū ab
icientes. His certe fraudulenta dia
boli et ira di relinquent. q; fedus
illud p̄uaricati s. q̄d ipsis dns con
stituit. Qua ppt̄ ue ipsis q̄ndo
peccata ipso; eis n̄ remittunt. ſ; q̄m
uir ut mulier unusquisq; suus ut
ostensū ē sibi coopent. oīa tam̄
uidelicet ta uir quā mulier cete
re creature ex diuina dispositi
one & ordinatione s. q̄m dns ea
sedm uoluntatē suā fecit. Ante
incarnationē aut̄ filii mei q̄da
in antiquo pplo plurimas uxo
res sedm uoluntatē suā simul ha
bebant q; n̄ dū apte demonstra
tionis p̄hibitionē inde audierant
quā fili⁹ m̄s in mundū ueniens
ostendit. rectissimo germine hui⁹
copulationis in marito et uxore
quādiu flatū expirationis in se
haberent sedm comunchonē ade
et eue ppalatā. q̄m comunchio ista
n̄ sedm uoluntatē hominū ſ; sedm
uoluntatē di excercenda ē. q; meli⁹ ē
rectū conugiū iuxta dispositio
nē ecclāstice discretionis habere.
quā formicationē appetere. cui ta
uos hoīes hoc neglegentes. s. uxām ly
bidinē n̄ solū sedm hoīes. ſ; etiā sedm
pecora exercentes. fides aū recta et
pura dilectio agnitionis di int̄ ma
ritū & uxorē sit. ne semine eo; dia
bolica arte polluto. diuina ultio
ipsos p̄cutiat. cū se inuicē mordentes
dilaniant. & cū semina sua i huma
ne sedm petulantiā pecco; semi
nant. Vnde cū i india uipere mor[te eos]
criminat.

ct cū maculosa supfluas semi
nis ipsoꝝ absq; amore di ct absq;
humana disciplina in ipsis est-
multo ciens ad castigationē huī
puersitatis ipsoꝝ recto iudicio
di qui excipsis nascunt ad con
trarietatē in membris suis de
fluunt. ct a pspitate ure sue
deciunt. nisi penitencia il
lorū suscipiens placabilē me
ipsis ostendā. Nā q̄ in pennten
tia peccatoꝝ suoꝝ me inuoca
uerint penitencia ipsoꝝ ppt̄
amorē filii mei suscipiā. quo
qui digitū suū ad me pcu
tendo leuauerint. idē q̄ gemi
tū cordis sui ad me in pcu
tencia extenderint dicens.
peccaui dñe coram te. penitcn
cia illa in filii mis ostendit q̄
sacerdos sacerdotū ē. qa pe
nitencia que sacerdotib; in
amore filii mei offert. purga
tionē peccatoꝝ ea faciet ib;
concedit. Vnde penitencia
sua digne facientes. a maxil
la diaboli exeunt homines. quo
ille hamū diuine potencie
deglutire uolens. maxillam
sua forti uulnerauit. ubi
eia nunc fideles anime ap
ditione transeuntes. ad salua
tionē puenium. Quom. Quia
sacerdotes mactari inuoca
tores nominis mei existentes.
confessionē pplōꝝ suscipient.
ubi eis remediū salutis de
monstrabunt. Quappt̄ ut dñs
placabilē habeat. semē suū in diuer-
sitate uiciorū in contaminent.
quo q̄ in fornicatione t in ad
ulterio semē suū ei cum filios
suos q̄ hoc modo excipsis nas-
cunt negligentiores reddunt.
Quomodo. Qui puro limo lu
tū uel stercus admisceat. nūq̄d
uas stabile facit. Sic q̄ semē suū
in fornicatione uel adulterio
contaminat nūquid filios for-
tuitos gignit. S; multi ex his
in diuersitate morū ac medulla
rū suarū laborant. multi autē
ex eis prudentes. et ad scīm &
addīn efficiunt. Et tamē cū his
celestis iertīm impletur. cū ipsi iu
cia deserentes. et iurtutes aman
tes. in castitate ac in magnis la
boribus filiū meū imitant. mar-
tyrium ipsi in corpore suo scdm
possibilitatē suā gestantes. Vbi
autē infantes de hoīe nasci no
lo. ibi uirtutes uires seminis au
fero. ne inuentute matris coa
gulet. quēadmodū eia in te
fruchferas uires de nego. ubi
hoc iusto iudicio meo facere
uolo. S; q̄d miraris o homo. q̄d
maduterius & in cęteris huī
modi criminib; infantes nas
ci p mittō. Iudicium meū iustū
ē. Nā a lapsu ade in uenit in
humano semine iusticiā que
in eo ee debuit. ubi eā diabo
lus ingustu pomi fugauerat.

Idcirco misi filiū meū in mun
dū sine ullo peccato de uirgine
natū·quatinus in sanguine
suo cui nulla pollumo carnis
merat diabolo spolia illa que
in homine rapuerat auferret·

xviij· Nā nec homo conceptus in
peccato·nec angls uegnī carnis
nī habens·hominē in peccatis
iacentē & corporali grauedine
laborantē·a diabolica potestate
eripe potuit·ꝓter illū q̄ sine
peccato ueniens·et corpus mun
dū sine peccato habens·eū sua
passione liberauit·Vnde hoīes
quā uis in peccatis nati sint·
tamē eos ad supnū regnū colli
go·eū illud fidelit̄ quer̄t·Nec
eos enī meos nulla p̄uersitas
mihi abstrahere potest·iux sa
pientia testat̄ dicēs·Iustoꝝ aīe
in manu dī s̄·et n̄ tanget illos
tormentū mortis·Qd dr̄·Illoꝝ
qui uiā rectitudinis complec
tunt̄ aīe·eū deuoto affectu in
opib; supni auxiliatoris s̄·
ita ut ꝓpt̄ bona opa quib; ce
lū in altitudine iustitie ad
tendunt·n̄ confringat illas
cruciamentū ꝑditionis·q̄a
uer̄ lum̄ eas in timore & in
amore ꝑficit·S; postq̄ā ad
ea cua de loco amentatis ex
pulsi s̄·opus concipiendi et
pariendi filios in semetipsis
cognouer̄t·Et ita de inobedi
entia sua in mort̄·cadentes·

dulcedinē peccati concepert̄·eū
se posse peccare cognouer̄t·S; ip
si hoc modo recta cōstitutionē
meā in libidinē peccati uertun
t̄s·eū cōmotionē uenarū suarū
in dulcedine peccati·S; in amo
re filioꝝ scire deberent ea diabo
lica suggestione in lybidinē de
der̄t·quia innocentia gentiuꝫ
sue ꝑdentes; in peccatū miser̄t·
Vnde quo hoc n̄ sine diabolica
ꝑsuasione pactū ē·idcirco et
ide diabolus ad hoc opus iacu
la sua emisit ne sine suggestio
ne ipsi ꝑficiat̄ cū dixit·Oꝫta for
titudo in conceptu hominū ē·
et idcirco homo mis ē·Et uidens
q̄d homo participes penarū su
arū ee debuit q̄a ei consenserat·
uerū in semetipso dicebat·for
tissimo do omis uiq̄tatis con
trarie s̄·quo omnino inuict⁹
n̄ ē·Et hoc ide decepit in cor
suo maximū sigillū posuit·
ut delicet q̄d homo q̄ sibi spon
te consensisset ipsi auferri n̄
posset·Qua ꝓpt̄ secretū consiliū
in me fuit ut filiū meū ad redēpti
onē hoīū mitter̄·qui⁹ in celesti
ter̄m redderet̄ ho·Et huic consi
lio nulla uiq̄tas resistere po
tuit·eū filiꝰ mis in mundū ue
niens·omīs ad se collegit q̄ ip
sū audire & imitari peccata
deserendo uolebant·Ego enī
iustus et rectus sū nulla uo
lens iniq̄tatē·quā tu homo

amplecteris·cū tc malū posse
facere cognoscis·Nā lucifer·&
homo inimicio creatoris suę
mihi rebellare cōptauerūt·et sta
re nō potuerūt·de bono caden
tes·et malū eligentes·Lucifer·
autē totū malū cōprehendit·et
omne bonū excecat nec illud om
nino gustauit·ſ;in mortē cecī
dit·ada ū bonū gustauit cū
obedientiā suscepit·ſ;malum
concupiuit·et inconcupiscen
tia sua illud pfecit·cū inobedi
ens do existit·Qd qrē facti sit
nō ē aut o homo pquirendū·uel
quid autē constitutionē scti fu
erit·et qd nouissimū diē fiat
mortalis homo scire nō potest·
ſ;solus dūs hoc nouit·nisi qmū
illud electos suos dūs scire pmit
tit·S;& formicario illa quę se
cōmunē hominib;facit abho
minabilis coram me ē·qui abmi
cio masculū et feminā inhone
state &nō inturpitudine con
stitui·Vnde illi ypocrite q dī
cunt sibi licitū ee·secūm appe
titū peccoq; formicari cū quo
cūq;uoluerint indigni ocu
lis meis sūt·quō honorē et alti
tudinē ratio na...tinatis suę
despicientes·in pecora respici
unt et se illis similes faciunt·
Ve illis qsic uiuentes·in hac
turpitudine pseuerant·Nec xvi.
enā uolo·ut notitia sangui
nis in coniugio se cōmisceat·
ū ardor amoris inconsangui
nitate nō dū attenuatus ē·ne in
pudens amor in recordatione
consanguinitatis ibi oriat·ſ;
sanguis alienus pplī confluat·
qui iā nullā noticiā consangui
nitatis in se ardē semel quatenꝰ
humana disciplina inope illo
sit·Qua lac semel·t bis cocty· xvii.
saporē suū nō dū pdidit·cū
septima uel octaua uice coa
gulatū et cochū uires suas de
serens·iā delectabilē saporē nō
nisi innecessitate habeat·Et
ut notitia consanguinitatis
in ppria coniuge nescienda
est·ita enā et notitia consan
guinitatis ei de coniugis·mali
gna copula abhorrenda ē·nec
se homo ad huiꝰmodi copulā
nō coniungat·sicut et eccla
in doctoribꝫ suis phibet·
qui ipsā in multa sollicitudi
ne et honore stabilierūt·Qd xviii.
autē inuitū testamento homi
nes in consanguinitate san
guinis sui pcepto legis con
iunch s hoc ppt duriciā illoq;
facti ē·ut minimē pacē haberēt·
et ut tā firma carnis meę fœ·
ne ille utrib;diuise coniunctio
ni paganoq; se miscerent·fœdus meꝰ
dirūperet·usq;dū illud tēpꝰ ueniꝛ
in q filiꝰ mūs plenitudinē carnalis af
fectionis cōiunctionē ēsanguinitatis car
nalis copulę in alienū pplm cū pu
dore uerecundie induxit·Vnde qm
sponsa eiꝰdē filii mei uinculū amo
ris mei &rectā iustitiā in sco baptis

mo modo habet·ideo co ꝯa
huiꝰmodi consanguinitatis ꝯ
unctio nec a se longe sit·qa
fornicatio sine uerecundia &
sine cessatione libidinis·in
amplexib; uiri et mulieris·in
noto sanguine magis quā in
alieno adūpe opus accendere
tur· Ego cū opus istud p hunc
hominē edisserо·cui idē opꝰ
in hoīe ignotū ē·et q̄ sermonē
istū ñ ab homine s; a sci ecclia
di accepit·S; q̄d nec· Cū autē
masculus in forti etate ē·ita
q̄d ueneꝝ illiꝰ sanguine plene
s̄ tunc·fertilis in semine suo ē·
et tunc mulier ē in desponsa
tione legitime in stramonis
accipiat·que ꝯa in feruenti
etate existēs·semꝰ illiꝰ cui ue
recundia concipiat·et illi
plē in sua rectitudi
nis gignat· Sed uir·antē
annos fortitudinis sue semꝰ
suū in supfluitate libidinis
ñ eiciat·q̄a hoc p hanc peс
cati suggerentē diabolo ē·
si semꝰ suū in concupiscentia
libidinis seminare ūpiauc
rit·antē quā idē semꝰ rectā
coagulationē in feruente
calore habere possit· Et cū
uir·iā fortissimus in libidi
ne ē·tunc uires suas secūm
q̄d potest in eodē opе ñ ex
ercеat·quō si tunc ad diabo
li respicit opus diabolicū

opaī corpus ꝯa suū contēp
tibile faciens·q̄d omnino u
erū ē· Vir autē secūm q̄d cū
humana natura docet·in for
titudine caloris et in suco se
minis sui rectū mēr·in uxore
sua querat·et hoc cū huma
na disciplina obstudiū filioꝝ
faciat·S; nolo uir idē opus fi
at in diuisione mulieris·cū
ꝯa fluxū sanguinis sui pauꝰ
q̄d ē aptuo oculoꝝ mbroꝝ ucn
tris ipsius·ne fluxus sangui
nis eius susceptū semē matuꝝ
effundat·et ꝯa semē effusū p ea·
ū se mulier in dolore & incar
cere posita uidet portionē sci
licet doloris paruis sui tangeꝝ·
S; hoc ūpus doloris in mulie
re ñ abicio·quō illud cue de
di q̄ndo in gustu pomi pec
catū concepit·unde et muli
er in hoc eo dē ūpore in mag
na medicina mīe habenda ē·
ipsa ꝯa se cōtinente in ab
sconso disciplinе·ñ autē ꝯa·
ut ab incessu ūpli mei se con
tineat·S; fidei p missione ip
sū mofficio·humiliatus p sa
lute sua ingrediaī· Quia aū
sponsa filii mei semp integra
ē·ut aptus uulneribꝫ si inte
gritas mebroꝝ ipsi imachu
p cussionis diuisa ē ūplum
meū nisi cū timore magne
necessitatis ñ intrabit nec uio
lentꝰ·sicut in tegra membra

xviii·

xx·

abel qui tẽplũ dĩ fuit cam fr̃
fuus crudelit̃ fregit. Sed & xxvi.
mulier cũ plẽ pẽpit fractis
oculus m̃bris suis tẽplũ meũ
ñ nisi scdm legẽ pme sibi da
tã ingrediat̃ quamꝝ sca sa
crameta eusdẽ tẽpli mei ab
omĩ pollutione & dolore uiri
ac mulieris inuiolabilia sint
quia filiũ meũ purissima ur̃
go genuit que integra absq;
ullo uulnere peccati fuit. Lo
cus enĩ qui inhonorẽ eusdẽ
unigenti mei consecratus ẽ
integer ab omĩ corruptione
luoris ac uulneris eẽ debet
quo idẽ unigenitus m̃s ure
gritatẽ uirgineã partus in se
nouit. Vnde & mulier̃ que
integritatẽ uirginitatis sue
cũ uiro corrũpit in luuore
plage sue qua corrupta ẽ ab
ingressu tẽpli mei se comme
at usq; dũ plaga uulneris ip
sius sanet̃. scdm q̃d ecclastica
disciplina ipsi decadẽ causa
certissime demonstrat. Nã cũ
filio meo in ligno crucis spon
sa ipsi conuncta fuisset ipsa
usq; dũ idẽ filius m̃s discipu
lis suis p̃cepit ut uerũ tamen
euglũ p totũ mundũ disse
minarent in occulto se con
tinuit. ac deinde apte sur-
rexit & gl̃am sponsi sui
in regeneratione sp̃s et
aque pasa p̃dicauit. Sic &

uirgo que uirgo conungit̃ sa
ciat cũ púdica scilicet uerecun
dia usq; ad tẽpus illud q̃d sibi
ecclastica censura ꝓponit. in oc
cultu maneat. & hoc pacto. de
occultatione sua se transferens.
ad dilectionẽ sponsi sui apte
ꝓcedat. Nolo eũ ut p̃dictũ xxvii.
opus uiri ac mulieris exerceat̃.
cũ ia radix infamiꝫ in mulie
re posita ẽ ne coagulato eĩdẽ
infamiꝫ superfluo et ꝓdito semi
ne polluat̃ usq; ad purgationẽ
partus ipsius. cũ uerũ deinde
obamorẽ filioꝫ in rectitudine
et ñ impetulantia fieri ñ ꝓhibet̃.
Sic genus humanũ in peccati
one sua. inhonestate humane
discipline ꝓcedere posse ẽ. & et
ñ sicut loquacitas stultoꝝ ho
minũ clamat. qui dicunt sibi
licere ẽ libidinẽ suã scdm uo
luntatẽ suã exercere dicentes.
Quomodo possum̃ nos tã cru
delit̃ communere. Ho ho si respi
cis ad diabolũ. ipse te ad omĩe
malũ excitat et mortifero
ueneno suo te mũficit. si autẽ
ad dm uides. ipse tibi aduer
sariũ ꝓbet. & te castũ facit. Non
ne in ope tuo magis libidinẽ
quã castitatẽ appetis. Mulier
uiro subiecta ẽ in qua ipse
semen suũ seminet. sicut eũ
tã opat̃. ut fructũ afferat. Nũ
q̃d uir tã opat̃. ut spinas et tri
bulos gignat. Ne quaquã. sed ut dig
num fructũ det. ita etiam

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hoc studiū hominis in amore
filiox et ñ in peiu lamia lybidi
nis ēe debet. Ergo o hoīes plo
rate et ululate dñm urm quē
multociens in peccatis uris con
tēpnitis. cū in pessima formica
tione sem urm eiectis ibi ñ solū
fornicatores. s; etiā homicidę
existentes. qa speculū dī abici
tis. et libidinē uiam secm uo
luntatē uām complentes. Vnde
etiā diabolus in hoc ope semp
p̄sequit uos. sciens qd magis
concupiscentiā uām appeti
tis. quā gaudiū filiox inspici
atis. Audite g̃ qui imurrib;
ecclię estis. In formicatione uā
nolite me accusare. s; uos met
ipsos inspicite. quo cū addia
bolū curritis me contēpnentes.
Ulciscia opa facitis. et idō casti
ēe ñ uultis. ut seruus mis osee
de contaminato pplō loquit
dicens. Non dabunt cogi
tationes suas ut reuertantur
ad dm suū. qa spūs formicatio
nis in medio eox. et dm ñ cog
nouerūt. Qd dr. Maligni hoīes
dm ñ cognoscentes. faciē cor
dis sui abscondunt ñ damnes
etiā in diuersis obuolutionib;
machinationis suę. ut rede
ant ad ueritā claritatē. scilicet
udentes oculo ñ discernentes.
quę dī s. s; malū in semetipsis
nutriunt. qm afflatio peiu
lantis in mundicię p diabo
lucā suggestionē uirtē formā
dinē quā in se habere debent.
emollire ñ sinens eos. ut in dñm
bonā conscientiā suā ponant.
cū ipso ad unā felicitatis aīam.

xxviii. Sed nē ad amantissimas oues
meas quę me corde meo plan
tauę s me conuertā. sem castā
tatis existentes. Virginitas enī
p me plantata ē. quia etiā filiꝰ
ms de uirgine natus ē. Et ideō
uirginitas ē pulcherrimū po
mū. int oīa poma conuallīū.
et magna p̄sona in omīb; p̄so
nis. quę in palatio indeficien
tis regis s. quō ipsa p̄cepto le
gis subiugata ñ ē. quia unigē
nitū meū mundo edidit. Qua
ppt audiant qui filiū meū se
qui uolunt innocentia li
bere castitatis. et inseparatio
ne mereamis uidentis. quō
nobilior ē uirginitas ñ pollu
ta abinicio quā uiduitas op
pssa uirili ugo. cui tam uidui
tas post dolorē suū in quo
uirū suū p̄didit. uirginitatē
subsequit. filius enī ms plu
rimos dolores in corpore suo
p̄sulit. et mortē crucis subiit.
unde et uos in amore ipsius
multas angustias patiemi
ni. cū in uobis met ipsis supa
tis. qd in lybidine peccati ex
gustu pomi seminatū ē.
S; tam ibi abincendio li
bidinis effluentes frustulos

xxx. iii.

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STIFTUNG

unsemune uro sustinebimus· cū tā
casti cē ñ poterimus· q̄n fragilitas
humanę ueremur dimisse lauru
ri ostendat in uobis· in quo
labore passionē filii mei im
itari debemus· cū uobis metipsis
resistimus· ardentē flāmā libidi
nis uidelicet in uobis extin
guentes· et alia secularia quę
mundi s̄ scilicet ira· superbia· pe
tulantia· et cętera huiꝰmodi uicia
abicientes· atq; uictoriā ista
magno certamine p̄ficientes·
Vnde tunc p̄lia ista magno de
core et multo fructu clariora
sup̄ solē· et dulciora sup̄ amorē
aromatū coram me appareant·
quia unigenitū meū in dolo
rib; ei⁹ imitamini· cū ardentē
libidinē tā forti certamine
in uobis conculcastis· Et cū sic
p̄seueratis· multā gl̄iam ex
inde in celesti regno habebi
tis· O dulcissimi flores· angli
mei inuicto certamine admi
rantē q̄d mortē transistis· ita
q̄d inuenenosa luxu mundi
pollutā ñ estis· cū tm carnale
corpus habeatis· illud hoc m̄
conculcastis· q̄d gl̄osi in ē
sorte eo⁹ eritis· quo secūm si
militudinē ipso⁹ in pollutā
apparetis· Ido gaudete cū
sic p̄seueratis· q̄a tunc uobis
cū sū cū me fidelit̄ suscepistis·
et uocē meā cū gaudio cordis
uri adimpletis· quia dmo du
insecreta uisione uobis dilecti
mei ostendo dicens· Ecce sto
ad ostiū et pulso· Si quis audie
rit uocē meā· et aperuerit ad illū
et cenabo cū illo· et ipse mecū·
q̄d dr· Ihesus qui me saluatorē
uerū fidelit̄ amatis· uidete q̄a
uobis succurrere uolens· ex
pecto ad tabernaculū cordis
uri· considerans q̄d conscientia
ura· in seruitio cordis sui ha
beat· et cū suffragatu recordatio
nis mee uere sp̄m uerū ad aptio
nē susceptionis bone uoluntā
tis concutio· Q̄d si tunc fidele
cor· p̄cepit somnū timoris mei·
coniungo me adipsū amplec
tens cū· indeficienterq; cibū ca
piens cū illo· cū ipse suauē gu
stū in bonis opib; semetipsū
mihi p̄bet· ita q̄d et ipse cibū
uite in memetipso habebit·
quo illud amat· q̄d iustitiā
desideranti· unā affert·

Sed ut uides acta et cuia de
paradyso expulsis· lucidissi
mus splendor· eande regionē
circūdedit· quo illis obuians
gressionē suā locū amenita
tis exeuntib; potencia diuine
maiestatis omnē maculā uite
contagionis abeode loco se
gregans· cū ita sua claritate
munuit· ne amodo ulla con
trarietate tangeret· ostendens
etiā· q̄d transgressio illa· que
meo facta fuerat· q̄ndoq; cle

xxv.

s:xxvi.

memor' et mid'or' abolenda

xxvii. cet. Et ita oña delenta mun
di quę prius in magna que
te constituerant in maximā in
quietudinē uersa horribiles
tores ostenderēt. qa creatura
illa quę ad seruitutē homi
nis creata fuerat. nec ullā ad.
uersitatē inse sensérat homi
nē inobedientiā arripiente.
ita q̄d dō inobediens fuit. et
ipsa tranquillitatē suā reli
quit et inquietudinē susce
pit maximas & plurimas ē
tra rectatēs hominib; inferens.
qm homo seipsū ad deteriora
inclinauerat. ut pillā coerceā.
Quid ē hoc. Quia homo in lo
co deliciarū dō rebellis exti.
idcirco et creatura illa quę
homini inseruiuo subiecta
fuit. se homini opposuit.

xxviii. Sed paradisus ē locus ame
nitatis qui floret in uiri
ditate florū et herbarū. &
delicus omniū aromatū. re
pletus optimis odoribus dota
tusq; in gaudio beatarū am
marū dans fortissimū sucū
ar de tre qa fortissimā um
bre tribuit uelut anima cor
pori uires p̄bet. quō ipsa pa
radisus in umbra et in pdmo
ne peccatrix ñ obscuratur.

xxviii. Qua ppt audite. et intelli
gite me. uos qui in cor di
bus uris dicitis. Quid s. et
cur s hec. O cur tā stulta estis in
cordib; uris. uos qui adimagi
nē et similitudinē di facti estis.
Quomodo tā magna glā et
tantus honor qui uobis datus
ē. posset ee sine pbatione. q si
nichil. et manis causa. Aurū
in igne debet pbari. et p̄ciosi
lapides in purgatione poliri.
et huiusmodi oña in omib; p
quiri. Vnde o stulta homines.
hoc q̄d adimaginē et simili
tudinē di factū ē. quomodo
sine pbatione posset subsiste
re. Nā homo sup omnē creatu
rā examinandus ē. et ideo p om
nē creaturā expurgandus ē.
Quomodo. Spe p̄ spm̄ p bandy
ē. caro p carnē tra p aquā. ig
nis p frigus. pugna p repcus
sionē. bonū p malū. pulchri
tudo p deforme. pauptas p
diuitias. dulcedo p amaritu
dinē. fortitas p infirmitatē
longū p breue. durū p molle.
altitudo p profunditatē. lux p
tenebras. uita p mortē. para
dysus p penas. celeste regnū
p gehennā. tra pena cū tra mis.
celestia cū celestib;. Sic homo
in omni creatura probatus ē.
ut deliceet in paradyso uita
et in inferno. posita colloca
tus in celū. Apte enī uideris
pauca de mirabilib; que ante
oculos uros abscondita s.
Et cur deridens ea. que recta.

plana· et iusta· a bona· in omīb;
bonus cor̄a dō s· Quare his in
dignāmini· Dś iustus ē· ſ; genus
hominū in p̄uaricatione p̄cep
torū dī inuſtū ē cū ſapiemus
do ee commendit· Nunc dic mihi
o homo· Quid putas te fuiſſe· cū
nō dū eras mamma et corpore·
Tu uero neſcis· quomodo creatꝰ
ſis· S; nunc o homo celū et t̄ram
uis p̄ſeruari· et iuſticiā cox in
conſtitutione dī diiudicare·
et ſūma dinoſcere· cū nec in ſi
ma ualeas examinare· q̄a neſcis
q̄m uuas ī corpe t q̄m exuaris a
corpe· q̄ te in primo homine
creauit· ille hec oīa p̄uidit·
S; idē mitiſſimꝰ pat̄ miſit um
genitū ſuū mori pp̄lō· ut ho
minē de diabolica poteſtate
liberaret· Et ſic homo libe
ratus fulget in dō· et dś in ho
mine· conſortiū homo habēs
in dō· fulgeat orē ſcilicet cla
ritatē· quā p̄ius haberet
poſſidens in celo· Q̄d nō fuiſ
ſet ſi idē filius dī carnē nō in
duiſſet· quō ſi homo in para
dyſo p̄manſiſſet filiꝰ dī in
cruce paſſus nō fuiſſet· Sed
cū homo p̄callidū ſerpentē
deceptus ē· ita q̄d unigenitū ſi
um inuiolatiſſima uirgine
incarnari conſtituit· et ſic
poſt ruinā hominis eleuatē
s̄ plurimę uirtutes in celo
fulgentes· uelut ē humilitas re
gina uirtutū· quę in uirgineo
partu floruit· et ut eā ceteę
uirtutes quę electos dī adcele
ſtia p̄ducunt· Nā cū ager mul-
to labore colit̄ multū fructū
p̄fert· ſicut in humano gene
re oſtenſū ē· quia poſt ruinā
hominis· plurime uirtutes ad
ſubleuationē ei ſurrexerunt·
Sed o homines uos grauat cor
porali grauedine· nō uidetis il
lā magnā gl̄am quę uobis
ſine mācula et ſine ulla indig
natione in plena iuſticia dī
p̄parata ē· ita q̄d nullus ea
deicere poteſt· Priuſ enī q̄m
fabrica mundi conſtituta
fuiſſet· hec oīa dś inuenta
iuſticia p̄uidit· Vnde o ho
mo ſimilitudinē hanc con
ſidera· Dīns qui ſine tedio
in multo ſtudio ortū facere
uult· primitus a p̄uī loci
ei de horto ponit· ac deinde
locū cuiq; plantationis diſ
ponens· fructū bonarū ar
borū atq; utilitatē· ſaporē
odorē et bonā famā diuerſo
aromatū in eo conſiderat· Et
ſic idē dīns magnus philoſo
phus· et profundus artifex· ex
iſtens· q̄ua q; plantationē ſuā
in eo diſponit· ut bene diſ
cerni in utilitate ſua poſſit·
ac deinde excogitat· q̄m a
munitionē ei circūdet· ut

nullus inimicoꝝ suoꝝ plantatio
nes ei dissipare ualeat. Tunc
etiã pigmentarios suos constitu
it. qui eundẽ hortũ rigare sci
ant. et qui fructũ ei colligant.
et exinde diuersa pigmenta faci
ant. Qua ꝓpt̃ o homo diligen
ter considera qua si dns ille
pulcer. q̃d hortus suus nullũ
fructũ nec ullã uoluptatẽ ꝓferẽs &
struendus ẽ. quare tunc tam
philosophus. et tam artifex
hortũ illũ uitã magno studio.
et uitã magnus laboribꝫ. facit
plantat rigat et munit. Au
di q̃ et intelligе. Dns qui sol
iustitie ẽ. splendorẽ suũ sup
lunã q̃d ꝑuaricatio hominis ẽ
misit et splendor ille in mul
ta claritate resplendut. quo
lunã illud ualde fedũ fuit.
Sol enĩ in sua claritate efful
sit. et lunã in sua feditate pu
tuit. unde sol maiori dilecti
one audientib; amplectebat.
quã si lunã et opposuũ n̄ eet.
Sed sicut lunã ad similitudi
nẽ solis fedũ ẽ. sic etiã trans
gressio hominis ad iustitiã
dei iniqua ẽ. unde iustitia
quia pulchra ẽ diligenda ẽ.
et iniqtas quo foeda ẽ abicien
da ẽ. In hanc feditatẽ cecidit
ouis huĩ dñi. qui tale ortũ
plantauerat. S; ouis hoc eidẽ
dño n̄ ꝓpt̃ ignauiã ei. s; ꝑ con
sensũ eidẽ ouis abalta ẽ. quã
ꝓstea idẽ dns immulto studio
et iustitia requisiuit. Qua ꝓpt̃
tunc chorus angloꝝ in maxi
mo honore illuminatus ẽ. cũ
hominẽ angli in cẽlo uiderent.
Quid ẽ hoc. cũ innocens agn̄
in cruce suspensus ẽ. et omnia
tremuerit. quia nobilissimi filii
uirginis de manib; homicida
rũ corporaliter occisus ẽ. in cui
morte ꝑdita ouis ad pascua
uite reportata ẽ. Nã antiquus
ꝑsecutor. ꝑ quã uidit. q̃d ouẽ
una ꝓpt̃ sanguinẽ innocentis
agni quẽ idẽ agnus in remis
sionẽ peccatoꝝ hominũ effu
derat dimittere debuit. tunc
primũ cognouit. q̃ agnus il
le eet. quo prius scire n̄ potu
it. quomodo idẽ celestis pa
nis sine uirili semine et sine
ulla concupiscentia peccati
de uirgine in obumbratione
spũ sci incarnatus ẽ. Idẽ enĩ
ꝑsecutor. inimicio creationis
siue inflatu superbie et excit se
in mortẽ se ipsũ deiciens. et
hominẽ de gla paradysi ex
pellens. cui ds in potestate
sua resistere nolunt. s; eũ in
humilitate ꝑ filiũ suũ supa
uit. et quia lucifer. iustitiã
dei subsannauit. iusto iudi
cio dei incarnationẽ unigen
iti dei scire n̄ potuit. Nam
in hoc abscondito consilio.
ꝑdita ouis ad unã reporta

ta ē. Unde o rebelles homines
cur tamā duriciā uobis assu
mitis. Ds̄ hominē deserere no
luit. s; filiū suū ad saluationē
ei⁹ misit. quō sic ds̄ caput sup
bię in antiquo serpente contri
uit. Inceptione cū hoīs de
morte infernus claustrū suū
aperuit. Satana clamante heu
heu quis me adiuuabit. Sed
eōmis diabolica turba in
fremitu magno decerpsit se
admirans quę tanta potestas
eēt. cui ipsa cū principe suo
resistere nō posset. cū sibi fide
les animas auferri uideret. Sic
homo sup celos elevatus ē qa
ds̄ in homine et homo in dō p
filiū dī apparuit. Unde cnā dn̄s
qui ouē istā pdiderat. s; eā tā
glōse ad suā reduxerat. pcio
sā margaritā in similitudinē
ei⁹ de ouis habuit que ipsi de
cidens in multas sordes corruit.
Sed ipse eā ita in sorde iacere
nō pmittens eā clementer extra
xit. ac eā de sorde illa in
qua iacuerat ita expurgauit.
ut aurū in fornace expurgat.
atq; illā in pristinū honorem
maiori glā reposuit. Nā ds̄
hominē creauit s; ipse diabo
lica psuasione in mortē corru
it. de qua eū filiꝰ dī p sanguinē
suū eripuit. et eū ęq; ad ce
lestē glām glōsę pduxit.

carnatę. Humilitas cū filiū dī
de uirgine nasci fecit. ubi ipsa
humilitas nec manuarīs amplex
ibus. nec in pulcritudine car
nis. nec iduitus ūtenis. nec in
auris ornamūs. nec insertī
bus honoribꝫ; inuenta ē. s; filiꝰ
dī in p̄sepio iacuit qa matī ei⁹
paupcula fuit. S; & humilitas
semp genit ploratū et oīa cri
mina interimit. qd opus ipsi⁹
ē. Unde quisq; s diabolū uult
expugnare se muniat et ar
met cū humilitate. quō lucī
fer eā ualde fugit. et uelut co
luber se corā ea incauernā ab
scondit. quia ubi ipsa illū ap
p̄henderit eū quasi uulissimū
filiū eius frangit. Carnas
quoq; unigenitū dī in sinu
patris in cęlo tulit et eū in
uterū matris intra posuit. qm
ipsa nec peccatores. nec publi
canos spnit s; oīs saluari ē
tendit. Qua ppt̄ & fontē lacri
marū ab oculis fidelium sepius
educens. duriciā cordis emol
lit. In hoc humilitas et carnas
clariores ceteris uirtutib; s. qm
humilitas et carnas simul: ue
luti anima & corpus. quę for
tiores uires ceteris uirtutib; animę
et membris corporis habent.
Quomodo. Humilitas ē quasi
anima. & carnas uelut corp⁹.
nec ab inuicē separari possunt.

Quomodo. In humilitate &c. xxx. iij. s; simul. opant. sicut nec aīa

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nec corpus disiungi ualent· ſ; ſibi coopant quādiu homo in corpore uiuit· Et sicut animę et corpori diuersa m̄bra cor poris ſcdm uires suas subiecta ſ·nta cuā humilitatu et carnta tu ccte uirtutes ſcdm iustitiā suā coopant· Et ido o homines ad glam di et ꝑsalute usa hu militatē et carnalitatē sectamin· cū quib; armati diabolicas in sidias n̄ tam ebrius ſ; indeficienter unā possidebitis· Vnde quecūq; scientiā inspū sco et pennas in fide habent· iste admonuit nē meā n̄ transcendat· ſ; cā in gustu animę sue amplecten do ꝓcipiat· Tertia uisio ꝓme pantis.

POST HEC vidi maximū instrumentū rotundū et umbro sū scdm similitu dinē oui supius artu et in medio amplum· ac infernus constrictū· in cuius exteriori parte per cumi lucidus ignis fuit quasi pellē umbrosā sub se habens· Et in igne isto erat globus rutilantis ignis tantusq; magnitudinis· qd idē instrumentū totū ab eo illu straba· sup se tres faculas sur sū ordinatas positas habens· quę suo igne eundē globū ne laberet· continebant· Et ide globus se aliquando sursū ele uauit· et plurimus ignis et oc cupauit· ita qd exinde flāmas su as longius ꝓduxit· ac se aliqn do deorsū inclinauit· multūq; frigus et obuiā uenit· ita qd & ex hoc flamas suas eicius sub duxit· S; de igne illo qui ide instrumentū circūdederat fla uis quida cū suis turbinib; ex iebat· et de pelle illa quę sub eo fuit aliuſ flamis cū turbinib; suis ebulliebat· q̄ se ipso in strumento hac et illac diffunde bant· In eade quoq; pelle q̄da tenebrosius ignis tamen horro ris erat q̄d eū intrare n̄ potu rā· qui totā pellē illā sua fortu tudine concutiebat· plenus sonituū tēpestatū· et acutissi morū lapidū maiox et minox· Quidū sonituū suū elevaret il le lucidus ignis et uentu et aer cōmouebant· ita q̄d fulgura sonituū ipsū ꝓcedebāt· q̄a ignis ille primū cōmotionē eiusde sonitus in se sentiebat· S; sub eade pelle purissimus ether erat sub se nullā pellē habens· in quo etiā quenda globum candentis ignis plurimeq; magnitudinis uidebā sup se duas faculas sursū clare posi tas habentē ipsūq; globū ne modū cursus sui excederet· continentes· Et in eode ethe

re multe et clare spere ubiq; po
ste fuerant. in quas ide globus
merdin se aliquantulu euacu
auit clarmate sua emisit. et ita
sub pfatu rubeu igneu globu
recurrens. et abeo flamas suas
restaurans. nerui illas in casde
speras efflauit. S; et ab ipso ethe
re quida flatus cu suis turbi
nib; se effundebat. qui se inpfa
tu instrumentu ubiq; dilata
bat. Sub eode aute ethere aq
su aere undeba alba pelle sub se
habente. q se hac et illac diffun
dens. omi instrumto illi humo
re dedit. Quadu se undiq; repen
te congregaret. repentina plu
uia multo fragore emisit. et
du se leniter diffudit blanda plu
uia lenimotu dedit. S; et ecce
quida flatus cu turbinib; suis
exiens. pdictu instrumentu
se ubiq; diffudit. Et in medio
istoz elemtoz quida arenosus
globus plurime magnitudinis
erat. que eade elemta ita cir
cudederant q nec hac nec
illac labi poterat. S; du undiq
eade elemta cu pdictis flatib;
se inuice concuterent. eande
globu sua formidine aliqn
tulu mouere faciebant. Et u
du inter aquilone et orieme
uelut maximu mote. qui
uersus aquilone multas rene
bras. et uersus orieme multa
luce habebat ita tam q; d
nec lux illa ad tenebras nec te
nebre ille ad ipsa luce pinge
re potuert. Audiuiq; terru uoce
de celo dicente. m. Dns qui
oia sua uoluntate condidit
ea ad cognitionem et ad honore
nominis sui creauit. in solu au
ea. que uisibilia et teporalia s
unpsis ostendens. s; etia illa que
uuisibilia et etna s ineis ma
nifestans. q d ex uisio hec qua
cernis demonstrat. Na hoc
maximu instrumentu q d ui
des rotundu et umbrosu secdm
similitudine ou supius artu.
et in medio amplum. ac inferi
constrictu. declarat fidelit er
omipotem dm in manifestare sua
in comprehensibile. et in myste
ris suis inestimabile. et spe omniu
fideliu existente. cu primitus
homines rudes et simplices in
actib; suis essent. s; postea inuen
ac in nouo testamto se dilatan
tes. tande circa fine mundi
multas erumnas mangustius
suis passuri sunt. Sn cui exteri
ori parte peripheria lucidus
ignis e. quasi pelle umbrosu
sub se habens. qui designat.
q d ds illos q extra ueram fide
s ubiq; pigne ultionis suis ex
urens. hos qui intra fide catho
lica manent. ubiq; pigne con
solationis suis purificat. ita
diabolice puersitatis tenebro
sitate pterment. sicut et fac

tū ē cū diabolus q̄ndo a dō erra
tus ē dō se opponere uolens in
pdmonē de uictus corruit. Et
migne isto glob⁹ ruulamus ig
nis tamtq; magnitudinis q̄d
idē instrumentū totū abeo illu
strat q̄ splendorē claritatis sue
ostendit qn̄do patre ē ineffa
bilis unigenit⁹ ei sol iustice ful
gore ardentis carnatus habens
tamtq; glē existens q̄d omīs ere
atura claritate lucis ei illumi
nat sup se tres faculas sursum
ordinate positas habens que
suo igne eundē globū nelabat
comunit. uidelicet sua admi
nistratione demonstrantes q̄d
idē filī dī decelo adterras descen
dens anglis in celestib⁹ relictis
hominib⁹ erā q̄ manuma et
corpore subsistunt celestia
manifestauit qui sue clarita
tis obsequio ipsū glificantes om
nē nocuū errorē abiciunt cū
eū uerū dī filiū de uera uirgi
ne incarnatū magnificant
ubi ipsis eū angls p̄nunciauit
et ubi homo inanima et cor
pore inuenis eū fidei gaudio
suscepit. Qua p̄p̄ et idē
glob⁹ se aliq̄ando sursū de
uiat plurimusq; ignis ei occur
rit ita q̄d eeinde flamas suas
longius p̄ducit significans
quia ubi tēpus illud uenit q̄d
unigenitus dī p̄destinone
et subleuatione humani ge
neris p uoluntatē patris incarnari
debuit. spūs

sēs. in uirtute patris supna
mysteria in beata uirgine mi
rabilit̄ operatus ē ita q̄d eodē fi
lio dī inuirginali pudicicia
fecunda uirginitate. mirificū
fulgorē dante uirginitas glo
sa effecta ē quo inobili uirgi
ne exoptabilis incarnato de
monstrata ē. Et ita erā se
aliq̄ndo deorsū inclinat. mul
tumq; frigus ei obuiā uenit.
ita q̄d æ exhoc flamas suas ei
cuius subducit declarans. quo
idē unigenitus dī ex uirgine
natus. et ita ad pauptatē ho
minū clementit inclinatus plu
rimis miseris ipsi occurrentib⁹
multas corporales angustias
sustinens. cū se mundo corpo
raliter ostenderat. de mundo
transiens ad patrē redit. dis
cipulis erā ipsius astantibus
uelut scriptū ē. Videntib⁹
illis eleuatus ē. et nubes susce
pit eū aboculis eox. Q̄d dr̄. filii
is eccl̄e numerio, scientia cor
dis sui filiū dī susceptientib⁹ sci
tas corporis ei eleuata ē in po
tencia diuinitatis ipsius. et
in mystico miraculo nubes
secreti misterii suscepit eū mor
talib⁹ oculis tegens ipsū. fla
bisq; uentox ipsi famulatū. ex
hibentib⁹. Sic et ut undes de
igne illo qui idē instrumtū
circūdederat flamis quidā eū
suis turbinib⁹ exiebant. qui

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ostendit p̄tendens· quō ab omni
potentie dō totū mundū sua
potestate cōplentē· uera diffa
mato cū iustis sermonib; pce
dit· ubi ipse unus et uerus dns
hominib; inuentate demon
stratus ē· ℭt de pelle illa que· yr·
sub eo ē aliꝰ flatus cū turbinib;
suis ebullit· q̄a ea ē de diabolica
rabie que dīm nō ignorans tamen
pessima infamia· cū nequissimis
locutionib; exit· qui se ipso
instrumento hac et illac· diffun
dunt· quō in seculo diuersis mo
dis utiles et inutiles rumores
uiter· pplōs̄ sedulant· ℑn ea ·x·
de quoq; pelle quidā tenebro
sus ignis· tanti horroris ē q̄d
eū intueri nō potes· q̄ declarat
q̄d in pessimis et inequissimis
insidus antiqui pditoris· ueri
mū homicidiū tanti feruoris
erūpit· q̄d infamiā illi⁹ humani
intellectus discernere nō ualet·
qui tota pelle illa sua fortitu
dine concutit quō homicidiū
oīs diabolicas malignitates
suo horrore cōplectitur· cū in
primogenitas abiit odiū ebul
liens· fricidiū ppetrauit· plen⁹
sonituū tēpestatū· et acutissi
mos lapidū maios et minos q̄a
homicidiū plenū ē auaricia·
et ebrietatib; atq; acutissimis
duricies· que sine media ba
chant tā in magnis homicidi
is· quā in minoribus; uicis· Qui

dū sonituū suū eleuat· ille luci
dus ignis· et uerum et act⁹ cōmo
uent· quō dū homicidiū in aua
ricia effusionis sanguinis str
det· supna iudicia et expiran
tes uolantiū rumoꝝ· et expan
siones fluentiū dispositionū
in multitudine recti iudicii suscitant·
ita q̄d fulgura sonituū ipsū p̄ue
nunt· q̄a ignis ille primū cō
motionē eiusdē sonitus in se
sentit q̄a dignitas ostensionis
diuini exanimis idē nefas p̄
cellendo opprimit· cū eā di
uina maiestas· amit quā fremi
tus eiusdē infamie publice ma
nifestet uidentē oculo cui oīa
nuda s̄ et p̄udeat· ℑed sub ·xi·
eadē pelle purissimus ether· ē·
sub se nullā pellē habens· quō
sub insidus antiqui pditoris
serenissima fides lucet unqua
nulla incertitudo infidelita
tis latet a semet ipsa nō funda
ta· ſ; ad ex̄pim suspensa· in quo
eā quendā globū· cadentis
ignis· plurimeq; magnitudi
nis undes· qui uehementer· desig
nat inuictā ecclīam in fide
candore innocentis clarita
tis· plurimiq; honoris ut ubi
demonstratē p̄tendentē· et sup
se duas faculas sursū clare po
sitas habentē· ipsūq; globū
ne modū cursus sui excedat
communes· que sua significa
tione s̄ ostendentes· quod

ecclīam. de supnīs edita duo
testamīta. uidelicet ueteris et
noue auctoritatis. additiua
p̄cepta celestiū secretoꝝ tabuꝝ.
scilicet cū ipsa tandē ecclīam
ne maritetur dūcrsoꝝ morī
se p̄paret extendat comu
nem. quia et ueteris et noua te
stificatio beatitudinē supne
hereditatis ipsi ostendunt.

xii. Qua ꝓpt̄ eā in eo dē ethere
multe et clare spēre ubiq;
posite ī quasi idē glob; mē
du se aliq̄mulū euacuans.
claritatē suā emittit. quo in
purissimi fidī plurima ēsplen
dida opa pietatis ubiq; appa
rent in quib; eadē ecclīa con
gruo tempore conculcatio
nē uerboꝝ aliq̄mulū sustinēs.
decorē miraculoꝝ suoꝝ uadit
cū ipsa uelut in merore iacēs.
tām clarissimē opū ꝓfectis
hominib; palios admirātes et
ita sub p̄fatū rubeū igneūq;
globū recurrens et abeo fla
mas suas restaurans. nec tū il
las in eas dē speras efflat quo
ipsa in commotione posita. sub
p̄cessionē unigenti ꝓpitis et
abeo sufferentias diuine con
fortationis accipiens. ita eā
amorē supnoꝝ inbeatus opib;
xiii declarat. Unde et ab ipso
ethere q̄dā flatus cū sint
turbinib; se effundit. qui se
in p̄fatū instrumentū ubiq;

dilatat. quia abunitate fidī
fortissima fama cū ueris et
p̄fectis assertionib; mauxiliū
hominū emanans. fines tocius
orbis multa celeritate ꝓpe
xiiii bat. Sub eode autē ethere
aquoſū aerē uides albā pellē
sub se habentē. qui se hac et
illac diffundens. omē instrumē
to illi humorē dat. quo sub
fide que tā manifeste patrib;
innouis ecclīa ad salutē creden
tiū ut ueritissime manifestatū
innocentia beatissime sta
bilitatis fundatus. se diuina
inspiratione ubiq; dilatans.
uniuerso orbi irrigatione
salutis inredentib; annulit.
Quidā se mōdū repente con
gregat repentinā pluuiam.
multo fragore emittit. et dū
se lenit diffundit blandā plu
uiā lenimotu. dat. qa dū bap
tisimus aliq̄ndo passeroꝝ
ueritatis in uidoeitate p̄dica
tionis. et ꝓfundit. mūs
ipsoꝝ coadunatē. celeri copia
uerboꝝ inmundatione p̄dica
tionis eoꝝ admonitus hominib;
manifestatē. inmōdū eā idē bap
tisimus suauitate ꝓpanito ipsis
p̄dicatoribus dilatatus. suaui
irrigatione cū discretionis
admorio pplis auditis. ppa
ratur. xv. Qua ꝓpt̄ et ecce
quidā flatus cū turbi

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nub; sius exiens: p̄ p̄dictū instru
mentū se ubiq; diffundit: quo
abmundatione baptismatis
salutē credentib; afferemus: ue
rissima fama cū uerbis fortissi
morū sermonū egrediens: omnē
mundū manifestatione beatitu
dinis suę pfudit: ut iā impplis
infidelitatē deserentib; et fidē
catholicā appetentib; apte de
clarat.

Et in medio istorū ℣ xvi.
eleūtoꝝ quidā arenosus ℣
glob; plurimę magnitudinis ℣
est: quę p̄fata elemēta ita circū ℣
dant: q̄d nec hac nec illac labi ℣
possit: qui manifeste ostendit
infortunidine creaturarū di-
hominē; pfundę considerato
nis de limo ut tę mirabili modo.
multę; glę; factū degenē: et ut
tute earundē creaturarū ita ob
uolutū: q̄d abeis nullomodo se
parari ualeat: quia elemēta mun
di adseruitutē hominis creata.
ipsi famulatui exhibent: dū ho
uelut in medio eoꝝ sedens: ipsis
diuina dispositione p̄sidet: ut
etiā pme inspiratus dauid diē.

Gl̄a et honore coronasti eū: ℣ xvii.
& constituisti eū sup opa ma
nuū tuarū. Q̄d dr: O tu dns qui
oīa mirabiliter fecisti: aurea
et purpurea corona intellect?
& dignissimo in dumtō uisibi
lis specici coronasti hominē:
ita ponens eū quasi principē
sup altitudinē pfectoꝝ opū
tuoꝝ quę intuearis: tuis iustis et
bene dispositis. Tu eni p̄alius cre
aturis tuis: magnas et admiran
das dignitates hominū iunxisti.

Sed ut uides dū itidē eade ℣ xviii.
elemēta cū p̄dictis flatib; se ℣
inuicē concutiunt: eundē glo ℣
bū sua fortitudine aliq̄tulum ℣
mouere faciunt: quia dū con ℣
gruo tēpore creature dī cū fa
ma miraculoꝝ ipsius creatoris
se inuicē cōplectunt: ita q̄d mi
raculū miraculo magno tem
pore uerboꝝ innectit: homo
eorundē miraculoꝝ magnitu
dine pculsus: concussionē men
tis et corporis sui sentit: dū in
eisdē mirabilib; admonitus: in
beeillitatē fragilitatis suę con
sideratꝰ.

Et unde ℣ xix.
nē & orientē uelut maximū ℣
montē: qui uersus aquilonē ℣
multas tenebras: et uersus orien ℣
tē multā lucē habet: quō ita ℣
diabolicā impietatē & diuinā
bonitatē magnus casus homi
nis apparet: p pessimā decepti o
nē in tēpb; is multas miserias
damnationis: et p exoptabilis
salutē melioris plurimā felici
tatē redemptionis tenens: ita ta
men q̄d nec lux illa ad tene
bras: nec tenebre ille ad ipsam
lucē pungere possunt: quia
opa lucis opib; tenebrarū se
ñ miscerunt: nec opa tenebra
rū ad opa lucis ascendunt.

quā⁹ diabolus ea multo ciens
p malos homines obfuscare la
borat· uelut ē impagamis· hereti
cis· et impseudo ꝓphis· et quos ista
sua fallaci deceptione post se ⁊here
conant· Quomodo· Quia uolun⁹
ea scire que ipsis scienda nō s· il
lū imitantes· qui se altissimo si
mile ee anhelauit· Et quō illū
subsecutē· et ipse mendaciū q̄si
ueritatē eis secūm uolumtatē ip
sorū demonstrat· Vnde mecū nō
s· nec ego cū illis· quia uias meas
nō ambulant· s; extrancas semitas
amant· inquirentes q̄d eis stul
ta creatura de futuris causis fal
laciter ostendat· et hoc ita uo
lunt habere· secūm q̄d illud p
uerse exquirūt me contēpnen
tes et scōs meos abicientes· qui
sincero corde me diligunt·

xvi· Sed isti homines qui puersa
arte tā ꝓtinacit̄ me ꝓtam
nia q̄d creaturā illā que ad ser
uitutē ipsoꝝ facta ē seruare
scisse tamen⁹ ut rē illā quā ipsi
scire uolunt eis secūm uolunta
tē ipsoꝝ ostendat· numq̄d
possunt inscrutatione sue ar
tis elongare t adbreuiare tē
pus· q̄d eis a creatore suo con
stitutū ē nosse· Certe hoc· nec xv·i·
diē nec horā facere ꝓualent·
Aut nūquid possunt p̄destin
natione dī post ponere· Nul
lomodo· Omisert· nonne p
mitto creaturas uobis passio
nes usitatū demonstrare·
que signa tunc ido habent·
quia me dimittentes uelut ser
uus facultatē dñi sui· aliqn
do ostendit et ut bos et asin⁹
ac cetera animalia uoluntatē
dñoꝝ suoꝝ manifestant· cū ea
inseruitute sua fidelit̄ adim
plent· Stultu· cū me obliuiom
tradunt· nec ad me respicien
tes· nec me adorantes· s; aspici
entes ad subiectā uobis creatu
rā· q̄d ipsa portentet et ostēn
dat· tunc ꝓtinacit̄ me abicitis·
infirmā creaturā p creatore
uō colentes· Quā ꝓpt̄ et ego
dico· O homo· cur creaturā illā
colis que te nec consolari nec
tibi auxiliari potest et que
tibi nullā ꝓsperitatē infelicita
te confert· uelut mathematī
ci mortis instructores· et de in
credulitate paganoꝝ sequaces
eoꝝ affirmare solent· ita q̄d
dicunt stellas uobis hominib;
uitā tribuere· et omīs actus
uros disponere· O misert· q̄s
stellas fecit· S; stelle inuidu ex
pmissione mea· cū quib; dā
signis hominib; declaratē·
ut ena filius mis meu glio
ostendit ubi diē· Erunt
signa in sole· et luna et stel
lis· Q̄d dr· In lumine horū
luminū hominib; ministrat·
et circuitu ipsoꝝ tempora
tēporū ostendunt· Vnde

etiã in nouissimis tẽporib; laĩmabilia et piculosa tẽpo ra pmissione mea in ipsis de monstrauit. ita q̃d radius solis et splendor lune et cla ritas stellarũ aliq̃ndo sub trahit. ut corda hominũ ex hoc concutiant. Sic et pstel lam. ex uoluntate mea in car nario filii mei ostensa ẽ. Homo autẽ ppriã stella que uitã ipsi disponat. ñ habet uelut stulti et errans ppls asserere conat. s; oĩs stelle oĩi pplo cũi seru tute sue cõmunes s. S; q̃d stel la illa ceteris stellis pclarior ef fulsit. hoc ẽ. q̃d unigenitus mis pr̃ alius hominib; uirginali par tu sine peccato natus ẽ. ipsa nullũ subleuamẽ eide filio ẽfe rens. nisi solũ incarnationẽ et pplo fidelit̃ de nutriens. quo oĩs stelle et creature me tamẽs. iussionẽ mea tamũ pficiunt nec ulluis rei nulla creatura noticiã ullã habent. Nã cũ m placuerit. creature iussionem meã ostendunt. uelut cũ faber nũmũ faciens. in eo congruen tẽ formã celat. sic q̃d idẽ nũm formã sibi imposita declarat. sed de hoc nullã potestatẽ ha bens. ñ nouit q̃ndo faber aliã formã sibi imponere uelit. quo nec longũ nec breue tẽpus suc forme discernit. Q̃d ẽ hoc. O ho. si lapis coram te iaceret. in quo aliqua signa passionũ tuarũ diligent̃ cũ intuens de notaret. tunc secũm fallacẽ estimationẽ tuã. aut de infelicitate tua con tristaris. aut de pspitate tua gaudens in deceptione dicere s. Ach moriar. ud. wach uitã. aut heu q̃nta infelicitas seu wach quanta pspitas mea ẽ. et q̃d tẽ lapis ille tibi conferret. Num quicquã tibi auferret et daret. S; nec t ob ẽ nec pdẽ ualeret. Sic etiã nec stelle nec ignis. nec auis nec alia huiusmodi creatu ra. insignis seruationis tue quicquã te ledere. uel nocere possunt. Q̃d si increaturã hanc que ad seruitutẽ tuã facta ẽ confidis abiciens me. tunc et ego iusto iudicio meo ex oculis meis te picio felicitatẽ regni mei tibi auferens. Nã ego nolo ut stellas. aut ignẽ aut uolatilia seu alias tales creaturas de futuris causis seruire ris. quo si illas pinacit̃ inspexeris oculi tui ñ molesti s. et te uelut pditũ anglm deicio. qui uernatẽ deseruit. et se ipsũ in damnationẽ pcipitauit. O ho. cũ stelle et cetere creature facte s ubi fuisti. Num q̃d dẽ institutione earũ do consiliũ dedisti. S; psupto huiusmodi seruitio nis orta ẽ in me. ut deiicere cũ hominis dñm ita ob liuioni dedisseme q̃d genus

ex genus diuersas creaturas
supbe inspexit. et de similis
causis uaria signa in eis que
siunt. Et sic etiã error ille in
baal exortus ẽ. scilicet qd bo
mines creaturã dñi pdo decep
ti colebant. ad qd cos etiã di
abolica irrisio excitauit. qa
post creaturã magis quã p
creatorẽ suũ respexerũt. hoc
scire cupientes. qd scire nõ de
buerũt. xx.iii. Vnde etiã peiora
his apparuerũt. cũ homines
p diabolũ magica arte insa
nire ceperũt ita qd diabolũ u
dent et audiunt. ipse eis falla
citer loquens et ostendens. qd
uelit creaturã hanc inspicias
et alia exultat. Nolo autẽ dice.
quomodo p diabolũ pmi se
ductores edoctꝰ sint. ita qd eũ
uident et audiunt qui eũ hoc
modo querũt. Si ipsi de hac ne
quicia sua ualde culpabiles
existunt. cũ me dñm suũ hoc
modo denegant et amq; quũ
seductorẽ imitant. O ho. ego
in sanguine filii mei te requi
siui. nõ cũ malicioſa imq; tate Si
cũ magna eq; tate. Si; tu me ue
rũ dñm deseris. et illũ q; mendax
ẽ imitaris. Ego sũ iustitia et
ueritas. et ideo admoneo te in
fide et exhortor ut amore. ac
reduco te in penitentia. ut
quãuis sanguinolenti sis in
pollutionib; peccatoꝝ tamẽ
exurgas de casu ruine tue.
qd si me subsannaueris. para
bola huius similitudinis sentie.
que dicit. Quida dñs mul
tos seruos si bi subiectos
habens. unicuiq; eoꝝ de seruoꝝ
suoꝝ plurima arma bellica
dedit dicens. Estote pbi et uiles.
tarditatẽ et pigritiã abicientes.
Si; dñs qdda ñ cũ eo agentem
de seruo quendã illusorẽ.
et diuerse aruspicem adin
uentorẽ secus uiã uidet. unde
et qdã excelsi decepti dixerũt.
Hui hõis artes discere uolum.
et arma que habebant abici
entes. ad illũ cucurrerũt. Quib;
alii dicebant. Quid facitis
hunc illusorẽ imitantes. et
dñm nrm aduersa cundiã. puo
cantes. Et illi responderũt. Qd
hoc dño nro obtrit. Et dñs
eoꝝ illis ait. O serui nequã. cur
arma que uobis dederã abie
ctis. Et cur carus ẽ uobis hãc
uanitatẽ amare. quã in dño
uro cui seruitis famulari. Ma
lite g; p illusorẽ istũ ut cupitis.
quia in seruire nõ uultis. et ui
detur qd ei stultitia uobis pfec.
et abierunt eos. Qd dr. Dñs iste ẽ
ds omps omis pplos sub pote
state sua regens. ita qd quẽq;
hominẽ intellectu armauit.
mandans ei ut strenuus et
uigilans ministruimus uirtu
tũ sit. pigritiã et neglegen

tiã a se excumenis. S; dñi homines
mã uertant arripiunt. in diui
nis mandatis ita disponentes
ipsis multe tẽptationes occur-
runt. ita q̃d diabolũ totius or-
bis seductorẽ & multipliciũ
uiciq; nequissimũ artificẽ. ñ
inuita uertatis s; p decepționẽ
immisidus positũ attendunt.
unde & quida ipsoq; inuisticie
magis quã rectitudinis ama
tores. peinde diabolũ seduch.
plus studerent. ei dẽ amaqui se.
ductoris uicia imitari. quã
uirtutes dñi amplecti. Et intel.
lectũ quẽ ad diuina mandata
conuertẽ deberent. ad uicia
trahẽ. mig̃tatis retorquentes.
diabolo se subponunt. Quib;
doctores eq; uelut consodales.
ipsoq; p sacras scripturas mul.
tociens occurrentes. facta eq;
impugnant. et cur diabolica fig
menta sequentes. diuinã ultiõnẽ sibi inducant uociferantur.
S; illi admonitiones eq; sepis
sime subsannantes. se in pau
cis peccare et dim suũ minime
offendere p superbiã affirmant.
Vnde cũ in obdurationẽ ista
p̃seuerant. diuinã sentenciã
accipiunt. quo ipsis seruis in
iquitatis exasperatis. cur in
tellectũ de sup sibi datũ suf
focauerunt. et cur magis de
ceptiones antiqui seductoris suscepint. quã creatorẽ
suũ cui stremue famulari de
buerant. dilexerint obiectũ.
ita q̃d ipsi contẽptu. diabolicis
illusionib; sedm opa sua q̃a
do seruire noluerẽt. deputantur.
ubi considerare cõpellunt. q̃d
nequissima seductio ipsis p
fuerit. quo hoc modo abiecti
dampnationẽ incurrunt.
quia diuina p̃cepta post po
nentes. plus diabolũ quã dñm
sequi comendarẽt. Ego enim
nolo ut me homines contẽp
nant. qui me in fide seruare
debent. quo si me abiecerint
et creaturã sibi subiectã in
spexerint. antiquũ seductorẽ in hoc imitantes. tunc et
ego p̃mitto. ut eis & cũ creatura et cũ diabolo sedm con
cupiscentiã cordis sui fiat.
quatinus ita expiantur. q̃d ip
sis p̃sit creatura. quã adora
uerunt. uel q̃d eis diabolus
conferat. quẽ sub secum s.

Eccho stulti homines. cur- xx.iiij.
creaturã de tẽpore ultra
ire inquirunt. Nullus enim
ultra potest tẽpus ultra suũ
scire aut illud deuitare
aut exsilire. ñ ut p me sibi
constitutũ ẽ uiuere. q̃a
o homo cũ salus tua, in scla
rib; quã in spualib; cõple
ta fuerit p̃sens sedm mun
dis. et ad illud q̃d termin
ñ inuenies. transibis. Nã

cū homo tam̄ fortunidus ē·
q̄d p̄alus pplis ardem̄ in me
ardet a q̄d inconsciam tue
m liquoris femineū peccam̄
ñ worpens insidias am̄qui ser
pens deuitat·huic spm a cor
pore suo ñ excuno amt quā
dulces fructus suos insuauissi
mo odore adbonū finē p du
cat·Illū aut̄ quē tam̄ fragi
lem̄ considō·q̄d teneř ē in
graui dolore sui corporis·et
inhorrore pessimi insidiato
ris iugū meū ferre·de hoc sclo
subtraho·amt quā intepore
marcescam̄ animi sui incipi
at arescere·Oīa enī scio· Volo
aut̄ humano generi quāq;
iusticiā ad suā cautelā dare·
ma ut nullus hominū se pos
sit excusare·cū hominēs mo
neo et exhortor iusticiā face·
q̄ndo ipsis iudiciū mortis in
cumo·uelut iā sint morituri·
cū adhuc diuī uicturi sint·
quō nemo nisi scdm ultimaū
quā inhoīe uideo et scdm
uoluntaū meā qua ei uiuere
concedo·aliud tēpus habere
uel sibi disponere possit·
quēadmodū enā Iob testat
cū dicit· Constituisti tēmi
nos eius qui p̄teriri ñ possūt·
Q̄d dr·Tu qui sup oēs es et oīa
amt quā fiant p̄uides·enā
in secreto maiestatis tue con
stituisti terminos humane

uite·ma q̄d nec scientia nec
prudentia·nec astutia ullius
rei p̄teriri·potest·nulla ui
tam̄ seu infamia·seu inu
entute·seu in senectute homi
nū transgressi·nisi secdm pru
dentiā secretos tuos·qui hoīes
ad gl̄am nominis tui fieri ius
sisti· Ego enī ohomo amt
constitutionē mundi te nouit·
tam̄ dies tuos inopib; tuis
uolo considerare et ultimaū
eos discernere·et quecq; opa
tua diligent̄ et acutissime ex
aminare·Quēcūq; aut̄ subi
to de tēporali uita subtraho
huic uite ultimas cōpleta ē·ma
ut si uita ipsius longius p̄tra
heret̄ nullā uirtutē bonos
fructuū ampli affert et s; ue
lut tepore carnee fidi habēs·
tamū quasi uacuo sono ver
borū fumū emitteret nec in
timo tactu cordis sui me tan
geret·unde ipsi induciās hu
ius uite ñ tribuo·s; amt quā
intepore huīmodi infirmi
tatis cadat·cū ab hoc sclo sub
duco·S; t ohomo dico·Cur me
contēpnis·Nonne p̄phetas
meos actt misi·et filiū meū
p̄salutis tue in lignū crucis
dedi·et aplos meos ut tibi uiā
ueritatis p̄etigim ostenderent
actt destinaui·Unde ñ po
tes te excusare·quin oīa
bona habeas p me·Et q̄re

xxvi

xxv·v·

tunc p̄ponis me- Sed error ē xxvij.
hui puersionis-scilicet q̄d signa
actuū tuoꝝ intellis-aut iugne-
aut inaudiꝫ-seu inalia huiusmo
di creatura queris-amplius nolo
tolerare-quo oīs ista qui erro
rē hunc diabolica suasione pri
mū adinuenerit dīm contēpnen
tes-p̄cepta illi omnino abiecerit-
unde & ipsi contēptu s̄-Ego aut̄
sup omnē creaturā-inclarescat
diuinitatis meę fulgeo-ita q̄d
miracula mea inscis meis tibi
manifestata s̄-qua ppt̄ nolo ut
ampliꝰ hunc errorē augurian
di exerceas-s̄; ut inme aspicias-

O stulte-quis sū ego-Videlicet xxviij.
sūmū bonū-Vnde oīa bona t̄
tribuo-cū diligent̄ quesieris me-
& quē credis me eē-Dīs sū sup
oīa-& in omnibꝫ-S; tu uis me
habere uelut rusticū q̄ dīm
suū timet-Quomodo-Tu uis
ut uoluntatē tuā faciā-cū tu
p̄cepta mea contēpnas-Sic dīs
nō-Quid ē hoc-Ipse enī nec
opinionē inicu-nec timorē fi
nis habet-Celi in laudibꝫ meis
sonant me inspicientes-& scdm
iusticiā illā qui p me posita s̄-
mihi obedientes-Sol. etiā luna
& stelle innubibꝫ • celi scdm
ut timorē suū apparent-nec nō
flabri-uenti-& pluuię macie
ut eis constitutū ē currunt-&
hęc oīa creatori suo scdm ius
sionē ipsius obediunt-Tu autē

o homo p̄cepta mea nō implesꝫ;
uoluntatē tuā sequeris-uelut
iusticia legis ubi nec posita nec
offensa sit-Inuania enī contu
macia es-quāius cumsis-q̄d t̄
nō sufficit iusticia legis meę-quę
excarata & culta ē insanguine
filii mei-& bene tua inscis meis-
tā uelis quā nouū testamentū-

Sed & in magna stultitia uis xxviij.
me appēhendere-cū mihi
hoc modo minaris dicens-si do
placet ut iustus & bonus sim-
quare nō facis me rectū-tu ita
me cape uolens-uelut si petu
lans hedus ceruū uelit capere-
qui fortissimis cornibꝫ ceruu
ualide trudit̄ & pforat̄-Sic
et ego cū mecū petulant̄ in mo
ribꝫ tuis uis ludere-inpēceptus le
gis meę quasi cornibꝫ meis, iudicio
dicio meo te comminuo-Hec
enim s̄ tube maiores tuas re
sonantes-s̄; tu illas nō sequeris-
s̄; p̄ lupū curris-quē te putas
ita domasse-q̄d te ledere nō pos
sit-S; idē lupus deuorat-te
dicens-O uis ista secus uiā erra
uit nec pastorē suū sequu uo
luit s̄; p̄ me cucurrit-unde etiā
illā uolo habere-quia me de
git-et pastorē suū deseruit-
O homo-dīs iustus ē-& ido oīa
quę in celo et in tra fecit-iusta
ordinatione dispositi-

Ego enim sū magnus me xxx.
dicus omniū languoꝝ

faciens uidit medicus qui lan
guidu uidet qui medela ar-
dentr desiderat· Quid ē hoc·-
Si languor parnus ē cū facile
curat· si ū grauis ē· languido
dicit· Ego argentū et aurū aut
exigo· Qđ si illa m dederis· te
nuabo· Sic et ego ohomo facio·
Qnora peccata ingemnu et
lacrimis ac mbona uoluntate
hominū abstergo· grauioribꝫ
autē culpis dico· Ohomo· age
penitentiā et correctionē· et
ostenda tibi midiam meā· &
unā ēmā tibi dabo· Et stellas
& alias ernantas de causis tibi
occurrentibꝫ· ne inspicias· nec
diabolū adores· nec eū imuo
cas· nec quicquā abeo pqras·
quō si plus uolueris scire· qm
te oporteat nosse a banuquo
seductore decipis qa cū prim⁹
homo plus quesiuit quā que
rere deberet a billo deceptus
est· & impdentē iuit· S; tam
diabolus nescuit hominis re
demptionē· ubi filius di mortē
occidit· et infernū fregit· Dia
bolus enī inimico pmulierē deuicit hominē· ſ; ds in fine temporꝫ pmulierē
contrituit diabolū quę filiū
di genuit· qui diabolica opa
opa mirabiliter ad nihilum
duxit· quēadmodū iobꝫ di
lectus mꝰ testat dicens· In hoc
apparuit filⁱ di· ut dissoluat
opa diaboli· Quid ē hoc· Ppt
salutē et saluationē homi
nū apparuit maxima clari
tas· scilicet filⁱ di pauptatē
humani corporis induens·
ſ; uidit ardens stella in um
brosis nubibꝫ· fulgens· ita po
situs in torculari· ubi unū
sorde fermū exprimēdu erat·
quō ipse lapis angularis sup
torcular cecidit & tale unū
fecit· qđ maximū odorē sua
uitatis dedit· Ipse enī absq;
mundatione pollui sangui
nis in humano genere clarus
homo effulgens· pede mili
cię sue os antiqui serpentis
conculcauit· et dissoluens
a iecore iniq tatis illⁱ oīa ia
cula que & furore & libidi
ne plena erant· eū omnino
contēptibilē reddidit· Unde
qui cūq· scientiā in spū scō
et pennas in fide habet· iste
admonitionē meā n̄ trans
cendat· ſ; eā in gustu anime
sue amplectendo pcipiat·

Quarta uisio. ꝑme parte

Eidem

udi maximū
serenissimūq;
splendorē ut
lux plurimis
oculis flāmamē
quatuorq; angulos ad q̄uor
partes mundi uersos habentē q̄
secretū supni creatoris designans
in maximo mysterio m̄ manife
status ē. in quo cuā alī splendor
similis aurore inse purpurei
fulgoris claritatē tenens appa
ruit. Et ecce udi uīa hominē
inuasis̄ lux hac portantes. et unde ca
seos facientes. cui quedā pars
spissa fuit. unde fortes caseī fac
tu s̄. pars quedā tenuis. de qua
debiles caseī coagulati sunt. &
pars quedā tabe p̄mixta. de
qua amari caseī effecti s̄. Et ma
udi quasi mulierē. uelut in
tegrā formā hominis in uero
suo habentē. Et ecce p̄secretam
dispositionē supni conditoris.
eadē forma motū inuidit. mo
tuomis dedit. ita q̄d uelud ig
nea spa nulla humana huma
ni corporis habens. cor eā de
forme possedit. et cerebrū eā
tenuit. et se p̄ oīa membra ip
sius transfudit. S; deinde eadē
forma hominis de uero eādē
mulieris hoc modo uiuificata
egrediente. sedin motus q̄s

ipsa spa inedē forma homi
nis habuit sedm illos euā et
colorē suū mutauit. Et udi
q̄d quandā huīmodi speciē
in humano corpore manentē
multi turbines inuadentes. eā
usq; ad tam incuruabant. s;
illa resūptus urtib; se uiriliter
erigens. eis fortē restitit. et eī
gemitu sic dixē. Ego p̄egri
na ubi sū. in umbra mortis.
et qua ua eo. in ua erroris.
Et quā consolationē habeo.
quā p̄egrini habent. Ego
enī debui habere tabernacu
lum quinq; quadris lapidib;
sole et stellis lucidioribus orna
tū. q̄a occidens sol et occiden
tes stelle n̄ debebant in eo lu
cere. s; in eo debuit ee anglica
gla. quo topazius debuit ee
fundamentū ipsi et oīs gēme
structura ei. scalis ei cristallo
positis. et platees ipsi auro stra
tus. Nā ego debui ee consors
anglor. quia sū uiuens spūs
cultū q̄d ds̄ misit maritū hu
mū. Vnde deberē dm̄ scire. et
ipsū semper. S; heu cū taberna
culū meū intellexit se posse
oculis suis in oīs uias uidere.
instrumentū suū ad aquilo
nē posuit. ach ach. ubi capta
sū. et spoliata oculis et gau
dio scientie. uestē mea tota
scissa. Et sic de hereditate mea
pulsa. ducta sū malienū lo

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cū·qui omī pulchrmudine et
honore carebat·ubi pessimo ser-
uicio subiecta sū·S;ch qui me
ceperant colaphis pcutientes
cū porcis fecer̄t me manducare·
acta in deserti locū me mitten
tes amarissimas eaꝝ herbas mel
le intinctas mihi admanducan
du dabant·Postea quoq; sup
torcular me ponentes·multis
tormētis me affligebant·De mo
dicē uestib; meis me exuentes·
et multas plagas mihi inferen
tes·uenatui me miser̄t·ubi pes
simos et uenenosos uermes·uide
licet scorpionū·aspidū·et aliox
similiū uermiū me cape fecer̄t·
qui me tota suo ueneno ita con
spuer̄t·q̄d inde debilis efficiebar·
Vnde illi me deridentes dixer̄t·
Vbi ē honor tuus nc·Ach·s;ego
tota contremui·et magno ge
mitu meroris silent̄ dixi·O ubi
sū·Ach unde huc ueni·Et quē
consolatorē hui⁹ captiuitatis
quera·Quomodo has catenas
dirūpa·O quis oculus uulnera
mea uidere poterit·et quę na
res fetorē hunc egrū sufferre
poter̄t·Aut quę manus ea oleo
pungent·Ach q̄s dolori meo
medicam impendet·Cui q̄ cla
morē meū exaudiat·et ita de
merore meo tremiscat·ac omīe
q̄d uiuit ad captiuitatē meā
se miserando inclinet·quia
amarissimus dolor me p̄mit·
quō sine consolatione et sine
adiutorio pegrina sū·O quis
consolabit̄ me·quō et mat̄ mea
dereliq̄t me·quia a ua salutis
errau·Quis me iuuabit nisi ds·
cū autē recordor tui o mater
syon·in qua habitare debui·a
marissima seruitia quib; subiec
ta sū inspicio·et cū omē genus
musicoꝝ q̄d mox ē ad memoriā
duxero·uulnera mea aduendo·
Sed et cū recordor gaudii et le
titię gl̄ę tuę·tunc uenena illa
quib; polluta sū detestor·O quo
me uertā·et quo fugiā·Dolor
eum m̄s innumerabilis ē·quō
si in malis istis p̄seuerauero·so
cia illoꝝ ero·cū quib; uitia babi
lonia turp̄it conuersata sū·et
ubi es o mat̄ mea syon·Ach m
qua a te infelicē recessi·quō
si te nesciē leuius dolerē·Nunc
autē pessimos sodales meos fu
gia·quia infelix babilonia in
plūbea statera me posuit·ac
maximis trabib; me oppressit·
ita q̄d uix suspirare possū·S;
cū lacrimas meas ad te o mat̄
mea cū gemitib; meis effundo·
tantos strepitus sonamꝰ aquā
rū infelix babilonia emittit·
q̄d uocē meā n̄ audiendis·Ego
multa sollicitudine artas uias
quera·in quib; pessimos soda
les meos et infelicē captiuitatē
meā effugere possim·et cū hec
dixisse·in angusta semita·ubi

me abscondi in paruo foramine
contra septemtrionē amarissime
flens·quō matrē meā ꝑdideram·
ibi etiā considerans omnē dolorē
meū·et oīa uulnera mea·Tamaq;
effusiones lacrimarū flendo et
flendo ibi emisi·q̄d omīs dolor-
et oīs uuor- uulnerū meor lacri
mis istis ꝑfusus ē·Et ecce suauis
simus odor- uelut lenis aura ama
re mee emissus·nares meas tetu
git·O quantas gemitus et q̄ntas
lacrimas tunc effudi·cū pariam
consolationē istā adesse sensi·et
tantos ululatus cū tantis flenib;
ꝑ gaudio dedi·q̄d etiā mons ille
in cui foramine me absconderam
unde commotus ē·Et dixi·O mat
o mat sy-on·q̄d fiet de me·Et ubi
nunc ē nobilis filia tua·O quādiu
quādiu matine dulcedinis tue
exp's sū·que inmutus delicius me
blande enutrieras·et in his lacri
mis ita delectabar·uelut matrē
meā uidere·S; inimici mei istos
clamores meos audientes dice
bant·Ubi ē ista quā habebam in ē
seruo nro secm uoluntatē nrām
habuim?·ita q̄d et ipsa omnē
uoluntatē nrām ꝑfecit·Ecce u
celicolas inuocat·O mis q̄ artes
nras exercemus·ea tanto studio
et tanta sollicitudine custodien
tes·ne nobis effugere possit·q̄a
ea nobis prius omīno subiecera
mus·Si hoc fecerimus·uerū nos
sequet·S; ego foram illud in q̄

me abscondera latentē egressa·
inquandā altitudinē ire uole
bā·ubi me inimici mei inuenire
ñ possent·Ac ipsi q̄dā mare
tam feruoris m opposuerant·
q̄d illud nullomodo transuada
re potui·S; cū ibi quidā pons
tamq̄ paruitatis et angu
stie erat·q̄d nec pillū transi
re ualui·In fine quoq; eide ma
ris queda altitudo montū tan
torū acuminū apparuit·q̄d
nec ibi mor- habere potera·et
dixi·O q̄d ego misera nē faciā·
Suauitatē matris mee nunc
parūp sensera unde putabam
q̄d uellet me ad se reducere·
S; ach nū uerū relinquet me·
Ach·quo me uerta·Nā si modo
inprior- ē capuuitatē uenero·
inimici mei magis nē quā pri?
deridebunt me·q̄a ad matrē
meā flebit clamauera·et quo
dulcedinē suauitatis ei parūp
sensera·cū uerū modo ab ea
derelicta sim·S; ego ꝑ suauita
tē illā quā prius a matre mea
uenientē sensera·adhuc tamq̄
fortitudinis eta·q̄d me a dori
entē uerti·et q̄d uerū angu
stissimas semitas ire cepi·Ede
autē semitē spinis et tribulis
et alijs hui modi impedimus
ita plene et am·q̄d uix ulla
uestigia meis habere potera·
S; tamen cū maximo labore
et sudore tandē uix ꝑ

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transiens: exeo de labore tanta
fatigatione in curru· q̄d uix su
spirare ualui· Sic tandē cū maxi
ma fatigatione ad cacumē ei⁹ de
montis· in quo me prius abscon
derā ꝓuenies· aduasse ei⁹ me
inclinau· ubi descendē debebā·
et ecce ibi aspides· scorpio
nes· dracones· et alīa huiūmodi
serpentes· in oppositu erant· et
inme sibilos suos emittebant·
Vnde ego exterrita· maximos
ululatus emisi dicens· O mater
ubi es· Zelus enī dolere· si sua
unatē ussationis tuę ꝓius
ñ sensisse· q̄a nc mer̄ū in capu
unatē illam cadā· in qua dudū
iacuerā· Vbi q̄ nc ē auxiliū tu
um· Tunc uocē matris mee au
diui mihi dicentē· O filia
curre penne enī aduolandū
ubi datē s̄ a fortissimo dauore
cui nullus resistere ualet· Ego
uelociter transuola omīs has con
trarietates· Et ego multa con
solatione confortata pennas
illas suscepi· et omīa uenenо
sa ac mortifera illa uelociter
transuolaui· Et ueni ad
q̄dda tabernaculū· q̄d mur
rinus totū erat ex fortissima
calibe fabricatū· Et illud in
transopa clarissimus feci· cū
prius opa tenebrarū fecisse·
In eo de aurē tabernaculo
ad septentrionē columnā in
posui ferri posui· in quam
flabella diuersarū pennarū·
et sic hac et illac mouenda sus
pendi· Et manna mouens· il
lud comedi· Ad orientē uero
ꝓpugnaculū ex quadris la
pidib; construxi· et in eo ignē
accendens· ibi mirrati unū
cū musco bibi· S; ad meridiem
turrim ex quadris lapidib;
feci in qua clipeos rubri colo
ris suspendi· et in cui⁹ fenestras
tubas ex ebore factas posui· In
medio aurē ei⁹ de turris mel
effudi· et ex hoc ꝑciosū un
gentū cū aliis aromatib; feci·
ita q̄d ex ipso ꝓtinus ide taber
naculū maximus odor diffun
deret· Ad occidentē uero nul
lū opus posui· quia pars illa
ad sdm uersa erat· Sed interi
dū in hoc labore occupata es
set inimici mei pharaonis su
as arripientes sagittas suas ta
bernaculū meū aggressi s̄·
s; ego p̄ studio operis mei q̄d
faciebā· tādiu insaniā ex; ñ
aduerti· usq; dū ianua ei⁹ de
tabernaculi sagittis impleret̄·
Nulla tam̄ earū de sagittarū
nec ianuā· nec calibē eiusde ta
bernaculi ꝓforare ualebat·
unde nec ego abeis ledi potuī·
q̄d illi uidentes maximā in
undationē aquarū emisert·
quatinus et me et tabernacu
lū meū deleret̄ s; tam̄ in hac
malicia sua nihil ꝓfecert· Qua

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ppt̄ eos audaciter dicens· sa
ber· q̄ hoc tabernaculū fecit· uobis
sapientior· & fortior· fuit· Unde
sagittas ustas colligentes eas de
ponite· quō nullā uictoriā uo
luntatis urę amodo in me pos
sunt ꝓficere· Ecce uulnera
ostendunt· Ego multo dolore et
labore plurima bella aduersū
uos ꝓegi· cū me mortua tradere
uelleus· s; tam̄ n̄ potuistis· qua
fortissimis armis munita acu
tos gladios contra uos ubrabā·
ꝓquos me a uobis strenue de
fendebā· Recedite g̃ recedite· quō
ultra me habere n̄ possitis· Sed
ego fragilis et indocta udi etiā
q̄d maliā spetā plurimi turbines
irruentes· eā deiicere uoluerūt s;
n̄ ualuerūt· quō illa fortiū repug
nans· loco cū eis insaniendi n̄ de
dit· s; tam̄ sic cū querela dixit·
Quā uis pauꝑcula sim· tam̄ mag
nū officiū habeo· Oquid sū ego·
et quę ē querimonia clamoris
mei· Spiraculū tam̄ uuens in
homine sū· posita in tabernacu
lū medullarū uenarū· ossiū· et
carnis· ita q̄d ede tabernaculo
uiridi tatē tribuo· et q̄d illud
ubiq; in mouib; suis circūfero·
S; heu sensibilitas illi ꝓfert
spurciciā· lasciuiā· et petulan
tiā morū· ac oīa genera uiciorū·
Ach o quā magno gemitu hoc
queror· Nā cū ꝑspiratē uitę in
oꝑib; tabernaculi mei habeo·
occurrit in diabolica ꝓsuasio· in
omnib; me irretiens· ac in flam̄i
antis me erigens· q̄d mul
tociens dico· Ego secūm gustū u
ridinatis urę opari uolo· In taber
naculo cū meo queq; opa inue
ligo· s; tam̄ audinatę ei⁹ tia impe
dior· q̄d opa mea n̄ discerno· an
te quā dira uulnera in me ui
dero· O quantū planctū tunc
emitto· Et dico· O dē· fine creasti
me· Ecce uulis tua opprimit me·
Et sic fugā in eo· Quomodo· Cū
tabernaculū meū carnalē con
cupiscentiā habet· tunc quia
gustū inopę habeo· cū ipsa op⁹
illud ꝓficio· S; tacio quę in me
cū sentina ungit· ostendit in
quō ado creata sū· In qua ratio
ne etiā sentio· quia ada cū di
uinū ꝑceptū transgressus ē·
tumens· abscondit se· Sic et ego
tumens a facie di me abscondo·
cū opa mea in tabernaculo
meo contraria do sensero· Cū
autē plurib⁹ flatuerā peccati
sup ponderauero· oīa opa
illa ꝙ̄ carnalib; concupis
centiis ardent· contēpno·

Ach me pegrinā· quomodo
in his piculis subsistere
possū· Et cū diabolica ꝓsuasio
me inuadit sic dicens· ē ne hoc
bonū q̄d nescis· nec q̄d uides·
nec q̄d facere potes· q̄d tunc
erit· Et cū mortū dicit· q̄d no
sti· et q̄d intelligis· et q̄d ꝓficere

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ualeſ·cur hoc deſeriſ·q̄d tunc fa
ciā·Fr plena dolore reſpondebo·
Ach me miſerā·q̄a p̄ad̄ā nocua
uenena in afflata ſ·cū ipſe diuinū
p̄ceptū tranſgreſſus ex imāam
electus·carnalia tabernacula
coadunauit·Nā inguſtu quē
ipſe inpomo p̄inobedientiam
guſtauit·nocua dulcedo san
guini ex carni ſe ingerit·ex ma
pollutionē uicioꝝ p̄ducit·Ynō
peccatū carniſ in me ſentio·pu
riſſimū autē dm̄ quia p̄culpā
inebriata ſū negligo·S; hoc q̄d
guſtus tabernaculi mei inſe
habet·ſequi n̄ debeo·Nā ex hoc
q̄d ad̄ā in prima apparitione
purus ex ſimplex ad dō creatus
erat·timeo dm̄·ſciens quō p̄ip
ſū pura ex ſimplex creata ſum·
Sed modo p̄malā conſuetudi
nē uicioꝝ inquietudinē uerſo
o in his oīb; p̄egrina ſū·Qua
p̄p̄ē turbines diuerſoꝝ ſonituū
multa mendacia p̄ferē·qui
in me ſurgunt ſic dicentes·
Quę es·Fr quid facis·Fr qualia
ſunt certamina quę exerces·
Infelix enim es·Nā ignoras
utrū bonū an malū opus tuū
ſit·Quo tandē ibis·Fr q̄ſ te con
ſeruabit·Fr qui ſ errores illi
qui te in inſaniā ducunt·An
p̄ficies q̄d te delectat·an fugi
es q̄d te angustat·O q̄d facies·
quia iſtud ſcis·ex iſtud igno
ras·Q̄d enī delectat·hoc ubi li
cuit n̄ ē·ex q̄d te angustat ad
hoc p̄ceptū dī cōpelleriſ·Fr unō
ſcis·ſi hec ita ſint·O deus ubi
ēt·ſi n̄ fuiſſes·Fr poſt quā iſti
turbines ita in me ſurrexerunt·
incipio alitā uiā ambulare·
quę carni mee grauis ē·q̄a
incipio iuſticiā facere·S; uerū
intra me dubito·utrū hoc ex
dono ſp̄ſ ſcī ſit·annon·ex dico·
Hoc inutile ē·Fr deinde ſup
nubes uolare uolo·Quomodo·
Sup intellectū meū uolo uola
re·ex ea incipe quę p̄ficere n̄
poſſū·S; cū hęc facere tēptauero·
maximā triſticiā in me excito·
ita q̄d nec in altitudine ſēnatus·
nec in planicię bonę uoluntatis
ullū opus facio·ſ; inquietudinē
dubietatis·deſperationis·meroris·
ex oppressionis omniū rerū in me
habeo·Fr cū diabolica p̄ſuaſio
me ſic inquietat·o q̄ta calami
tas in tunc occurrit·q̄a oīa
mala quę ſ aut eſſe poſſunt in
uituperatione·in maledictione·
in mortificatione corporis ex
animę·in uituperibus uerbis contra
mundiciā·ſanitatē ex altitudi
nē quę in dō ſunt·hęc oīa in
infelici occurrunt·Vnde etiā
hęc iniquitas in inſurgit·ſcili
cet q̄d omniſ felicitas ex omne
bonū q̄d tā in hoiē quā in dō
ē mihi moleſtū ex graue erit·
magis mortē quā uitā mihi
p̄ponens·Ach quā infelix hoc

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certam ē q̄d sic de labore in la
borē de dolore in dolorē de
scismate in scisma se in ingerat.
omnē felicitatē in auferens.
Sed unde excitat malū istoꝝ
errorū. Videlicet ex hoc. An
tiquus eni serpens in se habet
astutiā. et deceptabile uersu
tiā. atq; mortiferū iniquitatis
ueneni. Nā in astutia sua inge
rit mihi cotumaciā peccatoꝝ
a tumore dni intellectū meū
auferens. ita q̄d peccare in tumo
sic dicens. Quis ē dns. Nescio q̄s
dns sit. In deceptabili aut̄ uer
sutia sua obdurationē michi
inducit. ita q̄d in malo obdu
ror. Et; in mortifero iniquita
tis ueneno spīale gaudiū in
aufert. ita q̄d nec in homine.
nec in deo letari ualeo. sic dubie
tatē de spāonis in inducens.
scilicet q̄d dubito. utrū salua
ri possim an non. O quę s̄ ista
tabernacula. quę tanta pecu
la sustinent in diabolica decep
tione. Et; cū p̄donū di recordor.
q̄d ado crebra sū. tunc turr
has oppressiones his diabolicis
psuasionib; hoc modo respon
sū do. Ego fragili utę nō cedam.
s; fortissima bella exercebo.
Quomodo. Cū tabernaculū
meū opa iniustitie exercere
uult. medullā. sanguinē et
carnē insapientiā pacientię
comestā quēadmodū fortis
leo se defendit. et ut serpens in
antro suo ictū mortis fugiens
se abscondit. Nā nec sagittas di
aboli debeo suscipe. nec uolun
tatē carnis exercere. Quomodo.

VI Cum eni ira tabernaculū VII.
meū incendere uoluerit
in bonitatē di respicio quē ira
nūquā tetigit. et ita acie qui
sua lenitate ordinatē ut rigat
suauiter ero. spīale gaudiū ha
bens cū uirtutes in me uiridi
tatē suā ostendere incipient.
et sic bonitatē di sentio. Cū aut̄
odiū me denigrare tēptauerit.
in mediam et in martirū filii
di aspicio. et ita carnē meā con
stringo. suauē odorē rosarū
quę de spinis oriunt̄ fideli re
cordatione suscipiens. et ita re
deptorē meū agnosco. Et; cū sup
bia turrim uanitatis sue sine
fundamēto petre in me cōmen
dare ponere. et hanc alti
tudinē in me erigere
q̄d nullū sibi simile uult
habere. s; semp amor ceteris u
dere. o q̄s in tunc succurrat. quō
antiquus serpens qui sup omēs
ē uolens in mortē ceciderit me
decipere conat̄. Tunc cū merore
dico. Ubi ē rex mis. et dns mis.
Quid possū boni absq; do. Nichil.
Et sic addm qui in unā dedit
respicio. et ad beatissimā uirgi
nē illā quę superbiā antiquę
spelunce contrunt curro. sic

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fortissimus lapis edificii di effecta-
cū rapacissimus lupus q̄ hamo di
uinitus strangulatus ē-me amo
do supare ñ poterit-et ma suauis
simū bonū idē humilitatē malti
tudinē di cognosco suauitatē di
ndeficientis balsami sentiens-et
ma indulcedine di gaudens-ue
lut sim modo re omniū pigmē
torū-et sic etiā cēta uicia-fortis
simo scuto humilitatis deuicio.

viii. Sed deinde ego pauperula ui ix.
di q̄d alia quedā spa exclim
amentis forme sue se contrahens-
nodos ei resoluit et se abeis cū
gemmis extraxit-sedeq; suā me
rens diruptit-et dixit-De taber-
naculo meo exibo-S; ego misera
plenaq; meroris-quo uadā-Per
horrendas et p metuendas semi
tas adiudicū ubi diudicabor-
ibo-Opa cū q̄ue intabernaculo
meo opata sū ibi ostendā-et ibi
re[illegible]munerationē scdm merita
[illegible]mea recipiā-O quantus
timor-et o quanta angu
stia ibi ñ erit-Cumq; se hoc ñ
resolueret-quida spē et lucidi
et umbrosi uenert-qui socii con
uersationis ipsius scdm q̄d in
sede sua se moueat fuert-reso
lutionē ei expectantes-ut post
quā se exsoluisset-eā secū abdu
cerent-Et audiui uniuersē uocē
illis dicentē-Scdm opa sua de
loco ad locū ducat-Et iterū au
diui de cēlo uocē ñ dicentē-Be

atа et ineffabilis trinitas se mun
do manifestauit-cū pater unī
genitū suū de spū scō conceptū
et de uirgine natū misit in mun
dū-quatinus homines multa
diuersitate nati multisq; pecca
tis obligati-pcū ad uitā uera
tis reducerent-Ita ut ipsi anex.
ibus corporee grauedinis ab
soluti-bona et scā opa secū por
tantes-gaudia supne hereditā
tis adipiscerent-Quod ut
profundus o homo capias et ap̄d
manifestes uides maximū se
renissimūq; splendorē uelut
plurimis oculis flāmantem
quatuor q; angulos ad qua
tuor partes mundi uersos ha
bentē-qui magnā in misteriis
puraq; in manifestationib; sci
entiā di significat-maxima
profunditate p̄spicuitatis radi
antē-et acutissimas acies qua
drifide stabilitatis ad quatu
or plagas orbis extendentē-
ubi ipsa tā illos qui abicientē-
quā illos qui colligentē-ut
nitentes acutissime p̄uideat-mi
steriū supne maiestatis ostēn
dens-q̄d in magno tupo altu
dinis et profunditatis ubi
ut cernis demonstratē-In quo
etiā ali⁹ splendor similis auro
re in se purpureo fulgoris cla
ritatē tenens appareat-quia sci
entia di etiā hoc ostendit q̄d
unigenitus patris de uirgine

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carnē sumens sanguinē suū
in candore fidei psalmus hominū
fundere ppauit. ubi in cadē s;
scelera dī boni et mali ostendit
dunt. quo ipsa nulla obscurit
tas ullius rei obnubilatū. Sed
tu o homo dicis. Quid faciet ho
mo. cū ds p̄nouit oīa quę fac
turus ē homo. Et ego o homo
tibi dico. Stulte. inmeq̄quicia .x
cordis tui illū imitaris. qui u
am ueritatis primū recusans.
mendaciū ueritati opposuit.
cū se sūme bonitati similē face
re uoluit. Quis poterit inicū
et finē obfuscare. Qui ē fut. &
p̄manebit. S; q̄d es tu. qui fa
ctus es. Et q̄d nostū. cū
n̄ esses. S; tu lamentabile inicū
et miserabilē finē habens. con
tradicis. q̄d nec scis. nec scire
debes. iudelicet innumerabilē
pulchritudinē iustitię dī in
qua nulla indignatio inuenit
et inuenta ē. nec
inuenietur. O stulte. ubi putas te
patrē iniquitatis quē imita
ris. Quid ē hoc. Cui superbia inte
inflatū. sup sidera et sup alias
creaturas et sup angelos uis ele
uari. qui p̄cepta dī p̄oīa ad
implent. S; tunc cades. sicut
et ille cecidit. qui mendaciū
ueritati opposuit. Mendaciū
cui ipse dilectus. et ido immor
tē inuolutus inabyssū corruit.
Ergo homo aduende. cū nec
inspicis carnalē illā qua te
ds liberauit. nec cū aduendis
quanta bona tibi ds liberauit.
nec cū aduendis quanta bona
tibi ds semp impendit. nec cū
considerās quomodo ipse te
amorte reuocauit. cū multoci
ens impeccata corruis. ubi ma
gis mortē quā diligis. si tunc
tandē admentē tuā reuocas
scripturas et doctrinas illas.
quas tibi amicus et fidelis
pater tuus p̄posuerit. scilicet
q̄d malū debes deuitare. et bo
nū facere. et si tunc ex animo
corde dixeris. grauiter peccaui.
unde oportet me cū digna
penitentia ad patrē meū qui
me creauit reuerti. tunc ide
pater tuus benigne suscipit
te. et in sinū suū te ponens.
dulcib; amplexib; amplectit
te. Nunc autē beatitudinē
illā quę tibi ado p̄posita ē
scire contempnis. ac iustitiā
dī audire uel opari recusas.
Numq̄d si fieri posset. magis
iudiciū dī iniustū quā ueritatē
notaretur. Qua p̄te si sanguine
filii dī redemptus n̄ esses. in p̄
dmone p̄dnus iacerēs. Sed
iudiciū dī uerū et iustū est.
Unde o homo quā ualenter
inde consequeris. q̄d te in
iudicio meo deceptis. Incho
ro angelos et inelecta uinea
mea ē laus laudamus. et di

uitiam

cenmū·gſa ubi dñe·nec mdicū
meū ꝓcoſ comra dicēt·quo m
ſti ſ̄·S;·q̄d diabolo pſum·q̄d ſe
mihi oppoſum·Qm cū mdm ſe
multā clarmatē habere·ſup ōſ·cm·
ſe uolunt excabuare·ita q̄d ea in
numerabilis turba ſupbox ſup
borū ſpūaū conſenſit·q̄ſ omſ
diuina uirtus in zelo rectmudi
nis ſuę ſimul cū illo deiecit·Sic
etiā omſ deiciunt̄ q̄ inꝑſeue
rantia mali iuſticiā dī poſt po
nere conant̄·quo ipſi ſūmū bo
nū inꝑuerſitatē nequicie ꝓcu-
rare laborant·Unde nequaqm
dꝫ q̄d inuſtū ē conſtituit·ſed
omne q̄d rectū ē inequalit bo
nitatis ſuę ordmauit·Sed et
illi homines q̄ infidelitate ſua
dīm abiecerūt·ita q̄d ſibi ſculp
tilia fecerūt·quę diabolus in
uaſit·et in quib; eos illuſit·ut
in peculiarma huīmodi uam
tatis ſuę rexerūt·cui illud gen̄
hominū ꝓtranſiit quib; acta
et cuia dixerant quomodo
adō facta ēnt·et quomodo
de paradyſo expulſi fuiſſēt·
Quoſ alu ineade ꝓuerſitatis
ſubſequentes·et creaturā dī ma
gis quā ipſū creatorē ſuū co
luerūt·et ea quę nō unuunt unā
ſuā diſponere ꝓtinuerūt·Unde
et hi qui adhuc inipſa infi
delitate ſordent·ſtultitiā ſuā
deſerant·et adipſū qui la
queoſ diaboli conꝛuant fi

delit̄ conuerant̄·uetuſtatē
ignoramię deponentes·et no
uitatē uitę amplectentes·ut
ſeruus m̄s ēbechiel hortat̄ duces·
Proicite a uobis oīa ꝓuari
cationes uras in quib; ꝓuari
cati eſtis·et facite uobis cor no
uū et ſpm nouū·Q̄d dr: O uos q̄
in rectmudine ꝓſeuerare uultis·
inſole cui mitra beatę ouis
curſum ꝓtexit a conſcientia
cordis uri ſcaſcitatione oculos
illos que in principali ſapien
tia inutilia ſunt·in quib; inuita
nā celſitudinē uolare uoluiſtis·
cū in ꝓcipitē lacū merſi eſtis·in
quo nullus honor habitat ſed
illa horribilis laſcitia que dīm
ignorat·Et cū hoc feceritis·uā
uersutis ꝓgitie ꝓſalitie uā·ubi
tumultus celi nouitatē incorde
uro inuenietis·et ubi uanifice
ſpiritonis nouitatē in ſpū uro
habebitis· Videſ etiā uitra ho
mines in uaſis ſuis lac portan
tes·et inde caſeos facientes·q̄
ſunt in mundo homines·tā ui
ri quā mulieres in corporib; ſu
is humanū ſemen habentes·de
quo genus diuerſox ꝓplox ꝓ
creatur·cui⁹ quedā pars ſpiſſa
ē·unde fortes caſei fiunt·quia
ſem illud in fortitudine ſua
utiliter et bene coctū et ꝓparū
ſtrenuos homines ꝓducit·q̄b;
etiā magna claritas tā ſpīalis
quā carnaliū donox in mag

xi.

xiij.

nis patrib; et malis psonis tribuū-
ma q̄d inp̄spnatē prudentie discre
tionis-et humilitatis inopib; suis et
corā dō-et corā hominib; p̄spicue
floreāt-q̄uō diabolus meis locū
suū nō inueniat-Et pars q̄uedā te-
nuis-de qua debiles casei coagu
lantū-q̄uō hoc semen interim cudi
ne sua humilitē semi cochū et semi
tepatū teneros hominēs educit-ma
q̄d istu multociens stultu-tepidi-et
mundes tā apud dm-quā apud
scm inopib; suis s̄-q̄a dm strēn
nue nō queret-S; et pars q̄uedā te
be p̄mixta ē-de qua amari casei
efficuntū-q̄a sem illud indebili
tatē p̄mixtionis neq̄ter educhū-et
mundū cōmixtū-informes boies
efficit-ma q̄d illi sepe amartudi
nē difficultatē-et oppsionē cordis
habent-unde mentē suā multo ci
ens ad supiora leuare nō ualent-
Ostu autē exhis inutiles fiunt-ma
tamē q̄d multas tēpestates-et inq̄e
tudines-et incordib; et immorib;
suis pacuntū-s̄; tamē uictores ex-
istunt-q̄uō si inquietat pacis q̄es
cerent-tepidos et inutiles se red
derent-unde dns illos coercet-et
aduā salutis ducit-q̄uēadmodū
scriptū ē-Ego occidā et ego xliij
uiuere faciā-percutā et ego sana
bo-et nō ē qui de manu mea possit
eruere-Q̄d dr-Ego qui sū-nec inicio
nec finē habens-flagitiosos boies
machib; suis intimo qui p̄spuri
tas diaboli inuicis macerantū-

et qui in partib; infelicis semina
ri-p̄ diabolicas speluncas de
capiuntū-O quā uersuta ē iuxta
maxilla-q̄ue cos ma inflat-q̄d
mors ipsos interare conatū-Vnde
ab eis p̄spnatē huius seculi uolo-ubi
ma p̄plurimas, eruptas occiduntū-quas su
pare nō possunt-s̄;-q̄ue eis iusto iu
dicio semp assistunt-S;-ego qui
nulla obscuritate decior-istos
etiā in alia parte uuere mirabi
liter-multociens facio-ubi inip
sis uuens spiraculū eox̄ sursū de
ūtens q̄abo-ne inipsis p̄eat-Tuos
etiā uulneribus p̄multā infirmita
tē laboris unc̄ sue inūdū affligo-
qui p̄supbā mentē suā inuepta
altitudinē ascendere cupiunt-
putantes q̄d annullo deici ualeant-
eos etiā qui ubiq; p̄sens sū-ma inū-
dū sursū aduersā sanitatē erigens-
ne infallacib; piculis p̄fallaces
uanitates consūmantū-S;-in his
omnib; nō ē homo-nec alia crea
tura q̄ue huīmodi opa mea uer-
sucia aut ferocitate possit euel
lere-quia nullus ē-qui uolunta
ti et equnati mee ualeat resistere-

xv.

Multociens quoq; ut uides
ubi inobliuione mea et in
irrisione diaboli cōmixtio ma
ris et femine p̄petratū-ibi et con
tractio nascentiū hominū inue
nitū-ut quō parentes illox̄ p̄cepta
mea transgressi s̄-inipsis filius suus
cruciatu-ad me inpenitentia re
uertantū-multociens etiā hanc

mirabilē creationē, p gla mea et
sco⁹ meo⁹ in hominib⁹ fieri p mit
to. ut dñs illi qui hoc modo di
storti s̄ p sub ueniōnē electorū
meo⁹ sanctam restituunt nomen
meū ex hoc tanto ardemus ab
hominib⁹ glificē. Qui aut in
hac lege se constringunt. ita
q̄d uirginitatis decus appetunt
uelut aurora ad celestia secre
ta ascendunt. quia p̄p̄ amorē
filii mei delectationes corporis
xvi. ⁊ sui a se abscidunt. Sed q̄d ui
⁊ des quasi mulierē uelut imit
⁊ grā formā hominis in utero
⁊ suo habentē. hoc ē q̄a post q̄m
femina humanū sem̄ concepe
rit. in utero grauat membra su
orū infans in abdito cubicu
lo uteri ipsius format. et ec
ce p̄ secretā dispositionē supni
conditoris cadē forma motū
uitāde motionis dat. quo cū
in secreta et occulta iussione
et uoluntate dī infans in ma
terno utero congruo. et recte
diuinitus disposito tēpore.
sp̄m accepit. motu corporis
sui se uiuere ostendit. uelut
ūra se aperit. et flores fructus su
p̄fert. cū ros sup ea ceciderit.
⁊ ita q̄d uelut ignea spa. nulla. xvii.
⁊ humana membra humani corporis
⁊ habens. cor eidē forme possidet.
quia anima in igne p̄fundē
se et ardens. diuersas res
circumu. suę cōprehensionis

discernit. nec formā humanorū
membrorū habens. quo ipsa nec
corporea. nec caduca. quēadmo
dū corpus hominis ē. cor hois
confortat. q̄d q̄si fundamentū
corporis existens. totū corpus re
git. uelut firmamentū celū in fe
riora comuneta. et superiora tegit.
et cerebrū hois tangit. quia
muris⁹ sui n solū ūrena. s; etiā
celestia sapit. cū dīm sapientes
cognoscit. ac se p̄na membra ho
minis transfundit. quo uiridi
tatē medullarū. ac uenarū. et
omniū membrorū tou corpori uri
but. uelut arbor ex sua radice
sucū et uiriditatē omib⁹ ramis
dat. S; deinde eadē forma hois
de utero eidē mulieris hoc m
uunificata egredientē. secm
motus quos ipsa spera meadē
forma hois habet. secm illos
et eā et colorē suū mutat. quia
postquā homo in matno utero
una se sp̄m accepit et ita natus
fuerit. et motus operationis sue
dederit. secm opa illa que am
ma cū corpore opat. secm hec
et ea et merita ipsius existunt.
quo de bonis claritatē et de
malis tenebrositatē sibi induc.
psa quoq; secm uires corpo
ris uires suas ostendit. ita q̄d
in infantia hominis simplicita
te p̄fert. et in iuuentute fortu
tudinē. ac in plena etate cū oms
uene hominis plene s̄ fortissi

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mas uires suas insapientia decla
rat·sicut cuā arbor in primo
germine uenena existens·ac de
inde fructū se p ferre ostendens·
tandē cū implenitudinē uulnera
us educit·S; & postea in senectu
te hominis cū medulla & uene
ipsius iā addebilitatē se incur
uare cepisset·anima lemores
uires uelut in medio scientie ho
minis ostendit·quēadmodū et
sucus arboris cū iā hiemale tem
pus instat se in ramis et foliis
suis contrahit·& ut cadē arbor
in senectute sua iā incuruari
incipit· homo autē uires sem xviij·
tas in se habet·Quid ē hoc·Ani
mā corpus sensus·In his una
hominis exercet·Quomodo·
Anima corpus uiuificat·& sen
sus exspirat·corpus autē ani
mā sibi adtrahit et sensus apit·
sensus uero animā tanquā &
corpus allicuit·Anima cū cor
pori unā p̄bet uelut ignis lumē
tenebris infundit·duas primci
pales uires scilicet intellectū &
uoluntatē uelut duo brachia
habens·ñ q̄d anima brachia se
admouendū habeat s; q̄d in
his uiribus se manifestat·uelut
sol p splendorē suū se declarat·
Vnde o homo que ñ es sarcina
medullarū in scientia scrip
turarū aduende· Intellectus xix·
ita infixus ē animę·uelut
brachiū corpori·Nā ut bra
chiū cui manus cū digitis ad
iuncta ē a corpore extendit·ita
cuā intellectus cū operatione cete
rarū uirtutū animę cū quib; queq;
opa hominis intelligit ex anima
certissime p̄cedit·Ipse enī p̄alius
uirtib; animę quicq̄d inopib;
hominū ē·siue bona siue mala
sint intelligit·ita q̄d p eū uelut
p magistrū oña intelligumur·
quō ipse ea hoc modo excutit·
sicut & ruciū abomni contra
rietate expurgat·p quirens
uirtutū utilia·an inutilia·an ama
bilia·aut odibilia sint·uel uirtutē
aduitā·t admortē punciam·
Vnde sicut esca sine sale insulsa
est·sic cuā cetere uires anime
sine intellectu rapidę & ñ intel
ligibiles s·S; & ipse ē in anima
ut scalpella in corpore medul
la reliquarū uirtutū animę ex
istens·uelut humerus corporis
forus ē·diuinitatē cuā & huma
nitatē in do intelligens·q̄d in
flexio brachii ē·ita quo q; rec
tā fidē in ope suo habens·q̄d
cuā inflexio manus ē·cū qua
tunc diuersa opa indiscretio
ne quasi cū digitis discernit·
Ipse autē ita ñ opat·ut cetere
uires anime·Q̄d ē hoc· Volun xx·
tas enī opus calefacit·et animi
illud suscipit·et ratio p̄ducit·
Intellectus autē opus intelligit
bonū et malū intelligens·uel
lut angelī intellectū habent bo

nū diligentes. ⁊ malū negligen
tes. ⁊ ut corpus habet cor. ma &
anima intellectū. qui etiā in
hac parte animę uim suā ex
ercet sicut & uoluntas in natura.
Quomodo. ¶ uoluntas enī mag
nā uim animę habet. Quom.
Anima stat in angulo, dom⁹ suę
consistit. ut tota domū p̄spici
ens oīa instrumenta dom⁹ regat. ⁊ re.
scilicet dextrū brachiū leuans.
signando & ostendendo quęq;
talia ei de domus. & se adori
enti ē uertens. Sic & anima fac.
pplantas uocius corporis ador
ui solis respiciens. Ipsa enī uo
luntatē quasi dextrū brachiū
ponit in firmamentū uenarū
et medullarū. ac in cō motionē
uoci corporis. qm uoluntas
quodq; opus siue bonū siue
malū sit opat. ¶ am uolun
tas ē uelut ignis. quodq; op
quasi in fornace coquens. Pa
nis enī ad hoc coquit. ut hoīes
ex inde pastu confortent. qua
tenus uiuere possint. Sic & uo
luntas fortitudo uocius opis ē.
quia ipsa in inconceptione
molit et in robore fermentū
imponit. ac indurticia tundit.
et ita opus suū uelut panē in
consideratione parans. illud
pleno ope ardoris sui in p̄fec
tione coqt. atq; hoc modo ma
iorē cibū hominib⁹ inopē. q̄m
in pane facit. Esca hominis in

dom⁹. i. firma
mentum cordis. uc
lut alius homo
q̄ in angulo

xx. j.

tardū in eo cessat. opus autē uo
luntatis in eo usq; ad separatio
nē animę ipsius a corpore p
durat. & in q̄m magna diuer
sitate opus sit scilicet ab infan
tia. a iuuentute. a plena etate.
ad ecrepita in curuationē. tam
in uoluntate gradit. & in ea p
fectionē suā demonstrat.
Sed uoluntas habet in p̄cor
dio hominis q̄d dā tabet
naculū uidelicet animū. q̄ē
& intellectus. et ipsa uoluntas.
ac quecq; uis animę sua fortitu
dine afflant. & be oīs in eo de
tabernaculo calefiunt. & se
inuicē coniungunt. Quom.
Si ira surrexerit. fel inflat.
& ita fumū in de tabernacu
lum emittens. ira p̄ficit. Q̄d si
turpis lętitia se erexerit. in eo
dē libidinis in materia sua
tangit. et sic petulantia illa
quę ad peccatū punct. ad uolit.
ac in eo de tabernaculo coadu
natur. S. aliud amabile gau
diū ē. q̄d in eo de tabernaculo
de spū sco incendit. cui anima
cōgaudens illud fidelit. susci
pit. et opus bonū in celestib⁹. de
siderns p̄ficit. Est etiā quędā
tristicia de qua in eo de taber
naculo ex humorib⁹ illis qui cir
ca fel s̄ corpor nascit. indigna
tionē. obdurationē. et contuma
ciā in hominib⁹ faciens. animāq;
deprimens. nisi grā di suc

curremr ac cuis ereipiam. S; & cũ
eide tabernaculo commaric causę
occurremr. multocies modio
ac in relięs mortiferis reb; cõmo
uet quę anima occidum. & mag
nas ruinas inpdmone parat. Cũ
amẽ uoluntas uoluerit. instrũ
ta eide tabernaculi mouet. & ea
inferiorem calore siue bona sine
mala sint deponit. Qđ si uolun
tas instrumenta illa placuerint.
ibi escã suã coquit. & eã homini
adgustandũ ꝓponit. Vnde & in
ipso tabernaculo plurima tur
ba boni et mali excurgit. uidit
cũ aliquis exercitus maliquo
loco coadunat. S; cũ princeps
eiusde exercitus sup uenerit.
si exercitus ille ipsi placuerit. eũ
suscipit. si uero ipsi displicuerit.
illũ abire iubet. Sic et uoluntas
facit. Quomodo. Si bonũ uel si
malũ inp̃cordio cordis surrexe
rit. uolun tas illud aut
ꝑficit. aut ne gligit. Sed xx·ms
& intellectũ & inuoluntate
ratio uelut somnus animę ostẽ
dit. quę q̃dq; opus siue dĩ siue
hominis sit ꝓfert. Somnus enĩ
uerbũ inanitũ tollit. sicut ven
tus qui aquilã subleuat. ut uo
lare possit. Ita et anima somn⁹
rationis et inauditu & intellec
tu hominũ emittit. q̃tinus
uires ipsius intelligam. & ut
q̃dq; opus ꝓfectũ ducatur. Cor
pus autẽ omniũ uiriũ animę
tabernaculũ et subleuiam. ẽ. quo
anima in corpore manens. cũ cor
pore op̃at. et corpus cũ illa. siue
bonũ siue malũ sit. S ensus ũ xx·ms.
ẽ cui opus interioꝝ uiriũ animę
adherta. ita q̃d ipse infructib;
cuiusq; opis intelligunt. Et ille
eis subiectus; ea cũ ad opus ꝑdu
cunt. ñ autẽ ipse eis opus in po
nit. quo umbra earũ ẽ. faciens
sedm q̃d ipsis placuerit. S; & ex
terior homo inp̃mis cũ sensu
inuenit matris antequm ho
mo nascat. euigilat. et eius uiri;
animę adhuc in abscondito ma
nenti; Quid ẽ hoc. Aurora lucẽ
diei denunciat. sic et sensus ho
minis cũ ratione oĩs uires aię
declarat. Et ut lex et ꝓphę in
duob; p̃ceptis dĩ pendent. ita
et sensus hominis in anima et
in uiri;. et uiget. Quid ẽ hoc.
Lex ad salutẽ hominis posita
ẽ. & ꝓphete occulta dĩ manife
stant. sic & sensus hoĩs quęq;
nocua ab homine depellit. &
interiora animę denudat. Nã
anima sensu exspirat. Quom̃
Ipsa homine inuenit facie ui
uificat. & uisu auditu gustu.
odoratu. et tactu glificat. ita
q̃d homo sensu tactus. puigil.
mommb; reb; fit. Sensus oĩs
uires animę claudit. Quid ẽ
hoc. Homo in facie cognoscit.
oculis uidet auri;. audit. os
ad loquendũ apit. manib;. pal.

Sens⁹. H. signũ
omniũ uiriũ a
nimę est. sic ꝛ
corp⁹ uas aiẽ ẽ.
Quomodo.

pat·pedib; ambulat·et ido sen
sus ē unbomine·uelut p̄ciosi
lapides·& ut p̄ciosus thesaurus
inuase signatus·S; ut uas uidet·
& ut inco thesaurus sent·ita cuā
insensu ceat uires animę intel
xv·v. ligunt·· Anima aiat ē magi
stra·caro uero ancilla·Quom· xv·vii·
Anima tocū corpus uiuificatio
ne regit·corpus aut̄ regimen
uiuificationis illi suscipit·quo
si anima corpus nō uiuificaret·
corpus insolutione difflueret·
S; cū homo malū opus scelerat·
anima opat̄·hoc tā amarū am
me ē·uelut uenenū corpori cū
illud corp⁹ sceler̄ accipit·De bo
no aut̄ ope anima gaudet·sic
& corpus suauu cibo delectat̄·&
anima corpus ita puansit·uelut
sucus arbore·Quid ē hoc·P sucū
arbor uires·& sic flores p duc·
ac deinde fructū facit·& quom·
tē fruct⁹ ille ad Sol eū calefacit·pluuia eū irri
maturitatē p duc·it· gat·& ita intempie aeris p ficit·
tempie aeris·Item· Quid ē hoc·Ydria grē di uelut
pluuia ipsū irrigabit·& sic eū
discreto uelut bona tempies
aeris ad p fectionē bonoꝝ fruc xv·viii·
xv·vi· tuū ducet·S ed & anima in
corpore ē uelut sucus in arbore·
& uires ipsius quasi arboris for
ma·Quom· Intellectus in anima·
ē uelut uiridtas ramoꝝ & foliorꝝ in
arbore·uoluntas aut̄ quasi flo
res in ea animus uero uelut primi
& rūpens fructus ipsius·ramo aut̄

quasi fructus & immaturitate p
fectus·sensus uero quasi altitudo
& extensio latitudinis ipsi·& sedm
hc modū corpus hominis a anima
solidat̄·& sustentat̄·Vnde o homo
intelligę q̄d anima tua sis·qui
bonū intellectū tuū deponis·&
ut pecoribꝫ cōparare uis· Quod
aut̄ tu o homo quę hęc uides·ē
sideras cuā q̄a q̄ndā huiꝰmodi
speā in humano corpore ma
nente multi turbines inuaden
tes·eā usq; ad ītā incuruant·hoc
ē·q̄d animā hominis quādiu ho
mo anima & in corpore uiuit·mul
tę inuisibiles tēptationes pur
bant·quę ipsā p delectationē
carnis multociens ad peccata trę
narū concupiscentiarū inclinant·
s; illa resūptus uiribꝫ·se uiriliter eri
gens·& fortiter resistit·q̄a fidelis
& sollicitus homo eū precauet·
sepe p donū dī cōpunctus pecca
ta deserit·& spē suā in dim
ponens·diabolica figmenta
abicit·creatorē suū fideliter que
rens·uelut eā hęc fidelis p̄fata
anima miserias suas conquerēs·
supius ueraciter ostendit·S ed
q̄d uides q̄a in alia spē plu ri
mi turbines irruentes·eā deice
re uolunt s; nō ualent·id ē q̄a
animā istā plurimę diabolicę
insidię inuadentes·ad peccata
multoꝝ sceleꝝ p trahere conant·
s; tamē ex suis illusionibꝫ· p uale
re nō possunt·quō illa fortiter

—ó sol hominē illustrabit & respirabit sps scī.

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repugnans·locū ꝯ insanicndi ñ
dat·idē quō supna inspiratione
se muniens·a se iacula fallaciū de
cogitationū expellit·& ad saluatorē
suū recurrit·quēadmodū etiā su
pius inuerbis querele suę decla
rat·ut p̄monstrauī ē· Quod ū
ut uides alia quedā spera exlimia
mentis formę suę se contrahens·
nodos ei resoluit·hoc ē q̄d anima
illa membra corporalis habitacu
li sui deserens·iunctura ex relin
quit·cū tēpus resolutionis ei de
habitaculi sui instituit·& se ab
ei cū gemitu excurabit·sedeq;
suā merens dirūpit·quō a cor
pore suo cū angustia se tollens·
locū habitationis suę multo ut e
more cadere p̄mittit·imminens
iudiciū supni iudicis metuens·
quia tē merita opū suoꝝ iusto iu
dicio dī sentiet·uelut etiā inque
rela sua supi manifestat·Qua
ppt cū se hoc modo resolut
quidā spūs et lucidi & umbrosi
ueniunt·qui socii conuersatio
nis ipsius·sedm q̄d in sede sua
semouet s·q̄a in resolutione il
la cū anima hominis habitacu
lū suū deserit·angelica spūs et bo
ni & mali sedm iustā & uerā dis
positionē di assumt·qui inspec
tores opū illi sedm q̄d in corpo
re suo cū corpore opata ē fuerit·
resolutionē ei expectantes·ut p̄
quā se exsoluat etiā secū abdu
cant·quō ipsi sententiā iusti iu

dicis de anima illa inseparatione
ei a corpore aduendum·ut ipsa
a corpore soluta eā ducant quo
supnus iudex iudicauerit·sedm
merita opū illius·ut ubi etiam
obomo fidelit p̄monstrauī ē·

xxxvi Idcirco uos o carissimi filii mei xxxvi.
oculos & aures uias aptet·et p̄
cepta mea obedite·& cur patrē
uim contemnitis·qui uos de
morte liberauit·Chori angelo
canunt·iustus es dne·quō iusti
cia di ñ habet ullā rugā·cū etiā
dis hominē ñ liberauit sua po
testate·s; compassione·ubi filiū
suū ad redēptionē hominis mi
sit inmundū· Solē enim nulla
indignatio stercoris pollut·sic
etiā nec dm ulla puersitas iniu
stitie tangere potest·s; tu o ho
inspecula tua scelesta bonū et
malū inspicis·& q̄d es cū inmun
ditudine carnaliū desideriorū
sordes·& q̄d es cū clarissime
gemme uirtutū iure fulgent·
Primus angelis bonū contēpsit
et malū concupiuit·unde et il
lud in morte etiā p̄dictionis ac
cepit·et in morte sepultus ē·q̄a
q̄d bonū ē abiecit·Boni uero
angeli malū neglexerūt·et bonū
amauerūt·casū diaboli uiden
tes·qui uerniam uolebat oppri
mere & mandatū erigere·Qua
ppter ipsi in amore di exar
serūt·firmū fundamentū uoci
boni habentes·ita q̄d aliud

nolunt qm̄ q̄d dō placeat nūquā
in laude cōfessantes. S; & prim⁹ hō
dm cognouit & cū insimplicitate
dilexit acp̄cepta cōsuscipiens. sc
obedientie deputauit. S; de inde
ad malū se inclinauit & inobe
dientiā p̄fecit. Nā cū a diabolus
malū suggereret. bonū deseruit.
et malū p̄petrauit. unde & de pa
radyso eiectus ē. Vnde malū inp
dmone mortis abiciendū ē. & bo
nū in amore uite p̄ficiendū. S; tu
oho cū habes recordationē boni
& mali. uelut in bruto positus es.
quia si tunc tenebras mali contēp
seris. uolens in illū aspicere cuius
creatura es. et quē in scō baptismo
confessus es. ubi uetus crim̄ adḳ t
ē ablatū. et si dixeris. diabolū et
opa eī uolo fugere. et dm uerū ac
eī p̄cepta sequi. tunc tua conside
ra. quomodo doctus es a malo de
clinare. & bonū facere. & q̄a eccle
sius p̄ris unigenitu suo n̄ pepcit.
S; cū ad liberationē tuā misit. &
ora dm ut t succurrat. & ipse te
exaudiens. sic dicit. Ifa. oculi m̄
placent. & si tē uidui ab iceris. ma
q̄d in mandatis di fortit cucur
reris. clamore p̄cū tuarū ubiq;
exaudit. Carnē cū tua debes do
mare. et impio animę subiugare.
S; tu dicis. Tanta & tā magna pon
dera in carne mea habeo. q̄d me
supare n̄ ualeo. S; quō dns bonus
ē. ipse me bonū facit. Quomodo
possē carnē meā domare. cū ho
sim. dns bonus ē. ipse oma bona
in me p̄ficit. Nā cū sibi placue
rit. me bonū facere potuit. Sed
ego tibi dico. Cū dns bonus sit cur
bonitatē eī scire contemnis. q̄a
ipse filiū suū p̄ te tradidit. q̄ te
inimicus erūnis et in magnis la
boribus; de morte liberauit. S; cū
dicis quō bona opa opari n̄ pos
sis. hoc iniustitia inq̄tatis di
cis. Oculos enī habes aduidendū.
aures ad audiendū. cor ad cogitan
dū. manus ad op̄andū. pedes ad ambulan
dū. ita q̄d etiā p̄me corpus tuū
te potes sublenare et p̄sternere.
dormire et uigilare. manducare
et ieunare. Sic te dns creauit. Vnde
& concupiscentias carnis tuę re
sistere. et dns iuuabit te. Nā cū te op
ponis diabolo. uelut fortis bella
tor inimico suo. tunc dns delectat
in certamine tuo. uolens ut cū in
omnib; hortis. in omnib; angustiis
tuis constanter inuocet. S; cū carnē
tuā n̄ uis domare. tunc facis eā
inuictus et in peccatis epulari.
quō ei frenū timoris dni abstra
his. cū quo eā retinere debeas. ne
in p̄dmonē ruat. Qua p̄p̄ta ma
ad diabolū respicis. sicut et ipse
ad inimicū tē respexit. cū in mor
tē ceciditt. & ipse de p̄dmone tua
gaudens dicit. Ecce homo q̄ nobis
similis ē. & tē sup te cadit. animas
uas suas in umbra mortis sedm
q̄d sibi placet imittit. S; dns
nouit q̄d boni p̄ficere possis.

Tibi enī lex posita ē-scdm hoc q̄d laborare potes-. Dꝫ abinitio scī usq; adconsūmationē eī in electis suis delectari uult-ita q̄d ipsi inclarificare uultuū fidelissime ornatu coronentē-. Quomodo-. Homo uoluptatu carnis suę hoc modo resistat-ne in deliciaſ huī mundi diffluat-nec etiā tā secure uiuat-quasi in ꝓpria domo sua maneat-quo pegrinus ē-quia patr ipsius eū expectat-si adipsū redire uelit-ubi eū ē. nouit-Vnde o homo si oculos tuos adduas semitas-idē adbonū et admalū uerteris-tunc do ceris-q̄d & magna et parua intelligis-Quomodo-Fide unū dm indiuinitate & inhumanitate intelligis-et etiā diabolica opa in malo uides-Et cū iusta & iniusta tua cognoueris-tunc tibi p me dicē-. Quā uā ire desideras-q̄d si te inbonis uis ire uolueris-et si uerba mea fidelit audieris-as sidua et sincera p̄ce dm ora-ut tibi succurrat-& ne te deserat quo fragilis in carne tua es-. atq; adhumiliandū caput tuū inclina-& ea que inopib; tuis mala s̄ excauit & aue illa festinanter pice-Hęc dꝫ requirit atq; quia q̄ tibi aurū et plumbū ponere et dicere ad q̄d uolueris manū tua porrige-aurū audissime rapes-et plumbū dimittere s-quo aurū magis q̄m plumbū diligeres-Sic ecclestē patriā magis q̄m grauedinē peccatoꝝ attendere debes-Qd si in peccatis ceciderit-mox in confessione et pura penitentia surge-atq; q̄m morsor iat inferat-Pat enī tuus uult ut clames-plores & auxiliū petas-ne in sordib; peccatoꝝ remaneas-S; si uulnera accepis-medicū quere ne moriaris-Nonne multo ciens dꝫ de pestaſ hominib; immittit-ut tanto adtenci abeis muo cet-. S; tu o homo dicis-Bona opa opari n possū-Et ego respondebo-Potes-Et tu dicis-Quomodo-. Et ego dico-Intellectu et opatione-Et tu respondes-Consensū n habeo-Et ego respondebo-Discere pugnare contra te-Et tu dicis-~~Contra te ipsū pugnare contra te-Et tu dicis-~~ Contra me ipsū pugnare n ualeo-nisi dꝫ aduuerit me-Audi q̄ quomodo pugnes aduersū te-Cū malū inte surgit ira q̄d nescis quom illud abiciaſ tunc tactu grę mee tachus-q̄a nuis inū oculoꝝ tuoꝝ gra mea tangit te-. mox clama-ora. confuge te-et plora-ut dꝫ succurrat-& ut malū ate auferat-& ut tibi uires inbono tribuat-Istud habes de sciemia tua-qua dm pinspiratione spūs scī intelligis-Nam si alicui hominis opari ces-.

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STIFTUNG

32 u

o quociens te oportuerit illud
facere. q̄d corpori tuo difficile
erit. Nonne multa aduersa susti
nere. p̄pt̄ tenuā mercedē tuā.
& curādo. p̄pt̄ supnā mercede ñ
seruis. q̄ tibi et animā & corp̄
dedit. Si enī aliquā tēporalē
rē habere uelles. ó q̄mū labo
rares. ut illā saltē uel paruo
tēpore habere posses. Nunc
autē redet te illud querere
q̄d finē ñ habet. Nā ut bos th
mulo agit̄. sic & tu corpus tuū
tumorē dñi exercere debes.
quia si hoc feceris dñs ñ abi
ciet te. Si enī aliquis uiam
te caperet. punus adiutū te
conuertere. qui tibi p desse
possit. a ea supplicares. et cū
orares. et substantiā tuā illi p
mittere. quam ubi subuenī
ret. Sic & tu ihū fac cū iniqui
tas te cepit. addñm te conuer
tens supplica ora et correctio
nē tuā p mitte. & dñs miserabit
te. Surdus ihū es audiendū. stul
tus addefendū te. quō intel
lectū. quē tibi dñs infudit et
quinq; sensus corporis tui
quos tibi dedit quasi p fecto
re & p uam habes. Non
ne intellectū et scientiā ha
bes. Regnū dī poterit emi. ñ
aut̄ loco acquiri. Audite q̄
o homines et nolite despice
re uiro tuī celestis iudicē. &

nolite tangere mortē. et no
lite dñm negare & diabolū
confiteri. & nolite in peccatis
crescere. et in bonis deficere.
Dñs enī audire ñ uultis. cū
in p̄ceptis ipsi ambulare re
cusatis. et ad diabolū curri
tis. cū uoluptatē carnis ut̄e
p ficere contendit. Consola
lescite q̄ & confortamini.
quia uobis necesse ē. fidelis
aut̄ homo dolorē suū con
sideret. & medicū querat.
ante q̄m in mortē cadat. Q̄d
si dolorē suū inspexerit et
medicū quesierit. ille inuen
tus ostendit ei amarū sucū
pigmenti p q̄d saluari potē.
q̄d s amara uerba p que p ban
dus ē. in tū penitencia ei de
radice cordis ipsius. ande
uerto instabilitatis ei peccat.
cūq; hoc p bauerit dat ei u
nū p enitentie. ut foetorē uul
nerū suoꝝ abluat. & ei of
fert ei oleū misit quatinus
eade uulnera ad sanitatē le
uiat. Tunc ei iniungit ei.
ut circa sanitatē suā sollici
tus sit. dicens. Vide ut in hac
medicina studiosus et stabi
lis sis. nec tediū capias. quia
uulnera tua grauia s. Sed mul
ti s. qui uix penitentiā pec
catoꝝ suoꝝ susciperunt. si q̄n
us multo labore tam ei pp
ter meū mortis p agunt.

At ego eis manū porrigo ctam rmidinē illā eis indulcedinē uerto·ita q̄d penitentiā hanc cū tranquillitate pficiunt q̄m cū magna dificultate inceperūt. Qui autē penitentiā peccatoꝝ suoꝝ neglexerit·quō corpus suū castigare sibi difficile ē dicet· miser ē·quia nūquā in semetipsū respicere nec ullū medicū quere nec uulnera sua sanare·ſ; pessimū liuorē inse celat & mortē insimulatione tegit·nec uide ri possit·Vnde piger adgustū penitentie ē·nolens respicere moleū midie·nec consolationē redemptionis querere·& ideo in mortē ibit quō mortē dilexē· nec regnū dī quesiuit·Ergo o fideles inceptus dī currite· ne uos damnatio mortis appē hendat·Nouū adā imitamini· et uetere hominē abicite·Nā currenti regnū dī apti ē·in tra autē iacenti clausū ē·S; mi seri s illi·qui diabolū uenerantur·dm ignorantes·Quom· Qui dm unū in trinitate nō colunt·nec trinitatē in unitate scire uolunt·Vnde qui salua ri uult·integra et catholica fide nō dubitet·Quid ē hoc· uō patrē nō colit·q̄ filiū ab xxxvi negat·nec filiū diligit q̄ patrē ignorat·nec patrē nec filiū habet·q̄ spm scm abicit· nec spm scm accipit·q̄ patrē et filiū nō uenerat·Ergo unitas in trinitate·& trinitas in unitate in telligenda ē·O homo·nūq̄d est sine corde et sine sanguine uiuens· Sic nec pater sine filio·nec sine spū scō·nec spūs scūs sine ipsis ē ere denduſ ē·S; pat filiū suū predesp tione hominis misit in mundū· & inter ū adse retraxit cū·sic et ho cogitationes cordis sui emittit·& intrū ipsas adse recolligit·Vnde de hac salutifera unigenti dī mis sione·ysaias inuolutam supne maiestatis loquū dicens· Verbū misit dns in iacob·et cecidit in israt·Q̄d dr·Verbū p q̄d oīa facta s·scilicet unigenitū dī q̄ in corde patris sedm diuinitatē semp sine initio temporis fuit· ipsū misit dns ut delicet supni pat̄ pora pphetarū in iacob·cui ipsi cum de filiū dī in mundū p salute hominū uenturū fideliter pnunciarent·quatinus hoīes p eos pmonita et pmunita diabo lum prudenter subplantarent·& uersucias deceptionū illi sapi enter declinarent·Cetera ide uer bū cecidit in israt·cui ide unige nitus dī uenit in natiā uirginis·de qua nullus ui gressū suū possunt·s; que flore suū inuiolabiliter tenuit·ut ip se natus ex uirgine·eos q̄ lum uerna ps fallace cecitate ig norabant·aduerū inter reduce ret·et in deficiente salutis resti

xxxvi·y.

tuicrer· Unde quicūq; sciam ām in
spū scō· et pennas in fide haber·
ist admonitionē meā n̄ transcen
dat·s; cā ingustu animę suę am
plectendo ꝓcipiat· Quinta ussio
ꝓme partis·;

Dso
hec

Audi uelut q̄nda mulierē
imaginē· auertice usq; ad
umbilicū pallidā et abum
bilico usq; ad pedes nigm·
et impedib; sanguineā· cir·
ca pedes suos candidissi
mā et purissimā nubē habentē·
oculos autē n̄ habebat· manus ů suas
subascellas suas posuerat· stans uac
ta altare· q̄d ē ante oculos dī·s;
ipsū n̄ tangebat· et in corde
ipsius stabat abrahā· et in pectо
re eī moy·ses· ac inuenire ipsius re
liqui ꝓphete· singuli signa sua
demonstrantes et pulchritudi
nē ecclę admirantes· Ipsa ů tan
te magnitudinis apparuit ue
luti aliqua turris alicuī ciuita
tis ē· habens in capite suo· q̄si
circulū simile aurore· Audiui
ueꝝ uocē de cęlo dicentē mihi·
Antiquo ppło· austeritatē le
gis dns imposuit cū abrahe circū
cisionē indixē· quā postea in
gr̄am suauitatis conuertit cū
ꝓ filiū suū ueritatē euāgelii ere

dentib; docuit· ubi iugo legis sauci
atos· oleo mitię delinuit· Qua
ꝓpt̄ uides uelut q̄ndā muliebrē
imaginē auerticē usq; ad umbili
cū pallidā· que ē sy·nagoga ma
ter incarnationis filii dī et castos
et abiricio surgentiū filioꝝ suoꝝ
usq; ad fortitudinē eoꝝ secreta
dī in obumbratione p̄uidens·s;
et n̄ plenit apiens· illa autē ru
bans aurora que apte loquit̄ n̄ et
istens·s; cā in multa admiratione
a longe intuens· et sic in cam
eis canticoꝝ de ipsa dicens· Que
ē ista que ascendit ꝑ desertū de
licijs affluens· et innixa sup di
lectū suū· Q̄d dī· Que ē hec noua
nupta que in plurimis bonis
opib; se eleuat ꝑ deserta paganoꝝ
legalia p̄cepta sapientię dī de
serentiū et idola adorantium·
ascendens ad supna desideria·
delicijs donoꝝ sp̄s sci habundans·
ac si multo studio anhelans· et
se ponens sup sponsū suū scili
cet filiū dī· Hec enī ē· que a filio
dī donata in p̄claris uirtutib;
uigeat· et in multis scripturarū
habundat· S; et ita de sy·nago
ga de filius ei de noue sponse
ꝑ multā admirationē in ser·
uo meo isaia ꝓpha sic dicit·
Qui s̄ bu qui ut nubes uo
lant· et quasi colūbe ad
fenestras suas· Q̄d dī· Qui s̄ isti
qui in n̄itib; suis se abstraben
tes de utens accarnalib; con

cupiscentiis plenodesiderio et
plena deuotione adsupna uolam
et columbina simplicitate absq;
amaritudine fellis sensus corpo
ris sui munuit. et munimentū
firmissime petre quę unigenitus
di ē multo ardore bonarū uir
tutū appetuit. Hu cui s. q. ppt
supnū amorē ūrena regna con
culcauit. et celestia quert. Hec sy
nagoga admirabat de ecclā quo
se bis uirtutib; ita munitā nō cog
nouit. sicut illā puidit. quia
ecclā anglicis psidiis circūdata
ē. ne eā diabolus dilaniet et deuo
ret cui synagoga adō deserta in
uicus iacebat. Qua ppt uides
eiā ipsā abumbilico usq; adpe
des nigrā. q̄d ē a fortitudine sue
dilatationis usq; ad consūmatu
onē sue extensionis. inp̄uaricatu
one legis et inuransgressione te
stamenti patrū suoꝝ sordidā. qa
multis modis diuina p̄cepta ne
glexit. et uoluptatē carnis sue
secuta ē. Et inpedib; sanguinea.
circa pedes suos candidissimā et
purissimā nubē habet. quō in
consūmatione sua ppham ppha
tarū. occidit ubi et ipsa lapsa
corruit. in eadē tam consū
matione. lucidissima et spica
cissima fide inimīb; credentiū
surgentē. qua ubi synagoga
consūmationē accepit ecclā sur
rexit. cui aplica doctrina post
mortē filii di se p totū orbē ūa
rū dilatauit. Sed eadē imago
oculos nō habet. manus ū suas sub as
cellas suas ponit. quia synagoga
inueta lucē nō aspexit. cui unigeni
tū di in despectu habuit. unde et
opa iustitie subtractio pigritie sue
torporē a se nō pitiens tegit. s; ea ue
lut nō sint negligenti abscondit.
stans iuxta altare. q̄d ē ante ocu
los di. s; ipsū nō tangit. quō legē di
quā diuino p̄cepto et diuina in
spectione accepit. excuti q̄ide
nouit. s; eā interius nō extirpat. qa
eā pocius abhorruit q̄m diligere
ret. sacrificia et incensū deuota
rū orationū dō offerre negli
gens. S; incorde ipsius stat abra
hā. quō in circūcisionis in
synagoga ipse fuit. et in pectto
re ei moysēs. qa in p̄cordia ho
minū diuinā legē ille amulit.
ac inuentute ipsius reliqui pphē.
idē in structione illa quę ipsi
diuinitus tradita fuerat inspec
tores diuinoꝝ p̄ceptoꝝ. singuli
signa sua demonstrauerūt. et pul
chritudinē ecclē admirantes.
quō ipsi miracula pphetę sue
immutabilib; signis ostenderēt. et
speciosiorē generositatis nouę
sponse inmulta admiratione
adtenderēt. Ipsa uero tante
magnitudinis apparet. uelut
aliqua turris alicuius ciuitatis
ē. qua magnitudinē diuinoꝝ
p̄ceptoꝝ suscipiens. munitionē
et defensionē nobilis et electe

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cuntaus ꝓnunciauit·habens in
capite suo quasi circulu simile
aurore·quia etiā mortui suo mi
raculū incarnationis unigenti
di ꝓsignauit·et claras uirtutes
ac mysteria que secutē ꝓmon
strauit·Nā ipsa uidit inprimo
mane coronata fuit·cū diuina
ꝓcepta accepit·designans ad ā·
qui primū mussionē di ꝓcepit·s;
posita inobedientie transgressione sua in
mortē cecidit·Sic et iudei fecerūt·
qui diuinā legē primitus susce
perūt·s;deinde filiū di inuidie odio
sua abiecerūt·S;& sic homo
ꝓmortē unigenti di circa no
uissimū tēpus de ꝓditione ~~mor~~
~~tione~~ mortis ereptus ē·ita et sy·
nagoga ante nouissimū diē ꝓ
diuinā clemētiā excitata·inue
dulitatē deseruit·et ad cognitio
nē di ueracit ꝓuenit·Q̄d ē hoc·
Nonne aurora ante solē asce
dit·S;aurora recedit·et claritas
solis ꝓmanet·Quid ē hoc·Ij enim
testamentū recessit et ueritas
euāgelii ꝓmanet·quia que ante
qui in legalib; observationib;
carnaliter observabant·hec no
uus ꝑpls innouo testamento spi
ritaliter exercet·quo q̄d illi in
carne ostendebāt·hoc isti inspu
ꝑficiunt·Nā circūcisio n̄ ꝓfuit· vnj·
quia in baptismū translata ē·
quo ut illi in uno m̄bro signa
ta s̄·sic et isti in omn̄ib; m̄bris su
is·Vnde antiqua ꝓcepta n̄ ꝓfuit·

vii·

q̄a in meliorē statū translata s̄·
cū etiā in nouissimo tempore sy·
nagoga ad ecclām se fideliter
transferret·Nā o sy·nagoga cū
in multis in q̄tumlib; errares·ita
q̄d baal et cū ceteris his similib;
te pollueres·consuetudinē legis
turpissimis moribus fendens·et
nuda in peccatis tuis iacens·fecit
te ezechiel seruus m̄s loquitur
dicens· Expandi amictū meū
sup te & operui ignominiā tuā·
et iuraui tibi et ingressus sū pac
tū tecū·q̄d dr̄·Ego filiū altissimi
uoluntate patris mei exten
di incarnationē meā o sy·nago
ga sup te ide ꝓsalute tua·auste
rens peccata tua que in multis
obliuionib; opta es·et firmauit
tibi remediū saluationis·ita
q̄d in uinea federis mei ad salutē
tuā manifestauit·cū uerā fide
ꝓplicā doctrinā tibi apud·qui
nus p̄cepta mea obseruares·ue
lut mulier· potestatem marti suo
subiacere debet·Nā a spirituē
exēplaris legis ante abstuli·et sua
uirtute spiritalis doctrine tibi
dedi·ac oīa mysteria mea in
spīritalib; doctrinis ꝓmente ꝓpſv
to ostendi·S;tu me iustū de
seruisti·et diabolo te coniunxi
isti·Sed tu o homo intelligere
scilicet ut samsonē uxor· ipsi
deseruit·ita q̄d lumine suo pri
uatus ē·sic et sy·nagoga filiū
dī deseruit·cū eī obdurata

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Vi. Visio prime partis.

spreuit· & cū doctrinā illius abiecit·S; postquā deinde capilli ei' iā renati s·ma q̄d ecclā di confortata ē·ide fili' di in fortitudine sua sy'nagogā deiecit·et natos illi' exheredauit· cū eā p̄ paganos dim ignorantes in celo di contra s·Ipsa cū multis erroribꝫ·toti' confusionis et scismatis se subiecerat· & cū p̄uaricationibꝫ·toti' inq̄tatis se polluerat·S; eā q̄ē admodū dauid uxorē suā· quā sibi primitus desponsauerat·& q̄ cū alio uiro se polluerat·tandē reuocauit· ma eā et fili' di sy'nagogam q̄ sibi primū incarnatione sua conuncta erat·s; grām baptismi deserens·diabolū se cuta fuerat·tandē extra nouissimū tēpus recipiet·ubi ipsa errores infidelitatis suę deserens ad lum̄ uertatis redibit· Nā diabolus sy'nagogā inceca tate illius rapuerat·et eā infidelitatis in multis erroribꝫ·tra dideratnec hoc usq;·ad filiū p̄dictionis facere cessabit·Qui dū in exaltatione superbię suę ceciderit·uelut saul in monte gelboe inf̄fectus expiraui·t· qui dauid de tra sua fugauerat sicut eā fili' inq̄tatis filius meū in electis suis expellere tēptabit·tunc ide fili' m̄s antichristo deiecto sy'nagogā

adueniā fidē reuocabit·sicut et dauid primā uxorē suā p' mortē saulis recepit·cū innouissimo tēpore homines illū p quē decepti fuerant uidebunt·et ad uiā salutis cū multa festinatione recurrent·Non aut̄ decuit·ut ueritatis euglīi umbrā legis pre nunciaret·quo decet ut carnalia p̄curram et spūalia subsequam̄·quia cū a seruus dn̄m suū uenturū p̄dicat·et n̄ dn̄s seruū inserturo p̄currit·et ecclā in lumine ueritatis subsecuta ē· Vnde qui cūq; scientiā in spū sco & pennas in fide habet·iste admonitionē meā n̄ transcendat·s; cā ingustu animę suę amplectendo p̄capiat·

Ista ẽ synagoga tumba figificatio nis p̄cucurrit·

Ẽ in

de

uidi in altitudine celestiū secretorū duas acies supnoꝝ spūuū multa claritate fulgentes·ita ut qui in una acie erant uidentur pennas in pectoribꝫ suis habebāt· & facies ut facies hominū in se p̄tendebant·in quib·& uultus hominū·q̄si in pura aqua apa

rebant·ꝛ q̄ macie alia fuer̄t ea-
in pectorib; suis q̄si pennas habu
erunt· et facies ut facies hominꝝ
inse ostenderẽt·in quib; ea ima
go filii hominis uidit in specu
lo fulgebat·S; nec in his nec in
illis aliã formã discernere po
tui· He autẽ acies·aliasq̄ q̄q;
acies scdm modũ corone circũ
cinxerant·Et qui macie una
istarũ fuer̄t·quasi facies homi
nũ habebant·ab humero ꝛ de
orsũ magno splendore fulgen
tes·qui uero malia erant tame
clarnatis extimer̄t·q̄d eos in
tueri ñ poterã·ꝛ qui malia·ut
albũ marmor apparuer̄t·ꝛ ca
pita ut capita hominũ habue
runt·sup quę tardemis facie
ę uise s ꝛ ab humero et de or-
sũ uidit ferrea nube circũdari
fuer̄t·ꝛ qui malia facies ut fa
cies hominũ·ꝛ pedes ut pedes
hominũ habentes·in capitibus
suis galeas gestabant·marmo
reas tunicas indut·ꝛ q̄ malia
erant nullã formã hominũ in
se ostendentes·uelut aurora ru
bebant·Nullã autẽ aliã formã
meas conspiciebã·S; ꝛ acies istę
alias duas etiã in modũ corone
circũdederant·Qui autẽ in una
acie illarũ erant·oculis et pen
nis plenis uidebant·ꝛ in quo q;
oculo·speculũ·ꝛ in ipso speculo
facies hominis apparuit·ꝛ pen
nas suas ad supnã altitudinẽ
eleuarant·ꝛ q̄ malia fuerunt
quasi ignis ardebant·plurimasq;
pennas habentes·in eis de pennis
quasi in speculo omnis ordines
ecclĩastice institutionis insigni
tos demonstrabant·S; aliã for-
mã nec in his nec in illis uidi·Et
hę acies omnis in omni genere musi
corũ mirabilib;·uocib;·miracu
la illa resonabant quę ds̄ in beа
tis animab; operat·ꝛ quę dñs mag
nifice glificabant·Et audiui uo
cẽ de celo m̄ dicentẽ· O mps
et ineffabilis ds̄·qui ante scla fu
it·S; nicũ ñ habuit·nec post
finẽ sclõꝝ cẽ desinet·omnẽ creа
turã mirabili modo sua uolun
tate condidit·ꝛ eãq; mirabili
modo sua uoluntate disposuit·
Quomodo·Quasdã creaturas
tremis adherere·q̄sdã ũ celestib;
inesse deputauit·Ipse quoq;
beatos angelicos spũs tã ad salu
tẽ hominũ·qui ad honorẽ no
minis sui disposuit·Quomodo·
Nã quosdã ita constituit ut
necessitatib;·hominũ subueni
ant·quosdã uero ut iudicia
secretaq; suaꝝ pcos hominibus
manifestentẽ·Qua ppt̄ uides
in altitudine celestiũ secretaq;
duas acies supnaq; spũaũ mul
ta claritate fulgentes·q̄a ut
ibi demonstratur·in altitudi
ne illaq; occultaq; quę carnalis
obtutus ñ penetrat·S; quę in
sius interioris hominis actu

dñi hec duo agmina corpus et
animā hominis dō familiari de
bere designant· ubi ipsa cū sup
nis ciuib; claritatē cōmē beati
tudinis habent· Et qui in ·11·
una acie s̄· uidēt pennas in
pectoribus suis habent et facies
ut facies hominū inse pūen
dunt· inquib; et uultus homi
nū· quasi in pura aqua appa
rent· quo isti angli s̄ deside
ria p̄fundunt· intellectus sui·
quasi pennas expandentes· ī
qd pennas ut aues habeant·
s; q̄d uoluntatē dī indeside
rius suus uelocit̄ p̄ficiant· ue
lut homo incognitionib; su
is celerit̄ uolat· ita q̄d et p̄ fa
cies suas pulchritudinē rationa
litatis inse manifestant· ubi
etiā dñs opa hominū p̄spicue
p̄seruat· quia ut seruus uer
ba dñi sui audiens· ita secdm
uoluntatē illi p̄ficit· ita et ip
si uoluntatē dī in hominib;
attendunt· et actus eoꝝ illi in
seme ipsis ostendunt· Vnde ·iii·
et qui in acie alia s̄· etiā in pec
toribus suis quasi pennas ha
bent· et facies ut facies hoīū
inse ostendunt· inquib; etiā
imago filii hoīs uidet inspe
culo fulget· qui archangli s̄·
etiā indesiderius intellectus
sui uoluntatē dī attenden
tes· et decorē rationalitatis
inse manifestantes· incarna
tū uerbū dī purissime magni
ficant· q̄a ipsi archana dī cog
noscentes· misteria incarnatio
nis filii dī signis suis multociēs
p̄uenerabant· s; nec in bis nec in
illis aliā formā discernere po
tes· quo et in anglis et in archan
gelis multa secreta misteriaꝝ s̄·
que humanus intellectus mor
tali corpore grauatus capere n̄
ualet· Qd autē hec acies alias q̄nq;
acies secdm modū corone cin
gunt· hoc ē q̄d corpus et aīa
hoīs· quinq; sensus hominis
uirtute fortitudinis sue cōp
hendentes· p̄ quinq; uulnera
filii mei emundatos ad rectitu
dinē uoluntatis mandatoꝝ dirige
re debent· Vnde q̄ in acie ·iiii·
una istarū s̄· quasi facies homi
nū habent· ab humero et de or
su magno splendore fulgentes·
qui uirtutes s̄· in corda creden
tiū ascendentes· et in ardentis
carnatis excelsā turrim inex
edificantes· que opa ipsoꝝ s̄· ita
q̄d in rationalitate sua opa elec
torū hominū ostendunt· et in
fortitudine sua ad bonū finē
multo fulgore beatitudinis
ipsos p̄ducunt· Quomodo· Sci
licet cū electi claritatē interio
ris sensus habentes· oīs nequi
cias malaꝝ suaꝝ abiciunt· p̄p̄ē
illuminationē illā· qua in ipsis
uirtutib; in mea uoluntate illu
minati s̄ fortit̄ aduersus dia

bolicas insidias pugnant·& certamina illa que ipsi hoc modo contra diabolicā turbā habēt ut tunc ist̄e in creatori ipsoꝝ necessariō demonstrant·Nā homines certamina confessionis et abnegationis habent in sequomodo·ita q̄d iste me confitetur·et q̄d ille me abnegat·S; in hoc certamine talis inīrogatio ē·Cst dꝫ annon·Tunc inīrogatio ista tale responsū spūs scī in hoīe habet·Dꝫ ē·qui te creauit·S; et ipse te redemit·S; quādiu inīrogatio et responsū hoc in homine ē·ut tus dī illi nō de trit·quia huic inīrogationi et responso pertinacia adhereat·Vbi autē inīrogatio hec in homine nō ē ibi nec hoc responsū spūs scī ē·quō homo iste donū dī a se expellit·et sine inīrogatione pertinacie semetipsū in mortē p̄cipitat·Certamina ū istorū bellorꝝ ut tunc dō offert·quia ipsi tale sigillū corā dō s·p q̄d demonstrabit̄ qua intentione dꝫ colat̄ et abnegēt·

Qui aut̄ malia acie s·tante claritatis existunt·q̄d eos inuicti nō potest·qui potestatis s designatus·quō serenitatē et pulchritudinē potestatis dī nulla inbecillitas mortalitatis peccatorꝝ app̄hendere potuit·nec se ipsi simulē facere·q̄a potestas dī indeficiens ē·

Sed qui in

s alia acie s·ut albū marmor
s apparent·& capita ut capita
s hominū habent·sup que tar
s dentes facule uident·et ab hu
s mero & deorsū uelut ferrea nu
s be circūdati s·q̄ principatus s·
p̄figurantes q̄d hi qui ex dono
dī in sctō principes hominū ex
istunt·sincerā fortitudinē in
stitie induant·ne in diuersita
te instabilitatis incidant·s; ut
caput suū q̄d xp̄c dī filiū ē in
spiciant·ac regimina sua scdm
uoluntatē ipsius in necessitatib;
hominū dirigant·sup se grām
scī spūs ardore uehementius attendentes·ita q̄d in fortitudine eq̄
tatis usq; ad consūmationē suā
firmi et stabiles p̄seuerent·
nde etiā qui in alia acie s·
facies ut facies hominū et
pedes ut pedes hominū haben
tes·in capitib; suis galeas gestant·
marmoreas tumentes indunt·qui
dnationes s ostendentes·quia
ille qui dns omniū ē rationa
litatē hominū·que in humano
pulvere pollutā iacuerat aīam
ad celos sublevauit·cū filiū
suū aduocatas misit·qui antiquū
seductorē sua rectitudine con
culcauit·ita ut fideles ipsiū q̄
caput eox ē fidelit̄ imitentur·
spē suā ad celestia ponentes·
ac forti desiderio bonox opū
se munientes·

ed qui in alia acie s·nulla formā ho

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mundū in se ostendentes. uelut
aurora rubentē. qui thronī s̄. de
monstrantes. q̄d diuinas ad
humanitatē se inclinauit. cū
unigenitus dī humanū corpus
psalit hominū indut. q̄ nul.
la contagia humanoꝝ peccatoꝝ
in se habuit. quō ipse de spū sc̄o
conceptus. maurora undecies
inbeata uirgine carnē absq;
omni macula uicius sordis ac
cepit. S; nullā aliā formā inest
conspicis. q̄a plurima misteria
supnoꝝ secretoꝝ s̄. que fragili
tas humana nō potest appbēn
dere. Q̄d autē et aciem iste. alias
duas inmodū corone circum
dant. hoc ē q̄d fideles illi qui
quinq; sensus corporis sui ad
supna dirigunt. seq̄ntes q̄a p
quinq; uulnera filii dī redepti
s̄. ad dilectionē dī et proximi sui
omni annisu et circumspectione nitūt
sue peccatis. cū uoluptatē
cordis sui negligunt. et spē
suā ad inūna ponunt. Qua ix.
ppē et q̄ in una acie illarū s̄.
oculis et pennis plenū uidentes.
et in quoq; oculo speculū. et
in ipso speculo faciem hominis
apparere. et pennas suas ad sup
nā altitudinē elenantes. qui
cherubin s̄ scientiā dī signi
ficantes. in qua ipsi misteria
supnoꝝ secretoꝝ uidentes desi
deria sua. secm uolumtatē dī
exspirant. ita q̄d ipsi in ipsum
dilate sciente sue purissimā p
spicuitatē habentes. in ipsa illos
mirabilit̄ pūdent. qui uerū
dim cognoscentes. in memoriam
desiderio & cordis sui ad ipsū q̄
sup oēs ē uelut pennas bone &
iuste subleuationis dirigunt.
magis etiā diligentes. quā ca
duca appetentes. secm q̄d et
ipsi in releuatione desideriorū
suoꝝ ostendunt. Sed q̄ malia x.
acie s̄. quasi ignis ardent. plu
rimasq; pennas habentes. in
eis dē pennis. quasi in speculo
oīs ordines ecclīastice institu
tionis insignitos demonstrant.
qui seraphin s̄. significantes.
ut sicut ipsi in amore dī ar
dent. et ut maxima desideria
uisionis ei habent. ita q̄d etiā
in eis de desideriis suis cū multa
puritate tā sclārēs quā spūales
dignitates. que in ecclīastucis mi
steriis uigent ostendunt. q̄a se
creta dī in ipsis mirabilit̄ appa
rent. sic etiā oīs q̄ sinceritatē
puri cordis amantes supnā ui
tā quer̄t. ardenter dim diligant.
eiq; uoto desiderio amplectan
tur. quatinus ad gaudia illoꝝ
pueniant. quos tā fideliter
imitant. Q̄d uero aliā formā
nec in his nec in illis uidet. hoc
ē q̄d multa secreta in beatis
spūb; s̄. que homini manu
festanda nō s̄. quō quādiu
ipse mortalis existit ea que

cōma s̄ pfecte discernere n̄ potuit.

.xi. Sed beatis oīs ut audis moī
genere musicoꝝ mirabilib; uo
cib; miracula illa resonant quę
ds in beatis animab; opat̄ pquę
dm magnifice glificant qa bea
tu spūs in ut̄ dī maxima gau
dia in ineffabilib; sonis popa
muraculoꝝ illoꝝ inc̄elestib; pferunt
quę ds in scīis suis pficit pquę
ipsi dm glōsissime magnificant. ·ii·
ubi cū in̄pfunditate scīatus ex ·iii·
quirunt l̄etant̄ in gaudio salu
tis. uelut etiā dauid seruus m̄s in
spector supnoꝝ secretoꝝ, dicens. ·iiii·

.xiij. Vox exultationis et salutis in
tabernaculis iustoꝝ. Qd dicit̄.
Sonus l̄etitię et pspertatis illius
qd caro conculcat̄ et spūs erigit̄.
cū indefectibilis salutis cognoscit̄
in habitationib; illoꝝ qui in iusti
cia abiciunt et iustitiā faciunt. ·vii·
cū suggerente diabolo id qd ma
lū ē facere possent. s; diuina in̄spi ·viii·
ratione id qd bonū ē pficiunt.
Quid ē hoc. Homo multociens in
epta exultationē in se ostendit. ·ix·
cū peccatū illud pfecerit. qd pfi
cere inconuenient̄ concupiuit.
s; salutē ibi n̄ habet qa hoc fecit ·x·
qd diuino p̄cepto contrariū fu
it. Ille aut̄ turpitudiū exultatio
nis cū pspitate uere salutis ha ·xi·
bebit. qui bonū qd ardent̄ desi
derauit strenue cōplet. man
sionē illoꝝ diu in corpore habitat ·xii·
amans. q̄ uia uermis cum tenuis

errorē mendacii declinauerunt.
Vnde quicūq; scientiā in spū scō
et pennas in fide habet. iste admo
nitionē meā n̄ transcendat. s; eā
in gustu anime suę amplectendo
p̄capiat. aō.

INCIPIVNT capla sc̄de parus.
Capla .i. usionis .ii. parus.
de omnipotentia di.
Verba Iob ad eand̄e rem.
Quod uerbū ant̄ et p̄ assūpta
humanitatē indiuisibilit̄ et coēterna
fuit apud patrē est.
Quare filius di dr uerbū.
Quod uirtute uerbi di omnis cre
atura sustentata ē. et homo reuixit
in saluatione.
Quod incōprehensibilis potentia
di mundū fabricauit et diuer
sas species eduxit.
Quod creatus alius creaturis. ho
delimo tr̄ creatus ē.
Qd ad duplici p̄cepto claris
simę obedientię accepto. consilii
ant̄ diabolo n̄ obediunt.
Quod abrahā ysaac et iacob &
alii pphete mundi tenebras
significationib; suis repulserit.
Quod p̄cipuus pphēta Iohes
miraculis coruscans. filiū di p̄
monstrauit.
Quod uerbo di incarnato. il
lud magnū et amq; suū consi
lium usū est. manifestare.
Quod homo secreta di n̄ debet
plus scrutari quā ipse ulti ma

Quod filius dī natus in mundo .xxiij.
morte sua diabolū supauit. et
electos suos ad hereditatē suā re
duxit. ¶ fundata ē. b

Verba oseę de eadē re. .xxiij.

Quod corpus filii dī in sepulchro .xv.
puridiū iacens resurrexit. et ho
mini uia ueritatis de morte ad
uitā ostensa ē.

Quod filius dī a morte resur- .xvi
gens. discipulis suis frequenter ad
corroborandū eos apparuit.

Quod filio dī ascendente ad pa .xvij.
trē. sponsa ei diuersis ornatus
Capla sedę. uisionis. ii. paruus.

De sensu misterioꝝ di- .primū.
De trib; psonis. .ij.

Quod homo nūquā obliuiscat- .iij.
tur dīm utrib; psonis ardenter
inuocare.

Ioh̄s de carnate dī. iiij.

De trib; turib; lapidis. .v.

De trib; turib; flāmę .vi.

De trib; causis humanū uerbi- .vij.

De unitate essentię. .viij.

Verba salomonis. ix.

Capla tercię uisionis. ii. paruus.

De constructione ecclę quę sēp primū
gignit filios suos in regeneratio
one spūs et aquę. ¶ ecclā.

Quod ecclā in mortu suo inaplis ij.
et martyrib; decorata ē.

Quid in sacerdotali officio et ele .iij.
mosinarū distributione ornat.

De mātia benignitate ecclę. iiij.

Quod ecclā ad candorē cōplc v.
uonis suę in dū pfecta. circa tē
pus filii pdmonis ad pfectū pducit.

Quomodo ecclā filios suos in pu .vj.
ritate deuotissime offert.

Quid ecclām nulla puersitas dia .vij.
bolice artis obscurare potest.

Quod secreta eccle. humanus in .viij.
tellectus ad plenū intuerī nō ualet.

De cuiusuitate marię. viij.

De dilatatione sacramentorū .x.
uere trinitatis.

Quod cuiq; fidelium ad ē ministe .xj.
rii angloꝝ.

De his qui in fide sēe trinitatis .xij.
amatre ecclā regeneratā ipsa
integra pmanente.

Similitudo de balsamo et om .xiij.
chino et carbunculo.

Quod beata trinitas in baptis .xiiij.
mo apto cęlo baptizantis appa
ret et eis nigredinē peccatoꝝ
abstrahens. singulos candida
ueste induit. ¶ plexlex.

De querimonia ecclię sup er- .xv.
rore filioꝝ. ¶ gaude eī.

Quod duo signa tradita s̄ ho .xvi.
minib; ad defendendū se.

Similitudo de unicorne. .xvij.

Quare adę nō erat danda du .xviij
Quod ānonimo spūs scī appa .xviiij.
rens minabat antiquo serpen
ti nisi circūcisio pcussit eī
in maxilla mandibulā. ecclā u

De trib; aliis qd̄ significent. .xx.

Quod masculi qui intra octo .xxi.
circūcisionis circūcisi nō s̄ uan
gressores legis fuerūt.

Sicut in circumcione adę uer .xxij

cause designate s̄ma cruc̄is ·ii·
cause s̄ mutuo impetrandis filius.
xxiiij. q̄d mulier mamorte di obseruans ·iij·
uirginitatē suā ualide ornat adō.
xxiiij. Quod uir recusans ēsortiū ma ·iiij·
trimoniū mamorte di consorsi
ui di efficit.
xxv. Verba ysaie ppbe. ·v· ¶ uū di. ·vi·
xxvi. qd casus adq; clausit homini celū-
que clausura durauit usq; adfi ·vii·
xxvii. Verba euglii.
xxviii Verba exhortamus di.
xxix. Quod incircūcisione abrahe
membrū unū ·mbaptismo aiē
xp̄i oīa membra circūcidunt.
xxx Verba euglii. ¶ aiē. ¶ pu.
xxxi. Quod oīi tēpore et omi etate ·
omnē sexū udelicet masculū et ·x·
feminā mbaptismo pie dē suscipi
xxxii. Quod tres mhonore sce trinita ·xi·
tis adesse debent baptizando ui
delicet sacerdos et duo q̄ pillo fi
dē spondeant et isti eidē bapti
zato carnali copula n̄ cōmisce ·
xxxiij. Cōparatio demfamis. ·xij·
xxxiiij. Quod oīa peccata mbaptismo
remittuntur. ¶ eo suscipit. ·xiij·
xxxv Quod quāuis sacerdos peccator ·xiiij·
sit tamē officiū baptismi dē ab ·xv·
xxxvi. Similitudo dediuite. ·p uū·
xxxvij. Inecessitate si sacerdos n̄ adē
concedit cuilibet fideli homi
ni baptizare seruata forma
baptismi. ¶ bet. ·xv·
Capla q̄rte uisionis ·ii· partis. ·xvi·
p uū. Qd omīs baptizatus punctio
nē epi ornari et stabiliri de ·xvij·

Quod immensa et indeficiens
dulcedo spūs sc̄i dat confirmatoe.
Quod ineffabilis trinitas in ē
firmatione. ¶ uis datea potē.
Quod ecclā unctione spūs sc̄i mu
nita ·nūquā incurrere puersita
Verba moysi de eade re.
Qd baptizatu munctione cris
matis a pontifice decorant.
Verba libri regū adeande re.
Quod baptizatus et n̄ confir
matus ·claritate baptismatis
habet ·s; ornatu et fulgore unc
tionis superioris doctoris sui n̄ hab.
viij. Quod in honore spūs sc̄i p̄solos
episcopos confirmatio exercen
da est. ¶ comungat.
Qui confirmandu manib; ut
net ·incarnali pcreatione et n̄
dēpnabit. qui aut baptismū
fidelit sequit ·adō suscipitur:
ecclā pfilius suus dm exoratte.
Tres modi quib; ecclā resonat
ut tuba. ¶ multimoda.
De diuersitate baptizatorū
Verba ebrebiclis de eode.
Capla ·v· usionis ·ii· partis.
Qd apli et pigmarii sequaces
ex udelicet sacerdotes ecclām
doctrina sua splendidissime
circūdant.
Exemplū de abel
Quod ministri ecclē castitatē
seruare debent.
Qui exhis in clausura subiecto

nis regularit̄ uiuunt cura p̄gri
tarios nī habeamus supna mercede
acquirt. ¶ginee iocundnatus.
De statu nobilissime pfectionis ur: v.
De puellari imagine. vi.
De turba que cande circūstat mi vii.
ro modo ornata.
Verba iobis de eode. viii.
Qd uirginitas do oblata pru viiij.
dent conseruanda ē. ¶capit.
Qui corrupto pacto uirginitatis .x
redierit. flore integritatis care
bit. nī enī ut dna s; ut ancilla sius
exemplū adcande rē. xi.
Qd magna differentia ē int̄ cele xii.
ste desiderii et t̄rena concupis
centia. na qd nisi sanguine filii
di homo nī redimeret̄.
Ecbis q̄ passionē xpi uicarium ar xiij.
dore imitamus. et uiuens odor
ecclesie nis arripiunt.
Verba euglii adcande rē. xiiij.
Qd uirgineū genus et hic ordo xv.
uouens uer secrete regeneratio
nis unpcepto legis nī s.
Exemplū de iobe adcande rē. xvi
Quod q̄ s uiuens odor uouens xvij.
nī secrete regenerationis; p necessi
tate et utilitate ecclē regimen
ecclāsticū suscipiam. et agia secla
riū rerū abiciamus.
Verba euglii de iobe. xviij.
Quod in uestitu istoq; uestitu alioq; xix.
pplōq; dissimili incarnatio et se
pultura xpi designat̄.
Quod prima lux diei aplicam xx.
dochrinā. aurora uicinū huius
conuersationis. sol discretā uā
in benedicto qui ē quasi alter
moyses designat. ¶amt.
Qui in hac conuersatione pbatus xxi.
inuenium̄. p necessitate eccliē
sup excensū sacerdotiū suscipi
Quod nullus conuersationem xxij.
istoq; repente aggrediat̄ nisi in
una; pbatione examinatus.
Quod sclāris pplis; legē di con xxiij.
seruans. ecclām di plurimū ex
ornat.
Quod nec maritus uxorē. nec xxiiij.
uxor maritū in hoc; ppositio de
seruat. nisi uoluntas amboq; sit.
Verba euglii. xxv.
Qd p̄ dicte ecclāstice instituto xxvj.
nes ecclām in gradib; et in ordi
nib; suis consolidant.
Quod in uno quoq; ordine ser xxvij.
uata concordia. diuersitas mo
rū. singularitas et nouitas uite
et uestiū uitanda ē. ¶suoq;
Verba iobis adcande rē. xxviij.
Cōparatio de artificib; xxix. viij.
Qd unicuiq; cū humilitate suf xxx.
ficere debet in statuto p̄decessoq;
Verba euglii de eade re. xxx. j.
euuangelii de his q̄ sibi secm xxx. ij.
cor suū legis faciunt.
hē uerba euglii.
Quod in his nouitatib; dis ali xxx. iij.
quos deiecit aliquos tacite tole xxx. iiij.
rat quos tam̄ in futuro iudicat.
Quod de inferiori gradu licet xxx v.
ascendere ad superiorē. nī aute

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de supior ad inferiorē

xxxvi. Exemplū de anmab; & anglis

xxxvij. Quod q̄ s uuens odor uouens
ner secretæ regnerationis gra
nū fortis cibi. et pigmentarii po
ma dulcis saporis. et sclaris ppls
carnē designant. ¶ pter.

xxxviij. Quod hę res ecclāstice institu
tiones. in duab; uis uersant.

xxxix Qui signū religionis in uolun
tate cordis accepti abiecerit
iudiciū districti examinis accu

xl. Verba dauid de eodē.

xl.j. Q̄d illi q̄ in amore dī s; aliqua
sclari molestia constricti. signū
religionis ficte accipiunt. bala
am assimilantur.

xl.ij. Exemplū de balaam.

xl.iij. Qui signū religionis insipienter
accepit et male consūmauerit
in suā uadit.

xl.iiij Verba ieremie de eodē. ¶ ciat.

xl.v Qui infames suos sēc conuer
sationi subicere uoluerit. hoc
n imprudenter s; sapienter eis con
sentiendo; absq; coactione fa

xl.vj. Exemplū de agro. ¶ guī fac.

xl.vij. Qui uolentes dim sequi. p luuo
rē malicię retraxerit. sacrile

xl.viij. Verba moysi. ¶ canduſ ē.

xl.viij. Qui uoluntate sua seruicū
dī aggredit. et postea contēp
nens neglexerit districte reuo

.l. Verba eugūi.

.l.j. Qui in disciplinante uuentes
nulla castigatione corrigi
uolunt ne gregē dñi. comu

munem excellant.

.l.j. Verba apli ad eande rē.

.l.ij. Q̄d hi qui ficte conuertunt de
cipiunt. et q̄d hi q̄ toto corde
conuertunt ad o susciput.

.l.iij. Verba dauid ad eande rē. ¶ etc.

.l.iij. Qui blasphemiā contra spm sēm
impenitens dixerit. et q̄ se ipsū
mortē p̄cipitauerit hunc dns nes

.l.v. Verba eugūi.

.l.vi. Verba dauid de eodē. ¶ rat.

.l.vij Sup quē blasphemia despatio
nis cadit si cruciatus repugnaue
rit cuius ei ad o subuenit.

.l.viij. Quod in p̄dmone cadit q̄ corp⁹
et animā que dns coniunx sepa

.l.viij. Verba eugūi. ¶ in potestate.

Capla sexte ysionis. ij. partis.
Q̄d ecclā xp̄o in passione sua
iuncta. et sanguine ei⁹ dotata ē.
et saluatio animarū exorta ē.

.lij. Quod dns pat̄ in humilitate filii
sui serpentē antiquū uicit n

.liij. Verba psalmiste.

.liij. Quod ecclā crescens dotē suā de
uote d̄o coram anglis offert. et p
fundnas sacramēt⁹ spūs scō in
spiratē manifestata ē.

.liv. Similitudo de auro.

.lv. Q̄d sacerdotē ad altare ad im
molandū accedentē magna
clarnas cū ministerio supnę spi
rituū effulgēt.

.lvj. Quod in sacramēto altaris dns pa
tē passionis filii sui in salutē
ppli recordat.

.lvij. Quare in sacramēto altaris panis.

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umū·et aqua offeram̄·

Verba iobel decodē· ¶ pleam̄· ·viij·

Quod sacerdos in sacram̄to altaris ·x
ris p̄sens auxiliū di n̄ deserit· sed
nutat manentē donec misteria cō
Du sacerdos sēs sēs·sēs·decantat· ·xj·
et misteria sacram̄ta inchoat·in
cōprehensibilis serenitas cadē sacra
menta irradiat·

Quod diuina clarītas oblationē ·xij·
altaris surs̄u inuisibiliter q̄si in
puncto trahit et remittit·uerā
carnē et ueru sanguinē effectā·

Cōparatio de unguento et saphi ·xiij·
ro adeandē rē· ¶ efficit·

Quare homo hoc spāle donū in ·xiiij
sibiliter sumere n̄ possit· ¶ apparet·

Quod sacerdos fidelit̄ in dīm ere ·xv·
dentē et humili deuotione offe
rentē·oblatio caro et sanguis xp̄i

Simlitudo de pullo et uolatili· ·xvi·
Q̄d uera manifestatione misteria ·xvij·
natiuitatis·passionis·sepulture·
resurrectionis·et ascensionis xp̄i
in sacram̄to altaris ut in speculo

Quādiu fidelis homo dicere de ·xviij·
bet dimitte nobis debita nr̄a sic
et nos dimittam⁹ debitoribꝫ nr̄is·
tādiu passio xp̄i in media di pa
tris apparebit·

Quod oblatio nūquā cruda ca ·xviij·
ro apparet nisi in magna neces
sitate electis demonstret·

Dum canticū innocentis agni ·xx·
cant̄·fideles hoies cōmunicant
ut a p̄uaricatione emundan
tine hereditatu restituant̄·

Verba salomonis in canticis canticoꝝ· ·xxj·
Qualit̄ accipienda sint uerba dn̄i ·xx·ij·
dicta discip̄lis in cena sua decodē mysterio.

Verba dauid adeandē rē· ·xx·iij·

Quod sacramentū illud om̄s sor
des emundans usq; ad nouissimū ·xx·iiij·
hominē colendū ē misteria·

Hec uerba dauid decodē· ·xx·v·

Quare in sacramento altaris pa ·xx·vj·
nis offeratur· ¶ offerat̄·

Verba moysi adeandē rē· ·xx·vij
Quare unū in sacrificio altaris ·xx·viij·

Verba de canticis adidē· ·xxviiij·

Quare in sacram̄to altaris aqua ·xxx·
uino mixt̄ ee debet·

Verba sapientie· ¶ mundicie· ·xxxi·
Hec de libro sapientie· ·xxxij·

Quod ada ante peccatū mun ·xxx·iij
du sanguinē habuit·p⁹ p̄uari
cationē sparsit eū in fetorē in
Q̄d corpus et sanguinē xp̄i ac ·xxx·iiij·
capientes·multa dulcedine
unuificantur· ¶ exercet·

Verba salomonis de eadē re· ·xxx·v·

Quod ad inuocationē sacer ·xxx·vi·
dotis in altari·sacram̄ti cor
poris et sanguis xp̄i p̄ficit̄·

Quod dn̄s omnī creatura po ·xxx·vij·
testatē et fortitudinē uolun
tatis sue secm̄ q̄d sibi placet·

Quod a p̄ma hora diei usq; ·xxx·viij·
ad nonā officiū misse p necessi
tate t̄poris exerceri potest·

Quod oīs reum cōmunicare ·xxx·viij·
debent excepti his qui in op
pinione mortis ponūt̄·
Q̄d diabolus sine suggestione ·xl·

adtur. ccidit homo aiē q̄a fragilis suadentē diabolo ccidit adō subleuatus ē.

xl.i. Quod inpceptione corporis et sanguinis dñi nī q̄mtas ſ; scīa tas considerāda ē.

xl.ii. Cōparatio demanna adeandē q̄d nī ē dubitandū q̄n uerum corpus et uerus sanguis xp̄i sit maltart.

xl.iii. Quod insacramēto altaris tria offerenda s. innoīc trinitatis. panis unū et aqua.

xl.v. Quod sacerdos qui p̄negle gentiā aut p̄infidelitatē aut p̄obliuionē hec tria insacramēto altaris offerre negligerit grauit puniendus ē. ¶ dōē.

xl.vi. Qualit corpus et sanguis xp̄i pp̄lo distribuat. ¶ ert.

xl.vii Qd sacerdos his indumēt⁹ et his uerbis insacramēto altaris mat. scdm q̄d antiqui patres instituerūt.

xl.viii. Verba dñi adnegligentē sacr.

xl.viiii. Qd sacerdos q̄ has copulas inaltari offert abaltari reuti his copulis nī recedat.

xl.x. Quod sacerdos insacramēto altaris mutus et magnis sermonib⁹ nī utat. ſ; scdm ordinationē p̄rior magistrorē. ¶ ſordent.

l. Dequunq; modis cōmunicamus

l.ii. De his qui incorpore lucidi et inanima ignei s.

l.iii De his qui incorpore pallidi et inanima tenebrosi uidentur.

l.iiii De his q̄ incorpore hirsuti et inanima multa immundicia sordent.

l.v De his q̄ incorpore acutissimis spinis circūdantur et anima lep si apparent.

l.vi De his q̄ incorpore sanguinei et anima uelut putidū cadauer fundi uidentur.

l.vii De his q̄ adhoc sacramētū deuota mente et pura fide et de his q̄ contrario corde et uacillante animo accedunt.

l.viii Verba apli.

l.viiii Quod sacramentū altaris magna diligentia et sollicitudine a sacerdote et applo tractandū et custodiendū ē.

l.x. Qd mistica secreta corporis et sanguinis dñi seruanda nī s.

l.xi Quod ministri eccle q̄ nī postuī ſ; pdecia inimicē. q̄a amari et illusores et impolti lapides s. diabolū et baal inimicē et xp̄m uulnerare contendunt q̄si eru cifixores. ¶ bet habere.

l.xii Quod idē ministri eccle omni diligentia exemplo aplōr de bent castitatē seruare et abomī immundicia se abstinere.

l.xiii Verba moysi adeandē rē.

l.xiiii Qd sacerdos duas copulas nī de

l.xv. Quomodo diabolus sit sacerdos sacerdotū.

l.xvi. Verba legis de eodē.

l.xvii. Verba euglii adidē.

l.xviii. Verba apli adeandē rē. ītē paulus de eodē.

l.xix. De trib⁹ generib⁹ eunuchorē.

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Quis ē ualet cōmunere nec sa lxxi.
cerdos aut alī mīnistēr sacerdo
talis ulla occasione fiat.
Qua causa amīe cōiugatus sed lxxii.
posita abiuicē separatis cō
cessū ē imprīmis ut ecclā ad sa
cerdotū accedere et q̄rē modo
nō cedatur.
Similiudo regis de cade re lxxiii.
q̄d immaturi & nō consecrati ec lxxiiii.
clesiā nō suscipiant et ut plures
appetere nō p̄sumat.
Quod de omī pplō xp̄iani noīs lxxv.
sacerdotes boni ingemīscat uti
lis animi uitiositatē membrō
habentes eligendi sūt.
Q̄d femine ad officiū altaris nō lxxvi
debent accedere.
Quod uir femineo uestitu nul lxxvii.
lomodo induat nec femina u
rili nisi aliqua magna necessi
tate coacta. occurrit.
Quod fornicatores mulierū & lxxviii.
incōparabile sit fornicationis
aut malus aut insenectipsis tā
mulieres quā uiri se cōtamī
nantes et p̄ eorū fornicatores
dicrīcte iudicat dūs.
De pollutione q̄ dormiendo lxxix.
Verba moysi de eode. lxxx.
Qui forte in libidine ardet ar lxxxi.
dori suo nullū incendiū sub
ministret.
Quod diuersis uicius grauat lxxxii.
admidiam dī uicon fes
sione fugiat.
Quod remediū pur gatio lxxxiii.

nis et manuq̄ sparsis diui p̄fi
guratī est.
Qui peccata sua confiteri recu lxxxiiii.
sat seipsū decipit.
Quod in hora mortis si sacerdos lxxxv.
nō adē alii homini homo confi
teat in p̄sentia clerīcox.
Q̄d nemo ppē pondus peccatox lxxxvi.
suox desperet. debēnt.
cuglīm de eode. lxxxvii.
Q̄d et p̄ elemosinā p̄ccata et p lxxxviii.
corporalē satisfactionē deleri
De libro sapiencie. lxxxix.
Q̄d elemīa lacus uoluptatū xc
hominū sunt. faciant.
Qui elemosinā dant et q̄ eam xc.i.
suscipiunt hoc inuicē nō
Quod pauper et diuites et ho xc.ii.
norē potestatis appetentes
unusq̄sq; secīm intentionē suā
remuneratur.
Quod sacerdotes exorando xc.iii.
et coercendo moneant pplm
de confessione.
Quod sacerdotes auctoritatē xc.iiii.
magisterii pplō nō ostendentes.
nō sacerdotes s; lupi uocantē.
Q̄d elemīa corā dō ululant xc.v
sup iniquitatē sacerdotū et
celi iniquitatē eox suscipiunt.
Quod sacerdotes habent po xc.vi.
testatē ligandi et soluendi.
Verba cuglīi de eode. xc.vii.
Q̄d nullus absq; culpabili cul xc.viii.
pa liganduſ est.
Quod si aliquis innocens con xc.viiii.
structus fuerit ppē honorē

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di solucionē querere debet·

c. Qd rebelles ad xpm reuerti no
temes·et obduratu nullā miam
querimes·amq; ī serpentē
immamur·

c.j. Verba diaboli·

c.ij. Qd homines de tenebrosita
infidelitatis·p incarnationē fi
li di educti sunt· ¶ possunt·

Capla septime visionis·ii·partis·

i. Qd ds oīa iuste dispensans·et
iniusticia diuersa dona spūs scī declarans·
fideles hoīes in bonis opib; con
fortat ne a diabolo superari ñ

ij. De multitudine fideliū et de
diuina lege cora ipsis extensa·

iij. Quod deceptiones diaboli·
hominib; in hac huī mundi
parte mit· ¶ mit·

iiij. Quod diabolus diuinas et de
licias hoīb; apte et fraudulenter
offert quas qui concupiscit·

v. Quod quida diabolica psua
sione ītrilit et resistentes abi
cium·quida repide inuenies
et consentium·

vj. Verba ezechielis·de cade re·

vij. Qd diabolus omī nequicia ple
nus veneno multiformis artis
sue·quinq; sensus hominū de
cipere laborat·

viij. Quod superbia diaboli incarna
tione filii di derecta ē·

ix. De oculis et auribus·et naribus·ser
pentis quid significent·

x De manib; et pedib; et cauda
et quid significent·

xj. Quod potestas omīpotentis di-
c. formidinē diaboli ma et con
trium qd nequicia sua sedm
uoluntatē suā exercere ñ potē·

xij Quod diabolus in quatuor par-
tib; mundi incendiū iniquit p
c.j. suasionis·in omē genus diuersox
hominū emittit·

xiij. Verba dauid de eodē·

xiiij. Qualit diabolus in gneis p sua
sionib; diuersa genera hominū·
spūaliū et sclariū·multimodis
tēptationib; aggredit·

xv. De urb; acieb; eox· ¶ hominū·

xvj. De tēptatione sclariū· ¶ signif·

xvij. De sex modis tēptationū spūaliū

xviij. De ñ baptizatis· ¶ nificet·

xix. De sagittis ortis et et de fumo pe
ortis et de humore lubrox qd signif·

xx. De urbine umbilici·et de in
mundicia ranarū uenientis et qd·s·

xxj. Qd diabolus stultos homines p
iniquā incredulitatē exagitat·
uerū ee putantes·qd ipse eis fal
lacter demonstrat·

xxij. Quod hereci urendi et ab
ecclā eiciendi s qd diabolū pdo
colunt et sūt uiscera diaboli·et p
currens germ filii pditionis·

xxiij. Quod aduersoriū di comēpnen
tes·gra di deserti·querentib; aū
midtes subuenit·

xxiiij. Verba salomonis de eodē·

xxv. Qd uere cultores di q uno anni
su [illegible] urena conculcant·anni
qui [illegible] serpentē fortu cū moe
dei [illegible] unt·

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Incipit scdā pars libri scalaris simplicis hōis. i. visio. scde partis.

Go homo ñ calens in forma fortuī leonū nec docta ex spiratione illoꝝ ſ; manens in mol lucie fragilis coste inbuta mihi co spiramine. uidi q̄si lucidissi mū ignē. in cōprehensibilē. in ex tinguibilē. uoū uiuentē. uoūq; uitā existentē. inse autē flāmā aerei coloris habentē. que tm flatu ardentē flagrabat. et que eade lucido igni ita inseparabilit inerat. ut hoīe uiscera s. et uidi qđ eade flāma fulminans in can dunt. Et ecce obscurus aer et tro nitruus multiq; magnitudinis repente excortuis ē. sup quē ipsa flāma quosdā ictus dedit uoci ens ab eo scintillā educens. donec idē aer adp̄fectū p̄ductus ē. ita celū et̄a resplendens plena in stitutione. Deinde eadē flā ma inigne et ardore illo exten dit se adparuā glebā limose trē iacentē in fundo eiđē aeris. eā ca lefaciens ita qđ caro et sanguis effecta ē. eāq; aspirans ita quod uuens homo erecta ē. Quo facto.

ille lucidus ignis p̄buit peandē flāmā tm flatu ardentē flagran tē ipsi hoī candidissimū florē pendentē in ea dē flama. ut ros pendet in gramine. cui odorē idē homo naribꝫ. quidē sensit. ſ; gustū eiꝰ ore ñ p̄cepit nec manibꝫ. eū te ngit. ita uidelicet se auertens atq; cadens in densissimas tene bras. de quibꝫ se erigere ñ ualuit. Tenebre autē ille in eodē aere ma gis ac magis sedulando creuerūt. Tunc tres magne stelle in fulgo re suo sibi coheremus in eis dē te nebris apparuerūt. et post eas alie multe tā parue quā magne plu rimo splendore fulgentes. ac deinde quedā maxima stella mira claritate radians. et fulgo rē suū ad p̄dictā flāmā dirigens. Sed et in ea quedā fulgor uelut aurora aparuit. cui eade flāma mirabilit infusa ē. ñ tam apta to lucido igne separata. Et sic in eodē fulgore ipsius aurore maxima uoluntas accensa est. Cūq; eandē ascensionē uoluntas huiꝰ diligentiꝰ considerare uelle. in eade uisione secretū si gillū m̀ opposuit ē. audiuiq; uocē exalto m̀ dicentē. De hoc misterio ñ poteris quicquā am plius udere. ñ ut ubi ꝑ̄ mira culū credendi concedit. Vidiq; de eodē fulgore p̄fate aurore serenissimū hominē egredientē. qui claritatē suā ad p̄dictas te

nebras effundens·ita ab eis reuer
beratus ē q̄d in rubore ē sangui
nis et in albedinē palloris uer
sus·tanta formidine eas de ut
nebras repeuerterit·q̄d ille homo
qui meas iacebat p eū tactus ap
parens fulgeret·atq; ita erectus
exiret·Et sic idē sereni homo q̄
de p̄dicta aurora egressus ē·in
tanta claritate apparens ultra
quā humana lingua effari pos
sit·in acutissimā altitudinē in
numerabilis gl̄ie ascendit·ubi
in plenitudine magnifice fruc
tuosus et odoris mirifice ra
diabat·Et audiui exp̄ facto ui
uentē igne uocē dicentē mi·
o que es misera tua et in noīe fe
mineo indocta de ulla doctri
na carnaliū magistroꝝ scilicet
legere literas p̄mittigentiam
philosophoꝝ·s;tamē tacta lumi
ne meo q̄d tangit te uereri cū
incendio ut ardens sol·clama
et enarra ac scribe hec misteria
mea que uides et audis immu
tata uisione·Noli q̄ timida·
s;dic ea que intelligis inspīm
quēadmodū ea loquor·p̄te·
quatenus illi uerecundiā ha
beant qui pplō meo deberent
rectitudinē ostendere s;de pe·15·
tulantia morū suoꝝ recusant
iustitiā aptē dicere quā nouē
runt·nolentes se abstrahere
de malis desideriis suis·que il
lis ita adherent q̄si sint ma

gistri eoꝝ faciem a eos fugere a
facie dn̄i·ita ut erubescant loq̄
uerecundē·Vnde opus illa animo
que interi est docta de mistico
spiramine·quātus concalcata
sis puritē formā ppt̄ p̄uaricā
tionē cuc tam dicigneū opus
q̄d tibi demonstrat̄ cernissima
ostensione·Iuuens enī dr̄s q̄ cunc
ta superbū suū creauit·p̄idē uer
bū incarnatū miserā humanā
creaturā que se dimersérat in
tenebras·ad fidelē saluationē
reduxit·Quod ē boc·
uicadissimus ignis que uides
de signat omnipotem et uniuersē
dm qui inclarissima serenitate
sua nūquā ulla unq̄tate obfus
catus ē·incōp̄hensibilis manens
quia nulla diuisione potest di
uidi·aut inicio aut fine aut ul
la scintilla scientie creature sue
cōp̄hendi sicut ē·et inextingui
bilis existens·quo ipse ē illa
plenitudo quā nūquā ullus
finis attingit·ac totus uniuers·qa
nulla omīno res ipsi absconsa
ē quā nesciat·totusq; intra ex
istens·quo omne q̄d uiuit ab ipso
uiuere sumit·sedm q̄d iob p̄me
inspiratus ostendit dicens·
uis ignorare·q̄d omīa hec ma
nus dn̄i fecerit·Incipus
manu anima oīs uiuentis·et spūs
uniuerse carnis hoīs·Q̄d ē hoc·
Nulla creatura tā hebes ē inna
tura sua q̄d uicissitudinē plenu

tudmſſuc umllis cauſis ignorā-
mquib; fructuoſa conſiſtūt. Quo
modo. Celū habet lucē lux aerē.
aer uolatilia. & pisces uiuūt uiridita
tē uiriditas fructū. fructus ani
malia. que oīa teſtāt qđ ea po
ſunt fortiſſima manus idē max
ima potencia dñatoris cuncto-
qui oīa impoſſibilitate uirtu
tis ſue ita operatus ē qđ eis nihil
deē inuisib; ſuis. & nomū potēn
cia eiđē fabricatoris ē motuo
cunctos uiuentiū ceteraq; inferio
ra ut pecora quadrupedū. nec ratio
nalitatē inſpiratonis dī haben
tū. et ſuſtentatio eox q humanā
carnē in habitant. inquib; ratio
nalitas diſcretio. et ſapientia ē.
Quomodo. Anima circuit infe
rius cauſis laborans in multis in
ciſſitudinib; ſcdm qđ carnales
mores expoſtulant. Spūs ū erigit
se induob; modis. udelicet ſuſpi
rū gemitū. et deſiderū addm
habens. aut dīm aut regimen.
aut operationē indiuerſis rebus
quaſi inpcepto querens. quia
diſcretionē irrationalitate
habet. Vnde etiā homo ſimili
tudinē celi & terre continet in ſe.
Quomodo. Ipſe habet circuitū.
inquo apparet ſpiritualitas ſpi
raculū et rationalitas. uelut
in celo notant luminaria aer.
et uolatilia. habens etiā recep
taculū. inq; notant humilitas.
germinatio. ac parturitio. ſic

uīa apparet uiriditas. fructua
tio. et animalia. Quid ē hoc. O ho
mo uolū es in nomū et anima. et ob
audiens creatoris tui. & ſubiectio
tua obedit ei. ſic ei conſtituti ē.
& tui pcepta illi transgrederis.
Sed uides qđ idē ignis in ſe ſ. iii
flāmā aerē coloris habet. 7
que ſem flatu ardentē flagrat. 7
et que eidē lucido igni ita inſe 7
parabilit inē. ut in hoīe uiſcera 7
ſunt. qđ ē in patre ante tēpora
conſtituta creature infinitū uer-
bū. qđ uiardore carnalis ſub de
curſu labentiū tēporū murabi
liter ſine ſorde et grauedine
peccati puriditatē ſuā intactus
ſpūſcī inaurora beate uirginis
uſq; ad incarnandū. ita tam ut
ſic ante ſuſceptā carnē indiuiſi
bilit fuit in patre. ſic etiā poſt
aſſūptā humanitatē inſeparabi
lit meo manet. et. quo uerbo nō
ē abſq; ullo tractu immutare uiſ
cerū. ſic a patre nō erat omnino ſe
parandū unicū ei uerbū. et qui te
dr uerbū. Qua ut ploquale ſ. iiii.
uerbū qđ impuluere hoīs tran
ſmortū ē. prudēt intelligūt
iuſſa pcepti. hominib; ſcien
tib; et puidentib; que cauſa
iuſſio pcepti miſſi. ita etiā p
illo cale uerbū qđ pmeantingui
biſe uitā qua uiuit in ētinitate
intranſmortū ē. ueracit. cognoſ
cit uiſ patris di
uerſis creaturis mundi ipſū

semmentib; et intelligentib; in
ortu quo creatꝰ s̄. amꝫ: ut p̄ of
ficiale uerbū potestas et honor
scīt hominis. sic etiā p̄ plenū uer
bū sētias et bonitas resplendet
patris. Quod autē uides quo
modo cadē flāmā fulminas in
candet. hoc ē q̄d uerbū di uirtutē
suā q̄si excardescens ostendit. cū
p̄ ipsū oīs creatura suscepta ē.
et q̄si incandum. cū aurora et
candore uirginitatis incarnatꝰ
ē. ita q̄d exeo stillauerit oīs uir
tutis magnitudo di cū bo reuīt
in animarū saluatione. Sed et
obscurus aer et rotundus mul
teq; magnitudinis repente ex
ortus ē. qui ē instrumū terū in
obscuritate impfectionis scilicet
ñdū illustratū plenitudine crea
turarū. et rotundū q̄a sub uno
p̄hensibili potentia di ē diuini
tate nusquā absente. ipsū tamē
in maxima potestate di surgens
quasi in ictu oculi in supna uo
luntate eleuatū. sup q̄d ipsa flāma
uelut faber quosdā ictus dedit
ducens a deo scintillā educens
donec idē aer ad p̄fectū p̄ductꝰ
ē. ita celū et tra resplendens ple
na institutione. quo excellens
uniuersā creaturā supnū uerbū
mediatione creaturarū seruum
tē tenentiū. uirtutē fortitudi
nis sue ostendens. a deo de instru
mento diuersas
species creaturarū lucentes imi
rabili ortu sustentationis ipsarū
eduxit ut faber formas suas ex
ere competenter faciat. usq; dū ecce
creatura impulcritudine plenī
tudinis sue effulserit. sursū et de
orsū decore et stabilimentū p̄fec
te institutionis habentes. q̄a supi
ora resplenduerit ab inferioribus.
et inferiora a supioribus. Quod
autē deinde eadē flāma magne
et ardore illo extendit se ad par
uā glebā limose tre iacentē in
fundo et de aeris. hoc ē q̄d creatus
alius creaturis uerbū di in fortu
uoluntate patris. et in amore sup
ne suauitatis inspexit paupertē
et fragilē materiā mollis et tena
ci fragilitatis humanitatis tam
malos quā bonos pertandos ho
minū. immo insensibilitatis et pon
derositatis sue de terrā. et nec dū
acuto et uitali flatu excitata.
et ea calefaciens. ita q̄d caro et
sanguis effecta ē. idē humiditā
te calorē et infundens. quo ita ē
carnalis materia hōis. nutriens
ea suco suo. sic mater lactat filios
suos. ea aspirans ita q̄d uiuens
homo erecta ē. qa ipsa p̄ supnā
uirtutē excitauit. atq; maia et
corpore discernentē homi ē mi
rabiliter eduxit. Quo facto. il
le lucidus ignis p̄buit p̄tandē
flāmā lem flatu ardentē flagran
tē. ipsi hoi candidissimū florē
pendentē in ea de flāma. ut
ros pendet in gramine. quo cre

ato adā pāt̄ q̄ lucidissima sere
nitas ē dedit p uerbū suū in spū
scō ipsi adę dulce p̄ceptū claris
sime obediendę ad heremū eidē
uerbo inhumida uiriditate fru
ctuositatis. q̄a p idē uerbū sua
uissimū humor scātur de patre
in spū scō stillauit. faciens maxi
mū et plurimū fructū. sic pur⁹
humor sup gramē descendens.
illud adaptū germē suscitat.
Cui⁹ odorē idē homo naribus
quidē sensit. gustū eius ore nō p
cepit. nec manib; eū tetigit. quo
ipse p̄ceptū legis cū intelligen
tia sapientię quasi naribus. ad
traxit. sic uim illi⁹ inuisibilis am
plexionis ore p fectę nō intromi
sit. nec ope manuū implendū
dine beatitudinis adimpleuit.
ta uidelicet se auertens ad q̄.
cadens in densissimas tenebras.
de quib; se erigere nō ualuit. q̄a
diuino p̄cepto consiliante di
abolo dorsū p buit corruens
in maximos ritus mortis. sic
q̄d dīm nec in fide nec in ope
requisiuit. unde aduersā cog
nitionē et peccatis grauatus
surgere nō potuit. donec ille
aduenit qui patri suo plenis
ter sine peccato obediuit. Sz
tenebre ille in eo de aere ma
gis ac magis se dilatando ere
uerē. quo potestas mortis in
mundo semp in latitudine ui
ciorū augmentata ē. scientia

hōis se inuoluente in diuersita
tē mutaplicū uitioz̄ p horrorē
erūpentiū et seruentiū peccatoz̄.

Quod autē ures magnę stellę. viiij.
in fulgore suo sibi cohęren
tes in eis de tenebris apparuerūt et
post eas alię multę tā paruę q̄m
magne plurimo splendore ful
gentes. hec s̄ in figuratione sup
ne urbis tantas. magna lumina
uidelicet abrahā. ysaac et ia
cob. tā fidei ope quā carnis
coniunctione se inuicē complec
tentes. mundiq; tenebras signi
ficationib; suis repellentes. et
eos subsequentes alii quā plu
rimi pphetę. scilicet minores
et maiores in mutuis et admiran
dis miraculis radiantes. De
inde uero apparens queda
maxima stella mira claritate
radians. et fulgorē suū ad p
dictā flāmā dirigens ē p̄cipu
us pphęta scilicet iohēs bapti
sta. fidelissimo et sertissimo
ope in miraculis coruscans. et
in eis uerū uerbū idē uerū di
filiū p monstrans. q̄a iniquitati
nō cessit. s̄. eam in opib; iustitie strenu
e et fortiter abiecit. Sed
q̄d mira ille fulgor uidit au
rora. apparet cui eadē flāma
mirabiliter infusa ē nō tam ap
pato lucido igne separata.
hoc ē q̄d dīs in loco germinan
di magnū splendorē rutilan
tis luminis planauit. nullū

uerbū suū pleno desiderio
mmens· nō tām abipso diuinū·
s; dedit illud fructuosū fructū·
amq: ipsū eduxē magnū· fomē·
ta q̄d omē fidele gustar· gu
stans exco ultra sm̄ nō arum·
Vnde et sic inco dē fulgore ip
suus aurore maxima uolun
tas accensa ē· q̄a inclarmare
rubentis sertinatis uiridatas
magni et antiqui consilii u
sa ē· nta q̄d omis p̄misse legio
nes· t angloꝝ hoc inlucidissima
felicitate admirate sunt· Sed
xii. tu o homo diu emmentia consi
lū huī humano more plenius
scire desideras· claustrū occul
tationis t opponis· quō secre
ta dī nō debes plus scrutari· q̄m
p̄p̄ amorē et credulos diuina
maiestas uult manifestari·
xiiij. Quod autē uides de eo dē ful
gore p̄fate aurore ho
minē egredientē· q̄ claritate
sua ad p̄dictas tenebras effun
dens· nta abeis reuerberat· q̄d
in rubore sanguinis et in pa
re palloris uersus tanta fortu
dine eas de tenebras repcu
tiat q̄d ille homo q̄ inas iacet
peū tactus apparens fulgerat
atq: nta erectus exeat· hoc de
signat dī uerbū incandore m
temerate uirginitatis inuiola
bilē incarnatū· et sine dolore
natū· nec tām a patre separatū·
Quomodo· cū filī dī natus ē
in mundo ex matre· apparuit
in celo in patre· unde et angli
mox contremuer· et gauisi su
dulcissimas laudes decantaue
runt· Qui sine macula peccati
in seclo conuersatus· lucidissimā
beatitudinē doctrine et salua
tionis utentebras infidelitatis
emisit· s; ab incredulo pplo
abiectus atq: ad passionē duc
tus pulcherrimū sanguinē suū
fudit· et caligine mortis cor
poralit gustauit· Ex quo dia
bolus supans ex inferno electos
suos qui in co deuenit et p̄stra
ti fuerant liberauit· atq: eos
tactu redemptionis sue adhere
dinauit· ipse p̄uenit· et exorta s
ymphania et cythare omisq:
cantus musicoꝝ innumerabi
lib; ornatus· q̄a ho q̄ in p̄dicta
one iacuerat in beatitudine
erectus mortē p̄ supnā uirtu
te liberatus euaserat· ut p̄ser
uū meū ose sic locutus sū·
xiiij. Colligata ē iniq̄tas effraim·
abscondita ē peccatū eī·
Dolores parturientis uenient
ei· ipse filiī nō sapiens· Hunc
enī nō stabit in contritione
filioꝝ· De manu mortis liberā
bo eos· de morte redimā eos·
Ero mors tua o mors· ero mor
sus tuus inferne· Quid ē hoc·
Inpondere ligature et colliga
ta ē p̄uersitas iniq̄tatis diabo
li· nta ut a zelo dī nō meritum

q̄ in adā p̄didert inscitiā redigat· Ut in dō in
hereditatē suā.

solu-q̃a nūquā illū in recta ag
nitione uidit-sic̄ bi cū aspicuit
qui ipsū fidelit̄ amat-Nā ipse
semp eleuat se contra dñm dicens-
ego ds̄ sū-semp erā q̃ trans sup be
nedictū dñm uidelicet ppt̄ ipsū c̄
tra dicens nom̄ xp̄ianoz-Et ido
malicia ipsius tā abscondita e-
q̃d nulla medicina reparationis
peccatū illi-q̃d inmundissima
supbia crudelit̄ commisit insal.
uatione tegi dignū sit-Unde &
ipse erit inobdurationē doloris-
sicut parturiens c̄ mafflictione
despationis-que diffidit q̃d de
aptione uulue sue uiuere possit-
Nā hec infelicitas sup eū manc
bit-q̃d a beatitudine relictus e-
quia illa filioz sapientia fugit
abeo-q̃d in se nō reuertit̄ sic̄ ille
in se reuersus e q̃ ad patrē suū de
miq̃tate sua redit̄-Qua ppter
nūquā stabit c̄fidens in contri
tione illa-qua filii saluationis
in supno filio mortē durissime
inquantus comert̄-quā idē cal
idus serpens ebullire fecit-cū
primo homini dolositatē quā
nesciebat suggessit-S; q̃a idē
filii uenenū inmundissime sug
gestionis contēpnunt-et post
salutē suā respiciunt-deseru
unt idoloz liberabo eos-que
fallaciā habentia in potestate
pdmonis s̄-et inquib; infide
les honorē creatoris sui de fu
gunt-se uidelicet in laqueū
diaboli inuoluentes-et opa sua
sedin uoluntatē illi ꝓficientes-Et
ido animas illoz qui me diligunt-
et q̃ me colunt-scilicet animas sc̄oz
& animas iustoz ab infernali pena
redimā-quō nullus hominū po
tuit solui de diabolica ligatu
ra-in qua durissima mort̄ ppt̄
p uaricationē p̄cepti dī cōp̄
hensus e-nisi in redemptione illius-
qui electos suos ꝓprio sanguine
redemturus e-Ubi ad imitationē
te omors inuficiā-q̃a in quo te
uuere putas hoc ubi extrahā-
ta q̃d inutile cadauer uocabe
ris-quō infortunissimis uirib; tu
is ꝓstrata iacebis-sic̄ & illud q̃d
ab anima deserit̄ omīno adimē
tui ꝓsternit̄-Nā fons aque ui
ue te suffocabit-cū felices aīe
p nouū hominē q̃ uenenose de
cepti onis socius nō erit mi dñr
in sup na beatitudine suscitabun
tur-Unde etiā ad confusionem
tuā ero morsus tuus inferne-et
potestas mea in magna uirtute
ubi spolia illa auferet que frau
dulent̄ rapuisti-ita ut & tu iuste
despoliata-nūquā de inceps in
tegra nec plena indumenti tui
apparias-s; uulneribꝫ-et feditate
ꝓstrata iacens confusionē tuā
in ꝑpetuū portabis-Sed ut
uides eode sereno hoīe qui de
pfata aurora egressus e-in ama
claritate apparente ultra quā
humana lingua effari possit

xxv.

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demonstrat q̄d nobilissimū cor-
pus filii di ex suauissima uirgi-
ne natū et in sepulchro p̄triduū
iacens. ad confirmandū quō
tres p̄sone s̄ in una diuinitate
patrna claritas uenit in qd ex
sp̄m receptū atq; in seternissima
immortalitate resurrexē. quā nul-
lus hominū cogitatione aut uer-
bo explicare potest. Quē ex pat̄ ap̄ti
uulneribꝫ celestibꝫ chorus ostendit
dicens. Hic ē filius m̄s dilectus. quē
misi mori pp̄lō. Unde supra hu
manū intellectū innumerabile
gaudiū in ipsis exortū ē. qua
criminosa oblitio qua ds̄ nesciē
bat̄ sic de p̄ssa ē qd racionalis
hoīs que suadente diabolo p̄stra
ta fuerat. ad agnitionē di eleua
ta ē. quō p̄sūmā beatitudinē
homini uia ueritatis ostensa ē.
in qua de morte ad uitā eductꝰ ē.

xvii. Sed sedm hoc ut filii israel ex
egyp̄to liberati. p quadra
ginta annos deserti transeun
tes. in terrā lac et mel. fluentē p̄ue
nerūt. ita filii di a morte resur-
gens p quadraginta dies disci
pulis suis. cū beatis feminis qui p̄
ipsū plorabant et qui eū pleno
desiderio uidere desiderabant.
se benigne ostendit ad confir-
mandū eos. ne dubitarent in fi
de dicentes. nos n̄ uidim̄ eū. idoq;
n̄ possum̄ credere q̄d ipse sit sa
lus n̄ra. s; frequent̄ manifesta
uit se illis ad corroborandū ip
sos ne caderent. Quod uero
in acutissimā altitudinē inenarra
bilis gl̄ie tendit. ubi inplentur
dine magnifice fruitiositatis
et odoris mirifice radiat. hoc ē
q̄d idē filiꝰ di ascendit ad patrē.
qui una cū eodē filio et sp̄ū sc̄o
acutissima et p̄cellentissima alti
tudo inenarrabilis gaudii et le
titie ē. ubi idē filiꝰ inhabundan
tia s̄ternissime s̄enitatis et beatitu
dinis fidelib; suis gl̄ose appar̄et.
qui ip̄sū puro et simplici corde
uerū dm̄ et hominē credunt.
Nā ecclia tunc noua sponsa ex de
agni fundata ē diuersis ornam̄
tis. quib; ornanda ē in omī ge
nere uirtutū fortissimi certami
nis uocī fidelis p̄pli. qui contra
callidū serpentē pugnaturi s̄.
s; qui uigilantib; oculis uidet
et sonantib; auris audit. his
mȳsticis uerbis meis osculū am
plexionis p̄bent. que de me ui
uente emanant.

Secta uisio sabbato p̄ascē.

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Et mox

serenissimā lucē & ipsa saphiri
nicoloris spēm hoīs· quę tota
suauissimo rutilantę igne fla
grabat· & illa serena lux pfudit
totū illū rutilantē ignē· & ille
rutilans ignis tota illā serenā
lucē· ac eadē serena lux & idē ru
tilans ignis totā speciē eidē hoīs·
ita lum̄ unū in una ui possibili
tatis existentes· & nec ū audiui
eandē unitatē lucē in diuersitē·
Hic ē sensus misteriq; dī· ut dis
cretę cernat̄ & intelligat̄· quę
sit plenitudo illa quę nūquā
uisa ē mortu· & inqua nullus
defectus ē illi acutę fortitudi
quę plantauit omīs riuulos for
titudī· Hā si dns uacuus ēt pprię
uirtutis fuę· q̄d tunc ēt op
illi· Videlicet uanū· Idoq· imple
no ope cernit· qui fabricator sit·
ua ppē uidet serenissimā lu
cē quę sine macula illusi
onis defectionis· ac fallacię de
signat patrē· & in ipsa saphiri
ni coloris speciē hoīs· quę sine
macula obdurationis inuidię

et inq̄tus declarat filiū· ante
tēpora secm diuinitatē a patre
genitū· s; post in tēpore secm hu
manitatē in mundo incarnatū·
quę tota suauissimo rutilante
igne flagrat· quę ignis sine ma
cula ariditatis· mortalitatis inq·
tenebrositatis demonstrat spm
scm· de quo idē unigenitus di
secm carnē conceptus· & de uir
gine tēporaliter natus lum̄ uere
claritatis mundo infudit· S; q̄d
illa serena lux pfundit totū il
lū rutilantē ignē· & ille rutilans
ignis totā illā serenā lucē· ac eadē
serena lux et idē rutilans ignis
totā speciē eidē hoīs· ita lum̄ unū
in una ui possibilitatis existen
tes· hoc ē q̄a pat̄ q̄ iustissima eq̄
tas s; sine filio nec sine spū scō ē·
et spūs scs q̄ accensor fideliū cor
diū s; n̄ sine filio ē· & filī q̄ plen
tudo fructuositatis s; n̄ sine pa
tre nec sine spū scō ē· in maiesta
te diuinitatis inseparabilis s;
quō pat̄ n̄ ē sine filio· nec filī si
ne patre· nec pat̄ nec filī sine
spu scō· nec spūs scs sine ipsis· ita
he tres psonę dī unus in una et
integra diuinitate maiestatis
existentes· et unitas diuinitatis
inseparabilis ingens· quia diuinitas secun
di n̄ potest· q̄m ipsa absq; ulla
mutabilitate inuiolabilis sēp
manet· S; pat̄ declarat̄ p filiū·
filī p ortū creaturarū· et spūs scs

peunde filiū incarnatiōi. Quom̄ Pat̄ ē q̄ amat sēla genuit filiū. filiꝰ p quē oīa a patre facta s̄ mmicio erc aturarū. et spūs sēs q̄ in specie colū be apparuit in baptismate eiꝰde filiu dī sub fine tēporū. Vnde nūquā obliuiscat̄ homo me solū dm in bis trib; psonis inuocare. quia eas ppria ostendi hominī ut homo tanto acriꝰ in amore meo ardeat. cū ppt̄ amorē eiꝰ mi si filiū meū in mundū. quātadmo dū ihs dilectus m̄s prestat̄ dicēs.

1111. In hoc apparuit cārtas dī in no bis. quō filiū suū unigenitū mi sit ds in mundū ut uiuam⁹ p eū. In hoc ē cartas. nō q̄si nos dilexeri mus dm. s; quō ipse prior dilexit nos. et misit filiū suū ppriationē ppeccatis nr̄is. Qua in hoc q̄d ds dilexit nos. alia salus exorta ē quā illa quā t in p̄mo ortu habuim⁹. cū heredes in noctem. et sēnatis fuimus. quō supn̄ pat̄ ostendit carnatē suā in piculis nr̄is. ubi constituti eramus in penis. unde licet uerbū suū p̄ natis hominū solū in plena sēnatē minuerit. p sup nā uirtutē in tenebras scōz. ubi idē uerbū p fecit oīa bona. illos ad unitā p dulcedinē suā reduceꝰ. qui p inmundiciā p̄uaricationis deiecti erant nec in sēnatē quā p dideramt recte ualebant. Qd ·v· ē hoc. Nā p ipsū fontē unt mātia dilecto amplexionis dī ueniūt. que nos ad unitā eruerunt. et que in piculis auxiliatrix nostra ē. que ē in p fundissima et suauissima caritas nos ad penitentiā instru ens. Quomodo. D̄s magni opis sui atq; p̄ciosissime sue margarite scilicet hōis quē de limo trē for mauit et cui spiraculū uite inspi rauit. mirū recordatus ē. Quo modo. Ipse instruxit unitā in pen tentia que nūquā deficiet nec ficta. quia callidus serpens de cepit hominē p sup̄bā suasionē. s; ds dereliquit illū in penitentia que humilitatē ostendit. quā di abolus nescuit nec fecit. quō ad rectā uitā assurgere ignora uit. Vnde ista saluatio carnatis nē orta de nobis. ita q̄d nec no uimus nec ualuim⁹ diligere dm in hac saluatione. s; qa ipse creator et dns omnū ita dilexit pplm suū. q̄d ppt̄ saluationē eiꝰ misit filiū suū principē et saluatorē fidelium. qui uulnera nra lauit et erersit. unde etiā de illo dulcis sima materia fudauit. de qua oīa bona saluationis fluunt. Qua ppt̄ et tu o homo intelligē. quia dm nulla aduersitas mu tabilitatis tanget. Nā pat̄ ē pat̄. filiꝰ ē filiꝰ. spūs sēs ē spūs sēs. hę tres psone in unitate diuinitatis in diuisibilit̄ uidelicet uigentis. Quomodo. Tres ures in lapi de. et tres in flama. et tres in uer bo s̄. Quomodo. In lapide ē hu mida uiriditas. et palpabilis cō

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p̄hensio· atq; rutilans ignis· Sed humida uiriditatē habet ne dis solutā cōmutā· palpabile ui cōp̄hensionē ut habitationē et defensionē exhibeat· rutilantē autē ignē ut confouet̄ & consolidet̄ adduriciā suā· Ipsa autē humida uiriditas significat patrē· q; nūquā arescit nec finit̄ in sua uirtute· et palpabilis cōp̄hensio designat filiū q; natus ex uirgine tangi & cōp̄hendi potuit· atq; rutilans ignis significat sp̄m scm qui ē accensor et illuminator cordiū fidelium hominū· Quid ē hoc· Sic homo qui in corpore suo frequent̄ tangit humidā uiriditatē lapidis exanimis infirmando debilitat̄· sic et homo q; p̄instabilitatē cogitationū suarū uemere uult patrē interficere· perit infide· Et ut in palpabili cōp̄hensione lapidis faciunt hoīes habitationē suā sep̄ eū defendentes ab hostib;· ita & filiū dī q; ē uerus lapis angularis· ē habitatio fidelis ppli eū; pregens amalignis sp̄ib;· S;· & sic rutilans ignis illuminat tenebrosa conburens ea que teligerit· sic et sp̄s sc̄s fugat infidelitatē auferens omnē rubiginē iniq;tatis· Sic quomodo he tres ures s̄ in uno lapide· ita & uera trinitas ē in uera unitate· tē sic flama in uno ardore tres ures habet· sic & unus dns in̄b;

·vi·

p̄sonis ē· Quomodo· flāma cni splendida claritatē & purpureo uirore ac igneo ardore consistit· S;· splendidā claritatē habet ut luceat et purpureū uirorē ut rigeat· atq; igneū ardorē ut ardeat· Unde in splendida claritate patrē considera· que patria pietatē claritatē suā fidelibus suis expandit· & in purpureo uirore q; huic cause in ē in qua eadē flāma uirtutē suā ostendit· filiū intelligit q; ex uirgine corpus assūpsit in quo diuinitas mirabilia sua declarauit· ac in igneo ardore sp̄m scm p̄spice qui mētes credentiū ardent̄ infundit· S;· ubi nec splendida claritas· nec purpureus uiror· nec igneus ardor ē· ibi nec flāma cernit̄· sic ubi nec pat̄ nec filī· nec sp̄s sc̄s colit̄· ibi nec dns digne uenerat̄· Ergo sic in una flāma he tres ures cernunt̄· sic in unitate diuinitas tres p̄sone intelligende s̄·

ta ea ut tres cause in uerbo notande s̄· sic & trinitas in unitate diuinitatis considerāda ē· Quomodo· In uerbo sonus· uirtus· et flat̄ ē· S;· sonū habet ut audiat̄· uirtutē ut intelligat̄· flatū ut ēpleat̄· In sono autē nota patrē q; inenarrabili potestate oīa ppalat· in uirtute filiū q; mirabiliter ex patre genit̄ ē· in flatu ū sp̄m scm q; suauiter ardet in ipsis· Ubi ū son̄ n̄ audit̄

vii·

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MANFRED
LAUTENSCHLÄGER
STIFTUNG

ibi nec uirtus opat̄ nec flamus de
uat̄ unde et nec ibi uerbū intelli
gitur quia etiā pat̄ filiꝰ & spūs
sc̄s n̄ s̄ ase diuisi ſ; suū opus una
numit̄ opat̄ Vnde sic̄ he tres
cause in uerbo uno s̄ nta etiā sup
na trinitas in supna unitate ē.
Itaq; sic̄ in lapide n̄ ē nec opat̄
humida uiridnas sine palpabi
li cōprehensione nec sine rutilante
igne nec palpabilis cōprehensio si
ne humida uiridnate nec sine
rutilante nec igne rutilans ignis
sine humida uiridnate nec sine
palpabili cōprehensione & uc in
flama n̄ ē nec opat̄ splendida
claritas sine purpureo uirore nec
sine igneo ardore nec purpure
us uirorꝰ sine splendida claritate
nec sine igneo ardore nec igneus
ardorꝰ sine splendida claritate
nec sine purpureo uirore et sic̄
in uerbo n̄ ē nec opat̄ sonus sine
uirtute nec sine flatu nec uirtus
sine sono nec sine uirtute ſ; in
diuisibilit̄ in ope suo sibi coad
herentes s̄ nta etiā he tres psone
uere trinitatis inseparabilit̄
in maiestate diuinitatis uigent
nec a se diuidunt̄ Sic dm unū
in tribꝫ psonis o ho intelligit ſ;
tu instabilitas mentis tue putas dm
tā impotentē ee qd n̄ sit ei possi
bile in tribꝫ psonis ueracit̄ uige
re ſ; tamē in una tepide ēsistere
Quid ē hoc Dicam̄ in tribꝫ psonis
uerus dꝫ primus et nouissimus

.viii. Sed et pat̄ n̄ ē sine filio nec fi
lius sine spū sc̄o nec spūs sc̄s ē
sine ipsis quo hec tres psone in
separabiles in unitate diuinita
tis s̄ Quomodo ūerbū resonat
ex ore hoīs ſ; n̄ os sine uerbo nec
uerbū sine ura Et ubi manet
uerbū ūn hoīe Et unde exit De
hoīe Quomodo ūiuenit hoīe
Sic ē filiꝰ in patre quē pat̄ p salute
hominū in uentre uirginali tra misit
de spū sc̄o in uirgine concepit
Qui filius ut ē unigenitus in di
uinitate nta ē unigenitus in uir
ginitate et sic ē unicus patris nta
ē et unicus matris quia ut pat̄
illū unū ante tepora genuit sic
et uirgo mat̄ genuit in tepore
eundē solū quo uirgo mansit
post partū Vnde o homo intelli
ge in his tribꝫ psonis din tuū q
te creauit in formositate diuini
tatis sue et q te redemit ap dno
ne Noli ergo obliuisci creatoris
tui sic̄ salomon et psuadet ut
scripsit ē. Memento creatoris
tui in diebꝫ iuuentutis tue ante
qua ueniat tepus afflictionis
et appropinquent anni de quibꝫ
dicas n̄ in placent Quid ē hoc
In intellectuali sensu tuo recor
dare illi qui te ēstituit scilicet
cū uelut in diebꝫ falsē ēfidentie
tue putas et possibile ee ut sedm
desiderū tuū uadas et uidelicet
deuians in malū et ut piciens in p
fundū ac in p spūalē stans et in

ertūna cadens. Nā uiuificatio
que inte ē. semp studet ut pficiat: usq; ad tēpus illud diu plena appareat. Quomodo. Infans a primo ortu suo usq; ad plenā staturā ascendit. et deinde imperfecta etate manet. relinquens lasciuiā mus que infantia morū ē. s; tamū cū magnis laboribus. solli citus puidet. qd sibi in rebus. suis ēsi dirandū sit. qd tunc nō fecit cū infantia pueritie fuit. Sic fidelis homo faciat. Infanciā morū relinquat et ad plenitudinē uirtutū ascendat. ne in fortuitu dine earū p seueranș. scilicet excollendā cupidinatus sue desserens que infantia uicioș palpitat. s; in anguſtia sollicitudinū medit quid sibi utile sit. cū prius ad infantiā morū se puerilit declinauit. Unde o homo sic amplectere dm tuū in lumine uigoris tui. prius quā ueniat hora purgationis opū tuoș cū oīa manifestabunt. nec quic quā neglectū relinquet. ubi etiā accurrit tēpora que integritate sua nō deficient de quib; in humano sensu tuo sub murmuras dicens. nō m placent iste uoluptates. quas nō intelligo utrū in spiritate aut in calūnia sint. qua humana mens semp in hoc dubia ē. qm dū bona opat. anguſtiā habet utrū do placeat an nō. et dū mala ppetrat de satiate remissionis formidat. S; q uigilantib; oculis uidet et sonantib; auribus audit hic mistis uerbis meis osculū amplexionis pbeat. que de me uiuente emanant. iii. visio. ii. partis.

Post hec uidi

q̄si mulier
grē ima
gīnē tan
te magnitudinis ut
magna ciuitas ē. ha
bentē caput muro or-
natu coronatū et bra
chia de quib; splendor-
uelut manice pendebant ace
lo usq; ad tūrā radians. Ipsemet-
autē ei erat immodū rectus p fo
ratus multis foraminib; in q̄b;
maxima multitudo hominū
discurrebat. Crura u et pedes
nō habebat. s; tamū sup uentrē
suū ante altare q̄d ē ante ocu
los dī stans. ipsū expansis ma
nib; circūplectebat. et oculis
suis p omne celū acutissime
uidebat. S; nulla uestimenta ei
considerare poterā. n q̄d luci
dissima serenitate fulgens
multo splendore circūdata
fuerat in pectore ei uelut auro
ra rubeo fulgore rutilante.
ubi multum m genere musicoș
audiui de ipsa q̄si aurora

ualde rutilans decamari· & ecce imago expandit splendo
re suū uidit uestimtū dicens·
Oportuit concipe & parere·
& mox accurrit ei ut fulgur
multitudo angloꝝ graduſ & ſe
des intra hominib;· facientiū·
p quos eadē imago p ficienda
erat· Deinde uidi migros in
fames iuxta uiā maere q̄si pis
cis in aqua p gentes· & uentre
eiꝰdē imaginis in foraminib; ut
p forata erat in fames· Et illa
ingemuit sursū eos ad caput suū
habens· ubi ados ei exierāt· ipsa
tamē integra p manente· Et ecce
illa serena lux· & ipsa species
hoīs tota rutilans igne flagrans
secm̄ uisionē quā prius uderā
uerū in apparuit· & singulis eoꝝ
nigerrimā cutē abstrahens· ac
extra uiā eas dē cutes pricens· sin
gulos illoꝝ candidissima ueste
induit ac esserenissimā lucē
aput singulos eoꝝ dicēs· Exue
uestimtē iniusticie· induens
nouitatē sēnatus· Reserata ē tibi
tibi ianua hereditatis tuę· Con
sidera q̄ quomodo doctus sis·
ut cognoscas patrē tuū· quē con
fessus es· Ego suscepi te· & tu con
fessus es me· Nunc igit̄ respice
duas semitas· unā ad orientē· &
alteram ad aquilonē· Si ergo in
teriorib; oculis tuis diligent̄
inspexeris me ut in fide doct⁹
es· suscipiā te in regno meo· Et
sime recte dilexeris· faciā q̄ de eiq;
uolueris· Si aut̄ me despexeris· te
auertens a me· uidelicet retro respi
ciens· nec me scire aut intelligere
uolens· cū te sordidū in peccatis in
pura penitencia reuoco· & tu tam̄
ad diabolū recurris· q̄si pat̄ tuus
ille sit· tunc suscipiet te p dicio·
qua secm̄ opa tua iudicaberis·
quo cū bonū dederi ubi cognosce
re me noluisti· In fames aut̄ qui
uentre p̄dicte imaginis transie
rat ambulabant· Et illa benignis
sime eos inuiens· tristi uoce dice
bat· Ista filii mei rursū reuertim̄
in puluere· Quos tam̄ concipio
et pario q̄ me matre suā diuersis
tēpestatib; famgant & opprimunt·
uidelicet me impugnantes in be
nefacis et sacrificatis ac inimicis;
plus· in raptoribus; & homicidis in
adulteris· ac fornicatoribus; atq; in
aliis hiis similib; erroribus· S; pluri
mi de istis resurgunt in uera pe
nitencia a duna ēmna· & plurimi
cadunt in falsa obdurationē ad
ēmnā mortē· Et iterū audiui uocē
de celo dicentē in· Plena ēstructio
uniuersū animarū que construu
tur in celis unius ex lapidib; or
nata in mensō decore uirtutū
in filiis suis quos cōplectit̄ tan
quā maxima ciuitas plurimā
turbā pplox· & in latissimū rete
maximā multitudinē piscū· in
supius uirtutib; decentissime
floret· secm̄ q̄d uigit opus fi

ſ splēdeat q̄ ea ceū dicat.

Ideliū hominū inoīe xpiano-
nde nē uides qsi muliebrē imaginē tamē magnitudi
nis ut magna ciuitas ē. que designat sponsā filii mei. que sēp
gignit filios suos in regeneratione spūs. aque. cū eā fortissimus
pliator posuit inlatitudinē uir-
tutū. cōprehendere et pficere plu
rimā turbā inelectis suis. quō
nullus hostis eā pualet expug
nare incontraria impugnatione.
ase infidelitatē expellentē. et se
fidelitē expandentē. ita qd immor-
tali scto secm hoc intelligit qd
unusqsq; fidelium pbet exemplū
pximo suo. qd ipsi plurimas
uirtutes opatī inecclestib;. S;. cū
unusqsq; iustoꝝ puenerit. ad
filios lucis. ut ipsis appareāt.
opus bonū qd opati S;. qd immor-
talitate cuncti cognosci nī potē.
quō hic inumbra inquietudi
nis obscuratū ē. Et habet ca. ii.
put miro ornatu coronatū. qa
ipsa in ortu suo cū suscitata ē in
sanguine agni decentī inaplīs
et martyrib; decorata ē uidelicet a
desponsata filio meo. quō in cru
ore ipsius se fidelitē formauit. in
fidelē edificationē scārū anima
rū. Qua ppī et brachia habet . iii.
de quib; splendor uelut manice
descendit a celo usq; ad ītā ra
dians. qd ē opatio fortitudinis
in sacerdotib; q in puritate cor-
dis et manuū in sacrāmto cor-
poris et sanguinis saluatoris sui sa
cro sēm sacrificiū sup sēm altare
in uirtute bonoꝝ opū offert. et qd
ē clarissimū opus imbentib; mīam.
scilicet q in largitate sēp omni
dolori adiutoriū impendunt
mitissimo corde elemosinā in
paupes distribuentes. et sic imple
no animo suo dicentes. istud nē
mea substantia. s;. ei qui creauit me.
quia hoc opus adō inspirātū
ante oculos ipsius apparet ince-
lo cū incultura ecclie p fideles
hoīes pficīt intīa. Quod aū . iii.
uentī ei ē immodū retis p foratus
multis foraminib; inquib; maxi
ma multitudo hominū dis
curritur. hoc ē mātia benigni
tas ipsius que ad capturā fide
liū animarū pspicua ē. diuerso
acumine uirtutū. inquib; cre
dentes ppli p fide uere creduli
tatis deuote conuersantē. S;. is
qui rete suū piecit in capturā
piscū. ē filius mī sponsus dilec
te eccle sue. quā in cruore suo
sibi desponsauit ad reparan
dū casū pdmi hoīs. Que nē dū . v
crura aut pedes habet. qa nē
dū ad fortitudinē constantie
sue nec ad candorē complexi
onis sue p ducta ē. quō circa tēp
filii p dicionis q mundo errorē
induceret igneā et sanguineā
crudelissime puersitatis angu
stiā plenissime in mībris suis
paciet p quā calamitatē in
mueta dispositione.

sanguineas uulneribꝫ adp̄fectū p̄duc-
ta p̄pere curtat uiceleste ierim· cui
etiā in sanguine filii mei noua nup
ta suauit̄ exorta ē· ipsa hoc ardo
re integra summā implenitudine gau
·vi· dii soboliꝭ suc- Sed tamē sup
uen- ut̄ē sui amice attare· q̄d ē an
te oculos di stans· ipsū expansis
manibꝫ circūplectit̄· quo ipsa sep
p̄gnans ē· atq; pertans filios suos
in lucra ablutione· cos etiā de uotis
sime offerens dō p̄ purissimas ora
tiones scoꝝ et p̄ suauissimū odorē
discretionis occultarū et manife
starū iurtumē· que p̄ferunt̄ in lu
cidissima integritone oculoꝝ mus·
abiecta omī sorde simulationis
et fama humane laudis· ut tuis
purgat̄ abomī iniuria comitatu
fetoris· que bona opatio uisioni
di dulcissimū sacrificiū ē in quo
cade ecclā frequent̄ laborat· to
to uidelicet desiderio inope fruc-
tuosiores iurtumē adcelestia an
helans· atq; tricesimo sexagesi
mo et centesimo fructu excelsā
turrim supnoꝝ muroꝝ edificans·
·vii· Vnde et oculis suis p̄ omē celū
acutissime uidet· qa intem
tionē ipsius quā in ecclīs· de
uotissime habet· nulla p̄ uersi
tas obscurare potest· scilicet nul
la p̄suasio diabolice aruſ· nec er-
ror claudicamus ppī· nec diffu
se tēpestates in diuersis tris· ubi
insani hoies in incredulitate fu
roris sui crudelit̄ decerpt̄ se-

Sed q̄d nulla uetustā ei⁹ con
siderare potes· hoc ē q̄d secre
ta illi⁹ humanus intellectus in in
firmitate fragilitatis suc grauā
tus· ad plenū intueri n̄ ualet· n
q̄d tota lucidissima serenitate
fulgens· multo splendore circū
data ē· quo ueruſ sol clarissima
inspiratione spī sci et decentesi
mo ornatu iurtumē ea ubiq; p
fudit· Inpectore ei⁹ uelut auro
ra rubeo fulgore rutilante· qa
incordiū; fideliū integritas bea
tissime uirginis filiū di generan
tis ardentissima deuotione ful
get· ubi etiā multu in genere mu
sicoꝝ audis de ipsa q̄si aurora
ualde rutilans decantari· quo
omīs uox credentiū ut intellec
tu tuo infundit̄ uirginitatē
eide illibate uirginis tota in
tentione in ecclā amplecti debe-
·x· uod ū eade imago expan
dit splendorē suū uelut
uestimentū dicens· q̄d ea opor-
tuit concipe et parere· hoc ē q̄d
in ecclā dilatat̄ sacramentū uere
ut mitatis· q̄d amicus ipsi⁹ ē in
proclione fideliū pplōꝝ· p̄ quos
ipsa consurgere in edificatione
uiuentiū lapidū in fonte puris
simi lauacri dealbatoꝝ· sic et ip
sa facit̄ q̄d necesse sit ad saluatio
nē ut concipiat filios in bene
dictione· et ut pariat eos in ab
lutione p̄ regeneratione spī et
·xi· aque· Qua p̄pt̄ et mox ac

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curtit ꝙ ut fulgur multimodo
anglox gradus et sedes mea hoīb;
faciemuū pq̄s eade imago pfica
enda ē: quia cuq; credemu hoī ad
ē meruendū & diligendū ministe
riū beatox spūuū: ascensus pfidē &
repositiones p sumā quotē illis
fidelib; p̄ paramuū: unq̄ub; ipsa
felix. mat ecclā addecorē suu p
ducenda cognoscit. Sed & de .xu.
inde uides nigros infantes iuxta
tā mare q̄si piscis in aqua pgen
tes: et uenire ē eade imaginis in fora
minib; ubi p forata ē intrantes: q̄d
ē nigredo illox stultox hominū qui
ñ dū ablui s̄ in lauacro saluatio
nis: ipsi trena diligentes et ineis
ubiq; discurrentes: unq; habitatio
nē suā ineox instabilitatē ponen
tes: ad matrē scīam tandē puenī
unt: et dignitatē secretox ei⁹ intu
entes: benedictionē ipsius suscipi
unt: p quā diabolo abstrahunt. Ac sic reformantur
sic constitutionē ecclāstica ordi
nis: unqua fidelis homo ad salua
tionē beatificari debet: intrantes:
cū ille in semetipso dicit: credo
in dm: & cetera q̄ ad fidē pinet.
Ynde et illa ingemit: sursū eos ad
caput suū trahens: ubi ados ei⁹ et
eunt: ipsa tam integra pmanen
te: q̄uo hec beata mat intima sus
piria trahit: q̄ndo baptisma cū
crismate in scificatione spūs scī
consecrat: cū homo in ucta circū
cisione spūs et aque innouandus
ē: ita illo sume beatitudini que

capit omniū ē: oblato et mbro
xp̄i facto: cū p inuocatione scē
trinitatis q̄si pos beate matris
ad saluatione regenerat: nulla
lesione eade matre patiente: q̄a
ipsa integrū p manebit in integri
tate uirginitatis suę que fides
catholica ē: quo exorta ē in san
guine ueri agni ut decet intima
sponsi sui q̄ sine ulla corruptio
ne integratus ex integerrima
uirgine natus ē. Sic et eade spon
sa integra p manet. bit: ita q̄d
nullū sensima ea corrumpe potest.
Q ultro ciens tam aperfis hoīb;
fauganda erit: s; p aduersorū
sponsi sui sēp fortissime defen
det se: ut uirgo que sepe incon
cupiscentia libidinis p diabolicā
artē et psuasiones multox hoīū
impugnat: s; tam ipsa p oratio
nes suas q̄s fundit ad dm atq̄
tationib; illox strennue liberat:
conseruando uirginitatē suā.
Ita et ecclā repugnat nequis
simis corruptoribus q̄ s errores
hereticox: scilicet tā xp̄ianox
quā iudeox et paganox q̄ ea in
festant uirginitatē ei⁹ que fi
des catholica ē corrūpe uolen
tes: ipsa tam ei fortiter resistente
ne corrūpat: q̄a sēp uirgo fuit: et
ē: p manebit: uera fide id ē ma
tera uirginitatis ei⁹ omnia om
nē errorē integra p manendo:
ut et honor castę uirginis in
materia pudoris corporis ei⁹

comta omnē tachū libidinus in
corrupta pseueiat· Unde ct ecclā
omnū xpianox uirginea mat ē·
quō inseerto spūs scī eos concipit
ct parit· illos dō offerens ma q̄d
c filiu dī uocatū· Et ut beatā ma
trē spūs scs obumbrauit· ita q̄d
sine dolore mirabilit filiū dī con
cepit ct peperit· c tam uirgo p man
sit· sic c ecclām felicē matrē erc
dentū spūs scs illustrat ita q̄d sine
ulla corruptione simplicit fili
os concipit ct parit c uirgo p
xviii. duxat· Quid ē hoc· Ut balsa
mū exarbore sudat c ut for
tissime medicine quę inco latex
exomphalo uase emanant c
ut clarissimus splendor excar
buculo absq; omi impedimto
se dilatat sic filī dī sine omni
obstaculo corruptionis exuir
gine natus ē· c sic etiā ecclā spon
sa illī absq; omi aduersitate er
roris filios suos generat· uirgo
tam uuitegritate fidī p manēs·
xviiii· Quod autē unde quoīm ulla se
rena lux· et ipsa species
hoīs tota rutilante igne flagrs·
sedm unionē quā prius unde
ras meruit ubi apparet· hoc ē q̄d
uera trinitas inuera unitate·
scilicet serenissimi patris c in pa
tre dulcissimi filī c q̄ ante tē
pora sedm diuinitatē in patre
manens· s; intēpore sedm carnē
de spū scō concepti· c de uirgi
ne natus· ut mirissima unio
ne tibi p monstrauit ē· nē etiā ad
confirmationē fidī tibi ostendit·
quō eadē beata trinitas in scō
baptismo baptizatus a pto cdo ap
paret· ut fidelis homo hanc fidē
suscipiat qualit unū dīm inuc
ra trinitate colat· que etiā in ipmo
sacramto baptismatis uera cter·
> apparuit· Et singulis eox nigerri
> mā cute abstrahens· ac extra uā
> eas de cute spiēs· singulos illox
> candidissima ueste indut ac eis
> serenissimā lucē apt· singulis eox
> uerba beate admonitionis pfe
rens· q̄a diuina potestas corda
hominū aspiciens in lauacro bap
tismi eis infidelitate scelerū suox
mediator aufert· atq; eadē scelera
extra uā que xpc ē abiecit· quō n
mors in xpo s; uita perpua con
fessionē c pablutionē peccatox
in ipso ē· cui p ipsū q̄sq; fidelis can
dore salutis induit· c cui illi p eū
claritas beate hereditatis de qua
prim homo expulsus ē apt· ip
se scilicet admonitus p uerba ue
ritatis· ut deponat ueterē consue
tudinē iniquitatis· c ut assumat
nouū donū grē ad saluationē·
S; q̄d infantes qui uenire p dicte
imaginis transierant q̄ in splen
dore qui eā circūdederat ambu
lant· hoc ē q̄d hi quox mat felix
ecclā p fontē sacri baptismatis ex
istit· in lege diuina qua eadē
mat illustrata et ornata ē p ma
nere· atq; eā conseruare debet·

ne si eā infidelit̄ abiecerint· rur-
sū peccatis aquib; mundau eam
inquinatā· Vnde eā illa be; xv.
nignissime cos intuens· tristi uo ;
ce dicit· q̄d ista filii sui rursū re ;
uertant̄ impuluerē· q̄a cadē be ;
ata mat̄ illos interiori dilecto
ne diligens· ac eis exuuiis uisce
rib; condolens· conquerit̄· q̄d ip
si q̄s in lauacro regenerationis ge
nint mundos uidelicet· in celesti
bus effectos· iterū tr̄enis causis
inbiantes· in peccatis sordescant·
Quomodo· Quia multi fidē ex
teriꝰ p̄cipientes· interiꝰ eā di
uersis uicius impugnant· magis
uā erroris quā uiā ueritatis
gradientes· ex quib; tam̄ plu
rimi a falsitate resipiscūt· plu
rimi eā inniq̄tate p̄manēt·
ut & eadē mat̄ in uerbis suis de
monstrat· quomodo supradic
tū ē· Nam duo signa legis ·xvj·
signatiꝰ tradita nosc̄unt̄ hoīb;
scilicet· circūcisio in antiquis
patrib; et baptism̄ in nouis doc
toribꝰ· p quē iugum ſ hoīes ut
hos iugo suo· quō quā uis ille
stimulo corripiat̄ tam̄ curuū
sulcū faceret si iugo ligatus nō
eēt· Simili modo nō incederent
homines p uias meas· si nō essent
ligati iugo signoꝰ suoꝰ· Hoc ·xvij·
tale ē uelut· si iuuenis aliquis
uiret· in uia aliqua et pat̄ ipsius
ei diceret· ambula recto itinere
et tam̄ nō daret illi gladiū nec
alia bellicosa arma ad defendendū
se· q̄d tunc· Nudus fugeret· nec aude
ret· nec posset se defendere a piculo
sibi occurrente & cū auia sua im
pedire uoleret· sed absconderet
se q̄a signatus nō eēt tribili arma
tura· p quā se defendere deberet·
Sic eēt ppl; m̄s nudus· si nō eēt bap
tizatus· unde tribilis appareat in
micis suis qui eū cū crismate bap
tismatis signatū uident· p q̄d etā
fortit̄ illis repugnat q̄ eū destruc
re uolunt· uidelicet· tā humana
turba quā acies diabolica· Sed ·xviij·
ad̄ nō erat danda duplex lex·
Quomodo· Ego dedi ei legē inar
bore· cū me uideret· in imo cordis
cordis sui· ipse aut̄ contēpsit me
callido serpenti consentiens· q̄d
ita periculosū erat q̄d nūquā mor
talis oculus me uidere potuit· q̄m
diu in hoc transitorio seculo manet·
S; q̄a ad̄ p̄ceptū meū transgres
sus ē· sine lege dī genere suo fu
it usq; ad tempꝰ illud q̄d nobili
tatē filii mei p̄nunciauit· Ad ·xix·
montem aut̄ spūs scī in noe ap
paruit· cū genus humanū p̄ire
p̄pauit· ubi sup diluuiū arcā
erexi· quō ante secla p̄uidi q̄d
post illud iniquū genus· q̄d se
omīno in nigerrima iniquita
te polluerat· noua soboles ex
urgere debuit· Nā p̄ transitū
ad̄ genus ipsius ignorans q̄d
ego dꝰ sū· errabat dicens· Quis
ē dꝰ· Quis ē dꝰ· Et tunc oriebat̄

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nullis omē malū·ma q̄d imē cos
amaquis serpens soluta potestā
te cucurrit·suadens illis ut om
nē uoluntatē ei⁹ facerent·Ipse
enim tunc aumculo ligatus e
solutus erat·ma q̄d ea ante dilu
uiū ñ minabat̄ admonitio sp̄s
sc̄i·ut illi minatus sū innoc·in
quo noua soboles exorta ē·cū
pplm meū talē crudiu q̄d ery
dmonis illius ñ posset obliuis
ci·Nā admonitio sp̄s sc̄i primū
illi minabat̄ innoc. p̄ea autē
circūcisio in maxilla p̄cussit
eū in abrahā·deinde ū eccl̄a
ligauit eū in nouissimo tēpore
usq; dū p̄transeat mundus in
ultimo die·S; ego p̄misi dia
bolū potestatē suā ante dilu
uiū exercere in mundo p̄ter
amaquū certam quo deuicit
ada·donec uenirē suū cadaue
re ōis iniq̄tatis impleant·et hoc
ideo p̄misi·q̄a iustū ē iudiciū
meū·Unde etiā ego surrexi mons
diluuii·et peccatores occidi·re
seruans in misterio meo noe que
de satanas exspoliare ñ posset·
quō inuoluntate mea sup dilu
uiū erat·Et ego designaui in
diluuio rectissimū germē·unde
licet filiū meū·nouo sclo p̄nun
cians eū·q̄ silentū uenientis in
mundū scam trinitatē mani
festauit ueracissime colenda·
Quomodo·Tres alas ostendit
que scam trinitatē significant·

ubi tu sy̆nagoga me negabis·
et ubi alienus pplz me suscipiet·
ubi et tu o abrahā magnifica
beris·O abrahā tu es circūdatus
circūcisione tu es muratꝰ uetere
testamēto·tu es ornatus aurora
solis eccl̄e·Ego tibi et generi tuo
dedi circūcisionē usq; ad filiū
meū·q̄ apte peccata hominū re
mitt·et ubi carnalis circūcisio
uelꝰ p̄pucii cecidit·cū fons bap
tismi inscificatione lauacri filiu
mei ueracit̄ ebullit·Sed q̄
intēpore circūcisionis ex genere
tuo circūcisi ñ s scdm tēpus q̄d
eis ibi ostensū ē·scilicet siue mi
noris siue maioris etatis cēt pac
tū federis mei transgressi s·p̄ter
mulieres quib; circūcisio ñ ē
inuncta·qm mulier ñ ē circū
cidenda·quia mamū taberna
culū latet incorpore ei·nec tan
gi potest·nisi ut caro carnē ē
stringit·et quō ipsa ē sub po
testate uiri·ut seruus sub dnō
suo·Nam uir tres causas ha
bet inope suo·idē concupiscen
tiā formositatē et studiū·Concu
piscentia autē incendit formo
sitatē·unde inuicē q; ē studiū
coēti laboris·et ardentius uolun
tatis ipsi⁹·Hoc tale ē ut in crea
tione ade tres cause designatę
s·quia uoluntas dī in potestate
formauit hominē·et hoc in
magna pietate cōpleuit·cū ipse
hominē ad imaginē et simili

tudinē suā fecit. In uolumate aiē
di. nota uiri concupiscentiā. et in
potestate di. uiri formudinē. atq;
impietate uoluntatis ac potestatis
di. studiū concupiscentie. et formu
dinis uiri. Hoc modo p̄ uirū p̄ere
atur genus humanū ex muliere.
quia ds fecit hominē de limo
tre. quo ut ita imuriditate germi
nis fructuū agri. ex. ita et mulier
in humore partus ad pariendū
filios posita ē. Quid ē hoc. q̄ mulier
habet tēpus reuelationis suci q̄
in ipsa ē. et q̄ se in humore uiridi
tatis cū calore intra diffundit.
alio q̄n uoluntarie uirū n̄ suscī
peret. s. de dignando eū uolunta
ti illi n̄ consentiret. nec filios p̄ere
ret. Nā si humorē uiriditatis
in calore n̄ haberet. infructuosa
maneret. sic arida ita que se n̄
flectit ad ullū usū fructuositatis.
S. et ide humor uiriditatis n̄ ha
bet semp in calore incendiū ar
doris concupiscentie. in muliere.
nisi ipsa prius tacta auro. ag
noscat ardentē concupiscentie
feruorē. quia mulla n̄ ē tā fortis
et tā feruens concupiscentia. sic
inuro. q̄ fortis ē tanquā leo ad
concupiscentiā opis filioq; ita q̄d
ipse habet formudinē concupis
centie. ac opis. muliere tamū hoc
negotiū habentie q̄d subiacet in
pio uoluntatis illi. quo ipsa oc
cupata ē in p̄creatione natoq; usq;
dū eos p̄ducat in mundum.

Quedū desiderat filiū meū. in amore ei. cupiens obseruare uir
ginitatē suā ualde ornatū intha
lamo ipsius. quo cōtēpnit ardo
rē quē p carnalē illi sustinet. no
lens dissolui de incendio arden
tis libidinis p̄seuerans impudici
cia. q̄a carnalē uirū in spūali de
sponsatione despicit. uno deside
rio anhelans p̄ filiū meū. ut delicet
recordationē uiri carnalis abici
ens. O carissima germina. et odul
ciores et suauiores flores sup oīa
aromata. ubi mollis et fragilis na
tura q̄si aurora ad desponsatio
nē filii mei consurgit. casta dilec
tione ualde amans eū. ipsa scili
cet ei sponsa. et ipse illi sponsus.
cū hoc genus uirginū ualde di
ligit eū. in supno regno insignib.
ornamus uidelicet adornandi.

Sed q̄d nē. cū ea formudo
uiri recusat ducere consor
tiū matrimonii. ita q̄d uir p̄p̄ē
amorē filii mei se coerceat in uiri
di natura sua. cū floret in germ
mine filioq; ipse tam̄ constringēs
m̄bra sua ne excerceant concu
piscentiā carnis suę. hoc m̄ ual
de amabile ē. scilicet q̄d uir hoc
modo uincat se. Unde et ego fa
ciā eū consortē filii mei. et po
nā eū serenissimū speculū amie
facie ei. quia fortē resistit dia
bolo. q̄ sibi humanū genus p̄in
fidelitatē nequissime sordis ad
traxerat. De cui laqueo ut eri

pertē cunde filiū meū misi in
mundū·natū exdulcissima uir-
gine sine oīa macula peccati·
afferentē fomē salutionis·
quē ipse innocens agnus sacra
uit·ut pp̄ucū ueteris crimi
nis in eo aboleret·Quid ē hoc·
Amarissimū p̄ucū ē crimen
transgressionis ade·q̄d filius
mis abstulit·cū ipse fomē salu
tis ingressus xp̄iana choortē
nobilissime dedicauit·ut ser-
pens antiquus q̄ hominē de
ceperat·in eode lauacro suo
mergeret·Quomodo·fili' con
dmonī patris sui respondet·
nec hereditatē ei' renuet·
Quid ē hoc·Genus ade p̄uans
gressione illi' de loco amenita
tis expulsū ē·et in baptismo
salutis p̄filiū meū adu
tā reuocatū ē·Quomodo·Ipse
sup incredulos q̄ p̄ceptus mas
repugnauerit·uocē benedictio
nis dedit·ita q̄d exūtia·uenia
in spū commonis p̄ueniet·
ut esayas seruus mis secdm hoc
q̄d ame accepit p̄stat̄ dicēs·

xx·v· Et uenient adte curu filii
eox qui humiliauerit te·
et adorabunt uestigia pedū xx·vj·
tuox oīs qui detrahebant t·
Quid ē hoc·Ou qui es supna
pax et purissimus sol·p̄te
ebullet uuens radix que ē
regeneratio sps et aque cū il
li sollert uenient ad agnuo

nē tuā·q̄ inspurticia nefandis
sime immundicie sub grauissima
maledictione p̄stati erant·quo
ipsi hoc modo q̄si curru uic
tande aduersatē et adiustitiā
surgent·Quomodo·Ipsi mātā
dulcedinē uere fidi sugent eā
uisibilit̄ uidendo nesciemus·s;
tamū illā fidelit̄ credendo rapi
emus·Et qui s illi·Videlicet isti q̄
in materia peccati de his ortu q̄
te mardem carnate mīquā un
dert·s;q̄ te crudelit̄ opprimēdo
pmanent affluxert·q̄si tu illox
ñ dñateris·te in bono sensu dul
cissime amauert·Et ido cū uerā
fidē secum fuerint uelint regē
app̄hendere te·et q̄si dñm ad
orabunt te·atq; festinant̄ cur-
rent sequentes scissima tuncta
tua que eis p̄cepisti·ita ut semp
cū eleuatus manib; uite aspici
ant atq; in bonis op̄ib; adte
semp uigilent in fide scilicet
te uidere tediū n̄ habentes·et
hoc oīs illi facient q̄ prius in
pudice et irreuerent̄ te dilani
auert·et q̄ modio ac in mundia
te diuiserit·cū nē in speculo
fidi ardent̄ te amplexentur·

xx·vj· Quid ē hoc·Nam casus ade
clausit celū in indignatione
mea·cū homo me spreuit·et
callidū serpentē audiuit·un̄
et ipsi concluса ē oīs gta pa
radys·Que clausura duraut
usq; ad nobile filiū meū·qui

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uuolumtate mea fluentē lorda
nē uirtutē ubi ꝙ uox mea cle
mentē uitonuit cū dicerē quia
ipse ē filius mīs dilectus inquo
mihi bene cōplacuissē quō hoc
uolutē infine tēporū redimerē
hominē pfiliū meū in mclaris
simo calore ita adherentē ut
fauus melli adhereat quē ita
idcirco misi infomē me fomē
aque uiue designantē ut ꝙ ip
se fons salutis animas illas de
ētna morte resuscitarēt quib;
inaqua pspm scm remissio pec
catorū darētur Qua ppt ꝙ ibi spūs
sēs apparuit quia fidelib; pcū
remissio peccatoꝝ fit ibi undi
cet obmisticū secretū eundē
unigenitū meū idē spūs sēs in
specie colūbe ostendens quē
simplicis et sinceri moris ē quō
et spūs sēs insimplicitate ꝙ in bo
nitate omniū bonoꝝ indefici
ens iusticia ē Et hoc decebat
quia filius mīs sine ulla macu
la criminis exuirgine natus ē
ut etiā ho q̄ ... cū peccato de
uiro ꝙ muliere nascēt sine pec
cato splendide ꝙ glōse renasce
retur sicut idē filius mīs in eu glō
adnichodemū dicē Amen xxvij.
amē dico t nisi q̄s renatus fuerit
exaqua et spū nō potest introi
re inregnū dī Quid ē hoc Con
stantissima certitudine et nō in
stabili ambiguitate dico tibi
qui natus es expuredine q̄a
homo q̄ exortus ē de ardenti ca
lore ꝙ inuolutus uenenose facti
ē nī inuero gaudio nouē sobo
lis renascat exaqua scificationis
et spū illuminationis intēpore
neglectus sui confundat Quom̄
Quia homo uelut aqua cū spū
uegetationis sue inundans quō
ut aqua sordes emundat ꝙ ut
spūs inanimata uiuificat nī inue
ra regeneratione purgēt nō po
terit puenire ad salutionis hē
res regni creatoris sui fieri quia
in peccato primi parentis quē
diabolus fraudulentē decepit ob
ligatus ē Quomodo Q̄m ut fur
qui nobilissimā et p̄ciosissimā
pecuniā regis furat furtiue sub
uultu sic tortuosa conceptio in
ingluuie diaboli deceptiose sub
repsit ita q̄d ipse dilectissimā
gēmā scē innocentie et castita
tis inquib; spūs sēs habitat ne
quit abstraxit unde nē insci
ficatione ablutionis emundan
da ē Nā mortiferus calor quē
libido in coagulatione concu
piscentie p̄uaricationis p̄cepti
om̄potis dī succendit illo sub
mergendus ē q̄ nūquā miracu
la sua inuidiose abscondit ſ; ca
in incōp̄hensibili pietate lauda
bilitet declarat Audite ergo xxviij.
filiū meū in hac constitutione
regenerationis que reuelatio
regni mei ē et discite ab eo ut
p̄cepta mea ēpleatis Sic facite

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et hoc m̄ placet·& cauete ne uos
aliquis serpens seducat·& n̄
moriemini si baptismū ur̄m ser-
uaueritis·ite uobis in nomine
beate trinitatis p̄ceptū ē·Et quo
ciens ceciderimis·surgite cū cor-
recta penitencia sedm̄ mediam
meā de peccatis ur̄is·O uos caris
simi filii mei cognoscite bonita
tē patris ur̄i·q̄ uos in semetipso
p̄ punā confessionē & p̄cetā ue
niā de maxilla diaboli libera
uit·et qui uobis oīa bona con
tulit in quib; laborare debetis·
ut celestē ierl̄m possideatis·q̄m
p fallacē deceptionē p̄didistis·
quia nemo p̄dictā hereditatē suā
requirere potest·n̄ p̄sudorē la
boris sui·Vos autē supnā beati
tudinē scilicet iustissimā here
ditatē uram·facile p̄parua lege
recipere poteritis·Na spūs sc̄s ut p̄
dictū ē potestatē satane in bap
tismo expellit ab hoīe·sc̄ificans
eū nouū hominē in regeneratio
ne·ut p̄dicta gaudia recipere ua
leat·Vnde quisq̄s saluari desi
derat·in purgatione criminū
suoꝝ regenerari n̄ recuset·Na
ego dedi masculis generis abra
he circūcisionē m̄bri uirilis·in
filio meo p̄cepi uiris ac mulie
ribꝫ cunctoꝝ pplōꝝ circūcisionē
omniū m̄brorꝫ suoꝝ·Quomodo
circūcisio baptismi orta ē in bap
tismo filii mei·et hec nra durabit
usq; in nouissimū diē·et p̄ hunc
sēmas ei⁹ in eēmitate manebit·nec
finē accipiet·Et qui ita in laua
cro baptismi circūcidunt̄ ueris
sime conseruabunt̄·si hoc laua
crū iustis op̄ib; fidelit̄ conserua
uerint·quia homo siue minoris
siue forsitan maioris ętatis sit·ego fusci
piā eū·si fedus meū custodierit
q̄d mecū pepigit scilicet in me
credendo et in uera trinitate
me confitendo·seu p̄ se ipsū seu
alios q̄ eo p̄loquunt̄·ut infans
seu n̄ loquens homo uerba alie
ni oris expostulat·et n̄ delebo eū
in eēmū·sicut illū q̄ fomē hunc
cū ope fidei suscipere recusauerit·
sedm̄ q̄d uerū p̄ doctrinā filii
mei in euglio scriptū ē· Qui
crediderit et baptizatus fuerit
saluus erit·qui uero n̄ credide
rit condepnabit̄·Quid ē hoc·
Ille homo q̄ p̄ sua segnitia q̄
interior oculus ē istud uidet q̄d
exterior usu absconsū ē & in
hoc n̄ dubitat·hic certissime
credit·et hoc fides ē·Na q̄d ho
exterius certum hoc & exteri⁹
nouit·et q̄d interius uidet hoc
et interi⁹ considerat·Ido eū sc̄i
tia hoīs p̄ speculū uitre arden
ter p̄cipit in cōprehensibile diui
nitatē·quā exterior oculus aspi
cere n̄ ualet·tunc desideria op
primunt̄ ad ūā p̄ strata·Vnde
et sp̄s hoīs illi⁹ ad ueā altitudi
nē suspirat hanc regeneratio
nē semens·qua filius hoīs de

xxxv·

xxxvi·

ſpū ſcō conceptuſ amulit· cuī ma
ter· eū de carne uiri ſudamuſ in
libidine nī acceptū ſ; de ſecreto pa
triſ omniū· Et ille ſuauiſ uemens
puriſſimū et uiuū ſpeculū maq̄
oſtendit· ita q̄d homo p illud in
regeneratione uiuit· Nā ſic homo
naſcit ex carne· diuina poteſtate
in forma adę illū creatrice ita ſpſ
ſcs recuperat uitā aīe p mundatio
nē aquę cui ipſa ſpūm hoīs inſe ac
cipit eū reſuſcitans ad uitā· ut
prius munda ſanguinis ſuſcita
tuſ ē· cū incorporali uaſculo ma
nifeſtatuſ ē· Vt eni forma hoīs tunc
amabilit formaī ita q̄d homo dī·
ſic ſpſ hoīs amę oculos di nē ita q̄
uiuificaī ita q̄d eū dę adhereāt ita
tē uitę nouit· Vnde q̄ ſic fontē ſa
lutis cū fedei ſuſcipit
uitā in ſaluatione inuenit q̄a
fidelit credidit· q̄ ů credere n
uult mortuuſ ē· quo ſuſpiria ſpſ
n habet cū quib; mansuetudinē
celi uolet· ſ; tamū tangendo ce
cis oculis palpitat in obumbrata
ſcientia carnis nouiens· q̄a uita
li diſciplina caret· quā dę ſpūs
uit in homine· ſurſū cōtra uolun
tatē carnis aſcendentē· Qua ppt
iſte in morte infidelitatis condēp
nabit· quia lauacrū ſalutis n ha
buit· Ego eni nec tēpus nec gen
ab hac ſalute ſeparauī· ſ; hanc
uocationē omī pplō p filiū meū
clementi inſtituī· Nam quo
cūq; tēpore labentiū horarū

cuiuſcūq; ſexuſ aīe ętatis homo
ſit uidelicet maſculuſ aut fem
na infans aut decrepituſ· cū in
affectu deuotionis ad baptiſmū
uenerit ego cū pietatis admiratio
ne ſuſcipiā eū· Et ī recuſo lauacrū
baptiſmi infamiſ· ut quidā falſi
deceptoreſ locunt· q̄ me talē ob
lationē abicere meminit· ſic eā
in uetere teſtamēto ī ſpretu infan
tis circūciſionē· cū ille eā nec uoce
expetierit· nec uoluntate ſuſcepe·
quā tamē parentes ei ipſo cōple
uerī· ita eā nē in nouo gratiā· ī
abicio baptiſmū infamiſ· quā
uiſ ille eū nec loquendo nec con
ſentiendo querat· ſ; tamū paren
tib; ei id peo facientib; Et tamē
ſi ille ſalutē conſequi deſiderat·
omī uere fidele promiſſionē ad
implebit· quā hi peo ſpoponde
runt q̄ eū ad ſacro ſēm fontē
adhibuerī· qui tres homines in
honore ſcē trinitatis ee debent·
uidelicet ſacerdoſ qui ipſū pfun
dit· et duo qui pillo uerba fidei
dant· Qui aut hoc modo in la
uacro baptiſmatis ei de bapti
ſmo conungunt incarnali
peratione ei ī cōmiſceant· q̄a
in ſpāli generatione ipſi adhę
ſerunt· In baptiſmo eni filii mei
ego pī admonui q̄d ſacerdotē
in lauacro benedictionē dant
oſtendit· et ſpūs ſcs in ſpecie leuis
animalis uiſus ē q̄d uirū in ſim
plicitate cordis ibi hominē bap

tibandū ploquentē et docentē
denunciat·atq; filius mīs in car-
ne baptizandus aderat· q̄d mu
lierē in suauitate nutricis astan
tē obdulcissimā incarnationē
eīdē unigenti mei declarat·
xxxiiij. Quid nē· Sed sicut infans de
lacte et de cesis abalio sibi con
trus corporalit pascit·ita etiā
doctrinā et in baptismate sibi
ppositā fidē ex intimo corde ob
seruabit· Q̄d si uba matris sue
ñ sugit· nec comitas sibi escas
suscipit· in cunctanter mortī· sic
etiā si nutrimēta pussime matis
ecclē ñ accipit· nec uerba fidelīv
doctōx que sibi in baptismate
ppositā s̄ reuocet· et crudelmatē
mortis animē ñ euadit· q̄uo sal-
uationē animē et dulcedinē et
ne unte recusauit· Et sic cū ide
infans corporalē cibū de mam-
suis molere ñ potest alius et il-
lum addeglutiendū ne moria
tur· conterit· sic etiā faciendū ē
cū ille in baptismo uerba ad con
fitendū me ñ habet· ad erunt
et spīales aduitores· qui ipsi
cibū unte idē catholicā fidē ne
inlaqueo ppetue mortis cōphen
dantur· ppōnant· Quomodo·
Dñs seruo suo causā suā in uo
ce pcipientis ppōnit et ille eā
in angustia ūmortis cū ope cō
plet et matē filiā suā in carna
te docet· et illa uerba ei· cū sub
iectione pficit· ac simili modo

debitores fidi baptizato uerba
salutis oportune pferam· ut il-
lic fidei deuotione ob amorē
xxxv. celestiū adimpleat· Nam nul
lus tā graui pondere peccatōx
pmitur· si in noīe sacro sce trini
tatis in sem baptismatis inuocē·ue
re oīa crimina sederis ei· deleo·
sicut et in infante cū in lauacro
regenerationis pfundit uetere
culpā ade uetacit abluo· S; ñ mi
reris homo q̄d in fonte baptisma
tis ab omnib; peccatis suis homo
iustificat· ita q̄d de pondere
peccatōx suōx in eo clemētissime
alleuiat· Nā in nocens agnus q̄
sine ulla macula peccati fomē
baptismi ingressus ē· cū magno
sacramēto incarnationis sue cri
mina peccatōx hominū in bap
tismate mundi auferet· S; oīa
acutissime pspicio et pscrutōx·
et in hoc seclo et in cōmutat ubi
mors corporū ñ ē· S; oīa apta·
Quid ē hoc· Gehenna inopibus
mortis pbat· et una cēna inopi
bus que punent ad una· Quoni·
mors p mortē pbat· qa cū homo
sine pnitentia et sine media di-
quo ñ requirit cā iusto di iudi
cio in peccatis mortī· mors ei in
morte inferi discutit· Ista q̄q;
pbat puna· ita q̄d bona opa ful-
gent in electis· cū una cēna dñat
illis· Ita etiā q̄ in fonte benedic
tionis baptizant· in semetip se de
regenerationis pbant· S; ibi p

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uocatione benedictionu sacer-
dotis uocor-ita q̄d aures mee
uerbis fidi assē-quāuis ille qui
ibi me uocat mobligationi
bus peccatox sit-Nam quāuis xxxv.
idē sacerdos peccator sit-tamē
officiū baptismi abeo susceptio-
si hoc p uocationē noīs mei
fidelit̄ exercet-ipsius aut̄ iu
quitas condepnabit eū-si mea
sine penitencia pseuauerit-
celebratione ū baptismi n̄ recu
so abeo suscipe-cū uerbis fidi
me uocauerit-Q̄d ē hoc-Si xxxvi.
aliq̄s diues homo dispensator ē
habet q̄ multib; suis bona sua
recte dispensans-officiū suū fi
delit̄ exercet-et si idē dispen
sator de alio ope suo culpabi
lis ē-tamē dīs suus n̄ dedignat̄
abeo suscipe officiū suū-et ta
men diligens-seruet nequā in ope
tuo-unde ē illū indigne sua in
dignū habet-officiū tam iusti
cie sue abeo n̄ dedignans accu
pere-Sic et ego q̄ plurimos dis
pensatores habeo-a sacerdote
qui recte unctus in officio suo
fidelit̄ manet-quāuis de alius
opib; suis culpandus sit-n̄ re
nuo suscipe sacramentū meū-
de alius tam iniustis actib; suis
eū in contrariū iudicans-nec
tam q̄d meū ē abeo suscipe ē
necessē. Quod si aliquis bap xxxvii.
tizandus separationē corpo
ris sui adē putans baptisma
quesierit-nec sacerdotē a quo
baptizet̄ habere poterit-tē
siquis eū p inuocationē trine
maiestatis p fuderit-baptiza
tus ē-et remissionē peccatox
suox grām q; supne beatitudi
nis p hanc p fusionē accepiet-
quia in fide catholica p fusus ē-
nec hoc baptisma mutari pote
rit-S; tam in inuocatione hac
nulla p sona-ista rū trium uocabi
liū p sonarū omittenda ē-
quo si ibi ulla earū p infideli
tatē inuocari omitt̄ tunc
ibi ueritas salutē n̄ opat̄ur; po
tius falsitas decepcionē tribuit-
unde et ibi inuocatio huiusmodi
fabilis ut mutans n̄ deceat-q̄a
et puriss̄imo baptismate filii
di ueritas n̄ defuit-s; ibi mira
bilia sua mirabilit̄ p semetipsā
declarauit-Qua ppt̄ et hoīes q̄
saluari desiderant regenera
cionē ueram ad saluationē pe
piant-et hanc p cipere n̄ negli
gant ne pereant-quia ut abor-
tiuū abiciē-q̄d p ue sine calore
ueri-nec informatione nec in
exp̄ientatione adh̄erens uisce
rib; matris sue-ita ena in pri
culo mortis sine consolatio
ne sp̄s sci dereliq̄t-q̄ nec in
ueritate nec in ope implicat̄ sa
cramentis eccl̄ie-que mat̄ uoci
sentias existit-Hoc audiant
et intelligant oīs ppli-qui
regnū dei in regeneratione

spſ et aque mutare uolunt ſcdm
q̊d eſ inſcīſ ſcripturiſ p domū
ſpſ ſcī pposīt ē ſ; q̄ uigilantib;
oculiſ uidet et ſonantib; auribꝫ
audit hic miſticis uerbiſ meis of
culū amplexionis p̄beat quę
de me uiuente emanant. iiij.

Tertia uiſio ſole partis

Vidi uelut
magnā et rotundā turrī totā q
integrū et albū lapidē exiſtentē
tres q; feneſtras in ſūmitate ſui ha
bentē ex quib; tantus fulgor re
ſplenduit q̊d etiā tecū turris il
luſ q̊d ſe uelut in cōnū et excelſa
mirabiliter eide fulgoris mam
feſtius uideret ipſe autē feneſtre
pulcherrimis ſmaragdis circūq
ornate erant ſ; et cadē turris
uelut in medio dorſi p̄dicte
muliebris imaginis poſita erat
ſcdm q̊d aliqua turris in mu
rū urbis ponit ita q̊d cadē
imago p̄ fortitudine ei nullo
modo cadere poterat et infan
tes illos qui uenire eide imagi
nis ut p̄dictū ē tranſierant ui
di multa claritate fulgentes
quoꝫ alii in fronte uſq; ad pedes
ipſoꝫ uelut aureo colore orna
tu erant alii uero candē clari
tatē tantū habentes illo colore
carebant. Excepſis autē infantib;
alii quenda purū et lucidum
ſplendorē alii uero quenda tur
bidū et rubeū fulgorē adorientē
uergentē inſpiciebant ſ; ex his
qui ipſū purū et lucidū ſplen
dorē conſiderabant quida cla
ros oculos et fortes pedes habe
bant ac in uenire eide imaginis
fortiter incedebant. Alii autē in
firmos oculos et debiles pedes
habentes huc et illuc aduerto pi
ciebant ſ; et ipſi baculū inma
nib; ſuis tenentes coram p̄fata ima
gine uoluebant ac ea aliq̄ndo
ſ; tamen tepide tangebant. Quida
uero ſereno ſ oculoſ ſ; imbecilles
pedes habentes ante eandē ima
gine hac et illac inuicem p̄gebant.
Alii autē infirmos oculos ſ; for
tes pedes habebant et tamen coram
eadē imagine tepide ambula
bant ſ; ex his qui illū turbidū
et rubeū fulgorē inſpiciebant.
alii in p̄fata imagine bene orna
ti fortiter incedebant alii autē
ex ipſa ſe rapientes eā impugna
bant et conſtitutas ordinatio
nes ei comprimebant de quib;
quida p̄ fruchi penitentie ad
ipſā humiliter reuertebant q̄da
uero p̄ neglechū obdurationiſ
inclinatione mortis remanebant.
Et terrū audiui uocē de celo mi
dicentē. Sicut noua ſponſa
agni poſt illuſtrationē unū

damonū que orta ē insole iustice
qui mundū sua ꝑfusione sc̄ifica
uit·inigneo ardore sp̄s sc̄i deco
rata & confirmata·ad ꝑfectionē
decoris sui ē·ita ut fidelis homo
qui regeneratione inspū & aqua
peperit·p unctionē supioris doctō
ris ornari & stabiliri debet·ut in
omnib; mbris suis ad effectū beati
tudinis confortatus·plenitudi
nē fructus sume iustice ꝑferens·
decorē sui ornatus ꝑfecte inuenī
at·Qua ꝑp turris hec qua uidet
designat flagrationē dono; sp̄s
sc̄i·qua misit pat in mundū ꝑp
amorē filii sui incendentē corda
discipulo; illi inigneis linguis·
unde robustiores reddti s in no
mine sc̄e et uere trinitatis·S; q̄d
ipsi ante aduentū ei⁹de ignea sp̄s
sc̄i in habitaculo suo clausi sede
bant clausurā corporis ipsorū
ostendebat·ꝑ quā timidi adhuc
quendā iustitiā dī·& imbecilles
pati penas aduersario; erant·Et
qua filiū meū in carne uiderant·
ideo clausis utriusq; oculis suis il
lum in carne diligebant·ita q̄d
tunc nō uidere aptā doctrinam
quā p̄ea in mundū effudere·cū
inspū sco robustiores effecti s·
In cui⁹ aduentu ita confirmati s·
q̄d nullā penā abhorrerent·q̄n
strenuie tolerarent eā·Hec ē enī
fortitudo turris huiꝰ ꝑ quā eccl̄a
ita roborata ē·q̄d nulla insania
diabolici furoris superari potu-

Sed q̄d eā uides magnā & ꝓ > ·13·
tundā totāq; imaginū & albȳ >
lapidē existere·hoc ē q̄d immensa >
ē dulcedo sp̄s sc̄i·& uolubilis in
gr̄ā·oīs creaturas circumens·ita
q̄d nulla corruptio immundicie
plenitudinis iustice eā euacuat·
quō ipsa torrens uoꝝ habens os
riuulos sc̄ientie in claritate for
titudinis illi⁹ emittat·in qua nū
quā maculosas alicui⁹ sordis in
uenta ē·q̄a ipse sp̄s sc̄s ē ardens &
lucens serenitas·que nūquā cua
cuabit·& que ardentes uirtutes
fortit accendit·ac ideō oīs tene
bre abeo fugant·Que uis fe > ·15·
nestras in sūmitate sui habet ex >
quib; tantus fulgor resplendet >
q̄d eā techi turris illius q̄d se >
uidit in conū erigit·in clarissime >
ei⁹dē fulgoris manifestius uidet·>
qua ineffabilis trinitas in effu
sione dono; excellentie sp̄s sc̄i
manifestat·ita q̄d ex eade beata
trinitate tanta serenitas iustice
ꝑ doctrinā ap̄lo; emanat q̄d eā
exinde fortissima uirtus diui
nitus que incōprehensibilis in
altitudine omnipotentie mai
statis sue ē mortali creature sci
licet homini aptius notificetur·
s;tamē ita q̄ nū fide credentis
et fidelis hoīs capi possibile di
noscit·Unde ipse fenestre pul
cherrimus smaragdis circūor-
nate s·quō eade trinitas uni-
dissimis uirtutib; & eruditis ap̄lo;

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que nūquā aridnatē uporis mue
nium· ubiq; nouo mundo apus
sime declarata ē· Quomodo· Quia
notū ē· quom̄ ppt̄ fidē uermans
rapacissimi lupi cos diuersis cala
mitatib; dissecabant· unde robu
stiores ad bellū certaminis effecti
s·ta q̄d p̄hando eccl̄am acq̄sierūt·
& eā adedificamonē fidī forussi
mis uirtutib; roborauerūt· & mul
timodis coruscationib; ornauerūt·
Et quō eccl̄a mūspiratione sp̄s
sc̄i p cos ita confortata ē· ideirco
& ipsa uult & exposcit· ut filii
sui ornent̄ signo sp̄s sc̄i in hac
unctione· ut ide sp̄s sc̄s penet̄rent
corda fidelīū matta midia que
ualde mistica ē· ita q̄d migneis
singulis p uoluntatē di patris in
mundū uenit· Qua ppt̄ & homo
baptismate saluationis p̄fusus·
confirmandus ē unctione excel.
lentis doctoris· sic & eccl̄a supra
firmā petrā firmata ē· Vnde
cadē turris uelut in medio dor-
si p̄dicte muliebris imaginis po
sita ē· scdm q̄d aliqua turris in
murū urbis ponit̄· ita q̄d cade
imago p̄formidine ei nullom̄
cadere potuit· q̄a sp̄s sc̄s in max
ima formidine incarnationis
illius qui uerus sponsus eccl̄e ex
stitit· mirabilia sua mirabiliter
operatus ē· & eccl̄am tā fortē in
defensione mumonis sue ostēdit· q̄d ipsa p̄formidine illa
qua abigneo dono ei munita ē

v.

nūquā in errore ulli p̄ucrsitatis
deiici potuit· quō p̄ supnā p̄uc
tionē in amore sponsi sui sine
macula & sine ruga semp̄ gau
debit· quia & ide unigenitus
filius de spū sc̄o conceptus· nobilit̄
sine macula ex uirgine natus
ē· quē admodū ad moysen locu
tus sū· Ecce inq̄t ē locus apud
me· stabisq; supra petrā· cuiq; di
xerit q̄a mea ponā te in foramī
ne petre· & protegā te dextera
mea donec p̄transeā· Tollamq;
manū meā· et uidebis posteriō
ra mea· Quid ē hoc· Prope ē mi
raculū· q̄d implebit̄ in uoluntā
te mea· Si tu prius pugnabis
in duricia legalium p̄ceptoꝝ p̄ex
tionē significationē ui eoꝝ ostēn
dens· ubi dulcedinē & lenitatē
nō inuenies· que in filio meo
apiet̄· Et hec duricia legis quā
in p̄cepto meo scribes· tādiu in
duricia lapideoꝝ cordiū stabit·
quo usq; omīs gta illa manife
stabit̄· que in arc & abimmano
rib; tuis usq; ad manifestationē
filii mei exhibenda ē· cuiq; hoc
adimplet̄· in lege quā nē scribis
glificabor· ponā q; te in p̄fora
tū lapidē· Quomodo· Ego ponā
te in duriciā legis· cui te in p̄cep
to meo sup ea constituo· ut ude
licet magistrū hui antiquatus
nominans· quā filiū mīs p̄forabit·
plus ea quā tu in mistcis uerbis
exponens· cui cū inopportuno

.xiiij.

tempore inmundū miser⁹. Et ido
plagit te fortuudo ipsius acrimo
ra uerba quā ti affuit. et clausu
rā inlegalib⁹ p̄ceptus apiet. donec
adme redeat. Quid ē hoc. ipse tā
diu salutaria uerba mundo cor-
poralit̄ p̄ transeat. Tunc et ego tol-
lam manū meā. q̄a sup sidera eū
adme leuabo. oīa misteria eī p
spīm sēm demudans. et sic uidebis
incarnatione eī. ut homo adorso
cernit̄. et in matre p̄spicit̄. quō eū
incarnatū semel. s. diuinitatē il-
luis ñ capies. q̄a filiu tuu magis eū
uidebunt eū adme redierit. quā
eū intelligant eū apud eos uisibi
liter conuersatus fuerit. Et q̄d. in-
uides infantes illos qui uenire eī
de imaginis ut p̄dictū ē transie
rant. mutatā clarificatā fulgentes. hoc ē q̄d
hu q̄ innocentia mundicie pu
ri cordis. p̄ fontē regeneratōis
matrē scilicet ecclām ut ubi p̄
monstratū ē adepti s. filiu lucis
ppt̄ ablutionē peccatoꝝ suoꝝ ex
ituntur. Quoꝝ alii a fronte usq; ad
pedes ipsoꝝ uelut aureo colore
ornati s. quia abrenūcio bonoꝝ opū
usq; ad finē sc̄inatis p̄fulgentissi
ma dona sc̄i spūs inunchone uere
credulitatis p̄ manū pontificis
inerismate decorant̄. Quomodo.
ut p̄ciosis lapidib⁹ aurū decorat̄
cui inponunt̄. ita et crismate p
manū supioris doctoris fidelit̄
bapt̄hatis inuncto bapt̄smatis
ornatus ostendit̄. quēadmodū

scriptū ē. Rex quoq; transgre
diebat̄ torrentē cedron. et cunct⁹
pplꝰ incedebat contra uiā oliue
que respiciebat ad desertū. Quid
ē hoc. filiꝰ uirginis q̄ dñatur um
uerso mundo. ut rex tirenus relicto
pplo transgressus ē torrentem. aq̄s
beati lauacri. q̄d admonitione
spūs sc̄i forti desiderio uiā salutis
demonstrat. Quid ē hoc. ipse re
liquit mortē transiens ad uitā.
cū in regeneratione spūs et aque.
idē in magno ornamento urbis ce
lestis ierlm que nūquā deficit
sūmā beatitudinē enunciauit. Un
de omīs pplꝰ q̄ in illū credebat
uult p̄ inspiratione sc̄i spūs ad uiā
illā. que absconsa erat in unchio
ne olei respicientes ad p̄uaricatio
nē ade. que deserta erat pulcritu
dine hereditatis iustitie di. et con
sideramus utrū illa ad salutē redi
re uellet an ñ. q̄a uulneratū pecca
tū primi hoīs necesse habuit ut
p̄sacerdotale officiū inungeret̄
q̄d filio uirginis necesse ñ erat.
quō ipse totus insēinate concept⁹
ē. ñ uulnere nec corrupto ma
tris suę utero. s. integratis ho
nore p̄seueranter. Nā q̄d p uulne
ra suggestionis diaboli macera
tū et confusū ē hoc p unchionē
olei impugnandū et ornandū ē.
ita q̄d edax humor abstergatur
que carnis concupiscentia op̄at̄.
In uero ut uides candē cla
ritatē tamū habemus. illo

vij.

viij.

colore carebant· quo ipsi inbap
tismate ablutionis tamū munda
ti unchonē supioris sui sacerdo
tis nō habent meritū· q̄d sig
nū ardentis sci spūs ē· Quid ē hoc·
ūncho confirmandi p̄donū sci
spūs in episcopali officio specialit
fulget· q̄d infideli pplo post regt
nerationē spūs ac aquę· exercendū
ē· cū credulus homo confirman
dus ē· supra firmā petrā· Quom·
filiꝰ mis baptisma in corpore suo
suscepit· ipsū ita in carne sua sci
ficans· in qua nō ē diuisus· qua
ipse solus uirginis unus filiꝰ ē·
ac ideo filiꝰ hoīs dictus· quo eade
uirgo cū nō concepit ex uiro· s·
in integritate uirginitatis suę
peperit illū· Qui post passionis
miseriā & resurrectionis glam·
in eade carne celū penetrauit·
rediens ad me· ac de inde spūs
sc̄s in magno ardore mundū il
lustrauit confirmans omnē in
structā in cordib· discipulox illi·
cū eis apuit q̄d antea absconsū
erat· Quom· Sic spūs sc̄s corda illox
accendit· ut sol cū sub nube in
cipit apparere ardentē calo
rē suū ostendit in sua p̄clara
luce· Quid ē hoc· Amor· filii mei
in imis ab· eox latentē ardebat· &
ita calor· spūs sci eos p̄transiens·
fortissimū solē doctrinę illox
ostendebat· quo hoc ē testimonii
illud q̄d spūs ecclę declarauit·
ita q̄d mors iustitie di resistē

xx

re nō ualet· Vnde uos o filii ue
ritatis audite & intelligite confir·
mationē spūs sci· qua ipse in blanda
unchone magisterii sui ut docet
magister· omnū unchonū exactis·
uobis benigne offert· Et ideo hec
uncho in honore cū de sci spūs p̄ supi
orē sacerdotē tamū exercenda ē·
qua omis ecclāsticus ordo in spū
sco instruitis ē· & p̄ p̄terita hec eade
uncho spūs sci ē· Qua p̄p̄t & homo
ille qui misterii regenerationis
aduntā suscepit· si hoc m̄ nō ē unctus·
tunc nec ornatū ecclāstice plenitu
dinis p̄cepit· secm q̄d ecclā p̄flagrā
tē spm scm ornata ostendit· ut sup·
ē p̄monstratū· S· & quēadmodū ec
clesia in domis sci spūs p̄ficit· sic et
fidelis homo confirmandus ē in
unchone principalis doctoris· q̄
in honore spūs sci formidabilis ma
gister ē· quo ide spūs scs calore suo
certissimā doctrinā xp̄iano pplo
ardenter p̄fert & accendit·

xx

Vnde qui in hac unchone sci
spūs sic uncto adhesit· in secla
ri p̄tamone illi nō comungam·
quia in spū sco ei copulatus s· Q̄d ē
hoc· fides portat hominē ad hanc
unchonē· & ideo qui illū tunc in
manib· tenet· fidē designat· que
carnalia nō querit· s· semp ad spūa
lia tendit· Nā oculus mis uidet ho
minē· ut mopib· suis uenturus ē
ad me· Quod si tu o homo post
baptismū me dimisti et ad diabū
reuerteris· inde iusto iudicio con

dcpnaberis·qũo magnũ domũ in
tellechus ubi dedi·&quia midiam
meã in fonte baptismatis ubi ostẽ
di·Oms enĩ q̃ midiam meã in baptis
mo quert·eã benigne mundum
ppt filiũ meũ immundũ uemẽtẽ·
&multos labores in corpore suo
sustinentẽ·&ppterea obo pug
nas animę &corporis tui patiẽt
debes tolerare·&ppt filiũ meũ sus
cipiãtr·Et nemo repellendus ẽ
alauacro baptismi q̃ illud mno
mine meo fidelit sequit·quia in
quocũq; tẽpore me homo quert
illũ ardenter suscipio·Q̃d si post
ea illius opa prana crt·ipsa eũ
diiudicãt admortẽ·Ido obomo
in regeneratione salutis mun
dare·atq; inunctione sctus in
ungere·mortẽq; fugere &uitã im
trare·Nã &mat fidelũ quę ecclã
ẽ·ut filiu su mortẽ effugiant·&
uitã inueniant fidelit mipſ ex
orat·Quomodo·ipsa gemebun
da uocẽ in filius suus habet·quę
ado in ipsa posita ẽ·usq; diu ple
nitudo filioꝝ ei in tabernaculũ
supnę ciuitatis ingrediat·&
hanc uocẽ ideirco habet·ut me
qui sũ amre cuũ admoueat sẽp
uidere &inuieri·q̃d unigenitus
ms incarnatus ẽ·quatinus ppt
amorẽ illi⁹ filius suus parcã·quos
ipsa in regeneratione spſ &aquę
suscepit·quia cęleste regnũ ñ
possunt intrare·ñ in salutatione·
Unde sic resonat·uidelicet xvij·

tumere patrẽ amare filiũ·&ardere
re in spũ sctõ·Quomodo·Hic son⁹
de me patre filiũ meũ in sctõ spũ
ei dans ẽ·qui ẽ uox mipsa reso
nans q̃si tuba incuitate·Et alio
modo ñ loquit·ñ sic in filiũ suus·
Qua ppt &ecta fortissim⁹ ds admo
nẽt pfiliũ suũ·ut parcat peccans
hominũ·quę ppt penitentia sine
pdicione toleranda s·q̃a ide fili⁹
di humanitatẽ sine peccato assũp
sit·Qui ñ debuit indui pollita
carne quę de semine peccati con
cepta ẽ·quõ ds iustus ẽ·&quia
splendor celestis regni ñ tangit
ulla macula sordis·Et quomodo.
&posset·ut homo qui immisa fe
ditate maculatus ẽ supnũ regnũ
intraret·ñ pfiliũ meũ sine sorde
incarnatũ·Qui peccatores suscep
it·impenitentia purgatos·Et
q̃s posset hoc facere·nisi ds·Unde
&ecclã ad filios suos conuertit·
&eos matna dilectione fouet·

Sed q̃d uides q̃d expdictis s xvij.
insanib; alii quendã pu s
rũ &lucidũ splendorẽ alii ũ s
quendã turbidũ &rubeũ ful s
gorẽ adorientẽ uergentẽ inspi
cunt·hoc ẽ q̃d ex filius ecclę q̃s
ipsa immaculata incorrupto
nis suę puritatẽ di perat·quida
puritatẽ spũalis uitę inseruissi
ma uirtute fulgentẽ·uirtutes uidel
cet conculcantes ppt amorẽ ueri
solis adtendunt·quida autẽ car
nales facultates quas multa diuer-

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ſmaſ uicioꝝ ꝓturbat habemuſ· & ta
men uiuecta fide fidelit̄ ardemuſ·
cuiꝰ ꝑpt̄ ſupnā reribumonē adḋt̄
na ſuſpiram· Et exbiſ q̄ ipſū puru
& lucidū ſplendorē conſideram·
& quida claroſ oculoſ & fortes pe
deſ habem· ac mouemur eid̄e ima
& gmiſ fortit̄ incedum· q̄a hu eī
& celeſtia ſectam̄ mandata dī miſū
& iuſte conſideramoniſ· & ceſſū bo
ne fimmoniſ ponum· ita ſcilicet
& mmma amplexione mām di
lectomiſ ambulamuſ· q̄d nec inca
ducis nec mēmis deuotionē ſuc
& mmoniſ mmuam· Alii aut̄ in
& firmoſ oculoſ & debileſ pedeſ ha
bem· quo nec clarā mmonem·
nec fortē exhibmonē adopuſ ꝓ
& fectomiſ tenem· unde & huc & il
& luc aueno picuum̄· q̄a indiuer
ſitatē morū ꝓuariaſ tēptamoneſ
& damoniſ fundum̄· S; & ipſi bacu
& lū umanib; ſuſ tenem· & coram ꝑ
& fata imagine uolitam· ac eā ali
& quando ſ; tam̄ tepide tangum·
quo commumacē fiduciā inopib;
ſuiſ ponemuſ eccleꝫ di falſo rumo
re ſe oſtendum· ac eā mūdū ſ; tam̄
inſipiem̄ ꝓfelarē prudemā no
tam· q̄a cū ꝓficta ſimulamonē
ſapiemuſ apparem· in conſpectu
hominū· ſtultā apud dm ꝓmanē
gtam efficium̄· Quida ū ſeruoſ
oculoſ ſ; imbecilleſ pedeſ habemuſ·
amc eande imagine hac & illac
mactē ꝓgum· q̄a cū ipſiſ dmn
na p̄cepta ꝓmmū conſideramo
miſ nota ſim· impedc tam̄ cōpleno
miſ claudamuſ· ita ſponſe xp̄i ꝓ
diſcurſū ꝓpriꝫ inſtabilitatiſ de
monſtram̄· ut in umbra ſapiemā
querem· eā in poteſtate ſua ſe ha
bere putamuſ· amc quā coſ imme
ipſoꝝ comungat· miſſā uī illī obu
& neam· Alii aut̄ infirmoſ oculoſ
& ſ; fortes pedeſ habem· & tam̄ coſā
& imagine tepide ambulam· q̄uo
ipſi debile mmonē adopuſ bo
nū tenem· cū fortit̄ inopib; iuſti
cie incedere deberem· ſ; in eccleſia
cis inſtmmomb; ſimplicit̄ ñ cur
rum· q̄a magis adūrena quā ad
celeſtia mem̄ figum· & ido apud
dm ſtultū ſ· quo ꝓfelarē pruden
tiā cōphendere uolum· q̄d aſſeq̄
& ñ poſſum· S; exbiſ qui iſſū turbi
& dū & rubeū fulgorē inſpicium·
& alii in p̄fata imagine bene or
& nati fortit̄ incedum· q̄a iſti
quāuſ ūrena poſſideam· tamen
in uiſceribꝫ eccleꝫ ornatū laborū
ſuoꝝ portamuſ in diuina lege pe
de rectitudinis ponere ñ dedig
nam̄· cū mandatis dī obedien
tes ꝑegrinos ſuſcipium· nudos
ueſtium· & eſurientes alimum· O q̄m
felices iſti ſ· quo hoc modo dm
ſuſcipium· unde & ipſe habitat
& cū illis· Alii aut̄ ex ipſa imagine
& ſe rapiemuſ ea impugnam· & con
& ſtituta ordinamoneſ ei cōprimuꝫ·
quo hu matna uiſcera et dulcia
mmma eccleꝫ deſeremuſ· illa
uarius erroribꝫ fangam· & ado

constituas legis ei⁹ diuersis oppssi
onib⁹ dilaniant⁹ de quib⁹ quida
pfructu penitencie ad ipsa humi
liter reuertunt⁹ quia qd grauiter
deliquerit digne penitendo ppt
restauratione unde grauit inse pu
niunt⁹ quida uero pnegligentia ob
durationis inclamone mortis re
manent⁹ quo ipsi una negligentes
obdurato corde ppt contumacie
impenitentie uccordia iudicii
mortis suscipiunt⁹ ut in mistica
uisione sua ezechiel dicit⁹ Rex gemis
lugebit et princeps induet mrore⁹
et manus ppli terre conturbabunt⁹
Scdm una ex facia eis et scdm iu
dicia ex iudicabo eos⁹ et scient qa
ego dns⁹ Quid e hoc⁹ Anima in qua
regalis rationalitas e⁹ cu delectati
one peccati adee sentit qa malu
nouit⁹ tunc lugubre assensu assu
mit⁹ Quomodo⁹ Qua illi raciona
litas sapientia et scientia ado in
spirata e⁹ et ido quaus corpori
consentiat⁹ tam indignu habet
malu⁹ scies hoc n ee bonu⁹ Unde
cu diuersis crimib⁹ popartee
carne polluit⁹ alta suspiria tra
hens anhelat addm⁹ Cumq⁹ crimi
nosu opus ibi cu sufflatu supbie
impletu fuerit⁹ tunc corpus uelut
ignominiosus princeps induet
confusione principatu suu inin
mundicius uidelicet exercens⁹
quo ut homo dolet cu ulib⁹ ue
stimentis coopit⁹ ita ita merit
cu turpis rumor ad confusione
siu ab ipso p̄cedit⁹ Qua ppt epia
ua opa illoz hominu⁹ qui inma
lis achib⁹ suis adtra pstrati s⁹ ace
lestib⁹ p̄ceptis conturbabunt⁹ qa
uestimenta salutis idē beatitudine
cu do n habent⁹ quo quib⁹ hec
felicitas e⁹ hos maligna contur
batio possidebit⁹ Et ido scdm
una iniquitatis cui semp assistunt⁹
scilicet peccati una colentes nec
ulla iustitia cu aspu scō monentē
intimere cordis sui ponentes⁹
sic facia eis uidelicet nulla mia
ei⁹ impendens⁹ qua cu scientia
boni n intelligunt n timent
me⁹ s; cu rabie puersitatis me era
tore omniu dedignant⁹ facien
tes quecuq; uolunt⁹ Unde et scdm
iudicia ex que s opa illa que
in desideriis suis ppetrant iudi
cabo eos⁹ nulla pmia felicitatis
eis reddens⁹ s; penas impditione
ei⁹ opponens⁹ quo nullu honore
mihi exhibent⁹ et in hoc scient
quod nullus eos inde liberare
poterit p̄ter me qui dns⁹ omniu
su⁹ S; q̄ uigilantib⁹ oculis uidet
et sonantib⁹ auris audit⁹ hic mi
sticis uerbis meis osculu amplex
ionis pbeat⁹ que de me uuiente
emanant⁹

Quinta Visio scde partis

post hec vidi.

59°

Post hec
vidi quod p̄fata
mulierem
imagine q̄dā
splendor alb;
ut nix: & tanquā cristallus
plucidus: a uertice usq; ad
gutt ei circūfulserat. S;
a gutture usq; adumbilicū
eius quida ali splendor
rubei coloris eā circūdederat:
qui de gutture usq; adubera il
lius uelut aurora rutilabat. S;
a uberib; usq; adumbilicū illi
quasi purpura iacincto inter
mixta fulgebat. Et ubi ipse ue
lut aurora rutilabat claritatē
suā sursū adsecreta celi extem
dat: inqua pulcherrima et pu
ellaris imago nudo capite &
sub nigris capillis & rubra tu
nica que circa pedes ei diffluc
bat indutа apparuit. Et audi
ui uocē de celo dicentē. Hec ē
floriditas insupna syon: mat
& flos rosarū & liliū conuallium.
O floriditas: filio potentissimi
regis desponsaberis cui & nomi
natissimā plem gignes: cū untē
porte tuo confortaberis. Et cir
ca eande puellā uidi maximā
turbā hominū. lucidiorē sole
flammē. qui omīs miro modo au
ro & gēmis ornatu erant: ita
q̄d etiā quida illoz incapitib;
suis uelatu candidis uelaminib;
aurea bona circūornatus fuerūt:
supra quoz uertices similitudo gle
ineffabilis trinitatis uidit in supi
tipice demonstrata ē. q̄si inspera
in ipsis uelaminib; uidit sculpta
apparuit. & in frontib; ipsoz agni
di ac in collo eoz species bois. et in
dextra aure cherubin & in sinistra
alia species angelica: ita q̄d & de
ipsa similitudine gle supne trini
tatis ad has species quasi aureus
radius se extendere. S; inter hos
quida alii apparuerūt: qui in fu
las in capitib; suis. & pallia episco
palis officii circa humeros habe
bant. Et audiui uocē excelso
dicentē. Ista s filie syon: & cū eis
s cytharę cytharedoz & omne
genus musicoz ac uox totius lęti
cie: & gaudiū gaudioz. S; sub eo
de splendore ubi ipse uelut auro
ra rutilabat. uidi inter celū & tram
densissimas tenebras apparere:
que tanta horroris erant ultra
quā humana lingua effari possit.
Et rursū audiui uocē de celo di
centē. Si filius di in cruce passus
nō esset iste tenebre nullomodo p
mitterent hominē ad supnā cla
ritatē puenire. Ubi autē ide splen
dor quasi purpura iacincto inter
mixta fulgebat: forte p̄dictā
mulierē imaginē constringens
ardebat. S; aliud splendor ut can
dida nubes. eande imaginē ab
umbilico & deorsū quo usq; ul

ua ñ dū crucīat honeste circūde
derat· Et bu ures splendores circa
ipsā imaginē se late diffundentes·
plurimos gradus et scalas in ea be
ne & decenter ordinatas ostende
bant· S; cū hec uidet· & nimio ue
more qui me appbendebat· in tā
dissolutis uirib; corrui· nec alicui
responsū dare ualui· Et ecce maxi
mus splendor uelut manus tenens
me· unde ures & uocē recepi· Et
uerū audiui uocē ex illo in dicentē·
O magna misteria s· hec· Considera
ui sole & luna & stellas· Ego forma
ui solē ut luceat in die· & luna & &
stellas ut luceant in nocte· Sol au
tē significat filiū meū qui de corde
meo exiuit· & mundū illuminauit
cū natus ē ex uirgine in fine tēporū·
sic & sol egrediens mundū illustrat
cū ortū circa finē nocte· S; luna
ecclām ex filio meo inuicta et
supna desponsatione desponsatā
designat· Et ut luna semp increm
tū & defectū in sua constitutione
habet· s; a se ipsa ñ arderet nisi q̄d
a lumine solis incenditur· sic & eccla
in circuitione motionis ē· ita q̄d
filii ei sepe pficiunt in incremto
uirtutū· et q̄d sepe deficiunt in di
uersitate morū· atq; in dispsione
aduersitatū· ita q̄d multo ciens
in misteriis suis p rapacissimos lu
pos impugnat· uidelicet p malig
nos hoīes tā malos xpianos quā
uidelicet & paganos· et in hoc pse
me ipsā ad tolleranciā ñ accen
dentem· s; in me p filiū meū ut in bo
no pseueret illuminat· Stelle aut ex
a se differentes in claritate fulgo
ris sui· significant pplos diuersi
ordinis ecclastice religionis·

Inde ea uides q̄d p fata mu
tuebit imaginē quidā splen
dor alb; ut nix· & ea quā cristallus
p luciduse auertice usq; ad gutur
ei circūfulget· qua ecclām uidelicet
ex incorrupta sponsā circūdat
aplica doctrina· que candidissimā
incarnationē illius enunciauit q̄
de celo in uterū uirginis descendit
et qui fortissimū ac lucidissimū
speculū omniū credentiū ē· ita q̄d
eandē ecclām ipsa doctrina ab hoc
inicio cū primū edificari cepit·
usq; ad tēpus illud· cū cibū uite
fortit de gluture ualuit· splendi
dissime ea circūfulgens fidelit
circūdedit· Quom· Aplica doctri
na circūfulsit ecclām in capite
cū apli primū illā sua p̄dicatio
ne ceperit edificare· scilicet cū p
diuersa loca discurrentes· colle
gerēt operarios· qui illā in catho
lica fide roborarent· et q̄ ipsi p
spiritos et episcopos ac omnē eccla
sticū ordinē puideretur· atq; in
ra uiros ac feminarū q̄ sub con
iugio s· et cetera talia fidelit
constituerent· Qua ppter eandē
doctrinā subsequunt· pigmea
rū habentes similitudinē sacer
dotū legalis testimonii· q̄ sub le
ge circūcisionis posita erant· in

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terrori cibo cumulare pplōs. unde
cū apli ordines illos eligebant
cū quib; ecclām supna inspiratio
ne exornabant. Quid ē hoc. Nam
sequaces ex nunce ipsos saluberri
ma pigmta gestamus. fidelū pla
tas & ullas. & cunctas atq; alia
loca regionū. & tarū pertranseunt.
et pplō diuinā legē annuntiant.
Ipsi cnī s exqsim patres & dispen
satores. ad ecclasticā disciplinā oī
pplō indoctrina sua pferendū.
et ei adcibū unc dispensandū. ita
q̄d cnā se tales inuenta sua exhibe
ant. ne ouesq; mee inopib; ex offen
debant. s; ut recte post ipsos gra
diant. quia ipsi hoc officiū ha
bent. ut apte cibū unc pplō sub
ministrent. & unicuiq; fidelia of
ficia diserte ordinent. semet ip
sos cnā ita constringentes. ne
carnale copulā appetant. quo
spūale escā credentib; pbent. &
qm cnā immaculatū sacrificiū
do offerre debent. ut innocen
te abel pfigurabat. sicut de ipso
scriptū ē. Abel quoq; obtu
lit de primogenitis gregis sui.
& de adipib; eox. Quid ē hoc. In
ortu surgentis sci sēficatio re
galis ostensionis imlo qui inno
cens inuenta sua erat effulsit. q̄d
donū omipus di n̄ ih̄u s; ecclīa for
titer retinet. Quomodo. Quia
abel in sua integritate obtulit
do intentionē uoluntatis sue.
& plenū officiū cū de uoluntā
tis. cū cogitauit in corde suo illi of
ferre primū germ. q̄d in substantia
sua habuit. & cū illud cnā pfecto
ope cōpleuit. ita undelicet sūmū pa
trē honorans. atq; debitā reuerentiā
exhibens. Unde cnā sicut idē abel
gregi suo pfuit. & ut ei pascens ei
stoduit. & ut cnā simplici deuotio
ne do obtulit de primis emissionib;
et. ac de pinguib; nutrimtis earun
de emissionū. ita cnā pdicti pigm
tarii. qui filius ecclē. idē ouib; xpi
ipsius dispensatione ad pascendū
eos plati s. ipsos in uerbis doctrine
ecclāstice disciplinę fidelit nutri
ant. et eos ab insidiis antiqui insi
diatoris fortit muniant. ac cnā
sincera consideratione inspectori
omnū aliquas donationes exeis
offeriant. Quomodo. Quo si illos p
oīa pfectos facere n̄ possunt. tam
aliquē fructū ex ipsis egredientē
do offeriant. primū scilicet rectā
intentionē bone uoluntatis ex.
quasi simplex. germ de primoge
nitis gregis ipsox. ac deinde pfec
tū opus operationis in ea de uolun
tate illox uidint suauē fructū de
adipib; eox. S; unde hoc fiunt. q̄d
idē abel dm tā deuote colunt. Vi
delicet castitas integritatis eū ad
tantā deuotionē impulerat.
Qua ppt. qui in consecratione
corporis. do sacrosēm sa
crificiū offerre debent. in suam
tate castitatis adiutare ipsi acce
dant. quia si ipsi auctoritis cor-

ti. cū cogitauit in corde suo illi of
ferre primū germ. q̄d in substantia
sua habuit. & cū illud cnā pfecto
ope cōpleuit. ita undelicet sūmū pa
trē honorans. atq; debitā reuerentiā
exhibens. Unde cnā sicut idē abel
gregi suo pfuit. & ut ei pascens ei
stoduit. & ut cnā simplici deuotio
ne do obtulit de primis emissionib;
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Qua ppt. qui in consecratione
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crificiū offerre debent. in suam
tate castitatis adiutare ipsi acce
dant. quia si ipsi auctoritis cor-

ruptionis s̄. quomodo incorrupto
ne uulnerauis manū salutaris medi
camen porrigere possumꝰ. Et ido
ut alius tamen fiducialis salutare
remediū conferre ualeam. uolo ut
filiū meū inamore castitatis fortiꝫ
uincam. Qđ si ceciderim. festinem
ut ceciꝰ ꝑ penitentiā surgam. et
in hoc ignominiā peccati uelim
nudi fugiam. salubrē medicinā
requirentes. et abel. cuius sacrifi
ciū dō acceptū erat fideliter se
quentes. Sed q̄ exhis inclausu -iiij-
ra subiectionis inamore filii mei
se continent. et inmoribꝫ suis insti
tutionē maiorꝫ suorꝫ quā me inspi
rante ꝓfuleri obseruant. sollici
tudinē curationis pigmariorꝫ n̄
habentes. tam̄ quāuis onera anx
ietatis exꝫ n̄ gerant. quo ꝓpi cōma
pmia maioribꝫ suis subiecti s̄. cū
eisdē pigmariis supnā mercedē
inelecta ciuitate sibimet acquirāt.
Quod autē uides quo agutu ℈ -v-
re usq; adumbilicū eidem ℈
imaginis quida aluus splendor ℈
rubei coloris eā circūdat. hoc ē ℈
quia post doctrinā aplōꝫ cū ecclā
ta roborata ē q̄d salutarē cibū
ueracit̄ ualeant discernere. et eū
adiuuenes ora fortitudinis suę trans
mittere. surrexit nobilissima pfec
tio ecclāstice religionis. quę sup
nā dulcedinē flagrantu ardore
degustauit & se aspritate constrin
gens. adcunctionē secretioris for
titudinis se extendit n̄ tam ad
diuisionē carnalis amaritudinis
ꝓuenies. quo copulā humane
communionis abiecit. Quomodo.
Nā ide splendor degutture usq;
adumbilicū illi uelut aurora ru
lat. quo eade pfecto a gustu
mirabilis uegetationis adulcis
sima nutrimenta ecclāstice religi
onis inuirginea iocunditate
se dilatauit. ita q̄d cetā abube ℈
rib; usq; adumbilicū illi q̄si pur- ℈
pura iacincto intermixta fulget ℈
quia anobilissimis educationib;
adconstrictionē inmunde castita
tis se munuit uidelicet passionē
filii mei ꝓpter supnā dilectionē
quā in corde suo fideliter habuit
imitando. Qua ꝓpter cū ubi ipse ℈
uelut aurora rutilat claritatē ℈
suā sursū adsecreta cęli extend ℈
it. quo illa pfecto quę inuir-
ginitatis honore floret uirtutē
suā n̄ deorsū adterrena s; sursū
adilla quę s̄ incęlestib; mirabi
liter diligit. In quo pulcher- ℈ -vj-
rima & puellaris imago nudo ℈
capite & subnigris capillis appa ℈
ret. q̄d ē serenissima et abomni
fęditate humanę concupiscentię
innocens uirginitas nuda men
tē abomī uinculo corruptionis
habens. s; tam̄ n̄ dū pfecte fatiga
tionē tenebrescentiū cogitatio
nū in filiis suis quādiu immun
do s̄. deserere ualens. cui tamen
ut resistat. fortiter se opponit.
Unde & rubra tunica quę circa ℈

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pedes ei diffluit induit qa ꝑsu
dore laboris inuirtuosis opib;
usq: adfine lauc debeant ꝑfecho
nis ꝑseuerat scilicet circūdata
uarietate uirtutū illū immanis
qui plenitudo sctatis ē. Quę eiā
ut tabi in secreto supni lumi
nis ostendit ē nobilissimū gem
inecclesti thesin uidelicet qsta et
decus illoꝝ qui obamore uir-
ginitatis sanguinē suū fuderit.
et qui eiā incandore humilita
tis uirginitatē suā ꝓpo obser-
uantes insuauitatē pacis. quietis
rum. quo ipsa filio omptis di q
rex cuncloꝝ ē desponsata. nobi
lissimā ꝑlē idē elegantissimū
chorū uirginū ea ꝓtulit cū impa
ce ecclę ꝑficiens confortata est.
Quod autē circa eandē puellā
uides maximā turbā ho
minū lucidiorē solis stantē qui
omis miro modo auro et gemis
ornatu s. hoc ē qd ardentissimis
amplexib; nobilissimā uirgini
tatē ꝓcipuus chorus uirginū cir-
cūplectit. q omis ardentiore clari
tate coetā do fulgent quā sol in
tra appareat. qa se ipsos conceal
cantes mortē uirilit deuicerit.
unde eiā mirabilit insūma sa
pientia ꝓpt clarissima opa quę
ꝓxpo humilit gesserit. decentissi
me exornant. Qua ꝓpt et quida
illoꝝ incapitib; suis uelatu candi
dis uelaminib; aurea bona circū
ornatu s. qua ipsi ingla

uirginitatis fulgentes demonstrax
qd hu qui decus uirginitatis ap
petunt membra sua abomi noxio
calore circūtegant. et candore
innocentie pulcherrimo fulgore
castitatis decorati fidelit apphen
dant. Sup quoꝝ uerices similitu
do ineffabilis trinitatis uelut tabi
supius tapice demonstrata ē qsi in
spa inipsius uelaminib; uelut sculp
ta appareat. quo ostendunt qd in
tentiones hominū honorē supne
eglose trinitatis. ut ubi inostensi
one misteriu uerissime ꝓsignatū ē.
incōphensione amoris et stabilita
te castitatis firmit et strenue tene
ant. Qd et infrontib; ipsoꝝ agnus
di. ac incollo eoꝝ species hoīs. et in
dextra aure cherubin. et insinistra
alia species anglica declarat. qa
in reuerentia castitatis suę man
suetudinē filii di imitabunt. pe
tulantiā supbi colli deponentes.
et se ipsos fragiles hoies considerā
tes. in spiritate eiā audientis suę
uerā et indeficientē scientiā am
plectentes. ac inoccursante aduer
sitate ei de auscultationis suę an
gelica ꝓsidia appetentes. ita qd
et de ipsa similitudine glę supne
trinitatis ad has species qsi aure
us radius se extendit. quo ineffa
bilis trinitas infidelib; hominib; q
uirtutes quert. et diabolicas seduc
tiones fugiunt mirabilia miracu
lorū ꝓfunde sapientię suę opari
ñ desinit. S; inter hos quida alii

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apparent· qui infulas in capitib;
suis & pallia episcopalis officii cir-
ca humeros habent· quo int illos
qui in uirginitatis honore floren-
tia quada in supna ciuitate con
sistunt· q dignitate antiquos pa
trū ecclām superioris magisterio in
scło streinuc gerentes· tam decore
uirginitatis nō pdiderūt· Vnde etiā
ut audiſ· omīs isti q cū suspirus su
is pcelesti amore integritatē suā
conseruauerūt in cęlesti habitatio
nē filię syon dicunt· quia filiū
meū uirginitatis florē in uirgini
tatis amore imitati s· Idoq· & cū
eis s exspirationes sonos spūuū·
et germina cunctos somniū ac
uolatilia ornamēta pspariū mūdi·
et aurea uisio fulgentiū lapidū
ac gēmarū· Quomodo· Quia hoc
habent de filio di q d de uno sonus
exit cui oīs chorus uirginū in max
imo desiderio concinit· uidelicet
nouū cantū symphonizando· ut
ioh's dilectus uirgo testat dicens·
Et cantabant q si canticū nouū ·viij·
ante sedē· & ante quatuor
animalia· et seniores· Quid ē hoc·
Inullis fidelib; q bona intentione
castitatē amplectentes· uirginita
tē suā pdi amore illibatā conser-
uant· bona uoluntas ipsos in
laude creatoris sui mirabiliter
erūpit· Quomodo· Quia in auro
ra uirginitatis quę filio di semp
adhesit fortissima laus absconditā ē· cui nullū trenū officiū·
nec ulla ligatura legis resistere ua
lent· in uoce exultationis ad gl̄am
di celeste carmē decantat· Quom·
Videlicet quo uelox mer habens·
carmen illud in noua ciuitate libera
tus mirabiliter pmit q d ante qua
unigenitus di q uerus flos uirgi
nitatis ē incarnatus de mundo ad
celos rediens ad dexteram patris re
sedit audiū nō ē· s; tunc quasi no
ui mores qui prius usi nō s cū u
dentur in stupore habent· ita hoc
nouū misterū q d prius audiū
non ē tunc in cęlestib; resonans in
honore uirginitatis cognitū ē·
scilicet ante maiestatē di q a ds
hoc facere potuit et ante quatuor
rotas· quę quatuor partes mun
di pcurrentes· ueritatē omīs iusti
cię & humanitatis saluatoris ue
lut animalia in noua lege fere
bant· & ante illos antiquos qui
spū scō inbuti uiā rectitudinis in
uentri lege hominib; suo tempore
demonstrabant· Quid ē hoc· Quia
ds in noua grā austeritatē anti
quę in structionis delinuit· ·ix·
Sed q a uirginitas tā gl̄osa an
te dm ē· ido qui ea ex uoluntate sua do obtulerūt· ea prudenter
conseruent· quo, sem̄ p posse cū
tuma deuotione uirginitatis sus
cepti fidelit custodiendū ē· Vnde
etiā qui ide sacramentū adierūt·
cauteant ne retrorsū incedant·
Nā ipsi carissimi imitatores filii
mei s· cū se ita do offerūt ut nō sint

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ugam moppinione commugi·nec
onerari sclari causa·carnalē co
pulā respuerit·ne illi cū omni
sollicitudine carnis sue subiecti
sit·S; hoc cupiens ut gloſe
innocentie innocentis agni ad
hereant·Qua ppt ut ille qui in
animo suo deliberat ne ullā co
stā sibi copulet·S; hoc desiderat
ut impudore uirginitatis ppt
amorē filii mei psueret soda
litatē ei accipiet si tamē inopib;
ei de castitatis psueranerit·qa
hec scā munera in uotis sacra
tissimi pacti ecclastice religio
nis obglam supne remunera
tionis eide filio meo obtulit·S;
si ille postea idē pactū relinquēs·
ppt turpē stimulū carnis sue ad
uberiū ppetrauerit libertatē
suā inseruitutē redegit quō
honorē colli sui ubi filiū mei
pudice immari debuit·purpu
dinē delectationis sue nequiter
corrupit & qa mdaciū pulit
uouens se caste uiuere qd nō im
pleuit·Unde etiā si in eade culpa
temeritatis sue psuerauerit·
districtū iudiciū iustissimi iu
dicis·inde sustinebit·quō nec
turpitudo nec mendatiū ince
stus glā apparebit·Quod si
amaro fletu ante finē suū de
hoc reatu suo penitentiā fecerit·
tamē unda sanguinis filii mei
ullū suscipit qui culpā suā ex
horruit·nō autē ipsū imō soda
les suos q̄ gla integritatis floret
ponit quō societatē illoꝝ deseruēs·
libertatē pacti sui abiecit·et eā
inseruitutē peccati redegit·S;
ea puella que exuoluntate sua
insciissima despontatione eide
filio meo offert·a ipso decenter
sime suscipit·qui eā hoc modo
sibi coniunctā uult habere con
sortio suo·Quomodo·ut illū ca
sta dilectione amplectat·sicut
et ipse eā in secreto suo diligit·
quō illi semp amabilis ē·quia
magis eū quā ullum iuuenū sponsū
querit·Qd si pactū ei postea ingressa fuerit tunc coram his·qui
in celesti gaudio s̄ polluta erit·
unde etiā si in eade temeritate
psueraverit supna gla iusto
iudicio carebit·S; si penituerit
suscipit·sic ancilla ei ñ sic dna·
quō regale despontationē dese
ruit·et quia magis aliū amauit
quā illū quē amare debuit·
Ille quoq; q̄ eā seducendo uiola
uit si culpā suā emendare uolue
rit·ita peniteat q̄si ceſū rupisset·
ne inp̄ditione mortis occidat·
quia supnā despontationem
temere corrupit·Quid ē hoc·
x. Quod si
amaro fletu ante finē suū de
hoc reatu suo penitentiā fecerit·
tamē unda sanguinis filii mei
ullū suscipit qui culpā suā ex
horruit·nō autē ipsū imō soda

xj. Nam si aliquis magnus prin
ceps sponsā alterius sibi caram
habet quā seruus seruosq; suos
adulterando corrūpit·quid
dñs ille facit·Uerte in maxima
ira exercitui suū mittit ut illū
p̄dat·quō eū inpprius uiscerib;

sius confudit· Qđ si tunc seruus
ille timens· omnē excreuit illū
exorat ut p ipso intrcedat et in
sup ad pedes dñi sui flebiliter
cadit· quatinus sibi parcat· ide
ide rex ppt bonitatē suā et pp
ter petitionē illoꝝ eū uincere si
nens· societatē conseruoꝝ suoꝝ
illi reddit· s; tam eū tm ut ceteros
interiores et familiares amicos
suos n remunerat· quāius et int
alios illi consimiles ~~consimiles~~
conseruos ipsius debitā grām
exhibeat· hꝫ et hunc erit· qui
cūu regis sponsā seducendo u
olauerit· Ide enī rex intrectissi
mo helo iudicia sua exercens· il
lū adpditionē tristimum· quia
eū in hoc facto q̄si illusorē inob
liuione mus sue habuit· S; si
miser· ille die huī indignatio
nis amicipans· electos dī suppli
citer exoranerit· ut uenā sibi a
dño suo petant· et in sup humam
tatē saluatoris sui flebilit inspex
erit· quatinus pgrām ipsius a pec
cato suo absoluat· tunc ide rex
sanguinē hunc q̄ predepitione
humani generis effusus ē et di
lectionē supnoꝝ ciuiū aduersus
illū a tanta suo et a diabolica
potestate in perditionē eat eri
pit ac eū in saluationē beatarū
animarū ponit· s; tam ut pudio
regalis desponsationis quo ce
teri amici dī his sacris uirginib;
que filio meo sup na desponsa

tione dicat· s congaudent· n
decorabit sicut et illū qui pu
dorē uirginitatis amisit· decō
re uirginitatis n coronabit· q̄m
uis ei int alios electos suos gau
diū in sup na ciuitate cū inesti
mabili remuneratione tribuat·

Sed q̄d subeode splendore > xiij·
ubi ipse uelut aurora rutu >
lat uides int celū et tā densissi >
mas tenebras apparere· que tan >
ti horroris s ultra quā humana >
lingua effari possit· hoc ē q̄d >
sub uirginali gla inter· spūale
et carnale intellectū casus primi
parentis q̄ densissimus inobtus
catione infidelitatis erat· ita ut
tē horē illi nullus hominū explī
care ualeret· apte cognitus ē·
Quomodo· Quia in incarnatio
ne filii dī q̄ ex uirgine natus ē·
celeste desideriū ascendit et ter
na concupiscentia claudicauit·
quō p uaricatio ade p sanguinē
eiđē filii dī mirabilit in saluatio
nē restaurata ē· cū prius illā nul
lus usi unigenitus dī a patre
missus inmundū dissoluere pos
set· Unde ut audis unitas pica mam
festatione· nisi ide filii sanguinē
suū p salute hominū fudisset·
cadē transgressio ita cōprime
ret hominē· ut ad illud gaudiū
supnoꝝ ciuiū pungere n posset·
Quod autē ubi ide splendor- > xiiij·
quasi purpura iacincto in >
ter mixta fulget· forte p̄dicta >

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mulieb⁹ ī imagīē constringens : xviiij.
ardet· hoc designat pfectionē
illoꝝ qui passionē filii mei imitari
tanꝰ ardore inflammat̄ strenue
ecclām in constructione sua exor-
nant· Quomodo· Quō ipsi ſ alta
edificatio surgentis thesauri in
diuino consilio· quia cū eccla ita
roborata consolatur· egressus ē
addecorē illius unens odor· uo
uens mer· secretꝝ regenerationis·
Quid ē hoc· Quia tunc surrexit
mirabilis ordo· qui filiū meū in
specie exempli sui tenuit· quō
ut ide filius mis uenit in mundū
de cōmuni pplō absconsus· ita et
hec acies conuersat̄ in seclo dere
liquo pplō separata· ¶ Nā ut bal
samū de arbore suauit̄ sudat· sic
et pplꝰ iste primū in heremo et
in abscondito singulariter exortus
ē· deinde uelut arbor· ramos
suos expandit· paulatim in mul
titudinē plenitudinis pficiens·
Et istū pplm benedixi et sēificauit·
quō ipsi m̄ ſ amantissimi flores
rosarū et liliꝝ q̄ sine humano
ope magro germinant· sicut et
pplm hunc nulla lex adhoc con
stringit ut tā artā uiā appetat·
ſ ipse illā me suauit̄ inspirante
sine p̄cepto legis sua uoluntate
aggredit̄· plus faciens quā sibi
iussū sit· unde et plurimā mercē
de inde acquirit· sicut et mulier
ubi samaritanus illū uulneratū
hominē in stabulū duxit· scriptū ē·

Altera die protulit duos denarios·
et dedit stabulario et ait· Cu
ra illius habe· et q̄dcūq; sup eroga
ueris ego cū rediero reddā tibi· Q̄d
ē hoc· In prima die salutis· uidi
cet cū filius dī mirabilit̄ incarnat̄
corporalit̄ in mundo manebat·
multa et admiranda opa in hu
manitate sua usq; ad resurrectio
nē ipsius p̄fecit· p̄que uulneratū
hominē aduersa remedia salubrit̄
reduxit· ſ; altera die· idē cū oīa
mysteria uetustatis post resurrec
tionē ipsius in eccla apte posita ſ·
protulit in typica manifestatione
noui et ueteris testamenti· scili
cet eccīe unitatē certissimā demon
strationē et credentiū pplō dul
cissimū cibū· Et hec scripta de
dit p grām suā pastoribꝫ eccle q̄
gregē ipsius custodiunt· et ait il
lis inuerbis blande admonitio
nis suę· In ecclāsticis constitutio
nibꝫ; p cuius ait xp̄iana cohorte
quā in sanguine meo redēptā
uobis commisi· hoc habentes in
sollicitudine usā· ne aliquibꝫ·
que p̄uenit aduersā deficiens
erret· Q̄dcūq; autē bis que uobis
seruanda tradidi in bona uolun
tate usā sup addideritis· uidi
cet plus facientes quā uobis p̄cep
tū sit· ego qui ductor· et saluator·
ūr· sū· nunc mundū relinquens
et ad patrē ascendens· cū meritū
rediero mundū iudicare· eūq;
in deficientē stabilitatē po

nere·ita q̄d ampliuſ ꝓlabemia tē
pora nō debilitaū·tunc mercede
laboriſ uſi & bone uolumauſ
uſq; cū augmēto fructu redda
uobiſ· Et dicā ubi o fidelis & pbe
ſeruc·qui fidelit̄ miniſtraſ·quiſ
quiſ pluſ uou ſu addit quā ſibi
inlege p̄ceptū ſit·duplicē merce
de accipiet·quia illū innomine
meo glōſū habeo·quō me ualde
amauit·Et ego dico· Hec uir :xv.
gineū genuſ·nec hic ordo ſingu
lariſ deuotionis·nec qui eoſ imi
tant̄ ut hu qui in heremo iacent
ſunt in p̄cepto legiſ·ſicut & ꝓphe
te abhominib; ſub carnali lege
conſtituti nō ſ·quia tamū mea in
ſpiratione madentes exoriu ſ·ſ;
hi pluſ addunt quā eiſ p̄ceptū
ſit·q̄d ſacerdotaliſ ordo et reliq̄
inſtituto ſacerdotaliſ officiū nō
facit·q̄a hec inabrahā et in moy·
ſe inueteri teſtamto iuſſa ſ·ſicut
etiā et apli illa exacte lege tollen
tes·& inſpū ſcō ea ſedm uolunta
tē meā bene ordinantes ecclē con
ſeruanda tradiderūt·S;·& ipſa apli
ca doctrina in euglo p filiū mev
diſpoſita ē·ubi diſcipli eī in uni
uerſū mundū uerba uertunt̄
effundere miſſi ſ·Q̄d tunc·N̄ā
cū apli uiā ſalutiſ pplo annun
tarent lucidiſſima aurora filia
rū ſyon in amore filii mei exor
ta ē·ſcilicet illoꝝ qui carnē ſuā
foruī conſtrinxerūt et malā con
cupiſcentiā inſemet ipſis durīt
mortificauerūt·Et ſicut tunc hec
caſta uirginitaſ in ardentē amo
re filiū meū ſub ſecuta ē·ita etiā
hic in ualde amabiliſ ordo ſin
gulariſ deuotionis in carnatione
illius imitatuſ ē·qui ſ; recta ūpla
mea uidelicet ut chori angloꝝ me
colentes·et eī de unigenitu mei
paſſione·& morte ac ſepultura·
in corpore ſuo portantes·ñ tam
ita ut gladio aut aliſ uiroꝝ·ex
quib; hoīes deficiunt·moriant̄·
ſ; filiū meū ſic imitantes·q̄d uo
luntatē carniſ ſue abiciunt·cū
ſc abomnib; ſ̄ſtantib; rēb; & or-
namentis inquib; mundus letatur
auferūt·ut in euglo de ihū lucer-
na mundi ſcriptū ē· Ipſe autē :xvj.
ihs habebat ueſtimentū de pilis
camelorū·& bonā pelliciā circa lūi
boſ ſuos· Quid ē hoc· Iuc inquo
diuina grā mirabilē abſtinentiā
ſuſcitauerat·p eande grām habe
bat defenſionē uirtutiſ huī q̄d
in ītate ſua honorē & diuiciaſ ſcla
reſ contēpſerat·& q̄d etiā p con
ſtrictionē quā in mortificatione
uiciorū circa uoluptatē carniſ ſue
poſuerat·peculariter motuſ eī de
corporiſ ſui foruī domuerat·cū
maiores edificationes quā p̄de
ceſſores ſui inſtruerent·uidelicet
cū p duras et aſpas uias incedens·
uirtutū ſtrenuē faciens·caſtitatē
ardentē amauit·p̄bens etiā his

uiā medicamīa qui illud deuote exquirebant. Unde cuā illi qui s̄ uuens odor uouens mr secrete regeneratōnis. cundē iohannē in maximis tenebris scī luceme. pacu ussimas opationes beatarū uirtu tū uiuta sua subsequentes. mepiā altitudinē & latitudinē mundi aliū rerū fugiant. & in constrictō one diffusi animi sui corpus suū coercentes. malā concupiscentiā abiciant. ita excellentiorib; in strumīs quā hu q̄ ante ipsos sim plicit in uia dnī gradientes. sim plicia habitacula faciebant. serenissime fulgentes. acutā & an gustā semitā arripiant. scilicet: xvii. ea que in uoluptatib; scī s̄ fortit sub pedib; suis conculcantes. Quo modo. Quo semetipsos despicien tes. & corpus suū seruitutī xpi inopatione uirtutū subiicientes. penulatiā in austeritate morū suoq; declinent. sic p̄bona exepla sua ceteris hoīb; lucidissime ful gentes. Ita cuā angelicū chorū fidelit imitant. Quomodo. In abiectione scelerū. quo ut an geli nec ūrena querit nec concu piscunt. ita & isti eos hoc modo mirabilit subsequunt. q̄d oīa caduca contēpnunt. Unde cuā sicut filiū mīs ē nuncius salu tifer; sacramīq; et sacerdos sa cerdotū ac ppheta ppheta rū & edificator felicū turrū ita cuā si necessitas se opposuerit qui

mīt huiūmodi hoīes radicē odoris cū utilitate habet. sit nunci⁹ & sa cerdos. sit ppheta & consiliator ecclastice edificatōnis. nec omīno abbis separandus ē. si tamū ocu lus claritatis in eo lucet. nec ad usū ecclasticū dormiat. s; ad in strumentū ei⁹ uigilet. occupatio nē tamū sclaris cause & contā gia sclarū rerū abiciens. qua nec angli nec sacerdotes. nec ppbe te iustitiā dī occultabunt s; cā ex p̄cepto illius inuestitate p̄ferent. quēadmodū de iohe qui harun do uerbo agnata n̄ fuit. cui⁹ au steritatē istu subsequunt in euglo rū scriptū ē. Et egrediebā tur ad illū oīs iudee regio & ie rosolimite uniuersi. & baptiza bant ab illo in iordane flumine. confitentes peccata sua. Q̄d ē hoc. In suspiriis et gemitib; a delecta tione uicioq; egrediebat ad illū in quo diuina grā opabat. uita simplicis confessionis deuota uoluntas. & uisionis pacis una uniuit omīs effectus. scilicet illoq; hominū quoq; corda p̄amore mortis a damore ad uitā concussa fuerant. Quomodo. Quo ide iohs p̄cursor ueritatis. & amaritudi nē & dulcedinē eis intimauerat. Unde & ipsi p̄fusione penitudi nis a rectitudine ei⁹ flagitabant. quatenus p̄declinatione malo. et p̄erchonē bono confessionē scelerū suoq; ponentes illū mere

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rum adipisci. qui ipsis in umbra amice tramis remedium denuncia ret. s; qui eis in luce nouitatis uera salutem conferret. S; uide ihs hoies ad se uenientes docens fluminee irrigationis profundes. uerba pronuncians ex adhorte uenturi saluatoris qui uenies salutem fidelib; contulit. et illi facere ne negligant. q testimonio sce fidei confirmans fulminantis opis plus ad dum. uidelicet prophetationem, scda rum rerum nouam auctoritatem secdm similitudinem illam aggredientes. qua excepto eide testimonii sci ficationis pregeneratione spi et aque inabiectione diabolice seruitutis nouum hominem inducentes adierit. s; ubi stimuli impellentis necessitatis se obtulerint. admonendo. et erigendo. ac sanando. manum deuote tuam, petentib; porrigant. sitam in adeande dignitate ecclastica promotione dignetur peuenert. et in hoc predecessore sui fidelis imitentur. ut qd ille uidit mumbra ostendit. ipsi in nouitate lucis ueracit cpleant. Ipsi enim s zona ecclie ea ualde constringentes. quo incarnatio ne filii mei occupati s. et qa ema angelicum ordinem excrcent. scali cet incessantes nullis horis cantando cum sompno. aut orando in cpunctione. n autem excussis clamoribus. ut inutilis puluis aut aridus absq; uiriditate compuncti

onis. et qa eua in recusant opari p necessitate sua in tam inumanib; suis sclaria quarentes. s; cui caritate et humilitate se ipsos aute cat cuspicientes. o ipsi fortissimi atq; amantissimus ppls mis cui in eis afflictionem illa adtendo. qua filius mis in carne sua passus e. quo et ipsi sedm mortem illi mo riuntur cui uoluntate sua deserentes. et ppter una cum a magisterio se subicientes. sedm impiu plausq; suoq; gradium. Qua ppter et uestimu alioq; pploq; n assimilat. qua et ipse integer. incorrupta incarnatione filii mei quo plurimum distat a pcreatione aliorum hominum ostendit. Na eande in carnatione legale impiu uiri ac mulieris in uenit. sicut nec iste pplis ulla conscripta lege ad hanc constrictionem cogendus e. s; qui ea pdilectione di sua uoluntate uouendo aggredit. hic inipsa pseueret. ne retro cedens corruat. sicut lucifer. q luce de serunt et tenebras receptit. de eni uestimus sedm coruscationem supnoq; spiritu cui alis subuliminis sue circuuolat et incarnatione ac sepultura filii mei designat. qa signu eide incarnatio nis in eode uestimu habet. qui habet q se ad fortissima obedi entia exhibet. et signu eide se pulture in ipso uestimu portat. qui inopib; iusticie sclarib; cau

xcix.

sci spe in abrenunciatione-

sis ab renumiat· Vnde q̄ pura
uoluntate code uestimi induit·
salubri remedio alleuiat· Et ido
qui illū p inuocationē spūs sci in
benedictionib; suscipit ñ illū ab
iciat· quo qui eū p abiectione
p seuerantis malū contēpserit cū
illo erit q̄ anglicū ordinē spre
uit & immortis sepultus ē· Qd ē
hoc· Quo hic ppls exp̄cepto legis
ad hanc constrictionē stimulat
non ē· s; uoluntate sua aggredi
sus ē pactū meū obseruare· et
ta ecclām meā sua scā conuer
satione illustrare· Quomodo· Ist
post primā lucē dicī aurora so
lis aspicit· ita ordo iste post uo
ces aplōr exortus ē· Quid ē hoc·

xx· Prima lux dicī fidelia uerba
aplice doctrine designat
aurora uero inicium huī conuer
sationis que primū insolitudi
ne & inspeluncis post eandē
doctrinā germinauit demon
strat· sol aut discretā & bene
dispositā uiā deinde inseruo
meo benedicto declarat quē
ego in ardente igne p transitū
docens eū in uestitu conuersa
tionis sue incarnationē filii
colere· & in abnegatione uolun
tatis sue passionē illi imitari·
qua idē benedictus ē q̄si alter
moysēs in lapideo foramine la
cens· et corpus suū in multa
aspritate obamorē unc̄ cruci
ans et constringens quotidie
dū eā primus moysēs in lapi
deis tabulis exp̄cepto meo aspā
& durā legē scribens iudeis de
dit· S; ut filius m̄s eandē legē
p dulcedinē euāgelii p foramina sic
eā benedictus famulus m̄s p
positū huī ordinis q̄d ante ip
sū durissima conuersatione fuit
p dulcedinē inspirationis spūs
sci discretā & planā uiā fecit
ac p hoc plurimā cohortē sue
religionis collegit· ut eā filius
m̄s p suauitatē odoris sui xp̄ia
nū pplm sibi coadunaret· Et
deinde spūs sēs cordib; electox suox
suspiria unc̄ haberet uū inspira
uit· ut sicut in lauacro baptismi
crimina pplox abluunt̄ ita & ipsi
in significatione passionis eiꝰ de fi
lii mei sclārēt pompas abicerent·
Quomodo· Nā ut homo adiabo
lica potestate in seō baptismo con
uertit̄ crimina uetus macule abi
cies· sic & isti ūtenas causas insig
no uestitus sui abnegant· in quo
eā & anglicū signū habent· Quo
modo· Ipsi enī in uoluntate mea
pectores ppli mei posita sunt·

xxi· Unde qui ex ipsis in scā conuer
satione p bari inuenient̄ pasto
res eccle mee constituant̄· qa et
angli qui nulla macula ūtenē cas
se tanguntur custodes ppli mei s·
Nā sicut angli coram do in duplici
honore s· sic & hoīes huī religio
nis s in duplici uita· Quomodo·
Angli in celestib; do sine intermis

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sione seruum. & ecia mūris hoīes
a diabolicis insidiis sēp pregam.
Sic & pplūs iste anglicū ordinē imi
tat. cū ūrna despiciens do comadre
famulat. & cū ecia reliquos hoīes
suis orationib; amalignis spiritib;
die ac nocte defendit. Unde si ecclā
mea rectū pastorē n̄ habet & pplūs
huiūmodi religionis clamando &
flendo ipsi subueniat. & q; meo
pbatus inuenit si necesse fuerit sup
extensū sacerdotiū suscipiens ip
sa in cēlo meo strennue defendat.

Nullus autē religionē istoz repen :xxxij.
te & uelut exsōno cuigilans
aggrediat. nisi prius inconstricti
one animi sui si in hoc ppositio p
seuerare ualeat. extrema pbatio
ne examinet. ne si illud uoluntate
sua in federe benedictionis susceptū
et postmodū in puersitate erroris
sui abiciens. m̄ sine penitencia il
luserit. in damnatione mortis mi
serabilit̄ peat. Qua ppt̄ o carissi
mi filii mei ualde incōtrarietate
dissipari ēstis. surgite eiciusq; inhu
militate et incarnate. & sco ppo
sito uro uirilit̄ & unanimiter
consentite. Sed ut uides aliusxxxiij.
splendor ut candida nubes p̄dic
ta muliebrē imaginē abumbili
co et deorsū quo usq; ul
ra n̄dū circuit honeste circūm
dat. qui ē sclāris ura que incan
dore serene intentionis ecclīam
aplenitudine germinantis for
titudinis. usq; ad extremitatē

illā ubi ultra ia n̄ dū infilius su
is ꝓcessit. inreuerentia a iuste sub
uentionis circūplectit̄. Quomodo.
Qua circa umbilicū ē germen
mbroz de quo omne genus hu
manū ꝓcreat. unde & ibi in ecclā
sclaris pplūs ꝑquē ipsa adplenū
numerū in ordinib; suis pueben
da ē demonstrat. cū ibi reges &
duces. principes ac p̄sides cū sub
iectis suis. ac ecia cēteri diuites
& paupes ac egeni cū reliquo
pplo conuersantes denuntiant.
& p hos oīs ecclā ualde ornat.
quia cū sclares hoīes legē di
que ipsis posita ē fidelit̄ conser
uant. & de ecclam plurimū ex
ornant. scilicet cū multis am
plexib; dim amplectunt. ita q; d
sincera humilitate & deuotione
magistris suis obediunt. & q; d
elemosinis & uigiliis ac continen
tia & ecia uiduitate ac ceteris
bonis opib; que di s corpus suū
p di amore castigant. Unde isti
qui constituta sibi legē secdm
uoluntatē meā custodiunt. ual
de amabiles mihi s. Sed siqs xxxiiij
exitus iugū libertatis mee in ab
iectione sclarū ferre desiderat.
a me eiciusq; uentat. nisi in hunc
ura carnalis copule sit. qua liga
ura temere n̄ soluat. n̄ p uoluntā
tē illius cuius consortiū habet.
Quomodo. Nec maritus uxorē.
nec uxor maritū in hoc pposi
to deserat. nisi uoluntas amboz

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sit· & tunc si ita de liberauerint·
aut ambo remaneant in sclo· aut
ambo a sclo separent· quo ee ñ
potest ut pes unus p̃ maneat in
corpore· & alter a corpore absci
datur· saluo hoie· Sic etiã ñ con
grunt· ut martius sclm colat et
uxor· sclm deserat· aut ut uxor·
in sclo resideat & martius sclm
fugat· si insupna una decorẽ
suũ inuenire uolunt· qa si hoc
indiscrete & insipienter agit· ñ ho
stia s; rapina appellabitur· Qua
ppt̃ qui incarnali copula lega
li iure sibi conuncti s unanimi
ter· simul uiuant· nec alterũ ab
altero sine consensu alterius· nec
sine dispositione· aut demonstra
tione ecclastici uigoris insipienter
se discindat· quadmodũ in
xxv. euglio retrũ scriptũ ẽ· Quod
ergo ds conunxit· homo ñ se
paret· Quid ẽ hoc· Ds mercatio
ne humani generis carnẽ de car
ne tulit· & in una copulatione
conuunxit· ita constituens ne
hec conexio p̃ cupitatẽ· ab inui
cẽ separaretur· Quomodo· Qua
ita inconuunctione uiri ac mu
lieris erit· ubi caro carni et san
guis sanguini legali ostensione
copulat· ne abinuicẽ sua stulta
p̃ cupitatione disiungant· nisi
hoc excusta causa aut ex rato
nabili deuotione utriusq; liga
ri· euenire occurrat· quo ds
in secreto sapiencie suę hanc
conuunctionẽ maris et femine
ad p̃pagationẽ hominũ benigne
disposuit· Et quia hec conuuncio
ab ipso ita decreta· constituta ẽ·
idcirco stulta cupiditas hois ab
scisionẽ in his duab; partib; ñ fa
ciat· nec pars hec nec illa dotẽ san
guinis sui malienũ locũ ducat·
quo sicut ds p̃cepit ne homo occi
dat hominẽ· ita etiã iussit ne ho
mo p̃ rudelitatẽ fornicationis
sanguinẽ suũ a recto loco suo
abscidat· Unde etiã homo ardo
rẽ cupiditatis sue deprimat· nec
incendiũ suũ ad alienũ ignẽ trans
mutat· qa si hec ardens uolun
tas calorẽ alterius uoluntatis cũ
feruente concupiscentia fortio
ris et melioris cause concepit·
uere tunc cũ desiderio animi
sui & cũ colligatione amplexio
nis mutus illi inunũ coagulatur·
Na exterior uidens oculus interiorẽ
calorẽ in adustionẽ excitat· Et
quãuis corpus hoc peccatũ cũ
corpore illo ñ opet̃ tam uiuens
uoluntas facit opus ardoris in
illis· ita q̃d omnia uiscera ex ppt̃
conscientiã suã concutiuntur·
Qua ppt̃ claustra exterioris hois
tam cauta custodia obseruent·
ne interior homo p̃cipi
dam negligentia sauciatur·
Et ut uides q̃d hui us splen
doris circa ipsã imaginẽ
se late diffundit· hoc ẽ q̃d
in honore supne trinitatis p̃

dicte ꝛ̄ ecclāstice instrūmones· ubiq; felicē eccl̄am in dilatatione erumpentiū germinū & in diffusione beatarū uirginū mirabili modo circūplectentes consolidant·unde etiā plurimos gradus & scalas in ea bene & decenter ostendunt qui s̄ diuersi ordines tā in sclaris; quā in spīalib; hoīb; p quos tacitē ecclā in bonitate morū et in disciplina uirtutū filios suos cū suauissima reuerentia educatos ad supna p ducit·Quomodo·cū terrena spernunt·et cū celestia diligunt·Quid ē hoc·Quia legalia p̄cepta que ipsis instituta s̄·in diuino amore fideliter ēplent·

Sed sicut in uiris; p sonis unus dr̄s xx·viij·ē·ita etiā in his; uiris; p dictis ordinib; una ecclā ē·fundator ille ē qui plantator omniū bonoꝝ ē·Quodcūq; enī ille n̄ plantauit·hoc stare n̄ potuit·Vnde illa instituta quā ipse n̄ instituit·hec in magnis illusionib; decidet·Quomodo·Quia dr̄s hec n̄ plantauit que ad supiora cū flatu supe ascendere tēptant·nec altoribus suis subiecta uolunt·Hoc ibi ē·ubi minor ordo supra maiorē ordinē quidē antiquo consilio principaliū magistroꝝ in uoluntate mea constituit ē se eleuare contendit·et ibi quidā in diuersis signis uestitus sui se uolunt extendere secūm mores suos·ut insania sua se cognitant·uelut si ordo angelicoꝝ se erigere uellet sup ordinē archangelicoꝝ·Et q̄d hoc ecē·Q̄si nichilū & uane essent·q̄a sic rectē constituti dr̄s ordines in uanitatib; suis diuidere uellent·Sed hoc ecē n̄ debet·Sic etiā nec hoc ecē decet·ut abbis in insania diuersitatis sue inuocet·qui in p̄posito suo semp̄ nouꝰ ecē uoluit·& rudes in scientia sua addiscendū ea que in mōtib; suis s̄·deserentes bone conuersationis uiā et bene exaratā artā anguste patrū·quā illius spūs sc̄s inspirauit·Vnde multa exitiosis constituta ordinationes·q̄s ecclā in antiquis patrib; habet in magna supbia destruunt·et hoc in plurimis scismatib; diuersarū institutionū suarū faciunt·Ipsi enī in diuersis circumstantiis; suis fructiferę arbores dici uolunt·s;·nec uacuę harundines possunt appellari·quēadmodū dilecto iohi de illo ostendit·qui intepore marcens abicit·ut scriptū ē·

Scio opa tua·quia neq; frigidus es neq; caliduꝰ·Vtinā frigidus ēs aut caliduꝰ·S;·q̄a tepidus es·incipiā te euomere ex ore meo·Quid ē hoc·O stultę qui in temet ipso turpit marcescis·ego q̄ cognitor secretoꝝ sū·in scientię oculo uideo opa desideriaq; tua·quō opa que adignē ignea illuminatoris p̄uenit omnino n̄ effugisti·nec etiā opa que glacie frigidi rigoris inducunt om

xx·viij·

no abiec ciſti· Quomodo· Tu nec
es inmaliſ opib; exoriow frigidus
nec inbonis actib; exoriow feruen
dus· ſ; iuuro q· p inſtabilitatē nīms
tuę ut tepidus uemuſ pendes u
delicet uincuro ſciens· q̄d ſiſ· q̄a
nec inmalo eternas penas· nec
in bono digna p̄mia conſideras· Quā
Qua inta magnā p̄funditatē
reſpicis· q̄d fundū ei⁹ inuenire n
ualeſ· et quia eria tā atuū mōtē
aduendis· q̄d cacuīn ei⁹ aſcende
re n̄ poteſ· Omdi⁹ ubi eēt ut in
uile ſeruū ⁊ peccatorē te ſciret·
quā ſiſ intępore· ita q̄d uix ad
iuſticiā reſpiciaſ· Nā ſi abomi
actib; ſeparatuſ eēt· peccatorē te
intelligeret· uel ſi a malis opib;
te abſtraheret· aliquā ſpē uitę
haberet· Nunc autē ut tepiduſ
uemuſ es· qui nec humiditatē
fructib; affert· nec es calorē indu
cit· Tu eni⁹ es uelut incipiens et n
quaſi p̄ficiens· q̄a bonū tangiſ
in inceptione ſ; illo te n̄ paſcis in
p̄fectione· ut uemuſ qui· os hōis
p̄cuit· ⁊ n̄ ſicut eſca quę inuen
tre ei⁹ uadit· Yuru eria carnuſ e
inaniſ ſomnuſ· an p̄fectū opuſ·
S; acceptuſ e p̄fectū opuſ· quā
inaniſ ſomnuſ· Et ido cū ſilentio
humilitatis opare· et n̄ cū ſuꝑbia
extolle te· quo ille p̄nihilo con
putabit· qui ſocietatē ſcīficatio
nis illoꝝ q̄ me inſeruatuſ obſeq̄o
amant abiciens· hoc p̄flagrantē
iactantiā aggredit· q̄d p̄ ſuauē
manſuetudinē adimplere de
dignat· Q̄d ſi p̄ inchoationē rec
titudinis uum uerboꝝ meoꝝ quę
cibū fidelib; p̄bent inuare cōp
tuerit· et ſi tunc inea torpens
ac nulla dulcedinē iuſticie te
tangentib; oſtendens· ita adde
teriora cadiſ· tunc ⁊ ego ꝑpter
tepore negligentię tuę incipia te
euere· ſcilicet exeade ui uerboꝝ
meoꝝ expellens te· quo nullū ſa
pore ſuauitatiſ p̄efficatiā opati
onis tuę exhibens· ad interiora
beate receptionis n̄ anhelas· Unde
et ita abiectus conculcaberis· ſic
⁊ cib; ille qui ꝑ tempus guſtus
exore hōis picit· amittę quā inuen
tre ipſius recipiat· S; q̄d nunc·
Yemu eni⁹ uolant et uentoꝝ ſtre
pitu reſonat· ſ; radices n̄ florem
nec germ̄ p̄ferunt· Nā qui ſub
iugo meo ee debuerunt laſciui ſ·
nec ſecm̄ diſciplinā incedunt·
Quid e hoc· Ipſi rectā uiā tranſi
liunt· ⁊ multa inutilia taberna
cula ſibi faciunt· Huiꝰmodi eni⁹
hōies· nullū feruorē iuſticie ha
bent· ſ; in ſemet ipſis torpent·
nec inconſtanta ſibi lege ardent
nec ſecm̄ conuerſationē p̄cedē
tiū patrū ſuoꝝ faciunt· ſ; quiſq;
eoꝝ quanda ſingularitatē inſe
met ipſo ſibi plamat· ⁊ ſecm̄
uoluntatē ſuā legē ſibi ponit· ſic
in p̄prijs cogitationib; ſuis· et in
magna inſtabilitate p̄inflatā
ſuꝑbiā ſe aduolandū eleuans·

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Et quō isti recto fedri patrū suoꝝ nō
adherent·ídcirco semp noui ædi
des in magna instabilitate hac &
illac sedin uoluntatē suā uagantē·
Qua ppt̄ et ego comparo illos .xx.xx.
stultis artificib· q̄ magnū
edificiū inaltū erigentes·nō imitan
tur prudentiā alioꝝ artificū·qui
in multis instruimus oportune edoc
ti·& diuersis pbationib· edifica
tionū examinatis·oīa iuxta quę
ad edificationē pertinent bene no
uerunt·& oīa instrumēta sua ui
ste disponunt·ſ;ipsi uacui & in
sipientes in semetipsis confidunt·
quia pālius sapientes sapientes ēe
uolunt·& edificia sua ita ponunꝝ
q̄d ad tēpestates mobilia s̄·unde
etiā auertus deciduntē·quō nō sup
petrā·ſ;supra arenā posita s̄·hīa
& isti faciunt q̄ in supbia sua in
semetipsis confidentes·pāmq̄s
patrib· suis prudentes uideri cu
piunt·nec sedm fedus eoꝝ ambu
lare uoluntē·ſ;sibimetipsis leges
sedm uoluntatē suā in magna
instabilitate ponunt·& ido myl
tociens p diabolicas tēptationes
ad peccata quantumē·q̄a nō sup
xpm ſ;sup instabilitatē morū
suoꝝ innitun.tur· Unde nec ex .xxx.
spiratio spc sci quę in antiquis
patrib· opabatē p supbiā inflatio
nē euacuēt uolo ut fideli homi
ni cū humilitate sufficiat q̄d si
bi ap̄ decessoribꝫ suis instrumū ē·
ne si plus inanitē uoluerit quā
humilitē querere debuerat·p̄ ca
tepefactus inde recedens ex hoc
rubore confusionis accipiat·ut
in euglio scriptū ē· Cum inu
tatus fueris adnuptias nō discū
bas in primo loco·ne forte bono
rator te sit inuitatus a billo·& ue
niens is q̄ te & illū uocauit di
cat tibi·da huic locū·& tunc in
cipias cū rubore nouissimū lo
cū tenere·Q̄d ē hoc· Quando p
supnā inspirationē admonitus
fueris·ut p fideles labores tuos
ad tabernaculū illud uenias·
q̄d semp innuptuali uita habun
dat·ita q̄d assidue in sinceritate
et honore ac sēificatione inuir
ginea uirga et imbeata matre
ui decet ęcclā teatē & nō in cor
ruptione & confusione accedere
tione germinis et floris sui ut
statē·tunc comprime mentē tuā
in humilitate nō eleuans eā in
elacione·Quomodo·cū sclareſ
causas in amore dī a corpore
tuo abieceris·tunc quasi pulcher
rimus flos ascendes·qui in cęle
sti ierusalē sine ariditate cū filio
dī floret·in quo oīa ornamēta
animarū apparent·quia uer̄
homo oīs abominationes ho
minū p̄fert·nouus autē omnē
sēificationē uirtutū edificat·
Et ido cū ad hanc sēificationē
ueneris·erubesce antiquū ser
pentē qui semetipsū a beatitu
dinis loco deiecit·p̄ appetitū

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manis gle immari· Q̄d ē hoc· Si ui
deris aliquē tibi ornamorē· eanc
ne p flagramonē memis tuę sup
eū ascendas dicens· uolo sup illū
aut sicut ille cē· Q̄d si hoc modo
te exaltaueris· numq̄d tunc fide
lis seruus es· cū dīm adiracundia
puocas· ita q̄d te illi opponis· Ş·
si uel exeris aliquē forte us in
strumentū habere quā tu habeas·
et si tunc illi p inuidiā detraxe
ris· planā uiā ñ ambulas· ſ; p de-
uia incedis· Qua ppt̄ studе in hu
militate do seruire et ñ in supbia
bachari· nec te p uanitatē simula
tionis sup illū extolle q̄ iusta ex. xxx.ij.
animatione maiori desiderio et
ne ute lucet quā tu ardeas· sci
licet a dei de beatitudinis culmē
p supnū ardorē ita inuitatus
ab illo· qui omīb; ueritatē dili
gentib; p se manifestat· ne in
sciente oculo uenens ide qui
te inhumilitatis obsequio et il
lū in carnalis dono p inspirati
onē beate admonitionis uoca
uit recto iudicio suo diiudicet
te dicens· Tu qui te p flagrantē
supbiā in locū illū et excisti cui
socius ñ es relinque uanā gl̄am
tuā· et da p subiectionis officiū
huic dilecto meo culmē honoris·
q̄d temere rapuisti· et q̄d exinde
de te· Quo si hoc modo defectus
fueris· incipies p angustiā me
roris et tristicie exēmitatē ab
iectionis sentire et ita te, piet
tui abhorrere· quia custos anima
rū auferet tibi alienū honorē
quē fraudulenter inuasisti· cū te
illi opponens hoc temere rapere
tēptabas q̄d habere ñ debuisti. vñ et cauſe
et tibi dabitur q̄d habere noluisti· q̄ habe uolebas·
ita etiā cū minor ordo supra ma
iorē se exaltat p iustū iudiciū
meū de iectus sub primit· quo no
lo ut alit̄ ante oculos meos sup
bia sit· qua in de iectione confu
sionis· Nā si ancilla supra dīnam
suā se exaltauerit· tanto despec
tior omīb; ea inspicientib; erit·
qua hoc fieri tēptauit· q̄d desi
derare ñ debuit· Qua ppt̄ q̄
sibi sedm cor suū leges faciunt·
et in hoc uoluntatē meā ñ que
runt· magis ex hoc in defectio
nē quā ad p fectū ueniunt· ut
uerū filius mis in euglio testat̄
dicens· O mis plantatio quā ñ
plantauit pat̄ mis celestis· era
dicabit̄· Quid ē hoc· O mē germ
sciente; cordis et mus ac morū·
surgens in uiriditate illa qua
homo uiuit cū homo illud ita
in semet ipso seminat· q̄d post
ea in calore feruens ita ei copu
letur· sedm q̄d hoc p ficere uult·
illud uidelicet transpositū·
aut in exaltatione mus· aut
in peculiaritate carnis· aut in
sup flua pollutione· aut in occa
sione excusationis· aut in inu
estitudine operationis· sursum
aut deorsū in prudentē uadens

nec quale fundamentū sit dis
cernens·scilicet an utile aut in
utile sit scire comēpnens·uere
hoc iusto iudicio destruet·quo
plantatione ista inutili opē non
plantauit pat̄ ille q̄ celoq; et om̄is
iustic habitator ē·& ideo cecida
arescat·quia de orte celi n̄ ascen
dit·s;de suco carnis uenit·Quom̄·
Quia homo pstituta scientia sua
hoc opus faciens·nec iustica·nec
uoluntatē creatoris sui inspicere
uoluit·s;ad illū qui semp rota
carnis ipsius infatigabilit̄ exa
guat respexit·Na q̄d hominib;
cū oculis suis acute in dim figere
nolunt pdecessionē nimis suc
aliquando bonū uidet·si hoc
exspiratio spūs scī n̄ calefacit in
imeritū ibit·quia hoc uana
gla pterasiunt·Cū enī uani ho
mines in uno pcedū afficiunt·
in altero quanā gla inouan
tur·multociens in supbia et in
simulatione ac inspū celoū
se extollentes·& cnā multociens
in molestia et indignatione
ac in contradictione aliarū in
firmitatū que de me fluxerit
se dilaniantes·nec n̄ in ceteris
bonis que n̄ s in tempore debu·s;
in ardore desiderii de die in die
pficiendi se inuicē cōprimentes·
Na q̄d de me fluit dulcē & sua
uē gustū animę pbet·semp in
pseuerantia pficiens·& n̄ instabi
liter retro aspiciens·Vnde ille
beatus ē·qui nunc confidens·spē
suā & meritū ac finē opū suoq; n̄ in
se s;in me ponit·Qui facit hec n̄ ca
det·qui uero sine me stare uolue
rit·in ruinā ibit·Et qui s illi·Vide
licet hi qui semetipsos pantam
gla nouos faciunt·& ppter
tridui q̄d inpceptis meis pacium
in semetipsis confidunt·Sic enim
uenis uestimentū in mīab; hominū
molestiū ē·sic ego in domis
meis spernendus n̄ sū·quo illa in
simplicitate semp noua s·et q̄nto
uetustiora·tanto cariora s·Qua ppt
que homines in semetipsis absq;
inspiratione mea excogitant in
uantate morū pmania studia
ex diffluent·et quāus aliq̄ndo
in conspectu hominū stare uide
antur tam̄ a oculis meis cecla
pulchilo ea habeo·ut nē in cuglo
scripturē·S unus illos·cecos s
duces cecoq;·Cecus aut̄ si cecco du
catū pstet·ambo in fouea cadunt·
Quid ē hoc·P mittit illos qui in
factis suis puersi s inpuersitate
sua diffluere·quia in rectitudine
bonoq; opū se corrigere nolunt·
Et quo in estimatione sua se iu
stos nominat cū in actib; suis ua
nis sint exipsa facilitate sua ceci
efficiunt·quia pua iustice am
bulare contēpnit·et quo magis
ua inquitatis qua ueritatis
illis hominib; pponunt·qui eos
in malis opib; sequi festinant·
Vnde qui hoc modo usu rectitu

xxxiiij·

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dimiſſ̄ habent· eſtimantes ſe iuſtos
ēe & iniuſtos ſ̄· cū uiā ueræ doctri
næ ignorantib; uiā falſæ iuſticiæ
demonſtrant· partē in foueam
deſperationis cadunt· quō nec iſti
xxx.iij. nec illi· quo eāt ſciunt· Sed in
bis quæda indignatione mea·
corā hominib; aliquando decli
quęda autē p moderationē p ſpi
cuę uiſionis tacite· corā hominib;
interdū uolero· ſ; tamē ea p
ponderationē iuſti iudicii mei in
futuro ulciſcor· Et ob hoc q̄ fide
liſ ēe ſtudeat aſcendere ad altitudi
nē iuſtitię· & ñ ad ima ſcłārū deſ
xxv.v. cendere· Quomodo· Qui in mi
nore gradu ē ad maiorē aſcende
re potuit· ñ autē qui in maiore ē
ad minorē ſe declinare debet·
Quid ē hoc· Ñā p̄ſides poſſunt ad xxv.vi.
duces puenire duces ū ad reges
aſcendere· ñ autē decet reges ad
duces deſcendere· nec duces ad
p̄ſides ſe declinare· Si enī reges du
cib; ſe ſubiugarent· uel ſi duces p̄
ſidib; ſe ſubicerent· wach omiſ
pplę uociferarent· & eos deriſui
haberet· Ita qui s̄ inſcłāris; poſ
ſunt uiā p̄dictę pigmęariæ ſub
ire et qui s̄ uiua eorundē pig
mentariæ poſſunt p̄ſatos qui s̄
uiuens odor· uouens mer· ſecretę
regenerationis adire· ñ autē q̄ s̄
idē uiuens odor· uouens īt ſecre
tę regenerationis· decet ad eos de
pigmęarios transire· nec ipſos
pigmęarios adſcłāres corrumpere·

Qđ ſi iſti qui s̄ uiuens odor· uo
uens mer· ſecretę regenerationis
ad ipſos pigmęarios reſpiciunt
uel ſi idē pigmęariū adſcłāres
tranſeunt· heu· heu heu aba
mab; iuſtę ſup eos dicēt· et coră
me in abiectione habebunt· ñ
digna penitentia reuertantē· qa
ſi alcior gradus ſup inferiorē ce
ciderit ambo deſtruentē· Sic et
illiſerit qui rectū mer· ſuū dese
runt· & retrorſū incedunt· Ñā
qui filiū meū induerit· quē ta
lem filiū induere poſſet· Ñullū·
et uere nullū· Gaudent autē in
patre uiſo· quō multo ciens in
minoribus maiores iudeo· et in
maioribus minores inuenio· qa
ſuperbia cadit· & humilitas aſ
cendit· Unde pacē & caritā
tē ac humilitatē habere intra
uos· ſicut et animę iuſtę cū
angliſ & angli cū archangliſ
habent· Animę enim iuſtę offi
cio angelę ñ inuident· nec an
geli q̄ſam archangelę dedig
nantur· Quid ē hoc· Archange
li in maiori neceſſitate maiori
demonſtrant· angli uero in
frequenti uiciſſitudine mi
nora denunciant· fidelis au
tē pplę humilitē obtēperat· Vnū
unuſquiſq; officiū ſuū fidelitē
exerceat· Quomodo· Qui s̄ iu
uens odor· uouens mer· ſecretę
regenerationis cū maior· occa
ſio ecclaſticę neceſſitatis ingrv

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archan-
geli

erit incunabiles causas subuenti
onis ipsius uelut recolant· et q̄ s̄
inopē pigmēariox assidua de
terminatione infrequentib; cau
sis certa negotia infirmonis ei
quasi angli exerceant· et hoīes
qui ad sumā beatitudinē desi
derant puenire uerba eox fideli
ter suscipiant· Quomodo.

Nam qui uiuens odor uoluis· xxx·vij·
uter secretē regenerationis
existunt uelut granū sibi· q̄d
siccus et fortis cib; hominū ē·
sicut et iste ppls mis asp et dur
ad gustū suci sclarii rerū ē· S;
p̄dicti pigmētarii s̄ quasi poma
que dulcē saporē se gustantib;
p̄bent· ut et iste puritatē offi
cii· sui se suaues hominib; exhi
bent· Cōmunis autē sclaris ppls
uelut caro estimatē in qua et
casta uolatilia inueniunt· quō
qui insclo degunt carnaliter
uiuentes filios pereant· inter
quos tamē castitatis initiatores
reperiunt· scilicet uiduę et conti
nentes q̄ ad supna desideria p
appetitū bonarū uirtutū uolāt·

Sed et idē ordines ecclāstice· xxx·viij·
institutionis· in duab; uis
uersantē· Quomodo· Spīritalii et
sclarii· Quom· ist dies et nox·
Quid ē hoc· Spīritales s̄ ut dies·
et sclares ut nox· intēporali u
ta hominū degentes· Q̄d ē hoc·
Dies claritatē solis et serenitatē
lucernis aeris habet· q̄d p̄ sig

nat· quia spīritales hoīes et ordinē
uitutis odoris uouentis uer· se
cretē regenerationis et ordinē p̄
dictox pigmēariox in se seruant·
Nox uero lucē lunę cū stellis et ob
scuritatē umbrosę tenebrositatis
tenet· q̄d demonstrat quō sclares
hoīes et iustos inopib; suis lucen
tes· et peccatores obscuritate delic
torū grauatos in se tenent· S; q̄
nocte sclarii deseruerit et addiē
spīritalii, ppt amorē uitę se con
uerterit· stabilis in hoc facto sit·
ne si retrorsū incesserit· ueteri
adę assimilet· qui p̄ceptū uitę
transgrediens in sclares et rūnas
expulsus ē· Vnde nemo sit p̄ceps
mundū relinquere· et fedus meū
sua uoluntate audacter irritare·
nisi prius in magna, p̄batione
examinatus sit· q̄a qui filiū meū
primicā cepit· nolo ut eū relin
quat· Nā qui ei incarnatione
se induerit· et crucē ei in man
suas susceperit· numq̄d conueni
ens ē ut abiciat dnm suū· Nullo
modo· Ergo his aduende· omo· xxx·ix·
qui in uoluntate cordis sui con
fessus fuerit· et in deuotione aię
sue uouerit iugū meū in abiecti
one sclarii rerū portare· et si ut
etiā in ipso ardore cordis sui p
uoluntatē desideramus animę
sue signū religionis in condim̄
to iustę intentionis suscepit·
in illo p̄maneat· ne si illud post
ea in contēptu p̄seueramus mali

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abiecerit iudiciū distrīctī exami
nis accipiat·Quid ē hoc·Quia il
lum sprevit cuius signū in semet
ipso suscipiens conculcauit·sic
et iuda cū contēpserit cū illū in
insania incredulitatis mē cruce
affluxerit·Nā ut iuda nefas illud
nō renouerit·ita et iste nō uerit·q̄d
eande passionē in uotō suo abi
cit·Q̄d cū homo in p̄mittit hoc
etiā reddere debet·scdm q̄d da
uid testat dicens· xl. I nuoibo in
domū tuā in holocaustis·reddā
tibi uota mea que distinxerūt la
bia mea·Quid ē hoc·Putauimo
nē bonę et iustę operationis inuoi xl.a
bo o dñe mīs in constitutionē scās
simi domi tui·scilicet in ardentē
desiderio tuaui uoluptatis mee
relinquens·ita q̄d nihil mihi
dulcius ē quā anhelare ad te
et amore omniū·Et ob hoc red
dā tibi uota mea que pmulti
os meū cū anima mea·quia hoc
p̄ficere uolo q̄d tibi iusto iudici
in ardentē desiderio meo prius
p̄muisq̄·uddicet ut achis meos
ad te dirigere et·q̄d insipiēter
transgressus sū·s; nunc ad te re
currere desideransq·uolo mala
deuitare et bona facere·quō ra
tionalitas et intellectus que in
me feruent p discretionē uere
castigationis magis queret ad
te uiuū dīm anhelare·quā p stul
titiā false comitarietatis diabo
lum imitari·Vnde obo cū cor-

tuū hoc modo in obtuleris·consi
dera quomodo illud prudenter
p̄ficiat·O cultus enī mīs acutissime
uidet·quid uoluntas hōis in lo
quatur·Vbi q̄d meū ē·hoc districtis
sime requiro·Qua p̄pter ostulti·ut
quid uobis tā magna onera in
ponitis·q̄d putatis uobis tā facile
et q̄d carnale uoluntatē uīam de
seratis·Nā p̄legē que uobis excep
tus mas data ē ad hoc nō cogimini
ut scīm relinquatis·nisi prius
p̄ multos labores ita exerceami
ni·ut carnalib; desiderijs que
in uobis s·frenū imponere possit·
Sed rapido uento assimila
mini·quō cū uana q̄tā mēs
te uīam afflauerit·tunc ex aliq̄
aspirare loquimini sic dicentes·
Amplius cū scīo laborare nolo·
s; illud festinanter fugere uolo·
Et cur·ita me frangā in uano
labore·S;·cū hec intra uos dici
tis·putatis ea ita terminari ut
excogitatis·Nā multa uacillan
te animo me queritis·ita q̄d tan
tū signo religionis exterius
notanter·puris oculis me nō que
ritis·nec semetipsos in recta
doctrina simpliciter circūspici
tis·quomodo diabolū qui
eos devorare cupit effugiant·
uelut colūba impuritatē aque
consideransq uoluerē qui ea
rapere cēpit fugit·Sic isti dia
bolū nō fugiunt·cū cū inscrip
tura doctrinarū uenientē in

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dem-ſ;in repcmuno ſoport q̄
eaſp̄ cccnatē mūſ ſuę in ē ur ucpi
duſ uemuſ admc curr um-Qui
da em̄ ñ uolumatē ſuā-ſ;tamē
ſclārē habmū abiciemuſ-ſp̄ma
lem rdigionē aggrcdiumur-
quia multas miſerias cr paup
tatcſ in ſclo ſuſtinemuſ-diuici
as habere ñ poſſum-&idō mun
dū rclinquim-quō cū ma ñ
poſſum habere uellem-Alu
autē adſclm ſtultu cr fatuu ſ-
ma q̄d hominib;ſ corrupubi
leſ- ſe ipſos regere ñ ualen
teſ-&;ꝓpterea ſclm fugium-
quia abeo deludum-S;& q̄da
debilmatē ac infirmitatē cor-
porīſ ſui habemuſ cr in his ca
lamitatib;multū laboramuſ-
ñ ꝓp̄ me ſ;ut his doloribuſ
tanto ſuauius ſubuenīant
ſclm derelinquum-Alu ū
tantas anguſtias cr opp̄ſſio
neſ a carnalib;dn̄i ſui quib;
ſubiecti ſ̄ paciuntur-ut ꝓp̄ tu
morē eor a ſcło recedant-ñ ut
p̄ceptuſ meſ obediant-ſ;ne ide
carnaleſ eor dn̄i ampliuſ ſup
eoſ poteſtatē ſuā exerceant-Ft
hi om̄ſ ñ ꝓp̄ celeſtē amorē ſ;
ꝓp̄ has ūtutes molcſtias quas
ſuſtinent adſp̄ualē religionē
uenium-ñ conſideramuſ-utrū
ſalſus-an inſulſus aut dulcis-
aut amarus-an cdi amīcę habi
tator ſim-Quid ē hoc-Ipſi nec
condimentū nec dulcedinem
ſcripturarū adtendum-nec quom̄
in cordib;illor hominū habitē q̄
ſupna quer consideram-Et quō
hec ſcrutari nolum ido umorē
meū abiciemuſ-ſedm uolumatēſ
ſuaſ incedum-unde et m̄ alieni
ſum-&fugitiui uocam-Qua
ꝓpter nec ego dico eoſ ſclm dimiſ
ſiſſe &admc uenīſſe-ſ;in hoc rei
ſ̄ q̄d ſeruū umeīt et dn̄m con
tēpnum quia ūtenas cauſas ſe
quunt̄ et me ñ uerent̄-&ido pa
uidi in minimo et audaceſ in
maximo dicunt̄-Ergo et balaam
aſſimilant̄-qui iſrahelcticū po
pulū in tabernaculiſ ſuis pulcrū
uidenſ-manſionē cū illius ficto
animo ſe habere concupiuit dicēſ-
orīat̄ anima mea morte iu
ſtorū-et fiant nouiſſima mea
horū ſimilia-Quid ē hoc-Cū homo
aliq̄ndo inſuſpirtuſ anime ad
hoc concurrit̄-ut opa iuſticię in
cipiat-tunc inſurgentē deſide
rio ea gemebunde excoriat-ſic
dicens in ſemet ipſo-Ego miſer-q̄
mutuſ peccatis et obligationib;
ꝓpedituſ ſū-ſtudioſe deſidero ut
in abiectione carnaliū concupiſ
centiarū anima mea omnē mali
tiā unq̄tanus relinquat-&ut p
contricionē illā qua iuſti ſemet
ipſos deſpiciunt in habitaculo
bonoꝝ opū maneat-Quomodo-
ſit in rectis actib;inueniat̄ finiſ
m̄ illius hominis q̄ iuſti/tiā di
opam̄ ſimiliſ-ita ut terminus

rl.y.

71ᵛ

corundē bonoꝝ opū meoꝝ imcio
iuste imminoꝝ coꝝ adeq̄untur
S; homo qui intra semetipsū ista
loquit̄ si postea transacto tēpore
corundē suspiriꝝ cū tēptationib;
maligneꝝ spūuū affiat̄ et carnali
concupiscentia deuictus adiuq̄
tant̄ reuocat̄ facit ut idē balaam
pneq̄uiciā cupidnatis suę decep
tus ferat. Quomodo. Q̄uia ipse po
stea p illud sensima tactus. p q̄d pri
us sursū aspiciebat ad fallaces ē
cupiscentias se deorsū declinabat
na ēbn faciunt q̄ me ficte quer̄t.
quia cū uiderint illos qui sēm
ueracit̄ abierer̄t simplicit̄ incc
dere. et inanita ac beata conuer
satione laudabilit̄ et uerace
p durare. dicunt eos pulcros et
suaues ē. ac primus repentino im
petu unā eoꝝ aggredit̄ sedim
ipsos uincere desiderantes. S; post
quā se illis na conuinxerint. quē
admodū et balaā israhelitcum
pplm inspexit. multociens p di
uersas neq̄icias quas prius in
cordib; suis habebat cū insclo
essent ad carnalia desideria re
uocant̄. quo et illis prius dna
batur. Qua ppt̄ cū sic impedi
untur. ueneno et aduersitate
sua contaminant electū gregē
meū. mutus tēpestatib; eū quaci
entes. et consilio neq̄icie sue eū
dispgentes. Hā eū ipsi a sclo de
ceptuose recederent. me inora
tionib; suis inadiutoriū sibi
ñ inuocabant. nec inpbatione
corporis sui si inhoc ꝑpositio ꝑse
uerare possent. an nō me quer̄ebar.
unde et ego ꝑmitto eos considera
re quid uoluntas ipsoꝝ cū in semet
ipsis confidunt. eos possit adiu
uare. O ipsi insipientes et infructu
osi exitum. q̄a s̄ imitules absq;
exactione legis dī. et sine iudi
tate uerbi ipsius. na q̄d nō exequu
ent̄ q̄d facere debebant. cū arta
uia adirent. im bona tra se circū
spicit. cū male fructū ꝑfert. Vnde
audiant. O homo hodie cū. intra
carne fortit̄ in concupiscentias
ardebas igneā fornacē exustu. et
quis ubi tamū refrigeriū dedit
quod tā magnū incendiū posses
euadere in uoluptate tua. xl. iij.
Vere qui hēc aggredi uoluerit
interioribꝫ oculis suis inspi
cere debet. qualit̄ ea ꝑ me inci
piat. et qualiter ea meo adiuto
rio ꝑficiat. ne si illa insipienter
inceperit. et male consūmauerit.
in ruinā uadat. sicut et ille an
tiquus hostis qui in semetipso
confisus. in tra tēli mei decidit
est. Sic et isti abicient̄ qui nec me
nec semetipsos considerantes. in
p̄cipitatione magne sup̄bie pas
sione filii mei indutī; ea post
modū in fastidio sup̄fluitatis sue
reciuunt. Qua ppt̄ qui ea sup̄ se
posuerint. adtendant. quomodo
ea diligant. sedm q̄d ieremias
ꝑpheta inspū seō inspiratus hor-

tatur dicens. Quos omis qui xl.my.
transmis puia adtendite & uide
sic dole te. si ē dolor mis quo undemo
ueritis me ut locutus ē dns indic
ite furoris sui. Quid ē hoc. Quos
omis qui uicia deseritis. ut declite
mabiechione sclārū & uanitatū
one spūaliū transeuntes puā il
lam que uita & ueritas ē que ego
filius dī sū. adtendite in incepto
ne bonoꝝ opū. ne doloris mei ob
liuiscamini. cū me in passione
mea ceptus imitari. & uidete in
pfectione iustitie. ut dolor ille
quē pamore meo uobis inpo
tus dolori meo similis sit. Quom.
ist meas de miserius quas pp̄ter
me sustinetis usq; ad bonū finē
indeficienter pseueretis. sicut et
ego pseueraui in dolore meo mo
ri puobis. quo ego conpassus et ē
cūlcatus in passione et crucis sū.
sicut una intorculari aduertē.
quatinus corpus meū manduce
tis et sanguinē meū bibatis.
ut in p̄scientia p̄spicatis oculi
sui locutus ē dnator celi et ūre.
uidelicet in illo inicio. cū adam
unā deseruit. et mortē accepit.
ubi tam ide pater mis celestis hoc
p̄uidit q̄d in fine tēporū p me
p filiū suū ex uirgine incarna
tū. qui me infortissimis uinc;
iustitie diabolo opponeba. eum
de antiquū seductorē superet
et humanū genus in defensione
supni auxilii liberaret. Ergo

homo cuiuscūq; sexus aut eta
tis sit qui passionē xp̄i in dur
adtendat. ut eā fortiter retine
at. ne si eā p errorē neglectus sui
abiecerit. postea cū ipsā uoluerit
reuocare. eā inuenire n̄ possit.
Unde et illi qui infames su xl.v.
os et de passioni inhumili
tatis conuersatione subicere
uoluerunt. hoc n̄ in p̄sū p̄tione
p̄cipitationis inprudenter faci
ant s; sapienter in examinatione
discretionis. n̄ cogentes illos absq;
consensu uoluntatis suę hoc
adire. q̄d nec ipsi ferre possunt.
Quomodo. Si infamē tuū mihi
offers. cū ea n̄ mē scientia discer
nentis intellectus. s; cū infatua
ta omis sensus ei iacet. et tam
ta sine uoluntate ipsius cū of
fers consensū illius in hoc n̄ con
sideras. n̄ recte feceris. ita offe
rens aricte. Quomodo. Si homo
aricte adamare meū offert. et si
cū incornib; suis fortiter fumib; n̄
ligauit. certe aries fugit. Sic etiā
si pat aut mat̄ puerū suū qui
aries ē ad seruitutē meā offert.
et si in hoc uoluntatē illius quę
cornua ipsius s. nec diligentia
custodia. nec supplicatione. nec
dep̄catione. nec exhortatione
uocius diligentię quę funes
colligationis ei intelligunt
adtendunt. quo his omnib; pu
et ad consensū bonę uoluntatis
puocandus ē. tunc si iustus exami

nationib; fuerit pbatus-certe
aut corpore aut mox fugit-
nisi ds immutabilib; suis eū cu
stodiat-Si autē in homo una
magna custodia corporalis
districtionis puerū illū conclu
dis-q̄d se apīssura repugnatus
uolumatus suę absoluere ñ pos
sit-tunc in omnib; fructib; tam
corporis quā animę ppē captu
rā illā quę sine consensu eī ipsi
in iuste illata ē-aridus m̄ appa
ret-Tunc ec ego ubi o homo qui
auctor huius ligatur; es-dico-
Vir de agrū in potestate mea
habui- xl·vi· Numquid o homo de
di ubi illū-ut eī germinare fa
ceres-quēcūq; fructū uelles-
Et si in illū semen semnas-nū
potes illud in fructū pducere-
Non-Nā tu nec rorē das-nec plu
uiā emittis-nec humiditatē in
uriduare tribuis-nec calorē in
ardore solis educis-p quę oma
cōpetens fructus pducendus ē-
Ita etiā in audituū hominis uer
bū seminare potes-s; in cor illi
q̄d ager-mīs ē-nec rorē cōpunc
tionū nec pluuiā lacrimarū-
nec humorē deuotionū-nec ca
lorē spūs scī infundere vales-in
quib; omnib; fructus scīatus
germinare debet-Et quom
audebas dedicatū et scīficatū
mihi in baptismo tā temere xl·vij·
tangere ut eī absq; uolumta
te sua in tantissimā captionē i
gamur ad ferendū iugū meū ga
dere-unde nec aridus nec uiri
dis effectus ē-ita q̄d nec scio mor
tuus ē-nec scio uiuit-Et cur eī
ita oppīssisti-q̄d aduersarū uale-
Sed miraculū meū ad confor
tandū eū ut in spūali uita pma
neat ab hominib; pseruandū
non ē-quo uolo ne pareres ipsi
in oblatione ei⁹ peccet-absq; uo
luntate illius eū mihi offeren
tes-q̄d si aliquis scilicet pater
aut mater puerū suū ad seruu
tuū meū offerre uoluerit-ante
quā eū rep̄sentet dicat-Promit
to dō ut puerū meū sollertu cu
stodia usq; ad intelligibile eta
tē ei⁹ custodiā-scilicet supplican
do-dep̄cando-exhortando eū-
quatinus in seruitio dī deuote
p maneat-Et si mihi consenserit
festinanter eū ad seruitutē dī of
fero-sed si in assensū ñ p̄buerit-
in fons coram oculis maiestatis ei⁹
sim-Si autē parentes pueri eū
his modis usq; ad intelligibile
etatē suā p̄secum fuerint-et si
tunc idē puer se auertens-illis
consentire noluerit-tunc ec ip
si quia deuotionē suā nullo
quatenus ualebant ostendere-eī
sine uoluntate illius ñ offerant-
nec eī ad seruitutē illā pueruꝫ
cogere-tant quā nec ipsi ferre nec
adimplere uolunt- Qui autē
deuoto animo se mihi liben
subicere uoluerit-ad hoc stren

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nuc exhortandus ē ut pucnat-nec
ꝓximor ē alicuius maluole animē
a bona intentione sua retrahendꝰ.
Nā si quis aliquē illoꝝ qui me seq̄
desiderauerit. apposito suo retrax
erit sacrilegiū facit. quo fedus meū
inmente illius dirupit. qua ppt̄
et in recto iudicio rationē exinde
redditurus ē. si in hac nequicia in
flexibilis duranerit. quia in ser-
uire uolentē auerit. q̄d facere n̄
debuit. Int scriptū est. Omne .xl. vnꝰ
q̄d dn̄o consecrat̄. siue homo fue
rit siue animal. siue ager. n̄ uene
at. nec redimi poterit. Quid ē hoc.
cūque libet anhelans anima cū
pleno officio scientię ma bonū sen
sū in homine tangit. ut ille ali
quā rē ꝓfiat. tunc eande rē uo
luntas ipsius constituit sic dicēs.
Hoc decet ad honorē dī. Et ma
cū bona deuocione et cū iusta re
uerentia ide homo illud ꝓmittit
do. ipsū et offerens ꝓ oscula cor-
dis. q̄d ē ꝓ uoluntatē desideriꝝ
suoꝝ. Et tunc illud hoc modo in
dorē scīficationis do oblatū est.
Quomodo. Quia dꝫ in eode homi
ne edificantē uoluntatē uidens.
ma eā ꝓ panulū scīficationis susci
pit. ut ut sponsā suā ꝓ panulum
desponsationis sibimet ipsi infe
dus colligationis ne ipsā amodo
diminuat minuere solet. Vnde cū
dꝫ eande uoluntatē de uirtuta
te uirilis animi hoīs suscepit. q̄
semet ipsū ma constringit. q̄d
relinquit q̄d habet. et q̄ magis do
minū quā sibi q̄d possidet. Et
ipsa colligatio huiusmodi conse
crationis ma ꝑmanebit. nec de
uotionē suā relinquet. Quare.
Quia illā scientia hoīs
cognouit. et quo bonus sensus
eius illā intellexit. et quia illā
uoluntas ipsi adhonorē dī edifica
uit. et ido siue homo fuerit q̄
semet ipsū ma do obtulit siue
animal. homini subiectū. quod
code modo adhonorē dī oblatū
ē seu ager fructū p[illegible]ferens. q̄
cuā ma do ē consecratus. nec ꝓca
riore p̄cio dari. nec sub uiliore
recompensatione retineri debet.
ne honor dī quasi incontemptibi
lem estimationē deputetur.
Sed sicut nullus contra uo xl. ix.
luntatē suā asciri uia ad
spūale tramitē conuerti cogen
dus ē. ita cuā qui cū deuotione
uoluntatis suę seruicū meū
aggressus ē. et postea illud con
tēnens neglexerit. iusto iudicio
ut illud recipiat reuocandus ē.
Quomodo. Si habet rectos rec
tores. et spūales magistros. et
lum meū habentes. hi debent
eū ad seruitutē meā reuocare.
et hoc primū facient supplica
tione. exhortatione et blan
do sermone eū limentes. et de
inde uerberib; et constrictione
frigoris ac famis et aliis hui
similib; castigationib; eū cor-

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ripiemus·quamuis his miserus
admonitus·infernales penas ad
meme suā reuocet·et eas tumens·
a se putredine animę suę auferat·
et ad summā illā quā deseruerat
ma reuocatus redeat·sic
enim de his meminit scriptū est·
.l. Exi anima et sepes & compelle
intrare·ut implear domus .l.i.
mea·Quid ē hoc·Tu qui spīalis
pastor·et iustus rector·& rectus
magister es·exi de pristinis mo
ribus·tuis·qui ubi de primo pa
rente tuo adherem·et ua de
uiuia arta et angusta·& in cōpo
sitionē inflexo pceptoꝝ·quę
certissimi uiri uitacura spūs sci
cōponebant·& acutissime in
celo meo considera eos qui sub
pceptu & magistratione tua de
gentes·aut susceperāt aut uouc
runt sua uoluntate·& ni exalte
rius boīs iniusta coactione sem
ppositi pacti mei obseruare·et
tamen postea illud contēpnen
tes aducta uicia cupiunt redire
& hos dulcib; et amaris correpti
onib; compelle ecclastica disципli
nā intrare·ut domus domini
nis meę tā extremum correptus·
quā exsuauiter admonitus in
pleatis·quo et alii aduntā diuer
sis castigationib; et alii uariis
blandimus uocandi s·Quom·
Vt rectus pastor pdita ouē suā
sollicite requirit·ita etiā spī
tales magistri subiectos suos
pduersa uicia et tamen·multa di
ligentia requirere debent·uidel
cet sua sollertia cogentes eos ut in
domū iustitiae de qua exierāt uel
exire uolebant reuertantur·quos
ecclā inaltera parte examare cor
repus et inaltera parte exblande
exhortans ouib; implear·ecclia ad
supna pascua pducat· Qui autē
tunc ita obdurati s·q̄d nec ppter
corporale castigationē quę eis a
principib; magistris suis in celo
meo infertur·nec ppter amorē meī
quo ego sū ds nolens iniquitatē·
nec ppter amorē effusi sanguinis fi
lii mei qui pipsis passus ē se corri
gere uoluit·s; fidelissimos amicos
meos qui uias meas uelocit̄ currunt
polluere sua putredine laborant·
tunc abipsis amicis meis negregē
meī contaminent ut lupi expel
lendi s·quēadmodū paulus ami
cus mis hortat̄ dicēs· Auferte
malū exuobis·Quid ē hoc·Ijos q̄
inculmine regiminis estis·et qui
in humilitate subiectionis mane
tis·expellite malū illud a uobis
quod amorē meī contēpnens·m
creatori celi & ī̄ę contradicit·il
lud tā forti examinatione a uo
bis expellentes·ut inconsciencia
ua radicē nō figat nec inconsor
cio uro pedē suū ponat·ne dul
cia pigmina bonoꝝ opū in uobis
uilescant·S; qui exhis in peni
tencia reuerti uoluerit·et me
creatorē suū puro corde quesie

rit cuā si mexuremur curſus
ſui uenerit ego tamē ſuſcapiā eū
quia cuncta iuſte iudico- .l.iij.
Qui aurē thesaurū cordis ſui
ſubtrahendo abſcondit
dicens-niſi ſeruā me mortuū
aſſertib; cauſis me ñ conuertā-
et ita conuerſionē ſuā uſq; ad
exſpirationē animę ſuę differt-
& cū iā ampliuſ ſpirare ñ ualet-
diuturnus p̄ſentē uitā ſe poſſe habe
re deſperans ſeculo renuntiare cēp
tat-hic animā ſuā decipit quō
conuerſio eī deceptibilis ē-hoc
iocando fecit ut iocus cuā accī
piat-Iuc uero qui iā morti pxi
mus toto corde ꝓpt̄ peccata ſua-
et ꝓpt̄ amorē meī ſeculo renuntia
uerit-ſcilicet quādiu uiuat ar
denter ſeruire deſiderans-ue
re deuotionē eī cū omnib; cho
ris angelor̄ ſuſcipio-et ei gr̄am
uitę tribuo-Nā quāuis homo in
multo crimine occupatus ſit cū
tangit peccata ſua-ita qđ ama
re delicta ſua deflet-et hoc ſim
plici oculo fecerit qa me adira
cundia ꝓuocauit-ego eū amor
ut adſaluationē erigo-nec ei
ſupnā hereditatē denego-ſcdm
quod pſalmiſta dauid inſpū
meo teſtat̄ dicens- In quacūq; .l.iiij.
die inuocauero te-ecce cognoui
quō dn̄s m̄s es-Quid ē hoc-In qua
cūq; luce uitę meę ulla claritas
ſupne illuſtrationis inīmę mea
qui intenebris iaceo ꝓdiuinā
gr̄am ſe oſtendit - rit-ita qđ
in amaritudine penitentię ꝓ
catis meis et inuulneribus gra
uat cordis mei inuocauero te-
qui omib; te puro corde inuo
cantib; remediū tuę pietatis
concediſ-tunc in eadem uiſta
tione cognoui quia tu q̄ hęc
inīdixti oparis dn̄s m̄s es-Quid ē
hoc-Cū p gr̄am tuā me ad hoc
ꝓduxeris q̄d te dm̄ meī inopi
bus iuſticie cognouero-ita qđ
inopib; ~~inopib;~~ inq̄tatis me
ipsū deuio-quia tu ille q̄ hoc
facere potes-tunc ſuſcipis me
ſimpliciter te querentē & lacri
mose poſt te clamantē atq; in
uiriditate animę mee te cog
noscentē-quō corpus meī inue
ra penitentia contero-& illud
quaſi pnihilo habeo-Et cū tali
modo penitentiā ſuā homo fe
cerit-remediū peccatoꝝ ſuoꝝ in
ueniet-Quomodo-Quia me dm̄
ſuū cognouit-Quomodo-Quō
peccata ſua deſeruit-& ideo p
oculū penitentię uidebit-qđ
illa uana fuerit quę prius ar
denter inmala concupiſcentia
ꝓpetrauit- Qua ꝓpt̄ nemo l.v.
negligat remediū penitentię
quęrere-quia ſi illā ſanus in
corpore neglexerit-ſtudeat
tamen ut eā uel in extremo te
pore ſuo inueniat-et ad ſalua
tionē eī ſuſcipiā-quō quāuis
ſordes magne ſint in peccatis-

tam ꝑ ꝑ fi liū meū impura
penitentia abluunt. ꝓter hunc
qui blasphemiā contra spm scm
impenitens dixerit. et qui se ipsū
in mortē corporis sui obdurauit
ꝑ apmanserit. quia hec duo uelut
unū s. ista in glā supne uite
nescio. ut in euāgelio scriptū est.
l.vi Omne peccatū et blasphemia
remittet hominib;. ista aut
blasphemia nō remittet. Quid ē
hoc. Omne peccatū q̄d in supflu
itate carnis aut cū libidine. seu
cū amaritudine aut alius hui si
milib;. uicius ꝓchū fuerit. seu
blasphemia que ē in cultu ido
lorū ubi uerus ds ignorat. et
falsū figmentū adorat. aut in
uocatō demoniꝝ ubi uerus ds
scit. et tam in peruersitate homi
nū diabolus inuocat. hec oīa
impura peccata remittentur
hominib; cū ꝓcompunctione la
crimarū et intimo corde ueri
dīm. omnib; se inuocantib; mi
dīam suā mediatorē ꝓstantē fide
inter. quesierint. quo quāuis
huiusmodi hoīes grauiter in
peccatis errando delinquant.
tam si dīm impio et potestate in
celis regnantē omnino nō abici
ant. manū auxilii eī quesierint
inuenient. S; si infidelitate sua
ꝑseuerauerint. ita q̄d ab hac ꝑ
uersitate nūquā resipiscunt.
s; fixo corde et anima consen
cientē dīm omnino abnegant.

sic intra semetipsos dicentes. q̄d ē
hoc q̄d dī. ds. nā ds, non est
aut ueritate. ut uelit aut possit
me adiuuare et ita impenitentes
diffidunt a peccatis suis se posse
mundari. aut ullo mō saluari. hu
dīm blasphemant et ob hoc ꝑ
nequitiā obdurationis suę. sine
ꝑseuerauerint remissionē eī de
blasphemię nō ꝑcipiunt. quia in
tellectū cordis sui ita suffocant.
q̄d sursū suspirare nō ualent. quō
illū ꝑ cuius mediam saluari de
berent. quasi nihilū habent. ut
ita psalmista dauid testat. dicēs.
l.vij Dixit insipiens in corde suo nō ē
ds. Quid ē hoc. Stulta locutio
nē. qui manis erat sapientia et in
tellectu. dīm in corde suo abnega
uit. quia ad cognoscendū eū in
sipiens fuit. Quomodo. Quia ue
rū dīm nec scire. nec intelligere
uoluit. cū in obdurato sensu suo
dicebat. Quid ē ds. Ds nō ē. Et q̄d
uel ego sū. Nescio quid sim. Qui
hec dicit insipiens ē quō uerā sa
pientiā qua ds cognoscit nō ha
bet. S; quisq̄s dīm in potestate sua
regnantē nō fidē cognouit. hic
sapiens ē. quāuis peccator sit.
Vnde quisq̄s hoc fixū in cor
suo habet q̄d de dī mediā despat
dicens. ds nihil ē. hunc nescio.
quia me nescium. et hunc nego.
quō me negantē. et ideō ideē ad
uitā nō resurget. nec ullū gau
diū habere potest. quia oīs

creatute cū destruunt· quō creatorē earū, nubilo habuit· S; ille qui de peccatis suis desperat· ita quod p̄ magnitudine ponderis ex se posse saluari nō credit infidelis ē· ex ido aduntā nō puenit· quia illi qui untā omnib; dat contra dicit· Quod siqs exhis omnib; penitencia ductus· me uehementer quesierit· inueniet me· quō neminē abicio· qui puro corde recurrit ad me. Si autē nigerrime tēpestatis huius blasphemie & desperationis sup quē piā hominē ceciderint· et ipse nec in corde suo· nec in uoluntate sua· nec in sapore puersi gustus eis consenserit· s; in hoc certamine ualde cruciatū· tunc si in eo dē agone fortiter repugnans pseuerauerit· ei cuis ea subuenio· & pp̄ter has grauedines nō dubitet· quia contra maximas procellas eū fortissimum pugnatorē dico· & eū uelocius uabo· atq; eū amicū meū habeo· quō pp̄ amorē meū tantas ad uersitatis patientē sustinens nobiliter supauit· Sed & sicut ille qui me uerū dm̄ nullomodo in ulla fide aut spe in corde suo uult scire aduntā nō resurgit ut p̄dictū ē· ita nec ille qui se ipsū in morte corporis sui p̄ceperit· qa separationē illā quā hominibus constituu nō expectat· s; se ipsū sine ulla spe mutue discindit· unde & impedimentē cadit· quō hoc occidit· cū quo penitere debuit·

Nam qui illud abhomine sep̄at· qd̄ in hominē posuit· magno reatui se substernit· quēadmodū increatō filius mīs ostendit dicens· Audi stus quia dictū ē antiquis nō occides· qui autē occiderit reus erit iudicio· Quid ē hoc· ijos qui pedē urm̄ sup fundamentū petre ponere uultis· notate quō p̄sonū illū qui de radice racionalitatis exit p̄cepistis· qa in factura scripture que sensū illū habet quē dignus dī dedit de monstratū ē his qui uos mamq̄tare p̄cessert· ne diuideretis in hoie qd̄ diuina dispositione in illo coniunctū ē· Quid ē hoc· Qua qa de ugnū scientie boni et mali inter dixit dicens· in quocūq; die comederis ex eo morte morieris· hic etā p̄ moysen generi ipsius locutus ē nō occides· nec dissipabis qd̄ ad imaginē dī factū ē· S; sicut adā p̄ceptū dī transgressus· uita salutis semet ipsū et genus suū p̄uauit· ita etā homo qui factura dī in homine destruit· fideles generationes salutarū opū abanima et a corpore suo absci dit· ex hoc etā reū iudicialis sententie se faciens mexiluū miserie uadit· Qua ppt̄ ille qui tā crudelem separationē in homine fecerit in multas calamitatis se mittit· ut delicet hoc separans qd̄ meū ē· qa corpus et anima simul in hominē constituu· Et quis ē ille· qui hec audeat separare· Et cū ille in multa grauedine peccati sit q̄ aliū occi

Lx.

dit·quid tunc iste erit qui se ipsū in
mortē tradit·et hoc impulsu tē mit
tit·cū quo debuit crimina sua de
lere·Nā qui se ipsū occidit·pdi
tū anglm imitat·qui primū inq̄
tatē inuenies·se ipsū impdicionē tra
didit·cū se ipsū occidit·Quomodo·
Quō dō imudit qui nec ortū ha
buit·nec finē accipiet·&q̄ oīa re
git quę incępto cōmta s̄·Et sicut
ide supbus diabolus noluit aspi
cere inme·cū se ipsū impdicionē
deiecit·sic nec iste homo me scire
dignat·qui se ipsū uolentes·dis
cindit·unde & in mortē cadit·Si
cut & ille cū sibi metipsi pdicionē
intulit·Nā ante quā corrueret in
quitatē suā sup pennas uentoꝝ ele
uare uolut·et q̄si uolatile q̄d in
aere uolat·sic incelestib; uolare cōp
tauit·unde et in hac p̄sūptione
semetipsū ab altitudine innfeli
citatē deiecit·S; ego de tua forma
ui homunē ut ab inferioribus ad su
piora ascenderet·et incipiendo &
pficiendo bona opa·surs̄ū p̄cla
ras uirtutes ad ardua ędificaret·
Qua ꝓpter homo q̄ & corpus et
animā habet cū bona opari po
test·& cū penitere ualet·semet
ipsū nō occidat·ne postea locū
illū recipiat ubi nec opus·nec
penitentiā habere potest·sicut
et diabolus quidā semetipsū oc
cideret·in tartara deiectus ē·S; q̄
uigilantib; oculis uidet·& sonan
tib; auribus audit·hic mistici

uerbis meis oscula amplexionis
p̄beat·quę de me uiuente emanat·

Ego hec

audi·cū filius dī in cruce pepen
dit q̄d p̄dicta mulieb̄ris ima
go uelut lucidus splendor exami
quo consilio ꝓpere ꝓgrediens ꝓ
diuinā potentiā ad ipsū adduc
ta ē·et sanguine qui de latere ei
fluxit se sursū eleuante pfusa ip
si ꝓ uoluntatē supni patris felici
desponsatione associata ē·atq;
carne et sanguine ei nobilit̄ do
tata·Et audiui uocē de celo dicen
tē·Hec fili sit ubi sponsa in restau
ratione pp̄li mei·cui ipsa mater
sit animas ꝓ saluatione sp̄s et aque
regeneransq; Et cū eade imago iam
hoc modo in uiris suis pficeret·
uidi q̄si q̄d dā altare ad q̄d ipsa
frequent̄ accedebat et ubi dote
suā deuote reuisens·eā supno pa
tri et anglis ei humilit̄ ostende
bat·Unde etiā cū sacerdos sacris
uestib; indutus ad celebranda di
uina sacramenta ad idē altare ac
cederet uidi q̄d subito magna
serenitas circuit cū obsequio an

gelox de celo uemens totū illud
altare circūfulsit· & ibi tamdiu
pmansit quo usq; post comple
tionē eiusdē sacramēti idē sacer
dos abaltari ſe cederet· S; & ibi angelo
pacis recitato· et oblationē quę con
secranda erat altari supposita cū
idē sacerdos laudē omipus dī· qd
ē sēs sēs sēs· dns ds sabaoth decan
taret et sic mysteria eorundē sa
cramētorū inchoaret repente ig
nea choruscatio inestimabilis cla
ritatis apto celo sup eandē obla
tionē descendit· & eā tota sua cla
ritate ita pfudit· ut sol rē illā il
lustrat· quā radius suus transfigit·
Et dū eā hoc modo irradiaret sur
sū eā ad secreta celi invisibiliter
sustulit· et iterū eā deorsū sup idē
altare remisit uelut homo alitū
suū introrsū trahit et iterū eū ex
trorsū emittit· ita eā uerā carnē &
uerū sanguinē effectā quāuis incon
spectu hominū uelut panis et uelut
uinū appareret· Cūq; hęc aspicerē·
statim eiā signa natiuitatis· passio
nis· et sepulture· nec nō resurrectionis·
& ascensionis saluatoris nri unigeni
ti dī uelut in speculo apparuerūt· q̄
modo eiā cū idē filī dī in sclo ēet in
ipso patrata s· S; dū idē sacerdos can
ticū innocentis agni q̄d ē agne dī
qui tollis peccata mundi decanta
ret et adipiscendā scām cōmunio
nē se exhiberet· p̄dicta ignea cho
ruscatio ad celestia se recepit· & ita
clauso celo audiui uocē exeo dicen
tē· Manducate & bibite corpus et
sanguinē filii mei ad abolendū p̄
uaricationē euę· quam intecta
hereditate restauremini· Et dū eiā
ceteri boīes ad p̄cipiendū idē sacra
mentū ad sacerdotē accederent·
quinq; modos in eis cōsiderabā· Nā
alii in corpore lucidi· & in anima
igniti erant alii autē in corpore
pallidi et in anima tenebrosi ui
debantur· quidā uero in corpore
hirsuti· et in anima multa immun
dicia humane pollutionis p̄fusio
nis p̄fusi sordebant· quidā autē
in corpore acutissimis spinis cru
cīdabantur· et in anima ipsi appa
rebant· alii uero in corpore san
guinei· et in anima uelut putridi
cadauer fendi uidebantur· S; ex his
omnib; dū quidā eadē sacramēta
p̄cipiunt· alii uelut igneo splendo
re p̄fundebantur· alii uero uelut
obscura nube obtenebrabantur·
Post completionē autē eorundē
sacramentorū dū sacerdos abaltari
recederet· p̄dicta serenitas quę de
celo uenerat totū illud altare ut
supradictū ē circūfulserat· sursū
ad supna secreta subtracta ē· Et ite
rū audiui uocē de supnis celoq; di
centē· m· X· pō ihu uero filio dī
in ligno passionis suę pendente
ecclā insecreto supnoq; misterioq;
ipsi associata purpureo sanguine
eius dotata ē· sicut & ipsa demonstrat·
cū frequentē ad altare accedentis
dotē suā reposcit· & q̄nta deuotio

ne filii ei⁹ adduuma misteria acce
dentes ea ꝑcipiam⁹ acutissime con
siderat⁹. Qua ꝓp̄t uides cū ide filiꝰ
di in cruce pendit⁹. q̄d p̄dicta
muliebris imago uelut lucidus
splendor⁹ exami quo consilio ꝓpe
gredies⁹ ꝑ diuinā potenciā ad
ipsū adducta ē⁹. Qua eode innocen
te agno marā crucis ꝑsalutē ho
minū⁹ subleuato⁹ eccla impuritate
candoris fidei et certitudinū uirtutū
ex diuino secreto ꝛ repente ꝑfun
dissimū misteriū apparens⁹ in celo⁹
ꝑsūmā maiestatē eide unigenito
di adiuncta ē⁹. Quid ē hoc⁹ Qua cū
de uulnerato latere eiꝺe filii mei
cruor⁹ exiuit mox saluatio anima
rū exorta ē⁹ quo gla illa de qua
diabolus cū sequacib; suis expul. ·ij·
sus ē homini data ē⁹ cū ide unige
nitus mis mortē in cruce tēporalē
subiens⁹ infernо spoliato fideles am
mas ad celestia duxit⁹ ita q̄d eā
indisciplis ei⁹ et ꝯmbis q̄ eos sincere
subsecuti s⁹. fides iā augmentari et
corroborari cepit⁹ quatinus here
des celestis regni fierent⁹. Vnde san
guine qui de latere ei⁹ fluxē se sur
sū eleuante eade imago ꝑfusa·ip ·iij·
si quoluntatē supni patris felici
desponsatione associata ē⁹ quo for
titudine passionis filii di ardentē
inundante⁹ et ad altitudinē ecclē
tuū misteriorꝫ se⁹ mirabiliter uolente⁹
quēadmodū odor⁹ bonorꝫ aroma
tū se ate diffundit⁹ exeta incandi
dis heredib; cūm regni eccla robo

rata eide unigenito di ꝑ incarnatū
nē altissimi patris fidelit̄ coniunc
ta ē⁹. Quomodo⁹ ut sponsa sponso
suo in subiectionis et obedientionis
obsequio subiecta fertilē donatio
nē cū federis amore ab eo in ꝑceꝑ
one filioꝫ accipiens⁹ eos ad hereditā
tē suā educat⁹ ita eta eccla filio di
in humilitatis et carnalis officio
coniuncta⁹ regeneratione spūs et
aque cū saluatione animarū ab eo
ad restauratione utꝫ suscipiens⁹ eas
ad supna transmittit⁹. Vnde eta
carne et sanguine ei⁹ nobilit̄ dotata
ē⁹ quia ide unius di corpus et san
guinē suū p̄cellentissima gla fidelib;
suis q̄ et eccla et filii eccle s⁹ ita con
tulit⁹ ut uita in supna ciuitate ꝑ
ipsū habeant⁹. Quomodo⁹ Qua ipse
carne et sanguine suū in sēificatio
nē credentiū dedit⁹ ut eta celestis
pater ipsū ꝓ redemptione ppl̄oꝫ ad
passione tradidit⁹ ita serpente an
tiquū in humilitate et iustitia ꝑ
eū deuincens⁹. nec illū potestate et
fortitudine sua superare uolens⁹ quo
ipse dns iustus ē⁹ nolens iniquitatē⁹
quēadmodū psalmista loquitur⁹
dicens⁹. Beatus⁹ uir⁹ qui n̄ abiit
in consilio impioꝫ⁹ et in uia pecca
torū n̄ stetit⁹ et in kathedra pesti
lentie n̄ sedit⁹. Quid ē hoc⁹. Quo dns
ē pater⁹ omniū beatitudinū et fe
licitatū creaturarū suarū in ipsis
creaturis⁹ suis multa et diuersa sig
na ostendens⁹. sicut eta in carna
to filii ei⁹ suauissimū gustū in

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multa dulcedine stillabat cū ecle
sie uirtutes plurimas edificamo
nes in ipso edificarent p quas homo
ad supnū regnū rediret. q̄d nulla
umbra mortis obscuratū ē. Erat
enā in eode supno patre fortissi
me uires omniū uirtutū ēe mani
festare s. quo p unigenitū suū mor
te uirtutū occidit. et infernū fre
git atq; innouissimo die orbē
tarū in aliā et meliorē nouitatē
conuertit. Vnde enā p diffusionē
cordis sui ñ abiit uacillanta inue
ra maligno spūtuū. q̄ uernatē re
liquerit. et mendacū arripuerit.
Quomodo. Quia uernatē p menda
cū diuidere uoluerit. Quomodo.
Quia uernatē p mēdacū diuide
re uoluerit. Quomodo. Inimquū
dierū q̄ante tēpus dierū et ho
rarū erat opprimere uolebant.
et antiquus serpens qui ante
tēpus tēporū ñ fuit illi consortē
facere inhiabant. S; hoc ēe ñ potuit
nec debuit. quo unus ds ē. Qua
ppt et diabolus mendax ē. Nā
ado recessit uritā desertus. et mor
tē inueniens. Erat enā ds in uia
illa qua peccatores gressū suū
figunt ñ stetit. q̄a uiā ade abi
ciens peccatū illius ñ amauit. s;
illū a diabolo seductū de para
dyso p iecit. nec enā in potestate
ullius iniq̄tatis regnauit ut
ome genus humanū in mortē
implicaret. in umbra mortis sedens
cū ide humanū genus uernatē
supbe deseruit. Quid ē hoc. Nā
ds nec diabolice p sūptionē nec
humane negligentie. ita potesta
te sua restituit. ut eas p fortuidi
nē suā deiceret. Quomodo. Sic
ut si duo pugnatores cōtra alt
alterū fortiorib; uiribus pirent. cer
te fortior ille maiores pugnas
in sua possibilitate illi infirmio
ri demonstraret. q̄nus confusū
illū sibi subiceret. nec maliquo
illi cedere uellet. S; ita ds ñ fecit.
quo opi iniq̄tatis p sūmā boni
tatē restituit. ut decet filiū suū
unigenitus di uita existens. se
met ipsū p redēptione humani
generis ad passionē usq; ad cru
cis optulit. ubi enā ut uerax
auditione uocē de supnis secre
tis resonantē p cepisti. sponsā
sibi eccl̄am ut ad restitutionē
salutis credentiū pplōx matē ex
isteret elegit. ut decet quatin
sine macula spūali regeneratione
ne ad cel̄estia eos transmutaret.

obtulit·cū de mundo ⁊ tristitiaꝫ esset ⁊
rideo ⁊ idē filiꝰ mꝰ in hora passionꝭ suę ḥ m

·iiij· ⁊ Sed pfata imagine iā hoc modo
⁊ uulnerib; suis pficiente uides
⁊ quasi q̄dda altare adq̄d ipsa fit
⁊ quem accedit·et ibi dotē suā deuo
⁊ te reuisens·cā supno patri et an
⁊ gelis cū humilitē ostendit·qa ecclā
ut p̄dictū ē inb eatus & fortissimis
uirtutib; augmentū capiente mox
uidit ⁊ manifesta demonstratione
ostendit·spū scō inspirante scīfica
tio mistico; altariū inp̄fundit aue
fideliū suspiriaq; exorta ē·ubi ca-
dē ecclā communia intermonie ue
stigia exemplaq; suaq; ponens·dotē
suā uidelicet corpus & sanguinē
filii di p̄fundissima deuotione cōsi
derando creatori omniū inconspe
ctu uiuentiū et ardentiū luminū
scilicet supnaq; ciuiū insubiecho
ne humillime obedientiꝭ ~~humil-~~
~~time obedientiꝭ~~ offert·Quid est
hoc·Quō ut caro eiꝰ de unigenti
mei uirginis orta ē·et postea p̄ salute ho ·vij·
minū traditā·ita etiā et nīc caro
eiꝰ frequentē in incorrupta inte
gritate ecclē augmenta adscīfica
·v· tionē fideliū datur·Qua sicut
faber aurū siuē p̄ ignē modo liq;
faciens unit·et modo unitū diui
dit·ita etiā ego patē carnē et
sanguinē filii mei p̄scīficationē
spūs scī inoblationē nunc glīfico·
et nīc glīficatū fidelib; hominib;
·vj· ⁊ adsalutē ipsaq; distribuo·Vnde
⁊ etiā cū sacerdos sacris uestib; in
⁊ diuinis adcelebranda diuina sa

⁊ cramenta adaltare accedit unde
⁊ q̄d subito magna serenitaꝭ lucis eā
⁊ obsequio angloꝝ de cēlo uenienꝭ·to
⁊ tū illud altare circūfulget·quo p
curatore animarū sacrata cinctio
ne circūamicto·et ad immolationē
innocentis agni uunificā mensā
a deuinte·repente magna claritaꝭ
supne hereditatis denotatē tene
brarū pellentiꝭ·cū ministerio sup
norū spūuū de secreto cēliq; efful
gens ubiq; eandē cōpositionis sci
ficationē irradiat·qua ibi refec
tio animarū ad salutē credentiū
exercet·Quomodo·Quia cū ecclā
p uocē sacerdotis reposcit dotē
suā quę corpus et effusio sangui
nis in magna multitudine ppliq;
augmentū accepit·tunc ego q̄ in
deficiens tūm sū·locū scīficationis
illius ad honorē corporis et sangui
nis eiusdē unigenti mei inscītiaꝫ
mea irradio Nam cū sacerdos
sup scīficationē altaris me inuoca
re cepit·quamuis inspiciā q̄d filiꝰ
mꝰ panē & unū incena moriꝰ
sue hoc m̄ ostendit cū in ligno cru
cis et̄ morituꝰ·illud designans·
ut eandē passionē suā inconspec
tu meo semp habere·nec ulla aba
cutissima uisione mea delere cū
felix oblatio sacre sci sacrificii
p sacerdotale officiū m̄ offerret·
quō et ipse in effusione sangui
nis sui panē et calicē m̄ obtulit·
morte deficiens & homine erigens·

·viij· Sed & q̄a dignitaꝭ ingredien

filii mei ē·quin ipā in saluatione animarum partiu apta sit·q; etiā in eadem
effusione huius p̄ciosi

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a egrediemſ

tus clauſus ā uirginalis pudicicie
ñ fuit humane nature ſ; diuine
potentie. ídō et hoc ee potest qđ
caro eius de unigenti mei de pane
frumenti et sanguis ei de uino uue
cū aqua mereť. quēadmodū p fide
lem seruū meū iobese ppbetam
ostendo dicens. Et implebunť
arce frumento. et redundabunt tor
cularia uino et oleo. Et reddā uo
bis annos qs cōmedit locusta et
bruchus. et rubigo et eruca. fortu
tudo mea magna quā misi in uos.
Et cōmedetis uescentes. et laudabitis
mini. et laudabitis nomē di uri q
fecit uobiscū mirabilia. et ñ con
fundeť pplus mis in sempiternū. Quid
ē hoc. Et mirabile dispositionē di
implebunť omi bono arce fidi
credentis ecclie. quo fructū frumē
ti tradō incarnē filii mei. in qđ
etiā in uera saluatione qua fide
les mei ad patriā reuocabuntur.
habundabunt commotiones ille
in quib; ipsi concupiscentias car
nis sue ppt nomē meū conuert
ubi et eis liquorē uue duco in san
guinē eius de unigenti mei dans
eis etiā oleū in die. Quomodo. Quo
paliū modū scilicet in salute ista
restituā uobis circuitus uanitatū
illarū qs p infidelitatē ignoran
tie cōmedit locusta oblitionis u
delicet ubi primū in filius adē ne
quicie excorte s. in qđ ipsi fructus
tuate iustitie mee. hoc modo in ob
liuione habebant. ut homo escā

:ix:

necessitatis sue oblitus sit. postquā
in uentrē suū illā transfuderit.
in impietate sua in iustitiā meā
discerpentes. ut et locusta fructus
corrodit. Quomodo. Quia ubi
locusta negligentie p desidiā mus
titudinē bonoꝝ fructuū auferť
ibi et bruchus sedulus in stercore
immundicie se inuoluit. qm huī
modi hoīes se inuoluentes in sor
de infidelitatis idoloꝝ et aliox si
miliū scismatū. et in diabolicis
sectationib; atq; in magicis
artib; et in inspectione creatura
rū creatoris. in fortuitis casib; hu
manarū rerū atq; in ultissima fe
ditate homicidioꝝ et fornicatio
nū. ita se in his pascunt quēad
modū ide bruchus uno nutrit.
Quomodo. Quo ubi bruchus
turpitudinis fetore sordū di
ligit. ibi etiā rubigo amaritu
dinis metalla fidelis splendoris
consumit. qa isti hoīes iustitie
di contrarii existentes. ita eā ob
fuscare laborant. ut et eadē ru
bigo decorē metalloꝝ auferre solet.
Quomodo. Quia ubi rubigo mor
dacitatis fulgorē bonoꝝ actuū
inficit. ibi etiā eruca nocuit ach
onis uirentes herbas bone uolu
tatis deprauat. quo tales hoīes
claritissimas uirtutes uelut ē sim
plicitas castitatis ac uirtuosa con
stantia qs sps sc̄s omnī uiri di
tate beatitudinis irradiat. p ma
liciā nequitie sue de se abicien

tes-ta illas delere conant. quā d
modū ē cruca multatē berbarꝰ
immmunt. Et mbis omīb; decla
ratur maxima fortmudo mea
que magnmudme uirtutis suę
diabolicas aduersitatis supauit.
cū ea ad salutē uām misi muos.
Quomodo. Ego pat misi filiū meꝰ
in mundū de uirgine corporalit
natū. ut p eū de pdmone mortis
uos redimerē. ita ut ego muobis
et uos mme habitarem. cū eam
de filiꝰ mis ad passionē uadens. car-
nē suā uobis admanducandū et
sanguinē suū uobis adbibendū
tradidit. Unde sacramtū hoc ad
salutē uām deuote comedens p
illud uos felicit pascentes. ac ppt
ea p oleū midie mee de famē pdi
tionis anime samtę abimmi. quō
eam filiꝰ mis medicinā uulnerum
uꝝ impenitencia amulti. et ea
eam sponsa eide filu mei omni
iustitia et ueritate exornata ē.
atq; idcirco nomī meū q̄ inuicta
triumphatrix dns unus existens uos gu
berno. ostendens in uobis mirabi
lia mea uidelicet uos mirabilit
de diabolica potestate eripiens.
fidelit laudabitis. Et ido p con
fusionē mortis nō confundemur
pp̄ts mis in futura ēmitate. quē tā
mirabilit de saucib; inferoꝝ eduxi
x. Et uides q̄d p̄dicta serenitas
altari tādiu p manet. q̄
usq; post cōpletionē eide sacra
menti sacerdos abaltari secedat.
ꝗa eade serenitas scilicet iusionis
immirabilib; illis se tādiu clarissime
ostendit. usq; dū pacis eide sacro
scī officii misteriis. ille q̄ dispensator
eorunde sacramtoꝝ ē a scīficatione
illa se recipiens. eade secreta mistē
ria cōpleat. Quid ē hoc. Quō dignꝰ
ē ut diuina maiestas uirtutē suā
meis de felicissimis sacramtis ple
nissime manifestet. et ꝗa etiā dū
homo manet mbis que addm pu
nent auxiliū dī illū n̄ desert.
ed ubi cuglo pacis recitato.
et oblationē que consecran
da ē altari sup posita. cū ide sacer-
dos laude omipus dī. q̄d ē sēs. sēs. sēs.
dns dꝰ sabaoth de cantat. et sic mi
steria eorunde sacramtoꝝ inchoat.
repente igneta coruscatio mesti
mabilis clarmatis a pto celo sup
eande oblationē descendit. quō
uirtute uniemis spirationis
moseulo regis plata. et fructu cla
rmatis unte qui in scīficatione can
didandis ē edificationi partis
di inposito. cū ide nuncius uerita
tis dulcissimū sonū in laude erta
toris omniū trina inuocatione
unchonis eide dnatoris exercituꝝ
emittit. et sic absconsa fulgoris
aurore scilicet incarnati filii dī
ex uirgine inchoat. subito impe
netrabilis altitudinis a pto claris
simo tabernaculo sup misteria eide
de sacramto se inclinat. et ea uita
sua clarmate tra p fundit. ut sol
rē illā illustrat. quā radius suus

serenemtas incōprehensibilis

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transfigur q̄a eandē rumlamē cr-
cultū cuiusdē oblationis sēissimus
calor mun patris nra pfundit-int
radians fulgor rē illā unuat-sup
quā se diffundendo cadit-Quid ē
hoc-Sponsa filu meu-oblationē
panis et unu-sup altare meū de
uotissima unctione offert-Quo
modo-Videlicet p manū sacerdotis
fideli recordatione mentis me-
ut eadē oblatione carnē et sangu
nē filu mei ipsi tradā-Quomodo-
Quia passionis eidē unigenti mei
medestib; secretis semp apparen-
idō et eadē oblatio eidē filio meo
ardentis calore meo pfundissi
ma admiratione nra coadunat-ut
caro et sanguis ei' uegetatissima cer
titudine efficiat-unde eadē ecclā
felicissima uegetatione roborat-
Quam diu pfata claritas oblationē
illā nra ut p̄dictū ē irradiat sur-
sū eā adsecreta celi inuisibiliter
sustollit-qua eadē ignea coruſca
tio diu idē sacramentū ut p̄fatū ē
sua illustratione pfundit-sursū
hoc adilla occulta quę mortalis
oculus uidere nō ualet inuisibili
ui tute trahit-et meritū illud de
orsū sup idē altare remittit-quo
ipsū condescensionis respectu sup
mensā scificationis suauissime
deponit-uelut homo alitū suū
introrsū trahit et meritū eū extror-
sū emittit-diu ipse spiraculū u
uentus uegetationis q̄ uiuit pmi
rabilis dispositionē dī sibi in
trorsū mittit et rursū ut uiuere
possit extra se deducit-ita eandē
oblationē uerā carnē et uerū san
guinē effectā-quā uis inconspectu
hominū uelut panis et unū ap
paret-q̄a ut dīs ueraxē sine illu
sione-ita etiā et illa admirabilis sacra
mentū firma admirabilē-quā nul
lus deicere potest uera caro et san
guis existens-absq; deceptione-
quō ut anima ueracit uiget in
carne et sanguine dū homo u
ita incorpore ita ē etiā hoc mi
steriū in pane et uino ubi colit
ueraci celebratione-sic etiā appa
rens hominib;-q̄a ut cecus ocu
lus hominis dīm pfecte uidere nō
potest-ita etiā homo misteria
ista corporalit intuieri nō ualet-
quō ut homo corpus hominis et
nō spm ei' uidet-sic etiā homo pa
nē et unū-et nō hec sacramēta pspi
cere potest-Quid ē hoc-Sc̄emitas
que sup corpus filu dī insepul
chro sepultū apparuit-ipsū aso
pore mortis resuscitans-hec etiā
inalitari sup sacramentū corpo
ris et sanguinis eiusdē unigeni
ti dī resplendet-illud ita incon
spectu hominū regens-q̄d sēmet
ei' uidere nō possunt-nisi inspecie
panis et unu-secdm q̄d eadē obla
tio altari sup posita ē-sicut etiā
humanitatē filu dī diuinitas
que in ipso erat ita hominibus
obtecta fuit q̄d eū nō nisi ut ho
minē uidere potuerūt cū ipsis

ut homunē s; tamen sine peccato con
uersantē. Quid ē hoc. Ego q̄ oīa cre
auī. cū ab ecclā p̄ sacerdotale manū
p̄dicta oblata m̄ offert. ea benigne
suscipio. quo ut diuinas mirabilia
sua in utero uirginis ostendit. ita
etiā in hac oblatione secreta sua de
monstrat. Quom̄. Qui a ibi caro et
sanguis filii dī manifestat. Quom̄.
xuij. Quo dū oblata illa sursū inui
sibiliter uelut in puncto pue
rum dī habitū et uerū rem̄ mutat. ita
in calore diuine maiestatis fouet.
q̄d caro et sanguis unigeniti dī ef
ficit. idē misterii hominib; carnali
sensu discernendis. Qsi aliq̄s p̄ciosissi
mū unguentū simplici panī inuo
luere et saphirū uino imponere et.
Ego illud uelut dulcē saporē con
uertere. ut in corpe tuo homo nec
panē illū cū unguento. nec uinū
illud cū saphiro discernere posses.
s; tamen suauē saporē sentires. Quo
et filius m̄s suauis et lenis ē. Quid ē
hoc. In unguento hoc intelligit
filiū m̄s ex uirgine natus. q̄ p̄ciosis
simo unguento unctus ē. Quom̄.
Quia sca humanitate indutus ē.
que tā p̄ciosū unguentū ē q̄d sua
uirtute sua mortifera uulnera ho
minū ita p̄fudit. ut ultra in p̄dica
one ade nec putrescant nec fetor
ent. cū se ad illū conuertunt. In
saphiro autē isto diuinitas notat.
que in eode filio meo ē. Qui lapis
angularis existens mitis ē et hu
milis. quo de radice humane car
nis que de uiro et muliere ē in radi
cauit. s; in calore meo mirabiliter
ex suauissima uirgine incarnatus
ē. unde etiā caro et sanguis ei dul
cis et suauis ad sumēdū et edendū.
xuij. Sed tu o homo hoc spīale domī
ta uisibiliter sumere n̄ potes. ue
uit. uisibile carnē comedas. et uelut
uisibile sanguinē bibas. quo putre
do stercoris es. s; ut uiuens spūs tuus
iste inuisibilis ē. ita etiā hoc u
isti sacramentū in oblatione ista
inuisibile existens. ate inuisibiliter
suscipiendū ē. Quia quēadmodū
corpus filii mei in utero uirginis
fuit texit. sic etiā et nunc caro eius de
unigeniti mei in scificatione alta
ri ascendit. Quid ē hoc. Nā spūs ho
minis q̄ inuisibile ē. inuisibiliter sus
cipit corpore hominis q̄d uisibile
ē oblatione. ista que in eode sacrāmē
to uisibilis existit. uisibiliter accipien
te. ita tam unū existentib; sic dūs et
homo unus xp̄c ē. et ut anima ratio
nalis et caro mortalis in homine
unus homo existit. quo homo qui
recta fide me inspicit. cū sacrāmēto
istud accipit. ad scificatione sui
illud fidelit suscipit. Quid ē hoc.
filius mis mirabiliter natus ē ex inte
gerrima uirgine. cui caro indul
cedine libidinis nūquā fer buit.
nec tacta ē. qa uas eius de uirginis
mundissimū erat. in quo ipsū un
geniti mei incarnari uoluit. Un
de etiā n̄ p̄misi ut ide uas eius
suauissime uirginis in calore ar

existit. Sacrāmentum hoc q̄d in oblatione ista inuisibile

doris diffluerit·quo in eo fili' m̄s hu
manū corpus mirabilit̄ susceptū·
Sed q̄d cade beata uirgo pangit :xv.
lucū sermonē in eode secreto uerā
allocutionē audiuit·ita q̄d exinde
credula effecta·suspiria m̄ris sue sur-
sū tenuit cū diceret·ecce ancilla dn̄
fiat m̄ secm uerbū tuū·ita etiā uni
genitū di spū sco sup uenientē con
cipiens·designat q̄d omipotēs ds̄ puer-
ba sacerdotis in officio sacerdotali
inuocandus ē·ita q̄d ide sacerdos
fidelit̄ indm credens·et cū deuotione
cordis sui puā oblationē ipsi offerens.
uerba salutis in obsequio humilita
tis dabit·ubi et supna maiestas can
de oblatione suscipiens in carnē·&
sanguinē·pii redemptoris mirabili
uirtute transfundit·Quomodo.
Quia ut filius m̄s mirabilit̄ prius
humanitatē in uirgine suscepit·ita
etiā et nūc oblato hoc mirabilit̄ caro
&sanguis ei' in altari efficit̄·Vnde
et hoc sacramentū totū integrū ē·
inuisibile et uisibile existens·ut etiā
unigenitus m̄s totus integer ē·secm
diuinitatē inuisibilis·et secm hu
manitatē uisibilis in sclo manens·
Nam ut pullus auiū de ouo egre :xvj.
ditur·et ut uolatilis uermicu
lus de exiguo grano orit̄·et anima
li eode auolante illud remanet de
quo ide animal ortū ē·ita etiā in
oblatione ista ĕrnas carnis et san
guinis filii mei p fidē tenenda est·
quāuis eade oblatio in conspectu
hominū uelut panis et ut uinū
apparat·Unde etiā ut aspicias :xvij.
signa natiuitatis·passionis·et sepul-
ture·nec n̄ resurrectionis·et ascensi
onis saluatoris hominū·scilicet uni
genitū di uidit in speculo ibi appa
rent·quomodo etiā cū ide filius di
uinsclo cēt in ipso p̄sentia s̄·quo ut
uera manifestatione consideras·
misteria nascentis ex uirgine et pa
cientis in cruce ac sepultū in sepul
chro·nec n̄ resurgentis a mortuis·
et ascendentis ad cel̄os·uidelicet
illius qui p salute hominū aduenit
uenit purissima claritate ~~meis de~~
~~claritate~~ meis de sacramentis fulgent·
ut etiā cū ide unigenitus di tēpo
raliter in mundo cū hominib; con
uersatus p̄uoluntatē patris p re
demptione humani generis ea in
suo corpore passus ē·Quid ē hoc·
Quia amat oculos meos apparet·
q̄d fili' m̄s p̄pt amorē hoīs in mun
do passus sit·quo natiuitatis·pas
sio &sepultura resurrectio·et as
censio eide unigeniti mei mortē
humani generis occidat·Vnde
&ea inceleſtib;·coram me fulgent·
quia ex n̄ su oblatis·s;usq;ad con
sūmationē scli quasi aurora ante
me immutata claritate apparebunt·
Quid ē hoc· Quo in eade passi :xviij.
one usq;ad finē mundi om̄s illos
p̄uideo q̄ in eande passionē s̄ cre
denturi·et qui ea abiecturi s̄·quia
ipsa coram me semp fulgebit·quā
diu illud homo dicere debet·q̄d
ide filius m̄s discipulos suos do

cum·ut dñs oraret·sic scriptū est·
Et dimitte nobis debita nr̄a·sicut &
nos dimittimus debitoribꝫ nr̄is·q̄d
est hoc·Tu qui oīa in potestate tua
habes·inspice effusionē illius san
guinis·qui p humano genere effu
sus ē·&dimitte nobis qui filii tran
gressionis sum⁹ debita nr̄a·quę tibi
p̄soluere debuimus·s;ppt̄ incurua
tionē cordis nr̄i ñ fecimus·Quid ē
hoc·Quia q̄d in baptismo p̄misim⁹
ñ adimplemus·quō p̄cepta tua
transgressi sumus·et innocentiā
abiecimus·sicut & adā in parady
so ubi ñ obedit·et uestē innocen
tie corrupit·S;q̄a tu pi⁹ es·noli pu
nire nos scdm nequitiā nr̄am·s;
relaxa nobis transgressionē nr̄am
scdm pietatē tuā·sic et nos q̄ p̄ua
ricatores sum⁹·quātus multā ma
liciā in nobis habeam⁹·tam̄ ppt̄
timorē et amorē saluatoris nr̄i·
dimittam⁹ ex corde nr̄o debitoribꝫ
nr̄is iniuriā illā quā nobis intu·xix·
lerunt·Quomodo·Quō illos qui
nos diligere deberem⁹·quia hoīes
sumus·inmultus nos contur̄ban
tes·et p hoc te ñ amamus·s;p̄cepta
tua negligamus·ñ p̄sequim̄ scdm
maliciā illā quā in nos exercue
runt·s;iustū iudiciū tuū inspi
ciamus ñ uindicam⁹ nos ipsos q̄n
tū possum⁹·ita ut & tu odꝫ nobis
sis ppicius quō iustus et bonus es·
Tu q̄ audi homo·quia quādiu
ubi subueniendū ē·& quādiu tu
alius hoīb; succurrere potes·tādiu

passio filii mei corā me immidia ap
parebit·& tādiu erā caro & san
guis eī inaltari consecrabit̄ ad p̄ci
piendū credulis hominib;·ad salua
tionē & ad purgationē criminū ex
Nā cū ide unigenitus mis in mundo
corporalit̄ ex·corpus ipsius immuni
mento carnis et sanguinis sui de fru
mento et uino sustentatū ē·unde
erā & nunc in altari caro & sanguis
eī in oblatione fruīm̄ & uini conse
crat̄·quatinus inde fideles hoīes in
anima et corpore reficiant̄·quō ide
filius mis hominē de p̄dicione ade
mirabilit̄ redemit·& nunc erā hoīes
de cotidiano malo in quo frequent̄
p̄labunt̄ indirecte absolut̄·In conse
cratione eni p̄dicte oblationis appa
ret·quicq̄d filius mis in carne sua p
redemptione hoīs corporalit̄ passus
est·& hoc nolo abscondere·q̄a dece
tos ei⁹ sursū ad celestia trahe quatin⁹
p ipsos corpus ei⁹ in p̄ celestis m̄bris p
ficiat̄· Qua ppt̄ ego oīa sacra
menta hec in oblatione ista mirabilit̄
demonstro·quō cū ea sup altare ap
paruerint·tunc erā caro et sanguis
filii mei eade fit·tam̄ in conspectu
hominū panis et uinū apparens·q̄a
tā tenera ē fragilitas hoīs q̄d crudā
carnē et crudū sanguinē p̄cipe ab
horreret·Nā mortalis homo diuinā
tatē ñ potest inspicere·quādiu mor
talis ē·unde erā misterū hoc quō
uerū ē diuinitatis ipsi homini obscu
ratū ē·ita q̄d illud inuisibilit̄ pci
piat·q̄a et ide unigenitus mis nē

immortalis existens ultra ñ morit̄.
Qua ꝓpt̄ ego ohomo carnē et san
guinē ei⁹ inoblatione panis æ uini
tibi trado. quatinus illud q̄d ui
sibile ē. illud q̄d inuisibile ē mue
ra fide ꝓcipias. Et idē sacramentū
inuera certitudine ꝓdiuinā potes
tiā suscipis. ita tam̄ q̄d tibi uisibile
ñ appareat. nisi inmagna necessita
te. ut etiā illud electis meis cū ꝓ
hoc inmagna afflictione possit
ēnt aliq̄ndo demonstratū ē. Hęc
autē oīa ꝓpt̄ amorē et ꝓpt̄ im
mutatē hominis facio. S; oīs crea
tura p̄ceptis meis subiecta ē. tu ⁊ ꝰ
ohomo in semp rebellis existis. Un
de cęcus et surdus es. S; tam̄ in rebel
lare ñ potes. Nonne facio q̄d uolo.
te ñ undeat. Tu autē ñ uides ocu
lis tuis. nec audis auribus tuis incar
ne. quomodo anima hoīs incorp⁹
ei⁹ mitiā. et quomodo illā de corpo
re ei⁹ auferā. S; anima tua intelligit
me. cui mortale corpus suū reliqui
t. Sic etiā carnē filii mei trado
ad manducandū. et sanguinē ei⁹
ad bibendū. & hoc in potestate
mea te ohomo ñ uidente facio.

Qua ꝓpt̄ ut uides dū ide sacer- xyx
dos carnicū innocentis ag ⁊
ni. q⁹d ē agne dī q̄ tollis peccata ⁊
mundi. decantat. et ad capien ⁊
dū sām cōmunionē se exhibet ⁊
p̄dicta ignea coruscatio ad cele ⁊
stia se recipit. qa eode ministro
laude illius qui innocentia
mansuetudinis suę tulit placu

la hominū denunciante. et inte
riora pectoris sui cū exteriori de
uotione ad tradę sacramēta apiente.
illa inuicta serenitas quę ibi uir
tutē suā ostendit. ad supna secre
ta se subtrahit. et ita clauso celo.
idē se subtrahentib; ei⁹dē celestib;
misteriis. audis uocē exultio di
centē. ut credentes et fideles ho
mines manducent et bibant ue
ra deuotione carnē & sanguinē
saluatoris sui. q̄ pro ipsis passus mor
tē tēporalē subiit. ad abluendū
contaminationē illā quā primi
parentes p̄ceptū dī transgressi
mundo intulerant. q̄tinus ipsi
hoīes ab hac p̄uaricatione emun
dati. recte hereditatē quā prima
inter ꝓdiderant fidelit̄ restaurent̄.
Nā sicut idē unigenitus dī incę
na corp⁹ et sanguinē suū discipli
suis tradidit. ita etiā et nē matta
ri carnē et sanguinē suū dat fi
delib; suis. quēadmodū homo ex
opus uoluntatis suę ꝓfecerit. illud
aduten dū hominib; tribuit. q̄a
ide filius dī p̄cepta patris sui pa
gens. semetipsū pro salute ho
minū obtulit. et corpus & san
guinē suū ad scificationē eox
ad manducandū et ad bibendū
dedit. ut etiā in carnico carnicox
sponsus amicis suis loquit̄ dicēs.
Comedite amici mei. bibite xyxj.
et inebriamini carissimi. q⁹d
ē hoc. Comedite in fide uos qui p
sēm baptismū ad amicitiā meā

uenustis·quō effusus sanguis filii
mei lapsū ade uobis abstersit·
ruminantes uerā medicinā in
corpore eide unigenti mei qui
nus mortua crimina ura cū frequē
inustitiā inopib; uris opamini
uobis mditur abstergant·Unde
etiā bibite inspe exhac ure que
uos de cena pena eduxe sumtes
poculū salutis undelicet ut fir
miter et uirtuose inulla gram
credatis qua redepti estis·quō &
sanguine illo pfundendi q̄
puobis effusus ē·Et ita inebria
mini in caritate q̄ m carissimi
estis·habundantes in riuulis sēp
turarū·quatinus cū sūmo studio
a carnalib; desideriis uos franga
tis·ita ut ego pclarus uirtutes
ualde m amabiles in uobis exsus
citē·tradens etiā uobis corpus et
sanguinē eide unigenti mei·sic
et ipse discipulis suis ide sacram
tū dedit·ut meuglo scriptū est·

xx.ij. Cenantib; autē eis accipiens ihc
panē benedixe ac fregit·de
ditq; discipulis suis et ait·Accipite
et cōmedite·hoc ē corpus mev·
Et accipiens calicē gīas egit·& de
dit discipulis suis dicens·Bibite
ex hoc omīs·Hic ē sanguis mī nou
testamti·q̄ pmultis effundet in re
missionē peccatoꝝ·Dico autē uob·
Non bibā amodo de hoc genimi
ne uitis·usq; indiē illū·cū illud bi
bā uobiscū nouū in regno patris
mei·Quid ē hoc·filio di una cū dis
cipulis suis consūmationē illā cele
bratē qua ipse transiturus erat
de mundo uidelicet cū uīs eius
causis diutius conuersari n debu
it ut prius fecerat;·in uolumate
patris ad passionē & crucis pduran;·
sūma deuotione accepit, psalite ho
minū panē·in recordationē corpo
ris sui·uno desiderio patrē suū mo
nens·quomodo de eo exiuit et quom
ad eū redire uolut·ita ut ipse etiā
inspicere si possibile ēt·ut infragi
bilitate carnis sue calicē illū quē erat
bibiturus transiret·quāuis tamen
hoc fieri n debuerit·Unde et panē il
lū benedixe in recordatione sudo
ris corporis sui cū pcepto patris se
subdens·scilicet in cruce mori uoleꝝ
in angustia eide passionis corpus et
sanguinē suū discipulis suis tradi
dit·ita ne et ipsi obliuiscerent q̄d
eis hoc exemplū dedisset·Ac fregit
eis·q̄a quāuis passio illa corpori
suo dura ēt·tamē patri suo obedi
ens crudelissimā mortē in morte
corporis sui uicit·designans etiā
q̄d in eī credentib; caro sua·et san
guis in sacramto oblationis ēt tra
denda·Deditq; aduersā salutē eide
discipulis suis·ita ut et ipsi hoc in
nomine ei facerent·sicut et ipse ea
ppt amorē eoꝝ faciebat·mitissima
uoce dicens·Uos qui humilitē me
sequi uultis·ardente amore accipi
te hoc exemplū q̄d relinquo uobis·
uidelicet passionē meā et opa mea
que inpcepto patris mei compleu-

qūo ipſe miſit me docere et oſtende
re regnū ipſius· et cōmedite fidelit
hoc q̄d uobis do· q̄a corpus meū ē·
Q̄d ē hoc· Comedite corpus meū· quō
inſpū et incarne uja debeus opa
mea imitari cū ea ſpſ ſcs cordi uro in
ſpirat· uelut homo eſcā ſorbet· quā
inuicem ē ſuū mittit· q̄a ut me inopib;
mas ſequi debeus· ita eā et corp
meū manducabitis· uos et omīs qui
p̄cepta mea ſeruare uoluerint· Et
deinde idē filī di accipiens in ſal
uatione poculū ſalutis· patri ſuo
gr̄as egit· quō cū de latere ipſius
ſanguis effuſus ē· hec gr̄ā credeti
bus data ē· que tā fortis fuit· q̄d et
antiquū ſerpentē ſupauit· et p di
cū hominē liberauit· et tota ecclām
fidelit corroborauit· Quomodo·
Quia idē ſaluator p̄ciosiſſimū ex
emplū ſuū in ſuauitate amoris ſui
tradidit fidelib; ſuis· dicens eſtem
inſpiratione admonuit omīs· Bibi
te fiducialit et hoc ſalutari pocu
lo· uos omīs q̄ me fidelit ſequi deſi
deratis· ita ut et corpus urm in
anguſtia caſtigetis· et ſanguinē
urm in ſudore arcetis· p̄p̄ amo
rē meū· ad roborandū ecclām uos
metipſos abnegabitis· ſicut et ego
me paſſioni ſubieci· et ſanguinē
meū predepti one ura fudi vene
rnidinē carnis mee· in hoc ni con
ſideratis· ſi; ſalutē uram ſicietis· Na
hic ſanguis q̄ pro uobis effuſus ē· nō ē
ſanguis ille qui in ueteri teſtamto
ſub umbra ſpargebat· ſi; ſanguis
īm̄s noui teſtimoni qui ad ſalutē
pplōz data ē· Quomodo· Ego qui
ſū unicus matris mee uidelicet in
tegerrime uirginis filius· ſanguinē
meū in cruce predepti one homi
nū fudi qui me p fidē inſpiciunt·
et ut eī tunc pliberatione humani
generis dedi ita eī et nunc in
altari p hominib; ita do· ſcilicet p
purgatione illoz qui eū fideliter
ſuſcipiunt· In cena enī paſſionis
mee corpus et ſanguinē meū uo
bis ad manducandū et adbiben
dū dedi· quatinus et uos nunc in
altari idē immemoriā meā facia
tis· Unde etiā in aptione uertatis
dico uobis· qui me fidelit ſubſecu
ti eſtis· nō biba amodo hoc poculū
anguſtie ingrauedine illa quā
nunc de uideris pacior· uſq; in die
illū cū de morte reſurgens· mor
te p̄ſtrata die ſaluationis affera·
ubi idē poculū redepti onis ure
biba uobis cū qui mea eſtis· noui
tatē exultationis uobis oſtendā·
quia p̄dicto ueteris criminis
abiciā apto uobis regno illo
q̄d pater mīs ſe diligentib; p̄pa
rauit· Quid ē hoc· Quō morte
mea quā in cruce paſſus ſū ſal
uatione animarū ſeminis· cū
etiā poſt reſurrectionē meā in
aſcensione mea ſp̄m paraclȳ tū
accipietis· nouitatē uite doctri
ne ſuſcipietis· ita q̄d et p̄p̄t nom
meū multas tribulatio nes
ſuſtinebitis· quas et ego uo

biscū sustinebo·ī q̄d amodo ul
las miserias corporalit̄ paciar:
ut prius cū inmundo corporalit̄
esse passus sū·s;q̄a uos cas inomi
ne meo sustinuis·ubi ex ego illas
uobiscū sustinco·quō uos imme
ritis ex ego inuobis·Et ita ut p̄dic
tū ē corpus ex sanguinē filii mei·
uos q̄ inme fidelit̄ credtis adabo
lucionē criminū utr̄oq; percipiens·qu
nus p hoc sacramentū exhilarātu·
urtutē supne confortationis ad
ipiscamini·sicut ex dauid seruus
ī̄s inuolumate ardoris mei cla
mat dicens· O esfructu opū tuo
rū saciabit̄ tua·p̄ducens fenū iu
mentis·ex herbā seruituti hominū·
Ut educas panē de tra·ex uinū lēti
ficat cor hominis·Ut exhilaret fa
ciē inoleo·ex panis cor hōis confir
met·Quid ē hoc·ō dn̄e cuius magnu
ficentia sup om̄s ē de fide illa qua
tu inuenimus cognoscentis·ita q̄d
ipsa fructus uirtutū insapientia
tua ē·saciabit̄ homo undelicet q̄
fidei adherens esurie infidelita
tis inulla iustitie abiecit·cū prius
ueritatē ignorans·ieiunus rectitu
dine defecerat·s;nunc insaturita
te bonoz opū p̄ducens contritionē
animi sui illis q̄ insimplicitate s·
fragilitatē suā considerans·exem
plū humilitatis fidelit̄ p̄bet·ubi
cruā cū germine uirtutū surgens·
in habundantia eiusdē saturitatis
um dinitatē uere rectitudinis
seruitutis illoz q̄ tristis inbi
anit exhibet·q̄m adimplenit̄ ipsoz
bis actib; insudat·qui obsequio
mummonis ex defensionis suę fide
les animas adsupna gaudia p̄du
cunt·ut et illi qui milicia fortitu
dinis ex p̄tectionis suę hos quos tueri
debent fortissime defendunt·Et hec
in hominib; p̄uoluntatē tuā odis id
circo p̄cedunt·q̄nus illis uirtutib;
ritus adornatis·mirabilit̄ ipsis edu
cas corpus filii tui de fructu illo quē
tua impuritate uiridnatis p̄tert·sic
etiā ide unigenitus tuus ex uitro
uirginalis pudicicie corporaliter
ueniens·panē uite credentib; in se
metipso misericordit̄ dedit·s; ex
hoc miraculū ido facies·ut etiā san
guis eide unigeniti tui q̄ adsaluan
onē animarū effundit̄·letificet in
teriorē uim hominū·idē animas
ex uiremissionē peccatoz ipsorū·
Quomodo·Quia ut prius filii tui
corpus p̄decessione humani gene
ris in cruce oblatū ē·ita etiā et nē
caro et sanguis ei ad salutē creden
tiū inhabitari consecrat·Qua ppt̄ eū
hoc inuolumate tua mirabiliter
facti fuerit·tunc et illud erit ut
ide sacramentū exhilaret, faciē ide
ecclām oleo midie p̄fusā q̄a cum
gaudio fidei credentes midiam
amplectentes·oculis dn̄i pulcri
apparent·quō cū salus mundi in
cruce pendens hominē de laqueo
diaboli miditer liberauit tunc
etiā hoīes a uinculo peccatoz be
nigne absoluit·quamuis et ip

xx·iij·

si in leticia simplicis cordis sui fide
liter indim credentis· miseriā pacien
tibus cū ardore deuotionis subueni
re nō desinant· Et in hoc amore fideles
ardere debent· ut panis ille q̄ unā
se gustantib; p̄bet sensus ipsos q̄ sēp
instabilitate uacillant confirmet
ne interimo cordis eos admalū de
clinet· s; ut ad hoc q̄d una ē fortiū
ascendit· Panis autē iste caro fi .xv.my.
lii mei ē· quā nulla obscuritas in pec
catis obfuscat· nec ulla macula in
iquitatib; obnubilat· ita ut qui
eā digne suscepiunt in anima et cor
pore celesti lumine p̄fundant· et
a maculis interioris sordis sue fide
liter emundent· Et ideo nulla dubi
tatio iusta sacratissima carne sit·
quō qui primū hominē nec de car
ne nec de osse formauit· huic possi
bile ē sacramentū istud hoc modo
operari· Vnde originalis ortus· in
surgis· crescis· dilataris· ac magnū
ramū in multis germinib; p̄ducis
p quē celestis hierlm edificabit· ni
si cuiusli semine s; ex mistico spira
mine ueniens· Nā in ortu tuo nō es
ligatus ulla maculositate criminis·
s; floruisti in mirificatione uirtu
tū· q̄a ex inarato agro talis flos
surrexisti· qui nūquā ullo casu
infirmitatis marcescet· s; q̄ impleni
tudine uiriditatis sue semp diua
bit· Qua p̄p̄t & hoc sacramentū
corporis et sanguinis tui tamdiu
in officio ueritatis in ecclā colen
dū ē· quo usq; in fine mundi no

uissimus homo ueniat qui p̄dē mi
steriū ueracit̄ saluandus ē· cū illud
de secreto dī uenens salutē credēn
tib; confert· unde dauid testatur
dicens· Et mandauit nubib; de .xxv.
sup· et ianuas celi aperuit· Et pluit
illis manna ad manducandū· et
panē celi dedit eis· Panē angelo;
manducauit homo· cibaria mi
sit eis in habundantiā· Quid est
hoc· Celestis pater p̄ potentiā gle
sue emolliuit mētes hominū a sup
na celsitudine· cū patriarchis et
pphetis in secreto misteriog; suog;
hoc demonstrauit· q̄d et filiū suū
in spū sco ueracit̄ p̄dixerit· et q̄d
eū in legalib; p̄cepis p sanguinē
hircoz et p alias ostensiones homi
nib; mirabiliter p̄signauerit· Et
hoc modo suauitatē et dulcedinē
cordis sui apiens· in lenitate et
in ardore caritatis misit eis eun
dē filiū suū· quatinus p eū a fame
infidelitatis sue reficerent̄· ita
refectionē celestiū dans eis cum
qua plenū gaudiū omnū felici
tatū ac beatitudinū fidelit̄ sa
ciat adipiscerent̄· Ergo panē il
lū cuius dulcedine supni •an
geli nō possunt saciari uidelicet
dīm inspicientes· ita suscepit ho
mo in humanitate filii dī· cum
has refectiones beatitudinis sū-
mus pater misit hominib; in
habundantiā spūalis gaudii·
Ac idō fidelis homo fideli au
ditione audiat· Quos fideles ho

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minꝯ qui ꝯclastri cū germen ch̄ſ
audiat et intelligat instrumentū
animę ſuę ubi nō ch̄ſ filiu diaboli·
ſ; hereditet ꝯlestis regnu· et consideret quomodo ego minimus ac
benignissimus pater magnis fideliꝫ salutis ſuę circūdedi uos·
Ergo adtendat bonitatē patris
ſui· scilicet quomodo ꝓme ordinauī ē· q̄d insalute uīa ē· quō quā
uis uilis cibus sit tamen eandē salutē uſām humanitas filii mei exposcat· Quomodo· filius mīs natus
est de incorrupta uirgine quę ignara ullius doloris fuit· ſ; quę in
uiriditate integritatis ſuę ꝓmanſit· ut gramen in gla uiriditatis
ſuę uigeat· ſup q̄d ros de ꝯlo cadit·

xx·vi· Et quia uirgo illa integra fuit
de qua idē filius mīs hoc modo
carnē sine peccato assūpſit· ideo et
iuſtū ē ut caro ei⁹ nunc de fructu illo fiat qui sine suco amaritudinis ē· Quomodo· Granū frumenti fortissimus et opulentissimus fructus aliꝯ
fructuū est· nec in culmo suo sucū
aut medullā ut cęteræ arbores habent· ſ; in gramine suo in spicā surgens· ita ut fructū suū tendit· nec
ꝓ calorē nec ꝓ frigus amarū sucū
ꝓducit· ſ; siccā farinā tribuit· ut
ita caro filii mei sicca fuit sine
omni fetiditate humane pollutionis· ꝓ quā humanū genus mam
plectit· libidinis uiri ac mulieris
surgit· Non sic unigenitus mīs natus ē· ſ; in uiriditate integritatis
exiuit· ut ita granū integrū fruſtum gignit· Nā ut culmus frumenti
sine medulla ingens siccū granū in
puritate spice pfert· ita ita beata uirgo sine uirili fortitudine gignens·
ſcissimū filiū suū in simplicitate innocentie edidit· qui de tali matre
sua nullū sucū peccati traxit· quō
et ipſa cū sine medulla uiri concepit·
ut ita granū sucū grano nō tribuit·
quia illud nō de medullato stipite uigoꝛ ſ; de sole et pluuia ac de blanda
aura uiret· sicut et ꝓdicta integerrima uirgo nō de uiro ſ; uirtute altissimi obumbrata et infusione ſpūs
scī ꝓfusa in suauitate castitatis unigenitū suū genuit· Quātus autē
tale uirgo de uoluntate uiri ac
mulieris orta ꝯcr· tamē eundē filiū
suū ita nō pulit· ſ; cū de ꝯlo uenientē uerū dīm et hominē sine uoluntate uiri in integritate sua purissimū genuit· Quę quō cū in uirginitate sua sine sorde purissimū pepit·
idō et nunc panis qui caro illius
ueraciter ē sacrat· purissimus in integritate sua existens· a fidelib; in
puritate cordis et sine admixtione
diuersitatis suscipi debet· ut filius
isrt ꝓmonstrauit· quēadmodū in
uoluntate mea scriptū est·

xxvii· Cūmque die hui⁹ in qua egressi estis de egypto et de domo
seruitutis· quō in manu forti eduxit uos dīs de loco isto· ut nō comedatis fermentatū panē· Quid ē hoc·
Vos qui imitatores filii mei ē ~~unt~~

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uulus eſtote reſpicientes de morte
aduna· uidelicet inmemoria uſa
habentes saluationē dicā illi qui fi
lius mīs ē· qui mortē conculcauit et
uitā dedit· in quo in salute uīa egre
si eſtis miserabile exiluī pdimonis·
scilicet cū abiecistis densissimas tene
bras infidelitatis· ita etiā uos eripien
tes de mansione diabolice seruitutis·
cui ingressione ade data fu
istis· Nunc ergo de ītemis achīb; ad
celestia respicite· quō in diuina po
tencia de malis eduxi uos ego dīns
qui cunctis tama fortitudine pīsū·
quod uirtuti mee nullū obstaculū
contrarietatis obsistit· quin oīa
acutissime penetrē· ita p filiū meū
eripiens uos de loco isto· in quo pīn
fidelitatē uīām mortu famulates
inbonis opīb; nī laborastis· s; in puer
sitate uīa iacentes in pristino meo p
ſtinastis· S; quia nunc in unigenito
meo ab oppīssione ista liberati eſtis·
curritte de uirtute in uirtutē· cauen
tes ne inconscientiā uīām imitatis
infidelitatē illā· que cor uīm sua
receptione nī confortat· s; potius
sua amaritudine grauat· Quid ē
hoc· Nolite dia bolicas artes sec
tari· nec cetera figmenta que ho
mines inhumanis contagiis phi
losophoꝝ paganoꝝ ac hereticorū
sibimetipsis adinuenerūt· s; filiū
meū inspeculo fidei inanimi·
qui uos de carceribus inferni libera
uit cū semetipsū puobis adpassio
nē crucis obtulit· S; ut uestigia
eius tanto caritatis sequi ualeatis cor
da uīa celesti pane confortate· ut de
licet corpus ei⁹ fidei deuotione su
mite· quō ipse de celo uenies de
suaui et de pura uirgine natus et
in ligno p salute uīa passus semet
ipsū uobis contulit· ita ut et uos si
ne admixtione ullius amaritudi
nis suauē et purū panē diuina in
uocatione corpus ei⁹ inanimi con
secratū sincero affectu suscipiatis·
quatinus p hoc esu istē inmortalis
hominis effugientes· adepulas etiā
ne beatitudinis p uenire ualeatis·

xx·viij·

Vnde etiā in uino q̄d de uite
fluit· eadē inuocatione p sa
cramentū sanguinis ei⁹ uolo mira
bilia demonstrare· Quid ē hoc·
Sanguis filii mei de latere suo
fluxit· ut et uua de uite sudat·
Sed ut uua pedib; conculcatā et
intorcularī pmittit· ita dulcissi
mo ac fortissimo uino effluente
ad roborandū sanguinē in boie·
sic etiā unigenito meo in sudore
angustie uerberib; et flagellis
conculcato· et ligno crucis oppīs
so· optimus atq; pciosissimus san
guis de uulneribus ei⁹ emanauit·
saluberrima liberatione credēn
tes pplos p fundens· Quēadmodū
etiā uua dissimilis ē aliis pomis·
que duras cortices habentia come
di possunt· cū homines uuā ma
gis soleant sugere quā comedere·
ita etiā filius mīs dissimilis erat
in peccato ceteris hominib; qa

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ipſi ſubpondere nequiuit gra
uam diuerſis paſſionib; ſubiacen-
cū idē unigenitus mīs decaſtiſſima
uirgine mirabiliter natus ſ omni
contagione peccati carere-. Qua
ꝓpter æquū uua tenere materie
eſt. id circo et unū inſanguinē
euſdē filu mū uolo conſecrari.
Nā ut unū de uua ſudat ita et
filiuſ mīs de corde meo exuat. ita
eodē unigenito meo uera unā ex-
iſtente. et diuerſis palmitib; exeo
exeuntib; quia fideles in ipſo plan
tati ſ. qui p incarnationē ei inbo
nis opib; fructuoſi exiſtunt. Et ut
iſte ſucus de dulciſſimo ac fortiſſi
mo fructu uitis emanat. ſic etiā oīs
iuſticia immidia et ueritate p incar-
nationē eidē filu mo appareat. q̄ſ
uirtutes in ipſo inuenium. oīs q̄
eū fideliter querit. Quomodo. Quō
qui ipſi fideliter adherent. bi ui
rides et fructuoſi ab ipſo efficiunt.
ita q̄d optimos fructus in uirtutib;
affert. ſicut et ipſe ſuauis et mūs
exiſtens p̄cioſiſſima germina in
ſēnate et iuſticia attulit et ſibi
credentes ab omni ſorde infideli
tatis emundauit. ut in carneis
cartiq; de eo ſcriptū eſt.

xx.xv. Botrus cypri dilectus mīs mihi.
in uineis engaddi. Quid ē hoc.
filiuſ di qui me exule animā in
paſſione ſua ſaluat. in reſurrectio
ne etiā ſua midier. poculū uite
dat. Quomodo. Sic botrus cypri
fortiſſimā plenitudinē potatio
nis inſe continet. ſic etiā excellentia
que in unigenito di ē indeficientē
magnitudinē inſe habet. ita q̄d
idē filiuſ di numquā hoc modo ex
hauriet quin potū uite ſcientib;
dare poſſit. quō ipſe ſaluſ uite ē.
Nos enim qui priuſ in defectu fui
muſ. nunc in oſtenſione et inſcien
tia uere ſēſificationis bonq; opum
confortati puſū cibū uite manduca
muſ. in quo etiā dm ſcientes aduitā
ꝓgimuſ. cū in ueteri teſtamto q̄d q̄ſi
p umbrā plenū ſenſū n habuit. ſ. in
oſtenſione ſignificationis multā di
uerſitatē inſe tenuit. magnā fam
ſuſtinentes ad ſaluationē ſurgere
n ualuimuſ. Nunc ergo in ipſo ſatu
rati. etiā in illo ſalutare poculū bi
bimuſ. ſcilicet fideliter in uera fide
guſtando q̄ſ dc̄s ſit. quē exterioꝛib;
oculis mortalis carnis uidere non
poſſumuſ. ſ. quē ſpūali intelligen
tia intus habemuſ. ſicut et unum
fortiſſimū ſuā in uitis hominū
oſtendit. hoc tamen hominib; non
ſentientib; ſ. tamē ita ē intra ſe
ipſos. Et idō ſponſus animarū
botrus cypri ē. cuius fructus n defi
cit. Quomodo. Cecus ingreſſus
portū. requirit uiſū ſuū. Quom.
Qua homo claritatē fidei n ha
bens. cū ad fidē ꝓuenerit. ꝓ preſ
ſuraꝫ torcularis in rore ſanguinis
xpi unxit. Quomodo. Sicut ꝓ p̄
cepta illius. uitā in anima n̄ra ha
bemuſ. ita etiā in donatione illi
emundationē in carne n̄ra reci

pmus·q̄ nos nam in p̄uaricatio
ne ade mundi existimus·ſ; in
ſanguine ipſius ſc̄ificam̄· vnde
deſponſatio animar̄ de ipſo in
ſp̄u ſc̄o dicit· Dilectus m̄s qui cor-
di meo dulcis et amabilis existit·
fortissimū unū p̄ſanguinē ſuū
in plena ſc̄ificatione mihi ē·q̄a
du ſū in munda in plantatione
carnis·sicut uinea que adhuc in
culta iacet in ſpinis·ipſe fons sal
uatonis existens·peccatores a sor-
dib; suis mid̄ter ablutt·et in miſte
rio secretor̄ suor̄ gl̄osissime ſc̄ificat·
q̄o ut de corde patris suauiter
exiuit·sic et̄ in uno sanguinē
suū suauit̄ ostendit·et ut exuirgi
ne mirabiliter natus ē·ita et̄ ad
in pane corpus ei⁹ mirabiliter de
clarat̄·quia ipse bonus ē·qui nū
quā defectū in ullo detrimento
patit̄·Qua ꝓpter et sup altare
uelut in orc̄ulari ꝓuoluntat̄
patris calcat̄·quatinus homo q̄
ꝓsentet ipsū nullatenus subsistere
posset·ob fragilitatē debilitatis
sue n̄ deficiat·q̄m et sicut sangu
is hominis augmentū expetit ac
cipit·ita et̄ homo ſc̄ificatione
ex sanguine filii di habet·Et ut
ne sanguis hominis sine ritulo
potus inariditatē uertat̄ expetit
reficiendus ē·sic et̄ unū in con
secratione sanguinis ei⁹dē filii di
n̄ deficiet·ſ; sup altare in sacrām
to ei⁹dē misterii semp erit· Sed cc.xxv.
o tu homo acutissime sci as q̄d
in consecratione ista uino aqua int̄
esse debet·quia de latere filii tui
sanguis et aqua emanauit·ita q̄d
et in uno diuinitas ei⁹ intelligitur·
et q̄d in aqua humanitas ipsius
sentit̄·Et ideo q̄o in ipso diuinitas
et humanitas ipsius sentit̄·Et ideo
q̄o in ipso diuinitas et humanitas
ē·idcirco et̄ in consecratione
ista uino aqua inter·it·quia cū
unū diuinitatē ei⁹ designet·aqua
et̄ humanitatē ipsius ostendit·
que sine commixtione uirilis san
guinis pura et munda ē·q̄o ide
unigenitus m̄s fons aque uiue ex
istens·hominē in regeneratione sp̄s
et aque de ueteri culpa ade emun
dauit·et eos ad ecclesiā transtulit·
cū p̄salute eor̄ in mundū uenit·
q̄e admodū scriptū ē·

Ego quasi fluuius dorix·et sic̄ cxxv.
ductus aque exiui de paradyſo·Quid ē hoc·D̄s hominē rationa
litate firmans·et plurima mistica
dedit·cū spiraculū uite in eū mit
tens·illū rationalitate sublima
uit·Qui diu seductus in mortē ca
deret·ego filius di qui ipsū libe
rare ueni fluens in decore omniū
rigationū in fixe carnalis·et ema
nans in diffusione uere et indefi
cientis puritatis·exiui de secreto
supne amentalis·quatinus ho
mo qui exteriu suo peccat·mid̄
ter de p̄dtione eriperet̄·Quom̄·
ut innoxius sanguis innocentis
innocentie·manguistia de sua

85 v

damus passionis p eo effundebatur.
Quomodo. Inuans gressione ade
cū ipse de paradyso expulsus est.
sanguis ei depulsatione angustię
quia reus erat totus inundauit. et
sic mangustia illa liquefactus cū
sudore aquę p fusus ē. Et ita san
guis hominis. aqua p sudorē imi
ē. secunda ē. Vnde o homo cū unigen
tus di incarne angustiari cepit.
undecies q̄ndo p humano genere
pati uoluit. sanguis ei guttas su
doris emisit. ac deinde ipso incru
ce suspenso de uulnere lateris su
aqua cū sanguine emanauit. Et
idō in sacramento illo ubi misterū
ei de passionis celebrandū ē aqua
uino inter ē debet. quia et de

uulnere lateris eius de filii di
aqua et sanguis effluxē.
S; et in eo de sacrificio unū aque
sup habundabit. quia et sanguis
tabi sup at. sicut & lac sucū suū
q̄d seru ē excedit. Qui autē mi
steriū hoc celebrant. id ita p fici
ant que ad modū eis p monstra
tū ē. sicut etiā ibi homines ex.
hortant ubi inspiratione mea
p sapientiā alloquunt. ut scrip
xxxx.vj. tū est. Venite comedite panē
meū. et bibite unū q̄d miscui uo
bis. Quid ē hoc. Vos qui stultitiā
deponere uultis. uenite de igno xxxv.vj.
rantia illa qua din nescistis. et
de stupro illo p q̄d in exilium
missi estis. et redite in candidā
regionē uā. que p speculū fi

dei in fonte uitę missis aque uobis
p monstrata ē. et pia deuotione co
medite panē meū. que ut magnū
n̄ semnauit. et cui ita ut id uitate
non dedit. sed qui de dō exiuit.
atq; in eo p manet. Na ut panis
manducat. et ut ita conculcatur.
sic et filius di panis uitus filios
hominū p cellit. quia ipse filius
di in uirtute diuinitatis suę sta
bilis ē. et filii hominū in debilita
te carnis suę labiles s. filius cū di
corporaliter manens in mundo
mollitē liquoris peccati in carne
sua n̄ habuit. quo sicut ignis pa
nē excoquens arefacit. nec ei ullū
mollē humorē dimittit. ita et ide
unigenitus di de fortissimo igne
spūs sci conceptus. et de castissima uir
gine natus. sine ulla contagione
peccati in corpore suo fuit. Et ita
sicut panis hominē reficit. sic
etiā et fideles homines p eande
filiū di in fide nutritē. quia
ipse fortissimus fructus ē qui nū
quā deficeret. Vnde et uos fideles
hunc panē comedentes. bibite etiā
pura intentione unū hoc q̄d om
ni prorsus sorde caret. et q̄d in
hanc inanē uagationē n̄ uadit.
ubi corruptio mundiciā in no
centię absorbens. eā in uicentium
conuertit. Nam et secūm mo
dū illū primus homo mundus fu
it q̄ndo creatus ē. quo nulla di
uersitate erat. s; mundus in carne
et in sanguine suo fuit. Qui cū

ꝑuaricationē faceret illusus ē·ita q̄d
postea semp sanguinē suū infectorē
immundicię mechię sparsit·quia
sicut ide homo honorē innocen
tię abiecerat·ita etiā ex sanguis
ipsius sanguineū colorē suū ꝑdit
inhumana conceptione in liquo
rē pollutionis subuersus·in quo
etiā liquore ita sine formatione
ē quo usq; uerū sanguis appare
at·et ita sanguis ille formā aliā
accipiens post ortū suū indebi
tate iacet·usq; dū medulla et
plenitudinē formositatis suę in
ueniat·et usq; dū sentina in ipso
ꝑcussionē occultę suscitatio
nis excurgat·et tunc ita munda
caro et mundus sanguis deue
no expiatus appareat·quo usq;
eū noxius calor ꝑcutiat·qui ꝑ
cussione sua noxiā spumā in
mundicie excit·S; abbis omnib;
filius dī mundus exstitit·unde
licet mundā carnē et mundū
sanguinē habens·ita q̄d eū nū
quā tactus ullius noxii caloris
tetigit·s; insēificatione et hono
re uiuidissimę castitatis manens·
nulla contagione uiolari potuit·
Qui tamen in angustia passionis
positus·aquā in sanguine late
ris sui effudit·qua sanguis si
ne aqua effusione sua nō ē·s;
ita ꝑceptatus exitit·ut sanguis
aquā confortet·et ut aqua san
guinē deluiat· Q ua ꝓpt̄ et .xxx.my.
uos qui dīm deuote colere uul

tis·ita q̄d uerā salutē amatis sumi
te hoc poculū sēificationis·q̄d ita
tēperatum uobis·ut aspiratē ultio
nis inclemate remissionis nō sentatis·
quō et diuinitas et humanitas in
supno filio ē·penitus passionē de
morte liberati·et ꝑcuius corpus et
sanguinē uegetati societatē inēt
na mansione habeatis·S; ego qui
sū uiuū et finis·uerū dico tibi
o homo de nobili filio meo·qui flos
ē rosarū et liliū conuallium·natus
de castissima uirgine quę eū inin
tegritate sua genuit·qui partus
talis exiuit·q̄d ꝑ eū de iniquitate
priorū parentū humani generis
placatus sū·qui me in transgressio
ne sua ad indignationē ꝑuocauerit·
Vnde et eande partū semp inspi
cio·eū corpus et sanguinē filii mei
cotidie sup altare nomini meo ēse
gratū habeo·ita q̄d ꝑide sacram
tū tu homo sēificaris·eande carnē
manducans·et eande sanguinē
bibens· Nā cū ibi sacerdos officiū
suū exercet·sicut illi constituit ē·
uidelicet sacratissimis uerbis me
inuocans·tunc in eade potestate
ibi assū·qua et ibi adesū ubi uni
genitus mīs sine sensitate ullius
contagionis incarnatus ē·unde
et corpus eī purissimū et suauissi
mū in omni sēitate fuit·ita q̄d
et nunc carnē et sanguinē ipsius
fideliter suscipientes·tanta dulce
dine uiuificentē·q̄d nullū despe
tū abiectionis paciantē·sicut et

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.xxx.v.

incamico camuco⁊ scriptū est·

uis mihi dcr tc frm meū fugen
tē ubera matris mę·ut inuemā. xxx.vi.
tc foris et de osculer·ecia mc nemo
despiciat·Quid ē hoc·Cemuus et de
uocio mecclā posmx·certissima fide
dicit·Quis ē ille qui m miserrimo ho
mini merummis posito·mmissima
oblatione dcr tc sponsū ecclię·cū tc
fratrē meū ppter incarnationē
tuā nomino·sugemē midiam et
uermatē quę s nutrimta illa quib;
diuumtas homines nutrit·quę m
matcr·in ereatione mea ē·scilicet
cū educatione uegetationis utā m
dans·Quid ē hoc·Quia et nutrimta
ecclię plena s grā tua·cū et plenā
ubertatē insacramto corporis et
sanguinis tui tribuis·qui panis
uuus et fons aquę uuę es·Et hoc
ido facis·ut manifesta certitudine
inuemā te foris·scilicet cū scio te
filiū di mecliss·uidā tc cnā homi
nē umta·quē in diuumtate mor
tales oculi mei cernere ñ ualent·
tta ut cnā inuemā tc in pane et
uino diuum misterū·q̄d sacramtī
sine pondere deceptionis·et sine
anxietate fallacię ē·acdc inde hoc
modo de osculer·et·quo psalmc
mea incarnatus es·et quia cnā me
participē corporis et sanguinis
tui facis·quamuis p hoc inmun
dū pter me uenisti·et q̄d te ipsū
mihi tradidisti iā nulla ereatura
deincepss me despiciat·cū ipsa uo
luntatē tuā tibi subiecta semp se
quat·et cū ego p̄ceptus tuus rebellis
existens·ubi multo ciens commari
inuemar· Nunc ergo ut uides
o homo cū sacerdos his uerbis quę
sibi inspū scō scō consecrata s·obla
to sacrificio adaltare me ceperit
inuocare·am ubi dico quo inarden
te calore meo ibi assū·et pleno desi
derio idē sacramentū pficio·Quom·
quo ineffectu eide misterū ardentē
carnatē sup eandē oblationē ex
pando·uidelicet abmicio uerbo
sacerdotis me inuocantis·et hanc
memoriā facientis·q̄d filius mis in
angustia passionis sue panē et ui
nū benedicens·in sacratmo corpo
ris et sanguinis sui discipulis suis tra
didit·ut et ipsi idē psalutc ppli fa
cerent·Vere dico uobis·quia num
quā inuocauo ista sup huimodi
oblationē in recordationē eide
umigenti mea erit nisi misterū
corporis et sanguinis ei ibi pficia
tur·q̄d carnalis oculus quādiu ei
nis ē uidere ñ poterit·nisi infide
illud humili deuotione pspiciat·
Quomodo·Cū alis ouīb sibi unm
dū suū poni uiderit ardentē sup
illud uolat·et calore suo illud fo
uens pullū educit·ita q̄d tecta ou
remanet·et q̄d pullus ille euolat·
Quid ē hoc·Ego omps cū oblato
panis et uini sup altare nomm
meo dedicatū in memoria filu
mei oblata fuerit·cā mirabiliter
uirtute et gra mea illustrans·in
corpus et sanguinē eide unige

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nm mei transfundo. Quomodo. Ip
so miraculo quo idē filius mīs carnē
ex virgine suscepit. ipsa cuā obla
tio hēc in consecratione ista caro &
sanguis ei efficit. S; panis et uinū
ibi exteriorib; oculis uisibiliter
cernit. ~~imus autē substās corporis~~
~~et sanguinis eidē filii mei inuisibi~~
~~liter~~ maner cernit. imus autē substās
corporis et sanguinis eidē filii
mei inuisibiliter manet. Quom. Cū
filius mīs apud homines erat in
mundo. apud me manens in celo.
apud homines cuā manet imāta.
S; hoc spīale et nō carnale est.

Sic et ego pater omn creature. xxx.vij.
assū. a nulla abstrahens me
uelut tu homo ab ea te subtrahis.
scilicet ut cū maquā uides faciēs
tua quidē mea appareat. S; tamen
ea nullas uires tuas in illa exerce
re uales. et cū te ab ea auertis. am
plius illa nō appares. Ego autē
huiusmodi mutabilitate nō appa
reo creature. S; assū ei uera ei ostēn
sione. nec ab ea potestatē meā sub
traho. S; in ea fortitudinē uolun
tatis mee sedm qd in placuerit
exerceo. Vnde etiā in sacramēto
corporis et sanguinis filii mei
maiestatē meā ueracit demonstro.
ut delicet ab inicio secretoꝝ uerboꝝ
sacerdotis usq; dū ide misterii
applo perpiatur. miracula mea
ibi mirabiliter exercens. Sed et. xxxviij.
hoc sacerdotale officiū a prima
hora diei usq; ad nonā horā ipsi?
a fidelib; exerceri potest. sedm qd
necessitas tēporis in morib; homi
nū inuenerit quō et ada inmane
surgens ad horā nonā seductus ē.
et quia etiā passio filii mei inter
pusculo diei inchoata. ad horā
nonā consūmata dinoscit. ita
qd in cruce moriens exspirauit
et morte sua mortē uulnerauit. su
perauit. ubi et eccla eidē unige
nito meo assistens. dotē suā ibi
suscepit. qd et nunc a filiis eidē
eccle celebrandū. Hoc autē idē xxxv.
officiū a sacerdotib; in sacrificio
in mandate uentis. et nō impleni
tudine ei pagendū ē. ne coagu
lato escarū spīale desiderium
eu acuet. quō prius ēē debet spī
talis epulatio. et postea carnalis
refectio. et qa etiā sps honoran
dus ē. et caro refocilanda. Nam
hoc sacramentū spīali desiderio
et nō carnali cupiditate accipi
endū ē. et ido in iciunio et non
in epulis percipi debet. nisi inne
cessitate illa si homo in hac opi
nione posit ē. qd de mundo
transiturus sit. S; filius mīs circa
finē diei corpus et sanguinē
suū discipulis suis dedit. qm eis
uerū manducandū ēē. et qua etiā in consūmatione
scli morte in hominib; tēpora
liter transeunte electis sicut sol
in regno meo fulgebunt.

Et hoc modo idē unigenitus xl.
mīs in resurrectione sua

demonstrauit animas iustoꝝ ab
inferno se abstrahere et genus
humanū in restauratione cū
uit se reducere quā rep̄bi an
geli p̄diderāt. mortē sine sug
gestione alterius appetentes. na
q̄d a nullo alio insidiatore q̄m
a semetipsis seducti s. cū nec gu
stū peccati in semetipsis habe
uerint homo infragilitate corpo
ris sui habet. Vnde et homo quā
ab insidiante seductus ē fragili
tatē corporis habens. a sublevan
te ea ad unā reductus ē. et dia
bolus corporalē grauedinē non
habens. impugnatā sua relicꝝ
est. S; et homini uera et salubris
refectio in p̄cepione corporis
et sanguinis filii mei data ē. q̄a
nus p̄ hoc sacramentū in nobis
uer' manima refocillamus surgat.
et inuisibili aduersario suo uiri
uer' resistat. Qui autē ide
sacramentū in maiore aut in
minore q̄ntate p̄cipiunt sic in
telligant. quia et ille qui plus et
ille qui minus accepit. unā eam
deq; um p̄cepert. q̄m hoc sacra
mentū n̄ in quantitate s; in fide
te ē. et p̄cipientes secūm fidē ipsoꝝ
saluat. ut de manna sic scriptū ē.
xl.y. Et cū mensi ē gomor. Nec qui plus
pl'alius collegerat habuit amplius. nec
qui minus paraverat reppit mi
nus. s; singuli iuxta id q̄d edere

potuerant congregauerāt. Quid ē
hoc. Supnū sacramentū iuxta
id q̄d edere potuerant congrega
uerāt. Quid ē hoc. Supnū sacram
tū iuxta id q̄d eis p̄ceptū ē. ameñ
dum filii dei hominis. qui dim ar-
denter uidere desiderant et col
ligunt illud in cordib; suis secūm
doctrinā principalium magistroꝝ
suoꝝ. et secūm id q̄d abeis didicerāt
seruantē illud in manib; suis. alī
plus deuotionis in secreto cordis
sui habens. Vnde et cū eſtimatio
ne sua meritū secūm id q̄d in
animab; suis senserunt. discernen
tes fidē quā in dīm habent. nec
eā dubitantes. s; ipsā integrā ha
bentes. et q̄ntā et quali deuotio
ne corpus et sanguinē redempto
ris sui p̄cipiant considerantes.
S; idē sacramentū n̄ q̄ntitate huic
sanctus qui plus exeo sūpserit. p̄cepit. e illi
s; secūm fidē suā qui illud p̄cipit plus q̄ntus q̄ illi
ta et eū illuminabit. Qua p̄p̄ē
o homo in magnitudine p̄cipi
endū n̄ ē. quia forassimus dꝫ
tā in parua quā in magna ob
latione huī misterii ē. et ideo
qui illud p̄cipiunt solū hoc at
tendant. q̄d q̄ unū et unū dīm
firma et integra fide in corde
suo habeant. et sic quisq; fide
li sincero et recto corde secūm
id q̄d possibilitas fidei in ipso
exposcit uires animę suę con
gregent. cauens ne alterius aut p
funditus diuinitatē scrutetur

quā sensu aut cogitatione sua ca
pere potest·ſ;sobrie ut inspū scō
edoctus ē amori dñi subiectus sit·
quō homo paup cinis est· Sed xl.my.
uos oſtulu homines nolite dubi
tare an sacramentū istud q̄d hoc
modo uobis demonstrauī ē·cor-
pus et sanguis filii mei sit·Recor-
damini ergo·unde adę carnē et
sanguinē creauerim·Videlicet
de limo tūrę·Quid ergo uobis u
detur·Ñ possibiliuis ē m̄ de ob
latione ista facere carnē et san
guinē filii mei·an de limo tūrę fa
cere hominē·Ş;uir sem̄ de san
guine suo fundit·et femina sus
cipit illud· et q̄d tunc amplius
addunt·Ñihil omnino·aut in
creatione aut in carne infanti
li·Quis ergo formatt hominē in
carne et inossib;ac in medullis et
in pulchra facie sua·nisi ego pa
ter omniū·Ş;pater et mater ñ
habent ullā potestatē facere aut
creare infantulū·nisi q̄d tantū
in ardentis libidine sanguinē
suū excernunt·et postea nullā
potestatē in eo formandi ha
bent·Ñū uidere potestis quom̄
hęc fiant·nisi q̄d ea cernitis in
formis suis·Tu autē o homo di
cis·Ego ñ uideo hanc oblationē
carnē et sanguinē·ut hominē
corpus et sanguinē cē credo·
Ad q̄d tibi respondebo·Vos ui
distis filiū meū in corpore et in
sanguine mortale unita·q̄ nunc
immortalis in cęlo ē·et ideo cor-
poralib;oculis eū modo uidere
ñ potestis·nec eius quomodo ca
ro et sanguis ei⁹ in altari conse
cretur·q̄d sacramentū ppter
glām sacerdotis ibi ñ sit·ſ;ppt̄
glām eiⁱde unigeniti mei qui
hoc officiū cū discipulis suis in
cęna sua pegit·Ş;ut me inclari
tate mea quādiu mortales estis
uidere ñ ualeatis·sic eius nec car
nē nec sanguinē filii mei carna
lib;oculis uris carnaliter uide
tis·secim id q̄d ea quę inuisibilia
s pspicere ñ potestis·ſ;secim hoc
quod mortalis obtutus ur·ea quę
uisibilia s uisibiliter capere ualet·
Hoc autē ide sacramentū in xl.my.
trib;causis mihi offerendū
est·Quomodo·ſ;in pane et uino
et aqua·ob honorē trinitatis·
Vnde si de his trib;aliquid de
fuerit·tunc ibi trinitas ueraciter
ñ colitur·quō enim intelligit
pater·in pane filius·et in aqua
spūs sēs·ita qui unū sine pane et
sine aqua offert·patrē colit·ſ;fi
liū et spūm sēm negat·aut qui
panē sine uino et sine aqua
dat filiū habet·ſ;patrē et spūm
sēm abicit·aut qui aqua sine
uino et sine pane utitur·spūm
sēm attendit·ſ;patrē et filiū re
cusat·aut qui unū et panē si
ne aqua dat·patrē et filiū ha
bet·ſ;spūm sēm abicit·aut qui
unū et aquā sine pane offert

88v

patrē et spm scm colit ſ; filiū ne
gat· aut qui pane et aqua sine
uino unum· filiū et spm scm ad
tendit· ſ; patrē recusat· Ergo in .xl. vj.
hoc sacramto diuisio nō fiat· qa
et ego indiuiduus manens in
trib; psonis unus dꝰ inseparabi
lis sū· sicut et cogitatio uolun
tas et opus inu no homine s·
sine quib; homo nō ē· Quod
si unusto sacrificio defectus fue
rit· tta q̄d ibi aut panis aut
unū aut aqua negligent· uere
tunc ille excuuus neglectu hoc
euenit grauu undicte subiace
bit· Nā si hoc scienter p negli
gentiā reporis· seu infidelmer
p dubietatē incredulitatis actū
est· illū qui huic rei tanu subia
cet ab oculis meis eciā· nisi ipse
grauu penitencia ad se reuer
sus semetipsū p hoc grauiter
penitendo puniat· uel si hoc
ignoranter p negligentiā obli
uionis euenit tunc ille qui in
hoc reus ē· de hac culpa sua in
correctione penitentie m re
sponsurus ē· quo acute n̄ pspec
it si hec oīa adessent que ad .xl.vij.
sacrificiū meū pertinebant· Cū
enim filius m̄s in cruce pepen
dit· ibi nichil saluationis de
fuit· quia p effusū sanguinē
suū saluationē animarū ho
minib; attulit· unde nec in
hoc misterio quicquā de eē
debet· Nā sacramentū hoc
sacratissima sēificatio in omni
sētate ē· & p̄ pcepta caro ista et
sanguis iste omī fide & deuotio
ne accipiendus ē· Quicūq;
autē hanc sacratissimā carnē
accipit· et sanguinē eiꝺē miste
rii sumere nō recusat· quo idē
filius m̄s sup oīa ē mundus·
et speculū inuertib;· ac ideo
nobilissimus sanguis eiꝺē acci
piendus· nisi p simplicitatē ac
cipientis sacerdos iumeat pcu
lum effusionis· et tunc illi ac
cepturo fiat sedm simplicitatē
infirmū· quib; esca panis con
cedit· et potus uni denegatur·
Ita et isti hec sacro sca caro tri
buatur· et fluens sanguis sub
trahat· ne maius pculū exinde
oriat· et quia etiā illa sacro sca
caro sanguinē suo et sanguis il
le carni sue muna sētate con
unctus ē· Qꝺ si homo ille huiꝰ
discretionis ē· q̄d angustiā ha
beret idē misterii custodire· tunc
cū et illa sca caro adcomedendū
datur· tunc et sanguis eiusdē
carnis ipsi adpotandū tribuat·
Sacerdos autē qui hoc sa
cramentū celebrat· dili
genter his indumtis quib; an
tiqui patres edoct pspm scm
adidē officiū indui constituc
runt uestimis sc· et a cumissime
uerba illa que idē spūs scūs eis
dē patrib;· adcelebrationē eiꝺē
dē misterii inspirauit adtem

dat· sollicit cauens ne quicquā ex
his omittat deuotissime cuā in
spiciens ne exemplū hoc transeen
dat· ubi filius mīs panē et calicē
accepit et discipulis suis adcome
dendū et adbibendū dedit· S; q̄
mundum̄ mus aut inuerbis adidē
officiū punctīb; quicquā pne
gligentiā obliuionis ignoranter
delinquerit· grauī et salubri pen
tencia corripiendus ē· s; tam̄ miam
meā quetens inueniet· quia trans
gressionē istā n̄ in uoluntate· aut
in malicia cordis sui p̄petrauit·
Qui uero id sciens et· aut p̄pter ē
uoluntatis sue· aut p̄ nequicia cor
dis sui· in eis dē sacrament̄ trans
gressus fuerit· hunc offensus dicā·

Sc̄e neq̄ cur· n̄ cras sacerdo· vel vng·
tali uestim̄to recte indutus·
ut inspū sco ubi instituerit· atq̄
principales magistri sui insigni
ficatione spīalis officii· ut mihi
semp̄ ministret· angli mei· et cur
uā neglectu modū uerboꝝ illoꝝ
que ubi in eode spū sco tradiderit
idē pat̄ris sui in consecratione
corporis et sanguinis filii mei· ad
salutē et adgīam generis huma
ni· Unde qui in hoc reatu culpabi
lis ē inde mihi responsurus ē· si n̄
grauī afflictione penitendo se
met ipsū puniert·

Sed sacer· vel gr·
dos qui epulas · istas adaltare
meū offert· inde ieunus his epu
lis n̄ recedat· s; refectionē anime
sue in corpore et in sanguine fi
lii mei p̄capiat· Q̄d si nouit graui
oris; oneris; se grauatū· et his
epulis indignū· tunc n̄ p̄sumat
ad mensā meā accedere· nec illoꝝ
affectet· et ummū suoꝝ filiū meū
tangere· uel illi et mensā et glām
nam̄tatis sue communicet·

qui capit · lucernas lucerne
et crudelit̄ abscidet· Qua p̄pter
et iste qui ita contaminatus ē ua
rietatē pestis sue sūmo sacerdoti
scilicet filio meo offendat· et eā
corā alio mortali sacerdote se ac
cuset· qui sibi remediū consolatio
nis cū penitencia demonstret· et
sic demū ad officiū suū purificatus
accedat·

Sed ego pat̄ omniū
secretā dispositionē sacratissimi col
loqui· p̄ q̄d me sacerdos adaltare
inuocare debet· in multis et in
magnis sermonib; esse nolo· s; in
recta ordinatione p̄ioꝝ magistro
rū quos dominus sci spūs in recta ad
monitione me inuocare edocuit·
et hoc in multiplicitate stultę sa
pientie ee n̄ debet· s; in simplicitate
cordis· qui in multa collocutione
n̄ delector· s; in puritate cordis il
lorū qui me deuote quer̄t· et qui
me in ardore cartatis benigne
amplectunt̄· Alias enim electis
meis cū me quer̄t grām meā sedm
ueracissimā dominē donoꝝ spūs sci impen
do· in hoc autē sacramento me to
tū ipsis ostendo· et spūs sc̄s in nobis·
et in ipso nos· et unū in diuinita
te sumus· sicut et corpus· et aīa

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et unus illius unus unus homo ē
Unde qui ad hoc sacramentū ac
cedit cauear ut ita ueniat ne
gḡam dnm nram offendat.
L.14. Sed tu o homo dū ceteri hom
nes ad percipiendū ide sacram
tū ad sacerdotē accedunt quinq;
modos mos consi derasq; qua
lli qui perceptionē diuini mysteri
i a sacerdote suo accipe deside
rant quinq; sensus corporis sui
a fece peccatoꝝ suoꝝ emundent et
eos a subripiente immundicia dig
ne et laudabiliter custodiant ut
tanto salubrius ide percipiant.
L.15. Qua pter ita ex his qui ad ide
sacramentū ut uides accedunt
alii in corpore lucidi et anima
ignea s. quo ipsi claritatē fidei
ad ide sacramēti habentes ñ du
bitant quin uerū corpus et uerus
sanguis filii mei sit. et ideo dū il
lud hac fide percipiunt in carne
sua uegetant et sēificant. ita ut
p hoc misterii sēificati post resur
rectionē in eode corpore suo ap
pareant in celo. atq; anima sua
igneo dono spūs sci transfundant
et accendant quatinus hac illu
stratione prefusi ītrena respuant.
et celestia desiderent. Quomodo.
Quia ut ante ignis adincen
dū excitat. sic et iste p sacram
tū istud ut in supno amore ar
deant in buuntur. L.115. Sed alii
in corpore pallidi et anima
tenebrosi uidentur. qui tepidi in
fide firmā fidē ad ide sacramentū
ñ habent. s. stulti s sapientiā in
telligere uelint. puer cuius opa
infantia s. Nā foris audiunt
auris audiunt. et intus dnante cor
dis sui percipiunt ea que ipsis de
eode sacramēto dicunt. ita q̄d illa
libenter in fide p fecte conphen
dere nt. s. tam p dubietate que in
ipsis ē ñ possunt uinci q̄m sci
tas nullo sit. Unde et inuteriore
homine tenebris circūdari s. quo
mentē suā sursū ad pfectionē illā
eleuare ñ ualent. quia ipsi in pec
catis concepti p pondere corpo
ralis fragilitatis ad pfectionē ere
dulitatis illius grauet s. spūm ta
men plus consentiente. ita q̄d fi
de libenter intelligerent. si p tepo
re cordis sui possent. Qui enī ma
loribus oneribus peccatoꝝ inopib; su
is ñ dū s grauari hos quātus ue
lut inuitos spūm consentire opor
tet. quo anima maiore potestatē
adhuc habens. ita q̄d ñ dū in pec
catis inuterupta ē. corpus uolun
tati suę subiect. Nā hęc s certami
na quę s inter corpus et animā.
qua anima corpori unit dnāri.
quo ipsi contrariū ē q̄d caro in
concupiscentia sua habet. q̄d pec
catū ē. et corpus dedignatur in
firmitatē quę in desiderio animę ē.
qua ipsa ui tā diligit. Quid ē
hoc. Q̄d mortuū ē mortuū appe
tit. et q̄d uiuit. uiuentē diligit.
Quomodo. Caro amat peccatū

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et anima diligit iustitiā: et in hoc
sibi aduersant: et raro sibi consen
tiunt. S; ut puer sine labore et si
ne intellectu sensus suu pascit: et
saturat: ita et iste homines hoc sa
cramento quasi pignoramina u
uificant: quo illud nec prabie nec
p communia dedignant: S; tan
ti simplici animo amplectunt:
uida uero in corpore hirsuti .l.iiij.
et in anima multa immundi
cia humane pollutionis p fusi sor-
dent: quo ipsi in carne sua turpes
et impudici sine pudore existentes:
et stercore uicios; se polluentes: ut
porcus luto se inuoluunt: hoc modo
animā suā diuersa sorde peccatoꝝ
humane contagionis inficiendo
contaminant: Et cū ipsi in his u
cus sordentes ad sacramentū cor-
poris et sanguinis filii mi ita illo
ti accedere nō uerent grauu exami
natione, phac p̄sumptione sua
emundandi s; in qua tam purga
tione mi diam meā esse nō denego:
qua in nīb; eoꝝ digna penitencia
assurgere p̄uideo. Alii aut in .l.v.
corpore acutissimis spinis circum
dant: et in anima lepsi apparent:
qua in corde suo ira odio et inui
dia circūdant. lenitate dulcedine
et caritate his spinis inimicos a se
expellunt: unde ita mala appe
tentes: et bona deserentes aliq; in
irrisione ceteros homines comu
nia affectantes animā suā ue
lut pessimis ulceribus immundā
reddunt. Qui cū hoc modo addi
unū misterū accedunt: semet
ipsos grauiter ledunt: S; tamen
oculos meos adeos conuerto: cū se
in amaritudine pulsantes grām
meā petendo post modū quer-
uida uero in corpore sangui- .l.vj.
ne et in anima uelut pu
uridu cadauer fendi uidentur:
quo ipsi cruenta manu diuisio
nē in hominib; facientes: animā
suā quasi putrescente tabe cru
delissime puer sanatis feruda red
dunt: qua in amore meo in inspici
entes hoc q̄d in homine constitui
sua crudelitate destruunt: Vnde
si ipsi hac contaminatione com
quinari corpus et sanguinē filii
mei p̄cipere nō uerent semetipsos
grauu lesione deiciunt: quo ita
illoru sacramentū hoc contingere
p̄sumunt: S; tam fons saluationis
eos postmodū pertransibit: si dig
na penitencia semetipsos ab hac
nequicia sua lauare studuerint.
Sed ex his omnib; dū quida ea .l.vij.
de sacramenta p̄cipiunt: alii
uelut igneo splendore p fundun
tur: alii uero uelut obscura nube
obtenebrant: qua dū credentes
admisterū corporis et sangui
nis filii mei accedere satagunt:
tunc hi qui illud deuota mente
et pura fide in bonis opib; ful
gentes p̄cipiunt: dono spūs scī ita
ad salutē corporis quā animę
sue illustrant: et hi qui illud

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contrario corde et uacillanti am
mo inpuerisiacib; torpentis su
mum obscurnatē psūptuē inse
uerans addentimentū sin et ex
terius et interius sibimetipsis in
ducunt quō huic scīam temere
se commungere illoꝝ psūpserit Nā
homo qui tā rebellis et contumax
est qđ nō timet se polluere aut sim
plici formicatione mulieribus
ppter corporis sui tactu et delecta
tione aut se contaminare duplici
formicatione educens semen suū
cū uiro aut cū muliere aut se di
laniare ira odio et inuidia cū ce
teris hominib; aut se cruciare
homicidio sibi inoccursantib; et
ita illoꝝ et incorrectus temere
psumit accedere ad corpus et ad
sanguinē filii mei sine purga
one confessionis et sine penitentia
correctionis ista scienter et inuel
ligenter iudicialē ignē exculpa
sua ingredit Quomodo Debac
psūptione et peccato suo ut au
rū in fornace examinabit ita
qđ nullus pulus humus psūpto
nis in eo relinquet quia pollutus
et incorrectus ad cōmunionē in
nocentis agni accessit Qui enim
ita illotus ut p̄dicti ē ad sēificam
onē corporis et sanguinis filii
mei accesserit et ita sacramentū
illud sūpserit adiudicū sibi hoc
sumit Quomodo Sicut paulus
amantissimus mīs dicit I taq;
quicūq; manducauerit panē
L.vij.

uel biberit calicē dñi indigne re
us erit corporis et sanguinis dñi
Probet autē se ipsū homo et sic
de pane illo edat et de calice bi
bat Qui enim manducat et bibit
indigne iudicū sibi manducat
et bibit nō diiudicans corpus dñi
ldō inter uos multi infirmi et in
berilles et dormiunt multi Quid ē
hoc dicere dico uobis qui comede
rit panē uite uel qui sūpserit po
culū salutis qđ sacramentū illius
est qui dñs ecclie et ure ē ita qđ hoc in
digne tractat uidelicet sordens in
peccatis in hoc culpā suā semet
Quomodo Quia corpus et sanguinē
dñi sui idē saluatoris mundi mor
dacter et moribunde accipit cū
pnus admalū et pollutus immun
dicia et oblitus timoris dñi ē ita
contaminatus palacui salutifere
receptionis aggredient Vnde et
homicidiū ibi facit Quomodo Quo
modo multis uulneribus semetipsū di
laniat cū sine detersione et sine
lauatione penitentie crimina sua
celans sacramentū hoc temere trac
tat Qua ppter ego illi dico Omi
serrime et amarissime quomodo
audebas in lacū tante miserie
dñm tuū mittere quē semp desi
derant celestes cuncti inspicere Vn
de amara penitencia in corpore
et in anima tua examinaberis ita
ut si reatū tuū nō correxeris post
resurrectionē mortuoꝝ correptio
ista uite inuenias Et ideo fideli

inspectione pbet se ipsū ille qui
bic punitor suū cū uoluerit. et sic
hac deuotione consideramonis
suę de pane illo sūmam accipiat
et de poculo illo suauissimę gu
stet. ut ma ad indeficientē refec
tionē puenies. esurię debilitan
tis animę effugiat. Nā qui hoc
sacramentū male tractauerit.
ma q̄d a sorde iniquitatis se ñ
purgans illud indigne sūpserit.
iudiciū ultionis sibi imponit.
quia illud inpurgatus mandu
cat et bibit. ñ tamen in hac p̄sūp
tione sua ledere aut obfuscare
idē misteriū p̄ualeat. ſ. se ipsū
damnans. Et quia inuicus sor
descit ma ad sacramentū hoc ac
cedere p̄sumpsit. ido s̄ inuic⁹ con
sortio multu infirmi. scilicet illi
qui insānie ista medicinā aię
querere nolunt. ſ. qui sibimet
ipsis amarissimā infirmitatē in
esse sacramēti imponunt. quo
ea sibi adiudiciū sumunt. Et eā
multu imbecilles. ut decet illi q̄
in lege di ma debiles s̄. q̄d nullo
modo inspicere uolunt. q̄s iste
sit quē tā indigne suscipiunt.
Quid ē hoc. Qua nolunt consi
derare quomodo dn̄m suū time
re et uereari debeant. aut quo
modo amara penitentia carnē
suā puniant. quā ma inuicus ene
trēt. S. quo ma negligentes s̄.
id circo eā inobliuione huius
negligentię obdormiunt multi

nesciunt. nec scire uolentes quo
modo peccata sua deflere debe
ant. uidelicet homo cū indormito
ne somni ē. nec intelligit q̄d uel
quomodo in corpore suo sit. Vn
de tu o homo cū nec in confessio
nib; nec in penitentia pte pur
gatus. corpus et sanguinē filii
mei illotus accipis. tunc imitemi
da exquisitione de hac p̄sūptu
one sordis peccatoꝝ tuoꝝ ma ex
aminaberis. ut et mustū de in
mundicia illa quā in se habet
purgat. cū eā in feruore suo de
se ecit. I dē quoq; sacramentū
tanta diligentia et sollicitudi
ne a sacerdote et appto tractan
dū et custodiendū ē. ne aquo
quā ma negligat. ut sup̄ tam
neglectū piciatur. quia si p̄ tor
porē neglectū sup̄ tam cecide
rit. comitantia illā p̄ helū meū
aut uitra. aut in homine ulcus
cor. nisi ipse homo penitentia.
et amaris uerberib; puniat se.
quo caro et sanguis carnē et san
guinē restituere debent. Quom.
caro et sanguis hominis in hoīe
lugebunt. q̄d caro et sanguis
filii mei negligent ab homine
tractata s̄. sicut et tunc tā tre
munt. et ut homines immemore
concussi s̄ cū idē filius m̄s meru
erit posmus spm tradidit. S ed
si tu homo immutabilitate cor
dis tui. intra te ipso dixeris quo
modo oblatio ista inaltari cor-

pus et sanguis filii mei efficiat.
tunc & ego tibi respondebo. Cur
hoc homo inuogas. et quare
hec scrutaris. Nū hec a me requi.
Quid scrutaris secreta mea de
corpore et sanguine filii mei.
Nec ista a me requirenda s. sed
tamū in magno timore et cuene
ratione ea suscipiens. diligēt
custodi. et amplius de hoc mi
sterio noli hesitare. Nā me tam
temere ñ debes tēptare. Et q̄d
hec a me. Sincerissima fide re
quire me. Cū enim tota fidē tua
inspexero. tunc ñ quero aut
quid sit corpus et sanguis filii
mei. uel quomodo misterium
hoc in altari consecretē. Et quis.
querit te homo inigme. ardo
rē ignis ñ sentiens. Nullus. Sic
nec tu in secretis meis temere te
quire me. ne inde lędaris. Q̄d
si ea cū deuotione animi tui
querere uolueris. tunc ea mora
tione et fletu & cenumo diligen
ter quere. sicut et antiqui pa
tres tui illa certissime quesierē.
et multo cicius eis reuelata s. Cui q;
illa hoc modo scrutatus fueris
et ea inueneris. tunc q̄d reliqu
um ē spū scō dabis. S; qui ad
sacramenta hec accedunt ñ p
deuia s; p rectā uiā ueniant.
ne abeas pręcū magnū casū
runę paciant. Quom.

Lx.j. Nam pessimus deceptor qui
sine electione et sine conse
cratione principalis unchonis ca
thedrā pastoralis officii fallacit
sibi usurpauerit. et nequissim⁹
raptor. qui pastore suū expellēs
p sibilos sibi consentientiū cathe
drā et uolenter inuaserit. isti
aut p semetipsos sua uoluntate
grauiū undicte subiacebunt.
aut p hoc meū grauē sentenciā
inde sustinebunt. q̄a in pessima
amaritudine mihi sunt. illū
inimicos qui in semetipso maxi
honorē habere uolens. ab omni
gla felicitatis immortē derectus
est. et quia cū baal. subsequunt.
qui mihi ma illusit q̄d se dm fal.
lacter nominans in dissipatione
damus ē. Et si in hac puersitate men
dacii. et p sūptionis sue sacros or
dines meos dare se simulauerint.
tunc illi qui abeas hoc modo pos
inficiunt. quā dominantē ma in
conspectu meo compatiant. uelut
hu applō derisui habent. q̄s puc
ri inocis et in ludis suis sibi io cu
lares psonas constituunt. S; ut
hoc in hominib; uanum ē. ita et
istud apud me uacuū ē q̄d hui
modi inuasores in decepcione sua
se facere similant. Vnde quia edi
ficatio eox praua ē. pbatur. stare
ñ potest. q̄m casura ē. et ideo si in
templo meo quicquā in sacris
ordinib; edificare uisi s. delendū
est. quia iusticiā ñ habens frmolū
ē dinoscit. Ergo ab hac temeritā
te sua resipiscant. ne impetus con

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sortes illius fiant· quidū plus que
rere quā deberet ababtmidine in
pfundnatē missus ē S; et ille lama
uit· qui unchonē sacerdotalis of
ficii nō habens pinsamā mentis sue
ita furiose adaltare meū accedit·
uidit illusor sim sicut et ipse loqu
lauit ē· hic mensā nomini meo con
secratā temere tangens· uidelicet
sacrā oblationē offerre uolens qd
sin officii nō ē filiū meū duro cruci
atu uulnerare nūquā· Quomodo·
Ut incredulus sua incredulitate
dim muadat· et ut uesanus sua ra
bie mignē currat· sic iste me dm
nescientē· nec ardentē ignē me senti
ens tumorē meū abiect· nec mansue
tudinē meā diligit· S; filiū meū uul
nerat· cū ñ unctis labijs sermonē il
lum laniat· quē idē unigenitus
mis sponse sue contulit· cū ei corp⁹
et sanguinē suū indotē dedit· Un
de huic tam temere cū muadenti
dicit· Quis tangit filiū meū· tam
contumax· et ñ unctus· S; iste qui
hoc modo adaltare meū accedit·
quotiens filiū meū p̄dicto secreto
sermone inuocare p̄sumit· totiens
cū uulnerare contendit· ñ qd cū
ita ullo dolore cruciet· S; quia cū
tā p̄sūptuose tangere nūquā· Qui
si in hoc contēptu sine penitentia
p̄manserit· inter illos inpenis sta
bit· qui filiū meū sine causa cru
ciantes uulnerauerūt· Qua ppter
ne hec tormenta sentiat· lamentatio
nē afflictionis sibi assumat· ita
tamen ne amodo ad ministeriū
altaris mei accedere p̄sumat· Cete
ri autē qui sub sacerdote mi ser ui
tio ecclastici officii ministrare
contendunt· caueant ne sine mo
do iusticie eide mīsterio apppi
are p̄sumant· ne si rectitudinē
illā sibi fallaciter usurpauerint·
tunc informes et in polita inuenti·
de constructione ecclastice edifi
cationis iusto iudicio eiciantur·
Volo enim ut ministri mei sine dolo et sine
sorde inconspectu meo mundi
appareant· Quomodo· Ut recta
electione adaltare meū accedat·
et tunc eua ibi sine immundicia
mihi assistant· Quomodo·
Ne adsclarē copulationē re
spiciant· quia spīrale elegē
runt· Quomodo· Qua seruitutē
meā adierūt· S; si quis eox ardenti
ubidine carnis sue urit· corpus
suū abstinentia et ieiunio mace
ret· atq; se frigore et flagellis ca
stiget· Qd si tandē inpollutione
mulieris labit· tunc contamina
tionē illā uelut ardentē ignē et
ut mortiferū uenenū fugiat· atq;
amara penitencia uulnera sua
detergat· quo uolo ut mihi in
castitate seruiat· Quom̄· Qua et
filius mis castissimus erat· qui et
hos om̄s ecclasticos ordines in semet
ipso demonstrabat· Quomodo·
Videlicet obsequendo· clamando·
p̄dicando· et offerendo· Quom̄·
Quo et circūcisio cū suo obsequio

·Ezech.

ungit·et ꝑphetia cū suo clamore
demonstrauit·ac ipse ꝑ semetipsū
hominib; ꝑdicauit·et tandē unū
sacrificiū mira et crucis se obtulit·
et quia ipse semetipsū in casti mam
holocaustū dedit·sic et illi casti
tatē ei' immittit·qui et adalbare
holocaustū offerre conant·Qui
tamen ñ solū castitatē malūt te
nebunt·s; et semetipsis cā con
seruabunt·Quomodo·ījt sacer·
dos a contagione mulieris se cu
stodire debet·sic etiā a se ipso se
commeat·scilicet cauens ne tactv
manuū suarū pollutionē de se
educat·ita ne strepitus lybidi
nis ipso crimiose tumultuet·
Nā crimen ade hominib; mortē
inferens ipsis sensus fornicati
onis excitauit·et ideō carnē suā
homines constringant·ne casib;
mortis ruinet·subiaceant·
Quom·Quia filius ms mortē
suspauit·et ipsis uitā dedit·Qui
quō in integritate uirginalis ·lx·v·
pudicicie carnē assūpsit·ideir·
co et castis debent·qui ipsi
famulari desiderant·ut excel
lentio ꝑcepto scriptum est·

·lx·iij· Estote parati in die tertiū·
ne apprinquetis uxoribus
uris·Quid ē hoc·Quia dō singu
lariter seruire uultis·estote
cū uolumate cordis uri parati
ut in die serenitatis illius ubi
sca et ineffabilis ut mitas uera
et ꝑ apparetis mirabilia sua
in magno miraculo demonstrat·
et ideō si ibi dō digne apppiare
uultis·cauete ne carnali affec
tu uos coniungatis carnalib; co
pulis·id est ne sanguinē urm
sanguini fragilioris estimatio
nis cōmisceatis·Qd uos o sacer do
tes et ceteri mei ministri qui sub
spīali nomine militatis cauere
debetis·quia etiā nec apli quos
sub secum estis se inuicem sa
luti debant·nec uobis tale exem
plū relinquebant· Nolo enī
ut duę copulę scilicet spīalis
et carnalis studii in sacerdotib;
sint·quō sacerdos iustitiā dī si
bi copulabit ita ut uxor ei' sit·
cū qua ceteros ꝑplos enutriet
et docebit·ut pater filios suos
educare et docere solet·et quom
apīi ētt ut sacerdos duas copu
las in recta mensura exerceret·
que sibi inuicem sunt contra
rie s·Quom·ūna carnalis·et al·
tera spīalis· Et cū sacerdos
pastor·et pater illoꝝ hominū
sit·qui carnale coniugiū ha
bent·et si tunc ipse idē equali
modo possideret·quis tunc ip
sius ee deberet·Nullū alium sacer·
dos habere posset·q ipsi ꝑ·et·
quia ceteri sacerdotes oms mi
nistri unius officii s quā diabo
lus q sacerdos illius ee deberet·
qm et cū unitatis fuisset·ueri
tū sub melle absondens·Quom·
Quō ut diabolus malū subbo

no abscondit·ita cuā huiʒmodi
sacerdotes qui ut̄ pruidinē suā
magis sequunt̄·quā castitatē di
ligant·carnalē copulationē sub
spūali coniugio quasi uenenum
sub melle eclare nitunt̄·S;quia si
luus mīs totus incastitate ē·ido
cuā et hu castitatē amare debent·
qui corpus et sanguinē ei⁹ inha
ri tangunt·quēadmodū scriptū ē·

Sacerdos scortū et uile pthibitū ·lx.vj·
nō ducet uxorē·nec eā quę repu
diata ē amarito·quia consecratus
ē dō suo et panes ppositionis offert·
quid ē hoc·Ille qui ad hoc posit⁹
est ut sacrificiū dō offerat inuisi
cuā diaboli quę oīi spurticie et
nequicie teneus inquinatus cōmu
nis ē nō diligat·nec cuā sensus su
os ita ultra deiciat·ut cū iugū
meū ferre uult·uolumatē carnis
suę contra iustitiā di·et contra ex
empla antiquoꝝ scoꝝ ut̄ pīt̄ am
plectendo sequat̄·ne et ita inmun
diciā illā quę repudiata ē ab eis
de antiquis patribus suis cū ei
de flatu antiqui serpen
tis ē cognoscerent·in cōmune
uosis actib⁹ pficiat·Has ergo sor
des ipse deserens·amator iustitie
dī sit·q̄m insūitate consecratus
dō suo ē·ut delicet a carnalib⁹ con
cupiscentiis inopib⁹ nascentiū fili
orū abstractus·unde ita sobrius
et inpollutus existens·panē illū
qui psalute hominū immensa
consecrationis ponit̄ offerre po
test·Quid ē hoc·Scilicet quia sa
cerdotiū illud q̄d ē uita uiuentiū
et refectio animarū·speculiq;
omniū uirtutū·quę pscām imno
centiā informa castitatis pspicue
s abomni sorde mundissimū ē·
qua ppt̄ et illi qui de sacrificiū
oblationis s·sine spurticia pollu
tionū ee debent·Sic etiā coniu
ges ab copulatione et ebrieta
te·a ioco et risu·atq; a leuibus
et inc̄positis moribus·s; sint in
reuerentia illa ut successorib⁹
antiquoꝝ patrū de quib⁹ plan
tatis s conuenit et indignitate
illa·ut honorabiles patronos
decet·Et etiā ita uiuant ne sint
duplices in duab⁹ psonis·idē ne
simul inscelari et in spūali uia
ambulent·quia difficile ē duob⁹
dnis simul famulari·ut etiā filii
mīs in euglio testatur dicens·

Nemo potest duob⁹ dnis seruire·Quid ē hoc·Nullus qui ·lx·vij·
mortalē tunicā induitus ē·ualet
pūenerituidine sensus et corpo
ris sui duob⁹ dnis pariter et eq̄li
obsequio seruitū exhibe·Quid
ē hoc·Quia nō potest dno recti
tudinis·et dno iniustitie simul
famulari·Quare·Quo rectitudo
iniustitiā abiciat·et iniustitia
rectitudinē impugnat·Sic etiā
sacerdos nō potest simul et pari
deuotione habere ancillā et
dnam·uidelicet carnalē copu
lam·et spūalē consortiū qa

hec duo unpfectione simul cē nō
ualent·quō illud q̄d carnale ē·
unpugnat hoc q̄d spūale ē·&
spūale deprimit·illud q̄d car
nale ē·Q̄d et paulus amicus mīs ·lx·ix·
cognoscens·illud na cē inuolun
tate mea demonstrat cū dicit·
·lx·viij· Oportet ergo epm irrepben
sibilē cē·unū uxoris uirū·
Quid ē hoc·Necesse ē utiste qui
cēteris hominib;·in officio spūalis
magisterii pmineat·na una suā
confundat·ne scandalū offensio
nis et repbensionis in eo inueniat·
Quom·Q̄ua sacerdos duas pso
nas habere nō debet·na ut simul
marit⁹ carnalis uxoris et uir⁹
spūalis coniugis sit·s; unius uxo
ris uir⁹ scilicet eccl̄e inscīatur et
que unica in filio meo ē·quō
una eccl̄a in ipso surrexit·
Sed hec quā uis una sit tamen
plurimos mar⁹ habet·
quia cū sacerdotib; filii mei q̄
comedit in officio ipsius s nup
tias pagit·uirgo tam̄ integri
tate sua pmanens·quō in ipsa
fides incorrupta ē·Qua pp̄ter
et idē paulus uas meū nō dixit·
ut hec uxor⁹ unius mar⁹ cēt·
quia sacerdotib; illis qui usq;
ad nouissimū diē in eode ui
gentio meo surgunt connuncta
est·usq; dū eā nupt̄e ille ue
niat·que numquā ulla mor⁹
talitatis instabilitate deficiet·S; et illi qui sub sacer⁹

dotib; inseruiūt altaris mei pxi
me ministrant et de uxoris ma
rīs s·quēadmodū idē paulus
fidele doctrinā hominib;·pme p̄
bens locutus ē dicens· Diaconi
sint unius uxoris uir·qui filios
bene p̄sint et suis domib;·Quid ē
hoc·Isti qui sui uiri amant obse
quio sacerdotib;·assistunt·sint
unius uxoris fidei communione
mariti·Et quę ē uxor⁹ illa·ipsi de
licet castissima sponsa quę nulla
corruptione ledi potest uelut
mulier⁹ illa corrūpitur·quę flori
ditatē et innocentiā suā p dit
quā initio desponsationis suę
habet·cū adhuc cū sponso suo in
corrupta manet·Vnde et isti de
sponsatores cū hac uxore instituit
tam fidelit̄ conuersentur·ut ebis q̄
adiutorio ex unspū et aqua re
generati s·bona exempla uiri tui⁹
p̄beant·et ut cū officio suo q̄d
ad munimen eccl̄astice mansio
nis p̄tinet·fideli sollicitudine in
sudent·uelut sc̄aris homo si
bi⁹ suis et domui suę om
nē de uotionē peregrinationis suę
innotuit·Sponsā cū ista ostendit
paulus amicus mīs sacerdotib; et
ceteris ministris altaris mei·qua
unus illā sibi in uxorē eligere cupit·
et carnale coniugē nō appetere·
Nā nec idē paulus nec ceteri disci
puli filii mei·nec reliqui patres
scilicet ex sequaces·hoc exemplū·
p̄semetipsos illis dabant ut car⁹

·lx·viij·

·lx·ix·

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nalē commigē accipiant·et illā dese
rant quā sibi prius in spīrale uxo
rē elegerant·Sacerdos enī qui tā
contumax in peccato ē ut mulie
rē sedm uoluntatē carnis sue illi
cite accipiat·adultero rū ppē at·
quā recta uxorē suā·idē ecclām
que sibi spīrali officio desponsa
ta erat deserat·et aliā sedm libitū
mentis sue impudice ducat·S; quā
uis sibi difficile sit ut in hoc ardo
re se constringat·tam ppē supnū
amorē a concupiscentiis istis se
communeat·ut ena filius mis meuglo
ostendit dicens· Sunt enī enu ·lxx·
chi qui de matris utero sic nati s·
et sunt enuchi qui facti s abhomi
nib;·et s enuchi qui se ipsos castra
uerūt ppē regnū celoꝝ·Qui potest
capē capiat·Quid ē hoc·Quō s ali
qui homines·qui de matrno ute
ro ita egressi s qđ pfrigidnate
uel imbecillitate corporis sui con
iuges habere ñ possunt·unde pp
ter hanc communitatē suā imbeci
litē mercedis ñ accipient nisi qđ
solū de ope illius peccati penas ñ
sustinebunt·qa de peccato qđ ñ
ppetrauerūt penas ñ habebunt·
et sunt alii hoīes·qui puoluntatē
aliquoꝝ hominū ita in corpore
suo debilitati s·qđ uoluptatē
carnis sue in hoc coniugali ope
exercere ñ ualent·s;·et ipsi ita se
communites gram laudis inde ñ
merent·qm quātus hoc opus in
cendū pficere ñ possint·tam in
uoluntate sua multociens ardorē sur
pruidmis habent·et sunt alii hoīes
scilicet spīrale unā aggredientes q
sibi metipsis hoc subtrahunt qđ fa
cile cū corpore suo pficere possent·
quō ppter gram supne hereditatis
carnale copulā contēpnunt·nec eā
habere uolunt·et idō maximā lau
dē cū mercedē beate remuneratio
nis indē habebunt·Qua ppē et cos
sacerdotes mei et omīs ad officiū al
taris mei puenientes plenissima uo
luntate sua imitari debent·quatin
coronā commenitē cū maximo ui
pudio supni gaudii pcipiant·Et
idō quicūq; in uoluntate cordis
sui potest hoc exemplū capere·ita qđ
pleno desiderio beatitudinis corpꝰ
suū ualet superare et concupiscentias carnalis abicere·iste cū ardentis
sima deuotione capiat celeste con
sortiū imitatione carnis sue car
nalē copulā fidelit relinquens·
Qui aut se ñ ualet continere ·lxxi·
quin in uoluntate carnis
sue ardeat·hic nec ppē psonā sup
bie·nec ppē appetitū diuiciarū sa
cerdos aut alius minister sacerdo
talis graduſ fiat·ne si postea in di
lectione carnis sue·ceciderit mag
nū detrimentū sui seminat·Nā ipsi
corpus suū a contagione feminarū
continebunt·qui ad ministeriū
altaris mei accedere solent·nec
qualibet occasione matrimonia
coniugia sibi copulabunt·s;·et
sua uoluntate et seruitiū mei rec

94v

lxxiij.

mudine se castx: commendum: alio
quin sem seruicū mutari meo
utare debem: Quodda seruicū
quāus quib; dā hominib; qui se
prius sclō subiugauerant aliqn
do concessū fuisse reperiam: tam
milbi apparuisse cernā qui amc
susceptū: cū nō potuit susceptū ide
seruicū meū carnali iugo se sub
posuerant: ita tamen q̄d eodē iu
go abeā postmodū abscisso dem
de mipsis spūs scī p̄conia laudis in
mirabilib; suis opamur ē: cū hoc
in primordio surgentis eccle, ppt
paucitatē sacerdotū immiracu
lo concessū sit: ſ; nunc ipsa ad
ulta et bene confortata ministris
ei multiplicans: iuxta id q̄d eccla
stica censura de eadē causa
ostendit p̄cauendū ē: sedm hoc
exemplū qm̄ ex mundo nascen
tis mundi masculis feminas de
prima stirpe sua ducere obsa
rmatē hominū concessū ē: q̄d
tamen nunc ipsis dilatamus phi
bendū ē: quia cuā informes et
impolitu lapides infundamentū
edificiu poni solent: cui tamen
postea pulchri et bene cōpositi
lapides immuro parietū ei exq̄
rantur: ita cuā ex imfamia ec
clesie sacerdotes sedm q̄d tunc
inuenirī poterant inofficiū il
lud posit s: ſ; modo inspūali
pplō plenus numerus illoc rep
perirur: qui ad sacerdotale offi
cū apti s: nta q̄d sclārī onere ux-

lxxiij.

ne copulationis occupati ñ sunt:
q̄m ñ expedit ut pat̄ familias q̄
p̄ceptū insclārī coniugio susceptū
nuncius mis in sacerdotio uocet.
Unde audi similitudinē hanc.
Rex quida multa formudine
positus: paruū exercitū con
gregauerat: Quē cū diligenter
intuitus ex rude eū ad exercitū
laboris uidens: ecce quenda ho
minē cū quib; dā alius uidelicet
communis plebis: tollens: quos ido
neos p̄cutatione p̄spexit: eos de ex
ercitu p̄fecit: quia excellens ger
men horum nobilitatis ñdū matu
rauerat: S; cū deinde ide exercitū
iā augmentū sui cepisset: et cū
iā meo nobiles adulti fuissent:
rex ille q̄dq; uis meo de exercitu
bene ordinate dispositis: ac
duces et p̄sides ex nobiliorib; illis
ei sedm quāq; iusticiā p̄fecit: Q̄d
est hoc: Rex celestis cui fortitu
do sup omīs ē: inplanatione ec
clesie modicū adhuc agm̄ credentium
coadunauerat: Q̄d acutissima ex
quisitione pserutans: infirmū
et debile illud adhuc ad susten
tandū corporales passiones pe
nomine considerauit: et ita petrū
qui unus ex ipso existens: prius
mūtens a clib; conuersatus fue
rat: atq; post eū quosda alios q̄
etiā aliquando sucū ure gustaue
rant a sorde terporaliū rerū ar
denter emundans: qm̄ eos saga
ces et fideles ad curā animarū

et adsustemationē corporū impla
tionē sua cē pnouit·fidē catho
licā amplectentes·in officio distric
tionis et relaxationis pculit·qa
rutilans aurora mardore castita
tis humana contagia excurens·in
diu flores suę dulcedinis in hōib;
late diffuderat·S;iā multitudine
ecclāstica germinis p̄ cucumis to
tius mundi late dissemmata et
glā ecclāstica honoris iā nobilit̄
confortata·ide rex sup̄nus tam
sclāria q̄m spūalia dona homi
nib; benignissima et decentissi
ma dispositione inspirauit·atq;
sacerdotes et ceteros ministros di
uinorū officiq; sobrietate et ca
stitate suā ecclāstico uiri secdm iu
stitiā dī honestissime conseruan
tes instituit·Vnde o homo q̄a iā
inter spūales hoies multi exoru
sunt·qui contra sclm et contra
diabolū militare laborant et q̄
incastitate et constrictione cor
poris sui adaltare meū accedere
festinant·uolo ut sacerdotes mei
sine contagione ut̄pice copulę
in conspectu meo appareant·Nā
cū in ueteri testamēto sacerdoti-
p̄ceptū sit·ut cū adaltare meū
accederent se a contagione mu
lierū continerent hoc tm̄ in
nouo testamēto sacerdoti-bus mei
ad plenā p̄fectionē p̄ducti ē·
ita ut q̄d illi ueteres quasi una
hora incastitate cauebant·hoc
ipsi noui ab initio puericię suę
usq; ad finē senectutis suę cōple
ant·Et cū de ueteri-b;-sacrificiū
in coniunctione mulieris pollu
tū suscipe uoluit·multo magis
modo de nouis sacerdoti-b;-filiū
meū in castitatis officio tractari
uolo· In equisquā immaturus et in- lxxiiij.
et inconsecratus ecclām susciat·
nec etiā plures ecclās appetere
p̄sumat·ne si in etate puericię
aut sine consecratione sacerdo
talis officii ecclām suscipe p̄sūp
serit·uel unā habentes etiam
plures sibi subiugare tēptauerit·p̄uaricator iustitie in hoc
existens·grauissime districho
nis iudicio discutiat·uelut ille
qui ante legitimū tempus uel
sine legitima desponsatione for-
nicari nūmet·uel legitimā uxo
rē habens se polluere cū alius in
aduterio festinat· Sed et de ·lxxv·
omni pplō·qui ē in xp̄iano noīe
sacerdotes sapientis ingenii et u
rilis animi eligendi s̄·ita tam
in recto ordine et iusta unctione
atq; uoluntario animo adseru
tutē meā ueniant·Hoc tamen ee
ñ debet·ut hi ad officiū altaris
mei accedant·qui maligno mem
brorū suoꝝ debilitatem claudicant·
quia nec etiā in regno eloꝝ ulla
macula diuersoꝝ uulneꝝ in
animab; hominū appareb-
et ideō nolo ut altari meo assi
stant·qui maligno membroꝝ
suoꝝ destitutum s̄·S;quāuis ipsi

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incorporib; suis debiles sint tam
phac destinonc membroꝝ suoꝝ
a regno celoꝝ n̄ separabunt̄. si tam
sanctaꝫ animaꝝ suaꝝ habent̄
ta si impuritate bonoꝝ op̄ū me
quer̄t. Nolo tam ut ministerio al
taris mei fungant̄. s; ut efficaciā
bonoꝝ op̄ū humiliter operamur.
lxxvi. Sic etiā nec femine adidē offi
ciū altaris mei debent acce
dere. quō ipse infirmū et debile
habitaculū s̄. ad hoc posset ut
filios pariant. et eos pariendo
diligenter enutriant. S; femina
n̄ p̄ semetipsā s; de uiro infamē
concipit. sicut nec ita p̄ semetip
sam. s; p agricolā arat̄. Qua p̄p̄
ut ita semetipsā arare n̄ potest.
ita nec femina in officio consecra
tionis corporis et sanguinis filii
mei sacerdoti cōparanda ē. quā
uis in laude creatoris sui sonare
possit. ut et ita adiutrigationē
fructuū plumā suscipit. et ut
ita omnē fructū p̄fert. ita etiā
et in femina omissis fructibus bonī
op̄is p̄ficit̄. Quom̄. Qua sūmū
sacerdotē sponsū accipe potest.
Quom̄. Ipsa ergo desponsata filio
meo sponsū eū accepit. q̄m cor
pus suū carnali uiro conclusit.
et ideo in sponso suo sacerdotiū
et omne misteriū altaris mei ha
bet. atq; omissa diuicias ipsius cū
eo possidet. S; et uidua eidē filii
mei sponsa potest apellari. quę
carnalē uirū reuicit. subalas
pectionis ei fugit. et ut sponsus
sponsā suā ualde diligit. sic etiā
filius mī sponsas suas dulcissime
amplectitur. quę adeū amore
castitatis sollicite curritur.
lxxvii. Sed et mulierū ut femineo
uestitu induat̄. nec femina
uirili habitu utatur. quatinus
hoc modo utraq; p̄sona discer
natur. scilicet ut uir uirile for
titudinē in se demonstret. et ut
femina femineā infirmitatē in
se ostendat. q̄n hoc abiicio hu
mani generis ita indispositione
mea ē. nisi aut uir impiculo mor
tis. aut femina impiculo castitatis
sit. tunc si ad horā illā aut uir
sedim feminā aut femina sedim
uirū uestitū suū humiliter in
timore mortis mutauerint. eū
micliam meā de hoc facto suo
quesierint eā inuenient. quia
illud n̄ intemperantia s; impicu
lo salutis sue fecerit. et quō fe
mina uirili habitu uesturi n̄
debent. ideo etiā ad officiū altā
ris mei n̄ accedet. quia uirile
p̄sonā nec in capillis. nec in ue
stitu suo demonstrabit.
lxxviii. Si aut̄ ad altare meū acce
dunt in castitate in con
spectu meo appareant. et n̄
solū ista s; et ceteri q̄ sacramentū
corporis et sanguinis filii mei
p̄cipe desiderant. ne se ipsos in
casū ruine mittant. S; multa ita
inter spinales quā int̄ sectas

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inuenium. qui se nō solū informi
catione mulierū pollunt. ſ; etiā
incontrarietate fornicationis se
contaminantes. grauissimū onus
districti iudicii sibi inponunt.
Quom. ijſ. qui secdm modū femi
ne cū alio uiro peccauerit. amare
contra dm peccat. et contra con
iunctionē illā qua dꝫ masculū
et femina coniunxit. Vnde etiā
ambo corā do pollunt. nigri. aq;
luxuriosi. horribiles. ac molestu
do et hominib;. et ira mortis ap
parent. qa contra creatorē suū
creaturā quę in ipsis ē destruunt.
Quom. ijſ. uirū et femina coniunx.
scilicet hoc q̄d forte ex infirmū
erat simul copulaunt. quatinus
alterū ab altero sustentari ualeat.
S; et isti contrarii adulterii. cū u
rile fortitudinē suā in mollicie
contrarietatis transferūt. recta in
stitutionē maris et femine abici
unt. satanan in puericiam sua
turpissime subsequunt. qui illū
in diuiduus ē scindere et diuide
re in superbia sua uolunt. Nā ipsi
alienū et contrariū adulteriū in
pueris artib; suis in semetipsis
constituunt. et ido in conspectu
meo pollui et contumelioſi ap
parent. Qui aut eodē modo in
hac contraria fornicatione pec
cauerit cū muliere uoracissim
lupus uirgula pueritiae sua est.
Quom. Nā ut homo ille contrarii
et molestus et hominib; qui pul
cherrimas et mundissimas epulas ha
bens eas abiceret. et stercus q̄d indi
gestione hōis egredit comederet.
ita etiā et iſti indigni et immundi
corā me ſ. quō recta institutionē
coniunctionis in muliere deserunt.
et alienā p̄uaricationē inea quer.
S; et femina quę has diabolicas ar
tes rapit. q̄d se uirili officio cū al
tera femina coniugari simulat.
uilissima in conspectu meo appa
ret. simul et illa quę se huic intā
contumelioso facinore subiect.
quia cū uerecundiā ad passionē
suā habere deberent. alienū uir
sibi impudice usurpauerūt. Et q̄n
mexuanei modū se transmuta
uerunt. idcirco transpositi et con
trarii mihi ſ. lui quoq; mares
qui cū tactu p̄pucii sui semē suū
educunt magnū casū animę suę
inponunt. quia in hac inquietu
dine se omino concutiunt. et
ido uelut immunda animalia
quę catulos suos deuorant. corā
me apparent. quō semen suū p
uerse excutientes illud ad con
tumeliosā pollutionē deducunt.
Quos et femine impudico tactu
immanes. cū incentiuo ardo
re ardentis libidinis in constric
tione corporis sui semetipsas fa
tigant ualde culpabiles exinde
sunt. quia cū incastitate se con
tinere deberent se immundicia
pollunt. Vnde tā femine quā ui
ri qui p̄prio tactu corpo

ris sm sem suū de se exc̄uunt· in
hac sorde sua ulceꝛib; et uulneꝛib;
semetipsos inanimab; suis inficiunt·
cū ꝓpter amorē meū inofficio casti
tatis se constringere noluerunt·
Quid ē hoc· Quia cū homo stimu
lū carnis suę se pungere senserit·
incauerna cōmittę curratur et
seruū castratus ap̄hendat· aug;
ita se ab inmundicia defendat·
Quomodo· Libama de cruce eiu
at· id ē strepitū libidinis a suau
itate castratus separet· Vnde quis
quis gustū libidinis sic a se pecce
rit· ualde dulcis et amabilis m̄ est·
s; uos o hoīes castitatē abicitis et li
bidinē amatis· cū ea n̄ solū for ni
catores hominū· s; ~~ea fornicatio~~
~~res hominū~~· s; ea fornicatores pec-ꝯ-yr.
corū estis· ita q̄d sem̄ ur̄m n̄ inul
lud q̄d uiuit· s; illud q̄d mortu
um ē mittitis· et q̄d consortē ur̄i
deserit is· et illud· q̄d uobis in seru
itute subiectū ē appetitis· Qua ꝓpt̄
clamant sup uos elementa dicentia·
Heu heu n̄ri dn̄atores miscent se
nobis· in cōmixtione seminis sui·
et ita de indignatione mea in opi
bus ur̄is q̄stitia ā se habere demon
strant· Cur· g̃ intelligibile intel-ꝯ-yr.
lectū ur̄m in pecuale stultitiam
uertitis· cui serui uos homines ē·
Numq̄d creatu uos aduncturā
peccorū· Nequaquā· et quo illis
uos coiungitis· idcirco amarissi
ma consortia nefandoꝝ criminū
cadent super uos· quia in stratio

nē meā inmundicia maris et femine
contēpnitis· Nā quisquis in aliꝗ·
suis se ita transmutat· q̄d hoc facit
q̄d facere concupiscit ut delicet
q̄d se ita destruit· q̄d sem̄ suū cū
pectore effundit· hic maximā rui
nā sibi inducit· ut enā sathanas se
metipsū ꝓaduersitatē suā deiecit·
cū similis ꝺo ē uoluit· Qua ꝓpter
uos om̄s qui ꝓuerso usu inuer-
sis huiusmodi pollutionib; uos
contaminatis· concupiscentię ure
resistere· et corpora ura castigan
tes amarissimā et ueram penitentiā
cū planctu magno et eiulatu ac
macerationē carnis ure atq; cū
duris uerberib; facite· ne incestu
lum et crudelissimi reatus uos in
penitentes mittatis· Non solū
autē uolo ut hoīes a uigilante
inmundicia se emundent· s; ut
etiā a pollutione illa quę ipsis
dormientib; occurrere se digne
purgent· Nā si dormiens homi
ni cōmotio seminis in somnio sub
repserit· nolo ut ita ardente
calore illo ad sacramentū officii
altaris mei accedat· quo usq; ar-
dor ille meo sedeat· ut scriptū ē·
Si fuerit inter uos homo qui
nocturno pollutus sit som
nio egredietur extra castra· et n̄ re
uertetur prius quā ad uesperā
lauet aqua· et post solis occasū
regrediet in castra· Quid ē hoc·
Si ē inter uos qui seruitio meo
insudatis homo· qui p̄ nocte

pollumur· in somnio dormiomis
sue· separet se de congregatione
sēnis illius· que adaliare meū p
uinet· ita ut se ministerio illi con
iungere ñ p̄sumat· ame quā ab
eius noxio calore illo emun
detur· lauacro penitencie in con
fessione et cōpunctione cordis
de incendio libidinis sue· et ut
penitencia illa que cor· ipsius
ita illustrauerat· pacta· redeat
in amore· castimus· ad illos qui
se fideliter· ab immundicia pol
lutionis defendunt· et sacrā
tū illud q̄d uotū in sēnate· ē dig
ne et honorifice· adeat·

Sed ·lxxx·j·

homo ille qui tā dormiendo
qua uigilando fortiter· in libi
dine ardet· caueat ne ardori
suo incendiū subministret· Quo
modo· Scilicet· escis illis que si
bi sucū libidinis offerunt se ñ
inflamet· ſ; a carnib;· illis que
sine regimine nude de marib;
suis idē de pecorib;· egresse s
humiliter· abstineat· quia imp
sis feruor· ardoris ē· qui tamus
non ē meā ne uoluerū que sine
regimine ñ egredit· ſ; cū regimi
ne reste· nascit· Vnde eiā mi
incendiū in ipsa ē· S; et abinmo
derato uino se abstineat· ne in
supfluitate potatio· uene ipsius
noxio sanguine repleti· mar
dore incendii turpit· incalescāt·

Siquis autē in supfluitate cay
sarū istarū laborat· sibimet

ipsi resistere pse ñ ualens· deuotis
sima intentione me querat· ac
uulnera cordis sui humillima de
uotione mihi demonstret· Quo
modo· Videlicet· humili confes
sione corā· sacerdote· ea mi aplia·
et cur· hoc· Quia uera
confessio· sed· resurrectio· est·
Quom· Incasu ueteris ade
hum· anū· grauis occasū ē· q̄d
nouus ad· ā immortē sua excita
uit· Qua pp̄ter· et in morte eius de
nou ade resurrectio animarū
exorta ē· ita q̄d peccata homo sua
confiteri debet· q̄d uetus ad· ā ñ
fecit cū p̄uaricatione· sua magis
obtexit· qua· ea confessus sit· Q̄modo·
Quia ea non ē confessus penitē
do· ſ; ea obtexit femina accusan
do· Vnde et confessio posita ē· ut
post qua· homines ceciderunt· de ca
su suo p̄ea· erigant· et ideo quicūq;
pura confessione sacerdoti in
amore meo peccata sua confes
sus fuerit· de morte aduna· re
surgit· in ea· illa de morte erep
ta ē· que in conuiuio corā· filio
meo cū lacrimabili penitentia
de sordib;· suis se purgauit·

·lxxx·ij·

Quod remediū purgationis·
et mamu quis patrib;· diu
p̄figurauit ē· Quom· Na· ame le
ge· patriarche et pphe consola
tio hominū erant· et sublege
pontifices et sacerdotes· erudi
uo ipsos fuerit· cū deinde ap̄li
uenientes uera· iustitia· in· filio

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meo amulerē·ma q̄d multi hoīes
eis accurrentes ad uotū eox de
uote implorauerē·Et ma abadā
usq; ad aplm̄ aplox semp hu
iam·qui p̄ supnā inspiratione
consolatione et instructione sua
miser⁹ hominum
subuenichat·S;et
ut aplī hominib; sua p̄dica
tione et multis miraculis ostēn
debant·homo qui diabolica
suasione in morte cecidē ps
num quā erigi potuit·p filiū
meū a morte eripuis ē·Quom̄·
quo cū in mundo ēet multos
labores in corpore suo p̄ferens·
demq; p̄ceptione mundi in
cruce posuis ē·Istud fideles ho-
mines p̄ salute sua cū sacerdo
tib; suis imitari debent·Quom̄·
Aduocatū filii mei querent q̄a
cū post baptisma uetus crimen
ade timuerūt·de casu suo ps
metipsos surgere ñ ualent·Et
ido uelut a patriarchis et pphe
tis consiliū querent·et uelut a
pontificib; et sacerdotib; eruditi
onē capient·et tunc uelut ab
aplis auxiliū accipient·ubi pec
cata sua denudantes uulneribus su-
is nuda et pura manifestatione
ne fideliter demonstrabunt·
Quomodo·Peccata sua sacerdo
ti qui minister eccl̄ē filii mei ē·
deuotissimo corde et ore confi
tebunt·Et tunc sacerdos ille re
me diū eis impenitentia ip
sorū conferentes·ma peccata eox in
morte eccl̄ē unigenti mei sepe-
lier·S;illi demde hoc modo ad
uitā resurgentes·resurrectionē
eiā filii mei glificabunt·Qui
autē uulnera peccatox suox denu
dare recusat·S;tacens p semetip
sū sine sublevatione alterius ea
curare cōptat·sedm q̄d tunc cor-
sui uelle p̄bat·seipsū decipit·qa
sibimetipsi sacerdos unlt ēe·qua
p̄pter et sine aduocato alterius
surgere ñ ualet·q̄m nec homo p
semetipsū in saluatione erectus
ē·S;p filiū meū saluatus ē·Unde
qui saluari desiderat·nec in fine
uitę suę peccata sua confiteri de
speret·Quod siq̄s in hora mor-
tis suę posuis remedia uulnerū
peccatox suox querit·S;tam̄ sacer-
dotē cui peccata sua confitatur
habere ñ potuit·tunc alu hoī
quē eo tē̄pore oportunū habet
ea manifestet·uel sitā repente
nullū hominē habere potuit·ea m̄
cordā elem̄osis cū quib; eiā illa p̄pe
tranunt·extremo affectu cordis
sui apiat·Et ego deuotionē cor-
dis ei⁹ audens·penitentiā ei⁹ ñ ab
icio·Qua p̄pter nemo de pon
deribus iniquitatis suę desperet·
q̄m si de media nocte desperet·
ad uitā ñ resurget·Qui autē cū
desperatione certauerit·et tande
ea ad nihilū deduxerit hic se li
berauit·qua fortis existens uin
cere uoluit·S;qui remediū salutis

suę ꝓmorē meam suę nequitę
huic succurendū nē ē qm dū me m
uenire posset me querere recusa
uit. Ergo dū homo tēpus habet se
ipsū nō negligat ſ; refectionē purę
confessionis querat. ut cū filius
mīs lepso pcepit meretrici dicens
Ade et ostende te sacerdoti. et offer munus tuū qđ pcepit
moyses in testimonium illis. Quid ē
hoc. Tu qui in peccatis sordes cū te
abeas emundare desideras. uade
bona intentione et ostende illa pu
ra confessione sacerdoti qui minis
ter mīs ē. et offer devoto corde mu
nus uere penitentię qđ exuoluntā
te di pfigurauit ille qui de multis
mundationib; ut enę inquit ꝓdi
uinā potentiā sublatis erat. ut te
stificentē illi qui te prius inmalis
actib; uiderant sordidisse. qđ nunc
in amaritudine penitentię abeas
uelut in camino examinationis
purgatus sis. Quę ꝓpter o homo si
peccator facta sua in abscondo cor
dis sui occultaret. quis tunc peni
tencię illius testis assisteret. Nullus.
Unde homo peccata sua manifestet.
quatenus penitencię suę testē ha
beat. Sed q̄ penitentia peccatorum
suorum ꝓficere desiderat. elemosinā
sibi in adiutorium assumat. Quoniam
Quia cū corpus hominis ꝓinbecil
litatē suā in labore penitentię de
fecerit. elemosinā sibi in adiuto
rium accurrat. Et quīo difficile est
homini. ut aspe et sedm qđ iustus

est peniterat. ido mittē sibi elemo
sinā assumat. quatenus cū ea ꝓfici
at. qđ corpori suo laboriosū ē.
Nā quēadmodū mater necessita
ti filii sui subuenire non cessat.
quātus ille iā enutritus cē in
dcat. ita et elemosina venetu
dini corporis impenitentia hōis
succurrit. quātus idē homo in ma
cerationē corporis sui penitendo
foris apparat. Intrā mala opa
que homo in corpore suo ꝓcon cu
piscentiā carnis suę ꝓpetrauit.
illa et in se ipso corporaliter punit.
quatenus opus illud qđ carni suę
carū et dulce fuerat. ꝓamaritu
dinē penitentię fideliter abeo
abstergat. qm in amaritudo peni
tentię mortifera uulnera peccato
rum ad iustitię elemosinā in hōib;
sanare debet. Quoniam. Qui elemosi
na in diam meā designat. Quoniam
cū fidelis homo pauperib; cū sub
stantia sua ꝓpter amorē meū sub
uenit. pcepta mea custodit. qa
indigentib; in diam suā ꝓpter
honorē nominis mei impendit.
sicut et ego impuritatē cordis sui
me querentib; gratiam meā nō sub
traho. Qui autē hoc modo in re
fectione elemosinarū pauperib;
motu in diē succurrit valde in
amabilis ē. qm uiscera in diē ha
bet. hoc implens qđ scriptū est.
Pone thesaurū tuū in pcepto
altissimi. et ꝓderit tibi elemo
sina magis quā aurū. Quid ē hoc.

Qa ē homo sē
stigatōē. ꝑh
git se q; ꝓ elemo
sinā reficiat. Qm

Ecclesiastici. xxix.

Ecclesiastici. xxxv.

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lusta ⁊ recta consideracione tol
le de materia peccamine tue que
in sinu tuo ⁊ in amplexione cor
dis tui ē diuidens ca secdm pcep
ta illi qui sup oms ē. quia dς
mandauit ut a malo declines
⁊ bonū facias. ⁊ ido in pcordis
tuis pbona uoluntate tua hoc
modo habundare debes. ne de
pdms oub; sis. s; scifica te ame
dim in refectione deficientib; de
tua substantia tribuens. quo
et tunc dς midiam suā in tuis
miseriis sup te habebit. Qd si hoc
feceris tunc maiore ualentie ubi
confert compassio hec quā sup
illū habes. qui nullū thesaurū
possidet. quā si sup magnū mon
tē ascendens. multā pecuniā au
ri in superbia tua haberes. Quom
Deus enim ē ubi ut modicū
pusillis in humilitate des. quā
regnū mundi in magna uolup
tate habeas. quia tunc midia
in remuneratione di obpondus
superbie tue ubi dcit. qm ibi
uiscera cōpassionis sup paupē
n̄ haberes. Vnde et elemosina la
cus uoluptatū hominū s. et mo
res eoꝝ ostendunt. Quom. Quia
undicta di illis peccatis; sup
inducunt. ⁊ ido o homo mam
tate naufragamus auaricie de
sere. qa iustissima hereditas tua
in celis una ē. ut dicit malū
relinquens bonū fac. ita ut ma
uuolentia duricie diminuas et
ut midiam habeas. scilicet ut in
digentib; de tua substantia des.
in hoc imitans dm q̄ misericors ē.
Nullus ꝑ pter ea o homo nullus
mendax hoc contra dicere
potest. uos qui pauperib; ta sub
uenitis. qn uoluntate mea in hoc
cōpleatis. Quom. Sicut ego uobis
gratiam meā impendo. ita et uos
pauperib; elemosinā uiam tribue
re debetis. S; qui elemosinā acci
pitis. ea n̄ inuanū nec secdm
auaricia sua sumatis. Quid ē
hoc. Quo multi s̄ qui ignauia
amantes. nec corporaliter labo
rare uolunt. ut seipsos pascere
ualeant. nec bona opa spūaliter
facere studeant. ut animab; su
is subueniant. s; ut pecus s. in
tellectū iustitie nec in anima
nec in corpore suo habentes.
Vnde etiā indigni ante oculos meos appareatis. si hoc modo
sine correctione et sine penitē
cia in tempore huius pauperis pse
uerauerint. S; et multi s̄ qui cor
porale necessitate patientes. ele
mosinā cū humilitate in mente
re meo ꝑ pauperum. atq; pilis orāt
et laborant. qui eis midiam suā
impendunt. prana etiā opa in
mundissime sordis deputantes.
inter hos etiā multi inuenientur.
quib; ideirco tuas diuicias
subtrahe. qm eis celestes diuicias dare uolo. Quia ante. pau
pertatē ꝑpter nom̄ meū libenter

xxc.

xxij.

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sufferrum·ualde ꝺ amabiles ſ·qui
uero diuicias ſclāres ꝓpter cupidi
tatē ſuā habemꝰ habere nō·nec eas
habere poſſum·bi mercedē buiꝰ
laboris ꝓdum·ſ;qui ꝓboc diuici
as querit ut uoluntatē meā et nō
cupidtatē ſuā meas cōpleat·hic
ꝓbona uoluntatis ſua mercedē bo
noris apud me habebit·hta ciuā
et ille qui poteſtatē honoris ꝓpē
iactantiā ſuꝑbie ſue et nō adgl̄iam
nominis mei appetit·hic ꝺ uelut
putridū cadauer·ē·qui autē id
circo eā querit ut ꝑ ſuꝑbiā ſuā ſ;
honorē meū inde deſideret·glo
ſus in regno meo exinde appare
bit·Qua ꝓpē et ſacerdotes officiū
ſpūalis regiminis magiſterii ſuꝫ
nō ꝓpter ſe ſ;ꝓpter me ſubire de
bent·quatinus ꝓplo meo tanto
ſecurius et deuotius ꝑ ēe ualeant·
Quomodo· Qua pplm meū do·xc·ius·
cere·admonere·hortari·et coerce
re debent·ut legē di digne et la
dabiliter cuſtodiant·Et hoc pa
ſtores ſemp ruminabunt dū pplm
exorando monent·ne ſine confeſ
ſione et ſine penitentia in peccā
tis ſuis ꝑſeuerent·ſ;ut mala opa
conculcent et bona ꝑficiant·Qđ
ſi pplꝰ ſacerdotes ſuos ꝛ admoni
tione iſta nō obaudierit·tunc po
pulus reatū ſuū ſemet·et ſacerdo
tes de caſu negligentie huiꝰ ſe ei
pueri· Si uero ſacerdotes auctō·xc·ius·
ritatē magiſterii ſui ꝓplō non
oſtenderint·tunc ſacerdotes nō uo
cant·ſ;lupi rapaces dicunt·qm
officiū ſuū in rapina habent·ſic
et lupus ouē crudeliter diripit·
ita qđ magis uoluntatē ſuā ſe
cuntur·quā cuſtodiā ouiū ſua
rū·et·quia ꝑ uerſe uiuunt id
circo ueā doctrinā ꝓplō inſere
re timent·ita uniquitatē uelut
alicui ſubiecto ſuo conſentien
tes·qđ carnales concupiſcentię
ſ·et oſtiū cordis ſui uelut alicui
domeſtico ſuo claudentes·qđ iu
ſticia dī ē· Vnde uos o paſtores ·xc·v·
ululate et plangite crimina uſā q̄ īmigrate· ita
dirā uocē emittunt·qđ et elemta
clamorē eoꝝ ſuſcipiunt·et cū eis
corā me ululant·Quoꝝ cui in of
ficio uro audeas dnm urm tan
gere inſanguineis manib;·et in
contaria ſpurticia·et inadulte
rina iniquitate·ſſere uos inim
mundicia uſā fundū ure cōmo
uens·Quoꝝ·ſ;idelicet cū inman
ibus criminib;·ſordentes·dnm urm
tangere ñ umeris·uā in magno
dolore oppримo·ita carnem et
ſanguinē filii mei ulciſcens·qm
ñ ſolū uam in hoc horrore cru
delit cōmouens·ſ;eā ecclīa in
immundicia uſā peſſime contā
minans·Quoꝝ·cū in fetore in
mundicię uſę dnm urm tangi
ens·ſic porcus in ſtercore margā
ritas contaminat·tunc ecclīa in
quitatē uam ſuſcipiens·ultio
nē iudicii mei in uoluntate mea
ſup uam extendam·Nā cū uera

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iustitia et cū diuina lege ppl̄m
meū p̄cedere debeamus in bonis
op̄ib; et luceamus in ista uita de ppl̄o
mis gradiens post uos pede suū
immilla offensione commoueat; si
uos aliq̄ndo maiore iniq̄tate
ppl̄m meū commaculamus quā ip
se se commaculet in q̄ malū et
pessimū exemplū in uobis habet.
Ylos enī tā lucida gēma cū debeat
ius ut credamus in lumine uro
incedentes uiā rectitudinis ag
noscere possent; si uos eis exem
plū mortis p̄beatis ita ut minuq̄
tatē uīa modū inuenire nō ualeā
mus et quomodo pastores eos cū
possemus, eos ita seducamus? Quomo
do p̄is respondebimus qui nec p
uobis responsū dare potestis?
Vnde ploratus et ululatus amā
quā tēpus mortis uos subtrahat.
et quare nō consideratis honorē
uīm qui p̄cepturis hominib; uo
bis datus ē? Quid ē hoc? Q m
in filio meo p̄ceperis claues cēli
accepistis quę iudicia iusti iu
dicii in scientia scripturarū s;
ubi recte considerabimus quid
sit q̄d ligare debeamus? Quid ē
hoc? cū hoies se in lege mea
pertinaciter opponunt? ut morē
iudicii mei eis inferre debeamus?
et si tunc culpā suā nō correxe
rint? ligaturā uīam sup eos ex
tendere? Quom? Quia rebelles s
ido apti uocib; in uerbis meis
eos ligabimus et eis ligaturā illā

xc.vij.

iudicabimus? qm et p̄ contumacia
sua coram me ligati s; ut filii mis
primo pastori ecclē offendit di
cens? Tibi dabo claues regni
cel̄or? et q̄dcūq; ligaueris sup
terrā erit ligatū et in celis et q̄dcūq;
soluer is sup terram erit solutū et
in celis? Quid ē hoc? Ego qui pote
statē cēli accepe habeo? ubi qui me
deuotē immanis es p̄gratiam meā
dabo iudici? Illa quę dignitatē
regni cel̄or tanquam ita ut ne
fas hoc q̄d iusto iudicio ligaue
ris sup terrā? sedm q̄d hoies sup terrā
peccare uideris? quia post quā
hominis anima de corpore suo
abstraxero? tunc iudicii tui
sup eā nō extendas qm iudicii il
lud meū ē in mequicia sua nunc
tui sit et mecelestib; sed licet a cēlo
separatū ēpiectū? q̄a in supna
mansione nulla iniq̄tas libertā
tē aut locū habere p̄mittit? Sic
uinculū hoc q̄d ita prius in rebel
lione constrinxisti cū deinde in
penitentia delinquentiū deno
daueris sup terrā? qm p̄ mortē ho
minis, panima ei? orabis? nō aut eā
tunc a nexib; ligaturę sue absol
uere poteris? erit solutū et in sup
nis secretis? quia gemmus deuoti
cordis dis nō abierit? Vos aut o
sacerdotes qui hoc modo p filiū
meū potestatē hanc p̄cepistis? ne
mine absq; culpabili culpa p̄p̄t
rabiē cordis uīi in uerbis meis li
gabitis? si; acutissime uobis consi

xc.vi.

xc.viij.

derandū ē quē nra constringere de
beamꝰ. Nā qui nec ꝓpē pudorē ho
minū nec ꝓpē timorē meū nec p̄cep̄
nec p̄ceptꝰ uꝰ cohiberi potuit qn
minīquitate sua p̄seuerare uolu
hunc ecclāstica censura uerbis me
is abara mea separabitꝰ. S; innocen
tē ñ ligabitꝰ. qm̄ siullū constrinxe
ritꝰ. uos metipsos innodū diri ra
tus mutuꝰ. Quod tam̄ ille hoc ·xc·ix·
modo inconuenienter constrictus fu
erit. qm̄ uꝰ innocens sit. tam̄ hu
millima subiectionis obedientione pp
ter honorē nominis mei solutionē
querere debet. nec si contumax ex
stiterit reatū superbię sibi contrahat.
S; ligatura ista ista talis ē. Homo q
nec m nec p̄ceptꝰ maioꝝ suoꝝ impue
nitatib; suis obedire uoluerit. hic in
uerbo meo ecclestib; separandus ē.
nec in consortiū fideliū recipiet.
nisi in penitentia obedientię. sic
etiā genus humanū in martirio
obedientię filii mei ad ecclestē patriā
reuocatū ē. Qui uero ita rebel ·c·
lis ē qđ in humilitatis officio reuer
ti ñ uult. tunc sit ita in contumacia
sua p̄durauerit. consortiū illoꝝ ha
bebit. qui lapideū cor abicere re
cusantes. S; in infidelitate sua p̄ma
nentes. gl̄am ecclāstice beatitudinis
habere recusauerit. Nā qui ita ob
duratus ē qđ de nequitia sua nullā
mitiam querere curat. hic ami
qui serpentē imitatꝰ. q primū
hominē in paradyso decipiens. in se
metipso dicebat. Quāuis ego de ·c·
ecclis p̄ceptis sim cū contra exercitū
altissimi cū anglis meis p̄liari uelle.
et illi resistere ñ ualeā. q̄m abeo
uultus sui. tam̄ nunc unā hominē
inuitum. in qua ira mea exercens me
fortit̄ uindicabo. Inīra cū in hoīe
cōplebo qđ in ecclis facere uolui. sci
licet ut altissimo similis essē. Et si dꝫ
ustus ē. potestas ista m ñ auferet.
quia homo mihi consensit. et dō ñ
obediunt. Hec diabolus in semetip
so loquens. oēs artes suas contra
hominē instruxit. quō ille adō re
cesserat. et diabolū sub secutus ē.
unde et eū sibi tā fortiter alliga
uit. qđ homo illū p̄dō coluit. et
dm creatorē suū abnegauit. S; cū ·c·ij· ,,,
homo in tanta tenebrositate infi
delitatis iacere. nec se erigere ua
leret. ad saluationē ei misi filiū
meū mirabiliter de uirgine incar
natū. uerū dm et uerū hominē
existentē. Quid ē hoc. Quia de me
patre sedm diuinitatē ueraciter
exiuit. et qm̄ de uirgine matre
sedm humanitatē ueraciter carnē
assūpsit. Quid ē hoc. O homo mol
lis et tener in uno corpore es. S; du
rus et inflexibilis in alia in credu
litate manes. Nā lapis poliri ad
edificiū potest. tu autē mollire
ad fidē ñ uis. Attende tam̄. Sicut
homo in archa pulcherrimā gem
mā habens eā in metallo imponit.
ut hominib; appareat. sic et ego

100°

incorde meo filiū meū habens eū
de uirgine incarnari uolui quam
uis ipse credentib; salutē uitę con
ferret. Q̄d si carnalē patrē dedisse
quis nunc dicat. Videlicet nō filius; s;
seruus mīs. S; hoc dici nō debuit. Ipse
autē de uirgine natus comedit bi
bit. et dormiens requieuit aq; ali
as corporales miserias sustinuit. s;
tamen gustū peccati in carne sua
non sensit. q̄a nō immūdacio s; mun
ditie carnē assūpserat. Q̄d. ē hoc.
Quō enim homines impuritatis
ne adę & eue p gustū delectationis
nascuntur. q̄d immūdatio est nō mun
ditia ē. Non sic filius mīs ortus ē.
s; in sēnitate de castissima uirgine
ad redēptionē hominū natus est.
Nā similis simulē de uinculo suo
soluere nūquam eret. nisi maior uen
ret qui eū eripere posset. Quid ē
hoc. Q̄m homo natus in peccatis.
homini peccatori de pdītione
mortis liberare nō ualuit. Qua ppt
filius mīs sine peccato uenit. qui
homini deuicta morte mundi
de morte eripuit. S; qui uigilan
tib; oculis uidet. et sonantib; au
ribus audit. hic mistica uerbis me
is osculū amplexionis p̄bet.
que de me uirtute emanant.

vij. visio. ij. partis.

Et

Ego

uidi ardentē lucē tantę magnitu
dinis. ut aliquis mons magnus et
altus ē. in sūmitate sua uelut unmul
tas linguas diuisā. et coram luce ista
quedā multitudo albatorū hominū
stabat. quos uelut q̄dā uelū tan
quā cristallus plucidū a pectore
usq; ad pedes eorū extensū erat. S;
et ante multitudinē istā quasi
in quada ua. uelut quida ue
mis mire magnitudinis et lon
gitudinis supinus iacebat. qui
tanta horroris et insanie uide
batur ultra quā homo effari po
test. Ad cuius sinistrā quasi foru
erat. ubi diuersę hominū atq;
delicię sclares et mercatus diuer
sarū rerū apparuerūt. ubi etiā
quida hoīes multa celeritate cur
rentes nullū mercatū faciebant.
quida autē tepide eunte et uen
ditoni et emptoni ibi insistebant.
Vermis autē ille niger et horribilis
atq; ulceribus et pustulis plenus
erat. quinq; uarietatis a capite
pedibus suis usq; ad pedes immo

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dū bonarū descendentes inse habens quartū una uirdis alia alba rubea quedā crocea quedā nigra apparebat plene ueneno morifero S; caput eī ma comu tū fuit q̄d et sinistra maxilla ip sius iā dissolui uidebat Oculi uero eī erant insecus sanguinei et uterinsecus igni aures autē rotunde et hispide nares uero et os sedim nares et os uiperę s; man sedim manus bōis pedes autē ut pedes uipę et cauda breuis et horribilis apparebat et collo eī carena imposita fuerat quę et manus et pedes ipsius alligauerat ita q̄d et eadē catena in lapide abyssi fortissime firmata illū tā ualide constrinxerat q̄d se nec hac nec illac sedim nequā uoluntatis suę mouere potuerat Exore autē eius multę flamę exeuntes inquatuor partes se diuiserūt quarū pars una usq; ad nubes ascendebat et alia uterscląres homines alia autē ut spirales se extendebat quedā uero usq; in abyssū descendebat S; flama illa quę nubes petebat contra hoīes illos pliabat qui a dęos ire uolebant Quorū tres acies indebā Nā acies una ppe nubes et una in medie tate illa quę inter nubes et ūrā ē et una maxia ūrā pgebat omīs re pentis nocib; pgamus adęos uociferantes S; a flama illa hac et illac piebā quidā ñ cadebant alii autē pedib; suis se uix sustentabant alii uero adūam cadentes s; mutū surgentes adęos uendebant flama autē illa quę se inter setantes homines diffudit quosdā exas cōburens interfecit mā nigredinē uertit quosdā autē suo acumine ita transfixit q̄d eos quocūq; uolebat inflexit Aequa tamē quidā se erigentes et ad illos qui eos petebant pgentes ouos fideles pfitente nobis aduersorū meritō clamore uociferabant quidā autē ita transfixi pmanserūt Illa uero flama quę se inter spirales extendebat eos sua caligine obtexit Quos etiā insex modis ēsiderabā Nā alios eadē flama eruciator incendio lesit quos autē ledere ñ potuit hos aut uirdi aut albo aut rubeo aut croceo aut nigro morife ro ueneno illo q̄d a capite eī de uertus usq; ad pedes eī descendebat ardenter afflauit S; flama quę a byssū petebat diuersas penas illoq; in se habebat qui pfonte baptismatis ñ lotu lucē uertatis et fidei ignorantes sanan pdō coluerant Et uidi etiā exore ipsius acutissimas sagittas pstrepentes et a pectore eī nigrū fumū uolantē a clum bis ipsius ardentē humorē ebul.

uemẽ· et abumbilico ei' feruidꝰ
turbinẽ flammẽ· amꝫ· ab extremi
tate ueneris ipsius uidit immun
dicia ranarũ scaturiremẽ· que
oña magna inquietudinẽ in
hominib; faciebant· S; et de ip
so uũrima nebula cũ pessimo
fetore egrediens· multos hoies
sua pulcritate infecit· Et ecce
magna multitudo hominũ
in multa claritate fulgentiũ
ueniebat que eundo uermẽ
fortiter ubiq; conculcans acri
ter· eũ eruciabat· ita tamẽ qd
ipsa· nec aflamis nec ueneno
illius ledi poterat· Audiuiq; ter
rũ uocẽ mihi de cẽlo dicentẽ·

.v. S oña iuste et recte dispen
sans fidelꝫ pplos ad gtam
supne hereditatis uocat· S; ami
quus deceptor insidias posit·
eos impedire tẽptans· artes neq
cie sue in ipsos exercitat· S; tam
ab eas uehus· confusio
nẽ psumptionis sue accipit· cũ il
li celestẽ patriã possideant· et
ipse infernales horrores habe
at· Qua ppter uides ardentẽ lu
cẽ tante magnitudinis· ut ali
quis mons magnus et altus ẽ·
in sũmitate sua uidit immul
tas linguas diuisã que ẽ ar
dens in fide credentiũ iustitia
dei· in fortitudine potentie sue
magnitudinẽ scientie et altitu
dinẽ gle demonstrans· atq·

mentis de gla sci spꝰ diuersa dona
.15. mirabiliter declarans· Et coram lu
ce ista quedã multitudo albarꝫ
hominũ stans· ẽ inpsentia iustitie
dei cohors infide lucentiũ homi
nũ pbona opa sua bene et bone
fte cõposituꝫ· amte quos uidit
qdda uelu tanquã crystallus p
lucidu a pectore usq; ad pedes ex
tensu ẽ· qua in conspectu suo
diuinã legẽ fortẽ & splendã ab
intentione bonarũ actionũ usq;
adcõpletionẽ earũ semp habent·
in quib; ita confortantꝫ· qd a stu
tia et deceptione fallaciũ suasio
.16. nũ superari nõ possunt· Sed qd
amte multitudinẽ ista quasi in
quadã ua uidit quidã uermis
mire magnitudinis et longitu
dinis supinus iacet· hoc ẽ qd an
te noticiã hominũ manifeste
cognitus in uia mundi huius que
et bonis & malis adgrediendũ
pposita ẽ antiquus serpens in
ita in forma sua s; insignificatio
ne mysterii uidelicet magnus
in malicia· longus in insidiis· p
rectus apparet· sursũ inhians·
ut eos qui ad celestia tendunt·
p deceptionẽ sua deiciat· s; tam
iacens· qm pfiliũ dei uires ipsius
euacuare s· ita qd uires stare nõ
ualet· quãuis tamen horroris et
insanie uideatꝰ ultra qm homo
effari potest· qa uenenosũ fu
rorẽ et malicios conatus ipsi?

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ūmultiplicitate diuersitatis suę
estimatio mortalis hominis explicare nō pualet. Vnde et ad dei similitudinē
stra quasi forū ē. ubi diuitę hominū atq; delicię sclārēs et mercatus diuersarū rerū apparent. quō
in morte quę cōdē pdamoris similitudinē
telligitur forū cernit. qd neqssima opa eōdē mortis s. ita qd ibi
diuitis corruptibilib; superbia et
uana gla. et in delicijs transmoritis
lasciua & concupiscentia. et in mercatu uendmones ac empciones
multarū uarietatū ōrnamentorū cupiditatū feruent. ita ut quū diabolus
cū ōtore pallā exhorruerit. ab
his latenter decipiat. uidelicet cū ei
multę suasiones uicioꝝ lenter offerunt. uidet cū pmercatore diuersa mercimonia hominib; ostendunt. quatenus phoc delectati tanto ardentius emant. qd sibi oblatū uiderint. Nā diabolus artes suas hominib; fraudulenter offert. Ş;
qui tunc eas concupiscunt. hīi eas
emunt. Quomodo. Bonā conscientiā suā quasi uendentes abiecunt.
et mortifera uulnera animarū suarū quasi ementes sibi contrahunt.
Sed ibi quidā hoīes multa celestia currentes. nullū mercatū facium. quia ipsi dīm cognoscentes. thesaurū bonę uoluntatis et aromata uirtutū portant. et sibi ea forussime contrahunt. ita qd sclārēs uoluptates et diaboli cas spurcicias uelociter immanda uas diuitis transeuntes dulcedinē carnis
sue contempnunt. quidā autē tanquā pide eunteś et uendmoni et empcioni ibi insistunt. qm hi tarditatē in
bonis opib; habentes. præporē cordis sui celestē desideriū uelut illud
uendentes in semetipsis extinguunt. et uoluptatē carnis sue. q̄si eā ementes in se cumulant. Quā pprer illi
mercedē bonę opationis accipient.
et isti penas iniquitatis sue sustinebunt. uelut ezechiel ostendit
dicens. Iustitia iusti sup eū erit. et impietas impii erit sup eū. Qd
ē hoc. fulgida opa puri hoīs illuminātē pfundum. & quasi mille oculi aspicientes malitū atq; in
pfundū ubiq; eū circūdant. sursū
ferentes eū in magnū honorē et in uoluptatis sue mortificationē. p
ut spūs sēs illi inspirauerit. uelut alauolucrē sursū in aerē uolit. quo
cūq; illi placuerit. Ş; uipeū uenenū negquā seuissime uipe quę
conspumat celū margaritā luto
inuoluens. et sup pulcherrimum
omniū speciosoq; frementes. hunc q̄
illud infidelit subsequunt. de nobilissimo ope digni dī et ab omni
honore. et a beatitudine supnę uisionis abiecit. atq; ei oculē faciens
auuentit fructu et radice iustę arboris abscidit. Quod autē ui
des qd uermis ille niger et hirsutus atq; ulceribus et pustulis plenus
ē. hoc indicat. qd ide serpens antiquus immigredine tenebrarū in

v. vj. vij.

fidelnatus et impilis absconsionū
decepcionis aq; inulceribz; inmun
diciarū pollucionis et inpustulis
cauernarū furoris habundat
quinq; etiā uarietates a capite p
uentre suū usq; ad pedes in modū
bonarū descendentes in se habens
qua qnq; sensus hominū diuer
sis passionibz; uicioz ad decepcione
illa cū se primū implere studuit
usq; ad consūmacionē illā cū insa
nia eī finē accipiet afflare n̄ cess
sans ſ; fallacē rectitudinē simu
lans homines ad declina inmun
darū arcuū suarū trahit quarū
una uiridis alia alba alia rubea
quedā crocea quedā nigra appa
ret plene ueneno morifero qm
mundicie sclarē tristiciā malb
bedine inepcā irreuerenciā inru
bore fallacē glām in croco mor
dacē detractionē aq; ingredinē
turpē simulacionē ostendunt cū
plenitudine aliarū puersitatū
que mortē animab; hominū sibi
consentientiū inferunt Sed
q̄d capite eī ita comutū ē q̄d et
sinistra maxilla ipsius ia dissolui
uidet hoc ē q̄d supbia illius in
incarnacione filii dī ita derecta
est q̄d et aduersitas mortis ia eua
cuata formidinē amaritudinis
sue exercere n̄ ualet Oculi ue
ro eī exterius sanguinei et in
terius ignei apparent quia
interno puersitatis ipsius uelut
exterius sanguineū nefas cor

poris hominū incunt et uelut
interius igneū iaculū anima
bus eoz infert aures aiē ipsius
rotunde et hispide ſ. quo homi
nē quasi in rotunditate pilis ar
cūs suarū circūdat ut eū celeri
me deiciat si q̄d in illo q̄d suū
ē deprehenderit ~~nares uero et os~~
~~ei sedm~~ nares et os ei sedm nares
uero et os ei sedm nares et os ui
dere apparent quia indiscretos
et feritates mores hominib; ostendit p q̄s in multas uicis eos trans
figens crudeliter occidat
Sed manus ei sedm manus ho
minis uidem q̄m machina
tiones arcuū suarū in opib; ho
minū exercet pedes aut ipsius
ut pedes uipere ſ. qua muneribz;
hominū in sidius suis diabo
licas laceracones inferre n̄ desi
nit et cauda ei breuis et horri
bilis apparet que ē potestas ip
sius parui ſ; tam pessimi tempo
ris in filio pdicionis qui plus
apprehendere bachando cupit
quā proficere possit Et q̄d col
lo ei catena imposita ē que et
manus et pedes ipsius alligat
hoc ē q̄d diabolica formido
p potestatē om̄pis dī ta fracta
et comuta ē q̄d et pessima opa
et nequissima munera illi in q̄b;
homines seducit in comutacione
sua compassa ſ. ita q̄d et eade ca
tena in lapide abissi fortissime
firmata illū ta ualide constrin

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gnt. q̄d sc nec hac nec illac sedm
nequmā uolummus suc mouere
ponst. qm ponstas dī instabilis
sima cmmanc sinc defcchone ma
nens. diabolū tanta fortmudi
ne insaluatmone animarū oppri
mit. q̄d ille nec exterioribꝫ nec
mterioribꝫ. instrumtas nequissi
mi conatus sui. salutē redēptio
nis a fidelibꝫ animabꝫ remouere
ualebit. quin mlocū gaudii quē
ipse punacū amisit puemant.
Quod autē ex ore eī multe flā
me exeunt. s mquatuor
partes se dmdunt. hoc ē q̄d ip
se extrapacissima uoracitate sua
pessimū et multiplex malū cru
delissimi incendii mique psua
sionis emittens. inquatuor pla
gas totius mundi inter homines
ut ipsū sequant diuerse spargit.
Quarū pars una usq; admubes
ascendit. qua illa diabolica af
flatio celū uero desiderio mus
sue petemes suo acumine rapta
bit. et alia mter sclares homines
se spargit. qm ipsa mūtenis cau
sis conuersantes sua diuersitate
decipit. alia autē mter spūales
se extendit. qua illa spūalibꝫ
disciplinis insudantes sua simu
latione inficit. queda uero usq;
mabyssū descendit. qm ipsa
infideles sibi consententes mm
fernalia uermma sua puersitate
mmut. qua ipsi uā falsitatis
et decepuonis cultores. uā rech
tudinis nō uenerāt. nec uero dō de
bīā reuerentiā exhibuerāt. quēad
modū dauid testat dicens. C on
tricio et infelicitas inuas eos. et
uiā pacis nō cognouerāt. nō ē timor
dī ante oculos eoꝝ. Quid ē hoc. In
nocentia et fortissima opa dī. que
mundo et impurissimo fonte mili
tant illos qui dm de corde suo cū
nequissimis et damnabilibꝫ opibꝫ
expellunt ita contrarium uidet
magna pluuia rē aliquā dimer
git. ita q̄d amplius nō appareat.
Et ideo etiā in conspectu dī nō ful
minant. qm infelicitas cū infeli
cissima consuetudine ē intranc
ribꝫ eoꝝ quocūq; se cū pastu mor
tis extenderint. Quomodo. Ijde
licet gustando et comedendo hoc
q̄d malū ē. Ynde et uiā illā que
in calore solis ascendit in opibꝫ
suis nescium. qua dulcedinē dī
nec in honore nec in amore gu
stant. ubi timorē et quasi timo
rē alieni abiciunt. cū ipsū nec ui
dere. nec aspicere desiderant.
Inde et ut uides flāma illa
que nubes petit contra hoīes
illos p̄liatur. qui ad celos ire uo
luit. qua nequissimū illud in
cendiū cū meritis fidelium homi
nū sursū uendere sensit. aduer
sū eos suos artibꝫ crudelissime ba
chatur. ne ad illa celestia que ip
si multis suspiriis quer. puem
ant. Quoꝝ tres acies uides. qm
ipsi uerā et ineffabile trinitatē

quāuis in suis certaminib; plurī mū sanguīē colere nō cessant·

Nā aciēs una ꝑpe nubēs ꝓgit·qa ista fortissime contra diabolum pugnantēs·mentē suā de tremis achib; ita sursū ad celestia tollunt· quādmodū et nubēs sup̄ terram fluere solet·& una immediate illa quę inter nubēs et terrā ē dis currit·quō ipsi quadā modera tione se continentēs·nec exteriora mentē celestib; nec exteriora desidē rio tremis insudant·s; in his mo dū sibi imponentēs·et interiora queruntes·nec tamē exteriora re spuunt·et una iuncta terram ꝓgit· quia ista caduca ꝑfecte nō deseren tes·caducis aliq̄mulū adherent· ita q̄d in eis ualde laborantēs· multas sanguinēs passionū in ipsis sentiant s; tamen sup̄no auxilio uictores existant·omīs repentis uocib; ꝓgamus ad ce los uociferantēs·q̄m et isti et illi immutatis suspiriis desideriōq; suōq; ut tendant ad illa quę insup̄nis secretis s̄ semet ipsos exhortantē· quāuis aliis aliquā seipsis in hac intentione sua multo ci ens sanguinē·S; afflāma illa hac et illac ꝓiecti·qui afflatu diabo licę tēptationis induersitatem morū aggrauat·quida tamē nō ca dunt·quō ipsi fortissimi pug natores existentēs·ab his illusio nib; se uirilit̄ defendunt·alii autē pedib; suis se uix sustentant

quia hui inuiā rectitudinis mentis sua ponunt·s; in multis labori bus sanguinē·uix tamē diabolicas ictus superantēs·inmandatis dī ꝑ seuerant·alii uero ad terram caden tes·s; uerū surgentes ad cēlos ten dunt·q̄m ipsi in diuersitate uicioꝝ lapsi·s; postea ꝑ penitentiā erec ti spē suā cū bonis opib; in dīm ponunt·Quod autē flāma il la quę se inter sclārēs hoies diffundit·quosdā ceteros cōburens inextricabili nigredinē ueritatis· hoc ē q̄d ide incendiū nequissi mę deceptionis ad illos qui tē nis insistunt tendens·quosdā il lorū suę puersitatis subiacens· pessimis uicius tenebrose inq̄ tatis eos inficit·ita q̄d ipsi clari tatē uerę fidei despicientes et se metipsos amara morte mūficu entes inuitā cadunt et nefandis sima opa in actib; suis ꝑficiunt· quosdā autē suo acumine ita transfigit q̄d eos quocūq; uult inflectit·q̄m eos sua nequitia ita domat·q̄d ipsos ad uniuersa ui cia prauitatis suę inclinat·unde licet sclārē dulcedinē in amplexi one ardentis lybidinis esse sug gerens·ita q̄d et diuersos mores multiplicium rituū suoꝝ·scilicet in uestibus·in capillis·in uestitu·in incessu·et in ceteris his similib; habent·Unde tortuosi efficiunt iusticiā dī negligentes et p̄uari catores legis existentes·nec sibi

mcupſiſ circūcisionē mentis impo
nentes·q̄a ſuperfluitatē in libidine
queruntur nec ullū tēpus legis ut
eis adō constituti ē seruant·ſ; ut
mare auerno immundicitidinē con
cutiunt·ita et ipſi de flatu antiqui
draconis in diuersa uicia mouent·
De quatā quidā se eripientes·et
adillos qui celos petunt p gentes·
ouos fideles p̄stant nobis a diuino
riū meatu clamore uocaferamur·
qm̄ de turpi et noxia consuetu
dine se abstrahentes·et hos qui
mentē suā celestib; infigunt imi
tantes·ut sua sollicitudine in
pendant ipsis imaginē corde et
uoce desiderant· Quidā aut̄ ita
transfixi p manent·quia ipsi
diuersis uicijs ut rem·in malis p
seuerant· Sed q̄d illa flama
que se intus fluere spiritales et
tendit·eos sua caligine obtegit·
hoc ē q̄d eade afflatio diabolice
psuasionis incendia sua adillos
qui toto animo spīm seruire de
berent emittens·eos puersitate ui
ciorū suoꝝ obnubilat·quatinus
magis carni quā spīm inhient·
Quos etiā in sex modis consideras·
qm̄ antiquus hostis tā quinq;
exteriores sensus eoꝝ·quā interiorē
deuotionē cordis ipsoꝝ uelut sex
tū modū puertere conat· Nā ali
os eade flama ledit·quia diabo
lus artes suas eis in mittens·car
nalib; desiderijs et uoluptatib;
eos afflat·ita q̄d eos ad libidi
nē et ad pollutionē multe immun
dicie accendit· Quos aut̄ ledere
non potest·hos aut uiridi·aut al
bo·aut rubeo·aut crocco·aut ni
gro morifero ueneno illo·q̄d
a capite ei de uermis usq; ad pedes
ei descendit ardentem afflat·Quo
modo· Quo cū uoluptatis pollutio
nū recusant·aut tristiciā sclī
quasi pullulantē uiriditatē p
quā ita opprimunt·q̄d nec in spī
talib; nec in sclāribꝫ reb; ualent eis
infundi aut ut reuertantur ad uicioꝝ
uelut in cepta albedinē·ita q̄d nec
corā do nec corā hominib; turpi
tudinē suā abscondunt ipsis in
mittit·aut recordationē ut ene
gle quasi fulgentē rubore unde
amaritudinē et anxietatē cordis
habent eis ostendit·aut de tractio
nē proximoꝝ uelut rapidū crocū·
ita q̄d susurrones et bilingues in
de efficiunt ipsis inducit·aut si
mulationē iusticie q̄si horridā
nigredinē p quā in cordib; suis
miserabiliter obtenebrantur eis imp̄o
nit· Que oīa morifere pestes ſ·
ab initio deceptionis eade p dies
ris usq; ad finē illū·cui iā insania
ipsius finē in mundo accipiet p
cedentes·p quas noxiū ardorē
uicioꝝ hominib; inferunt· Sed
q̄d flama que ab ysſū petit diuer
sas penas illoꝝ in se habet·qui p
fontē baptismatis nō lotus lucē ue
ritatis et fidei ignorantes·sata
nan pdo colunt·hoc ē·q̄d incen

seuciam·
-s xvij·
-s xviij·

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dñi illud ꝑdicom adhęrens· dira
et amara tormẽta illis animab; in
ferat quę insonte salutis ñ emun
dare claritatẽ supnę hereditatis
et fidẽ ecclastice instimonis ñ ui
dentes· illũ qui insidius posuit
animas hominũ immortẽ mittere
conatũ pullo qui hominib;-umã
et salutẽ tribuit uenerari ñ ces
sant· ⁊ Et uides exore ipsius acu
⁊ tissimas sagittas ꝑstrepentes· quę
s̄ adiabolica rabie pessime et ne
quissime infixiones excutiat· &
⁊ multis iniquitatib; bachantes·
⁊ et a pectore ei⁹ nigrũ fumũ uolan
tẽ· qui ẽ amalicios conatib; ei⁹ te-
terrime et ire et immundie emissio·
⁊ ac lumbis ipsius ardentẽ humorẽ
⁊ ebullientẽ· qui ẽ abhominabilia
ipsius implans feruentissime libi
·xix· ⁊ dinis effusio· Et a bumbilico ei⁹ ·xx·
⁊ feruidũ turbinẽ flamẽ· qui ẽ a uo
race et a insubiectis ardentissime
⁊ fornicationis suffocatio· atq; abex-
⁊ crantes uentris ipsius uelut in
⁊ mundicia ranarũ scaturientem
que ẽ a ꝑdicione ꝑuersę absorbi
tionis ei⁹ inobdurationis despera
tionis fetida egestio· cũ ide antiquus
insidiator se subsequentes ad om
nẽ uoluntatẽ suã ꝑduxerit· que
⁊ oĩa magnã inquietudinẽ in ho
⁊ minib; faciunt· q̃m huiꝰmodi ꝑuer-
sitates maximã calamitatẽ miser-
rime irrectionis illis imponunt·
qui spẽ suã ñ celestib; s; terrenis infi
·xxi· ⁊ gunt· Sed q̃d de ipso uentri

⁊ ma nebula cũ pessimo fetore egre
⁊ diens· multos homines sua puersi
⁊ tate inficit· hoc ẽ q̃d abeo dẽ dia
bolo nigerrimus error· fetentes
consciencie; ꝓcedens· stultos hoies
ꝑ iniquã incredulitatẽ exagitat·
Quomodo· De absasione captus
iohis baptistę filiũ dei et remissorẽ
uulnerũ peccatoꝝ ostendentis· pes
simus error exortus ẽ· ubi diabo
lus multos hoies inuersis imagi
nib; seducit· hoc uerũ ee putantes
q̃d ipse eis secũm estimationẽ ipsoꝝ
fallaciter demonstrat· Vnde et
multi secũm hunc modũ decipi
untur· quia et fides ipsoꝝ semꝑ in
infirmitate uacillat· S; uos filii
mei si iuste et pie uiuere uolueri
tis· hunc nequissimũ errorẽ fugi
te· ne amarissima mors iniqe
dulitate uos apphendat· Fugi
te eã illos qui morantur in spe
luncis· incluse ebhortes diaboli
existentes· Ve illis· ue illis· qui sic
ꝑseuerarint· quia uiscera diaboli
s̄· et ꝑcurrens germ̃ filii ꝑditionis·
Qua ꝓpter uos dilecti filii mei om
ni deuotione et omĩ uirtute ani
me et corporis uri illos deuitate·
q̃m antiquus serpens sua arte il
los pascat et uestiat· q̃a eũ p dõ co
luistis· et q̃a ineũ ꝑfallacẽ decepti
onẽ confidunt· Ipsi s̄ pessimi ho
micidę· ita q̃d illos qui eis simpli
citer adheserint occidunt antiq; m
eos errorẽ suũ declinare ꝑmit
tant· et s̄ in semetipsis turpissimi

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fornicatores·sem cū suū inhomi
cidio mortificamus et diabolo of
feremus·ita cū inseismamb; suus
et inplenitudine uicioꝝ suoꝝ eccle
siā meā inuademus·cū baptisma
et sacramentū corporis et sangui
nis filii mei et cetera instituta quę
cade eccla mea habet·utur pib;
machinamonib; suis nequiter de
rident·S; quāuis ppt inmorē ppli
mei his instituis meis aptę nīre
pugnent·tam in cordib; et infac
tis suis ea pnichilo ducunt·Nā
diabolica illusione sētiunt se ha
bere simulant inquib; a diabolo
decipiunt·qm si idē diabolus se
eis pala demonstraret·abeis cog
noscerēt·ita qd illū deuitarent·
Vnde ipse sua arte quedā eis
ostendit uelut bona et scā sint·
et sic eos illudit·Oue illis·q sic in
morte hac pseuerauerint·Sed
quia diabolus nouit se modicū
tēpus erroris sui habere·ideirco
nunc festinant infidelitatē in
membris suis pficere·quę uos pes
simi deceptores estis·qui fidē ca
tholicā subuertere laboratis·Vos
instabiles et molles addeuitandū
uenenosas sagittas humanę vol
untatis estis·quas sedm uolunta
tē uīam contra legē exercetis·Vn
de postquā uenenoso semine for
nicationis libidinē uīam euacua
tis·tunc ficte oratis et scītatē uob
fallaciter imponitis·qd oculis
meis fetentē luto indignus est·

certe scisma qd exortū ē inoreb
ubi iudaica plebs sculptile faciens·
indiabolica irrisione ludere cepit·
sicut cū etadhuc quida petulanter
ludere solent et sasma qd fuit in
baal·inquo multi pierūt·et scisma
fornicationū ubi cū madianitis
turpia facta ppetrata s·et cetera
his similia sup uos cadent·qua in
his oīb; inmalis urīs partē habe
tis·peiores priori pplo existentes·
quo uerā legē dī cernentes·eā pu
naciter abicitis·S; ouos q salutē
uīam desideratis·ita qd baptisma
suscepistis·et unctus mons dī estis
satane resistitis·et demonte salua
toris uīr descendere nolite·

Homo autē qui tante duricie ē exx.iij.
qd aduersū dī adrepugnan
dū diabolo contempnit·hunc ipse
insidias suas ponere nō desistit·cū
cū meo nigredinē inquitatis surr
gere uidet quę tm corpori illi tan
tā amaritudinē infert·qd cū cor
pus ipsius inde infirmitate arescit·
Vnde cū homo cepit malū ruminare·et se ipsū ita indespatione con
tere·uelut sibi nō sit possibile malū
deuitare et bonū facere·tunc dia
bolus hoc uidens dicit·Ecce homo
qui nobis similis ē·dīm suū negans·
et se ad nos conuertens·sequit nos·
Qua ppt ppetemus oīs et ad eū
festinanter curramus·ita ipsū nīris
arub; coercentes·ne a nobis effugere possit·Nā dīm suū deserere uult·
et sequi nos·S; homo q his malis

p diabolicā suggestionē inpugna
tur· indelicet· q̄d homicidio adul
terio uoracitate· ebrietate· et sup
fluitate· omniū uiciox pollutē· si
tunc inhis inpenitens p̄seuerauc
rit· inmortē· cadit·· qui autē dia
bolo repugnans· his uicijs penitens
do se subtraxerit· ad unitā· resurgit·
Nā qui cupiditatē carnis siue secu
tus fuerit· et bonū desideriū spūs su
neglexerit· de hoc fabricator orbis
dicit· Iste me despicit· et carnē suā
cū peccato diligit· nolens scire q̄d
ap̄dmone se debeat auertere· Et
ido abiciendus ē· Qui uero bonū
ardorē spūs sui dilexerit· et uolup
tatē carnis sue abiecerit· de isto
idē creator mundi dicit· Hic ad
me respicit· et corpus suū insor
dib; n̄ euomit· desiderans scire· q̄d
amore se debeat submouere· Unde
ei succurrendū ē· Quomodo· Ipse sa
lomon inuolumate mea dicit·

xxc·iiij· Peccatores p̄sequit̄ malis· et iu
stis retribuent̄ bona· Quid ē
hoc· Labāmur in lapsu et cademus
in ruina undiq; mortiferi morbi
inuadunt· ita q̄d prudent̄ in hoc
quod uerū ē n̄ aspiciunt· s; q̄d
illud negligent̄ abiciunt· Unde
qua n̄ s̄ digni in dīm aspicere·
nec ulla felicitatē in do aut in ho
minib; habere q̄m dīm respuunt·
et diabolū diligunt· idcirco in mul
tā aduersitatē illis infert· in ma
lum q̄d opant̄· S; in bonis rectus
sensus et iusta cogitatio me excel
so edificat· ita q̄d in sinu suo susci
pit· hereditatē patris· q̄m supnum
lumen aduendum· fallaces inuri
sione fori quomodo hoc uel illud
sine cōparatione uenundet̄ ii ex
istimes· s; id q̄d in do uerū ē habeā

xxc·iiij·rcs· Sed q̄d inde s q̄d magna mul
titudo hominū in multa claritate
fulgentiū uenit· que p̄dictū uermē
fortiter ubiq; conculcans acriter eū
cruciat· hoc ē q̄d fidele agmen ere
demū· s; inhumana miseria p̄cta
tox· in fide baptismatis et in beatis
uirtutib; multo ornatu et decore
ad supna desideria p̄perat· ita q̄d
ipsi in factis suis hunc antiquū se
ductorē fortissima contritione
circūdantes· de cium· et eū diro
cruciatu cōminuunt· uidit· s; uirgi
nes· martyres· et ceteri huiusmodi·
cultores dī· qui toto annisu ūrena
conculcant· et celestia desiderant·
nā tam q̄d ipsa nec aflāmis nec
a uenenо illius ledi potest· quia
ipsi tanta fortitudine et constan
tia in do munit· s· q̄d nec a bapt̄is
incendijs· nec a bocculti p̄suasio
nib; diabolice inquietatis contami
nari ualent· q̄m magna fortitu
dine uirtutū· uana figmenta deser·
et sēcum iuste uiuentes adherent·
s; qui uiglantib; oculis uidet· et
sonantib; auribus audit· hic mistici
uerbis meis osculū amplexionis
p̄bent· que de me uiuentes emanant
a eo·

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Vorsal hornblasz lupmus vasz + vn-tufo vn pfaff.

Capitula prime visionis-tercie partis.

Quod corda fidelium timere & venerari debent magnitudinē-latitudinē-altitudinē-timoris dñi. .v.

Quod oīs fidelis aīa sapienter mens dīm-pfidē sedes dī ē. .vj.

Quod pfunditas mysteriox dī homīb; incōprehensibilis ē-nisi qñ ipse donante fide concipitur. .vij.

Quod insapientia di patris-pamorē filii sui pfecto omniū electox computata est. .viij.

Exemplū inceptio de cadē re. .ix.

Qđ significet luteus limus in pectore-& cur homo a bangelo nō spnat. .x.

Verba esaÿe adcandē rē. .xj.

Yerba daud. .xij.

Quod dñs pater infilio suo abaurora virgine incarnato-opatōr ordinat-ac pficit oīa opa sua. .xiij.

De circulo gyramē. ¶ dm. .xiiij.

Quod potestas dī amor ē qua hominī sciendū sit-& cur angli laudent. .xv.

Quod dñs ē pspicua iustitia-uerus & iustus absq; cōmutatione. .xvj.

Quod iudicium-iustitia-& iudiciū dī-nullū finē habent-qui conphendi possit humano sensu. ¶ rede. .xvij.

De casu primi angli & sibi consentientib; & qrt-& quo mō-& quo ceciderīt-Yerba ezechielis de cadē re. .xviij.

Quod-gīa splendoris illi quē diabolus psuperbiā pdidit-seruata ē in secreto patris alteri facte luci. .xix.

Quod diabolus ceciditabsq; hac rede-homo autē cecidithabens hac

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xvij. Exemplū degoliath ꝫ de dauid· xix. ad eande rem·

Capmula ī unsionis tēpꝰ partis·

·j· Quod fides quę mamquis xx. occultata fuit mmisterio· incarna xxj. to di filio ꝓcessit mlucē·

Quod fides cōmuncta ē umori dñi xxij. ꝫ umor dñi fidei·

·xij· Quod fidelis ꝓ quatuor partes tēpꝰ sup fidē bona opa edificant·

·xiij· equatuor quadris· ¶ fugere·

·xiiij· v Quod oportet hominē humiliter mcedere· et insidias diaboli sapientē

·xv· D equatuor angulis edificu· q̄d signifi·

·xvj· tē aliter de eisdē angulis· ¶ ro s·

·xvij· Quod hominib; a dō patre dat̄ mu nimo et defensio ad bene opandū·

et circūspecti sint· qua cuncta ca

·xviij· D especulamua scientia· ·xviij·

x V erba pauli· ¶ Verba salomonis·

D e opmone duarū causarū·

·xix· Quod recte mstitutiones sunt exerit uiabrahā et mmoy se·

·xx· Quod speculamua scientia cepit m noc apparere· regnante tamen

umquante usq; ad abrahā et moy sen sine mtrupmone·

·xxj· V erba pauli ad eandē rē·

·xxij· Quod rectū opus ostensiū ē mabrahā et mmoy se ꝓspicua iustitia mm carnatione filii di· ardens opus ꝓ baptismū m ecclā· durans mfinē

V mundi· ¶ babtisma ē·

·xxiij· V erba dauid ad eandē rē·

·xxiiij· Quod membra xpi constant adhuc mperfecta mdefectis suis· et ecclā ca ret adhuc futura ꝓfectione q̄m

Quomodo denarius numerus ani mantis ꝓpādā surrexit mfilio di in denariū· et denari mmillenariū·

V erba eugelii de eadē re·

·xxv· Quod unquq; uulneribꝫ xpi pec cata hominū delent̄· ¶ lum·

·xxvj· Quod homo qunq; sensibꝫ spūs scō sibi inspiratis discernit bonū et ma

·xxvij· Quod homo anima et corpore laboret deuitare malū et facere bo nū imꝑpis et maduersis·

·xxviij· Quod humana mens debet habe re sapiemā et discretionē ad cog noscendū dm·

·xxix· Quod homo ex quatuor elemtis constans fidē catholicā equali de uotione colat·

·xxx· Quod fidelis homo ascendat de uirtute in uirtutē· ¶ uonē hōis·

·xxxj· Quod filius di missus ē immundū secm tēpus ꝓordinatū a patre· ut ꝓficeret uoluntatē patris mredep

·xxxij· Quod supbia malū uel finē ei' in opante et creatura· aut minū aut finē supne iustitie iustiq; distri bumonē uoluntatis di· nullus ho minū ꝓscrutari potest· ¶ tas·

Capmula tēpꝰ unsionis· tēpꝰ par

·j· Quod dum uirtutes sub lege pullulantes mnoua lege plu rimū fructū afferunt·

·ij· Quod uoluntate di uirtutes op amur· in hominib;

·iij· D e statu amoris celestis· discipli ne uerecundie· mitie· victorie et q̄d significet· ¶ ficet·

·iiij· D e habitu eande· et q̄d signi

Specialiū de amore ecclesie et habi .v.
tu ei et qd significet.
Specialiū de disciplina et habitu .vi.
eius & qd significet. ¶ qd signifi.
Specialiū de uerecundia & habitu .vii.
ei et qd significet. ¶ & qd signi.
Specialiū de midia & habitu ei et .viii.
Specialiū de uictoria et habitu ei .ix.
e statu patientie & gemitus & qd .x.
e habitu earundē et qd significet. .xi.
Specialiū de patientia & habitu ei .xii.
et qd significet. ¶ & qd signifi.
Specialiter de gemitu et habitu ei. .xiii.
Capitula qrte unsionis tcie
partis.
Cum austeritas legis dulcorata ē .i.
incarnatione uerbi di uirtuose
uirtuose uirtutes se ostenderīt.
Quod patriarche in misterio sig .ii.
nificabant legē uicinā ēe.
Quod fortitudini di nulla supbia .iii.
resistere potest.
Quod iustitia di metuenda ē & al .iiii.
tuido oīs creaturas excellit.
Quod uerbū di tria acumina in .v.
cidentia habet. antiquā legē.
et nouā grām. et expositores di
uinor librorū. ¶ strox.
De inicialī cognitione diuine le .vi.
gis. et de operatione cuiusdā & excq
sua sapientia pncipaliū magi
Quod ab inicio legis tēpora patri .vii.
archarū et pphārū extendit ds.
usq; ad manifestationē filii sui.
Quod patriarche et pphe cuiusdā .viii.
doctrinā ueneramur. de incar
natione filii di admiratu s.

Quod uerbū di pupū pfiguram .ix.
onis tenuit inanimab; anteq;
a primo electo usq; ad ultimū.
Quod doctrina filii egredīt a .x.
patre et reuertit ad patrē. diffun
dens se in fructū beneuolentis. sic
puriens ad ecclie doctores.
Quod pdicante xpō facti s apli .xi.
martyres. et alii electi.
Diffuso cuiusdā eloquio. extensa ē in hoīb; .xii.
sapientia diuine scripture. que
inicio minoris studii erat. et
in fine debilis. refrigescente cari
tate multorū. ¶ us.
Quod homo in principio boni .xiii.
operis debet ēe timidus. in medio
fortis et constans. in ultimo humi
Quod misteria filii di in pfun .xiiii.
dissimo secreto patris. inuenien
et nouo testamento edita. gra spūs
sci declarata s. qd in cinereo homi
ni nō nisi in umbratione ostenditur.
Desiderium di et statu ei. et qd .xv.
significet. ¶ alati sunt.
Quod angeli circa eā s. et cur .xvi.
De his qui dicunt ēpulse oues. .xvii.
Quod ds quosdā leniore quosdā .xviii.
dā fortiore flagello. q̄sdā maxi
ma etiam in mitis et corporis ē
stringit. ¶ emus.
Exemplū de pharaone et moy .xix.
se & aaron adeunde rē.
De modis castigationū et di ē .xx.
solationū. uias hominū inspici
Verba sapientie salomonis. .xxi.
Quare scientia di inspiciat ho .xxii.
mines noua uestē induitos.

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¶ paruſ.

Capitula q̄mꝫ uiſionis ꝑtic
.i. cforma cdi dī ex q̄d opē.
.ii. Quod dꝰ peccata hominū diligent
examinat aut puniendo incor
pore boīs aut inpena futuri ſcli
aut ipſe homo purgabit ꝓpter
.iii. tenciā inanima et corpore.
Verba iob de eade re.
.iiii. Qui cū timore peccam merent grā
di reſurgere ꝓpenitenciā inpur
gatione quā ſi hic plenius nō inue
nuunt aduersa. ¶ malū bono.
.v. Quomodo irracionalit̄ homi
nis bonū reſpondeat malo et
.vi. Quod homo habeat inſe duas uo
cationes una uocat̄ aduersā et al
tera admortē.
.vii. Verba pſalmiſtę de eode.
.viii. Quod mirabilia et admiranda iu
dicia cēli dī inuenit teſtimo iu
ſa ſ. ut dꝰ timeat.
.viiii. Quod dꝰ a rectitudine iudicii nec
fallacib; nec adulatoriis ſermo
nib; mouetur.
.x. Quod ſupna ultio nō excedit actus
hominū grauius iudicando. ſ
.xi. erba dauid ad eande rē. ¶ iuſte.
.xii. Quod oculi dñi uident unā quāq;
iniuſticiā puniendo ea. ita ut qua
liis humanus ſenſus iudicia dī p
ſcrutari nō poſſit. tam crimina ho
minū nō negligunt indiſcuſſa.
.xi. Quod helius dñi iuſte diiudicans
opa hominū horribilis ē omī creā
.xiii. Quod uirtutis ſēę trinitatis. inmuta
ſuauitate et recta ultione ſibi ſubi
et inter hominū ſedm diuerſita
tē unicuiſq; ipſoꝝ. ¶ caſtiganſ.
.xv. Quod helius dī primo uicit dia
bolū in xpo. deinde in electis ſu
gauit. tertio in filio ꝓdimoniſ omīno
comꝑet. uniuſq; parentis rebelliſ
.xvi. Quod induratā iuſticiā dī deſpi
cientes et admonitionē dī et ex
hortationē hominis nō recipientes.
in pdicionē abiciunt.
.xvii. Quod elemēta ēq̄runt̄ de duri
cia inpenitencię et ſup eos inun
dicta inducunt.
.xviii. Quod dꝰ ſup rabidos et p̄ſūptuo
ſe conſcienter peccantes. undicta
cain et pharaonis. et illoꝝ qui ido
lū moreb adorauerūt. et qui inicia
u ſ beelphegor inducit.
.xix. De iuſticia dī orta in abel. culta
in aliis electis ſuam in filio dī hāc
tranſgreſſā ulciſcit̄ helius dī. qui
tunc erat et nūc ē ꝑmanebit.
.xx. Qui animo more abhominatur
eccl̄am et dedicationē eccl̄ę et
res ad eccl̄ias punientes deſtruit.
helo dī deicit.
.xxi. Quod in facto iacob p̄figurabat̄
dedicatio eccl̄ę.
.xxii. Vbicūq; corpus xp̄i inmolandū
ē debet ee lapis ſignatus. eā ſi
ibi ex aliqua inpoſſibilitate tē
plū ee nō poterit. ¶ deſtr.
.xxiii. Quod ꝑplū debet habere cau
ſam conſtitutionis ſuę quę ad
here ſibi de labore ꝑpl̄i.
.xxiiii. Quomodo et qua cauſa iacob
decimas omīs ſubſtantię ſuę de
.xxv. Qui eccl̄ias deſtruunt dedicatio

nes sanguine homicidii t formica
tione pollunt· et q̄ significatiū
lapidē. in sacrificio n̄ habent· et q̄
decimas t res tēpli diripiunt· one
miseris illis·

Q ui res ecclē camb;· et porcis· idē pra xxv.vj·
uis hominib;· diuidunt· homo t sem
ex de sūmo gradu usq; ad infimū
helus di picit·

Q uomodo dē ultione sua cedit credu xxvij·
los et incredulos· T iusti iudicii·

Q ui putant se sapientes· et potestatē xxviij·
suā p iniusta iudicia eleuant· quā
miserabiliter hos zelus di excurit·

Q uod in cēlo di n̄ ē clamor· in ama xxix·
uocis·ſ;· immobilis et firma potestas

Q uod scientia in hoīe· ē quasi specu xxx·
lum· in quo latet desiderii bonū
uel mali· T suū· T in xpo·

Q uomodo ex metu p cedit timor· et xxxi·
de timore tremor· et quom̄ homo
p hec tria debet et opari q̄d iustū ē·

D e prima radice· idē discretione ho xxxij·
minis· et de igne a sup addita grā

Q uod nemo in excusatione peccati xxxiij·
sui debet mutuare contra creatorē

Capitula· Sexte ysionis· tcie
parus· V erba abstinentie· ·j·
V erba largitatis ·ij·
V erba pietatis· ·iij·
V erba ueritatis· ·iiij·
V erba pacis· ·v·
V erba beatitudinis· ·vj·
V erba discretionis· ·vij·
V erba salnationis animarū· ·viij·

Q uod nullus fideliū contēpnat ma viij·
gisterio sub ē· q̄a ea p magiste
rii israhelitici ppli intelligt p figura
bant· rectores tēporis gr̄e·

Q ue duricia legis quasi subleuata x·
ne occultaut· incarnato filii di
p gr̄am spūs scī elucidaut·

Q uod homo indignitate magiste xj·
rii fungit· uice di· T regunatur·

Q uod p ter· spūale magisteriū s̄ xij·
quida sclaris potissime maiores s·
et minores impplō· qui aburrisq;

Q uod p exterius magisteriū intel xiij·
ligitur· interius·

Q ua de causa d̄s p misit genus xiiij·
unū excellere et aliud subiacere·

V erba ysaac ad iacob de cad̄e re· xv·

h ic innuit· ordo· dn̄ani· xvj·
liberor& famulantiū·

Q uod sclares et spūales· in quantu xvij·
ordinantur·

Q uod nemo spūale aut sclarē dig xviij·
nitatē· aut p rapinā· aut p furtū·
aut p emptionē· sibi usurpet·

Q ui maturo sensu s̄· bonā consci xviij·
entiā habentes· et uolantia uerba
laudis hominū n̄ querentes· elect
one regiminis digni s̄·

Q uicūq; potestatē regiminis adi xx·
piscuntur· despicientes ut rū do· pla
cent an n̄· a facie di fugientes· in par
te diaboli s̄· quib;· n̄ resistit· ut q̄n
doq; ampliꝰ puniant·

Q uod p dicte differentie homi xxj·
nū ut fuerit· ita e& s̄ et semp erunt
p extensione humani tēporis· sedm
auctoritatē diuine prudentie·

Q uod in condītione sclarū scili xxij·
cet maior& et minor& tres partes s̄·

xxx.iij. Quod spūales magistri pplō inuuta
te fida pē dēbent.

xx.iiij Quod potestas sēcāris regiminis ex
pplis inuicē se tangant puriter in
nocentie & simplici deuotione.

xx.v. Quod inopē di sex urnule ceree
pfigurabant. ¶ qd significet.

xx.vj. Destatu abstinentie largitatis pcta
tis ueritatis pacis beatitudinis dis
cretionis saluationis animarū et
xx.vij. habitu earundē & qd significet.

xx.viij. Specialit de abstinentia et habitu
eī et qd significet.

xx.viiij. Specialit de largitate et habitu
eius et qd significet. ¶ qd signif.

xxx. Specialit de pietate et habitu eī

xxx.j. Specialit de ueritate et habitu eī
et qd significet. ¶ qd significet.

xxx.ij. Specialit de pace & habitu eī et

xxx.iij. Specialit de beatitudine & habitu
eī et qd significet.

xxx.iiij. Specialit de discretione et habitu
eī & qd significet. ¶ patris.

xxx.v. Specialit de saluatione animarū
et habitu eī et qd significet.

Capitula Septime uisionis tertie

j. Quod ineffabilis trinitas in
fine temporū declarata simplici et
humili corde a fidelibus credenda
et colenda ē neq; plus inuestigans
quā oportet quia cōprehendi nō
potest in deterī cadat.

ij. Quod in sanguine xpī mundus
saluatus ē & cultus sce trinitatis
manifestissime declaratus ē ipsa
tamē nulli intellectu patet.

iij. Quod ineffabilis trinitas omī erga
tute aptissime impio et potestate
apparet excepto incredulis cor
dib; cuncta tamē uidit incidens
gladius penetrat. ¶ nē.

iiij. Qui in expiano pplō catholice fi
dei inordinate infidelitatis ad
uersantē hos diuinitas in confu
sione succidit. ¶ ppli dicent.

v. Quod diuinitas iactanciā iudaici

vj. Quod diabolicū schisma gemulis
ppli ado abscisū uadit in pdmo

vij. Parabola adeande rē. ¶ sonar v.

viij. Verba iohis adeande rē. ¶ tē.

viiij. De differentia et unitate triū p

x. Cerib; similitudinib; adtrinita

xj. Verba de libro regū adeande rē.

Capitula Octaue uisionis tertie

partis. j. Verba humilitatis

ij. Verba carnatis. ¶ diemē

iij. Verba timoris. iiij. Verba obe

v. Verba fidei. vj. Verba spei

vij. Verba castitatis. ¶ hominū

viij. Verba gre di adammonitionē

viiij. Quod humanitas saluatoris
ecclastica edificationē sustentat
apparet in fide pplox fidelium
opatiū. ¶ festat.

x. Quod secundo uerē incarnatio
nis humanis mētib; obumbrata
ab timoribus fide et ope cognoscit
exterioribus fama & uoce mani

xj. Quod soli dō cognitū ē qr et
quales fuerit sint ut pficiatur
corpus xpī. ¶ patris.

xij. Quod oīa opa incarnati filii
di et collecto ecclē de quatuor
partib; mundi s in uoluntate

Quod inxpo omīs uirtutis acuto stu dio plenit opantē et ipso apte ma nifestant sunt. xxiij.

Quod septē uirtutis septē dona spūs scī significant.

Verba esaye de eadē re. xv.

Verba salomonis adeandē rē. xvi.

Destatu et habitu p̄dictarū uirtu tū. et q̄d significet. xvij.

Specialit̄ de humilitate et habitu eius et q̄d significet. xviij.

Specialit̄ de carnate et habitu ei⁹ et q̄d signif. xviij

~~Specialit̄ de timore dñi et habitu eius et q̄d significet.~~ xviij

Specialit̄ de timore dñi et habitu ei⁹ et q̄d significet. xx.

Specialiter de obedientia et habitu ei⁹ et q̄d significet. xxj.

Specialiter de fide et habitu ei⁹ et q̄d significet. xxij.

Specialit̄ de castitate et habitu ei⁹ et q̄d significet. xxiij.

Specialiter de grā dī et statu et habitu ei⁹ et q̄d significet. xxv.

Capitula Nonę ussionis tūcę

Verba sapientię. j.

Verba iustitię. ij. Verba fortitu

Verba scīatus quę intercepserat. iij.

Verba dextri capitis. v.

Verba sinistri capitis. vj. strat.

Quod filio dī incarnato uocato noui ppli munitione uirtutū noua constructio exorta ē. vij.

Quod ecclā luce humanitatis filii dī illustrata interiori et exteriori scientię hominū demon viij.

Quod ecclā omnē ornatū suū sponso suo reparasset. ix.

Quod potest.

Quod diuinā sapientiā in ecclā fideo ope cor hominis p̄seruari ñ x.

Quod de ecclā inscientia dī p̄co nii adhuc occultatū ē et sollerti industria doctor adp̄fectionē cotidie p̄parē ñ cessat. xj.

Quod ecclā inexpugnabiliter circūdata ē septē donis spūs scī. xij.

Quod ecclastici doctores aplica doctrina floretes unanimi opatione sua ecclām confortant. xiij

Quod doctores ecclię aduā ue ritatis fide et ope p̄duxerūt erran xiiij

Quod apli et sequaces eox scilicet aplici uiri unū tenorē habentes sponse di magna pietatis sollici tudine p̄ ēe debent. xv.

Verba salomonis adeandē xvj.

Parabola adeandē rē. xvij.

Quod carnalit̄ uiuentes ad tendant p̄sentia potestatē dī. xviij.

De diuersitate multimoda ingre dientiū ecclām et egredientiū. xix.

De symoniacis et de occultis dī uinis iudiciis sup eos. xx.

Verba petri apli de eadē re. xxj.

Quod dignitas regiminis bona xxij.

ē et adunitatē hominū ado dis posita ut p̄ ipsā discant timere dm cui qui resistit dō resistit.

De symoniacis q̄ pentiunt ubi qui ñ pentiunt. xxiij. dedit.

Quod dns nouę sponse dona scī spūs ad defensionē et ad decorē xxiiij.

De sapientia et statu et habitu eius et q̄d significet. xxv.

De statu iustitię fortitudinis xxvj.

xxviij. Specialit̄ de fide et habitu ei⁹ et q̄d significet.

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xx.viij. Specialit de fortitudine et habitu. xci. et q̄d sig̃.

et scientia et q̄d significet.

xx.vij. Specialit de iustitia et habitu c̄ et q̄d significet. ¶ et q̄d significet

xx.viij. Specialit de scientia et habitu c̄

Capitula Decime uisionis

Verba filii hois.

Quod homo habens scientia bona et

mali inexcusabilis sit. ¶ amen. xx.ij.

Admonitio ad coniugatos. ¶ tur. xx.iij.

Comparatio de agro. ¶ dem.

Quod homo non debet seruari q̄d si

bi sciendū non est sicut in exemplis pa

Quod nullus repente ua sentias ar

ripiat ut in suppositis exemplis ui

Admonitio aduersus et communi

bus qualiter scientie aggredi debe

De interiori communitate mus ut

in subiectis exemplis manifestū est

Comparatio de thesauro.

Verba constantie.

Verba celestis desiderii.

Verba cōpunctionis cordis.

Verba contemptus mundi.

Verba concordie.

Quod in altitudine iustitie et fortu

itudine donorum spūs sci opa que dñs

in hominib; operatur solidantur.

Quod omissa cho que fide et opere in

fidelib; proficiūt amori dñi diuina

pietatis coadunatur. ¶ tur.

Quod uolenter perseuerare in bono

opere filii dei regit ne cadat in erro

rem q̄ humilitate sua destruxerit mor

Quod umbra legis in natiuitate et

in passione filii dei finem accepit.

Que gessit dñs in ecclia ab hominib;

uideri et seri possunt similia autem

nisi fide et recta dilectione diuina

Quod dñs uidelicet hominem aspici

entis admonet ut imitando secu

celeste patriam petat. ¶ significet.

De statu constantie celestis desi

derii compunctionis cordis con

temptus mundi concordie et q̄d

De habitu earundem et q̄d signifi.

Specialit de constantia et statu

ei et q̄d significet. xx.iiij.

Specialit de celesti desiderio et

statu ei et q̄d significet. xx.v.

Specialit de compunctione cordis

et statu ei et q̄d significet. xx.vj.

Specialit de contemptu mundi et

statu ei et q̄d significet. xx.vij.

Specialit de concordia et statu

eius et q̄d significet. xx.viij.

Quod in uigilantie fortitudine

fidei opus bonum explanatur et imple

tione operis qua deuotione q̄sq;

dm colat ostenditur. xx.viiij.

Quod per fortitudinem fidei dñs ani

quem serpentem impfundum ecclie con

fusionis deiecit. xxx.

Pagani iudei falsi xpiani uera

fide abnegantes in potestate dñi s;

quamuis ab ecclia que mala posita

et electi sint. xxx.j. ¶ us.

Verba tobie ad eandem rem. xxx.ij.

Quod dñs ecclam ab omnib; par ub;

mundi collectam secm q̄d p̄destina

uit ad effectum confuso diabolo p

ducit q̄d in nouissimo die.

Capitula xcj uisionis tricie par

Decq̄nq; ferocissimis curs ib;

tēpoſaliū regnoꝝ· xv·
De cane igneo q̄d ſignificet· xv·
De fuluo leone q̄d ſignificet· xv·
De equo pallido q̄d ſignificet· xv·
De nigro porco q̄d ſignificet· v·
De griſeo q̄d ſignificet· lupo xv·
De colle q̄nq; apices habente & de quinq; fumb; beſtiarū q̄d ſignificet·
Verba Iob adeande rē· viij· viij·
Quod ecclā adp̄fectionē ſuā fulget in decore iuſticie uſq; ad tēp̄ amī xp̄i·
Quod tunc fides ecclē q̄ſi in dubio ē· x·
p̄ter teſtimoniū enoch & helie· xj·
Quod amī finē mundi teſtimonio eorundē ſponſus ecclē candidiſſime fulgebit de uicto filio p̄dmo nis et manifeſta fide uerſatus· xij·
Verba dauid adeandē rē· xiij·
Quod ecclā refrigeſcente iuſticia· multas et diuerſas paſſiones et p ſecutiones lāmabilit̄ ſuſtinebit·
Quod amī xp̄e horribili tūrore fide xiiij·
les dilanians ſeuorē ſuū crudelita tis et inſaniā mordacitatis ſuę hoīb; infundit· xv·
Quod filius p̄dmonis q̄ſ blandicus ñ poteſt crudeliſſimis p̄ſecutionib; incuruare tēptabit· xvj·
Quod ecclā inconſūmatione mundi nobiliſſimo ſanguine p̄funde tur· uſq; ad duos teſtes uernans· xvij·
Quod noſ in ſeptimo millenario ſumus tranſactis ſex· quntur· xviij·
Qua de cauſa d̄s noua ſecreta & multa miſtica hactenus latentia p̄ ñ loquentē et indoctū modo lo
Exhortatio d̄i addoctoreſ ne hc xix·

ſermonē ſpernant· ſ; uelut uncto rioſiſſimū uexillū contra filiū in quantus eleuent· tēpore· xx·
Verba ſp̄e ad ecclām de nouiſſimo
Euangeliū de eode· xx·i·
Quod turbato orbe· quatuor· de mēta abluunt· et ecclā in filius ſu iſ inplebit· ne m̄bra deſint capti·
Quod curſus mundi nē in ſeptimo numero ē· & poſt labore ſigilla ſcripturarū aper & lenitet· ut in hoc libro· p̄ferunt· et aliuſ nume rus ñ ē q̄d ſup ē homini ſciendū ñ ē·
Quare d̄s filiū ſuū uoluit incarnari· in fine tēporū· xv·v·
De carne xp̄o· et marte ei· xv·vi·
Quod amarte magiſtras arūb; in ſtructus· in diuerſis creaturis uo luntate ſuā p̄miſſione di exercet
De poteſtate ei· & diuerſis miracu lis que facere uidet· xv·viij·
Verba moyſi de uiſione d̄i· xv·ix·
Quod quida adiabolo decepti· portenta in creaturis fallaciter oſtendunt· ſ; eas maliū modū tūs mutare ñ poſſunt· xxx· ſit·
Qua diuerſo modo amī xp̄e ſu oſ decipiat· et cur hoc illi p̄miſſū
De ſimulata morte amī xp̄i· et de ſcriptura maledictionis qui hunc contra dixerit oo ccidetur·
Verba iobiſ· reſeruata ſunt· xxx·ij·
De enoch et elia q̄ſ ad id tēpus xxx·iij·
Verba illoꝝ ad filios d̄i· xxx·iiij·
De ueriſ ſignis illoꝝ quib; falſa amī xp̄i abiciant· xxx·v·
Quod p̄miſſione d̄i conſūmata xxx·vj·

mercedē labor suor consequent.

xxx.viij. Quod oīa mbra ecclē exp̄sūptuo
sa arrogantia amixēpi tremore
concutiunt̄. putamus se posse pene
trare secreta celestia. ℣ redeamt.

xxx.xij. Quod potestas dī manifesta uirtut
filiū pdmonis admodū diabolu
mctua damnatione pterunt.

xxx.ix Quod infernalis fetor et nebula lo
cū demonis illi replebit. ut decepti

xl Quod filio pdmonis pfrtim sponsa
xp̄i candore mire pulcritudinis
claritatis ecclē. et tam ab aduā uerita
tis redeunt. ℣ n dñs.

xl.j. Quod diē iudicii nemo scire potest

xl.ij. Exemplū de samsone. ℣ us.

Capitula xii. mē usionis tuic par

.l. Quod nouissimo tēpore
mundus multis calamitat; ut ho
ra hora mortis dissolut̄. ii.

Quod oīs creature repente et cō
mouent̄ et q̄cq̄d macie t maqua
tuūa mortale ē. uitā reddit et
q̄d fecundatus ē meis euanescit. iij

Quod corpora mortuor ubicūq;
fuerint in integritate corporis
et sexus sui resurgunt. ℣ tuū.

.iiij. De signatis et nō signatis resurgen

.v. Quod filiꝰ cui pat̄ potestatē dedit
iudicii facere in forma humani
tatis ad iudicii uenit. vi.

Euangeliū de eodē. vij.

Quod signati obuiā iusto iudici
nō indifficultate celeriter rapiunt̄
et opa eor apparebunt. viij.

Quod oīs flores di. idē pa
triarche. pphē. apli martyres. con
fessores. uirgines. et monachi. et
alii p̄ posse fulgebunt. ix.

Quod ecclia in tm laudes suas in
silentio commend. cū filiꝰ sermo
nē iudiciale p̄ferat. conscientia
singulor aptā. x

.xj. Debonis et malis q̄ iudicandi s
Dem fidelib; q̄ iā iudicati adiu
dicū nō p̄cipiunt. xij.

Quod finito iudicio maxima
quies et tranquillitas exorit̄. xiij.

Quod electos gr̄a cōmutat; cū mag
nis laudib; recipit. s; reprobos infer
nus magno ululatu absorbet. xiiij.

Euuangeliū de eodē. xv.

Quomodo elemēta. et sol et luna.
et stelle finito iudicio. in melius
mutant̄. et nox nō erit.

Verba nobis de eodē. xvi.

Capitula tuic decimē usionis
tuic partis.

Symphonia de scā maria. j.

.ij. De nouē ordinib; supnor spūū.
De patriarchis et pphetis. iij.
iiij. De apl̄is. v De martyrib; ℣ dus ē.
vi De confessorib; vij. De uirginib;
.viij. Vox armonie inquerelis de reuo
catis ad eos dē gradus. viij. tuū.
In exhortatione uirtutū. et in
contradictione diabolicar̄ ar
x Quod de ineffabili gr̄a sua cor
de et ore dñi inestimabilit̄ laudan
.xj. Quod symphonia inunanimi
tate et concordia p̄ferenda ē.
.xij. Quod uerbū corpus. symphonia
mia autē spūm. et armonia diui
nitatē. uerbū uero humanitatē

filu designat· xvij· ¶ diu·

Quod psÿmphonia rationalis mens torpens anima excitat· adunglan

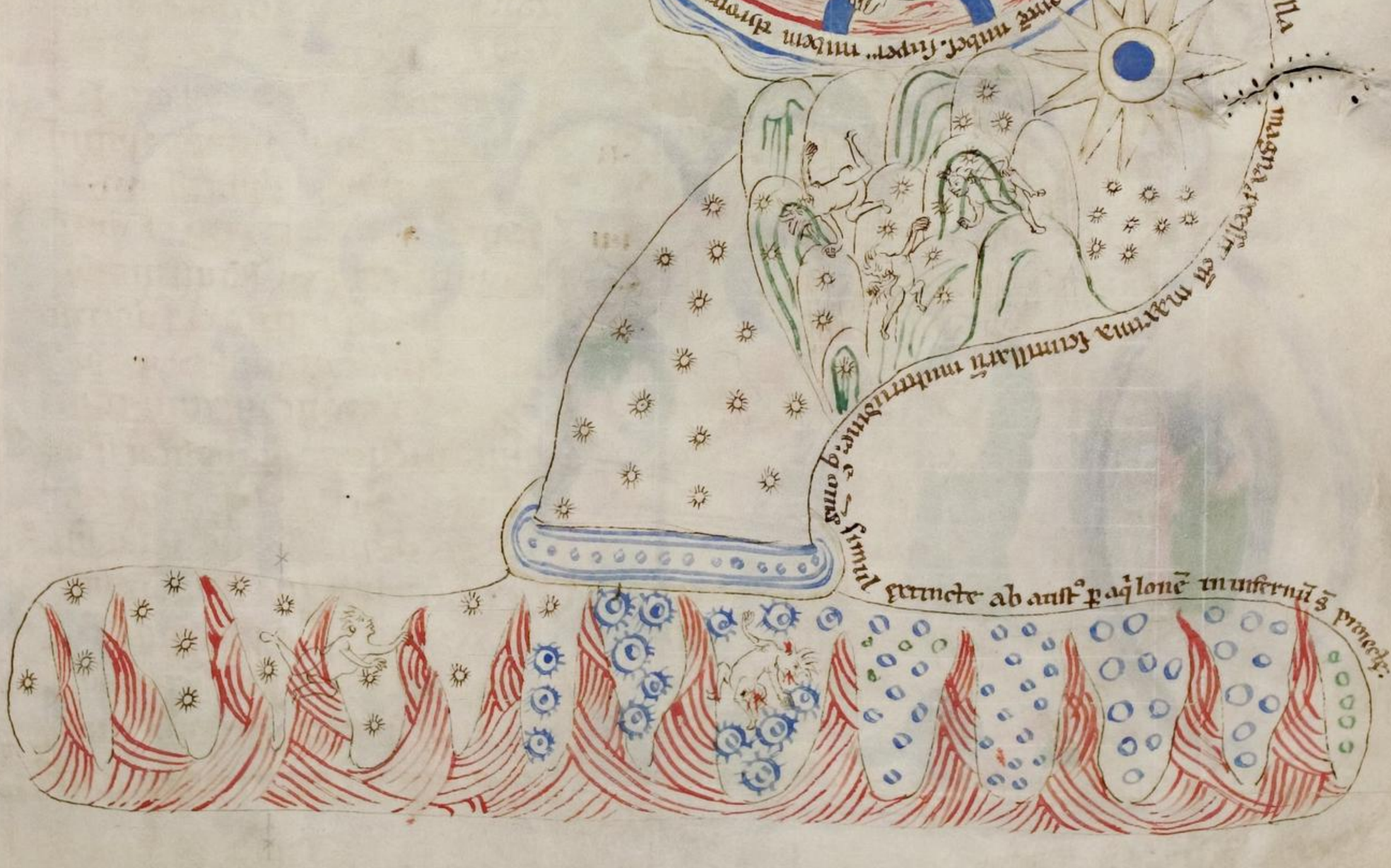
Quod symphonia dura corda emol· xviij·
lit et humore compunctionis in
ducit et spm scm aduocat· xv·

Quod fidelis omi deuotione incef
santer iubilare debet· ¶ cunas· xvi

Verba dauid de tade re· xvij·

Explicuit capla tcie partis libri

Explicuit capla libri cunas sim
plicis hominis·



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In circulo sup̄ mon̄ē edificiū quadrangulū ad similitudinē urbis quadrangule factum. aliq̄ diuersum in edificijs posuit ymaginē.

Regis ymaginē in sessione ut parce.

Vna ymago cum corona

Abraham ymaginē

Sedet communiter

Hunc h' edificiū ymagines stare singli in singlo arcu. desup ēmū comū habentes.

Et ecce homo sumpta.

abaliis hominib; que ñ sũ digna nominari homo. ppt̃ transgressio nẽ legis di. cũ debere ẽ ee iusta et sim iniusta. nisi q̃d di creatura sũ ipsius grã. que me eiã saluabit. uidi adorientẽ. et ecce illic con spexi uelut lapidẽ unũ totũ in tegrũ. immise lamuidinis atq; alu tudinis. habentẽ ferreũ colorẽ. et sup ipsũ candidã nubẽ. ac sup eã positũ regalẽ thronũ rotundũ. in quo sedebat q̃da iuuenis luci dus mirabilis glẽ tamq; clarita tis. ut nullatenus eũ ꝑspicue pos sem intueri. habens quasi in pecto re suo lumũ nigrũ et tumulentũ. tamq; lamuidinis ut alicui magi hominis pectus ẽ. circũdatũ la pidib; pciosis atq; margaritis. et de ipso lucido sedente in throno. ꝓcedebat magnus circulus au rei coloris ut aurora. cuius amplitu dinẽ nullom cõphendere potui. gyrans aboriente ad septentrionẽ. et ad occidentẽ atq; ad meridiẽ. ita se reflectendo adorientẽ ad ipsũ lucidũ. nec habens ullũ finẽ. et ide circulus erat aũa tamq; al tudinis. ut eã cõphendere ñ pos sem. ex se reddens splendorẽ ualde horribilẽ. sicut lapides calibei. et ignei coloris. undiq; sedim amplitu dinẽ suã sursũ in altitudinẽ ẽdi et deorsũ in profundũ abyssi ita se extendentẽ. ut nullũ finẽ ei uidere posse. Vidi eiã tunc de secreto eidẽ sedentis in throno stellã magnã multa splendoris ac decoris ꝑdite. cui eã plurimã multitudinẽ can dentiũ scintillariũ. que cũ eadẽ stella omis confluentes adaustrũ in spiciebant ipsũ sedentẽ in throno quasi alienũ. seq; abeo auertentes magis inhiabãt adaquilonẽ. quã eũ inspicere uellent. S; statim in ipsa auersione inspectionis sue omis extincte s. sic uerse in nigre dinẽ carbonũ. Et ecce uentus turbinis ortus ẽ abipsis. qui eas mox abaustro retro eundẽ se dentẽ in throno ꝓiecit adaquilonẽ. ꝑcipitatas in abyssũ. ita ut earũ amplius nullã uidere ualerẽ. Splendorẽ autẽ illũ magnũ qui eas abstractus ẽ. iudi subito in earũ extinctione reuerti ad ipsũ sedentẽ in throno. Et audi ui eundẽ q̃ sedebat in throno mi dicentẽ. Scribe que uides et audis. Et respondi de interiori scientia eidẽ uisionis. Rogo te mi dñe ut in des intellectũ. qũ nus possim enarrabiliter ꝓferre hec mistica et ne derelinquas me. s; confirma me in aurora tue iustitie. in qua manifestar

ē filius tuus· et da m̄ q̄uom̄ possim· ac
qualit̄ debeā ꝓferre diuinū consiliū·
q̄d mamq̄uo consilio ordinauī ē·
quom̄ eundē filiū tuū uoluisti in
carnari· ita ut homo subtēpore fie
ret· hoc uolens ante omnē creatu
rā insimplicitate tua et inigne co
lumbe scilicet spūs sēi· ut idē filius
tuus quasi splendida solis forma
mirabilit̄ surgens· in principiente
capite uirginitatis ueracit̄ indu
eret̄ humanitate· supra hominis
forma ꝓpt̄ hominē· Et tuerū audi
ui eū dicentē m̄· O quā pulchri s̄
oculi tui in diuina narratione·
dū ibi surgit aurora in diuino ēsi
lio· Et tuerū respondi· de interiori
scientia uisionis ipsius· Ego appa
reo in sinu animi mei ut cum isce
re ꝓuideris· et sicut puluis in
stabilitatis· unde sedeo pauens in
umbra sicut penna· s; ne deleas me
de tua inuentū ut ꝓgrinū· quia
in magno sudore laboro in hac u
sione· et q̄a etiā de culpate mee stul
ta sensus q̄ mis ē in carne cōputo me
frequentit̄ in numerū et in ultissimū
locū· ita q̄d nō sim digna uocari
homo· quia ualde timeo nō au
dens dicere tua misteria· O bone ac
mitis pat̄· doce me q̄d tuę uolun
tatis sit· q̄d dicere debeā· O tu me
tuende pat̄ et o tu dulcissime et
o tu plene omnis grē· nederidq̄s
me· s; conserua me in tua mitia·
Et tuerū audiui eundē m̄ dicentē·
Nunc dic ut docta es· Volo ut di
cas· quāius eris· Die reuelatio
nē panis qui filius dī ē· q̄ uita ē
in igneo amore ut delicet omnē
mortuū suscitare in anima et cor
pore· et dissoluta peccata relaxa
re in serena claritate· ipse in meū
suscitationis scēntis in homine ex
istens· ante quā in illo ex suscitet·
Vnde etiā magnificus et glōsus ac
incōpēhensibilis ds dedit magnū
instrumentū· in quens eundē filiū
suū in pudicicia in uirginitate· q̄
nō potuit habere ullā uaricatē ma
cularū in sua uirginitate unde ip
sa mollirēt· ibi nō potuit· nec eē de
buit ulla pollutio carnis in mente
uirginis· q̄a infectrix et mortifi
catrix mors generis humani ipsā
met nescientē ut in somno decepta
ē· q̄ndo filiꝰ di in magno silentio
uenit· in aurorā in diuinū puellā· O ors q̄si secura ꝓces
sit· nescius in quā illa dulcis
uirgo portauit· q̄a sibi erat ab
sconsa ei⁹ uirginitas· Ipsa enī ui
go erat in pauperculis reb;· q̄a diui
na maiestas eā ita inuenire uolu
it· Nunc scribe de uera agnitio
ne creatoris in bonitate ipsius sic·
s; qui cuncta creauit et homi
nē ad glām illā de qua ꝓdit
angls; cū suis imitatoribus; precipuis
ē ordinauit· a bonitate creatura
sua maximo honore et amore
ueneranduis et metuenduis ē· q̄a
iustū ē ut creatori omnium uene
ratio· a creatura sua exhibeat̄· et

dꝫ sup oīa fidelissime adorēt·Qđ
ē lapis iste quē uides certissime de
signat·Ipse ē enī in ministerio magnitu
do uoluntatis dñi·qui purissima uolun
tate in cordib; fideliū semp oriri
et pseuerare debet·S;qđ eū uides to
tū integrū et inmīse latitudinis atq;
altitudinis·habentē ferreū colorē·
hoc ē qđ eadē firma et grandis mag
nitudo uoluntatis dñi firmissime te
nenda ē·quia dꝫ metuendus ē ab
oīi creatura integra integritate ut
cognoscat̄ unus et uerus dꝫ ē·cui
nullus pter eū ē·nec similis illi·inq;
ē inmīsa latitudo·quo incōprehensibi
lis ē in oīb; et sup oīa·et altitudo·
cui scām duuinitatē nullus cōpreh
dere nec adeā pingere cū altitudi
ne sui sensus potest·quia ipsa est
sup oīa·Qđ autē ē similitudinis
ferrei coloris·hoc ē qđ oneroſū et
durū ē humanis membris·dm ume
re·illud ualde graue existens mol
licia fragilis carnis·qa humana
creatura ipsi rebellis ē·Sup lapi
dē uero ipsū candida nubes·clara
sapientia humane mīis ē·ac sup
eā positus regalis thronus rotun
dus·ē forus et principalis fides·cir
cuiens in xpiano pplo·cui dꝫ fide
liter consciꝰ ē·qua ubi uoluntas
dñi radicat·ibi eā sapientia hu
mane mīis sup apparebit·et de
inde dō adiuuante fides sup hanc
ponet̄·in qua ipse dꝫ sibi requiē
parat·Cui enī dꝫ unet̄ p sapientiā
humane mīis in fide intelligim⁹:
qua cū bis tangendus ē·ut sedes tan
quā dñm suū·et tunc in his dꝫ parat
sibi sedē existens sūmus sup oīa·qa
neq; potestate neq; dīnatione cōp
hendi potest·ſ;resident unica et
pura fide quo unus ē·qui credendus
ē dꝫ sup oīa· Vnde sedens in umbro
no uidens lucidus·mirabilis glē tan
teq; claritatis ut nullatenꝰ eū pspicue
possis intueri·habens quasi in pecto
re suo lumē mgrū et humilitatē·tan
te latitudinis·ut alicuius magni
hoīs pectus ē circūdatū lapidib;
p̄ciosis atq; margaritis·est sup oīa
regnans uiuus dꝫ·lucens in bonita
te et mirabilis in opib; suis·cuiꝰ in
mensā claritatē in pfunditate mi
steriū suū nullus hoīm pfecte po
test inuenire nisi in q̄ntū fide cōp
hendit̄ atq; portat̄·sicut sedes con
tinet ac circūdat dnm suū·Que
ut illi subiecta ē·ita qđ nec se ele
uare possit contra dñm suū·sic fi
des nr̄a desiderat supbe aspicere in
dm·ſ;tamē in tota deuotione tan
git eū· Et q̄si in pectore suo idē
in sapientia misterii sui habet p
amorē filii sui infirmū et debilē
ac paupē humanū hominē·in mgrū
in mgredine peccatoꝝ et humilen
tū in pollutione carnis·et clarū
secm̄ similitudinē pectoris hoīs·
qđ ē dilatatio pfunde et magne
sapientie in qua ipse dꝫ creauit
hominē·illos respiciens qui s in
saluatione anime p penitentiā·
in qualicūq; crimine contra dm

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113°

sunt in sua debilitate calcitramus-
quia tam̄ ad eū puenient. Hi s̄ circū
dam cū pluribꝫ ornamēt illoꝝ qui
inter eos surgunt ut lapides p̄ciosi
in magnis p̄sonis q̄ s̄ martyres ac ·v·
uirgines s̄c̄e tus. et ut margarite
que s̄ innocentes & penitentes filii
redēptionis. cū quibꝫ idē lum̄ualde
ornatus ē. dū inhumano corpore
fulgent tanq̄ uirtutes. que in do
s̄ fulgentes in omī claritate. Ita q̄
construunt spiraculū et unitā homi
nū. ille inspexit semetipsū. Quom̄-
scilicet cū redēptione. dū p̄sentit
in sua p̄destinatione filiū suū incar-
nari. ita q̄d in ei corpore deberet
abstergi omis maculosa uarietas
criminū. et sic uidet etā animas
que iustificabunt post multiplica
tionē supfluoꝝ peccatoꝝ. dū adhuc
in corporibꝫ suis s̄. et que consue
erant iniustitia dī ambulare post
diuersitatē errorꝝ suoꝝ qualit̄ con
sistant in do. ac qualit̄ desistant de
multa oblitione. et quom̄ reuer-
tant̄ de uno quoq; uicio cū quo
s̄ uulnerate inmortalibꝫ ubi ceci
derunt in peccatis. sicut s̄ inspici
entes. q̄d multi ppli surrexerunt
de erratibꝫ uis in quibꝫ ambula
bant. plenis uulneribꝫ. in plagis pes
simis. restaurati de morte fedita
tis criminū. sicut etā multi uen-
nium qui in amaritudine acerbi
doloris peccati tā grauit̄ s̄ uulne
rati. q̄d ipsi etā in consuetudine
malox morū in quibꝫ supra modū

peccauerit. s̄ ita tedioси. q̄d ñ pos
sunt amplius spirare influuijs. ad
opandū mortiferū opus. in adulte
rio et homicidio. et supfluitate om
niū maloꝝ. O miseri. nūne uenium
ipsi quasi pegrini de longinqua
regione. sicut scriptura habet in
euglio ubi adolescentior filius dix̄.
surgā et ibo ad patrē meū et dicā
illi. Pat̄ peccaui in cēlū & coram te.
iā ñ sū dignus uocari filius. fac me
sicut unū ex mercennarijs tuis.
Hoc tale ē. Homo qui delapsu pec
cati p admonitionē sp̄s sancti reuer-
titur in se. dicit. Uolo surgere de
importabilibꝫ peccatis que ame
nullatenus s̄ sustinenda de graui
culpa. s. reuertar in recordatione
mea. plangens ac merens peccata
mea sic ueniens ad patrē meū. q̄
pater mis ē quō creauit me. et di
cā illi. Pat̄ peccaui in cēlū idē in
celesti ope q̄d ego sū. qui me for-
mastī in uoluptate tua. me sic
tangendo in certatione hac. q̄d ego
etā cēlestis debui ēe machibꝫ mea. s.
feci me commaculū cū turpissimis op
ibus. peccatis etā corā te. quia huma
nā naturā destruxi in me. Quomodo.
In multis abhominationibꝫ. Ideo sū
et ego reus in mea p̄dmone & in tua
maiestate. et ñ sū dignus nominari
filius tuus. quia p̄p̄t nequitiā cor-
dis mei creaturā tuā in me dex̄i in
aliū modū. quā ante constitisti-
s̄. nunc fac in te tuo recoempto ser-
uo cū mercede sanguinis filii tui. q̄

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ipsū dedisti unamā mercede quā
mors nūquā rependere potuit ul
la recompensatione·ſ; dimittit pec
catores ꝓpenitenciā·que in passio
ne cōde filii tui orta ē·ꝗa rectā he
reditatē filioꝝ amisi madā·qui ere
amus filius inustitia destituī ē glā
felicitatis·Nunc autē debet pēi
tentia redimere hominis peccata·
cū sanguine filii tui·Istud ē dicen
dū illis q̄ putant casū ade·et post
hec reuertuntur ꝓpenitenciā·sic pun
gentes ad saluationē·et memores s̄
quod multas causas audierūt que
descripturis s̄ narrande et de cru
ciatu & de sanguine redemptoris ex·
et recordantur gementes q̄d transgres
si s̄ cū audirent·q̄d cū studio debuer
ꝓpe·uidelicet quomodo seruarent
uerbū dī·cū ipsi negligerent legē
eius que eis erat instituta a deo sto di
endū in constitutione p̄cepti·recu
santes inspicere ~~q̄d deberent facere~~
~~uel~~ q̄d deberent facere uel q̄d debe
rent dimittere ꝓpt̄ timorē dn̄i·
qui tam uenium aduertantē re
cordantes ea que audierūt uel sci
uerūt adō quāuis prius ita cecati
essent·q̄d omnino nolebant scire
iustitiā ipsius·ut se ad hoc quicq̄m
declinarent·q̄d ipsā ꝓponerent
peccatis suis·cū spernerent eā·et cū
recederent retro uerbū dī·respuen
tes legē ei⁹·Multi de istis erūt sup ha
bundantes in bonis·ita ut nec sacia
entur·nec eis sufficiat epulari in
domo dī celebrando diuinū offi
cū·et opando iustitiā ei⁹ sup habun
dantes·ita q̄d semp̄ s̄ flentes et me
mores in dolorib⁹ malox que fecerūt
inanie achis reb⁹ dū colebant illicita
opa·transeuntes ucrita legis dī· Istud ·vi·
ē lumen luminis·quē uides in pectore
pii patris·Quomodo·filio dī qui de
corde patris exiuit uemens in mun
dū·adē credens ꝓpt̄s·adherens ipsi
hac inuentione qua creditur in eū·cer
te ꝓpter ea sic etiā istu apparent in
pectore pii patris·ut ñ spnat angl⁹
nec ulla creatura hominē qui sūmi
dī filius incarnatus habet formā
hominis in semetipso·quō beatus
angelicus chorus indignū habe
ret hominē ꝓpt̄ magnā feditatē
uiciox in peccatis ei⁹·cū ipsi supni
angeli inuiolabiles sint ulla disp
sione iniustitie·nisi q̄d acutissime
uident faciē patris·Et q̄d amāt apa
tie·hoc etiā amant ipsi in filio·Quom⁹·
Scilicet q̄d idē dī filius natus ē ho·
Nā ego pat̄ eundē filiū meū excur
gine natū posui in saluationē et in
restauratione hoīs·ut dicit esayas
ꝓpha seruus mis·Sicut pastor ·vij·
gregē suū pascet in brachio suo
congregabit agnos·et in sinu suo
leuabit·fetas ipse portabit·Hoc
tale ē·Sicut pastor gregē suū pas
cit·sic pascet filius mis pastor bon⁹
redemptū gregē suū·Quom⁹·Ipse pas
cit eū sua lege·quā ipse met ꝓme
plantauit·Unde etiā in sua excel
sa potestate ut in brachio suo·scili
cet q̄d idē filius mis ē homo·congre

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leuabit ipsas in uiuentibus suis

gabit innocentes agnos de culpa
ade; pinnocentiā baptismi cū eis ex
uuit ueus homo cū opib; suis. et in
lege sua-misimū suū-Quomodo-ījde
uerit qa leuauit eos sup excelsa celox
talium q̄d fiunt mbra ei-Qua ppter
sic immersionī secretu dīam appa
ret homo informa sua-q̄d nec an
gli faciunt nec ulla alia creatura-
quia ide unigenitus mis ppter re
demptionē humani generis uuurgi
nea carne formā assūpsit hoīs-Ip
se portabit etiā has fetas incorde
suo-Quom-Ipse filius mis portat ho
mines in sanguine suo-sic q̄d saluu
facti s ppquinq; uulnera ei-qa q̄d
cūq; peccauerint ppquinq; sensus
suos-hoc abstergēt psūmā iustitiā
post penitentiā-quo ipsemet eos
ita portauit q̄d incarnatus ē-et
q̄d passus ē uulnera in cruce-et q̄d
mortuus et sepultus ē-et q̄d amor
tuus resurrexit-Ipse portauit etiā
eis manū suā-cū eos retraxit adse-
Quom-Scilicet q̄d ide filius mis as
sūpsit humanitatē pillis-qui pu
tabant se pdītos ēe ppter casū ade-
Ide unigenitus mis uenit etiā mor
tē-sic q̄d n potuit amplius dnari
sup eos-Vnde et ipse nouit eos ita
muruure clamantes sue-ut uenia
ri s inpurgatione penitentie-Qd
autē eos uidet in sinu patris appa
rere-hoc ē q̄d filius hominis pficit
tur cū membris suis in secretu pa
tris-Quom-Cū enī mundus cōple
bit-tunc electi etiā xpi qui mbra

ipsius s-pficiunt-Oquā pulcher-
ille filii ē-ut psalmista dicit-viij-
Speciosus forma pfilius homi
nū-Hoc tale ē-Pulcherrima
pulchritudo fulget in eo clarissi
me forme-sine ulla macula pecca
ti-et absq; liquore humani fe
ris-et sine ulla concupiscentia fac
tu opis indesiderius peccatoꝝ-que
exigit caro humane infirmitatis-
Hoc nūquā tetigit hunc hominē-
Et tale forma filii hominis nata
ē in simplicitate pālis hominib;
ita q̄d illesa uirgo genuit eundē
natū suū in ignorantia peccati-
se nescientis in erūna habere filiū-
Quom-Quo n sensit ullū contactū
opus inpeccatis-ido ignorabat se
habere dolorē in partu-s; intus in
ea corporis sui integritas gaude
bat-Oquā speciosa forma-S; nonī
sit hominib;-q̄d ibi carnalis pul
chritudo maior in erat nisi ut or
dinatio pfunde sapientie; consti
tuit formā hoīs-qa patri et filio
et sps sc̄s unus ds inuisib; psonis-n
delectat in pulchritudine carnis-
s; in magna humilitate-ut ide fi
lius di se induit humanitate-In
forma autē ei de filii hoīs n erat
ulla maculositas-ut aliq̄ndo dif
fundit homo molesta facie indi
uersitate corporū-q̄d ē iudicio
di-scilicet cū mbra hoīs diuisa s
n recte ordinata ut debilitū-q̄d
n ē secūm naturā formationis in
corpore hoīs s; secūm iudicium di-

xiiij

ct forus quidē natura exiſtit inrecta
formatione infirma autē deflunt in
diuerſitatē formationiſ comparię
formę·q̄d nō erat opus huic homini
filio meo·S;inquā magna diuerſi
tate ſunt hoīes inſuiſ mbriſ ma q̄d
ipſi ſ nigri·fedi·pollini·lepſi·idro
pici ct plenu uicuſ·habemuſ cuā ru
bigine maleficu inſuaſione diabo
lice aruſ·ct inſipientiſ·ędurī uide
re bona dñi·ct accuſandi aliq; cul
pandi demul ta obliuione·q̄d
iuſticiā debuerīt opari ct
opatiē malū·ac diminuum·bo
nū·deſpicientiſ crucē ct marturiū
dñi ſui·dę pat inſpicit tamē inintion
tione ſuę bonitatiſ factū opuſ de
mo·ſicut pat respicit adfiliоſ ſu
oſ dū eoſ eleuat inſinū ſuū·ct quō
ipſe dę ē·habet patriſ dilectionē
adfiliоſ ſuoſ·Tali m ē eni ſibi uniri
or dilecto cordiſ adhominеſ·q̄d
filiū ſuū miſit adcrucē·quaſi agnū
manſuetū qui portat aduchimā
occidenduſ·ita q̄d idē filiſ reporta
uit pdictā ouē quā tulit ſup hume
rū ſuū aſſūpta humanitate·in mag
nis eā portans doloriб; cū dignat
eſt mori pounb; ſuis·In eiſdē autē
hominib; ſ multa circūdata cū or
natū·qui decorau ſ pcioſo orna
tu uirtutū·qui ſ martyres·uirgi
neſ·innocentеſ·ct penitentеſ·ac ſub
iecti magiſtriſ ſuiſ ut p̄dictū eſt·
ct qui ſibi ipſiſ conſcii ſ incrimi
nib; ſuis·inbiſſe cruciantеſ cū in
expugnabili certamine·dū negaꝝ
inſemetipſis q̄d ſ·Ibi nō ē dicendū
qui ſ uel ubi ſ electi·nā omſ cōpu
tati ſ·Quiſ ē cui possibile ſit uidere
inpfunda ſapientiā altiſſimi·ct
indiſcretionē ſcientię ei·quid ipſe
habeat innumero numeratoꝝ·In cō
phensibilia ſ iudicia ei omīb;·hom
nib;·Uobiſ currendū ē·q̄a paratū ē
uobiſ regnū dī·Nā ſecm ſtudiū fi
delū opamū iuſticiā dī qui ſ ab
lum inbapriſmo cognitiq;·infide·
taliſ eiā merces erit exꝝ· Quod au
tē uidiſ q̄d deſederit inthrono
prendit magnuſ circuluſ auru
coloriſ ut aurora·cui amplitudi
nē nullom cōphendere potiſ·hoc
eſt q̄d ab omīpotentе patre excen
dit fortiſſima poteſtaſ·ct firmiſ
ſimū opuſ ei omīa cōphendens in
potentia ipſius cū qua ē opans in
filio ſuo·quē ſemp inmaieſtate di
nitatiſ apud ſe habuit·p eū or
dinans ac pficiens omīa opa ſua an
te mundū·ct inmundo abinicio·
qui pulcherrimi fulgoriſ uelut
aurora rubet·quia idē filiuſ inſa
pientiſſima uirgine q̄m aurora
ſignificat incarnatuſ ē inſpiratio
ne digna dī·qui ſpūſ ſcūſ ē·inquo eiā
factū ē omē opuſ patriſ·Hui gle
circumū nulla ratione cōphendere
ualeſ·q̄a nec ipſius poteſtati nec opi
ulla ē mſura ulliuſ bonitatiſ uel
poteſtatiſ adillā mensurā q̄ę ſit
uel fuerit uel fieri debeat nulla
creatura·niſi q̄d dę ē inestimabi
liſ et incōphensibiliſ in poteſtate

s viij·
s
s
s
s
s
s

sua· et mundus ac mirabilis in ope
·x· suo· Et dē circulus girans ab ori
ente ad septentrionē et ad occiden
tē atq; ad meridiē se reflectendo
ad orientē ad ipsū sedentē imbro
no nec habens ullū finē· hoc ē q̄d
potestas ac opus dī circuitus cō
prehendendo omnē creaturā· Quo
modo· Īnuoluntate patris qui
cū filio et spū scō dꝰ unus ē ortꝰ
s omīs creaturę· quę omīs semunt
cū in potestate· Quomodo· Omīs s
cū incertatione senescentes· scilicet
giramē aborientē q̄d ē mortu oīs
iustitię· et tendentē ad septentrio
nē in confusionē diaboli· et ad occ
identē ubi tenebre mortis lucē
unę uolunt opprimere luce tam
en rū resurgente de uicta tenebra
rū caligine· et ad meridiē ubi ar
dens ardor· ē iustitię dī in cordib;
fideliū· sic se recurruando ad ortū
iustitię quasi adorientē· Quid ē
hoc· Dū p̄sūma potestate opus dī
scdm p̄ordinatiōē ad ō tēpus cōple
tū fuerit in hominib; in mundo·
tunc etiā implebit̄ circuitus eiꝺe
mundi p̄fectus in fine tēporis cū
nouissimo die· et refulgebunt in
sedente imbrono oīa opa sua in
electis ei· n̄ habentia finē· qua dꝰ in
tegr· ē in potestate ac in ope suo·
qui erat et ē et p̄manebit absq;
ulla inceptione ulli· tēporis indi
uisitate· ita q̄d n̄ fuerit sed est·
·xj· ⁊ Et q̄d idē circulus ē aīa tamę
⁊ altitudinis ut eā cōprehendere

n̄ possit· hoc ē q̄d supna potestas ita
excelsa ē sup oīs unas creaturarū in
sensu et intellectu hoīs et ita in cō
prehensibilis in omīb; et sup oīa· q̄d
nulla creatura eā possit finire ul
lo capaci sensu· nisi ipsa sit multo
altior· quā et secundū sit· Vnde eiā
angli frequenter sonant dīm in laudib;
Ipsi enī uident eū in sua potestate
et gla· s; n̄ possunt eū p̄fecte uidere
quasi ad finē· nec unquā ualent sa
turari tā magni tudine quā
·xij· pulchritudine q̄· Quod
autē esse reddit splen dorē
ualde horribilē scilicet lapidea cali
bea et ignea coloris· hoc ē q̄d diui
na potestas esse demonstrat uir
tutē in magna seueritate contra
dissimilatā et impenitentē ac in
punitā iniquitatē formidabilē·
et uidit calibeū· q̄a dꝰ ē p̄spicua
iustitia quę n̄ habet ullā iustitiā
cedentis mollitiei quoꝺ puluis·
ut dicit̄ hoc iniustū iustū ē· q̄d do
n̄ placet· s; ipse ē illa iustitia quę
quasi calibe confirmauit omnē re
liquā iustitiā· quę multo fragilior·
ē iustitia ipsius· quā ferrū calibe
stit· et eā quasi igneū· q̄a ipse ē iu
dicialis ignis cōburens peccatū in
omni iniustitia quę se nūquā de
clinare uoluit ad illū querens mi
tiam ei· Est eiā dꝰ quasi lapis in
homine· quō ipse ē uerus et iustus
absq; ulla mutatione· q̄a ut lapis
immollitiē n̄ potest conuerti· ita
n̄ habet ille ulla mutatione· et ē

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uelint calibs scilicet in pspicuitate
pransiens oña absq; ulla mutatio
ne ullius tēporis·qa ipse ē dns sup
oña·circuiens eā q̄si ignis·quo in
flamat et incendit et illuminat
oña absq; uicissitudine pbans tē
poris innouitate quia ipse dns est·

Et q̄d ide splendor undiq; secdm̄ xuij·
amplitudinē suā sursū mali
tudinē cēli et deorsū in pfundū
ab yssi ita se extendit·ut nullū fi
nē cū uidere possis·hoc ē q̄d ut tus
potestatis ac sapientie dī et iustitia
atq; rectissimū iudiciū cū ubiq; in
cōprehensibilitate sua nec in supio
rib; cēli nec in inferiorib; ab yssi
ullū finē habet·q̄m cōprehendi pos
sit humano sensu· Vidit eā xuij·
de secreto eius dē sedentis in throno
stellā magnā in multi splendoris ac
decoris pdire·et cū ea plurimam
multitudinē candentiū scintilla
rū·quia p̄cepto omipotis patris lu
cifer angls qui nē ē sathanas·in
ortu suo magna gla ornatus·et
multa claritate ac decore uestit
pdit·et cū eo omīs scintille sue
agminis·tunc candentes in lu
cis fulgore nec aut̄ extincte in
caliginis tenebrositate·Qui pri
ad malū nō aspexit in me integri·
s; estimabat confidens in se ipsū
posse incipe q̄d uellet et p ficere
q̄d inciperet·Vnde q̄d sedentem in
throno debebat honoris q̄a
p eū creatus ē·hoc retorsit in
se ipsū·atq; cū hoc declinabat
se ad malū·Quod uero cū eade stella
oīs confluentes ad austrū inspicie
bant ipsū sedentē in throno quasi
alienū·seq; abeo auertentes magis
inhiabant ad aquilonē·quā cū in
spicere uellent·hoc ē q̄d ide lucifer omīsq; comitatus illi mirabilit
creatus in ardente bono dī constitit·
quasi pobliquū in sup̄bia uidelicet
dedignans regnantē in cēlo·quia
ipsi oīs orti in creatione ab immo
gustauerit impietatē que ad pdmo
nē se uertit·dū insipientes ñ sic q̄d
eū scire uellent in bonitate·s; q̄d se
sup eū uelut sup alienū uellent ele
uare·cū flagrante scilicet elatione
se a cognitione ei auertentes·et plus
tendentes ad casū suū·q̄m dū in
gla sua cognoscere desiderarent·
S; q̄d statum in ipsa auersione in
spectionis suę oīs extincte s·sic uer
se in nigredinē carbonū·hoc ē dū
dū sup̄be dedignarent scire·ipse
lucifer cū oīb; sequentib; se in ma
licia sua extinctus ē a fulgore clari
splendoris cū quo p diuinā potē
cia indutus erat·decerpens in se
ipso interiorē pulcritudinē qua
debuit conscius ee abbonū·et se
porrigens ad deglutiendē se in
pietatē·ita extinctus ē in tenebra cla
ritate cadens in tenebrā p dmonē·Vnde
oīs uersi s in nigredinē extincti
ignis carbonū·quia cū duce suo
scilicet diabolo exuta claritate
sui splendoris·sic extincti s in p
dmone tenebrositatis·carentes

omni gla beatitudinis· ut carbo
abigne suo ignee semulle· Qđ autē
uemis turbinis ortus ē abipsis q̄
cas mox abaustro retro cunctē se
dentē unt ono, precipitadaquilo
nē p̄capitatas inabyssū· ita ut ea
rū amplius nulla uidere ualeres·
hoc ē q̄d maximus flatus impie
tatis ceteras se instis anglis inimica
tis cū dō uellent p̄ualere & cū p
superbiā obprimere· q̄ se sufflauit
in amaritissimā nigredinē p̄dmo
nis· et cos de austro idē de bono
pcipit retrorsū· q̄d ē inobliuionē
dī cuncta regentis q̄si adp̄ātē aq̄
lonarē· ut ubi superbe exaltari uole
bant· ibi confusi casū inuenirent·
ppt̄ superbiā suā p̄capitati in abyssū
mortis cū quę pdicto ipsę ē· ita
ut in nulla claritate amplius uide
antur· ut p̄seruū meū ezechielē
saltu meridiano q̄ ardentē fructū
usticę ferre debuit et ī tumultu
locutus sū dicens· Ecce ego suc
cendā in te ignē· et cōburā in te
omne lignū uiride & omne lignū
aridū· Non extinguet flāma suc
censionis· et cōburet in ea omnis fa
cies a baustro usq· adaquilonē· et
uidebit omnis caro q̄a ego dñs suc
cendi eā· nec extinguetur· Hoc ta
le ē· O stulte qui in superbia tua te
erexisti contra me· ego qui nec in
tuū nec finē habeo· faciā ut in belo
meo accendat in te ignis indignati
onis mee p̄que cōburā in te om
nē uiriditatē illā quā uoluisti
incipere infalsa uiriditate· magis
confidens in te quā in me· quia ar-
ripuisti in tua insana scientia ex
cedim superbiā tuā· cōburāq; in te
omnē ariditatē illā p̄ dimq; cum
peccatū in bono aridū· suggeris
homum qui eius ē· q̄a suggestio
tua n̄ recipiet in te ullā saluatio
nē· sed fiet in te ignis ętnus· Nec ē ul
la remuneratio salutis ubi· nec ul
us qui te sequuntē in exemplo tuo·
et n̄ extinguet illa succensio pena
rū in supplicijs suis· sed cōburet p̄ci
pitē superbiā· quasi in facie desi-
derabilis aspectus honoris· quē aspec
ti uelle habere in temetipso· q̄
electus es a bonitate tua· abau
stro scilicet surgens in ardente
clarissima luce et cadens in tene
bras aquilonis· idē in infernū· et
hoc uidebit omnis homo· uidelu
cet electi et reprobi cognoscentes ge
hennā· quō electi eā cognoscunt·
quia ipsā effugerit· reprobi autē
quō cū ea in pena permanebunt·
scientes q̄a ego dñs omnipotens succendi
eā· ad retributionē malorū tuorū di
abole· nec extinguet malis tuis
nec sequentibus te· Et sic pdicto dia
bolice superbie precipitat in tene
bras ętnorū tormentorū sine ulla con
solatione luminis· ita ut illi nul
lus sit locus inuentus in eo lu
mine· ut et tu o fragilis homo ex
ultra nihil conspicere potuisti·
sicut ita idē ezechiel· in spū meo

xv.

regi uri submistica significatione
dicit. Omnes qui uiderunt te ingem
ub; & stupescent super te. Nichili
factus es & in eris in perpetuū. Hoc ta
le ē. Omnes recti corde q̄ uiderunt te
diabole inebriatū uicius millis
gemib; qui te amplexantē in pua
ricatione legis dī; arescent & obstu
pescent uidua sorde q̄ dom pollu
tus suggestione tua templū in edifi
catione dī; q̄d hodie ē. Et p̄ p̄terea
nihil factus es p̄ superbiā tuā in qua
cecidisti ab omni glā saluationis.
q̄a nō omnino ullus uigor est in ulla
felicitate. & in eris in uentus ullā
glām amplius habens in cōmutate
celestiū. q̄a uiconfusus es in millis in
perpetuū sine fine. Sed q̄d splen dore illū magnū qui eis abstracte
ē uidisti subito in carū excunctio
ne reuersu a dipsū sedentē in throno.
hoc ē q̄d p̄spicuus et magnus ful
gor quē diabolus p̄ p̄ superbiā et
contumaciā suā p̄didit. cū ipsū
et omnes sequaces eius in uasit ger in
mortis quō idē lucifer purioris
erat luminis q̄m ceteri angli re
uersus ē addm patrē seruatus
in secreto ei; q̄a glā splendoris il
lius nō debuit ēe uacua s; dns seruа
uit eā alteri facte luci. Nā quē
dns nudū surgere iussit. atq; in co
optū carne qui diabolus ē cū om
ni comitatu suo s; tam in splen
dore clarū illius splendorē seq-
uaunt limo quē formauit homi
nē. regens ipsū ultissima natu
ra ut p̄ p̄terea ne se exaltaret in si
militudinē dī; q̄a quē clarū creauе
rat in multo fulgore s; nō coop
tū tā fragili et tā misera forma ut
ē homo. hic nō potuit stare in elatio
ne sua. q̄a nō ē nisi unus dns sine initio
et sine fine in etūnate. Ac ideo scele
ratissimū ē p̄ceteris criminibus.
qui se deo similat. Nunc autē ego
dns celestis seruauи illustre lumen
q̄d secessit a diabolo p̄ p̄ malū
ei; hoc diligenter abscondens
apud me. et dedi illud limo ut re-
quē formauи ad imaginē et si
militudinē meā. sicut aliquis
homo facit cū filio ei; mortē. cui nō
adhuc hereditas in manus ipsius
quia nō habet filios hereditatis.
eandē hereditatē adtrahit sibi
pat et cōponit eā in manu sua alii
filio suo nō dū sibi nato. dans eā
illi cū natus fuerit ex ipso. xvij.

Nam diabolus cecidit absq;
herede q̄d ē in recta intentio
ne bonū opus. q̄a nūq̄m aliq̄d
boni fecit nec incepit. et ab hoc
accepit alius hereditatē ipsius.
qui eā cecidit. habens tamen
herede scilicet inceptionē obedi
entie. quō eā suscepit cū deuotio
ne. quā uis opus ad hoc p̄uenis
nō p̄ficeret. s; gla dī p̄fecit idē op⁹
in incarnatione saluatoris po
pulo; in restauratione bone he
reditatis. Atq; ideo recepit homo
hereditatē suā in xp̄o. quia nō
dedignatus ē in initio p̄ceptū

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117v

ꝑceptū dī eū oīno diabolus ī de
sideraūt seruitū creatoris sui in bo
no s; honorē in supbia. unde ī rece
pit glām suā s; pit inpdmone. xviij.
Et sicut goliath surrexit adde
spectū dauid. ita erexit se diabo
lus inp sūptionē in semet ipso. uolens
similis ee altissimo. Et ut idē goliath
in scaus uirtū dauid eū prorsus p
nichilo cōputans sublpendit. sic
constructa supbia diaboli comēp
sit humilitatē in humanitate filii
dī. qui in mundo natus ī glām
suā s; glām patris ꝓpōia quesiuit.
Quomodo. Diabolus ī desideraūt
tangere hoc exemplū. quatenus
se subderet suo creatori. ut se filiꝰ
dī subdidit suo patri. Ut tamē da
uid ampuraūt caput goliath
in secreta formidine dī. ut spū scō
inspiraūte scriptū ē. Assumens au
tē dauid caput philistei attulit
illud in ierlm. arma uero eiꝰ posuit
in tabernaculo suo. Hoc tale est.
Spolia et dureptiones diaboli ac
cepit fortissimꝰ filius mr. cū dere
ct caput eiꝰdē serpentis amaqui.
Ybi. Inuitro uirginis. quę hoc
caput contriuit. Per quē. P eundē
filiū suū. Quę ē hęc contricio. Sca
humilitas. quę in matre et filio
apparens. pcussit primū inicū
supbię. q̄d ē caput diaboli. Et sic
ipse filius mr attulit cū humilitate
in suo corpore idē caput in scām
ęcclām. quę ē uisio pacis. ea ostēn
dens peandē fortissimā humilita
tē. q̄d imfecta eet supbia diaboli.
fortissima uero arma ipsius. s obiec
ta eiꝰ uicia cū quib; ille supauit gen̄
humanū. q̄d eū coluit. pdō. ipse il
lud excūtens in uicius suis. ut arma
excūtiūt homines. Hęc confregit fi
lius mr. ponens ea in tabernaculo
suo idē in passionē corporis sui.
dū pateret in cruce. Unde ipsā pug
nā dimisit cuā in tabernaculis.
scilicet in corporib; electoꝝ mbroꝝ
suoꝝ. ut et ipsi distribuant arma
diaboli cū ipso. Quom. ist sicut ip
se deuicit diabolū in passione sua.
sic et ipsi eū deuincant se constrin
gentes in desiderius suis. et n̄ sint
consentientes uicius illiꝰ. Et secm si
militudinē hanc. ut gla goliath
data ē dauid. ita glām quę abla
ta ē primo angelo dedi adę et ge
neri eiꝰ. q̄d confirmē me seruans
ꝑcepta mea. interēpta supbia di
aboli. Qui autē acutas aures in
terioris intellectus habet hic in
ardentis amore speculi mei ad
uerba hęc ambulet. et ea inconsci
entia animi sui conscribat.

In medio autem ambitū circuli qui pendebatur de code sedentis in throno

Scā uisio sedis partis.

quasi montē magnū cōmunctū ra
dici illius immīsi lapidis sup quē cū
nube tronus eīdē sedentis posuit
erat ita q̄d idē lapis altitudinem
erectus et q̄d idē mons in latitudinē
extensus videbat et sup ipsū montē
stabat vidit q̄ddā ędificiū quadran
gulū adsimilitudinē urbis qua
drangulę facti aliq̄ntulūq; inob
liquū positi ita q̄d ei angulus unus
respiciebat adorientē; et alius ad
septentrionē et alius admeridiē. Ide
autē ędificiū mercatui suo murū
unū duoq; generū habebat quorū
genus unū erat quasi splendor lu
cidus ut lux dici ē et alterū quasi
compaginatio lapidū admixtē
connecta inangulo orientali et
inangulo septentrionali ita ut
illa lucida pars muri protenderet
abangulo orientali et finiret in
angulo septentrionali tota mira
gra et nō habens ullū locū interpo
et ita illa alia scilicet lapidea pars
extenderet abangulo septentrio
nali adangulū occidentalē et ad
angulū meridianū et finiret in
angulo orientali habens duo loca
interpta unum angulū videlicet
occidentalē et angulū meridianū.
Longitudo autē eīdē ędificii erat
centū cubitorū et latitudo eius q̄nqua
ginta cubitorū ~~et altitudo ipsius~~
~~quinquaginta cubitorū~~ et altitu
do ipsius quinq; cubitorū ita ut ei
duo parietes interq; latera ipsius
essent unius longitudinis et alii ip
sius duo parietes infronte et infine
eius unus latitudinis. Et eīdē quatuor
parietes ubiq; circuitu ipsius ędifi
cii equalis erant altitudinis excepti
propugnaculis eius quę aliq̄ntulū em
inebant altitudinē ipsius. Latitudo
autē interipsū ędificiū et splendorē
expīdicto circulo se infundū abyssi
si extendentē erat in cruce orienta
lis anguli unius palmi alibi autē idē
in septentrionali et occidentali
atq; in meridiana parte tanta un
diq; erat latitudo inter idē edificiū
et eundē splendorē ut ei amplitu
dinē nullom cōprehendere possem.
Et hęc me admirante qui sedebat
in throno mihi dixit adme. Primum
Videsne quę inamiquis scis cū
ope iusticię p bonitatē patris
de sup ędificato videntur in pallore
apparuit incarnato dei filio apta
manifestatione cū ardentib; opib;
ardentur inluce processit quando idē
filius dei caduca nī concupiscens
et exemplo suo conculcari et eccle
stia amari p docuit cū priores par
tes mundi nī fugientes nec se abeo
separantes dīm simplici tamē cre
dulitate et humili deuotione co
lebant quia nī dū ut oīa deus crea
ta ostensū fuerat. Vnde etiā q̄d ui
des in media ambitū circuli qui pten
dit descendit in throno montē
magnū cōmunctū radici illius in
mīsi lapidis sup quē cū nube thro
nus eīdē sedentis positus ē ita q̄d
idē lapis altitudinē erectus et

q̄d idē mons in lamitudinē extensus
uidet̄. hoc ē. q̄d in potentia ac fortu
ope potestatis supi patris q̄d po
tentē op⁹ stat mons. significans fi
dē que magna ē in ruinis palamq;
surgens in crucifixione abrahē. et
ita p̄ficiens usq; in filiū ei⁹dē supi
dei. post ruinā serpentis antiqui
p̄ spm̄ sc̄m inspirata hominib; qua
tinus in bonitate patris fideliter. liij.
op⁹ames. illū credant omnipoten
tē ē dīm. qui tā magnū hostē supa
re potuit. ita ut p̄ eande credulita
tē subleuari adgtam illā p̄un
gant. de qua idē diabolus obsup
biā suā deiectus ē. iij. Atq; idem
mons positus ē ad radicē p̄dicti m
ūsi lapidis misteriū timoris dn̄i
habemus. qua fides coniuncta ē sta
bilitati timoris dn̄i. et timor. dn̄i
cuā fortitudini fidei. scilicet cū de
patre missus ē filius nasci excuti
ne et cū de eode filio pullulabat ue
ra fides primū fundamentū bom
op⁹. quā timor. dn̄i p̄fert cū oib;
uirtutib; tangens dīm in altitudi
ne sua. ita. ut in sapientia fideli
mentū d̄s supi oīa regnans fide
liter. colat̄. Quom̄. Q̄ō timor. dn̄i
secreta cēli usu circūspectionis
acutē penetrat. q̄a ipse intuū in
stē intentionis ē. cū qua etiā bea
ta fides apud dīm in latitudinē
p̄fectionis tendit̄ cū in bonis op⁹.
ad sēitatē dilatat̄. S ed q̄d supi iij.
ipsū montē stat ędificiū quadran
gulū ad similitudinē urbis qua
drangule factū. hoc ē q̄d supi fidē
bonitas patris bona op⁹ edificans.
multos fidelitū p quatuor. angulos
ūt̄ colligens trahit ad cēlestia. sic
muros instabilitatis uitiorū. ut
idē cēlestis pater. in sinu suo q̄d ē
in interiori potestate et in mistico
consilio suo eos benigne cōponat
cū quatuor. quadris in fide. Quom̄.
Ego scilicet altissim⁹ ordinau
i mope meo primū quadrū
hominū uidelicet ada. cui⁹ gen⁹
ipso reposito p magnū sensima
debilitans. p̄cessit usq; ad sedm
quadrū. idē ad noe. ubi diluuiū
factū ē. ubi et misteria filii mei
in archa p̄monstrau. S; in eode
quadro qui ē noe. p admonitio
nē meā manifestau illā lucidā
partē muri p̄dicti edificii. qua
ibi in diluuio suffocans peccato
res in unu hominib; ut mortē fu
gerent. et uitā appeterent. sic et
pala apiens speculatiuā scientiā
duarū oppositionis causarū. Quid ē
hoc. Homo uiret et uiget in uiuen
te uita que anima ē p quā specular̄
et cognoscit duas semitas uidelicet
bonū et malū. quo homo tangit̄
hac alterutra parte ita q̄d manens
in corpore bonū siue malū cū aīa
et corpore op⁹at̄. q̄d ipse incipit
p̄positionē animi sui. uoluntatē
suā ita cōplens in op⁹. Et sic in noe
offensa ē p admonitionē meā spe
culatiua scientia duarū oppositionis
causarū. scilicet acutissima con

sidera mone malū spernere & bonū
diligere-quę ma cū omissione cir-
cūcisionis tendit mp̄cursu uolum
tatis dī usq; ad tertiū quadrū-ubi ab
raha ex moysē & iuncha s incircūci
sione & lege-quę circūcisio ex lex
ma p̄cedebat usq; ad q̄rtū quadr̄
sc̄e trinitatis-ubi uetus testamū
in filio dī finitū ē cū exortione sig
nificatione-unde ma surrexit in
tertius germ̄ p̄cunde filiū dī in
ęcclā qui natus ex passus p salute
hominū-resurgens cnā ex rediens
ad patrē-angulū illū qui in casu
ade absconsus ex aduersitatis erat
restauraut in saluatione p̄ aīas
hominū. Quod autē ide ędifi-
cū aliq̄ntulū ē inobliquū posmū-
hoc ē q̄d homo qui opus dī ē nī po
test p̄ fragilitate sua incedere fir-
mit̄ sine peccato ex audacter si
ne timore fragilis carnis diaboli
supando-s; eū oportet illū humi
liter deuitare ex insidias ei' sapi
enter fugere ne peccet aliq; se fi
delit̄ coniungere bonis op̄ib;
et sic constare in filio dī-qui q̄si
in angulo sedens lapis angula
ris ē-ma cnā opus electū comun
gens in homine. Sed q̄d ang- vj.
lus unus respicit ad orientē ex
alius ad occidentē ex unus ad
septentrionē & alius ad meridiē-
hoc ē q̄d filius dī natus ē ex uir-
gine ex passus in carne ut mor-
tu iustitię homo restauraret ad
uitā-cui omīs iustitia apposita

ē-q̄d ē angulus orientalis-inde
surgente saluatione animarū
in dē cōpleuit in eo de filio suo
omnē iustitiā quę ab abel usq;
in ip̄sū filiū dī p̄figurata ē in q̄
finita ē consummato carnalis ob
seruationis ueteris testamū-ma
uente salute fideliū hominū
p̄ fidē quā ide filius dī assumpsit
missus a patre in mundū in fine
temporū-q̄d ē angulus occidenta
lis-contra diabolū quoq; mabra
hā ex in moysē dicauit se iustitia
qui ma p̄monstrabat p̄missā
grām p quā homo saluatus ē quē
diabolus decepit occidendo eū ut
tunc in lapsu ade q̄d ē angulus
septentrionalis-inde ex miserabi
lis ac mortalis casus qui factus ē
in humano genere postea p̄ supnā
grām nobilit̄ ex elegant̄ re
stauratus ē pleno fructu mardo
ci ex ope dī ex hoīs q̄d ē angulus me
ridianus. Angulus cnā meri vij.
dianus ē-q̄d primus homo ada
ado creatus ē-s; q̄d a beode an
gulo speculamua scientia duar̄
operum causarū in incipit ful-
gere-hoc ē q̄d a bipso ada genus
suū in cōpositū erat in colens dm
in scientia sua officiali seruauit
legis-s; tamū p̄priā uoluntatē
suā adimplens cū sūmo malo-ita
ut nec in recta scientia dī nec in
uera beatitudine ēt fulgentis-im
mo in morte iacens-s; absconsū
erat tamū in corde patris q̄d cū

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homine facere uellet. Angulus
etiā inoriente designat hoc ubi
sc iustitia ostendere incepit. et
ibi etiā apte manifestata ē pmon
strata speculatiua scientia ostēn
dens omnē sētiatē. quę posita in
filio dī pficienda erat. et quia
unaquęq; iustitia in filio dī qui
est uerus oriens erat incipiens.
idō ē hoc edificiū primū appel
landū adorientē inhonore inho
nore sētiatis quę primū etiā in
hoc uera ciuitate declarata ē. Angu
lus quoq; in septemtrione ē abrahā
et moysēs. qui aduersus satanan
cū opam̄ ope pdictā speculatiuā
scientiā coopiebant. quasi eā cir- ix.
cū edificarent cū pciosis lapidib;
et cū desup aurato ope. pspicuę
iustitię dī q̄d erat circūcisio et
lex. quia iustitia ante circūcisio
nē et legē q̄si nuda erat absq;
ope. et quartus angulus occiden
talis pfigurat etiā uerā ultima
tē. quę pfā manifestata ē in bap
tismo saluatoris. qui extitit ple
nā et sc̄am ciuitatē iertim cū om
ni ope suo recurrens ad celū. in
viij. ꝝ saluatione animarū. Sed
ꝝ q̄d ipsū edificiū in circuitu
ꝝ suo murū unū duos generū ha
ꝝ bet. quos genus unū ē quasi
ꝝ splendor lucidus ut lux dici.
ꝝ et alterū quasi cōpaginatio
ꝝ lapidū adinuicē connecta in
ꝝ angulo orientali et in angulo
ꝝ septemtrionali. hoc ē q̄d pbom

tatē patris hominib; ex omī parte
data ē quasi securitas una idē
munimen et defensio in bonis opib;
quatinus ipsis circūdati et con
fortati carnales concupiscentias
deserant. et ad unū dīm qui mum
mentū eos confugiant. Qui mu
rus in duob; generib; quia uelut
unū genus muri ē speculatiua
scientia, in macerrima et certissi
ma exquisitione speculationis
animi sui homo habet. ut sit cir-
cūspectus in omnib; causis suis. et
etiā uelut aliud genus muri. ē ca
rnea caro hoīs. quia adō creatus
est homo. ad opans factū opus in opa
tione. Et hec speculatiua scien
tia lucet in splendore lucis dici.
quō pēā homines actus suos uidet
et considerant. q̄d splendidus ra
dius ē humanę mentis se cautę cir-
cūspicientis. quia in homine ap
paret hęc pclara scientia ut can
dida nubes pambulans mentes po
pulos in celerrimate sicut et nu
bes deflum maere. lucensq; ut
lux dici. quō ipsa candida de
claratā ppt splendidissimū op
q̄d dās. benigne opatā in homi
nib; scilicet ut cū ipsi de untam
malū pficiant bonū. q̄d in eis
quasi lux dici lucet. In ipsa q̄q;
scientia. p cedit unū q̄dq; opus
in homine. Quomodo. Homo
habet duas uias. Quom̄. Ipse ē
sciens bonū atq; malū. cū sensi
bilitate. Qui dū transit de malo

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opando bonū·immat̄ dīm·faciens
bonū impso qui iustus ē·nolens
iniusticiā·S;·dū opat̄ malū impli
cat̄ pcontractorē diabolū impec
cans·cū ñ uult se comunere·nisi
sentat illū in munculo malox opū·
quō diabolus querit iniquitatē fu
giens sēntiē·Si aut̄ homo abstra
hit se a malo et opat̄ bonū·tunc sus
cipit eū sūma bonitas·qua seipsū
pp̄ter amorē dī supauit·qui filiū
suū tradidit pro omnibus·ut omnē
cū facie ei spirauit spiraculū uite
in anima·Nā uidere pcox deficit
qua rationale ñ ē·anima autē
hominis nūquā deficit qa intēt
nū uidet quō rationalis ē·unde
etiā homo sentit in consideratio
ne boni et mali q̄d opus sit con
trariū uel electiū·p gr̄am dī for
matus et inspiratus rationali
sensu in ortu creationis suę illa
gr̄a cū ipō restauratur in elec
tione baptismi·et in saluatione
animę nouū testimoniū·ut dicē
paulus a mantissimā mīs de eadē
electione gr̄ę· R eliquię sedm .x.
electionē gr̄ę saluę factę s̄·Si
aut̄ gr̄a·ia ñ ex opib; Alioquin
gr̄a iā ñ ē gr̄a·Hoc tale ē·Reliq̄e
quos laqueus mortis ñ cōphen
dit·ne se declinent post exem
plū diaboli·ille saluę factę s̄ cū
apta saluatione dū dns misit fi
lium suū incarnari·q̄d ē electio gr̄ę
p̄ salutē manifestata hominum·
Quomodo·ē gr̄a dī constituit ho
minē·s;·ille lapsus ē in prauis opi
bus·Tunc ostensa ē electio gr̄ę in
electi uase·cū exurgine filius
dī natus ē·in quo ñ erat licitū fie
ri ullū lapsū·Nā si quis pia homo
sibi facit aliquā imitē rē quę ip
si a bono abstrahit·tunc eligit
sibi aliā in meliorē quā ea nullus
demat·et in qua ipse plenius
habundet·Sic fecit gr̄a dī·Ipsa
forma aut̄ data primū hominē·
quē diabolus abstraxit a bonis
centia opis·S;·tadē gr̄a fecit
postea plenitudinem bonorū
opū p filiū dī·in saluatione ani
marū·Si aut̄ gr̄a dī fecit sal
uationē·tunc saluatio ñ ē facta
ex meritis opū hominū·Quom·
iustitia opis defecit in ada·ita
q̄d homo nūquā rediret in sal
uationē p̄ merita opū suox nisi
recuperet̄ p eandē gr̄am omni
potentissimo filio dī p̄pa ipsius·se
licet q̄d obediens factus ē patri
suo·et nisi etiā homo munda
retur p baptismū q̄d ide filio
dī tradidit hominib; cū bono
ope·quod opus gr̄a dī opat̄

cū homine et homo idē opus cū illa. Idoq; ē grā dī cū hoc ope. et hoc opus ortū ē de grā. Q̄d si saluatio ēēt ex merito hominī et rectū opus hominis ēēt ꝑ ꝓprīū ase ipso. ita q̄d grā dī opus illud nō accenderet. tunc grā nō ēēt grā. Quomodo. Tunc ēēt homo a se ipso et nō a dō. et nulla creatura referret gratiaꝫ dō. et grā dī nichil ēēt. Nunc autē grā dī constituit hominē rationalitē subiectū ut iusticiā operet̄ in sciemia boni et mali quatinus desciens ista appetat bonū abiciens malū. et ut sic cognoscat utrā et mortē. ꝑ hoc eligens in qua parte remanere desideret. ut salomon dicit intellectū sapienti. xij. Appposui ubi aquā et ignē. ad q̄d uolueris porrige manū tuā. Hoc tale ē. Dō apponit hominī in prima suscitatione animę uim magnā et acutā ut delicet pudenda malo. et bono rū. quę ō aqua et ignis. S; si cui aqua semp mundat et celat in se multa morifera animalia plurimaq; immunda. ita ē etiā homo mundanus in malis factis suis celans ea n̄ diuulget̄. Et ut etiā ignis urit nō ꝑferens intra se ullam indignationē in cōbustā et ut faber̄ puriora facit monilia sua ablata rubigine. sic etiā bonū facit hominē purū euellens abeo rubiginē nequitię.

Nā aqua et ignis dissentiunt. suffocat nes et necat nes se inuicē. Sic etiā facit homo. In malo necat bonū. et in bono necat malū. atq; in utroq; semp occultat intra se silentia sua desideria hac et illac uersans et in ipsa cōmotione desiderioꝝ habet optionē uoluntatis illius cause quā desiderat. et ad hanc uertit se cū uoluntate opis quasi manū ad hoc porrigendo. scilicet bonū opus ꝑficiens adiuuante dō ꝑ grām et malū ꝑagens insidiante diabolo. ꝑ suggestio nē arteꝫ suarū. ipso homine hec inspiciente in sciemia rationalitatis. Nā in eade sciemia inspicit bonū et malū. et inde ortā in ipso desideriū optionis de duab; causis. boni uidelicet et mali sedm uoluntatē ipsi. Quid ē hoc. Optio ē q̄d homo uidet in desiderio animi sui quasi in speculo res aliquas dicens intra se unā posse illud uel illud facere ad q̄d nō dū accedit popus. s; habet illud in sciemia sua. posituꝫ q̄si in capite duarū uiarū q̄d ē sciens tā habens duarū causarū idē bom et mali. et ita sedm desiderii sui tendit ad opus illud. tamen. surſū siue deorſū. Et alterū genus muri q̄d uidet quasi cō pagination̄ lapidū ostendens genus humanū. designat etiā rectas inflationes que surrexerunt in mīmb; hominū. ut in

abrahā et in moysē ac ceteris
qui p̄cedens germen erant legis
di-cū omnib; apendicens iusticie
di in lege-usq; in nouissimū tēpus·
Quomodo·Scilicet q̄d opus di ē
in homine et p homine ē-ita q̄d ds
misit filiū suū, ppter saluationē
hominū in fine legis sine peccato·
et opant̄ in humano corpore
atq; ponent̄ fundamentū fidei
sup semetipsū·hoc modo q̄d por-
tauit genus humanū cū primo
homine electo de paradyso ppt̄
p̄uaricationē iusticie·faciens omē
hoc mirabile in homine p legē suā·
ubi cōp̄hendit xp̄iana cohorte
que hec edificatio ē in bonitate
patris·q̄d homo ponendus ē in ce
lestu iherlm· Vnde et ipsa gene-ris·xmis·
ra in unū coadunata s̄ in parte
orientis et septentrionis·quo in
speculatiua scientia et in humano
ope ē cōmunis finitio in iusticie·
in qua genus humanū erat in
oblitionē di implicatū que se
erexit primū abada cū insana
in iusticia ante diluuiū·ita q̄d
ipsa dep̄ssa ē cū cōmuni plebe
ppt̄ magnā iniquitatē in dilu
uio aquarū·ubi cadē speculati
ua scientia apparere incepit
p inspiratione mea cū scientia
bom in noe·ut in angulo orien
tali·sicut p̄dictū ē·S; quāuis se
in noe a mortuo di erexerit·
tamen cerui ce et appetitus ma
li in recordatione ipsius, p̄cessit
ouant̄ ad aquilonē·ita q̄d in iq̄
tas sus in ante cōtra dim n̄ ē conci-
cata usq; ad abrahā·in quo suffo
cata ē ut in angulo septentriona
li·cū meo orta ē acutissima acies
iusticie di·Quod uero illa lucida
pars muri p̄tendit̄ ab angulo ori-
entali et finit̄ in angulo septentri-
onali·tota integra et n̄ habens
ullū locū int̄ruptū·hoc ē q̄d spe
culatiua scientia in mundatione
mentū hominū ab angulo orien
tali idē adieb; noe incepit appa
rere·cū prius ante noe studebat
iniquitas hoc adimplere q̄d p
petrare posset in irrisione di·ho
minib;·ut delicet magis conci
piscentias suas sequentib;·quā
culturā di amantib;·qa primū
genus hominū ab ada ubi spec
tatiua scientia absconsa erat de
glutiuit diabolus omnī uolun
tate sua usq; ad noe in quo tacte
scientia apte ostensa ē ut p̄dic
tū ē·cū tamen adhuc confide
bat diabolus·q̄d ecē habiturus
omne genus humanū in suo p̄
cepto·in q̄tate ita p̄cedente usq;
ad angulū septentrionalē·hoc
ē ad abrahā et moysen·quo
ante eos in speculatiua scientia
erat iniquitas q̄si integra, in sua
nequicia·et n̄ dū int̄rupta aut
contrita p constitutā iusticiā
legis di·qa nec dū circūcisio
aut lex data fuerat·in quib;
tamen patrib; idē diabolus in

cepit confundi·cū prius quasi
confidenter in mundo regnare·
sicut dicit paulus mcū lucidū
xv. uas electionis·Regnauit mors
abadā usq; admoysen etiā in eos
qui n peccauerūt in similitudinē
p̄uaricationis adę·qui ē forma
futuri·Hoc tale ē·Q)ors regnauit
nullo contra eā militante cū sup
ante bello·de adā usq; admoy
sen·Quomodo·Q̄uia auferetas et
cultura legis ante moysen data
n erat exceptio q̄d circūcisio in
abrahā missione di facta ipsā le
nter p̄monstrauerat·s; mortis
uinculū; pcessit de errore in erro
rē ut sibi placuit·Tunc surrexit
in uoluntate di fortis miles mo
ysesi·et p̄parauit fortia arma
iustitię in quib; mors in suo cul
tu destructa ē p instrumēta legis·
quia lex abscondit in se omnē
saluationē animarū cū p̄signi
ficatione filii di·q̄a etiā mors
dñabat̄ in innocentib; q̄ p̄sum
plicitate moderationis sue nes
ciebant in actib; suis opus p̄ua
ricationis adę in nationib; qui
est forma futuri·Quom· Ada fu
it iustus et innocens creatus ab
omni conceptione et inceptione
peccati adō·et sic etiā filius di natus
ē ex virgine maria ueniens absq;
xvj. s ulla macula peccati·Sed ut
s uides q̄d illa lapidea pars muri
s extendit̄ a b angulo septentrio
s nali ad angulū occidentalem·
s et ad angulū meridianū et finit̄
s in angulo orientali·hoc ē q̄d recta
opa hominū cū quib; in dō mu
nu s; p̄cesserit quasi de angulo
septentrionali idē de circūcisione
abrahę cū lege moysi et cū appen
dituis iustitie ex inhominib; usq;
ad angulū occidentalē·ubi sur
rexit p̄spicua iustitia in carn
natione filii di·abinde ultra ex
tensa usq; ad angulū meridianū·
ubi ardens opus p̄ baptismū et
p̄ reliquā iustitiā docte et noue
sponse eiusdē filii di ad restauran
dū adā in saluationē accensū ē·
terrā inde ultra plongata termi
nū q; ponens in primo angulo
orientali·ita reuertendo ad sūmū
patrē·Quomodo·Idē sūmus pat
erat in suo misterio unāquāq;
iustitiā ordinans·quom redire
deberet primi hominis casus in
saluationē animarū·reuertendo
addm·Quom·Q̄uia homo ceciderat
ido surrexit in media et misit filiū
meū in restauratione saluatio
nis animarū·sicut seruus mis psal.
mista dauid ostendit dicens·
xvij. Sed in lege dñi uoluntas ei·et
s in lege eius meditabit̄ die ac
nocte·Hoc tale ē·In lege iustitię
quā unigenitus di natus ex virg
gine demonstrauit mundo q̄
cū patre et spū scō unus ds exi
stens omni dñatur· scło·ita q̄d
ipse filius patris incarnatus et
homo uisibilis uisus·dns ē deuat·

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incarne sup omnē creaturā· fuit uo
luntas patris insaluatione· Quom·
Quia ide filius di ante mundu a
patre genitus· postea in mundo
natus ex matre in fine temporū·
nec dū incarnatus manens in pa
tre inuisibilis· ut uoluntas inuisi
bilis ē in homine· anteqūm exeat
in opus· uisibilis deinde apparuit
in carne psalute hominū· Ita cū
eo de filio suo meditat· omnipotens
pater omnē iustitiā· contra pri
mū casū ade· Vbi· Indilectione
eide filiu· qui ante tēpora in dili
natus gla manens in patre· mira
biliter postea substantio tēpore
mundi incarnatus ē· ut eā cū
patre in mundū mitat de corde
suo sūmū sacerdotē sup omnē iu
stitiā· Vnde et legē iustitiae· dē fili?
collegit· ut eā acceptit de patre·
facta lege xpianox· S; in ea de le
ge quā pater in filio suo consti
tuere atq; facere uoluit· meditā
tur in die· Quom· Scilicet in die
qui ipse ē· dū nulla obscuritas
iniquitatis erat· in nulla creatura·
prius quā constitueret ullā crea
turā sclox· meditatus ē in istā legē
filiu suu· Et eā in nocte· Quomo
do· Quia in facta creatura dū se
incepit erigere malū· q̄d, quasi
obscuritas noctis in angulo et
in homine· meditat· eā pater
na usq; in nouissimū diē· in quē
pungunt opa sua quę in effabi
liter opat· ostendens et apiens

omnia bona que in hoie· pficiā

legē filiu sui· cū ipso pficere debent·

Sed q̄d inde? q̄d pfata lapidea ſ xviij·
pars p̄dicti muri habet duo ſ
loca irrupta· inter angulū u ſ
dentem occidentale et angulū me ſ
ridianū· hoc ē q̄d opus humani
generis in munitione defensio
nis sue duob; modis adhuc in
pfectū ē· cū mbra incarnati filii
di constant adhuc quasi in pfec
ta melectis suis· q̄d ē primus irru
ptus locus uelut ab occidente·
quo ide filius di missus ē in mun
dū in fine tēporū· et cū de inde
ecclā ē simlit· adhuc quasi inp
fecta in omnib; ut retrib; suis· ut con
sistere et edificari debet in celesti
ter in· q̄d ē alter irruptus locus
uelut ad meridiē· cū eade ecclā
pficiet in celestib; Quod autē ſ xix.
longitudo ipsius edificii ē centū ſ
cubitox· hoc ē q̄d denarius nume
rus attenuatus erat in puarican
te homine et recuperatus ē in filio
meo pmultiplicē denariū cen
tenariu numeri multiplicitū ut
tuū in saluatione animarū·
de quo denario p centenariū
deinde ascendit millenarius
numerus pfectus in omnib; ut
plenius euacuent mille artes
diaboli· cū quib; seducit omnē
cohortē amabilitū ouū omnipotens
di· Quid ē hoc· Ego omnipotens
constitui in initio ardentia et
uiuentia lumina que lucerent
in splendoribus suis· s; quecūq

ꝑfluerꝫ in amore meo quecꝺa
aiīe ceciderꝫ despiciendo me
creatorē suū. ⁊ ñ decuit me crea
torē. ut in stimonē meā uacuā
et irritā dimittere. Quom. Ange
lica scilicet creatura supbiens
agminis. hoc bonū qꝺ creator
suus ipsi dedit ad cognitionē suā.
illud sibi uendicauit deputauit in
fallacē gl̄am se posse simlē esse
creatori suo. unde ceciditꝫ in mor
tem. Tunc ꝑuidit ds quia qꝺ in
eode ꝑdito agmine ceciditꝫ fortius
restaurandū erat in alio. Quom.
Quia creauit hominē de limo
terre uilemē in anima et corpore.
ut ad gl̄am illā ꝑungeret. de qua
ꝑuaricator diabolus cū suis im
peratorib; excidit. quo homo val
de carus ē do. sedm qꝺ cū ea fe
cit ad imaginē et similitudinē
suā. ita ut in ꝑfectionē sēper
operarē oīs uirtutes. sicut ē ds
candidit oīs creaturas. et ut
eā impleret opando in humil.
itima obedientione et in ope uirtu
tū sub ministratione laudis glo
riosoꝝ angelicoꝝ ordinū. quam
in hoc beatitudinis culmine ad
ornaret laudē eorundē supnoꝝ
spīuū. qui assidua deuotione
s laudamꝰ dīm. atq; ut in eade
beatitudinē sua hoc adimpleret
qꝺ ꝑdituꝰ angelꝰ in p̄ supbione
sua ruens euacuauit. Ideoq; ē
homo plenus denarius numē
rus. qui hēc oīa ꝑfectionē di
ficit. ⁊ denarius numerus multipli
cat centenariū in hac ꝓpositione.
quia homo diabolica seductione
corruens a do. tandē diuina mise
ratione et inspiratione admonit.
strennue incepit dīm agnoscere cū
lege et ꝓphetia ueteris testamī. et
deinde acuitus cū scīa atq; oīb;
instruīt uirtuose constantie eccle.
Sicq; incepit homo operari oīs uir
tutes de abel. ita eas ꝑficiendo usq;
ad nouissimū iustū. qꝺ ē centena
rius numerus longitudinis huī
edificii. qꝺ ds immutabilis figura de
monstrat hominib; ne desperent
lapsi in q̄tanib; suis. ⁊ ut sur
gentes ab eis fortiter laborent
in ope dī. quia et unusquisq; ca
dens in peccatis. cū se erigit ab eis
fortior erit quā prius erat. sicut
et ds maiores et fortiores uirtu
tes restituit in homine filiū suū
miserens immundū ad erigendū
collapsū genus humanū. quā
prius homo operatē. Unde et ho
fortius operat in anima et corpore
quā si esset sine corporali grauedi
ne. quo rixat in semetipso in
multis periculis ꝑficiens fortissima
bella. et victoriosus existens cū
dño do suo. fidelit militans et. sic
ipsū cognoscens in milicia sua.
corpus suū scilicet castigando.
quia angls carens grauedine ut
ni corporis. ē tamē miles celestis
armonie lucidus. et purus ꝑseue
rans in uisione di homo uero

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grauatus corporali putredine ē
fortissimus et gl̄osissimus scissimq;
mulcs cū restaurato ope q̄d opat̄
ꝑ ꝓuer dīm in anima et corpore ma
ꝑcentenariū numerū ꝑsentis labo
ris ꝑungens ad millenariū futuꝝ
retributionis uidelicet cū innouis
simo die plenā mercedē accipiens
sine fine in anima et corpore gau
debit in celesti habitatione Sic er
go ergo denarius amissus inuentus
est recuperatus ē p filiū meū q̄
natus ex uirgine et passus in cruce
hominē reduxit ad celestia ut ide
filius m̄s dicit in euglo. ue mu xx.
lier habens dragmas decē si ꝑdide
rit dragmā unā nonne accendit
lucernā et euertit domū et querit
diligenter donec inueniat Et cū
inuenerit conuocat amicas et ui
cinas dicens Congratulamini m̄i
quia inueni dragmā quā ꝑdide
ram Hoc tale ē Scā diuinitas ha
buit dragmas decē ide in celestis
anglis et in homine decē ordines
supnarū distinctionū ſ; dragmā
unā ꝑdidit cū homo magis dia
bolicā seductionē quā diuinū
ꝑceptū secutus immortē cecidit
Vnde ipsa accendens ardentē lu
cernā scilicet xp̄m uerū dīm et
uerū hominē splendidissimūq;
solem iustitie euertit ꝑtū domū
ide iudaicū ꝑplm et in ea legē
quesiuit diligenter omnē signi
ficationē que fuit in saluatione
in qua constituit nouā scīficatiō
nē et sic inuenit dragmā suā ho
minē uidelicet quē ꝑdiderat Tunc
conuocauit amicas ide scīlet iu
stitias et uicinas ide spūales uirtu
tes dicens Congratulamini m̄i quia
inueni dragmā quā ꝑdideram Hoc
tale ē Scā diuinitas habuit dra
gmas decē ide in celestibus
angelis et in homine decē ordines
supnarū distinctionū ſ; dragmā
unā ꝑdidit cū homo magis dia
bolicā seductionē quā diuinū
ꝑceptū secutus immortē cecidit
Vnde ipsa accendens ardentē lu
cernā scilicet xp̄m uerū dīm et
uerū hominē splendidissimūq;
solem iustitie euertit ꝑtū domū
ide iudaicū ꝑplm et in ea legē
quesiuit diligenter omnē signi
ficationē que fuit in saluatione
in qua constituit nouā scīficatiō

quia hominē inueni Ꝗa hominē in
ueni qui ꝑierat deceptione diaboli
Sicut uidet q̄d lassitudo huī edi xxx.
ficii ē Ꝗnquaginta cubitor hoc
ē quod omnis lassitudo uicioꝝ homi
nū qui inope dī edificare debuerīt
magis tam concupiscentias suas
sequentū quā opus dī colentū in
diffusis Ꝗnq; uulneribus filii mei que
in cruce passus ē mediator abstergit
et remittit Ita q̄d uulnera manuū
et opa manuū inobedientie ade et
eue deleuerīt et q̄d uulnera pedū
et liberauerīt tuncta humani exi
lii et q̄d uulnus lateris et de quo
orta ē ecclia deleuit culpā eue et
ade Quo de latere ade eua creata
ē Vnde et ide filius m̄s in ligno
fixus ē ut hoc aboleret q̄d ꝓlignū
ꝓuaricatione facta fuit Accepto et fel
le potatus ut gustus pomi dimi
nueret Et altitudo et ē Ꝗnq; xxxii
cubitor que ē excellentia diuina
rū scientiarū in scripturis que
ꝓpter opus dī s̄ in quinq; sensibus
qui s̄ in homine quos exspirauit
spūs sēs ad imitationē hominū Ꝗa
homo cū quinq; sensibus suis respi
cit ad altitudinē diuinitatis discer
nens unū q̄dq; bonū scilicet

xxiiij

et malum. Unde et ei duo pa
rietes intrinseci lateris ipsius sm uni
longitudinis quo medificio boni
tatis di quasi in duob; paricib; aiç
et corporis utriusq; lateris ꝑspici
ci licet et aduersi hominē constan
tissime oportet laborare. Quom
Vt deuitet malū et opetur bonū. Quo
modo. Quia ꝑfunda et incōprhen
sibilis diuina potestas instituit ho
minē ut totus utrib; suis et toto sen
su suo colat dm equali deuotione.
in longitudine intelligibilis ratio
nalitatis quo dignū ē ut creator
omniū amet oīa et sup oīa dig xx.vj.
nissime colatur ds. xx.iiij.

Qua ꝑpter et alii ipsius duo pa
rietes in fronte et in fine ei uni
s latitudinis qm inopē di sapien
tia et discretio s uelint duo pari
etes iudelicet sapientia quasi in
superiori et discretio quasi in fe
riori parte qs ds aspirat equo et
iusto dono suo in magnitudinē
latitudinis humane mus ad cog
xx.v. noscendū se. Sed qd ide quā
tuor parietes ubiq; circumu
ipsius edificii eccliis s altitudinis.
excepus ꝑpugnaculis ei. que ali
quantulū eminent altitudinē ip
sius. hoc ē. qd homo in quatuor
elementis positus ubiq; fide catholi xx.vij.
cā ꝓbonitatē patris equali deuo
tione et cultura mentis habebit.
filiū cū patre et spū scō iudelicet
colens qui oīa opa sua opatur in
ipsis. Quom. Ome opus scilicet
qd filius di operatus ē et operatur. hoc ꝑfi
cit ꝓbonitatē patris in spū scō. Qd
ē hoc. Quo scdm uoluntatē patris
erat filius redimens hominē ꝑ incar
nationē suā. qd ē magna bonitas.
quia pater sic ordinauit ut filius
ei nasceret ex uirgine de spū scō
conceptus. humanitatē assumens
ꝓpter amorē hoīs. ut eū reduceret
in restaurationē unde. quatinus ho
mo cū do partē haberet. et cū qua in
trasset in saluationē ꝑ ipsū in recta
et catholica fide. in qua pater et
filius et spūs scs cognosci debet uni
et uerus ds. Sed ecce ibi s ꝑpugna
cula ꝑstamoris altitudinis. Quo
modo. Quia cū homo respicit in
culmen bone mtis tunc edificat
altitudinē fideliū murox munis
tumb; operis di. ascendens sup intel
ligibilē fidē. dm iudelicet sciens
et in potentia diuinitatis sue. sup
quā fidē deinde construit amorē
stantiā uirtutū ꝑstantissimox ꝑ
pugnaculox. Quomodo. Nā edifi
cat altiores uirtutes. sibi n suffici
ens. ut solū modo fidē habeat in
dm. s; ascendit uirtutē palmā qd
ē de uirtute in uirtutē. cū quib;
exaltata et decorata ē rectissima
fides. quasi cuncta cū ꝑpugnacu
lis. Quod uero latitudo inter xxvij.
ipsū edificiū et splendorē exp̄dic
to circulo se infundū abyssi ex
tendentē. ē in uicem orientalis
anguli. uni palmi. hoc ē. qd am
plitudo supnox secretox ē inter

opus filii di q̄d demonstrauit quasi
edificiū conuersatus sine peccato
corporaliter· in seculo scilicet faciens
uirtutes multas in bonitate patris·
et inter potestatē eiusdē patris q̄si
splendorē in maxima uirtute sua
se inferiora et in superiora extendē
dentē· cū filiū suū misit in mundū
in carne scilicet angeli qui respi
cit adorientē· hoc ē in iustitia que
primū p̄signata ē in noe p̄ammo
nitionē spēi· p̄figuratē p̄fectā
illā iustitiā que declarata ē in in
carnatione filii di· ita q̄d in his
secretis erat q̄si spaciū uni⁹ statureˉ·
ut extrema manus ē apollice usq·
ad alios digitos· q̄d ē ordinatū
tēpus in paternis uiscerib· quoꝝ
unigenitū suū mittere uoluit in
manu fortissima· ut ipse ita circui
ret cū omnib· articulis digitoꝝ
qui s̄ oīa opa ei⁹ in spū sco· q̄tin⁹
p̄ficeret uoluntatē patris sui pas
sus in cruce· ppt̄ miseriā ac contēp
tibilē mobediētiā· quā diabo
lus primo homini insufflauit in
sua suggestione· cū ppt̄ hoc ad
redimendū ipsū hominē midia
di se declinauit ad ūtā p̄humani
tatē eiusdē filii di ut nūc cōprehensibi
li altitudine diuinitatis· Sed s xxviij·
q̄d alibi idē in septentrionali et s
in occidentali aliq· in meridiana s
parte· tanta undiq· ē latitudo s
inter idē edificiū et eundē splen s
dorē· ut ei⁹ amplitudinē nullom̄ s
cōprehendere possit· hoc ē q̄d nul· s

luis hominis hominū mortali corpore
grauatus potuit scire demonē ma
li inuiscerib· aq̄lonaris diaboli· nec
finitionē ei⁹ in opante creatura in oc
casu cademus hominis· nec in ūtū
aut finē ardemus meridiei· q̄d ē sup
ne iustitie· considerare quom̄ hec
dilatata et discreta sint inter opus
et potestatē scientie mee in omnib·
pplis· scilicet aut in electis aut in rep
bis· qui oīs posita s̄ in equissima p̄
scrutatione· ita q̄d acutissima et
diligentissima districtione exami
nabunt in p̄ceptis meis· cū tamen
ipsi oīs p̄spicue debent confidere
q̄d eos pasco in omnib· necessitatu
ius q̄a hec hec oīa in secretis meis
ita occultata s̄ q̄d amplitudinē
p̄fundatus eoꝝ· nec sensus aut in
tellectus hominis ullomodo cōp
hendere uel intelligere ualeat· nu
si q̄tin⁹ p̄missione mea concedit·
Qui autē acutas aures interioris
intellectus habet· hic mandūcat
amore speculi mei aduersa hec
anhelet· et ea inconsciēcia ani
mi sui conscribat·

Tercia uisio. tāt partis·

Os
Gb
Ec
iudi

et ecce quasi in medio longitudinis p̄dicte lucide partis muri designati edificii stabat uelut turris ferrei coloris. ipsi muro exterius imposita. latitudinis quatuor cubitor. et altitudinis septē cubitor. in qua conspexi quinq; imagines singulariter stantes in singulo arcu desup quasi turritū conū habentē. quarū prima respiciebat orientē. secūda autē aquilonē. tertia uero ad septentrionē. et q̄rta adcolumnā uerbi dī in cuius radice abrahā patriarcha residebat. ac q̄nta adturrim ecclē. et adillos hominēs qui in ipso edificio huc et illuc discurrebant. Similitudo autē una erat eis in hoc. Singule earū uestimenta erant solūmodo q̄si singulis uestib; sericis et calciamentis. calciamentis albis. excepta q̄nta quę ex omī parte armata uidebatur. Secūda uero ex tercia erant nudo capite dissoluta coma et alba. carentes amictu pallio q. Prima autē ex tercia ac q̄rta indute erant tunicis albis. Sed dissimilitudo ex hoc erat eis. Prima imago gestabat in capite suo pontificale infula sparsis capillis et albis. indutа quasi pallio albo. inferi in duab; oris ipsius purpura contexto. In dextera uero habebat lilia et alios flores. in sinistra autē palmā. Et dixit. O dulcis unta et o dulcis amplexio ętne unę. o beata felicitas in qua s ętna p̄mia quę semp est in uetris delicius. ita tamen q̄d nūquā possū impleri nec satiari interiori leticia quę ē in homeo. Secūda autē indutа erat purpurea tunica. stans ut adolescens qui nōdū ē ad plenū uirilis etatis. Et tam magnę grauitatis. Et dicebat. O ex nō terebit horribilis inimicus scilicet diabolus. nec inimicus homo. nec hoc selm de disciplina dī. cui in conspectu semp assisto. Tercia uero tegebat faciē suā alba manica dextre manus suę. Et ait. O spurcicia et omnmundicia huius scli abscondite uos et fugite ab oculis meis. quia dilectus mis natus ē de pura uirgine maria. Quarta autē erat uelato capite ex albo uelamine capitis more mulierū. et circū amicta pallio croceo coloris. In pectore uero suo habebat imaginē ihu xpi. circa quā in ipso pectore suo scriptū erat. Peruisetra mię dī nrī. in quib; uisitauit nos ori

cns exaltu·⁊ dicebat·Porrigo
manus semp adpegrinos et egenos
ac adpaupes et debiles·atq;·ad
gēmes·Quinta uero arma erat
galea sup posita capu suo·induta
quoq; lorica et ocreis atq; ferreis
et rothecis·habens cuā insinistra
sua clipeū abhumeris pendentē·
accincta quoq; gladio·et hastā
manu dextera tenens·Subpedib;
aurē cū iacebat quasi leo hians
ore lingua extensa excore ipsius·
et cuā uidit quidā homines quox
alii tubis resonabant·alii quib;dā
instrumētis lusorus iocularitē con
crepabant exalu diuersis ludis
ludebant·quos cadē imago simul
et ipsū leonē pedib; suis concul
cans·hasta quā dextra tenebat
acriter transfodiebat·⁊ dixit·
Ymco fortē diabolū exte odiū et
inuidia·atq;·et ospurcicia·cū lu
dentib; fallaci decepcione·S; intē
idē edificiū uidi duas alias ima
gines uersus hanc eandē turrim
stantes·quarū prior apparebat
stans supra pauimentū ipsius edi
ficii quasi marcu ignei splendo
ris diuersis imaginib; maligno
spiritui interius depicto·et con
tra p̄dictā turrim posito·altera
uero ipsi arcui exterius tamē
collateali in nullo arcu consisten
te·ambe uidelicet mūdū adp̄sa
tā turrim aspicientes·et mūdū
ad homines idē edificiū intran
tes et exeuntes·Ylestus autē erant

cuā ipse sericis uestib;·et uelate in
ligatura capitis albo uelamine
more femineo·ñ circūamicte pal
lis·indute uero calciamētis albis·
S; prior carū habebat in capite
suo quasi triangularē coronā·
rubentē ut rubeus iacinctus ru
bet in colore suo·induta quoq;
tunica alba·cui implicamēta erant
uiridi colore ubiq;·distincta·⁊
ait·Ymco moriente cū fortissimo
filio di·qui exiuit a patre uenies
in mundū p̄ redepcione hominū·
qui iterū rediit ad patrē cū in
maxima erumna moriens in cru
ce resurgensq; a mortuis ascendit
in celū·ideoq; nolo confundi fu
giendo miserias et dolores hui
sceli·Altera uero induta erat tu
nica alba·⁊; aliq̄mulū pallidi co
loris·⁊ in dextro brachio suo
portabat crucē cū imagine sal
uatoris·caput suū inclinans sup
illā·⁊ dicebat·Hic infans p̄ulit
multas miserias in hoc seclo·et id
circo uolo semp plorare et habe
re merorē p̄ p̄ gaudiū etne ut
in quā bone oues ducende s̄ p no
bile filiū di·⁊ audi q̄d om̄s p̄dic
te imagines singula uerba sua
p̄ misteriū di dicebant ad ammo
nicionē hominū·Tunc iterū se
dens in throno qui m̄ hec oīa
ostendebat dixit mihi·
Per fortitudinē ac constantiā
uoluntatis di·diuine ul
times inuictericestamēto lenitet-

pullabam⁹·ſ;ibi ſe uidit ignoran
tia colentib;·ñ dū plenius ſuauē &
dulcē guſtū p̄bebam⁹·q̄a tunc tan
tū auſteritas legis delinquentes
acrius corripiebat·post modū au
tē p̄ gr̄am di innoua lege plurimū
fructū p̄ferentes·fortē et p̄fectū ci
bū in amore celestū eſurientib;·cū
ſūma dulcedine exhibebam⁹·cū pri⁹
ut dictū ē quedā occulta oſtenſio
et ſignū futuroꝝ ēent·ſcdm q̄d etiā
miraculū hoc cū appoſitionib; ſuis
demonſtrat·Nā hec turris quā ui
des quaſi in medio longitudinis
p̄dicte lucide parus muri deſig
nat edificiū ſtamē·habet typū p̄
curſus uoluntatis dī·quę in circū
ciſione multis modis et diuerſis
ſignificationib;·manifeſtata ē·ita
ut q̄d dns inſigno eāde circūciſio
nis demonſtrauit legē et p̄legē
gr̄am euāgelii·quo fide p̄palata in
fideli abrahā·ſurrexit in ipſo etiā
circūciſio in miſterio uere p̄figu
rationis·quia p̄ diuinā potentiā
inſtruxerunt ſe fortes turres·
incipientes in eo de abrahā quaſi
in medio longitudinis ſpecula
tuę ſcientię duarū opinionis cau
ſarū ſub mūitione firmiſſimę
bonitatis ſupni patris·cū poſt
modū apte future erant p̄uolun
tatē di·illud in figura p̄ſignan
tes q̄d dns facere uoluit priuſq̄m
hoc manifeſte oſtenderet in pe·
Que ferrea coloris ē ipſiq; muro
exterius inpoſita·que ē iuſticia

di fortis et inuincibilis·ſe in ipſa
ſpeculatiua ſcientia quaſi extera
oſtendens p̄ circūciſionē·que ſe fo
ris carnaliter formauit·poſita cū
beatis uiris tib;·in ſp̄ualia ſp̄italis
muri·que conſtituit dns in hominib;·
Et eade turris ē lata dimiſ q̄u
or cubitoꝝ·q̄a p̄ uoluntatē di
ipſe uirtutes op̄ande in homine·
poſſit ſub extenſione quatuor
uiegr̄ar̄ corporaliter uiuens in cor
pore·et altitudinis ſept̄ cubitoꝝ
quia in altitudine ſept̄ donoꝝ
ſp̄s ſcī tanta firmitas ē ut ſe ipſa
turris ita erigeret q̄d ecclā p̄di
ret ecclā in incarnatione filii
mei p̄figurata in circūciſione
ueteris teſtamenti· Quod au
tē conſpicis in ea quinq; ima
gines ſingulariter ſtantes in ſingulo
arcu de ſup quaſi turritū conū
habentes·hoc ē·q̄d in turri hac ide
in fortitudine circūciſionis pen
debant quinq; fortes uirtutes·ñ
q̄d ulla uirtus ſit uilis forma
in ſemetipſa·ſ;ſolū modo p̄lucida
ſpera ad̄ō fulgens in ope hominis·
qua homo p̄ficit cū uirtutib;·quo
ipſe s̄ opus operatus hominis in dō·
Vnde ipſe quinq; uirtutes adſimi
latidinē quinq; ſenſuū hominis
in hanc turrim poſite ſ;·qua mul
to ‘belo tangebant circūciſionē
abſcidentes abea in q̄tatē·ut q̄nq;
ſenſus hominis in eccla circūcidun
tur p̄ baptiſmū·ſ;tam in hominib;·
ñ operantes p̄ ſemetipſas·q̄a homo

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cū illis opat̄ et ipse cū homine·sicut
cnā quinq; sensus hominis n̄ opan
tur· ps̄e s; homo cū illis et ipsi cū ho
mine·ita unusc̄ fructū faciemes·
et s̄ singulariter maximo studio de
suadames·insingulari scilicet sta
tura magisterii turris tui apicē ha
bente·idē p̄cellenter et bene cōposi
tā dignitatē uirtuose constituę·
et prima imago respicit adorien
tē·qua uirtus illa p̄spexit adfiliū
di planctu amoris·ut q̄ndoq; ue
niret hoc aptē loquens de ḡna u
ta·q̄d circūcisio habuit inabscon
so·Secūda autē uidet adaquilonē·
quo ipsa considerauit partē ori
entis ~~et partē orientis~~ et partē aq̄
lonis·inmagna disciplina aspici
ens addm quasi adorientē·dedig
nando inconuenientiā indiscipli
natę lasciuię·scilicet q̄d ds n̄ habe
bant· inuenerationē·despicien
doq; q̄d lex dī digne n̄ habebat̄
in pplo illo q̄si inaquilone·Tercia
uero uenit adseptentrionē·quia
illa fortissime p̄sternit superfluā
fornicationē despiciendo eā·et se
metipsā abilla purgendo legali
institutione·Q̄rta autē uertit̄ ad
columnā uerbi dī·incui radice
abrahā patriarcha residet·quo
ipsa uersa fuit adherens incarna
tioni filii dī·quā uidit infunda
mento abrahā tetigit cū p̄signi
ficatione mirę p̄fundtatis·arie
te pendente inspinis·Quinta uero
respicit aduultum ecclę·et adul
los homines qui inipso edificio huc
et illuc discurrunt·q̄a illa erexit
se uictoriose destruere omnē iniu
stitiā quę orta ē inadā·respiciens
adfortitudinē ecclę·ut uictoriose
pugnet contra uicia diaboli·et ad
homines qui inea diuersa uarie
tate morū discurrunt·ostendens
eis inprimescendo helo dī ut ouis
iusticię et p̄seueret·Quod autē
similitudo una ē meis·hoc ē q̄d
pari deuotione dīm colunt inopib;
hominū·Nā singule earū uestitus s̄
solūmodo q̄si singulis uestib;·seri
cis·q̄a unaquęq; earundē uirtutū
habet inse dulcedinē et suauitatē·
quib;·nullatenus grauant nec con
stringunt homines·s; ut suauiter
balsamū sudat de fructe suo·sic
mollit̄ opant̄ dulcedinē celestis reg
ni inhumanis mentib;·sine sorde et
duricia iniusticie·et s̄ calciant cal
ciamentis albis·quo recte sequunt̄
iusticiā meā inalbedine celestis
regni·transeundo subiectionē dia
boli·et omnino conculcant uesti
gia ei· inhominib;·S;·q̄nta uirtus
ex omni parte armata uidet·q̄a
ipsa p̄spicit adecclām·in qua for
tissime pugnet aduersus diabolica
uicia p̄ficiunt̄·extendens inea
ubiq; uictoriā suā cū p̄ciosissima
armatura quę ē inuictissima
fortitudo dī·quę p̄transeundo
occidit omnē iniusticiā incon
fusione diabolicę fraudis·Q̄d
uero sexta et tercia s̄ nudo capite

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dissoluta coma et alba·hoc ē q̄d
nullū supplicū laboris·nec onus
dumeiarū·aut concupiscemus si
bi imponunt pamore meo·s; nu
do capite idē apta conscientia
sua apiunt in omne occultū suū·
ardentes semp in dilectione mea·
cū omnē confusionē et lasciuia
concupiscentię carnis de se abici
unt·hoc incipientes malbis crim
bus q̄d ē claritas mus bona opa de
sideramus·et carent amictu palli
orū·quo aspiciunt mortes paga
norū cū impudicicia et spurticia
diaboli·et cū omnib; curis seculari
bus·quia sapientia hui mundi
stultitia ē apud dm·Prima quoq;
et tertia acquirta induit s tunicis al
bis·q̄d ē apphensio innocentię·
p̄figuramus incarnationē filii
mei cū suauitate castitatis·qui
mortu subtraxit hominē·indu
ens cū una in saluatione·Quod
autē dissimilitudo ē ait·hoc ē q̄d
aiscarū uicissim ē in dono spūs sci·
cū uirtus hec habet hoc instrum
tū animę et uirtus alia illud·unū
tam studiū existentes indo·ta
q̄d celestis uerbum p̄fecte construat
cū eis·quia ipse s opus q̄d hoies
opant p q̄d ad dm puenimus·

·v· Vnde hec prima imago desig
nat amorē celestē·quia ipse
p̄omni cura mea debet homini
bus·gestans in capite suo pomi
ficalē infulā sparsis capillis et
albis·q̄a ualde coronata ē in
sūmo sacerdote ihu xp̄o et in sū
mis sacerdotib; ueteris testamū·
et milliis qui ide filio di dixerūt·
umbrā dirumpes celos et descende
res·stans denudans capillis sine
mulichri uelamine capitis malbe
dine apparentib; p̄figurans meis
q̄d sacerdotale officiū denudan
dū erat coniugali officio·maduen
tu ipsius filii mei·qui imitandus
ē a sacerdotib; suis in castitate p̄p̄ā
saluationē·q̄a ipsi p̄fectissimo ce
lesti amori sic semp adherere de
bent·ut excruciant prauos mores
hominū a contagione peccati·cla
ra et candida pars existentes in
spūali dono di·Que etiā induta
ē quasi pallio albo·inferius in
duab; oris ipsius purpura con
texto·hoc ē q̄d ea circūdedit gra
di malbedine tentatus·subnixa
et ornata in finib; p̄cchonū sua
rū cū decoris ornamus carnis·
quia cōp̄hensio diuine gr̄e in ee
debet termino uni cuiusq; bom
opis·constans in duab; partib; ui
delicet in uirtute dilectionis di et
hominis·Q̄d uero in dextera sua
habet lilia et alios flores·hoc ē·
q̄d in bono ope habet candida
p̄mia liliog etne uite·et claritatē
etni luminis·et alios scitamus flos
culos qui s sodales sui·qui se illi
coniungunt celesti amore·Sed
q̄d in sinistra sua gestat palmā·
hoc ē q̄d ipsa in recordatione mor
tis habet palmā ascendentē de

occulto beate uirtutis cū qua mortē
quasi torrentib; lapidib; obruit·
ut etiā declarat in uerbis suis ad
filios dī ut supra dictū· Secdā
autē p̄tendit disciplinā·quō p̄
amorē celestis uite; ortur constric
tio carnalis concupiscentie; in dis
ciplinā magne contritionis· Que;
indutta ē purpurea tunica·quia
circūdata ē lege mea·et mortifica
tione carnis in hominib;·q̄d ē ex
emplū filii mei in purpureo in
dumento·ut idē filius m̄s ex uirgine
natus ē in carnem· que; omnimo
do opata ē in ipso· Stat etiā ut ad
olescens qui n̄ dū ē ad plenū uiri
lis etatis s; tamē magne grauitatis·
quō disciplina semp̄ ē in puericia
amore·ut puer ē in constrictione
timens magistrū suū sub magi
stratione·unde et ego om̄ps semp̄
magister sū disciplīe·quia ipsa
in me ē quasi n̄ uirilis·quō n̄ uult
ē potens in officio p̄prie; uolunta
tis sue; s; semp̄ fidelit timere in
magna districtione reuerentie;·
sicut etiā ostendit in supra dictis
uerbis suis· Tercia uero declarat
uerecundiā·quō p̄ disciplinā sur
git pudor uerecundie; a se fugans
confusionē peccati· Qua p̄p̄t te
git etiā faciē suā alba manica
decore manus sue;·qua p̄tegit
interiorē conscientiā suā quasi
faciē anime; fugiens a formicatio
ne et a pollutione diabolica·se
defendens candida ueste in no
cente et castimatis·eā habens in dece
ra q̄d ē in saluatione opis sui·quō
ipsi potenter adhereat contemptus
omnis spurticie satane; q̄m omnīm
abicit de se·ut etiā declarat in p̄
dictis uerbis admonitionis sue·
Quarta autē significat mīam·
quia p̄ uerecundiā eleuat se
adeo tertius uirtutis mīdie; cū etiā in
corde cōmuni patris ē uera mīdia gr̄e;
ei·quō ipse p̄ etā hoc ordinauit·in
antiquo consilio suo·q̄d primū
ostendit mīditer abrahā in circū
cisione educens eū de tra sua et p̄
cipiens ei ut circūcideret ip̄se et
genus sū·q̄ndo illi demonstrauit
magna mirabilia inuicta trinita
te p̄ que; et filiū suū p̄nuncians
erat in figura·q̄d totū ē illa mīa
quā idē abrahā p̄signauit offe
rens ysaac·et ē uelato capite ex
albo uelamine captus mortem mul
ebri·q̄d ē tegm̄ et inicium saluatio
nis quasi capite miserantis·p̄ditas
animas de exilio mortis reducen
tis sub candore puelaminis·
quō albas facit animas et homi
nē fulgentē dū cooptus fuerit
cū mīdia a deo·qa illis hominib;
qui dm̄ in indignatione habent,
dū adhuc in peccatis s̄ his fulget
post illatā sibi celitus mīdiam ut
radius solis in blanda suauitate·
quō mīdia in muliebri p̄sona fe
cundissima mater ē animarū de
p̄dītione· Nā ut mulier optica
put suū·ita deprimit mīdia mor-

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tē animarū· Et sicut mulier suaui
or ē uiro· sic ē midia suauior rabi
da insania criminū in insania
peccatoris prius quā cor ei⁹ uisce
tur a do· sicut et ea dē uirtus in
mulebri forma apparet· quā in
femina castitate clausa uirgi
nea materia surrexit in uenire
marię suauissima midia· quę sēp
erat obumbrata in patre· donec
pater eā uisibilē ostendit p spm ix.
scm in utero uirginis· Et circūa
micta ē pallio crocei coloris· qa
circūdata ē splendidissimo sole
q⁹d ē signū filii mei fulgentis de
celo in mundū sicut solis splen
dor in tra· quo idē filius mis ue
rus ē sol illuminans mundū cū
sēficatione ecclę· Quod uero in
pectore suo habet imaginē ipsi⁹
unigeniti mei· hoc ē q⁹d in pectus
midię inclinauit eundē filium
meū· dū eū misit in uterū marię
uirginis· Vnde et circa eā in pecto
re eusdē uirtutis scriptū ē· Per
uiscera midię dī nr̄i in quib; u
sitauit nos oriens ex alto· Quid
ē hoc· Quia ubiq; in circūcurrit
potestate mea demonstrat in
secreto scientię pectoris midię·
q⁹d filius mis ucra midia ē· Quo
modo· ist p dictū ē in uerbis ha
charię serui mei in eugio dicen
tis· P uiscera midię dī nr̄i· in q⁹b;
uisitauit nos oriens ex alto·
Hoc tale ē· P uiscera patris
saluatio ē· qa absconsū in cor
de patris erat ut uiscera manent
in homine q⁹d filii ei⁹ in fine tēpo
rū in carnare tur· ubi uisitauit dś
homines· Quomodo· celesti scilicet
pane qui filius ei⁹ ē natus in carne
ex maria uirgine· qui ueniens ex
alto idē de corde patris exiens
pbuit maximā quertimab; se
midiam· sicut etiā ipsa uirtus
in supra dictis uerbis suis filios
dī alloquit· Quinta uero ima
go p figurat uictoriā· quo post
midiam quā ostendi in circūci
sione filii meū uolens mittere
in mundū· erexit se uictoria in
eade circūcisione· ita p cedens cū
maiore uirtute usq; ad filiū meū·
atq; cū ipso in nouissimū die· Nā
in filio meo supau antiquū ser
pentē· qui sup caput suū exaltat
se· humanū genus rapiens p mil
le nequicias quib; illud cōpben
dit quasi in catena sua· cū easde
nequicias unigenitus mis deuicit
pōa bellicosa arma· que surrexe
runt in incarnatione ei⁹ floris
omnii uirtutū· Quid ē hoc· Post
midiam surgit uictoria· cū se
ipsū homo deuincit et alienа
uicia· Quo m· In p dictis uidelicet
quinq; uirtutib; primus ē amor
celestis· scilicet in hoc q⁹d homo
sciat et agnoscat dm· diligens eū
sup oīa· Deinde causa illius fi
dei. ligatur idē homo in legē
discipline· de qua ipse cōpescit
crimina peccandi· p bonā et rec

tā uerecundiā· Inhis ergo trib; u
rib;-iustificabit̄ homo in corde suo·
sic inspiciens aliā rē quę ē angu
stia ꝓximi sui·quę ꝑcutabit in om
nib; necessitatib; ei⁹ ut se· Ynde et
mox surgit homo fortissimus mi
les cū his trib;-urib;-unqub;-ꝓfect⁹
ē unīt̄ sua·unitando inmidia
filiū meū uerū samaritanū·sic in
uictoria ꝓtransiens urtes diaboli
cū armis uictoriosissimarū uirtu
tū·cū se ipsū unxit et ꝓximū suū
regit·in ipsis urtutib; occidens
omne malū·abiciendo uidelicet
supbiā quę adā expulit de para
diso· Et cadē urtus armata ē ga
lea sup posita capti suo·qua ho
mo pleno cęlesti desiderio addīm
qui ē caput omniū suspirare de
bet·ut salutē consequat̄ ęternam·
Yndua ē quoq; lorica·ut homo
resistat diabolo·constringens in
iustica uoluntatē carnaliū desi
deriox suox unuero timore et cū
iusto timore subiectus dō fidelit̄
metuens districtū iudicū ei⁹·ut ꝓ
me cōmonitus dicit psalmista da
uid· Illuxerūt coruscationes tuę
orbi terre·cōmota ē et contremuit
tra· Hoc tale ē· Effulserūt mirabilia
et secreta tua odīne cunctox·et mi
rifice apparuerūt· Quomodo· Ut
choruscatio quę ex parte uidet̄
et ex parte occultat̄·quō misteria
tua nunc intelliguntur· nunc au
tē nescuunt̄· Nā n̄ ē gens diffusa
in latitudine totius orbis q; inuo
luntate tua mirabiliter creatus est·
quin adeā nom̄ gl̄ę tuę·et poten
cia maiestatis tuę diuersis modis
et admirandis signis mirifice ꝓ
ueneritt·cuā si eā lum̄ fidei et ue
ritatis n̄i dū ꝓfecte adsalutē̄ sui
illustrauerit· Qua ꝑpter homo
in magnis suspiriis cōmotus auer
tit se a uoluntate sua·desertq;
concupiscentias suas timendo iu
dicet supnū iudiciū·qua ipse
prius inuenis actib; ambulans·
sumet imprudenter oblitus erat·
cū nunc sapienter redit ad se· Est
cuā ꝑfata urtus induta ocreis·
ut recta ua sibi denunciata·effu
giat mineta mortis ꝑ castigatio
nē corporalē· Induta ē et ferreis
curabecis·quatinus effugiat opa
diaboli ꝑ circūcisionē mentis·et
ꝓchissimā fidē·ita ut in dīm cre
dat·sic euadens laqueos truculen
tissimi inimici· Habet cuā insini
stra sua clipeū abbumeris pendentē·
quō in sinistra parte quę ē diabo
lica pugna contra hominē·circū
data ē gra fortissimox ꝑceptox di·
quib; homo tanta fidei fortitudi
ne circūdet̄ et defendat̄·ne diabo
lus cū corrūpat suasionib; suis·
et ne ipse homo se subiciat uicis
illius·ꝓchione di abbumeris cir
cūdatis·quō gra di adherit ere
tę fortitudini animę addīm·inli
gatura dilectionis di et ꝓximi·et
accincta ē gladio·qa homo debet
se constringere castigatione cor-

Hoc facient ē fortissima pace dñi que uera est iustitia qua nequissimū certamen

poris. mansuetudinis sermonis dī. et
ase cū abalus absidens iniquitatē.
Hastā quoq; manu dextera tenet.
q̄d ē ut homo cū fiducia sit au
dax undo supare omnē spurci
ciā diaboli et hominis. q̄d dif
ficile de bellari potest nisi adiu
torio dī. Q̄d autē sub pedib; ei
iacet quasi leo hians ore. hic ē di
abolus quē uictoria pedib; recti
tudinis uite et ueritatis p̄straut.
cū ide satanas acerrima et arma
rissima crudelitate hians deglu
tire genus humanū. Lingua ꝟ
extensa ex ore ipsi. est existima
tio ei. qua tribulū iniquitate pu
tabat omne genus hominū ab
ada p̄ctatū omnino deuorare. ꝟ.
Et q̄d etiā sub pedib; ei iacent
uelut quida homines bi s̄ sub
agilitate ei. serpentes fistule diabo
li. que se flectunt adinuicē omīs ma
li. quas ipsa p̄cepit in belo directe
p̄cedens iniusticia. qua ecclē puer
se machinationes diuersis mo
rib; subdunt diabolo. illi famu
lantes. Quoꝝ alii tubis resonant.
quo bachant̄ sonitu omniū ma
lorū et insaniunt etiam flagitan
te nīte odio habentes iustitiā dī.
genus scilicet sup genus hoc faci
ens in magna supbia. Et alii quib;
dā instrumentis diuersis iocularit̄
concrepant. quia fallaces s̄ in illu
sionib; famasticis ad diabolū pu
nemib; et quo p̄naces s̄ in mor
tuosa lasciuia et amoris inuiden

tes. disciplinę
tes dī. Alii quoq; diuersis ludis lu
dunt. quo uersant̄ in diuersitate
et spurcicia uicioꝝ que sedm libitū
uoluntatis sue ut excogitant in
semetipsis et insidias diabolicas
adimplent. Et hos omīs eadē imago
simul et ipsū leonē pedib; suis con
culcat. quia nimio hdo omīs bas
uantatis arcuū ppli et suasiones
satanę comittit iniusticia dī. Sed et
hasta quā dextera tenet eos acrit̄
transfodit. quo p̄fiduciā et auda
ciā addm fortissime transfigit
supando et uulnerando indoloris.
bas omīs immundicias. qa ado de
ludunt̄ et adnihilū deputant. ut
ipsa etiā inp̄dictis uerbis admo
nitionis sue demonstrat. Sed
q̄d intra ide edificiū uides duas
alias imagines uersus hanc eande
turrim stantes. hoc ē quod intra
opus illud q̄d celestis opatus ē. p̄fi
lii sui. pala cū ostendens in apto
ope qui mercūcisione ostensus ē
in obumbratione duc iurum
surrexer̄t. q̄d ē exemplū xp̄i in
una. et sequu uestigia ei. in altera
obuiā p̄cursu uoluntatis dī. max
ima fortitudine et reuerentia
aparentes. qua in se ipsis decla
rant fructū. qui p̄figuratus ē in
circūcisione. Et prior earū appa
ret stans. supra pauimentū ipsius
edificii quasi in area ignei splen
doris. diuersis imaginib; malig
norū sp̄tuū interius de pecto
et contra p̄dictā turrim posito.

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quia cadē uirtus pficit īmīrmis
rcb; cas conculcando inbonitate
patris· cū diligent pransit de
sideria carnis inexemplo filii di-
Quomodo· Qua inmulta tolera
ua pransit aduersa mundi· for-
mer· examinata et excribrata in
arcu· idē inexcellentia sclaris po
testatis· que ignea ē inmortore de
terremis supbie· quā diabolica
turba subsequit īmortora am
me sclarū desideria carnalia di
ligentiū adtrahens suę uolunta
ti· cū eua idē arcus pūrena pour
tā inmutus modis mūdū oppo
nat se iustice· repugnans uero
testamto q̄d edificatū ē indō·
que tam oña supat uictrix· ui·
tus padiuorū di inbonis ho
minib; quāius multū impug
nent et fangent abmsidiis ma
lignorū· Altera uero ipsi arcui
exterius tamū collateralis· in
nullo arcu consistit· quo cū pri
or· uirtus tumidā potestatē pa
cient deumcat· que ipsi multas
penas inulit; pcedit uirtus hec
foris tandē pourtuā· quia de
penis quas illa pulit hec quasi
extra tandē pourstatē orta ē ra
bie ei effugiens· s; tamen iuxta
eā· q̄d ē recordatio crūnarū unō
originē duxit· sine depssione ar-
cus consistens· quo libera ē apo
testate huī scli palā crucē xpi
baiolando· q̄d autē ambe mūdū
adpfatā uirtum aspiciunt· hoc
ē· q̄d ipse s plenū opus pfiguratū
inp̄cursu uoluntatis dī incarnā
cisione uocris testamū· conside
ramus inmū radicis suę· maiores
tam eo de inmo suo q̄d incarnā
cisione habuert existimus· q̄a
fulgens opus p̄cellit inceptionē
doctrinę· imūdū eua aspicientes
ad hominis idē edificiū inuan
tes et excusamus· q̄d ē admonitio
carū inspū scō adpplos q̄ addin
inuia legis iustitie ambulant
et adillos qui s inerimmib;· dia
boli uolentes recedere de uia iu
sta· unde exhortant abeis ut eas
inbono immitt· Vestite s
eua ipse sericis uestib;· quia ha
bent suauitatē illā ut homo n·
grauet inindignatione laboris
pfectionū· et s uelate inliga
tura capitis albo uelamine mo
re feminco· quo iustū ē ut ho
subiectus sit do capti suo· ipsv
menti suę iugiter circūponens
incandore dilectionis· ita ut
eū ingaudio et lętitia amplec
tatur· sicut mulier· uirū suū
habebit inhonore timoris et
amoris· ut constituit ds· S; n s
circūamicte palliis· quia ca
rent omī sollicitudine sclari·
se tamū declinantes post illa
que s eua indo inuita fuitura·
Indute s autē calciamentis albis·
quo lucent inmuneribus; iusti
cie palbedinē fidei inmib;
hominū· ut et ipsi seqntur·

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:xvij. s s

uestigia exempli earū. Prior au
tē imago designat patientiā. qua
illa surrexit in cornu abrahe. qđ
ē in inceptione obediendi cū obedi
ur. dō significante in circūcisione
primū sonū obedientis post casū
ade pcurrentē opantē obedientiā
in uero uerbo qđ ē in filio dī. ut so
nus uerbū pcurrit. insequentio
nali parte ui dicitur obposita neq
uis ex inquietudini antiqui ser
pentis. Et habet in capite suo quasi
triangularē coronā. rubentē ut
rubeus iacinctus rubet in colore
suo. quō in principio mūs fideliū
hominū pfidē sēc ut in mutatus ualde
coronata ē. qui carnē suā contem
nentes pamore dī et uera fide san
guinē suū fundere ñ dubitant. qa
et filius dī apparens in carne mor
tē deuicit cū rubore sanguinis su
i pquē ecclā decorata ē. quasi cū no
bili rubente iacincto in decore suo.
Induta ē quoq; tunica alba cuius
implicatura s̄ uiridi colore ubiq;
distincta. qa sibi induit uestimen
tū opis dī in albedine ppetui lu
minis ornatū scilicet in implicam
tus suis. que s̄ erumne et gemitus
dicentis. quando ueniā ad aspectū
ueri luminis. qđ desiderū felicit
in p̄senti uita habēt in adobum
brato exemplo pqđ decoramur
ipse aduersitates fideliū in uni
ditate animę multis calamitatib;
distinctę. ppt̄ dim in patientia hęc
oīa sufferentes. ut eā cade uul

Altera uero imago pūdit ge
mitū. quō p̄ patientiā contra
riorū eleuat se in lectis meis gemi
tus recordationis ut surgens ad
monitionē meā. ut decorde meo
filiū meū misi. ppt̄ gemitū ppli
mei. Nā pplis mīs inuetus et in nouo
testamēto habebat et habet hanc
recordationē mūs quā gemitus
cōprehendit in lamentabili ornamēto
suo. quō ipsa uera compunctio cor
dis ē. Pter qđ etiā stat in septen
trionali plaga. ut repugnet disso
lute immundicię diabolicarū in
sidiarū. Et induta ē tunica alba
s; aliqñ multū pallidi coloris. qa
circūdata ē bonis opib; in cando
re fidei turbulentū tamē pallorē
ostendentis. quō semp suspiria et
fletus habet; pēnia felicitate. Qđ
autē in dextro brachio suo por
tat crucē. cū imagine saluatoris
caput suū inclinans sup illud.
hoc ē qđ in dextera idē in recta
parte fortis opis sui amplectit
passionē eiđē filii mei. toto desi
derio intentionis suę anhelans
et se inclinans ad eū. imitando
ipsū in doloribus. et crucis. sicut
etiā in supra dictis uerbis exhorta
tionis suę demonstrat. Vnde ui
dens etiā qđ oīs p̄dictę imagines
singula uerba sua p̄misterii dī
dicunt ad admonitionē hominū.
quia in omnib; uultumb; dulcissi
ma suauitate pietas dī docet ex

hortando memores ppſæ; ut dimit
tant malũ· erigentes ſe ad bonũ·
Qui amẽ acutas aures interioris
intellectus habet· hic ardentis
amoris ſpeculi mei aduerba hæc
ambedo· et ea inconſcientia animi
ſui conſcribat·

ultra p̃dictã turrim p̃curſus uo
luminis di·ſ; cubito uno infra an
gulũ qui reſpicit adſeptentrio
nẽ uidi quaſi columnã calibei
coloris p̃fatæ lucidæ parti muri
eidẽ ædificii exterius appoſitã
ualde ũribilẽ aſpectu· tamq; mag
nitudinis· ut mẽſurã ei nullom̃ diſ
cernere poſſẽ· et eadẽ columna tres
angulos habebat abimo uſq; ad
ſũmũ quaſi gladiũ acutos· quoꝝ
primus reſpiciebat adorientẽ· ſecꝰ
autẽ adſeptentrionẽ cæterus adme
ridiẽ· exterius ipſi edificio aliqñ
tulũ communctus· Exangulo autẽ
qui reſpiciebat adorientẽ· pcedẽ
bant rami a radice uſq; ad cacu
men ei· iuxta cuius radicẽ uidi
in primo ramo abrahã ſedentẽ·
in ſecdo uero moyſen et in tertio io
ſue· ac deinde reliquos patriar
chas et pphas ita ſurſũ ſingulos
in ſingulis ramis ordinate ſeden
tes· ſedm tẽpus quo in hoc ſeclo ſi
bi nati ſucceſſerant· qui ſe omnes con
uerterant ad angulũ eidẽ columnæ
ne qui reſpiciebat adſeptentrio
nẽ admirantes ea que in ſpũ fu
tura uiderũt in ipſa· S; inter hos
duos angulos unũ ſcilicet uer
gentẽ adorientẽ· et alterũ ad
ſeptentrionẽ erat ante facies ip
ſorũ patriarcharũ et pphetarũ
eadẽ columna a bimo uſq; ad
ſũmũ quaſi ornatulis et rotun
da plena q; rugarũ· ut de arbo
ris cortice ſolet germen pullu
lare· Aſecdo uero angulo reſpici
ente adſeptentrionẽ exiuit ſplen
dor mire claritatis· ſe extenden
tis et reflectentis ad angulũ qui
reſpiciebat admeridiẽ· et in eodẽ
ſplendore ita magna lætitia
nẽ ſe diffundente conſpexi aplos·
martyres· confeſſores et uirgines·
atq; alios plurimos ſcos· in mag
no gaudio deambulantes· Tertiꝰ
uero angulus qui reſpiciebat
admeridiẽ erat in medio latus
et extremus· in imo autẽ et in ſu
mitate aliquantulũ gracilior
et conſtrictus· ſedm modũ arcus
qui extenditur ad ſagittas iacien

das. Inca cumine aut cide co
lumne undi tamā claritatē lu
minis ultra quā humana lingua
effari possit. unqua apparuit
columba habens more suo radiy
aurei coloris multo fulgore m
candē columnā radiantē. cūq;
illuc aspicerē audiui uocē de celo
magno tonit me redarguentē
et dicentē. Qd uides diuinū ē. ex
qua uoce ita contremui. ut am
plius illuc aspicere nō auderē. Ysi
di etiā tunc mira p dictū edificiū
uelut quanda imaginē corā hac
eade columna sup pauimentū
eide edificii stantē. et aliq̄ndo
ipsā columnā. aliq̄ndo etiā hoies
illos qui in ipso edificio discur
rebant inspicientē. Eade aut
imago tanti fulgoris et claritā
tis erat ut p nimio splendore qui
in ipsa lucebat. nec faciē ei⁹ nec ue
stimenta quib; induebat consi
derare ualerē. excepto qd tamē
ut cetere uirtutes in forma appa
runt hominis. Et circa eā conspecu
pulcherrimā multitudinē angē
licā formā et alas habentē. et in
tanta ueneratione stantē ut et
eā timerent ac diligerent. Sz; ante
faciē ei⁹ uidi aliā multitudinē
inhumana forma et turpi aspectu
ueste apparentē. atq; in multa
constrictione timoris stantē. Et
p dicta imago inspexit homi
nes illos qui de mundo uenien
tes in eode edificio noua ueste
induebant. dicens unicuiq; ex
considera in dumentū qd indu
ti. et noli obtundi creatoris tui
qui te creauit. Cūq; hec admiraret.
ille qui sedebat in throno mihi
mihi dicebat. Verbū dī p qd
oīa facta s ipsū ante tēpora ex
corde patris genitū. s; post insi
ne tēporū ut ueteres sci p dixerant
ex uirgine in carnatū quā uis hu
manitatē assumeret et diuinitatē
tamen n deseruit. s; cū patre et
spū scō unus et uerus dns existens
mundū sua dulcedine dulcora
uit. ac eū suę claritatis fulgore
illustrauit. Qua ppter et hec co
lumna q̄m ultra p dictā iterum
p cursus uoluntatis dī uides de
signat ineffabile misteriū uerbi
dī. qua in uerbo idē insi
tio dī impleta ē omis iustitia no
ui et ueteris testamti que fidelit
credentib; hominib; enucleata s
p diuinā inspirationē ad salutē
ipsoz. cū idē filius supni patris
ex suauissima uirgine incarna
ri dignatus ē. qa postq̄m p p̄cur
sū uoluntatis dī in initio circūci
sionis se uirtuose uirtutes osten
derunt. tunc etiā declaratū ē in
acuta iustitia misteriū uerbi dī
insinuatū uidelicet p sonū patri
archarū et pphetarū qui p dixe
runt ipsū uerbū cū omī iustitia
manifestandū et cū omib; admi
nistrationib; dō subiectis. atq;
cū maxima austeritate que ten

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gnt incidentē iustitiā dī·nullā
iniustitiā diminuentē illesā q̄n
abscidat eā in legalib; p̄ceptis·
Sed cubito uno infra angulum
qui respicit ad septentrionē
stantē·q̄d ē inhumano et singu
lari cursu p̄cellens uicinitas quę
fuit de patriarchis loquentib;
acutā iustitiā eidē uerbi dī in
significationib; suis usq; ad le
gē·quasi in septentrionali par
te diabolo repugnantē· Vnde
et calibet coloris ē·p̄ fatę lucide
parti muri eidē edificii exterī
apposita·qua inuicta ac in
superabilis ē fortitudo uerbi dī
cui nullus resistere ualet p̄ in
anē rebellionē aut p̄unē superbiā·
ita q̄d etiā speculatiuę scientię
p̄munitiones et achones iustitię
idē antiqui patris quasi extre
mus continuit et am·n̄ dū infixi
ignito et p̄fecto opi·se in filio
dī erigentis·q̄d ipsi tamē in ex
teriore sono uerboꝝ suoꝝ p̄mon
strabant· Est quoq; ualde
terribilis aspectu·quō iustitia
in uerbo dī metuenda ē humā
nę scientię in impio iudicio in
iustoꝝ iudiciū sedm semetip
sos solummō iudicantiū· Tamē
ē etiā magnitudinis ac altitu
dinis ut mensurā eī nullomodo
discernere possis·qua ipsū uer
bū filius scilicet dī·in magnitu
dine glę suę et in altitudine
diuinitatis suę omīs creaturas
sup excellit in p̄fata maiestate·
ita ut hoc nullus hominū in pu
tredine carnis adp̄fectū possit
considerare· Quod autē eadē ‹v.
columna tres angulos habet ab
imo usq; ad sūmū q̄si gladiū
acutos·hoc ē q̄d circumens et in
lubilis in grā fortitudo uerbi
dī·quā uetus testamentū p̄signa
uit innouo declarandā manife
stauit p̄ spm sēm tria incidentia
acumina·idē antiquā legē et no
uā grām·atq; enucleationē fide
liū doctoꝝ in quib; ses homo q̄d
iustū ē op̄at·ab imo uidelicet
inceptionis suę ut in imo cū bonū
incipit ita sui sū tendens ad p̄fec
tū quasi ad sūmū·cū hoc consū
mat·quia omne q̄d iustū ē fuit·
et ē & p̄manet in cōmū in acuta
dilatat quę oīa penetrat·ita q̄d
nulla potestas potuit constare in
malicia sua·q̄m iuste deiunxerit
suę pietatis gra· Et primus ‹v. ‹vj.
angulus respicit ad orientē·q̄ ē
primus ortus inceptionis cognos
cere dīm in diuina lege. ante p̄
fectū diē omīs iustitię· Secundus
autē ad septentrionē·quō post
inceptionē bonę et instituę opa
tionis euangliū filii mei et alia
p̄cepta inme pat̄ surrexerit·con
tra partē aquilonis·ubi omīs
iniustitia orta est· Tertius uero
ad meridiē exterius ipsi edifi
cio aliq̄mulū coniunctus·qui
ē roboratus op̄ib; iustitię p̄fun

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da et exquisita sapienta princi
paliū magistrox ꝑ calorē spē sci-
qui obscusa in legt & ꝓphetia
apuert· et qui in cuiglis ostēn
derunt germ̄ q̄d fructuosū fe
cerunt ad intelligendū· tangen
tes exēplorē materiā scripturarū
in ope bonitatis patris· et suauit
ruminantes inca misticā sigm
ficationē· Quod aūt exan
gulo qui respicit adorientē ꝑ
cedunt rami a radice usq; ad ca
cumen ei· hoc ē q̄d mortu cog
nitionis dī plegē iustice quasi
mangulo orientali apparuert
rami tēpora scilicet patriarcha
rū et ꝓphetarū· quia illa acuta
colūna diuinitatis hec oīa ex
tendit ab inicio radicis· idē bo
ne inceptionis in̄ib; electox
suox usq; ad cacuū ei· q̄d ē usq;
ad manifestationē filii hominis·
qui oīs iustica ē· Vnde cuā
iuxta ei· radicē uides in primo
ramo abrahā sedentē· quia ꝑ
acutissimā diuinitatē exspira
batur· hoc tēpus q̄d primitus
ortū ē in eo dē abrahā· cū quie
ta inte relict patriā suā obedi
ens dō· in sedō uero moysen·
quō deinde plantato surrexit· ix·
inspiratione dī· inicio data le
gis ꝑ eum dē moysen· in ꝑ signifi
catione filii altissimi· et inicio
iosue q̄a ipse postmodū habuit
spm hunc a dō ut consuetudinē
legis dī confirmaret robustorē
in pcepto diuino· Ac deinde undes
reliquos patriarchas et ꝓphetas-
ta sursū singulos in singulis ra
mis ordinate sedentes· secim tēpus
quo in hoc seclo sibimet succedebant·
quō inuno quoq; tēpore subse
quentiū patriarcharū et ꝓphetā
rū· exspirauit ds sursū ad altitu
dinē pceptox suox unicuiusq; sin
gulare germ̄· cū ipsi in diebus suis
disposuit et ordinauit mostensa
sibi iustica quiescebant· diuine
maiestati fidelit subiecti ut in
tēporib; suis uementes etiam·
et hi oīs conuertunt se ad an
gulū eidē columne qui respi
cit ad septentrionē admiramur
ea que in spū figura uident in
ipsa· q̄a oīs admonita spū ꝑ
spm sem se uertit et uidet ad
euangelicā doctrinā fortitudi
nis filii dī· diabolo repugnantis·
de incarnatione ei· loquentes
et admirantes q̄d ipse uenies ex
corde patris et de utero uirginis·
in magnis mirabilib; se ostendit
in suo ope & sequentiū se· qui ip
sū in noua gra mirabiliter· im
mutantes caduca conculcabant· et
ad ēmox gaudia formitur· anhela
bant· Sed q̄d inter hos duos
angulos· unū scilicet uergentē
ad orientē et alterū ad septen
trionē ē amne facie ipsox patri
archarū et ꝓphetarū ea de co
lumna ab imo usq; ad sūmū
quasi tornatilis et rotunda plena q;

rugarū ut de arboris corruce
solet germ̄ pullulare. hoc ē q̄d
inter binas sūmitates uidelicet
int̄ manifesta cognitionē mea-
& subsequentē doctrinā filii
mei. latuit pupū p̄figurationis
manumab; antiquoꝝ patrū intel
gib; meis cōmoramur unicū uer-
bū q̄d ē filius m̄s a primo electo
usq; ad ultimū sem̄ immutabilis
ornatura circūornatus. quia
ipse oīa instrumenta sua bene
cōposuit ac limauit. scilicet p
uolubilē gr̄am omnib; sepiū ma
nifestans. ut p̄figurabat̄ in ru
gis circūcisionis que fuit umbra
futuroꝝ inappositis significatio
nib; p austerratē legis inse haben
tis rectissimū germen latens sū
me & scissime incarnationis.

Quod uero a sedo angulo re
spicientē ad septentrionē ex
tendentis & reflectentis ad angu
lum qui respicit ad meridiē. hoc
ē q̄d a boreo nouo scilicet testa
mento diabolo opposito. exeunt
uerba filii mei que egrediunt̄
de me & reuertunt̄ ad me. quia
emicantē sole incarne qui idē
filius m̄s ē. fulget lum̄ sc̄i euglii
in p̄dicatione ei. a bipso & adisci
pulis ei. se diffundens in fructū
benedictionis. & se retorquens
in fontē saluationis. sic quem
ens usq; ad rectores. uidelicet ad
p̄fundos scrutatores uerborū
uet̄is & noui testam̄ti ostenden
tes q̄d sapientia erecta ē in ipso
sole mundū illustrantē. qui in
suo lat̄e ualde ardet uelut meri
dies in medio suis. Et in eodē ℣ xv.
splendore int̄a magnā latitudi
nē se diffundentē. conspicis ap̄los
martyres. confessores & uirgines.
atq; alios plurimos sc̄os in mag
no gaudio de ambulantes. quia
in p̄spicuo lumine dīi filii m̄s sunt
p̄dicans & dilatans lum̄ ueritatis.
facti s̄ apli annuntiatores ueri
luminis. & martyres robusti mi
lites sanguinē suū fideliter fun
dentes. & confessores officiales p̄
filiū meū. ac uirgines. supnū ger-
men sequentes. atq; alii electi mei
letantes in fonte leticie. & in fonte
salutis. dīi sp̄s sc̄i eos p̄fundit. ita
ut sint flagrantes & manantes
de uirtute in uirtutē. Sed q̄d ℣ xvj.
ter eius angulus qui respicit ad
meridiē ē in medio latus & extен
tus in imo aut̄ & in sūmitate ali
quantulū gracilior & constrict⁹.
secūm modū arcus qui extendit̄
ad sagittas iaciendas. hoc ē dif
fuso euglio ardens in feruore
sp̄s sc̄i illa sapientia sc̄oꝝ q̄m in
p̄funditate querebant. ut p̄ea
reperirent in pleū germ̄ p̄fundita
tis. scilicet q̄d est & intelligen
dīi in uerbo dīi. ipsa in medietate
& uidelicet lata. quia confortā
ta & roborata fide in pplo xp̄iano. quasi in medio erat latus

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sensus excrens de anmab; scōx do
ctor ū qui p fundā aspnatē scrip
turar ū seruamus; puulerē cā in
scientiā multox-qui abeis disce
bant na q̄d dilatabant sensū
suū in extensione sapientie et
scientie diuine scripture-que
in mimo quasi immo ecclastice
instructionis erant adhuc gra
cilioris et minoris studii-qua
ppli eā ñ dū amplectabantur
tali amore ut postmodū fecerē-
cū euā in fine scli ut insūmantē
cā refrigescent studia multox-
na q̄d eis diuina scientia ñ ē
amabilis amore opis; ab
scondunt sibimetipsis consci
entiā suā-quasi eis ñ sit unman
dū bonū in ope-illud tamū ex
ercitus ut insomno cognoscentis-

Ideo ē iste angulus imme
dio sui latissimus maspera
tate-q̄m aspa opa cultus dī de-
nudata ab obumbratione uete
ris testamū-erant a constricto
re immo suo se; prendentia q̄si
ad mediū sui-que s̄ fortissime
uirtutis maiori studio cū po
pulus uelociores fuit contra in
quitatē diabolū scilicet uulne
rare inuerbis que dī s̄-et acere
atq; conculcare oīa uicia et
cū magna auctoritate iusti
cie dī-ipse tam sic tande des
cendens in obliuione sui-et
constrictior existens inferuo
re spūs scī circa finē mundi-
na undelicet tensus ut cū neruo
ligni extendit ad bellū-qua
mamma et corpore se homo de
bet erigere contra uicia-extēdq;
parte sui constrictior et imme
dio largior stans; hoc ut in
primo et mutuamo ope suo cir
cūspectus sit magno timore &
humilitate et in medio fortis ac
stans emittere iacula bonox opū
p donū spūs scī-aduersus insidi
as diaboli-Nā in inceptione bo
ni-ē homo gracilioris uirtutis-
inope autē operationis sue cū bo
nū op̄ē-ē robustioris fortitudi
nis-quo spūs scūs eū puansiuit
infusione sua-in qua tamen
operatione uirtute frequens ee ñ
potest-unde rursū constricto
ris erit uirtutis-q̄si in fine opis
p fragilitatē carnis sue-Sic sēp
extendi debet arcus-se; phiben
tis contra uicia diabolica-Quod
autē in cacumine et de colum
ne uidet tantā claritatē lumi
nis-ultra quā humana lingua
effari possit-hoc ē q̄d celestis pa
ter inaccessimo et imp fundissi
mo secreto suo edidit misteria
filii sui-qui in eo dē patre suo
floret clarissima choruscatio
ne in qua plata ē omīs iustitia-
et in legali ppositione et in no
uo testamēto-q̄d ē maxima cla
ritas lucentis sapientie-ita ut
ñ sit possibile ulli emētreo hoī
hoc aliquo sermone; ferre

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dñi ē impuritudine carnis. Et inca
de clarnate apparens columba.
habens more suo radiū aurei co
loris multo fulgore incandē co
lumnā radiantē. ē inchoruscatu
one luminis filii dī incorde pa
tris fulgentis igneus spē ses. p
quē declarata s misteria ipsius
altissimi filii excsūma altitudine
uenientis predicatione ppli. ab
antiquo serpente seducti. Unde
et idē spūs sēs exspirans oīa lega
lia p̄cepta. et noua testimonia.
dans uidelicet legē claritatis
misterii sui ante incarnationē
dñi. atq; in eadē claritate uirtu
tē suā ostendens in incarnatio
ne eiusdē filii dī. habet impfundis
sima exspiratione sua aureū
splendorē scilicet eximiā et ex
cellentissimā illuminationē
unctionis sue. multa et magna
pfusione mistica secreta ipsius
unigenti dī antiquus p̄combi
tur p̄dictū ē apiens. qui eundē
dī filiū tipice ostendebant. et
ualde mirabant̄ ineffabiliter
exeuntē a patre et mirabiliter
surgentē in aurora p̄pere. uir
ginis. fortiter etiā excurens
texcū uetās testamētū et euāgli
um spūale germen in quo oīs
iustitia erecta ē. Ideoq; ppter im
mensā uim diuinitatis. ñ ē tibi
possibile intueri diuinā clari
tatē. quē a nullo mortali hoīe
poterit uideri. nisi ut eā osten
do in obumbratione cui uolo. Qua
pp̄ter. cui caueat p̄sumas ueme
re intendere q̄d diuinū ē. sicut
etiā tremor. qui te appēhendit
tibi demonstrat. Sed q̄d uides § .xv.
intra p̄dictū edificiū. uelut q̄n
dā imaginē coram hac columna
sup pauimentū eiusdē edificii
stantē. hoc ē. q̄d intra opus dī
patris se uirtus hec ostendit. de
clarans misterium uerbi dī. qa ipsa
apta. omnē iustitiā in cunctis
et omnibus. in pplō scilicet ueteris
et noui testamēti. sup pauimentum.
idē sup cuncta terrena inope eiusdē
pu patris stans. q̄m oīa terrestria
sicut et celestia inei. s. puidentia.
Q̄d autē aliq̄ndo ipsā columnā aliquando etiā homines illos
qui in ipso edificio discurrunt
inspicit. hoc ē. q̄d et secretū suū
q̄d uoluit uis diuinitatis inue
nire dī considerat. et etiā homines
qui in bonitate patris operantur
p̄spiciens. qui se tangant uel nō
tangant. inope. quia nouit
qualitatē uniuscuiusq; secūm stu
dium ei. Tūc autē imago decla
rat scientiā dī. qa illa p̄uidet
oīs homines et oīa que in cēlo
et in terra s. tanta fulgoris et cla
ritatis existens. ut p̄nimio splen
dore qui in ipsa lucet nec faciē
eius uestimenta quib; induti consi
derare ualeas. quo ipsa terribilis
ē in rore ut fulgur micantis.
et lenis in bonitate. ut splendor

solus·ma q̄d ūtūrore & inclemā
tr sua inconp̄hensibilis ē hom
nib; p̄ūtibilē fulgorē diumna
tis·quasi p̄facie ē & p̄claritatē
quā habet insemetipsa q̄si ue
stimēta decoris sui·quoꝝ ētiā
nec sol considerari potest mar
demr facie sua indecoro uesti
tu radioꝝ suoꝝ·Ipsa enī ē apud
oīa & inomnib; ac tamē pul.
chrtudinis insecreto suo·ut
a nullo homine seri possit
q̄ma suauitate roleret hoīes·
et quoꝝ parcat ei inp̄spicabi
li mīa·quo usq; durissimus
lapis ampliꝰ p̄forari n̄ pos
sit imp̄forabili duricia sua·
qui ē durus & incorrigibilis
homo qui nullatenus unlt
declinare amalo suo·S; tamē
ut ceter; uirtutes informa ap
paret hominis·qa dīs inuirtu
te bonitatis suę fecit hominē ra
tionalitate & scientia ac intel
lectu p̄fundissime adornatū·
quatinus se intima dilectione
diligens·et maxima deuotio
ne colens spernat figmēta de
moniꝝ·illū p̄cipue amans qui
sibi tamū & talē dedit honorē·
Quod uero circa eandē ima
ginē conspicis pulcherrimā
multitudinē angelicā formā
et alas habentē·& intanta uene
ratione flamē ut eā timeant ac
diligant·hoc ē q̄d ubiq; scientiā
di beati et excellentes spūs man
gelica ministratione p̄m explica
bile & puritissimā laudē colunt q̄d
tā digne n̄ potest homo adimple
re·cū adhuc inmortali carne ē·
ipsi dīm amplectentes in ardore
suo·qa lux uidens s·et inalatu·n
q̄d alas habeant ut alia uolatilis
creatura·s; q̄d flagrant in speris
suis p̄ut tē dī quasi pennatu
sint·Vnde uehementē me dīm uerū
p̄sistentes in recto timore et inue
ra subiectione·scientes iudicia ma·
atq; ardentes in amore meo·qa
facie meā semp aspiciunt·nihil
aliud desiderantes nec uolentes
nisi q̄d uident placere p̄spicatib;
oculis·Sed q̄d ante faciē ei' in
des alia multitudinē inhumana
forma & tenebrosa uestē appa
rentē·atq; in multa constrictione
timoris stantē·hęc s̄ inscientia
dī homines existentes·Quomodo·
Homo ē inconspectu dī in magno
honore quē p̄uidet adse p̄uenire·
illo abiecto qui magis in p̄dito
ne commendit p̄durare q̄m indo
cē·S; homines isti q̄s uides in hac
multitudine·dicunt̄ cōpulse
oues·humanā speciē habentes
p̄p̄t opa hominū·et umbrosū ue
stimū q̄d ē dubitatio in opib; pec
catoꝝ·in districtione tamē timo
ris memores iudiciū dī·Ideo
autē cōpulse oues nominant̄·
quo multis modis cōpello es·ut
ad unitā p̄uenant·p̄ sanguinē filii
mei ereptos a morte·Vnde et com

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pulsę ouęs s̄ hominęs illi qui p mul-
tas tribulationęs et crumnas con
tra uolumatē suā cōpellunt ame-
ut relinquant. unquamatē-qm̄ p
uolumatē pprię carnis et p flore
nuęmus suę. tādiu libentissime
adimplerent quādiu sęlo adhe
rent sic uolentes p manere in
ardore libidinis-usq; dū eos de
fecerit ignis carnis p frigus etatis
suę-quos tam̄ oīs diuersis mo
dis constringo sędm̄ q̄d meas iu
deo ut cessent a peccatis suis. xcvij.
Nam quosdā ex inquib; sęlm
tā fortu desiderio n̄ ardet n̄
constringo fortuori flagello s;
temori-quia n̄ uideo meas tan
tā amaritudinē quamā malis-
quo cū sentiunt correptionem
meā-mox relinquunt infestina
tione uolumatē suā et uenunt
ad me-pompis sęlāribus; renun
tiantes. Quosdā autē fortuori
uerbere corripio-quo tā arden
tes et tā magnanimes s̄ in pec
catis excucio carnis sue-ut nisi
fortiter p me coartarent n̄ essent
a pu regno meo. S ecclia mea
p̄uidet et cognoscit eos-ac con
stringit illos sędm̄ superfluitatē
corporis ipsos. Et uerū quosdā
in maxima et fortissima crum
na ac miseria mitis et corporis ex
supo. quia tā rebelles tāq; rebel-
les tāq; superflui in ope carnalis
uoluptatis s̄. ut si n̄ constringe
rentur grauissima calamitate.
n̄ cessarent a crimnib; p peculian
tā suę carnis. q̄a dū ęēnt in p̄spe
ritate suę uolumatis se n̄ conuer-
terent addim-q̄m unde unus p
pusillanimitatē mus suę omino
in desperationē. unde alius in oculatē
p magnanimitatē superbię-atq;
p q̄d iste conculcatē in desperatione-
p hoc ille uix constringitē imple
nitudine animi sui. Hoc modo
coercęo puenientes adme cū in
repugnantia mopib; suis-ut q̄a
eos nouu saltē p calamitates tā
corporis quā spē q̄s patiuntē ad
me puenire cōpellantē. quatin
saluentē-ut cū pharao israhelī
tica plebē a tyra sua p̄mus tan
dē discedere cōpulit sic scriptū ē.

Vocauitq; pharao moysen et
aaron nocte-ait. Surgite
egredi, applō meo-et uos ē filii
israel. hīe immolate dño sicut di
citis. Oues uras et armenta assumi
te ut peneratis-et abeuntes bene
dicite mihi. Hoc tale ē. O nefanda et
grauissima crimina que adhe
rent huic sęlo-immultis eorum
nis ac miseriis grauant supra
modū multos hominęs-illis in
cordib; suis dicentib; Heu heu q̄
fugiemus. Et tunc ecclę crumnę
rixando illos expellunt a se-ita
q̄d cū ipsi hominęs festinant
abeas recedere. quia insemetip
sis arescunt in corpore suo de
grauedine flagelli manus di-
ni ualentes cū gaudio uiuere in

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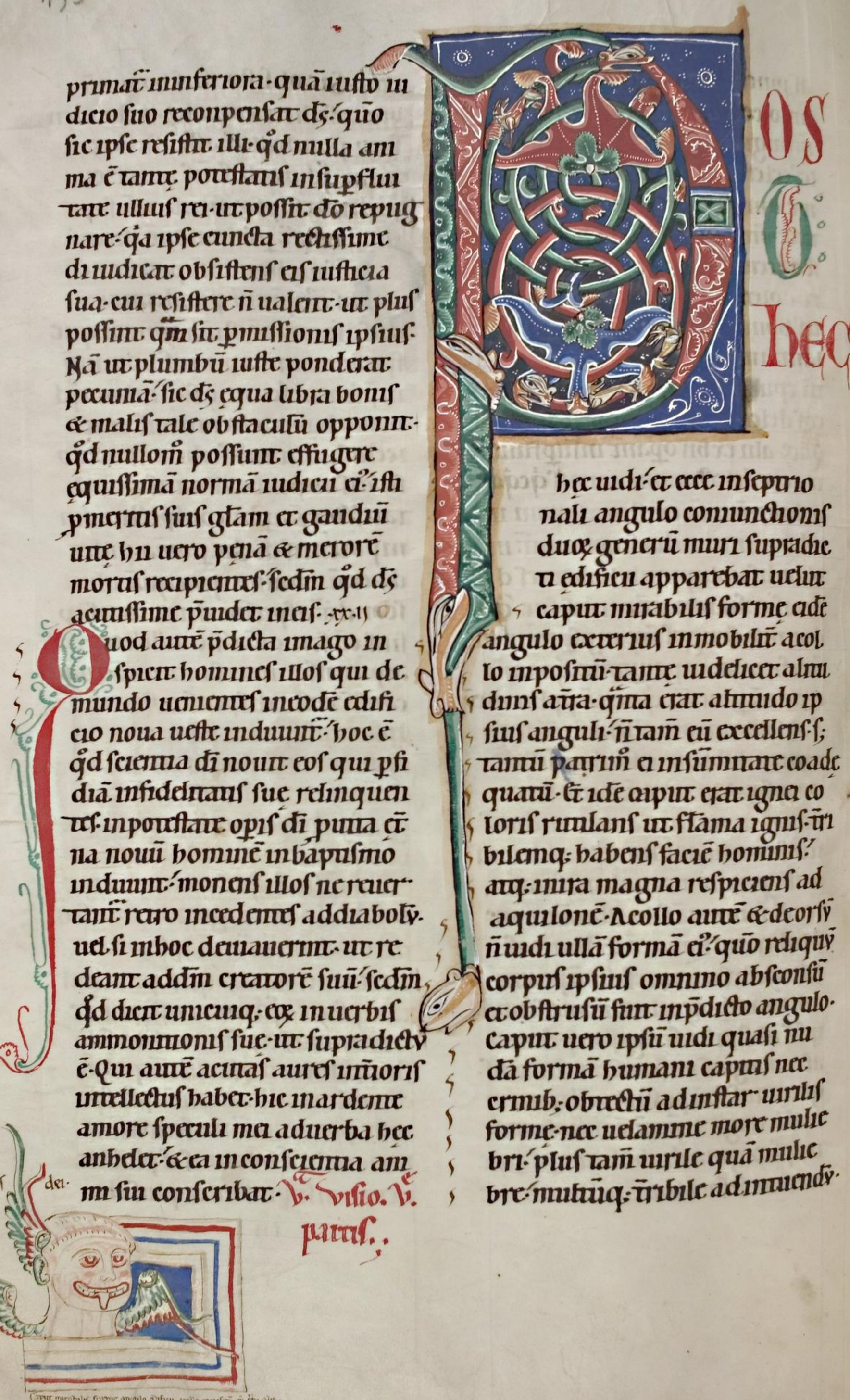
uoluptatē sed qm̄ dñs requirit cor-
q̄d ē uocatio iusticie p diuersas ca
lamitates membrorū ipsius nobis
tis peccatis. Unde pharao uicia scī
licet diabolica uocauit inclamo
re et rumnarū et miseriarū moy
sen idē hominē illos quos dñs con
stringit fortissimis doloribus si
ue spūalib; siue corporalib; et .xv.
aaron, videlicet quos coercet le
uioribus; aduersitatib; in nocti-
no tēpore malox opū conuoca
tos. ipsis uicis mobpssione uo
luptatis hominū dicentib; Sur-
gite de carnali consuetudine
uīa et egrediemini de uctā habi
tatione q̄m nobiscū habuistis
separatimq; uos a cōmuni ppto
quē possidemus cū nos colit et
subtrahentes uos a sclārib; nego
cijs quib; libenter adheremus. uos
scilicet qui extra me estis in nobis
cū incaptiua nīa fuistis et filii
dī uobiscū qui uident ipsū in
agmine ei. sic. mag; aliā uiā re
linquentes nos. et offerte uos
metipsos deo in nec expugnabilib;
causis quib; nos supastis. ut dicens
indesinenter uīris. Lenitatē quoq;
uīam in oculi mansuetudine
cū qua uobis durū ē nobiscū
laborare q̄a multis alīū dolorē
sustinere sequendo agnū et uic
toriosissima arma mitissimox for
titudine cū quib; nos supastis
et quib; nos resistere nō possim.
assumite inmountate mīnis mee.

q̄m modo habere multas et sepa
ratim̄ a nobis ut dudū uolui
stis. cū nos acrius impugnastis.
et cum ad patriā p qua dole
tis in animo uro. cōprehendere aliā
uiā q̄e uos ducat a nobis. atq;
benedicere in laude dī pugnā
illā inqua abcessistis a sclārib;
causis et negocijs. Ego q̄q;
omnipotens dñs ut p dictas ouis
compello transire ad me. sic etiā
columnas meas idē fortiores et
ueteres heredes in fundamento casti
gationis mee consolido. sed in
nequicia implicationis peccati
minuasione p uaricationis ade
qua impugnamini. qua stare nō
possent si eos gīa mea nō confir-
mare. Quox quidē alios q̄s tam
grande pondus nō grauat uicio
rum castigatione castigo.
quo si eos acriore uerbere con
stringere omnino deficerem
spū suo caderent in despatio
nē. q̄a afflatu maioris turbi
nis diabolice suggestionis nō ca
perent. Alios autē grauiore mo
le miserie et grauissimox morū
et insuperabilium concupiscentia
rū expugna diabolica oneratos.
habeo in duricia constrictionis
grauissimox dolox. ut nō exeant
a federe meo cui assistunt. me
ro desiderio uolentes appben
dere atq; p̄cepta mea obseruare.
qua si ipsos ut priores lenitas
castigare. ipsas correptiones me

aſpnichilo ducerent· quo grauiſ
ſimo certamine amiqui ſerpentiſ
impugnant· Sunt enā quidā exu
les celeſtis patrie quoſ neſcio· qa
me omnino relinquunt· audi
tate mentis fuę· ſe ipſos rapaci rabie
ſeducentes· nec me querentes nec ſci
re uolentes· ſ; in ſemetipſis ſuffocan
tes bonū deſideriū· ita q̄d nō poſtu
lant amē ullū auxiliū· auarę tan
tū epulantes inp̄priis reb; ſuis· ut
eos delectat in carnalib; deſideriis·
Quos alii exhis opantē inſuperflua
te ac in delectatione carnis q̄ eq̄d
uolunt· nō tamē exiſtentes numi in
odio et inuidia· ſ; uolutantē in
blandiſ uoluptatib; habentes de
licias et ſuauitatē carnis ſuę· q̄b;
dumtxo fruges uitę inp̄ſpitate ut
nō deficiant· in pauperate· q̄a tamē
creatu s̄ p me· et q̄a eā p̄plm meū
nō abſorbent p malicia ſuā· atq;
ideireo dabntur· eiſ ſedm deſide
ria ipſoꝝ· Alii uero s̄ tante feroci
tatis inimicitie amaritudinis
felliſ· et odii ac inuidie reddentes
malū p malo· nec uolentes ſuffer
re ullā iniuriā ſibi illatā· ita ut
ſi haberent honorē et diuiciaſ
ſeu celeſtes uirtutes dirūperent
in hominib; nec oleremē meā· unde
ipſis abſtrabo fruges atq; diuici
as in magnis miſeriis eos deacien·
quatinuſ se nō poſſint ad tantam
malū erigere q̄mū ē in uoluntate
et ipſoꝝ· qua diabolica opa ppe
trarent ſi facultatē ad hoc habe
rent· Sic obſiſto uiis hominū·
bonoꝝ ſcilicet et maloꝝ· recta men
ſura ponderans aſſenſus eoꝝ
ſedm q̄d oculus mē uidet· eu
p idritatē ipſoꝝ· ſicut eā ſapi
entia teſtatē p ſalomonē dicens·
Mīſ uię hominū patent ocu
lis ei· ſp̄tuū ponderator· ē
dn̄s· Hoc tale ē· O mā manera que
ſpirat uniuerſ animus hominū
in p̄ſentia ſcientie ſue· in hoc q̄d
homo habet circumonē uitę
rectus uel iniquus· ſcilicet fructuo
ſitatis atq; inbecillitatis mentis
tanꝝ· hec ſ; apta conſpectui om
nipotentis dī· Sic p omā uidet
dn̄s· et nō omnino quicquā ab
ſcondit aſpectui diuinitatis ip
ſius· cū ſcit omā· ſic uidelicet
aſpiciens uniuerſa ut unāquāq;
cauſā recte diſpenſet· Quom
ipſe ē eni ſp̄tuū ponderator·
mulcens eos in ſuauitate blan
ditiis et tranquillitatū· caſti
gans q; eos in tribulatione dolo
et miſeriaꝝ· ut excutiant ad
rectā mēſurā· quā contra eū nec
currendo nec fugiendo tranſcen
dere ualent· ni q̄mū ipſe p̄bat
iuxta merita eoꝝ· quo ponderā
tio ipſoꝝ ē· q̄d in excuſſione re
tributionis eoꝝ ſiue in hoc ſeclo
ſiue in futuro oſtendit quom
dm̄ coluerit· Unde etā ipſi ſpe
ruſte ponderant· ita ſcilicet ut
rationalitas hominis nō pluſ ele
uetur in ſuperiora· nec pluſ de

primaꝝ inferiora · quā iusto iu
dicio suo recompensat dꝫ · quō
sic ipse resistit illi · q̄d nulla am
ma ē tantę potestatis in supflu
tate ullius rei · ut possit dō repug
nare · q̄a ipse cuncta rectissime
diiudicat obsistens eis iusticia
sua · cui resistere nō ualent · ut plus
possint q̄m sit p̄missionis ipsius ·
Nā ut plumbū iuste ponderat
pecuniā · sic dꝫ equa libra bonis
& malis tale obstaculū opponit ·
q̄d nullom̄ possint effugere
equissimā normā iudicii ei · ish
p̄mertis suis gl̄am et gaudiū
utę hiis uero pęnā & merorē
mortis recipientes · secūm q̄d dꝫ
acutissime p̄uidet ineꝫ · xx · ii ·

Quod autē p̄dicta imago in
spicit homines illos qui de
mundo uenientes incodē edifi
cio noua uestę induunt · hoc ē
q̄d scientia dī nouit eos qui p̄fi
diā infidelitatis suę relinquen
tes in potestate opis dī puta ęt
na nouū hominē in bāptismo
induunt · monens illos ne reuer
tantur retro incedentes a diabolv
uel si in hoc deuauerint · ut re
deant ad dm̄ creatorē suū · secūm
q̄d dicit unicuiq; eoꝝ in uerbis
ammonitionis suę · ut supradictv
ē · Qui autē acutas aures intioris
intellectus habet · hic in ardente
amore speculi mei aduerba hec
audiet · & ea in conscientia am
mi sui conscribat · V. Visio. V.
patris.



Os

Hec

hec uidi · et ecce in septen
trionali angulo comunchomis
duoꝝ generū muri supradic
ti ędificii apparebat uelut
caput mirabilis formę cuius
angulo exterius immobiliter acol
lo impositū · tamę uidebatur alti
dinis altra · q̄ma erat altitudo ip
sius anguli · nitam̄ eiꝰ excellens · s ·
tamē patrim̄ ei insūmitate coadę
quatū · Et ide caput erat ignei co
loris rutilans ut flama ignis · ter
bilemq; habens faciē hominis ·
atq; mira magna respiciens ad
aquilonē · Acollo autē & deorsū
nudi ullā formā ei · quō reliquū
corpus ipsius omnino absconsū
et obstrusū fuit in p̄dicto angulo ·
caput uero ipsū uidi quasi nu
dā formā humani capitis nec
crinib; obtectū adinstar uirilis
formę · nec uelamine more mulie
bri · plus tam̄ uirile quā mulie
bre · multūq; terribile adintuendv

Habebat aut̄ ut̄ſ alas mire lautu
dinis et longitudinis albis ut̄
candida nubes-n̄ matu̅ erectas-
s; solummodo a se separatum in
directu̅ extremitas-tra tam̄ ut ide
caput eas aliq̄mulu̅ altitudine
p̄cellerent-quaru̅ prima adextra
maxilla surgens tendebat̄ adaq̄
lone-scda uero que & media erat
a gutture ipsius dirigebat̄ adsep
tentrionē-tertia aut̄ a sinistra
maxilla extendebat̄ adocciden
te-aliq̄ndo magno u̅ore se mo
uentes-atq; uicasde partes p̄cu
tientes-aliq̄ndo aut̄ a p̄cussio
ne cessantes-t̄ audiui ide caput
ulla uerba p̄ferre-s; tamu̅ inse
ipso immobile p̄manens alis suis
utilitatu illuc p̄cutiebat q̄d et ipse
ale tendebant̄ ut dictu̅ e-t̄ tertiu̅
audiui sedente in throno m̄ dicente
s qui mutuu̅ pplo suu̅
grauiter exercuit innouo
p̄ter amore filiu suu̅ mitte et sua
ue se ostendit-n̄ q̄d nr̄ peccata
delinquentiu̅ dissimulans negli
genter paruipendat-s; q̄d midi
ter puri cordis unitatē et uera
penitentia expectet-indurati
aut̄ nequitia n̄ tolerans iusto
iudicio suo puniat-Vnde et ca
put hoc q̄d uides in septentrio
nali angulo comunchonis duo
generu̅ muri supradicti edificii
apparens-ostendit insignificatio
helu̅ dn̄i-qui e unda inflexi
bilis iniquitatis-nec ulla medicina
desideratus-aperte surgens in
similitudine misterio uerbi di-p̄figu
ratas et p̄sonu̅ patriarcharu̅
& p̄phetaru̅ insignificationib;
eo& p̄nunciatu-Sic et ide helius
in forma uidet̄ capitis-quo sup
omne̅ timore̅ cognitus e inscie
ntiarum ultionis sue-ut homo in
facie sua cognoscit̄-ardenq; con
tra septentrionale parte̅-q̄ua
ipse indo uelocissimus et acer-
occidit diabolu̅ & omne malu-
eu̅ etia̅ in abrahā et in moyse
duę partes defensionis opamu̅
speculatiua scilicet scientia du
aru̅ oppugnationis causaru̅-et genus
humanu̅ in ope di communitē-
quo fortissime aduersus diabolu̅
inscientia boni et mali debet ho
mo opari in omnib; causis p̄bom
tate̅ patris-Preuaricatione̅ aut̄
que fit p̄speculatiua̅ scientia̅ in
opib; hominu̅ p̄cepta di transgre
dientiu̅ ulciscit̄ helius dn̄i-ubi
opatio n̄ e indulgentie-Vbi e
hoc-ibi uidebitur ubi nec e timor
dn̄i nec hominis-imaginatione di-
et tale cor-q̄d ita inferde inq̄
tatis obduratu̅ et emortuu̅ e q̄d
nec uereat̄ iudiciu̅ di nec ultu̅
hominis-hoc iusto iudicio con
fundit et deprimit ultione sua
helius dn̄i in lege di-Quomodo-
ost constitutu̅ p̄ceptu̅ ubi
sit p̄uaricatio legis-e helius
qui abstrahit iustitia̅ cu̅ rec
tissimo iudicio-ipsa iustitia

abstracta inuicem certamine cū
austeritate remunerationis in
exitiore homine cū transgressio
legis corporaliter ulceraba[tur]
in ipso. et post grām cuiusdē
libet ꝑpenitēcia atq; p̄ mor-
tē hominū ē ipse ꝑpetuas et ꝑ
tormenta gehenne. qa iniquitatis
hominū conceptas et plenas
atq; contortas in opā mb; tā
examine q̄d cas ulciscor aut
corporaliter in corpore hominis.
aut in pena futuri seculi. aut ip
se homo purgabit illas ꝑpe
nitencia remissionis uiuens in
anima et corpore. cū quib;
etiā opatus ē cas. ut dicit in
spū meo seruus mis iob. .ny.

Cōmuto faciē meā. et dolore
torqueor. uerebar oīa opa
mea. sciens q̄d nō parceres delin
quenti. Si autē et sic impius fū.
quare frustra laborau. Hoc tale
ē. Immutabo aspectū meū inuo
rē. Quomodo. cū certā scilicet hoc
quod sū mutabilis et inundans
in sanguine uenarū mearū. ha
bens in me aliq̄ndo delectatio
nē aliq̄ndo etiā iracundiā. et
aliq̄ndo contrariam tristiciā.
q̄d in me aspicio. quasi uidetā
delectabilē faciē. cū hoc ipsū li
benter ꝑficerē. et illud mutabo
contra uoluntatē meā. conuer-
tens me ad opus bonę opationis.
cumq; hoc fecero grauiter in
hoc flagello torqueor. q̄d me
ipsū constringo. abstrahens me
a cognoscibili facie mea. quod ē
opus uoluntatis mee in contraria
delectatione. adiungens me con
templatiue speculationi. dñm uidens
in bona conscientia. et nō in conscien
tia carnis p q̄m illu nō adtten
do. et abhis duab; causis tameo oīa
opa mea. Quomodo. cū bonū op⁹
facio. uertor illud nō et ꝑfectū co
rā deo. qa illud ꝑspicue nō in spicio
s; obscure quasi in speculo. aliq̄n
do illud cognoscens in spū. aliq̄n
do etiā ignorans abonere corpo
ris mei. Malū autē opus cū facio.
sū in confusione p conscientiā
spūs mei. quo in interiori intellec
tu cognosco q̄d nō parcet scientiā
habentib; in peccatis. q̄d ē q̄ndo
homo intelligit. q̄d in ope suo
contrariū sit deo. s; eū oportet pur
gari, uel uelione in corpore. uel pe
na penitentie uel pena tortorū
malia una. et ideo nō parcit delin
quenti. si nō penitet. qa nō dat ei
tentia peccandi ut peccet. s; eū
oportet castigari. aut hic. aut illic.
Qua ꝓpt̄ si sic impius sū. tamen;
obduration is. ut ad hoc nō uelit
molliri q̄d declinē a pprijs reb;
meis que s̄ peccata mea. ita ut nō
aspiciā in magnū certamen illud
mihimetipsi repugnans. q̄d ego
infragilitate sū s; q̄d deo semp
contrarius ex isto innotis causis
meis. qa conceptus sū in peccatis
semp cupiens opari iniquitatē.

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nec meuens indicari a dño· q̃re
tunc constrictus sũ unã uano la
bore q̃d frequent cũ scientia qua
dm agnosco· in meipso iniq̃
tatẽ cõmitta dico· Non autẽ tã
in potens sũ· ut ignorẽ bonũ
et malũ· Vnde si intelligibilẽ
sensũ ame repello· sic dicens· ig
noro dm· mĩdax sũ· q̃a ipsa scien
tia arguit me reprehensibilẽ q̃d
debitor sũ dõ· cũ incipio iniq̃
tatẽ opari· S; ñ inuanũ laboro·
cũ in bona conscientia contra di
co malũ quõ opus dĩ sũ· unde
et me conuerto a dipsũ ex hoc
bonã mercedẽ recipiens· I taq; -iiij
ego dñs omnũ testificor· quia
oportet hominẽ cũ dolore gemi
tus· aut cũ contritione peniten
cie seu cũ digna ultione perca
ta sua reddere· siue in hoc sclo·
siue in futuro· ut p̃dictũ ẽ· Quo
modo· Qui peccant cũ timore
et dolore penitentie meritis
peccata sua· merent̃ p̃ gr̃am dĩ
q̃d sepe surgunt a commissis
suis in purgatione ex· et cũ tam
tandẽ purgationẽ· plenius ñ in
ueniunt in hoc sclo inuenient
ea in futuro a duntã· Qui uero s
tante duricie cordis ut nec desi
derent nec uelint scire in timore
et dolore penitentie peccata sua·
s; in tanta nequicia p̃manent
q̃si ñ sint eis dẽ in timore haben
dus· hi ñ consequunt̃ purgatio
nẽ peccatorũ suorũ· nec in hac uita
nec in futuro· s; habebunt penas si
ne consolatione purgationis· adu
ta· quia de rationalitate sua ut certa
u s̃ p̃ me nolebant responsũ reddere.
inobedienti· Quomodo· I mellec tu. iv.
tus irrationalitate hominis habet
duas sententias in scientia bom et ma
li· a quas p̃ument duo responsa· bo
nũ scilicet et malũ· Quomodo· Bo
nũ respondet malo· cũ resistit ei
in dõ· Malũ uero respondet bono·
cũ repugnat illi cũ diabolo· S; hi
in bono respondent malo qui se
frenant semp in malo· ne delectent̃
in p̃prius delectationib; suis· Hi au
tẽ in malo respondent bono· qui
nullatenus se abstrahunt a prauis
actib; quin ep̃lent̃ cũ concupis
centiis suis· nolentes respondere
uocationi mali· Quom̃· z omo ha vi. hj.
bet in se duas uocationes· deside
rũ uidelicet fructus· et concupis
centiã defectus· Quomodo· p̃ desi
derũ fructus uocat̃ a duntã· et p̃
concupiscentiã defectus· uocatur
ad mortẽ· S; in desiderio fructus
cũ homo desiderat bonũ opari·
sic dicens in semetipso fac bona
opa· hoc ẽ responsũ contra malũ
ut deuitet illud· et faciat utile
fructũ· in concupiscentia uero de
fectus· cũ concupiscit p̃ petrare
malũ· sic eã adhortans semetip
sũ· fac opus delectationis tue· hoc
eã ẽ responsũ aduersus bonũ·
cũ ille ñ uult resistere unquam
sue· s; delectat̃ p̃ uenire· ad defectũ

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despicies me in hoc responso. & habens me quasi illusorē debitū honorē ñ exhibendo. & qua auerut, se ꝑ tumorē meū conuerut se ad illusionē in ecclesijs; ut ꝑ manifestationē meā dicat psalmista dauid. Posuerūt in cēlū os suū. et lingua eox transiuit in tēra. vij. Hoc tale ē. Multi homines s insipientes. irrationaliter nolentes intelligere innumerabilē tumorem dñi et abstrahentes sibimet ipsis bona desideria. in quib; debent anhelare ad me. et cognoscere uerū dm. recusantes assensū pbere bone scientie. que semp hominis assistit ut bona opa opent in dos; frequenter amplectuntur amplectuntur amplectuntur amaritudinē in contradictione bom. cū se ipsos despoliant. sibimet ipsis auferentes bonū thesaurū. diuersimodē iniquitatis sibi thesaurizando. & in his ponunt in celestia opa circuncionē. ix. s mūs sue. quasi os suū male aptū. destruentes ea in semetipsis ꝓuie subsannationis. sic dicentes in corde suo. Hec opa uoluntatis nre. tā licenter facere possum. qm illa que dicunt celestia. que an aliqui nobis ignorantib; secdm q̄d eis placuit instituerūt. Aliq; tamen modo subsannant uerba et institutiones antiquoꝝ patrū. que ꝓ celeste opus inme posite s. Unde etiā in gustu prauo opis uelut in lingua sua cōmouent se & transeunt mandacia possibilitatis sue. semetipsos. ita q̄d punctū adimplent uoluntatis suas. nolentes habere constrictionē corporis sui contra uicia. s; absq; labore sui ipsi uoluntatē indesiderus carnis sue quasi ymma. q̄d ē diabolica seducho. & q̄d iudes p̄dictū caput mirabilis forme. hoc ē q̄d in celo dñi s mirabilia et admiranda iudicia dñi. que a nullo hoie peccatis grauato seri possunt. Q̄d uero eide angulo exterius in mobiliter a collo imposita ē. hoc ē quod helius ms aduersus diabolū. ut inuenerit testamento ꝓphetā et moysen ostensū ē. in specula tua scientia et humana exercitatione exterius appareat in uisione pplōꝝ. ut me timeant oculo ad oculū. et orē meū sentientes. cū etiā iustitia mea minatur adaquilonē crudelissime iniquitatis sanie. Atq; immobile ꝓmanet. quia ds nec fallacib; nec adulatoris sermonib; omnino moueri aut molliri potest arectitudine iudicii sui de ñ emendatis criminib; uelut ꝓ collū fortitudinis sue. ado constituit legi ad opandū hominib; infixū. reddens scilicet unicuiq; ñ obseruantia ꝑceptā legis eternas penas. secdm mala opa ipsius inquib; sordens emarcuit. repugnans etiā eide excellentissima fortitudine sua quasi inuertit. colli sui diabo

lo et sequentib; illū se opponendo
iniusticie cox. Est quoq; tante al
titudinis aūa q̄nta ē altitudo ipsi
anguli quo dē insūma iusticia ul
tionis suę cuncta trena supat cadē
ultione huī altitudinis existentē
ut imp̄figuratione abrahe et moy
si plegē designata s̄ opa hominū
quia diuinū iudiciū insūmitate
speculatiuę scientię et actuū pplox.
ut p̄sternat ignorantia ipsox cū no
lunt scire dīm. Non tamē ipsū angu
lū excellit. s. tamū parumodo ei in
sūmitate coadequat quo supna
ultio actus hominū ñ excedit plus
et grauius ineis mala ulciscendo.
q̄m sunt merita eox. solūmodo eq̄
et iusto iudicio inexcellentia iusti
cię suę oīa recte diiudicans ut
ait spūs nouit psalmista dauid
cū diceret. Cognoui dñe q̄a eq̄tas
iudicia tua et in ueritate tua hu
miliasti me. Hortale ē. p̄ bonitatē
tuā in me ipso cognoui dñe
cū p̄peccatis meis ñ occidisti me is
ñ occidisti me ñ auferens in ira
ma et corporte efficaciā opandi. q̄d
nec p̄pter; ira tua plus iudicas in
scientib; aut ignorantib; quā
sint merita eox. Bonū enī operor
rixando contra me. malū uero
facio p̄ concupiscentiā carnis. et ideo
das bono mercede et malo iudicii
ñ tam aliter iudicans q̄m q̄d equū
et iustū ē. Quomodo. Si acrius insta
res. quā s̄ opa hominū inpacta ac
tione. ñ eet equitas iudicii. Si uero

tepide negligeres. ita ut ñ puocares
adp̄enitentiā. q̄d ñ eet exquisito in
purgatione iniquitatis. tunc tu iu
stus dē delinires et confoueres iniu
stitiā. Nonne enī erat quondā ama
rissimū iudiciū in morte adę. nec
aut reddita gra impenitentia reuo
cas hominē ad unā. q̄d inpossibile
eet fieri p̄ullū nisi p̄ dīm. Et hoc ē
iustissimū et equissimū iudiciū tuū.
purgatio scilicet ad unā cū gra. quo
unicuq; cause in recta mensura mereti
iudicia tua. Nā in ueritate s̄ oīa
que facis ita q̄d nullā inimicitiē ex
cessi supra modū fallacię. q̄a fallax
ē q̄d plus in minio uel minus inpar
uo ē. qua q̄d iustū ē. Sed tam pacis
in multis misericordib; potencię
tuę. ñ occidens ullū p̄ possibilitatē
clarissime ueritatis tuę hoc deputans
inte ipso q̄d pacis p̄ penitentia.
ideoq; de mia tua humiliasti me
dans q̄am nomini tuo iūdum
etiā turbatus in p̄meritis culpis
meis de tuo iudicio. Quod autē ignis
idē caput uides ignei coloris ru
lans ut flama ignis. hoc ē q̄d in
celo dñi ē igneū obstaculū rubens
in fortissimo ardore ultionis suę.
tribile habens faciē hominis. quo
oculi dñi facie ad faciē uident
unāquāq; iniusticiā. ita q̄d culpe
diuersox criminū ñ relinquuntur
neglecte ante dīm. quas ñ terribiliter
inspiciat eas examinando iusto
iudicio suo. et q̄a etiā monstruosa
et horrenda s̄ iniqua opa homi

nis· humanā faciē ostendentia in
achib; carnaliū desideriox· Ira; in
ira magna respicit adaquilonē·
quia ds mutatione sua dedignant
omne malū q̄d ortū de suggestio
ne diabolica· S; q̄d acollo et deorsū
ñ videt ullā formā ei q̄m reliquū
corpus ipsius omnino absconsū &
obstrusū ē inp̄dicto angulo· hoc
ē· q̄d in helo dī recta iudicia que
uruose dispgunt praua opa ho
minū ꝑuersoꝝ nullus humanus xxxij·
sensus quasi finitimus pscrutari po
test· quo occultant et contegunt
in angulo speculantur scientie &
opus hominū· ita q̄d nec uideri
nec cōphendi ulla scrutatione
valent nisi q̄d aliq̄ndo cognos
cunt cū ostendit res gesta in cau
sa ultionis dī· ut facies hominis
videt scd̄m desideria uoluntatis
ipsius· Unde etiā in ipsa ultione
ñ ē ulla simulatio alicui facilita
tis· nisi semp iusti iudicii scd̄m
peccata hominū· quo crimina cox
ñ negligunt indiscussa ut p̄dictū
ē· quia helius dñi examinatio ei ē·
xxxij· S uod uero caput ipsū videt
S quasi nudā formā humani
capitis· hoc ē q̄d ide helius dñi nul
li mortalium subiectus ē· p manēs
undelicet nudus ab omni subiecti
one debilitatis· iuste diiudicans
S opa hominū· Nec crinib; obtectū
S adinstar uirilis forme nec uela mi
S ne more muliebri· quo ipsi in ē
aliqua sollicitudo sensus· sibi

quēquā supiorē ulla uirili for
tudine debellare· nec ei inē ulla
femina mollicies humidi animi·
se aduersa ñ posse superare· Est plus
tam uirile q̄m muliebre· q̄a forus
sima uirtus di magis ē inuirili u
riditate· q̄m sit in mollicie femine
negligentie· multiq; tribile adin
tuendū· quo ide helius tribilis et
metuendus ē omni creature· cui ip
sa ē cui sentens ingesta causa ultio
nis ei· S ed q̄d habet tres alas
mire latitudinis et longitudinis·
albas ut ē candida nubes· hoc ē·
inexplicabilis uirtutis scē trinita
tis expansio· quā nullus hominū
cōphendere ꝑualet in latitudine
glē sue· nec in longitudine pote
statis ei· in multa suauitate et cla
ritate diuinitatis fulgens· rectaq;
ultione sibi subiciens mites homi
nū· in magna diuersitate ut nu
bes discurrentiū· Que ñ s̄ in natū
e recte s; solūmodo a se separatum
in directū extente· ita tam ut ide
capiut eas aliquantulū altitudi
ne p̄cellat· quia ultio dñi ñ ele
uatur ulla arrogantia s; coaptat
se unicuiq; cause scd̄m merita ex
tenta iusto iudicio correptionis
sue· sic tam ut possibilitas po
tentie dī q̄si in capite ei de ultio
nis sue humana opa que uera
trinitas ñ tolleret indiscussa in
altitudine fortitudinis sue p̄ce
dat· ñ tam ea tā acriter ulciscens
et contrens ut posset eade pos

sibilitas potestatis ei. Et ala prima adextra maxilla surgens tendit adaquilonē. quo dē iusto iudicio primū adextra saluationis parte in filio suo deuenit diabolū. et omne malū. Scdā uero que. et media ē. agitante ipsius dirigit ad septentrionē. qa post saluationē que in filio dī facta ē. & quasi immediō iā roborata fide gustataq; dulcedine electos. ipsos etiā fugant fugientē inimicū. eos eruens de faucib; illi. Tertia autē asinistra maxilla extendit ad occidentē. qm abeleuis dī satana fugato etiā asinistra pdamonis parte in filio pdamonis omnino comminuit. mundo iā inocca su termini sui tendente. Et aliq̄ndo magno impetu se mouent atq; in eas de partes pcutiunt. qa pribile atq; pformidabile iudiciū omnis creature belua dñi inuitationē mouetur. ibi exercens iudicia pcussionis sue ubicūq; iusto iudicio placuerit diuine maiestati. Ubi enī timor et amor atq; honor dī inreuerentia fidelit habet. ibi dē mittit & sua ue se ostendens. ultionē suā n exercet. duros autē & rebelles tribulit et iuste castigans. Vnde prima ala ultionis mee pcutit et abicit homines illos in abyssū pdicionis. q̄ ita indurati s sup duriciā lapidū ut interioribus oculis dedignando semp despiciant iustitiā meā. retro respicientes p scientiā intellectus sui. plusq; consentientes carnalib; desi derijs atq; diabolicis suasionib; q̄m uolentes scire ueritatē iustitiā et q̄m ullo consensu suo aut pdamonis aut pdamonis exhortatione neq; meā aut pdamonis exhortationē reuerti uelint de sua iniquitate sic cruciantes spīm scientie sue. qa magis nocent et faciunt iniustitiā diaboli. quā iustitiā meā. Hi infundunt in corda sua q̄si resolutū plumbū. idē dissoluta desideria praue molliciei. inuitant illud uelut ad stabiliendā duriciā ferri. uidelicet oblitionis di. sic indurati q̄si sint ferrei. ita q̄d nec causa di nec hominis sibimet aut ulli parcant inimicitie. Sup istos clamant et conqueruntē elemēta cū reliqua creatura. q̄d tā uilis natura hominis in brevissimo tēpore suo tā rebellis ē dō. cū ipsa semp in timore et reuerentia p̄cepta dñi p ficiant. Unde & sup hominē terribiliter uociferantē. Quom. Non sic q̄d elemēta clamant in uoce aut conqueruntē insensibilia racionalis creature. s. q̄d secūm modū suū uociferantē instrepitu sonituū et q̄d querimonias pferunt in timore tōrū. ut ea cū alia creatura iustū di iudicū inducat sup hoīes ipsi rebelles existentes. illa ñ alit flamma nec alit se insemetipsis mutamina. quā ea iussione sua ueritatis diuina potestas. Unde tā crudelit isti indurati homines. imitantur satanan. qui in duricia iniquitatis sue nolunt subdi dō creatori suo. ppt̄ q̄d put abomnī beatitu

xvi.

xvij.

dme· cū quo et ipſi ꝓibunt ſequen
xcviij· 5 tes illū· Media autē ala hebi
mei cęcidit rabidos hominęs· et unū
q̄dq; p̄ſūptuoſū malū q̄d ſcelerer·
ac temere facium· homines· q̄d· ſe
primū erexit· in homine· inſangui
ne abel· quē frater· ſuus, odio· ha
bebat· q̄a ꝑter· oblationē· ſubſtan
tię ipſius q̄m· in bona uoluntate
diſtribuit· deo· carus erat· et q̄d ſe
cundā erexit· in pharaone· qui· in mi
rabilib;· meis admonitus ē· in a q̄d
exterminū· in· ore meo· inundis· di
miſit· ꝑplm meū iſrł· quē· merū ꝓ
rabiē· retinere· uolunt· ꝑ· q̄d illū
helius· m̄ſ· deglutiunt· et q̄d· ſe cundā
meo de· ꝑplō meo erexit· qui me
cognoſcens· atq; mirabilia· mea· un
dens· idolū· morth· adorauit· unde
corona de capite illius· ceciderit· in a
q̄d· eſt· lex· dei facta· ē· corruptibilis
in duab;· lapideis tabulis· et alius
his ſimilib;· ꝑ· quę· de· glā· ſua· et
felicitate· ceciderit· hęc· oīa· ulcis
cens· ultione· mea· Unde· et· in a· moy
ſes famulus· m̄ſ· de· eade· contraria
plebe· mihi· multo· ciens· aduerſan
te· mixto· helo· meo· fecit· undictā
ex uoluntate· mea· cū· efficaciter· di
cerer· electis· meis· ut occiderer· un·
quiſq; fratrē· et amicū· et· ꝓximū
ſuū· et· merū· cū· ardentēr· indicib;· xxj·
eide· ꝑplī· aut· q̄d occideret· un· q̄ſq·
ꝓximos ſuos qui· inicium· ceīt· be
elphegor· ubi· ultus ſū· me occiſa
inquitate illa pugnante· contra
xix· me· Sed· in abel· primū· orta

iuſticia· dī· ꝑ· ipſū· inuentu· ſ· multu· alii
electi· excommuniz;· his malis· et· puerſis
generationib;· qui collegerūt· et colue
runt· ſubuliora· ꝑcepta· mea· ut· filii
iſrł· inter· q̄s· eiā· ortus· ē· luctus· ac
meror· deſiderantes· humanitatē· fi
lii· mei· Facta· autē· eide· filii· mei· ma
niſeſtatione· qua· miſi· eū· natū· ex
uirgine· coquebatur· et· ſalliebatur· oīs
iuſticia· legis· dulcis· et· ſuauis· eis;
facta· omni· ꝑplō· credenti· in me·
apłis· ueritatis· ipſā· ueritatē· mani
feſtantib;· hinc· in· omnib;· iſtis· ꝑdic
tis· generationib;· scientē· tranſgreſſā
iuſticiā· meā· ulciſcebatur· et· ulciſcitur·
hic· helius· m̄ſ· q̄a· dies· qui· erat· tunc· ē
et· nunc· ac· ſemp· ꝑmanebit· atq; he
lius· m̄ſ· qui· tunc· erat· ē· et· nūc· et· ſemp
ſtabit· uſq; dū· finiantur· urb;· et· ꝑpli·
ñ· finientur· iuſticia· di· omnē· rubigi
nē· inuſticię· diſcernentes· xx·
Propter· q̄d· et· in· hoc· eide· he
lo· meo· hanc· iniquitatē· auferā·
illū· in· delicet· deciens· qui· canino
more· abhominatur· florentē· in me
eccłam· aut· qui· ꝑ· abiē· iniquus
ſue· deſtruit· conſtituta· ꝑ· me· dedica
tionē· uel· alias· conſtitutas· iuſticias
ad· implū· meū· ꝑ· uenientes· que· for
tuite· ſurrexerūt· in· ꝑ· ſignificatione
ſeru· mei· iacob· ut· hec· ſcriptura· ha
bet· Surgens· g· iacob· mane· tu
lit· lapide· quē· ſub· poſuerat· capiti
ſuo· et· erexit· in· titulū· fundens· ole·
de· ſup· apellauitq; nom· urbis· be
thel· Hoc· tale· ē· iacob· ſurrexit
mane· quia· ipſe· ortus· ē· ꝓpheſtus

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amator ueracis iustic in constructo
tem plo cui ipse conuenit
nom in posuit quo de illo
debuit oriri rectissimu templu uir
go scilicet maria de qua sol iustic
effulsit et tollens lapide que infigu
ra altaris sub posuerat superiori capi
ti suo ide xpo ut unumquemque ipsius
qui e uera petra sc̄ificaret et sc̄ifica
tus nominaret quia unaquaq; sc̄i
ficatio altaris sub posita e potestа
ti omnipotis dei capiti omniu fideliu
et exitq; illu, libri unctq; et unp sona
pcipui odoris celestis uerbi quia
ut xpc e caput membroꝝ suoꝝ in sup
na uerbi sic e unuquodq; sc̄ificatu al
tare excellentior pars templi sui ef
fuso desup oleo insignificatione
crismatis qd e effusa gra dei omnipotis
in sco baptismo et apellauit sc̄ifica
tu locu illu domu et templu dei sedm
nom cuius celestis uerbi que ue
niens templu dei uidemus. Hoc tale q. exx.iij.
exemplo et significatione erigen
dus e lapis in templo in nomine meo
ordinando ipsu indecet templu
idcirco signatu cu lapide qa ego
firma petra su adque ois iustica
et lex xpianoꝝ punct. Ybi cuq; eni
fuerit sc̄ificatus locus ubi corpus fi
lii mei immolandu e ibi uolo ee la
pide in nomine meo signatu qa
ego ueracissima fortitudo su etiam
si ibi ex aliqua impossibilitate n po
tuerit esse templu quo seruus mis ia
cob erexit lapide in sua pfiguratio
ne in nomine meo ut dictu e quia
et filius mis de stirpe illius incarnat e. exx.iij.

Cumplu aut tale in dedicatu n
debet ee uacuu huius negocii
quin postulet causa constructionis
sue que adheret sibi de labore mi
nistrantis ei pplo sicut etia celestis
ierlm cu capite suo xpo n uult ec
tare iustica sua semp aspiciens in
labores filioꝝ suoꝝ quos suscepturus e
indo Quom ipse se abstrahant a dia
bolica seruitute se constringentes
a uoluntarius desideriis carnis sue
et se affligentes contra semet ipsos
in abscisione ppriarū rerū oba
more celestiu in eis omib; utentes s;
sibimet aliquas subtrahentes atq;
do offerentes ad honore ipsius
sicut etia p̄currens seruus mis ia
cob instituit decima omis sub
stantie sue cu dicebat ut rerū
scriptu e. Q unctorūq; que de
deris mihi decimas offera tibi.
Hoc tale e. Excommu qd mihi de
deris offera tibi decima parte
qua hoc lex tua e. primu seli
cet in manma mea o dns mis absci
dens ab ea ppria uoluntate mea
offerens tibi contra me iustica
tua et postra decima parte om
nis substantie mee q̄m possideo
sup tram. Quid e hoc. Omis scilicet
fidelis homo qui cōprehensus e in de
cimu ordine supnoꝝ ciuiu debet
semp ad templu meu decima parte
dare substantie sue ppt restitutio
ne illa qd computatus e in decimu
numeru numeratoꝝ ide inseruia

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di exaltemur· & aduerū templū ui
delicet celestis ierlm punemur·
xxv. Qui autē oblita timoris mei tēpla
nomine meo dedicata prauiē
iniquitatis sue destruunt· uel qui
dedicationē eoꝝ secm exemplū de
iacob ortā demunt· ſcīficata loca
scīficata loca scilicet polluendo·
seu cū sanguine homicidii· seu cū
pollutione seminis illud educen xxvij.
do maduterio aut formicatio
nē· uel qui insupno sacrificio ne
gligunt instituta dedicationē
antiquoꝝ patrū absq; signato la
pide quē iacob erexit in sua ꝑsig
nificatione uel qui destruunt
constructa ꝑme iustitiā in decimis
aut in substantiis tēpli mei· oue
miseris· oue miseris· oue miseris ho
minib; illis· qui se tā turpit seducun
et tā puersi ante oculos maiestatis
mee exultant· iudicet ut dictū
est instituta mea negligentes· que
oīa de ueteri lege translata s· q̄a
de ueteri testamēto plata ē noua
lex in filio meo secm midiam
gr̄ē· & q̄a de oīi iustitia legis et
pphetarū· q̄d erat minus factū
ē manus in eo dē filio meo· qui oīa
signa priꝝ patrū· que ipsi ab
sconse inumbrata dixerūt manife
ste ostendit in semetipso in omī
xxvi. iustitia· Et qui hec oīa destru
unt· ita q̄d ipsi cibū ute qui
de utroq; testamēto factus ē de dig
nando sicut lutū conculcant· &
camb; et porcis ac aliis pecorib;· xxvij.

idē prauis hominib; diuidunt eū
magis dantes paganis mo
rib; et uane igno ramue
q̄m in omnipotentu dō· atq; in
usū suū secm uoluntatē suā eū
parantes· hos uel sem eoꝝ et ego de
struā· eos ꝓcipiens de sūmo gradu
usq; ad infimū· & dedi uicis in
paupiatē· inutione huius hel
mei· Gretia uero ala ultionis
mee cedit & credulos et incredu
los· insuis impius & iustis opib;·
Ipsa ꝓcunt credulos n̄ opantes
in uoluntate sua bona et iusta
opa qui bene uident fidē et q̄b;
nota ē iustitia dī et tam sedent
in tenebrosiate malox opū· ge
mentes ignoranter· post tenebras
iniquitatis· uolentes bachari in
puersitate· q̄d eos tam n̄ ꝓmittit
dns secm uoluntatē ipsox ꝓficere·
hoc idē abscidens illis ultione
sua dū sic s̄ obscurata· q̄d oblita
s̄ et· ita ut abeo libentissime re
cederent· Incredulos autē cedit
in infidelitate eox ita q̄d eis
ab strahit iniquitas ipsox cū
retributione ultionis· cū n̄ ꝓ
mittit malū hoc ꝓficere q̄d
libenter faceretu· unde & ma
lignus diabolus supatus in hea
titudine fideliū hominū ante
oculos dī scintillantiū uellet
istos trahere in tenebras mortis
secm nequitiā suā· s;· eos ampli⁹
cōprehendere n̄ potest nisi ut s̄
opa illox· Sed queda alia m̄s

ra hominū ē sup ūam qui habent
pspectatē uiforma sensatu spūs·ita
q̄d sapientes s̄ adrecordationē di-
scedm uoluntatē suā accensi cū sci
entia sensus·unde tunc insemet
ipsis p̄sūptuose habere uolunt
scientiā sapientie·facientes quic
quid cogitauerint et miscentes iu
sticiā cū iniquitate·s;·stultu s̄ insa
pientia·quo notant semetipsos
ita q̄si pleni et pfecti sint ad haben
dū et cōp̄hendendū atq; adaeq̄
rendū plenitudinē uoluntatis suę
secdm arbitriū suū·q̄cquid exco
gitauerint·et dū alas suas leuare
uolunt p potestatē suā·in pumeus
et cuntamb; ac malus locis atq; in
alius causis·inquib; tunc occupati
s̄ cū inpio·in quo nolunt habere
intelligibilē mensurā in dīm aspi
cere quid faciant·tunc effundunt
et abicuunt ante oculos di ppter
impia et inuusta iudicia illoq; q̄s
ipsi prius diiudicabant·inquib;
nolebant timorē dīn scientē habere·
et sic pistū helū meū facti erunt
in planctū magnū·et inflebiles uo
ces coram omi pplo qui uident et
audiunt iudicabile tēpus iniq̄
tatis eoq; quib;·da indelicet excip
sis adhuc in hac uita immutus mi
serius multa defectus ipsoq; uuen
tibus·quib;·da etiā pessima morte
in diuersis passionib; moreintib;
imā diuersa uicissitudine ulcis
citur et excurit helus mis omnē in
iusticiā·quia illa ē contra me·

Tunc autē q̄d n̄ audis p̄dictū
capiut ulla uerba pferre s;·tan
tū in se ipso immobile p̄manens·
alis suis imūdū illuc p̄cutere quo
ecipse ale tendunt̄ ut dictū ē·hoc
est q̄d in helo dīn n̄ ē clamor mi
nantis uocis et insup̄biā se erigen
tis·s;·in potestate fortitudinis suę
et in rectis iudicius suis immobilis p̄
sistens·ultione sua post rabiē opū
eorum res absq; timore dīn ge
stas confundendo et conterendo
tas·secdm extensionē ultionis iudi
cii sui ulciscent·ut tibi homo ue
racissima manifestatione p̄monu
stratū ē·et quia dēs iustus ē omnē
iniusticā examinari oportet p iu
stū·quo ipse dēs bene nouit discre
tā positionē quę ē in scientia hoīs·
Iam scientia in hoīe ē quasi spe
culū·in quo latet desiderū si
ue bonū siue malū uolentis·Vnde
homo inter has duas partes posit·
inclinat se uoluntatē sua ad par-
tē illā quā desiderat·S;·homo q̄
uertit se ad bonū·illud fideli ope
amplectens p̄ aduersorū dī mer-
cedē beate remunerationis lau
dabilit̄ accipiet q̄a malū spre
uit et bonū fecit·qui uero se in
clinat ad malū·hoc puersa ac
tione deglutiens·p̄ suggestionē
diabolicā·penas iuste retributi
onis inde miserabilit̄ incurret·
quo bonū neglexit et malū
p̄petrauit·Idcirco immutata de
uotione et humilitate se homo

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subiciens dō fidelit operet salutē
suā quę de sūmo bono emanat ita
ut anima ipsius interiori sēnate in
ebriet quia inbene disposita et recte
ordinata concussione seruit erra
xxxi. tori suo. Quomodo. Q uō metus
idē inceptio angustię facit timo
rē timor autē concutit tremorē p
quę debet homo opari q̄d iustū ē.
Quomodo. q̄d homo metu angusta
ri incipit. hoc p donū sp̄s sc̄i de ra
tionali sensu habet. ppt q̄d etiā nul xxxiij.
lomodo omittere potest quun dīm
sciat illaq; scientia quā habet in
dīm facit in ipso timorē. in hoc q̄d
incipit timere secdm ea quę dī s.
Et si hęc habet cū studio sciens dīm.
tunc concutit eū rectū ignea grā
in xp̄o ammonens ut deinde in
cipiat tremere. quatinus p cōpunc
tionē tractatur ut iustitiā dī fide
liter operetur. xxxij. N unc ergo obsecs
intelligite et discite. unde sint hęc.
Quid ē hoc. Dic ē. qui in uobis q̄d
bonū ē operatur. Quomodo. Ipse
ita uos constituit. ut rationale
sensū in opib; uris ei seruatis. quę
sapienter cū discretione facitis. Irra
tionale enī animal facit, opa sua
sine intellectu et sapientia ac sine
discretione atq; uerecundia. nec
sert dīm quia irrationale ē. s; tan
tū seruit ei quo illius creatura ē.
Rationale uero animal q̄d homo
est. habet intellectū et sapientiā
discretionē. & uerecundiā in opib;
suis. quę rationabiliter operat. q̄d ē
prima radix. quā grā dī fixit in om
nē hominē cū anima aduuiendū ex
eratū. Hęc ergo p dicta uigent ī ratio
nalitate. quia in his omnib; homines
dīm sentes sūt ea quę iusta s uelint.
Unde ebulliens & perfectū opus atq;
sperū in bona uoluntate hominis.
quod ipse homo amplectit in salua
tore suo in filio uidelicet dī. p quē pa
ter oīa opa sua in spū sco operat. hoc
demo incendit & admonet ignea
xxxiij. grā data in xp̄o ihu. I deoq; in gau
dio sp̄s sci faciat homo opa iustitię.
n dubitans in peruersa mussitatione
idē ne dicat. q̄d aliq̄d sibi desit in
omnib; his. aut in prima scilicet ra
dice p donū dī hominis primitus in
posita. aut in ignea grā sp̄s sci eande
radicē mentū in admonitione tangen
tis ne peruerse corruens deinde an
gustiet in his quę ppt reprehensibilē
impetū fecit quasi in interiori sua
radice quicquā minus habuerit. sci
licet ne post quā ceciderit in necessi
tate positus murmuret sic dicens
in semetipso. Heu heu q̄d feci. q̄d
opa mea n potui puidere in dō. &
etiā sine pondere infidelitatis incē
dat. ita ut n diffidat dō in opib; su
is. s; ut sit securus sine lacrimabili
querela prauu opis. Qui autē acutas
et aures interioris intellectus habet
hic ardente amore speculi mei
aduerba hęc anhelet. & ea inconsci
entia animi sui conscribat.

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vi. Visio. iij. partis.

Post hec uidi alterum angulum septentrionalem & angulū occidentalē murū parietis pfati ędificii inferiore ei⁹ partē totū arcuatū sedm modū cancellor ñ tamen apti ut cancellos sed integrū habentēq; insingulis arcub; qsi picturā hominū. In exteriore autē parte eidē muri uidi alios duos minores muros longitudinis spacii. qd fuit apdicto angulo septentrionali usq; adangulū occidentalē ipsisq; angulis eximiq; parte siu coniunctos iuxta modū testudinis. Altitudo uero eorundē duor minor murorq; erat cubitor trium. Latitudo autē inter inferiorē arcuatū murū & medium erat cubitū unius anq; unū exteriorē & eandē medium fuit latitudo unius palmi qsi pueriles manus. Intra idē quoq; edificii uidi sex imagines ante predictū arcuatū murū sup pauimentum ipsius ędificii stantes. tres scilicet iuxta se infronte eidē muri. ppe angulū qui respiciebat ad septentrionē & tres etiā simul in fine parietis eidē secus angu-

lum qui tendebat adoccidentē. omnis pictura marcub; eidē muri inspicientes. In ipso autē fine eidē parietis uidi aliā imaginē intra idē muri inspicientes. In ipso autē fine eidē parietis uidi aliā ima gine intra idē ędificiū sup lapidē unū in modū sedis in pauimento positū sedentē & latus dexterū admu rū inclinantē. facie uero sua adco lumnā uere trium. latus uertentē. Sed ineodē fine uidi alteram imagi nē sup eundē murū in alteri loco stantē. & etiā ad pdictā columnā uere trinatus uersā. In his ergo in maginib; conspexi similitudinē talem. Indute erant ut priores ima gines quasi sericis indumentis et candidis calciamentis. excepta illa que ad dexteris medie harū trium erat. quasi in extrema parte eidē parie tis uidebatur. que tota tamē purpurea tamq; clarissima exurit ut pmul to splendore nullā ei⁹ formā ppecte intueri posset. & excepta illa que sup murū stabat ut dictū ē. que nigris calciamentis calciata fuerat. & omnis sine pallijs erant pter me dia illarū trium que in prima par te eidē muri stabant. que pallio induebant. Due quoq; earundē trium superior que ad dexteram scilicet et ad sinistram medie imaginis sta bant & due trium inferior media uidelicet & que ad sinistram ei⁹ erat. nā habebant muliebria uelamina in capitib; suis. nudis tamen albis

crumb; flammeŝ. Media autē trium
prioꝝ & illa quę sup lapidē uicta
murū sedebat cum uelato capite
candida uelamina capitiſ. ut mos
est mulierū. Cadē quoq; media tri
um supioꝝ & quę addextrā ei' sta
bat. uestitę erant tunicis candidiſ.
Sed uidi talē dissimilitudinē earū.
Imago quę stabat inmedio triū
supioꝝ habebat incapite suo immo
dū coronę circulū croceī coloriſ dex
tra parte insculptū. semp accende
et uidi q̄d adextra eiusdē imagi
nis columba aduolabat. ore suo
spirans in eandē scripturā. Atq; ea
dē imago dicebat. Ego pfusa
sū puteriorē midiam. excqua ori
tur riuulus qui nullatenus absor
dē uult pecuniā. nec aurū. nec p̄cio
sos lapideŝ. nec margaritaŝ corā
egenis et necessitatib; ex necessariā
substantiā ñ habentib;. ac pterea
ploratib;. Nunc consolabor illoŝ
et semp reficiā pauptatē ipsoꝝ pp
ter amorē filii dī qui suauis et mi
tis ē. acqui bona sua distribuit in
animaŝ iustoꝝ tangens uulnera
peccatoꝝ ex pter penitenciā. Alia
uero imago que stabat adextriſ
ei' habebat inpectore suo quasi leo
nē tamquā speculū lucidū. et acol
lo suo uelut serpentē pallidi colo
riſ intorta flexura uirgule adpen
dens etiā ipsius dependentē. Et tam
lucidū leonē inspicio. et pter
amorē ei' do. Ignitū autē serpentē
fugio. ſ; serpentē inligno penden
tē diligo. Tercia autē imago quę a
siniſtriſ ei' erat. tunica simili iacinc
to rubri coloriſ induebat. Et ad
pectus ipsius apparuit angis ex
utroq; latere suo alā unā habens.
ma utrala dextra addextrū hu
merū eiusdē imaginiſ extendere
et ala siniſtra adsiniſtrū humerū
illius. Et ipsa imago dicebat.

Anglicum habeo consortiū. nec
cū dissimilantib; se ypocritaſ
ambulare uolo. ſ; epulor cū iu
stis. Imago quoq; quę fuit media
triū inferioꝝ. induta erat tunica
croceī coloriſ. et sup dextrū hume
rū ei' candidissima columba sta
bat. spiritus ore suo indextrā aurē
illius. In pectore uero ipsius. mon
struosū et informe caput hoīs ap
parut. Jacebant quoq; subpedib;
eius quasi species hominū. conculca
torū et contritoꝝ abipsa. Inmanib;
autē suis habebat cartā expansā
et exuna parte uidelicet uersus
celū septē lineis inscriptā. quā
legere uolui. ſ; ñ potui. Et dixit
Virga amarę correptionis et
flagelli ē. ~~uolo contra illū~~ ē.
uolo contra illū mendacē qui
filius diaboli ē. quarū etiā idē
diabolus p̄secutor ineffabilis
iusticie dī ē. Unde illi contraria
et molesta causa sū. quo nūquā
sū inuenta more ipsius. ita q̄d
et ego cū deore meo sicut mor
ferū uenenū exspuo quarū ipse
me nūquā inaspira sua inue

143 v

nit·Ipse ē cuā mihi pessimū ac mo
lestissimū malū ommū malox·quo
omne malū abipso ortū ē;Ppterea
abicio & conculco cū inamabili nu
ditia di·que mihi necessabilit̄r
sine fine amabilis ē·cuius cuā su
stentatrix & ductrix ego sū·quia
sup me solidabit̄ et constabit om
ne edificiū uirtutū di que edifi
cauit inaltitudine·O fortissime &
nobilissime dns actunde·Altera au
tē imago que addextrā ei erat·
facie habebat anglicam & exim̄q;
latere suo uolatile alā unā·inspe
cie tam hominis ut certe uirtu
tes apparens·Et ait·Ego repug
no diabolico certamini qd se er
git contra me·pinaciter dicens·
Non possū sufferre ullā tribulatio
nē·s;omia mihi contra uolo abstra
here de me·Nullū timebo·Que ti
mere·Nemine timere uolo·Sed
qui hoc malū dicunt abiciendi
pme·quia posita sū semp letari
semp q; gaudere in omnib; bonis
quia dns ihc ē remissor et conso
lator omīs doloris·quo & ipse do
lore pullit in corpore suo·Et qa
ipse cuā ē iusta correctio·ideirco
et ego uolo me illi coniungere
semp q; ipsū portare abicies de
me odium & inuidiā ac omia ma
la·Volo quoq; semp facie letā in
tua iustitia habere ó dns·S; tertia
imago que stabat adsinistrā eius·
induebat̄ tunica alba uiridi colo
re distincta·Habebat aut̄ imma

nib; suis modicū uasculū pallidi
splendoris mutā lucē ut fulgur
ex se reddens·ita q̄d eadē lux
in facie & circa collū ipsius imagi
nis luceret·Et dicebat·Ego fe
lix sū·Dns enim xp̄c ihc facit et
parat me pulchrā et albā·cū illud
mortiferū consiliū diaboli effu
gio q̄d semp rumpat infelicitat̄
illā scilicet quod dns abiecit̄ & dia
bolus malis opib; adtrahit̄·Hunc
satanan fugio hunc abicio ipsūq;
mihi semp molestū habeo·quia tū
amatorē illū desidero quā assi
due amplectar & quē cū gaudio
habeā inomnib; & sup oīa·Ima
go uero que in fine huius parie
tis sup lapidē sedebat·induta erat
tunica subnigra·In dextro aut̄
humero suo habebat modicā cru
cē inposita imagine ihu xp̄i·que
hac et illac uersabat̄·Et quasi ex
nubib; effulsit in pectus ei quida
splendor mire claritatis a se inmul
tos radios diuisus·ut splendor so
lis a se diuidit̄ cū pparua et mul
ta foramina alicuius rei fulgit·In
dextra quoq; manu modicū lig
nū in modū flabelli habebat·ex
cuius sūmitate tres ramusculi
muro modo cū flore pullulaue
rant·Habebat etiā in gremio suo
minutissimos lapillos omniū gē
marū quos multa sollicitudine &
diligentia considerabat·uidit
mercator res suas diligenter con
siderare solet·Et dixit·Ego

matr· uir tutū· iusticiā dī in omīb;
rebus semp habeo· Nā in spūali mu
licia & insectari strepitū· uitia con
scientiā meā dīm meū semp ex
specto· Non damno nī conculco nī
sperno reges duces· & pīsides ac ce
tera sctās ia magisteria· quę abauc
tore omniū rerū ordinata s· Quo
modo licitū ēt· ut eius emergē sp
nere· Crucifixus dī filius conuer·
tit se ad omīs· eos secm iusticiā et
midiam suā monens· Ego eā unā
quāq; ordinationē & institutionē
eius· secm uoluntatē ipsius habe
re uolo· Illa autē imago quę in
eodē fine sup murū stabat nudū
capitt & nigros ac crispos crines
habebat· faciēq; obscurā indutā
quoq; erat uaria tunica· plurimo
colore intexta· Et uidi q̄d candē
tunicā et calciamēta sua exuit stans
nuda· Et subito crines ac facies ei
resplenduerūt in pulchritudinē al
bedinis et nouitatis ut iā nam in
famus· atq; p totū corpus suū efful
sit ut purus et lucidus splendor
ederet inclarescere· Tunc eā uidi
in pectore ei· splendidissimā crucē
cū imagine xpī ihu, arbusculam
inter duos· flores lilij et rosę stan
tē positā· qui se sursū ad candē
crucē aliquantulū recuruabant·
Uidiq; q̄d exutā tunicā atq; cal
ciamēta sua fortiter excutiebat·
ita q̄d puluis multus ab eis excu
teretur· Et ait· Exuo uetus te
stamentū· et in duo nobilē filiū
dī cū iustitiis ei· insectante et ueritate·
Per· q̄d reparata sū in bonis· et mu
tata de uitiis· Unde & tu ds̄ mīs de
licta iuuentutis mee & ignorantias
meas ne memineris· neq; uindictā
sumas de peccatis meis· Et cū hęc ad
tentus inspicerē· uerū qui sedebat
in throno dixit ad me· Nullus fi
deliū qui humiliter uult do obedi
re dubitet humano magisterio sub
iacere· quia sī p spīm scm regimen
in pplo ppt efficaciā ultimatis uti
litatis inuentū dispositū ē· illudq;
in ecclāsticis obseruationib; futurū
et fidelit firmiterq; habendū
mandauo pplo p figuratū ē· Hinc
etiā q̄d uides inter angulū septen
trionalē & angulū occidentalem
murū parietis p̄fati edificii inu
teriore ei· parte totū arcuatum
secm modū cancellos· nī tamen ap
tū ut cancellos· integrū· hoc ē q̄d
ab abrahā et a moyse diabolo re
pugnantib; q̄si in angulo respi
ciente septentrionē usq; aduenā
tū nitatē quę apte declarata ē
in uera et catholica fide· cū ad ō
patre filius dī missus in mundū
doctrinā suā habundant· emisit
in fine tēporū quasi ad angulū
respicientē ad occidentē· erat
murus idē israel in cuius pplis in
lege iusti cue dī constitus op ans
in constructione bonitatis patris
omīpus scilicet in uitetur testamēto
frenatus & sibi comunctus· quia
post ostensionē aspnatus quę

vnus

mbolo dñi excnata ē. punctuato
nes ueteꝝ ꝑtamonū ꝑlamonū ꝑ
signata s regimina nouarū dig
nitatū. Nā uetus testamentū ten
debat usq; ad nouū. exse germi
nans multo maiora ꝑcepta legis nou
testamū quā primū orta essent
mipso. ita ꝙd demmore facti ē
manus demmore uidelicet doc
trina ueteꝝ ꝑceptoꝝ maioꝝ et
lacior & doctrina nouoꝝ. cū ue
tus testamentū solumodo ect
quasi fundamentū primus
positū. sup ꝙd edificata ē pfun
dissima sapientia omis doctrine.
manifestata mincarnatione fi
lu di. tendens abeade ueteri le
ge circūcisionis. usq; adnouam
regula baptismi maiorib; ꝑcep
tis ornata. Et idē murus plebis
scilicet iudaica inmteriore par
te intellectus sui inquo aīa ho
minis dim cognoscit ē ubiq; ar
cub; circūdata idē circūquaq;
ꝓsignificationē magisteriu ꝑ
cursoꝝ suoꝝ ꝑcepta legis di cla
mantiū & sibi ostendentiū ual
lata ut minores ꝓmaiores qsi
ꝓpcellentes sibi hoies ornari
solēt iuxta constructionē
cancelloꝝ que ē upica pfigura
tio spūs sci duras intras ꝓforan
tis incarnatione filii di. qui
cancellos midie sue peremb;
plenissime demonstrauit. Non
tamen apte ē inꝓforatione
ostiarii spūs sci. uidelicet spūale

intellectū inuenerī lege ñ denu
dantis. ut postmodū factū ē in
cancellis midie incarne manife
stati filii altissimi. s; integer. ma
net indurcia legaliū ꝑceptoꝝ
que postea ꝓspm sem infonte
aque. unde elucidata sunt. xy.
abet quoq; insingulis arcu
busquasi pictura hominū.
quarū ut hec pictura ostendit
imaginē hominū. sic intriūpha
li arcu scilicet indignitate ma
gisterii positus ē homo inuice
di. Quomodo. Quo ꝓfundissima
et capitalis sapientia ꝓgram di
posita ē inos racionalitatis hois.
ut homo inomine di exerceat
officiū magistrationis ꝓdistricho
nē iusticie & mie ipsius altissimi.
Quod autē inexteriori parte
eiusde muri uides alios duos
minores muros. hoc ē ꝙd inexte
ribus negocis ꝑtin. spūale ma
gisteriū ē inceptū constitutio
ppleꝝ maioꝝ et minoꝝ qui con
stitutu s ꝑcepto di quasi duo
muri. quo exteriores s maiores na
tu exfortitudine sclaris poten
tie inuicta ordinatione. et medi
us. s minores qui consistunt sub
potestate et spiritaliū & sclariū
ꝓsonarū. quasi inter interioris
ꝓfati muri arcus qui ē spūale
magisteriū et exteriore murū q
est sclaris potencia ut ꝑdictū ē.
Unde duo muri positi s extra
ambitū interioris arcuati qrū

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sclarcs ꝑsone ꝫ uirtutis causis ma
gis undecies excursiosa quã uitero
sa habentes ma qđ tamẽ ꝫ inuinea
constitutionis mee. Quomodo
er exterius intelligit uteri
quo ut homo cognoscat ex
uisibili & alta ꝑsona hoĩs quom
homo timidus ac honorandus et
amandus sit. sic etiã in eo dc in
tellectu intelligat qualiter inui
sibilis et altissimus dꝫ metuendus
ac ueneranduꝰ et diligendus sit
sup oĩa. Nã ꝑ exteriorẽ et sclarẽ
dnationẽ admonet hoĩ inuisio
ris et spiritalis potestatis diuine
maiestatis. que ita clausa et ab
sconsa ẽ hominũ. ut nõ possit car
nalibus oculis ei uideri nisi qñ
tum fide illius capiũ. Et qñdoq; de
mortalt creature dꝫ inuisibilis
est. saltẽ ꝑ uisibile magisterium
discat homo timere & uereri
ipsũ altissimũ eusdc plationis
institutorẽ. Quomodo. Exspi
ratio diuina dedit insensus ho
minũ ꝓrionalitatẽ eoꝝ ut inrec
ta constitutione inter ppłos mag
ne ꝑsone dnentur. que ab illis
timeant ac honorent. Nã dꝫ id
circo ꝓmisit genus unũ excelle
re & aliud subiacere. ut ita hoĩes
diuiderent ne inuicẽ ꝑsemetipsos
uilificerent & perirent. alioquin
ociosi essent nescientes ꝑcedẽ ad
agnitionẽ dei nisi hoc ꝑuiderent
ꝑ timorẽ & honorẽ in hominib;
et ita ꝑcessit spẽs sẽs ducendo

ꝑplm admirationẽ legẽ spẽs qua
homo unus & exterius regeret.
donec fons saliens exiuit appa
rens mundo implenti me ius
xiij. tic qui regit utrũq; corpus scu
licet et animã. Unde etiã cura sclã
ris potentie sic constituta ẽ aduꝰ
terrenarũ rerũ ut corpus requi
rat refectionẽ ne deficiat. et spi
rituale magisteriũ ad interiorẽ
suspirationẽ ꝓuehendi adsci
untẽ di ut anima ad celestia
anhelet. Hec itaq; constituta ꝫ
inca ordinatione. secũm qđ etiã
ysaac dixit filio suo iacob. xv.
Esto dñs fratrũ tuoꝝ. et incur
uentur ante te filii matris
tue. Hoc tale ẽ. Dñs ee debet fratrũ
tuoꝝ pollens sup eos in honorib;
et in benedictionib; benedictus in
benedictionib; que mihi ado da
te ꝫ. et incliuentur ante te oĩs
nati filioꝝ matris tue. subiectio
xviij. ppter ꝓcellentẽ causã benedicti
onis tue. Exte enim exiet magnũ
genus. de quo fortissimus et po
tentissimus uir exsurget. que
fratres ei. ipsũ fugando ꝓsequen
tur. ſ; ipse uelocissime in maxi
mus uiribus suis q̃si leo se illis eri
piens. excellentissima dnatione
illis dnabitur. et ꝑmet eos in hoĩe
potestatis sue. que nũquã inuiolis
sima cauda eradicabit. fratribus
suis in cauda effectus. Sic et ego
pater celestis dixi filio meo in
carnato. Esto dñs omniũ nascen

tuī pceptor de concepto femine
humano quos ereuit pter-quiarū
tu mirabiliter natus es ex virgine
ñ conceptus hominis semine-sed
existi de me pflagrantē ignē ap
paruis umbra uerus homo clau
so sigillo integerrime et castissi
me uirginis-Tu ergo es dñs illoz
de supna claritate diuinitatis-
qui fratres tui s̄ pter incarna
tionē tuā in qua homo es-Et incli
nato idē subiecto exhibeat tibi
a filius tue matris scilicet tue in
carnationis-atq; in obsequio pie
deuotionis subiciant tibi homi
nes nam ex hominib; et quo filii
di sic ē dñs omniū creaturarū-
p ipsū etiā in uoluntate patris
et in machu spūs sci instituta ē dis
posito diuersarū potestatū in
mundo-Quomodo-Sic uidelicet
quod ds abstulit in mutatē et iac
tantia illā q̄d ppls pplm in ho
noraret-ita q̄d unusquisq; face
ret q̄d sibi placeret si hoc ds in
estimabilis sapientia consiliu suu
ñ pstauisset-s; ipse discreuit po
pulū inter pplm-minorē scilicet
cū ministratione obedientie ma
iori suo subiacere-maiorē uero
in omni humanis regimine solle
tum et deuote minori subuenire-
sicut etiā in accensione spūs sci da
tū ē iacob p patrē suū q̄d erit dñs
fratrū suoz-ut supradictū est.

ed in hoc q̄d ostensū ē quod
erit dñs demonstratū ē q̄d

selare negociū habet p̄sonā dñam
di sup libertatē alioz quib; p̄ter
timorē honoris sibi abeis illam p
potestatē suā parcat-ñ eos oppri
mens iure seruicioz-s; illos habens
quasi in dilectione fratrū-In hoc
autē q̄d dictū ē q̄d incuruatio
ante ipsū fiet et-in unum seruicū
ministrationis illoz qui p̄ligatu
rā famulatuū dñis suis substrati
s-ut filii carnis-cura carnalē ha
bentes-Sed postquā idē iacob
hoc dñium p̄ paternā benedictio
nē fratri suo subripuit deinde
celestē celebritatē p̄ lapidē quē
erexerat in titulū-et p̄ decimā quā
se uouit daturū constituit ut p̄
signatū ē significans principalē
p̄sonā in spūali milicia-quiarū
quisq; fidelis de minimo gradu
ascendē debet ad sūmū p̄ selarē
uidelicet potenciā discere sup
magisteriū clarioris lucis spūa
lis unde-in quo adimplet officiū
nauclerī secūm inter immaculatā
agni qui sursū leuauit hominē
cū plenitudine et bonitate oīs
iustitie-scilicet erigens hominē
p̄stratū insidiis p̄uersi raptoris.

xvij Unde etiā hec duo instituta
aduersa uidelicet et a dece
stia p̄cepta in quatuor et qua
tuor partes diuidunt quia ds
magnā ui scientie racionalibus
hominib; dedit-ita ut in accensio
ne spūs sci hec in semet ipsis seruen
tur in figura quatuor et omnes

xvij

plus ꝑdictis duob; modis addentes-q̄d nā aspnor nec abicio-quō qui unomine meo multiplicat quod minus ē-dignus ē merce dis et nā abiecthom̄s-que eiā qua ꝙr parius tā inscārib; grauami nib; quā inspīalib; inflammus s̄-Quomodo-Quia inscārib; causis s̄ nobiles & nobiliores-s̄ et famu lantes atq; obsequentes-Inspīa lib; uero sacramentis s̄ ꝓcellentes et supiores-s̄ et obedientes atq; corripientes-Ego autē casde-xvij officiales causas ordinatione mea constituitas omnino rapi nolo fur tuo munere ēpiscopi inuentionē-sed uolo ut eas racionabili causa assistat-nā ut qui ipsas susceptum utiles sint cosā dō et hominib; S; oquida uenenum scor piones iusticiā meā transeunt & eas mortifero ueneno auaricie et supbie surripiunt-ñ solū inscā ribus posmuriss; eiā indisposi tionib; spīalib;-Rapina autē scārium dignitatū ūrena scilicet ꝓterrena cōparata ē-quide cru delissime miracundia heli di examinanda-s; tam maioris ponderis et examinationis est rapina spīaliū-Nā scāres s̄ in exterioribus; caro de carne-spīa les autē interioribus; spīu con uinch-S; quā uis scāres in exte rioribus; occupent cura ūrenam habentes tam sub eadē specie ad interiora spūs in regimine suo deberent anhelare-spīales uero inspecie religionis et in contēptu mundialiū possu-uterus in cor de patris omnipotentis ordinati-multo magis sub spūali nomine deberent filiū ei⁹ in sūmo sacerdo tio ardenter imitari-qua sicut idē filius exiuit de corde patris sui, in filio suo ꝑsonas magistros qui imā egregiā ordinationē posiu s̄ ꝓpter utilitatē eccle-et in recto-ope dō communch-Quom-

xvij

ui inconpunchone & pbam one cordis atq; immaturo sensu s̄ qd mihi omnino pspicuū est bonā uidelicet conscientiam habentes-ita ut puer se & contra rie magisteriū ñ appetant illud nec diabolica arte scisentes-nec ꝓpecuniā aut pstare ē potentiā ac quirentes-nec inde uolantia uerba laudis hominū queren tes-sed illud uera electhone mea et ꝓpti inhumilitate suscipien tes-hi kīm & pbatissimi custo des atq; certissimi amici mei s̄-

xix

Sed qui retro incedunt et il lud alio modo intenebris-acquirit-uidelicet pstaria ūre norū furum misteria ecclestiū diripientes-facie meā fugiunt atq; animas suas aeternē occi dunt-inhoc me deridentes q̄d sic me denegant & contra uolun tatē meā calcitrant-Quomodo-Quia ipsi despiciunt me ñ de sideratos-potestatē magisteriu

xix

rta astruit idē pal apud semeriphī

adipisci p̄mea ut uiderent
oculos cordis sui a me eleuent
sic dicentes placet hoc do an̄
sed unusquisq; ex dicit mihi
met ipso etiā si hoc malū ē apud
dm̄ ego tam̄ accipiā confidens
in dño q̄d quandoq; uidens
adhuc in corpore pēnitēā & ita
li modo acquirt magisterium
absq; me do uno ita q̄d nec hoc
a me postulent nec se ad hoc mea
uoluntate puenire confidant
s; in hoc ardore a facie mea fu
giunt sic rapientes magisterii
a mihia mea naufragantes. Ih̄i
non s̄ ultra in corde sūmi pa
tris sed s̄ extra in parte aqui
lonis qui in his causis ē princ
eps ex nolentes quasi me ex
torrē omniū s; p̄priā uolun
tatē suā quā p̄do habent ipsā
sequentes & me derelinquen
tes. Nā nolunt scire me nec
ego eos. concupiscentia ipsos
suggerit eis q̄d uolunt. Et qa
tumorē meū habere recusant
ideirco et ego nolo eis tume re
sistere ut̄ore ut me quam
eis repugnet. Indic illa qua m
chil amplius p̄ualere possunt
ipsi aut p me deinceps in hac u
ita aut responsuri in futuro tre
mendo iudicio de his que faci
unt ut p̄dictū ē me uidelicet
seientes in fide s; in his que p
petrant ad me respicere nolen
tes. Nunc aut̄ ut uides q̄d
p̄ſam duo minores muri s̄ lon
gitudinis spacii q̄d ē a p̄dicto
angulo septentrionali usq; ad
angulū occidentalē. hoc ē qd
in constitutione ppls̄ maios et
minos cū extensione longitudi
nis humani tēporis ab abraham
scilicet & amoys se quasi a septen
trione usq; ad manifestationē
catholice fidei in uerā trinitatē
quā filius m̄s a me missus unum
dū ut ad occidentē edocuit. ex
uerit in lege mea ppli et princi
pales ex magist̄ p̄currens inde
licet germen et exemplū ppli
noui testimonii. abelo meo usq;
ad eundē filiū meū meā carne na
tū tendentes. ut fuerit et s̄ & semp
erunt. inter posite differentie in
hominib; interios et exterios
idē spūalium & secularium. maios
atq; minos. Qui s̄ ipsis angulis
exortaq; parte sui communi
uxta modū testudinis quo tā
uetri quā nouo testamento ex
uitoq; latere unci sui in hono
re & magistratione coadunati
declarant̄ ppli. et hoc in simili
tudinē testudinis. q̄d ē mauelo
rum ut dum̄ p̄ideam me bene
et digne cōponi ad stat̄ū edi
ficationis celestis hierlm̄.
Quod uero a tumido eorundē
duos minos ē cubitos trium.
hoc ē q̄d in sublevatione rectitu
dinis duarū scalarū condicionū
scilicet maios et minos tres par-

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tes s̄ hominū· idē p̄ cellentiores rec
tores· et alii auriculo seruantes fa
mulantiū liberi· atq; cōmunis ppls
p̄latus sius in subiectione substrat?
Quide etiā latitudo inter uterq; xx·ms·
orē arcuatū murū et medii s
est cubitū unius· que ē ā plitudo dig
nitatis inter superiores psonas spūa
lis magisterii et inferiores minora uoca
bula tenē seruantes· in unitate fi
dei secdm dm ad corripiendū subdi
tos supa constituta· Atq; inter s xx·iiis·
exteriorē et eundē medii ē latitu s
do unius palmi quasi pueriles ma s
nus· qa ē etiā int̄ inferiorē ponē
statē sectaris regiminis· et inter sub
iectionē sectaris ministrationis ex
tensio iuste considerationis· ita ut
hē unanimū et simplicē deuotionē
pueriles innocentie se inuicē tan
gant in manu coniungēte opatio
nis sue· Sed q̄d int̄ idē edificiū xxv·
uides sex imagines ante p̄dic s
tū arcuatū murū sup̄ pauimentū s
ipsius ędificii stantes· hoc ē· q̄d in s
ope bonitatis dī sex uirtutes ostēdunt̄ ceteras uirtutes p̄figurantes·
ut dns in sex diebus creaturas suas cre
uit· ipse uidelicet uirtutes in figu
ra futuroz ante murū idē ante ista
helmeū pplm diuina lege frenatū
et magisterio ac defensione p̄curso
rū suoz circūuallatū apparentes·
cū eiā pauimentū tērenarū curarū
ineadē constructione sūmi patris
in hac significatione conculcant·
ut xp̄iana milicia p̄ipsas sedu

bolo opponat· Quia ppter tres s xxx·vs·
stant iuxta se in fronte eius de mu s
ri ppe angulū qui respicit ad sep s
tentrionē· qua sca trinitas inseparabilis in ut̄te maiestatis suę initio
ueteris testamēti ab abrahā et amo ýse
diabolo oppositus inchoauit p diuersas et secretas figuras designata est·
et tres eiā simul in fine patriens ei de s
cius angulū qui tendit ad occiden s
tē q̄m eadē trinitas in unitate diui s
nitatis regnans· in fine eidē defluentis legis a pro nomine suo p̄dicata est· nato in carne filio dī obrediēp
tionē hominis ad occasū tendentis·
que oīs pictura in arcub; eiusdē s
muri inspiciunt· qua semp pari s
deuotionis studio in hominib; magisterii ordinationis dī p poten
tiā et in lege tā noui quā antiqui
testamēti designati attendunt· con
sideranter qualiter in ipsis p̄ficiat·
Quod autē in ipso fine eidē parie s
tis uides aliā imaginē inter ē edifi s
cii sup̄ lapidē unū in modū sedis s
in pauimēto positū sedentē· hoc ē
q̄d in ipsa repositione ueteris legis
antiqui p̄pli et in nunciō noue fidei
inchoato multa trinitas in ecclā in
struxit· decenter etiā apparuit
uirtus hec in ope sūmi patris op
antis in eo p̄ hominē usq; ad finitionē mundi· Inde sedet etiā sup̄ for s
missimā petrā sup̄ unicū scilicet
dī filiū qui sedes et quies ē omniū
fideliū caduca despiciens· et in

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se pura fide credemꝰ. Et latus dex
trū admurū inclinat. qua in qnc
us rectitudine et in saluationis par
te hunc ppl̄o qui sub magisterio dis
positione di positus ē adherere. ita
ut ipsi maiores cū minoribꝫ. eā in
opibꝫ. suis excolant. faciē uero suā
adcolūnā uere trinitatis uertit. quo
in omni re intentionē suā ipsi trini
tati acutissimo uisu iuste considera
tionis intendit. ut sicut ppetua tri
nitas unitatibꝫ. psonis in uio labilit̄er
considerāda ē. ita oīs dīm colen
tes eā in factis suis diligentissime con
siderent et considerando ñ relin
quant. S; q̄d in eo dē fine uides alte
rā imaginē sup eundē murū inal
tiori loco stantē. hoc ē q̄d ecclā in
translatione umbre legis antiquē
in fide sc̄ē trinitatis clarescente ue
ra luce iustice. hec uirtus in prima
pali magisterio et fideli ppl̄o in
alcius cacumē saluationis celestis
desiderii eleuata ē. stans pugnans
contra uicia in filio di erecta. qua
ab ipso incepit et cū ipso in celesti
ierl̄m post finē scli p̄manebit. Que
etiā ad p̄dictā colūnā uere trinita
tis uersa ē quo pscām et ineffabilē
trinitatē confortata. reducit ani
mas ad patriā. Quod ū in ipsis
imaginibꝫ. conspicis similitudinē.
hoc ē q̄d eccle uirtutes unanimes s̄
induerantur donoꝫ di. Qua ppt̄
induunt̄ s̄ etiā ut priores imagines
quasi seriei s indumentis que s̄
circa eas ut circa reliquas uirtu
tes suauissima opa que indiuina
lege cultores di ipsi exhibent faci
entes ea in iustitia uertatis. et can
didis calciamentis. q̄a in ardore ea
rū ē etiā candor sequendi exem
plū bonoꝝ actuū in hominibꝫ. Sed
illa que ad extris medie harū trium
est quasi in extrema parte eiusde pa
ricis uidet. tota tamē pura tamq; claritatis existit ut p̄ multoꝝ
splendore nulla ei forma p̄fecte in
tueri possis. q̄m uirtus eadē cū salu
te uere consortionis p donū sc̄ē
trinitatis in fine ueteris austeritatis
excurgens. omnis plucida et pura ē
carens cuncta indignatione diabo
lica. in claritate lete gaudii unani
mitatis hominū. ita ut p̄ multitudi
dine gl̄ē et honoris quā habet in ce
lestibꝫ. nulla ratione inestimabilis
unanimitas ipsius quasi forma ei
abullo mortali homine ualeat con
siderari. nisi quantū dns reuelare
dignatus fuerit. Et illa que sup
murū stat nigris calciamentis calcia
ta ē. quia tā in alto re dignitate
quā in minore ante incarnationē
filii mei mortis signū et uestigiū
fuit in hominibꝫ. S; q̄d oīs sine pal
lis s̄. hoc ē. q̄d partim tenos cultus
& exteriorē texturā legalis instru
mentis abiecerāt. intrinsecus ueram iusti
tiam inspicientes. p̄ter media illarū
triū que in prima parte eiusde
muri stabant que pallio induunt̄
quo ipsa sub defensione di in initio
p̄cepte austeritatis desudans. cir

cūdam ē cōp̄hensione amoris di-
nq̄ua cęlestē thesaurū abscondit
abiecto desiderio carnalū· Et duę
carundē trū supiox quę addex.
tęrā scilicet et adsinistrā medię
imaginis stant et duę trū inferi
orū media uidelicet et quę adsi
nistrā ei ē· n̄ habent mulierbria ue
lamina incapmb; suis· nudis tan
tū albis crinib; stantes· q̄a lex et
pphęta p uirtutē supne maiesta
tis emanantes· et uitā ac mortē sua
fortitudine ostendentes· cū duob;
p̄ceptis geminę dilectionis p ean
dē diuinā potentiā subsequentib;
atq; constantiā animę circūspectio
nis habentib; uicissitudinis et gau
diū suauitatis indiuinis· fidelit̄er
solutę s abominū subiectione ullius
doloris· seu laquei mortis incapite
inxpo uidelicet filio meo· nuda
tamen coma fulgentes incandore
uirginitatis· q̄a diuinitas uirgineā
naturā in uirgine maria ualde di
lexit· Ş; q̄d media trū prioꝝ et illa
quę sup lapidē iuxta murū sedet·
s uelato capite candida uelatura
capitis ut mos ē mulierū· hoc ē q̄d
ipse in auxilio supnę altitudinis
et instabilitate conseruationis bea
te quietis· blande ac dulciter ligate
s forti ligatura subiectionis· dim ca
pite omniū fidelium in albedine pie
deuotionis uenerando ut maritus
ab uxore sincera caritate debet ho
norari· Et eadē media trū supioꝝ et
quę addextrā ei stat uestite s tuni
cis candidis· q̄a p eandē ut̄rumq; di
uinę maiestatis in suauissima bea
titudine emanant lucidissima et
candidissima opa earū in hominib;
stabilita sublegit dnū cui ę iunctę s·
Sed q̄d ena uides dissimilitudinē
inter hoc ē quod diuersas uires
habent in do· concordit ipsū tam
colentes· Propt̄ q̄d imago quę
stat in medio trū supioꝝ p̄figurat
abstinentia· quo ipsa in primo cer
tamine ē quasi ciuitas et firmam
ti atq; ornamenti sibi adherentiū
uirtutū commens se a peccato in
grauitate morū· ita q̄d pseuerantrix
et recusantrix ē cuncte puerilium
malis· nullā penitentiam habens
in se· s; apparens quasi mat in me
dio earū uirtutū quę trinitatis, in
itio dantę legis antiqui ppli de
signant· Et habet in capite suo in
modū corone circuli croceū colo
ris dextra parte in sculptū semp
accende· quia ipsa p sūmū caput
coronata ē croceo radio splendi
dissimi solis scilicet filii dei in eui
claritate tota cōp̄hensa ē· nullū
appetens nisi illū qui ena in dex
tra parte saluationis animę sēp
eā accendit· Vnde ut uides a dex
tra ei de imaginis colūba a duo lat
ere suo spiritus in eande scripturā·
quo in dextra celestis p spiritus ad
ē donū uere simplicitatis uideli
cet sci spūs in abstinentia quecq; bo
na p supnā inspiratione in saluatio
ne animarū accendentis· ut ena

:xxviij.

ca dē uirtus demonstrat in supra dic
tis uerbis sue admonitionis. xxxix.
Alia ū imago que ē ad dextris ei⁹
significat largitatē puerilis sim
plicitatis existentē nec omnino astu
ciā aut duriciā aduersus dolores
hominū habentē. cū qua abstinen
tiā se sēp aufert abominā aspritatē in
dextris bonoꝝ opū sic tendens ad
dīm. qa largitas in cunctis operationis
cuiusē cū primū abstinentia opus
suū aggreditē. Que habet in pecto
re suo quasi leonē tanquā specu
lū lucidū. qui ē in corde illi⁹ filius
mīs xpē ihc leo fortissimus uelut
in speculo pie et splendide dilectio
nis conclusus. Quod autē acollo
suo gestat uelut serpentē pallidi
coloris. uarietate flexura turgule
ad pectus cuiā ipsius dependentē.
hoc ē q̄d quasi collo fortissima scili
cet patientia idē filius mīs pruden
tissimus in pallore angustiate car
nis sustinuit flexurā penarū. cū ex
altatione crucis. medicamine unde
licet omnium uulnerū. q̄d largitas
p̄celestē amorē pectori suo impri
mit illud frequenter inspiciens
in membra hominū. sicut etiā in
p̄dictis uerbis exhortationis sue
xxxix. fatetur. Hercia autē imago que
a sinistris ei⁹ ē declarat pietatē nul
lomodo habentē odiū aut inui
diā ad ullā felicitatē hominis s;
semp gaudentē. et amplectentē. p
spectatē omnium. cui⁹ uirtutē
et largitatis unctione. abstinentia
Hominū

sinistre parte diabolice sufflationis
resistit. quō pietas ē plenū opus ab
stinentie in significata pugna p quā
semp uictrix. existit. Unde etiā tuni
ca simili iacincto rubri coloris in
dutē. quia splendidissimo ope sub
quo pulcherrima sustentatione san
guinee. contrarietatis latentē. omis
sa licet iniuriaꝝ pati post passionē
filii mei ipsius exemplū circūda
ta ē. Q̄d uero ad pectus ipsius appa
ret anglis exutroq; latere suo alā
unā habens. hoc ē ut homo in co
gitatione sua semp angelicū ordi
nē imitetē unāquāq; dī ordinatio
nē diligendo. cū exutraq; parte
sui tā p̄sparū quā contrariarū re
rū in singulis et geminis aliis. unde
licet in uno do p geminā uirtutē.
ñ elatus supra modū in bonis. nec
omnino p̄stratus in malis. se eleuat
ad uolentiā dū. q̄d ē dīm in puritate
cordis aspicere. sic sursū tenden
do et ñ actiuam se detrecendo. Qua
p̄pē ei⁹ ala dextra ad dextrū
humerū ei⁹dē imaginis extenditē.
quō p̄sparas hōis in dextra salua
tionis animarū adiutoriū pecta
ris porrigitē. cū filii mīs hominē
reportauit ad patriā. et ala sini
stra ~~tendit ad sinistra~~ tendit ad si
nistrū humerū illi⁹. q̄a in sinistra
contrarietatis diabolicarū insidia
rū fidelis homo uolantē pennā p
quā abiciat opa tenebrarū sursū
extendit ad refugiū ei⁹dē filii ma
p quē fortis contra omnē aduer-

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ſnatē exiſtit·ymmanſ unā uſtoꝝ·in
cnā uirtus hec indictis ſuis declarat
quomodo ſupra oſtenſū ē· I magoxxxi·
quoq; que ē media uirtū inferioꝝ p
tendit uermatē·qua poſt abſtinen
tiā et illi coherentes uirtutes ſurgit
uermas in omnib; cauſis ſuis cū ſibi
aſſamb; imaginib; uelim uīris exi
tamen cartū exiſtens·indelicet forte
pſidiū deſignans·quaſi in medio
uirtutū ſcām uirginatē in occaſu
indaice conſuetudinis·et mortu
ere fidei pfiguram uū·Sup cui' dex
trū humerū candidiſſima coluba
ſtat ſpirans ore ſuo in dexterū aurē
illi·q'd ē in ſuperiori parte dexere ſci
licet beatū redimis·p incarnationē
filii di ad unā·apparens admirabi
lis uirtutis ſpūſcī·qui ſpirauit tactu
ſuo in dexterū audmū idē in corda
credulox hominū·ut intelligant
q'd dns in ſua diuina potencia ſit·
q'd aut̄ in pectore ipſius monſtru
oſū et informe caput hominis ap
paret·hoc ē q'd dns in cordib; electox
ſuox miſerias et pſecutiones princi
pū ēe p̄mittit·ſicut et filius ei' pau
perū uolunt de principib; ſacerdotū·et
quō dns ē in corde fidelis hominis·
ideo debet et ipſe homo pdi amore
patienter ſufferre pſecutionē·aug; q'
mors in caſu diaboli erecta ē·ideir-
co oportet et fidele hominē aduer-
ſus diabolicas nequicias multa cer-
tamina in diuerſis eruminis ſuſtine
re·que ſepe ipſius corpori laborio
ſe accidentia·ſ·quō homini adhe
rent q'd ideo antiquus ſerpens ſemp
pſequit·Q'd ē hoc·carnis concupiſ
cencia·cui ille malignus hoſtis
inſidias poſuit inſidiat·Q'd ū
iacent ſub pedib; ei' q'ſi ſpecies ho
minū conculcatox et contritox ab
ipſa·hoc ē q'd ſub uestigiis uermis·
omīs diabolice falſitatis·que inopib;
hominū ſiunt ad nichilū deducunt·
ipſa amore habentes edificationis
eccle·cū omīs uirtutes manifeſte
apparent et pbant in uermate·que
ante tēpora ſeculox in corde patris
latens fuit inuiſibilis·ſ; in fine tē
porū uiſibilis apparens in uera car-
ne filii di·Unde et ipſa in manib; ſuis
habet cartā expanſā et ex una par-
te indelicet uerſus celū ſeptē lite-
ris inſcriptā q'a in omnib; opib; uer
tutis ē texta et expanſa pgrām
xpiano pplo conſtituit legis et ex
parte celeſtiū deſideriox aptō cul
tu tenenda·et ex parte carnaliū
cupidinū metuenda·oſtendens
in ſe septē dona ſpūſcī indelicet in
expugnabile firmamentū contra di
abolicas mortis inſidias·Et illā le
gere uis ſ; nō potes·quō quā uis hom
multū deſidet ſcire miſteria et oc
culta in domis dī tamē nō ē ei poſſibi
le. dū ē grauatus mortali corpore
intelligere aut capere q'd dns in inmu
tabilib; ſuis fieri uelit·ſ; ipſe homo
amplectat et cōprehendat ea in ue
ritate fidelit̄ ſequendo p̄cepta di·
ſicut etiā hec eadē uirtus inpdic
tus uerbis ſuis oſtendit· xxxv.

Tercia autē imago que adde xtr
rā ei ē designat pacē supnū sig
nū et anglicū consortiū habentē
qua inplena uiriditate uernans
germinat. quo eadē uernas circū
data ē exterius et supnis donis. un
de extra parte saluationis animarū
habentis pacē pfilii di. Quom. ist.
scriptū ē in anglico carmine. ubi dr.
Gla in excelsis do. et in tra pax homi
nib; bone uoluntatis. Hoc tale ē.
In altissimo do fulget homo et ds
in hoīe quia filī di mirabilit incar
natus ē. idoq; laudabilis et glosus
ē in celo ds ab omni creatura sua.
Inde etiā in tra sit pax saluationis
illis hominib; qui uoluntatē pa
tris cū deuotione et fide suscipi
unt. quia etiā pax bone uoluntā
tis ē uoluntas tua et uis bonitatis pa
tris que filī ei ē qui ē ds et homo.
Et quom ē ipse pax. Ipse ē pax ho
minū defendens eos ab insidiis
antiqui serpentis. qui primis p
uaricator exitit qui lumē intel
pdidit de rectus in tenebras. q. d. lumē
pax uera ide ē uerus di filī amulti
hominib;. in qd ipsi facti s parti
cipes regni di in beato loco que p
didit diabolus. Fruit uides pdicta
uirtus faciē, anglicam. quo ipsa
fugit ab omī malo. in memone
sca quasi in faciē sua dm aspici
ens cū anglico desiderio. Inde
etiā exultat q; lauree suo uolamē.
Alā unā habet. q3 in utraq; par
te tranquille scilicet et turbide.
ostensionis sursū addim tendit ñ
faciens ei orē nec amaritudinē. s;
semp in spiritu placida existens
unū dm in unanimitate duarū ala
rū cōprehendit. qa nulla tēpestate
instabilitatis. nec in bono nec in ma
lo euersa tamē in tranquillitate p
sistit. Et in specie hominis ut extra
ius tunc apparet. qa pfilii di mirifice clarui
tate eius etiā ois humanis pillā in hoīb; pbatur. ita qd nullom contentionē aut
rixā querit s; semp lenitatē. sic sedi
abolice pugne opponens. ut etiā sup
in uerbis locutionis ei manifestatur.

Sed tercia imago que stat ad sini
stra ei indicat beatitudinē et
nā unā appetentē. p cui fidelitatē
et in tima lenitatē uernas a sinistris
omni fallacie serpentine psuasio
nis hominē decipientis ipsi con
sentientē. contra dicit. qa beatitu
do ē inuicta securitas uere clari
tatis. in qua ipsa infelicitatē mor
tis nō timet. Pter qd etiā in duit tu
nica alba uiridi colore distincta.
quo circūdata ē fidelib; op̄ib; in
celesti desiderio albescentib;. atq;
multimodis donis in uiriditate
spūs scī uirentib; decoratus. Qd autē
habet in manib; suis modicū uas
culū pallidi splendoris. hoc ē qd
in ope suo demonstrat. qualiter
in paruo receptaculo ide ē in cor
to secreto cordis sui homo dm pfi
de appēhendat. in pallore tamen

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fragilitatis humane carnis q̄a fi
des etiā in ipsa mortali uita pure
colenda ē. ubi miseria homines ī
desert. Unde etiā multā lucē ut
fulgur exse reddit ita q̄d tadē lux
in faciē ei circa collū ipsius imaginis
luceat. q̄o cognito ēim luminis
et ut amore et dilectione dī dif
fundit. uidelicet uidens de uteri
ori corde hoīs usq; ad faciē idē usq;
ad inceptionē recti opis in bono ex
emplo ut emendationē suā manifestan
tis. et circa collū q̄d ē postea ubiq;
prudentī fortitudinē cōprehensus in
cōpleto ope cui illud in hoīe ante
dīm p̄clarius sole fulget p beatitu
dinē. sic etiā in p̄dicta manifestatio
ne eide ut ratus declarat.

mago xxx.iij.

uero que in fine muri sup lapide
sedet p̄udentie discretionē. quia ip
sa in consūmatione antique ob ser
uationis in xp̄o requiescens plenit
apparuit solertissima excellentis cri
stiane omniū rerū. tenens scilicet
q̄d tenendū ē. et abscidens q̄d absci
dendū ē. ut ut trucī a lolio separat.
Et induta ē tunica subnigra. q̄o
circūdata ē mortificatione carnis.
abiciens leuitatē uocis uanitatis.
Qd autē in dextro humero suo ha
bet modicā crucē in posita imagi
ne ihu xp̄i. hoc ē q̄d tadē ut rus
radicē posuit in dextera parte po
tentie fortitudinis dī. cui dē omp̄s
filiū suū misit mirabiliter incarna
ri et humiliter pati. cuius dilectioni
coniuncta ē discretio. quo ab ipso
manifestata ē. ut p eā omīs iustitia
discernat. Et ut dē ē dispensator.
conuenientis statuit hominis. ita
ē discretio in matrix illi in officio
suo. opa sua uidelicet adimplens in
dispensatore crucifixo filio dī. cui
ipsa in utraq; dignitate ē diuini
tatis scilicet et humanitatis. Que
hac et illac uersat. q̄a incōprehensio
ne latitudinis p̄ significationē scē
crucis circumū inter bonos et ma
los habet. Q̄d uero quasi effulget
in pectus ei quida splendor mire
claritatis. hoc ē q̄d de mdia dī q̄si
de nube clarissima accensio diui
ne pietatis aspirat. in mētes homi
nū. discretionē in eis faciens eos q;
illuminans. Unde etiā ase in mul
tos radios diuisus ē ut splendor
solis ase diuidit. cū p̄ parua et mul
ta foramina alicui rei fulget. q̄o
spē ses in sup na ut ute diuersos
radios donoq; suoq; diuidens hoīb;
eos scilicet lucidores sole ineffabi
liter discretos in humilib; cauer
nis. idē in p̄spicacib; nisib; anima
rū fideliū suoq; diffundit. illustrans
sensus et mētes eoq; ita ut acutissi
me in quib; q; causis intelligant
q̄d eis apte in dō faciendū sit. Sī
q̄d in dextra manu modicū lig
nū in modū flabelli habet. hoc
ē q̄d discretio in dextera parte
saluationis animarū opus suū
p donū spē sei in hoīb; quasi in lig
no fragilis carnis semp consideratē.
hoc signū tam in se habemus. ut

ase ꝑdiuinū auxiliū diuersas mus
cas diabolicarū uidelicet ꝑsuasionē
abigat· ne ꝑeas in diuersas uanita
tes dispgat;. Ppt̄ q̄d etiā excel̄ sūmi
tatis tres ramusculi miro modo cū
flore pullulant· ut fideles homines
supoīa et nomīb; scām trinitatē
inmutabilib; suis semp floremē fi
deliter credant inuntate diuini
tatis glosissime regnantē nō temere
inscitie ipsis celestia secreta exami
nantes· ſ; sicut dr̄ oīa opa sua in
diuersis et tantis suis iuste & discre
te dispont sic etiā ipsi hoīes ꝑpū
dissimis cuncta facta sua bene
& recte dispensent· Qd autē habet
in gremio suo minimissimos lapil
los omniū gēmarū q̄s multa solli
citudine & diligentia considerat
uelut mercator· res suas diligent
considerare solet· hoc ē q̄d ipsa in
sinu mentis hominū oīe q̄d ap
tū et conuenies ē in minutissimis
consilijs et arrib; cōgregat q̄si
ingemmis uirtutū· unāquāq; iu
stitiā adō constantia cautā & dili
genti examinatione ꝑquirens ut
congrue et iuste in omnib; reb; ꝑ
cedat in cordib; hominū ꝑpt̄ mer
cede opis acutissime consideratis·
ubi ē remunerato indō· ut etiā
in uerbis suis quoīm ꝓmonstratiū ē
ꝑpalat· Illa autē imago que in
eode fine stat supra murū signifi
cat saluationē animarū· quō ip
sa in occasu uitis duricie effulsit
in culmine auctoritatis noue gr̄e
tia q̄d quasi fundamīntū ei⁹ existat
discretio· cū qua et supra quā appa
ret eade saluatio animarū orta in
filio di cū natus ē ex uirgine ꝑsa
lute hominū· Et nudū caput et
nigros acerispos crines habet· q̄a
nuda ē a seruitute subiecti homis li
bere scilicet dignitatis manens· q̄m
filio di apte q̄ereret aquo etiā cle
menter suscepta ē migredinē tam
pacientis capillos· quō in iudaica
plebe obfuscata apparebat nō ha
bente ueram claritatē· ſ; multiplicē
diuersitatē quasi crispā comā di
uersarū obseruationū· Habet q̄q;
faciē obscurā· quō ante incarnati
onē filii di inumbrata mortis nō uisa
ē retinere felicitatē q̄me salutis·
Vnde etiā induta ē uaria tunica
plurimo colore intexta· quō inue
teri ꝑplo multis modis circūdaba
tur uarietate opū· in mixta diuer
sitate multos uicios· S; q̄d uides
quoīm eande tunicā et calciamēta
sua exuit stans nuda hoc ē q̄d in
passione filii mei morte abstersa
cū etiā post aduentū spūs sci sonus
et uerba apl̄oꝝ emissa s̄ in mundū·
excitata ē saluatio animarū· ita
q̄d ipsa spnens mala opa et abici
ens contraria uestigia exuta ē
fortē denudata diabolica ma
gistratione· in̄ semetipsā sic dicēs·
O tu turpissime diabole nūquā
relinquetes me· si nō recepta essē
in sanguine agni· Nā in lacu in
ferni uoluisti retinere me· ſ; nō

:xxxv.

gr̃a dī liberata sū. Et sic crimes ac fa
cies ei⁹ resplendent in pulchritudi
nē albedinis et nouitatis ut iā na
m infamis. qā p⁹ incarnationē filii
mei creuit multus ppl̃s in figura
crimiū illius. bene illuminatis in
interiori facie aīe adherens uere
ēsplendide iustificē. ita q⁹d excqui
rebat feliciter ēmā confidens in
albedine iust̄e et in liberatione fi
deliū m̄brō⁹ xp̄o capiti suo adhe
rentiū p̄ nouā regenerationē et p
uerā infantie innocentiā salvari
in unita celesti. Atq; pro tui corpus
suū effulget ut purus et lucidus
splendor eluceat in claritate. quo
ipsa q̄si pom̄a m̄bra sua p̄ fidelē
sc̄licet ppl̄m sibi p̄ filiū meū subiec
tū facta ē pura in colūbina simpli
citate. ē clara in lucidissima pul
chritudine iustitie dī. Q⁹d autē u
des in pectore ei⁹ splendidissimā
crucē cū imagine xp̄i ihu sup ar
busculā inter duos flores lil̄ii ērō
se flammē posita. qui se sursū ad eam
dē crucē aliquamdiu recuruauit. ē
hoc ē q⁹d eadē uirtus facta ē creden
tiū p⁹plō⁹ forte p̄ cordiū in passio
ne ihu saluatoris qui martyrio
suo in uestigius boni ē rectī exem
pli sui arborē moris ē p̄dicionis
ade depressit atq; contrium aduer
sus quā ēmā duo testamenta scilicet
uetus in candore ē nouū in rubo
re illi repugnantia p̄ dispositionē
dī p̄cedebant. se in altitudine spā
lis intellectus ad passionē ei⁹dē p̄ii

ligna putrida

putridū stipitē

et nobilissimi receptoris. atq; a dom
nē iustitiā ei⁹ ap̄dmone mortis reflec
tenta. Unde unde ēmā q⁹d excu
tā tunicā atq; calciamēta sua fortiter
excutit. ita q⁹d plurimus mundus abeis
excutiat. qā saluando animarū ostēn
dit innouis et iustis op̄ib⁹ hominū ab
stractā tunicā prioris consuetudinis
et omniū uiciō⁹ ueterū delictō⁹ atq;
abiectū malū exemplū transgressio
nis ade. forissima examinatione
ea discernens atq; contēpnens. et pul
uerē uane gl̄ie aliō⁹q; peccatō⁹ aspi
ciens. sicut ēmā supius in locu
tione sua de semetipsa confitetur.
Qui autē acutas auris interioris
intellectus habet hic in ardente
amore speculi mei aduerba hec
anhelet. et ea in conscientia ani
mi sui conscribat.

Im. Visio terre
partis.

Fons. Arbor. Terra.

Fortissima columna tres angulos habens signa crucis significat

Pome d'ysse.

Cum
sic
di

mangulo occidentali demonstra
ri edificiu mirabile & secretā atq;
fortissimā colūnā colore purpu
ree nigredinis habentē eidēq; an
gulo ita inposita ut & intra et ex
tra ipsū edificiū appareret. Que
enā tante quantus erat nec ut
magnitudo nec altitudo ipsius
intellectui meo pateret. s; qđ tan
tamē miro modo planissima
absq; omī ruga fuit. Habebat
autē in exteriore sui parte tres an
gulos caliberi coloris a pede usq;
ad cacumē ipsius uelut acutissim'
gladius incidentes. quoz unus
contra affricū respiciebat ubi
plurimū putridi straminis abco
succisū et dispsū fuerat et unus
contra choz ubi multe pennule
pullū discisse occiderant atq; me
dius contra occidentē ubi pluri
ma putrida ligna a ripso desecta
iacebant. hec singulā a beis de
angulis ppē temeritatē ipsoz
succisa. Interū ille quē uidebā
in pdicto trono sedentē & hec oīa
mihi demonstrantē. dixē m. Hec

mistica & miranda atq; ignota ple
nissima dona que. t o homo claris
sime apparent in uero lumine. tibi
demonstro. et tribuo dicere & ostēn
dere ad accendendū ignea corda fi
deliū qui purissimi lapides s adedi
ficationē celestis ierlm. Nam scā
et ineffabilis trinitas sume unitatis
subiugo legis seruitutib; occultata.
s; in noua grā de seruitute liberatis
manifestata simplici et humili cor
de uiris; psonis unī ueri⁹ dī afi
delib; credenda & ītenere p̄ seru
tanda ē. ne qui noluerit consentire
ee dono qđ a spū scō accepit dū plus
querit quā oporteat; ppē temeritatē
elationis sue magis in deteriū cadat.
quā id qđ indecenter appetit inue
niat. Qđ & inuisio p̄sens ostendit.
Hec enī colūna quā uides in angu
lo occidentali demonstrat edificii
in figura uere trinitatis ē. quō pa
uerbū & spē sēs. unī dī in trinitate
et ea dē trinitas in unitate ē. existens.
p̄fecta colūna tocius boni et pene
trans sūma ac infima. regens q; uni
uersū orbē terrarū. Que in plaga occi
dentis apparet. quia filius dī sub
tēpore q̄si in occasū incarnatus pa
trē suū ubiq; glificauit et spīm scē
discplis suis p̄misit. cū ea dē filii
in uoluntatē patris mortē subeun
do adimpleuit bonū exemplū ho
minib; ut et ipsi in edificio sūmi pa
tris recte incedant uera & iusta opa
in spū scō p̄ficiendo. S; mirabile &
secretā atq; fortissimā se ostendit

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quō dꝫ incertaminiſ ſuiſ tā mirabi
liſ exiſtit ut nullomodo abeas adſi
nē pduci poſſit· taq; ſecretiſ ut nul
la carū ſcientia uel ſenſibilitate p
tinaciter ſit examinandus· atq;
tā fortis q̄d omiſſo fortitudo ipſa
rū abeo dirigat· nec ea fortitudi
ni ualeat cōparari· Quod aū ·115·
colorē purpureū nigredinis habet·
eideq; angulo ita inpoſita ut ē in
ita ut extra ipſū edificiū appareat·
hoc ē quod inuoluntate patriſ
unicuſ filiuſ eī purpureū ſangui
nē ſuū pnigredine peccatoꝝ homi
nū et ſic paſſione ſua mundū ſal
uans uerā & rectā fidē credentib;
attulit· qa in defectu ueſtriſ obſer
uationiſ et inortu nouę ſcīficatio
niſ cultuſ ſcē trinitatiſ manifeſtiſ
ſime declaratuſ ē· cū apte credim
ē q̄d idē ſupnuſ pat eandē filiū
ſuū miſit inmundū de ſpū ſcō con
ceptū qui glām patriſ & nām ſuā que
ſunt ſcīq; ſpē pfundā conſolatio
nē apte ut p̄dictū ē· ita q̄d hoc
in nulla parte lateret· quin & fide
lib; inope di manentib; & infidelib;
extra fide poſitis denumaret· Et
q̄d tamē q̄ minatiſ ē· ut nec magni
tudo nec altitudo ipſius intellec
tui tuo pareat· hoc ē q̄d eadē tri
nitatiſ tā ineffabilis glę et poteſta
tiſ ē· q̄d nec in magnitudine ma
neſtatiſ nec in altitudine duuinita
tiſ ullo circuitu aut iactantia ſa
pientię humanę mēſ determina
ri poſſit· Oſtenq; modo planiſſima
abſq; omī ruga ē· quo q̄d admiratio
ne dignissimū exiſtit mitiſſima ē
ingrā et ſemp benigna planaq; in
ſuauitate iuſticie accurrentib; ita
ut nihil rugoſū ulli iuſticie in ea
inueniat· iuſta et bona exiſtens· in
parte ſaluationiſ. Q d aiē habet · ·115·
in ecthore ſui parte Q tres angu
los calibei coloris apede uſq; ad ea
cumen ipſius uelut acutiſſimus gla
diuſ incidentes· hoc ē q̄d contrarie
tati tenebrarū oppoſita inuniuer
ſo mundo ineffabilis trinitatiſ inuni
tate diuinaſ apriſſime appareat· nec ul
li creature ſue impio et poteſtate ab
ſconſa lateat· exceptis incredulis cor
dib; quib; ob incredulitatē ipſoꝝ oc
cultatur· ppt q̄d eā iudicū dī cū
digna recompenſatione eoſ ut meri
ti ſ occidat· ultimū fortiſſima calipſ
nulli inflationi cedens· que ſe ipſi
opponit· unde et q̄d aſūmo uſq; ad
ſūmū tendit abinicio ſcilicet creatu
riſ ſeli uſq; ad finē eī et q̄d ſup ē· hoc
potentē inacciſſima diuinitate q̄ſi
muncidente gladio ſemp ſapientia
et poteſtate penetrauit & penetrat·
Et q̄d angulus unuſ contra af ·111·
fricū reſpicit ubi plurimū ari
di ſtraminiſ abeo ſuccisū & diſpſū
ē· hoc ē q̄d iuſtiſſima diuinitaſ tri
nitatiſ in xp̄iano pplō omnē aridi
tatē diuerſitatiſ et contradictionis
inq; abiectionis rectiſſime catholi
ce fidei aduerſantē in maxima illī
confuſione ſuccidit, cōburit ſicut
fenū q̄d conculcat & in igne cōbu

rīt a fructuoso frumēti grano separauē. qđ fides cū op̄ib; īsciemia scripture de qua oīe qđ eadē uere fidi contrariū et īmule ē īmiscredulitate sua dispḡt et auferē. qua īsipiens ppls quasi stultū pecus ummur-

.v. Aug; unus comta chorū se dirigit ubi multe pennule pullum diseisse cadum. qa eadē diuinitas clamā iactantiā iudaici ppli qui cū magna supbia malitudine īmis sue uolabat decerit. cū ille īsemet ipso ee īndō iustus et uolebat ut phariei qui malta celoz ascendere tēptabant scdm ppriā fiduciā suā īsemet ipsis confidentes. iusto iudicio di obdiuersitatē moz suoz discissim inhac p̄sūptione cadentes.

.vj. Medius uero comta occidentē respicit ubi plurima putrida ligna abipso desecta iacent. quo p ipsā ultimatē abscidit nefandū et diabolicū scisma gemlis ppli qui inoccasu infidelitatis erat infecta fide qa ut putrida ligna molesta. et inutilia s aduisus hominū sic etā abscisus et abiectus ē ppls iste agaudio ultē. magis diabolica sectans figmēta. quā diuina p̄cepta. Vnde etā hec singula abeisde angulis per terre temeritatē ipsoz succisa s. quia inomnib; p̄dictis causis uera et scā ultimas et infideles qui uel audacē eā diruere uolunt qui ineā p̄una emere credere nolunt ase abcisos ire p̄mittit in p̄dictionē. qm rabide et ignorantē inuadunt diuinitatē. no

uentes se inclinare fidi quā filiū di p̄semetipsū annulit et quā etiā p̄dis cipulos suos hominib; transmisit. scdm qđ hec parabola dicit. vij.

Dns quidā lapidē igneū habens ipsū et p̄nuntios suos necessaria rē multo ppto mandare uolebat. S; nūqd nō erant sapientes et scientes uerba dnī sui intelligere. S; insipientes et ignari admandatū illud p ficiendū. Inūa ortus ē tumultus et tēpestas magna et torrens ac seuus tonitruus. ita qđ tā mota ē et qđ lapides scissi s. sic etiā qđ uas unū inquo plurima uascula erant inūa iacens absconsū. dorso adcelū uerso maxima fortitudine eradicatur. cōcussa. et qđ uulua illi adcelū conuerteret. Tunc etiā adnō illo p lapidē ipsū uehementissimo flatu ignis aduenit. qui tanto ardore nuncios illos p̄transiuit qđ omīs uene eoz calefierent. et qđ omīs desidia tumoris abeis tanta uelocitate excuteret ut arida pelle uelocissime cadit qđ ei sup effundit. Et sic demū recordati illi omnū que audierant et didicerant adnō suo. et abierūt adpplm qui umbilicos nō habebat et cui ciuitas destructa fuerat. et illi mandatū dnī sui annuntiabant. S; et quib; dā ex ipsis umbilicos restituerūt ciuitatē eoz reedificantes ipsis ea reddiderūt. quib; dā autē nec umbilicos restituerūt nec eis ciuitatē reddiderūt. S; ipsos occidentes. ut porcos eos diuisert. Et sic la

pis ille ihumuerso mundo innouum
concumens et occidens oīa mīdosa
facta humane carnis. Hoc tale est.
Dīs iste ē pater omps. apud quē ē
unigenitus ei ille scilicet lapis angu
laris qui de igneo spū scō conceptus
ē et ex uirgine terrima uirgine natus ho
mo. ipse uidelicet flos candidissim
et pulcherrimus existens in albedine
et pulchritudine tocius sēmanis. Nā
filius dī erat secdm diuinitatē ine
narrabilīt ante cuīs oīs creature
cū patre et cū igneo refrigeratore.
postea uītēpore placito missus a pa
tre ut conceptus de spū scō sic p̄dic
tū ē ueraciīt incarnatus nascerēt
ex uirgine. ad conferendū creden
tib; candorē et decorē uīte. Quo in
carnato. ostendit celestis pat pullū
et p discipulos ipsi benigne mun
ans necessariā rē. salutē uidelicet
et saluationē hominib; qui in ipsū
crediderīt. Ş; illius discipli cui idē
filī apud eos corporaliīt manerēt
in mundo. erant stulti et insci ac
stolidi et tardi uiglantīt uerba il
lius in spū intelligere et ope com
plere. Ş; tamīt quasi in sōno insim
plicitate ea audiebant. nī dū con
firmati Ş; pauidi et ecclīa uelut
hoīes. Intēa uenit tēpus in sanc
cordiū. ut q̄d rudes in multū faci
ent exquirebant suscitantes mi
multa scismata contra filiū dī. ut
in hac magna tēpestate occiderent
eū. Et dū ita implerent omnē ma
lignitatē suā ut desiderauerīt. tē
inhoc p̄cepto et maximo tonitruo
pactū ē tā grande homicidiū q̄le
antea nī fuit nec postea fiet. ūtē
ita q̄d tūa moueret et idē q̄d tū ene
mies hominū exīteret cū reliq
creatura. et q̄d lapidea lex inde ex
sonderet. et inexitiosso facto ex. Te
primus homo cū genere suo inquo
latent signū reliquie creature suo
inquo latent signū reliquie creatur suo
inquo latuit signū reliquie creatur
tuę iacens sepultus in morte. ita q̄d
omnē intentionē suā ad tūa ena uer
tat habens ad orso celū nolens re
spicere addīm. in magna fortitudi
ne filii dī eradicatus ē et tūa mortis
inqua dormiunt cū filius suis. ita
q̄d suspicaret de uno corde et de
omī scientia sua. quasi mutua. ad
celestē patriā se conuertens. quia
audiunt xp̄m dī filiū ppt ipsū oc
cisū. Ş; post eī de filii dī ascensionē.
a patre et p ipsū filiū ut idē filī pmi
serat spūs scī aduenit. q̄a uota tūa in
supna dulcedine stillabat quo ce
lestis panis in mundo manserat q̄o
infideles transeunte q̄si in rumore
neglexerant. fideles ante cū omni
deuotione susceperant. Quia q̄ uerū
uerbū incarnatū erat apte spē scī
inigneas linguis apparuit. quo de
spū scō idē filius conceptus ē qui
in p̄dicatione sua mundū ad ue
ritatē conuertit. et quo cuā apli
peundē filiū doch erant idē spē
scī ita in calore suo p̄fudit eos. ut
diuersis linguis anima et corpore
loquerent. quo in eis aīa corpori

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dñabat sic illis clamantib; q̄d nuo
cib; eox mouis orbis tarū commouc
retur. Abstulit quoq; idē spē sēs ip
sis humanū timorē. ita q̄d talis pa
uor nullus eis meritū ut sentiā bo
nitū timerent ne uerbū dī loqué
rent. s; omīs hui modi timiditas tan
to ardore cē tanta festinantia eis ab
lata ē. ut quasi aridi et ñ molles. s;
ut mortui adeunctā aduersitatem
redderent. quę ipsis accidē potuisset.
unde etiā mox. p̄fecto sensu recorda
ti ōnitū quę prius tardi fide ne
gligent audierant et p̄ceperant a
xpō. ea ita admemoriā reducentes.
quasi eadē hora abipso illa cogno
uissent. Et abeuntes iter faciebant
int̄ incredulos pp̄los qui umbilicos
idē sigillū, scientiā scāz sē innocen
tię ñ habebant. quib; cuncta ex in
strumēta uidelicet legis infidelita
te destructa erant. ipsis uerba salu
tis et uere fidi in xpō annuntiantes.
Unde multos exeadē turba adag
nitionē dī reduxerūt. deducentes
eos adumbilicū idē adfontē bapti
matis in quo receperāt scīnatē p̄dictā
insup̄ba transgressione. atq; scām
cuncta p̄ceptox dī et excerāt. recidi
cantes eis ipsā qua eos insidiator di
abolus despoliauerat maculā. et ea in
fide adsalutē eis reddiderūt. Qui au
tē fide baptismatis et munimentum
uisionis dī p̄p̄ incredulitatē suā
recipe nolebant hos in p̄comis sig
norū p̄transierūt. ac eos obduriciā
et incredulitatē q̄ę in ipsis erat

condēpnantes mortu tradiderūt q̄a
in ecclesiis suis et insordib; pollu
tionū carnis atq; illecebris formi
carionū et adulterioz suox se inuol
uentes ut porcus luto inuoluūt ad
uersā fidē conuersi noluerūt. unde &
anima diuisi et separati s. Sicq; filii
dī a multis ē admirandis signis in
toto ītarū orbe manifestatus ē ex
patre secdm diuinitatē ante tēpora
ineffabiliter genitus fuisse et post in
tēpore secdm humanitatē mirabiliter
incarnatus ē ex uirgine. ita q̄d cor
da omnīū hec audientiū horrore
et tremore nimio sint concussa et p
cussa. et q̄d uana ac fallacia opa quę
secdm uoluptates suas fecerāt ad nihi
lū ineas p̄contēptū mortis sint redac
ta. uerū uerbo dī testimoniū sē tri
nitatis atq; unifice saluationis quę
sit p̄ aquā regenerationis adunā
reddente. ut dilectus iohs inuerbis
exhortationis suę ostendit dicens.

VIII. Et spē ē qui testificatur quo xp̄c
ē ueritas. quia tres s̄ qui testi
moniū dant in ītra. spē aqua et san
guis. et tres unū s̄. Et tres s̄ qui testi
monū dant in cęlo. pater uerbū et spē.
et tres unū s̄. Hoc tale ē. Spē hoīs
spīritalis ē uidelicet ñ p̄cedens de san
guine nec nascens de carne. s; cur
rens de archano dī. existens illi in
uisibilis q̄d mirabilitatis subiectū ē.
Idoq; ē illi testificatio ad filiū dī
cui gla mirabilis ē immistio spīri
tus in quā nullus hominū p̄fecte
intelligere ualet scilicet quomodo

idē unigenitus dī de spū scō concep
tus sit et ihc mundū uenerit·sicut
etiā nullus hominū plenitē scire po
test quomō anima ptranseat corp⁹
et sanguinē hominis ita qd una u
ta erit·Et sicut spūs hōis ē certissima
causa scientię quę dī adō data ē p
transiens unda oīa quę ei adō con
cessa ś·quō nō ē falsa et decepuosa
unda ś;acutissima·ita ē xp̄c pfecta
ueritas unqua surrexit et lumen
saluationis refulsit·de qua mors
cecidit quia ipsa fallax·ē·Et ut ia
scām trinitatē significantia testi
moniū dant unda·ita qd ostēn
dunt et tribuunt in p̄senti scło re
demptū uultifice saluationis ꝑqd
puenendū ē ad celestia sine ullo
pmansura·quę nō dū immortalita
te carnis habentē inte·ś;inspe ex
spectantē·Nā spē hōis habet et me
testimoniū in se qd non ē implena
unda restaurationis salutis nisi re
surgat pme maqua regenerationis·
quia defecit illo lumine qd lucet
in me expulsus de felicitate p cor
ruptā conceptionē et imundus quod
et crescit in sanguine·Et aqua habet
testimoniū illud qd oīa sordida
purget in se·et qd ipsa mortifera
pdicio mortis ꝑ purissimā purga
tionē ꝑeat in ea·hic spūs ante san
guinē adiuncta ḋa ut spē spūalis
est·sic et aqua spūalē affert sēifica
tionē·et media unt spūm et sangui
nē posita quō et animā et corpus
ꝑ spūalē regenerationē confortans
transmittat ad una·Sanguis quoq;
testimoniū habet qd uenenosa tu
nera sua retorquentē ad domū sēi
ficationis ꝑ aquā saluationis·quę
est medicinalis uis in filio meo ma
nens et in ipso ad una ꝑmanens·
quia sanguis in se commet ualde
culpabilia crimina magnāq; in
quietudinē insufficię ꝑ errantia
scilicet tunica currens ut mortuosa
dulcedine·quę ardentē libidinis fer
uit et quę innocentiā ꝑ horrida u
cia suffocat·et crescere incipiens ꝑ gu
stū comedentis de suggestione insi
diatoris diaboli·Et hęc ita unū·
quō spē nō ē uiuens homo sine san
guinea mana corporis nec sangui
nea mana corporis uiuens homo si
ne aīa·nec hęc duo reuiuiscunt in
grā noue legis ad una nisi ꝑ aquā
regenerationis·et ita unū ś in te
dēptione·nec ś integra in saluati
one quādiu ab hac saluari aqua
ś separata·ḋa racionalitatē de ē
pcellens honor·ut in qua redēp
tus homo semp resonare debet ꝑ
fectā laudē in conspectu dī qui ip
si racionalitatē dedit·Nā dś ꝑ ꝑa
uolumtate sua creauit hominē
ad honorē illū qui incōplet in cor
pore filii ei⁹ in una ęcīa·cui pdictus
homo reuiuiscit in honore ut in
salutifera grā redēptus indo·Et
spē quidē inuisibilis corporalib;
oculis existens designat patrē oī
creature inestimabilē·et aqua
purgationē sordis faciens sig

nificat uerbū idē filiū passione
sua abstergentē maculas hominū
aīaq; sanguis circūplectens et cale
faciens hominē figurat spm scm
suscitantē et incendentē clarissi
mas uirtutes in hominib; Sic tria
hec indicant spe aqua et sanguis
s̄ unum et unū s̄ in salutatione sci
licet ut dictū ē aīaq; trinitatē in
unitate et unitatē in trinitate de
monstrant Quomodo scā ecclē
sis trinitas dat celeste testimoniū
ita q̄d nō ē ab alio sūptū s; certa re in
ipsa manifestatū Quom̄ Pat̄ testi
ficat̄ q̄d unicū fructuosū uerbū
suū q̄d aīe sēla genuit p q̄d oīa
creata s̄ ipsū p̄ea in p̄destinato
tēpore in uirgine gl̄osissime flo
ruit Ipse uerbū aīe testificat̄ q̄d ex
uita patre inclinasse ad humanā
naturā incarnatū id est in pu
dore uirginitatis q̄a exiuit apa
tre spūali egressione et meritū redi
it ad patrē incarnis fructuositate
hic in medio positū q̄a a patre ē
ante tēpora inuisibilit̄ geniti et
de spū scō in uirginis utero intē
pore corporalit̄ concepti Sēs ū
sps testificatur q̄d accendit inte
gritatē uirginis ita q̄d uerbū di
concipet et q̄d do ctrinā eide uer
bi in igneis linguis firmauit eū
aplos ita p̄fudit aut p̄orū mun
dū uerā trinitatē uociferantur Quom̄
Ipsi clamabant q̄d dns pater p̄fe
cit illud q̄d creauit hominē ad
supnā felicitatē qua spoliatus ē

sed ut saluaretur in redemptione
homo q̄a ipse de limo t̄re factus
in erectione sursū s; uoluntate sua
deelinans se actūam deorsū nē
ingrā p incarnatū dī filiū erectus
denuo sursū et p spm scm illumi
natus et confirmatus ne p̄iret in p̄
dictione restitutus ē cūne claritatē

Sic pat̄ filius et sps̄ ses testimoniū
q̄d omnino nō distinguunt̄ in po
testate quāuis in psonis distinguan
tur q̄a simul opant̄ in unitate
simplicis et incōmutabilis substan
tie Quomodo quō pat̄ ē et trans sci
licet oīa p uerbū idē p filiū suū
in spū scō filius p quē oīa p ficiunt̄
in patre et filio Et hec tres psone s̄ ita
in unitate in separabilis substantie
q̄d nō transfundunt̄ uicissim in se
Quomodo Ido quō qui genuit pat̄
ē et qui natus ē filius ē et qui apa
tre et filio ardentissima uirtus
procedit et in specie innocentis alis
sup aquas apparens eas sēificauit
et aplos igneo ardore p̄fudit sps
ses ē Pater enī ante tēpora sēlā ha
buit filiū filiusq; erat apud patrē
spū scō cōmalit̄ patri filio q; inuen
tate diuinitatis coēterno Unde consi
derandū ē q̄a si ex his trib; psonis
due uel una de cēt nō cēt dns imple
nitudine sua Quomodo Quia ip
se dns una unitas diuinitatis quō
si aliqua earū de cēt dns nō cēt Nam
quāuis eedē psone ita distincte sint
tam s̄ una et integra aīaq; incōmu
tabilis substantia inestimabilis
pulchritudinis p manens in mundi

et spiritu scō sps̄ ses p quē uirent oīa i patre filio

xix.

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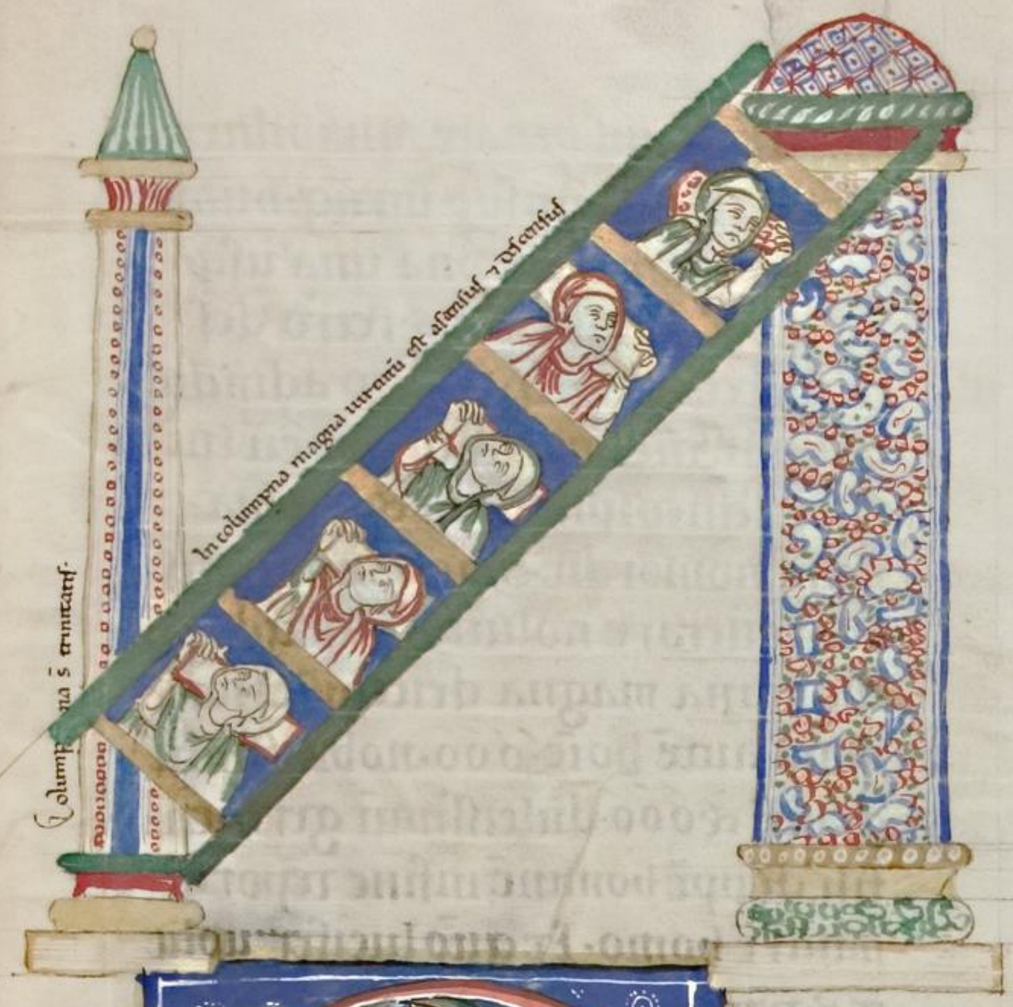
uisa unitate. Quomodo. Potestas uoluntas ardor: tri tres apices sunt in uno culmine operationis. Quoniam in potestate uoluntas in uoluntate ardor: et inseparabiles s. sic et calor hominis in sua emissione. Quoniam circulus uentus cum humiditate et calore et inuisibili emissione; sic et oculus tuus in sua integritate. Quoniam circulus oculi tui habet duo lucida in se. unum tamen habitaculum existens. omnaq; regens que sibi construxit s. Audi et intelligit homo. Sic tres psone in una incommutabili essentia diuinitatis s. In patre filio. utroq; spūs scūs et unus s. sibiq; inseparabiliter cooperant. quo nec pater operatur sine filio. nec filius sine spū scō. nec spūs scūs sine ipsis. nec pater nec filius sine spū scō qa unitas indiuisa s. Sic et dūs utrūq; psonis absq; initio ante cuncta. non dum ante exordium mundi assumptione carnis in filio pacta usq; ad portionatum tempus ubi uenit finito tempore illius cum misit dūs filium suum. s. et eidem filio incarnato nec dūs et utrūq; psonis uolens ma. meis in uocari. eum ide uirgineus, florum integritate uirginitatis nec mensabili uirginitatem ob hoc psona addita est. s; tamen ipse filius dei induit carnem inuiolabiliter assumptam. Unde et he tres psone. s. unus dūs indiuiduitate. et qui sic non credit ille absque de regno dei. qa secundum integritatem diuinitatis. et se ipsum infide.

ut scriptum est. Indie autem ultra apparuit homo ueniens de castris saul. uestibus concissa. et puluere aspersus capite. Hoc tale est. In nulla die catholica fides orta est in manifestatione sue trinitatis. pullulabant hoies in multos schismate. uenientes ab exercitu morufere cohortis. puer se illud seruare. qd non est possibile homini scire. Unde incuriam pro multas suasiones diabolice artis. fingunt se ascendere sup illam altitudinem. ma qd uolunt scire plus quam est scien dum sit de incomprehensibili diuinitate. Et ideo a uestibus salutis et iusticie secundum. qa do contrarium s. anq; fedam. et diuisionem sparsionis in capite. fidei fide integram non habemus. s; uni cum honore deitatis in multas sectas spargemus. anq; honore suum in risione schismatis minuemus. Quo omnis ad do diuidica buntur in inseq; uentib; ma commen. Dixit dauid adhuc iuuene qui nuncauerat ei. Unde es tu. Qui respondit. filii hois aduene amalechite. ego sum. Et ait ad eum dauid. Quare non timuisti mittere manum tuam. ut occideres xpm dni. Uocauitq; dauid unum de pueris suis et ait. Accedens irrue in eum. Qui percussit illum. et mortuus est. Et ait ad eum dauid. Sanguis tuus sit sup caput tuum. Os enim tuum locutum est aduersum te dicens. Ego interfeci xpm dni. Hoc tale est. Ille uictoriosus qui incomprehensibilis est omni creature

dicit adpuerile ignorantiā que in
homine ē adillā scilicet puericiā
que sibi metipsi facit exhortatione
hoc uolens scire qđ sciendū nē. hq̄
stultitia inuadit dm q̄si premerita
te annuntians ei scio te bene dne. ita
qđ ipse respondet illi sic. Vnde es tu
qui habens inimicū uis scire tuū
qđ caret. inicio. Et stultitia que orta
ē in cui habens. respondit q̄si insci
entia sua dicens. Ego fui filius hōis qui
peregrinus ē hic ueniens ab hac maledic
ta tua. q̄a primus homo lapsus in iustu
pomi fecit inde inhoc exulū de patria
cui & ego p geniem sui. Tunc dic dns ad
eū. Quia homo es a maledicta tua et
pulsus de patria ut exul. q̄te non
muusti tanta psumptione seruare qđ
ubi sciendū nō ē suffocans op tuū tua
qđ nullomodo uale ē in lumine spe.
& tangens meo malū homicidii q̄a
quicūq; temere seruat qđ dns fue
rit ante creaturā mundi. uel. q̄d
dns facturus sit p nouissimū diē hic
anathema habuis sit a portione bea
te cōmunionis. quo hoc sibi sciendū
nō ē qui habet mortale inimicū pecca
tu grauatū. Si; miser erit a felici salu
te bone scientie q̄a impunata seru
tauis ē qđ seruari nō debuit. Idcir
co tu qui hec psumptuose & crudeliter
poccisionē facis. beatā intelligen
tiā regalis pphetie inte inficis. q̄a
anima tua debuerat pudere sibi
putā scientiā fidelitē scilicet in illa
simplicitate que conueniens ē cre
dere in dm. Tunc pcipit dns. zelo
purissime iustitie sue que nō ha
bet ullā maculā in q̄ta. s. uo cans
eū p rectissimā uindictā in dicū iudi
cio suo sic dic. festina & obprime
illū de bona sua quā habuit. ne
quiescat in ulla felicitate sui sensus.
quo nulla in fecit requiē in corde
suo. Et sic plaga zeli dni pcutit illū.
ita q̄d nulla scintillula ulli oculi
ipsi remanebit ad uidendū idē ad
cognoscendū dm. Vnde & mortis
iustitie uitalis consolationis se ipsū
nō ualens regere. Tunc dicit ad eū
dns. Sanguinolentū nefas tuū q̄re
eleuas adilla excelsa que nō potes
intueri sit sup animū tuū que in
iuste erigis contra me. illud malū
conculcans te in deppssiū locū. de q̄
te leuare nō possis in recta mīa tua. p
positionis ficti q̄ recta uestigia ire
noluisti. si; in sensu tuo magnū sen
ma quesisti. Nā os tuū sit relictū
uerbis sapientie. quo locutū ē
contra salutē tuā. cui fallaciter seru
tauisti. et secreta & incōprehensibi
lē diuinitatē psumens scire. que
nō s scienda. temere dicens intimet
ipso. q̄d dns sit bene scio. premerita
te ista occidens inuiore salutē tuā.
cui caute in dm credere noluisti.
si; te supbe contra eū erexisti. Qui
autē a cunas aures interiores intel
lectus habet. hic ardentē amo
re speculi mei aduerba hec anhe
let. et ea inconscientia animi sui
conscribat. Octaua missio. ter
tie partis.

Octaua missa Ezechielis Propheta



misterius corā dō illū magnū etq̄ ⁊
dramū lucidissimiq; candoris splen ⁊
dorē prī uderā qui secretū supni ⁊
creatoris designans in maximo ⁊
misterio m manifestatus ē. inq̄ ⁊
erā alī splendor uelut aurora ⁊
in se aeriā in alto purpuree lu ⁊
cis claritatē habens fulgebat. p ⁊
quē m in mistica ostensione mi ⁊
sterū incarnati filii dī demon ⁊
stratū fuerat. Incolūna autē ista ⁊
abimo usq; ad sūmū et in modū ⁊
scale ascensus erat. ubi omīs utrius ⁊
sexus di descendentes et ascenden ⁊
tes oneratas lapidib; ad opus suū ⁊
ire uidebā. acuī studiū ide op' ⁊
p ficiendi habentes. Fraudium lu ⁊
cidū ullū qui sedebat in chrono
dicentē. Iste fortissimi oparii
dī ꝑ. S; int has uirtutes p̄cipue ⁊
septē uidebā. quartū erā for- ⁊
mas et habitus diligentissime ⁊
considerabā. Talis q̄ similitudo ⁊
in eis erat. Omīs ut alie uirtutes ⁊
que supra memorate ꝑ. uelut ⁊
uestib; ex serico indūebant. ꝑ; ⁊
et omīs albis crinib; retecto ca ⁊
pite et absq; amictu pallioq; in ⁊
cedebant. p̄ter primā more ⁊
femineo in capite uelatā. atq; ⁊
quasi casula tanquā crystallus ⁊
p lucida in dutā et p̄ter sdām ⁊
nigros capillos habentē. atq; p̄ ⁊
tē ia que dissimilis humane forme ⁊
uidebat. Prima quoq; et q̄rta atq; ⁊
q̄nta albis tunicis uestiebant. Omīs ⁊
erā alba calciamenta habebant ex ⁊

T de inde in pla ga meridiana in p̄fato lapideo muro demonstratu edificiu ultra p̄dictā co ⁊ lumnā magnā et obumbratā intra ⁊ et recta ide edificiū apparentē. que ⁊ scilicet usui meo tā umbrosa appa ⁊ rent. ut nec magnitudinē nec alti ⁊ tudinē ei' cognoscere ualerē et int ⁊ colūnā hanc atq; colūnā uere tri ⁊ nitatis. erat unū uacuus locus longi ⁊ tudinis tritū cubitoq; uacuusq; absq; ⁊ muro ut supius ostensū ē. fundamento ⁊ ibi tamē posito. Hec q̄ umbrosa co ⁊ lumna in hoc ipso edificio in eode ⁊ loco stabat ubi de sup in celestib; ⁊

cepta tua sedm speciē hoīs ñ appa
rent ut dictū ē. & excepta q̄rta
que cristallinis calciamentis miro
modo lucentib; calciabat. Hec aīe
mee fuit dissimilitudo. Prima
imago portabat coronā auream ca
piti suo imposītā tres ramos alcī
extantes habentē aug; p̄ciosissi
mis lapidib; uiridis & rubei co
loris & albis bacis multo fulgen
tē ornatu. In pectore uero suo ha
bebat speculū lucidissimū. in quo
mira claritate imago incarnati
filii dī apparebat. Et ant. Ego
sū columna humiliū mentiū. et in
tellectrix superboꝝ cordiū. In minimo
incepi & ad ardua celoꝝ ascendi.
Lucifer cernens se sursū sup se et
corruit sub se deorsū. Quis q̄s me
uult imitari filiī mīs ē desideransꝫ
si me mauult amplecti. opus
meū in me p̄ficiendo hic tangat
fundamentū. & lenit ad alta sur
sū ascendebat. Q̄d ē hoc. Ipse p̄mꝰ
carnis fuit ultimatē inspiciat et
sic de sursū de uirtute in uirtutē
suauī & leni animo gradatim p
ficiat. q̄a q̄ sūmū ramū arboris
primū ap̄phendit ad ascendēn
dū. repentino casu sepissime ca
dit. Qui autē uolens ascendere
a radice incipit. huc ñ ē tā faci
le cadendū si caute incedit. Et
secūda tota uidebat uiridi acinctus
aereī mirabilī coloris. uidelicet tā
forma quā tunica ipsi⁹. Et eidē
tunice due Zone ꝛestimabili m
auro & gēmis ornate mirabiliter
intexte erant. una sup utrūq; hume
rū eiⁿde imaginis. Zona una usq;
ad pedes ipsius ante & retro des
cendebat. Dixitq; Ego adindig
nationē incelo p̄uocabar. cū lu
cifer semet ipsū odio & superbia
transmontdit. Et. ooo humilitas
hoc tollerare noluit. Propter q̄d eiā
ille ruina magna deiectus ē. For
mauo autē hoīe. ooo. nobilissimū
granū & oooo. dulcissimū germen.
filiⁿ dī p̄p̄ hominē in fine tēporū
natus ē homo. Et quō lucifer uolu
it & cēptauit uestē & integritatē
meā scindere. idcirco lucidissimꝰ
splendor apparuit indo et in hoīe.
Nunc autē ceci & mortui. lupana
ria & meretrices aug; incestas cau
sas appellant equi uocas meas. Et.
q̄ntū impossibile ē, hanc spurciciā
tangere uoluntatē meā. Pennas q̄
malus uirtutib; m̄ faciā. cū q̄ub;
hec inutilia que lucifer p̄ mundū
sparsit abiciā. Ouirtutes. ubi ē lu
cifer. Ipse in inferno ē. Surgam⁹ q̄ oēs
aduersā lucē ap̄propinquantes. aug;
edificem⁹ maximas & fortissimas
turres impunctis. ut cū uenerit
dies nouissimꝰ plurimū fructū &
inspīalib; & incarnalib; apportē
mus. Cuiq; plenitudo gaudiū in
troierit. tunc & nos inuita & incē
lo p̄ficiem⁹. Ouirtutissime lucifer.
q̄d ubi p̄fuit repentina ruinet
tas tua. In p̄mo splendore tuo cū
creatus es dō. uoluisti me insam

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endo & bachando ~~conculcando~~ con
culcare & a celo deicere. ſ; tu mabyſſ
ſũ cecidiſti. & ego in celo p̃manſi. p̃ta
deſcendens ad ũras inmcarnato filio
dĩ. Et p̃ me p̃fecta ẽ multitudo fide
liũ. mille uſtis & bonis arrub; arma
tor. q̃ ſeipſis ſi poſſes iã dudũ liberiſ
ſime diripuiſſes. O humilitas q̃ue q̃ſi
ũram calcatos & conculcatos uſq; ad ſy;
dera eleuas. o humilitas q̃ue es glõſiſ
ſima regina uirtutũ quã forte & in
uictũ es tuis ubiq; p̃ſidiũ nullo ca
dente qui puro corde diligit te. ſic
& ego tecũ ualde uelis multũq; ex
optabilis defenſio meis ſũ. quia ual.
de gracilis & ſubtilis exiſtens. paruiſ
ſima foramina me colentiũ excipio.
et ea acutiſſime p̃tranſeo. Tertiã autẽ
imaginẽ uidi in eo dẽ ſcemate ut
in priori uiſione eã uidera maioriſ
ſeilicet a longioris ſtature quã ce
teras uirtutes diſſimilẽq; forme hu
manę et plurimos oculos undiq; in
ſe habentẽ totãq; inſapientia uiuen
tẽ. atq; indutã q̃ſi umbroſo indu
mento. p q̃d idẽ oculi p̃ſpiciebant.
multoq; timore tremẽte coram p̃dic
to lucido ſedente. unũ bono. Et ait.

Que miſeriſ peccatoribus dĩm ſi u
mentib; ſed eũ q̃ſi illuſorẽ ha
bentib; Quis poteſt incõp̃hensibiliſ
di timorẽ effugere quẽ ipſe culpa
biliẽ ſimul p̃ire. ñ abicientẽ aſe ma
la. Propterea ego ualde & ualde dñm
dĩm timebo. Quis me adiuuabit co
ram uero do. Quis me liberabit time
ndo ei iudicio. Nullas omnino

miſi de uſtus dẽ. illũ q̃ q̃ueã. a dillũ
ſemp fugiã. Ps̃ta uero mucũ uinculũ
circa collũ portabat. atq; manib & pe
dib candido religamine habebat li
gatos. Et dixẽ. non poſſũ currere
ſedm uoluntatẽ meã p̃ uiã ſclarẽ nec
p̃ contagia humane uoluntatis. & ideo
uolo redire ad dñm patrẽ ommũ quẽ
diabolus recuſauit. & quẽ obaudire
nolui. Quinta quoq; circa collũ tu
bã torquẽ habebat. Et ait. Vnus
ẽ dẽ. inter tres p̃ſonis unius eſſentie. & eq̃liſ
glẽ colendus. fidẽ q̃ & fiduciã habe
bo in dño. & ñ delebo in cõmũ nomẽ ei.
de corde meo. Sexta autẽ tunica pal
lidi coloris induebat. Et crux paſſi
onis crucifixi filii dĩ ante eã in aere
apparuit. ad quã ipſa oculos et ma
nus cũ multa deuotione erigebat.
Dixitq; O pie pat̃. parce peccan
tib; q̃ ñ derelicti ſti exules. ſ; eos clemẽ
ti inhumeros tuos. Vnde etiã iã ñ p̃i
mus. ſpẽ habentes inte. Septima lu
cidiore & puriore cristallo tunica ue
ſtiebatur. que ita in candore reluce
bat. ut aqua reſplendet cũ ſole p̃fun
dit. Et ſup̃ capitis ei expanſis q̃ſi ad
uolandũ alis colũba ſtabat. uerſa
ſedm faciẽ illi. Apparuit autẽ et q̃ſi
uniuerſe ipſi uelut in ſpeculo candi
diſſim infanſ. cui fronti inſeripti
erat innocentia. Habebat quoq; in
dextra manu regale ſceptrũ. ſiniſtrã
autẽ ad pectus ſuũ poſuerat. Et dice
bat. Ego libera ſũ. & ñ ligata. Puriſ
ſimũ fontẽ p̃tranſiui. dulciſſimũ
ſcilicet et amantiſſimũ filiũ dĩ. P

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transiui eū: abeoq: exuui Supbissimū
aiīē diabolū conculco: ñ pualemē
ligare me· Ipse absensus ē de me:
ḡa semp manco insupno parte·
S; insūmitate pstare obumbrare
colūne uidi aliā pulcherrimā ima
gine· nudo capite stantē & erās
pos ac subnigros capillos habentē:
faciēq: uirilē tamq: ardentis clari
tatis· ut eā pspicue considerare
ñ possē ut faciē hoīs· Erat quoq:
purpurea et subnigri coloris tu
nica induta: cui sup utrūq: hu
merū eī de imagnis· zona una
coloris rubicundi cōta aiīe & ere
tro usq: ad pedes eī sex tendens in
texta fuerat· Habebat aiīē circa
collū episcopale palliū: mirabili
modo auro & pciosissimis gēmis
adornatū· Splendor uero candi
dissimus ea ubiq: circūdederat:
ut nusquā nisi in ante a capite ui
delicet & deorsū usq: ad pedes eī
ipsā inspicere possē· Brachia aū
et manus atq: pedes ipsi: in adu
endū obumbrata erant· S; splen
dor idē qui eā circūdederat· ocu
lis undiq: plenus erat· uentusq: u
ens· atq: hac & illac se diffundens·
ut nubes diffluere solet: ita ut nē
laciosē nē aiīē constrictiorē se red
deret· Et eadē imago uoce mag
na clamauit in mundū dicēs hoīb:·
·viij· Gra dī sū filioli mei ideo audire
et intelligere me: qa illis dolū
aiē qui me intelligunt in mea mo
nitione: qs eā in eadē beatitudi
ne conuinco ne reuertantur ad inimica
re· Et quō ipsi me ñ despexerit: ob
hoc eā uolo eos tangere mea ad
monitione· quatin incipiant bona
opari: illi dicit· qui me reqrunt in
simplicitate & cordis puritate· Et da
tribuo margaritas boni· ammonens
ac exhortans hominē· ita scilicet dū
intellectus hoīs tangit p me sumei in
cui: hoc ē dū sensus hoīs intelligit ad
monitionē meā auditu ita q̄d eā
ide sensus ducit ad consensū tactus
mei in animo illi· tē sū ipso inceū
boni· q̄d eū oportet incipe: me sic il
li adunitce· Tē et ibi colluctamo ē: ut
uel pficiat q̄d do uel ñ· Quom: Hoc
sic uolo intelligi: qa dū hominē am
moneo tali m q̄d incipit gemere ac
flere peccata sua· tē si uoluntas illi
acquiesceret admonitioni qua illū
admonui quō homo insensu suo ta
liter sentit mutationē animi sui· q̄ltē
oculos suos leuat ad uidendū & au
res ad audiendū et os ad loquendū·
et manus ad palpandū & pedes ad
ambulandū· secm desiderū illud
ut sibi manimo ē: & si tē uoluntas
suscepit admonitionē meā· mox
ipsa eleuat se & deprimit ac supat
sensū: ita q̄d ide sensus discit ignota
in sua consuetudine· Quom: ipse mu
tat se: quō eī oportet quā uis inuitī
sequi uoluntatē que sup eī ē: ipse
eī subiectus ē illi inseruicio qa ei
inferior ē: eāq: sequet sine uelit si
ue nolit· Nā ego do bonū inuicio &
calefacio illud in tē· tribuoq: op⁹

uoluntam adpficiendū·et hoc facio admonitione exhortatione atq; calore dni exspiratiōis sp̄s sc̄i·Si aut̄ uoluntas his dnis repugnat·tē adnihilū deducunt̄ hec que memoraui·Unde unc de tēpore dū ho potē incipe unincendio donec insignis p̄conū q̄d de me orit̄·tē ad illud p̄ peret·ac cuā cuius uemat uoluntas inbonis·et pficiat op̄ hoc inclarnat·Nā scientiā bom et malī ob hoc habet homo·ut ipse inoptib; suis dīm tanto meliuſ intelligat·deuitando malū et opando bonū·qa sic dīm colit eū tumore eū amplectens inpfecta caritate·Quom̄·Ita scilicet si aperit inio res oculos sp̄s ad bonū·et si negat et abicit in exitiore hoīe malū q̄d facere potuit·Id circo cuā subiecta ē tūcta et tanta sub potestate ipsius·ut eo ampli dīm intelligat et diligat·ac op̄t̄ inco opus scientie sue cū intellectu quo ipse timet et amat omnipotentē qui ipsi deputauit magnū honorē ſ erumnis plurimarū creaturarū·Unde et obhas causas et fundit et infundit homo hoc ē q̄d ipse intellectu suo scientē cōp̄hendit discretionē increaturis·ita q̄d nouit que sint amabiles et odibiles et que inutiles atq; inutiles·et q̄d cuā post hec in fide qua ipse dīm intelligit concludunt̄ cuā opa ipsius·ita q̄d et do et anglis ei placent·Aliq̄ndo cuā tango hominē in aio ipsius et moneo eū·ut incipiat opari iusticiā et deuitare malū·ſ; dedignatur me et putat q̄d possibile sibi sit q̄cq̄d facere uoluerit·ac spaciū pertendi sibimetipsi constituit usq; ad tēpus illud dū corpus ei insimplicita te frigide ętatis sibi consentat·et dū cuā p̄p̄t̄ senectutē sibi fastidio sit amplius peccare·Tē ut tū admoneo atq; hortor eū ad bonū·et ut animo suo resistat·Quidū me negligit·sepe p̄mutas aduersitates ut indiuiens et incertis his similib; que patit̄ ad hoc p̄ducit̄·q d eū q̄si inutū et aduersus semetipsū oportet facere bonū·et q̄d eū imā exasperato animo ñ multū delectat ea adimplere que prius p̄posuerat p̄ficere in p̄senti tēpore·inq; ea uidebat̄ nichil contrarii ipsi obesse·secdm q d ipse in semetipso ordinauerat tēpore illa agere ut sibi placuisset·Hic homo dubie suscepit me·nolo tam eū derelinquere·quia q̄m uis sic susciperet me·tam ñ omnino despexit me·Unde et ego ñ labora ui frustra in ipso·Tedio enī m· ñ ē tangere ulcerata uulnera que circūdata ſ; comedentiū uermiū·inimicitias et rosiones uicioz et fetore malarum oris et infamie·et languore inuetera te inueterata peccatoz·nec despicia quin tenet̄ illa contracte eo tēpore dū incipio extrahere et dacē suo rē malicie·hoc ē eū intueor·et tango et dē uulnera blando calore exspiratiōis sp̄s sc̄i·ſ; sepe cū huīmodi dolor uetere fomito inueterat̄·ita q d peccatū incipit calere ardere in animo hoīs et eū cuā sic oriunt̄

in dolore uulnera peccatoꝝ ita qđ erũt
incoagulatũ opus huiꝰ inmundicie
quasi glob; ex aceruus se erigens de
magna sorde uermiũ & fomentatione
inuolutꝰ lutꝰ de quo nascuntᵉ morti
fera uenena scorpionũ serpentiũ ra
narũ & aliorꝝ similiũ uenenosorꝝ uer
miũ & eũ eaꝫ tẽ ita indurantᵉ ut la
pis · ita lẽ scilicet duriciã quã nullus
cogitat effringere que s̃ importa
bilia onera sceleruũ inillis hominib;
qui grauatꝰ s̃ grauioꝝ onerib;
qđ tunc adhec · Tẽ quippe hoĩes
ꝑpter infidelitatẽ suã nõ possunt
confidere · ut possibile sit huic hoĩ
se addm conuertere de sua inicꝫta
te · ꝓ eo quia uident eũ q̃si esse dia
bolꝰ · Ego tam̃ nolo eundẽ hominẽ
deserere s; meo adiutorio & ꝓlio
uolo eẽ ꝓ ipso incertamine · ubi sua
uter ꝓ primũ incipio tangere q̃si
duriciã lapidis illiꝰ peccati qm̃ q̃si
difficile ẽ eũ confringi uitã maxi
mo fetore horribiliũ sceleruũ · que
s̃ ꝓdicte cause magne sordis et
neqꝫe & que s̃ uelim cadauer pu
tredinis & esca diaboli · quã ipse
certissime absorbuit inuentẽ suũ ·
Quom̃ · Scriptura habet de filio di
cente mis eis; ẽ ut faciã uoluntã
tẽ patris mei · & e contra eis; ẽ dia
bolꝰ ut hoĩes deprimat inmortẽ ꝑ
quã illos talib; causis ut ꝓdictũ ẽ
afflat · qui ei uoluntate sua consen
tiunt · & ꝑ eũ declinant · Et id ipsũ
ẽ diaboli desideriũ & continuũ
studiũ · q̃a de hac sorde oritᵉ omne
malũ · S; de istis hoĩb; plures me in
telligunt · Quom̃ · Dũ eos primũ tan
go · dicit homo ille intra se · Qđ in ẽ ·
Ego nescio nec cogitare nescio q̃ eqꝫ bo
ni · Et interũ nesciens suspirat et
dicit · Heu me peccatorẽ · Nichil aũ
amplius sentit q̃a mole peccatoꝝ gra
uatus ẽ · & quo tenebre inicꝫtatis
conturbauerũt eũ · Tẽ interũ tango
uulnera illius · Et quo prius ꝑ me ad
monitus erat tẽ eo melius intelligit
me · & respiciens in se ipsũ interũ dicẽ ·
Uide in qđ faciã · Nescio nec excogita
re ualeo q̃d fiat de me · ꝓpter multi
plicia peccata mea · Ach quo me uer
tã · uel adquẽ ꝓpabo qui me adiu
uet ut turpissima scelera mea con
tegã & delẽã inpenitentia · Unde
interũ respicit in se ipsũ ea colluctа
tione quã prius habuit in studio
peccandi · ac eo de desiderio adue
rã penitentiã se conuertit ut ante
studebat in peccatis · Et q̃a tẽ ide
ꝫ homo admonitione sic euigila
uit de somno mortis quã s̃ puta
elegerat · ideirco tẽ nec cogitatione ·
nec uerbo · nec facto que prius arden
ter habuit ad scelera uult amplius
peccare · s; studiosissime in fortissi
ma penitentia se eleuat ad me · Qua
ꝓpter mox & ego suscipio eũ interũ ·
& de inceps dimitto eũ q̃si liberũ
ita q̃d de ꝓdictis causis graue infe
stationẽ ultra nõ habebit · ut ka
rissimi filii mei sustinent q̃s moneo
multiplici miseria inimicꝰ sagit
tis diabolicarũ ꝑ suasionũ · q̃a ipse

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harū ꝛc ñ in digꝛt·Nā ipse sēp dole
bꝛt ꝓpꝛ tꝛansacta peccata sua·ita ut
eā sibimet ꝛatus tā acꝛē pemmmā
agat q d se eā indignū estimet ho
minē uocaꝛi·S; hec uictoꝛia ē in fetꝛo
ꝛe soꝛdes illoꝝ hominū q s abicere
nolo·q uo p peccata sua me tam̄ que
sieꝛt·Nā qui me ñ spnunt s; admo
nitionē meā suscipiunt & me deuote
queꝛt·illis paꝛata sū facere q cq d
uolunt·Qui aut̄ me contēpnentes
abiciunt·illi moꝛtui s nec cos scio·
Sꝛt enī hoies qui diu me ad ee sentiunt
intelligentes ipsoꝝ mentē tacta ee
admonitionē mea fugiunt me p
malā consuetudinē conceptoꝝ pec
catoꝝ que in se deglutiebant uo
luntate consensu atq; ope·unde
eā & ipsi s cotā dō q si nihilū & ina
ne reputant·q a nolunt ee conscii
q d possent facere tacta p me·Ego
aut̄ nolo ee impollutione horū
peccatoꝝ q nolunt suscipe admo
nitionē meā·nec se uolunt purga
re p exhoꝛtationē illā quatenus
se auertant a peccatis suis nec desi
deꝛant comedere cibū illū q ē sēp
tura eugliū quo saciaꝛi debent oēs
fideles·nec gustare saporē ei sedm
q d eis datū ē·S; festinant fugere
grām di q a nec uidere nec audire
nec cogitare uolunt q d eis faciēn
dū sit dū uocant̄ admonitione
bona·ut uerius q ꝝ tam̄ intꝛat se
abscondens a boī decoꝛe huius sēli·
Hoc faciunt ex isto nequissimi
hoīes fugientes p̄cepta di seq; pol
luentes in stercoꝛe q se inuolutant
in moꝛtē cū se abscondunt in ma
licia sua·nolentes de fetoꝛe nequ ire
ad lucē p dire·Qui tales s·ñ p̄tuent
a me·Nā ego nolo hac ex illac di
uidi in pollutione lutu·Quomodo·
cū his ee uolo·qui me pura pen
tencia intelligunt·ubi me eā
adiungo humane putredini·q a
eā uolo purgare·Qui aut̄ me
nolunt suscipe illos de me abi
cio nolens ee cū eis quō nulla
pars mi cū illis ē·q a s in parte
stulte ignoꝛantie me intelligere
nolentes·& quō nolo ee in ope q d
puniet ad conglutinationē ob
duratę puersitatis q d ē ad moꝛ
tē·Et q d hoc modo spnunt me
in mitatꝛ p dnū augelum q d diu
diu uidere potuit eū inspice
re nolunt·ita ut eū humiliter ag
noscere·& p pꝛeꝛea subito effu
gat omnē q ꝛam celestē cadens
in moꝛtē diu do uolunt assimi
laꝛi simili honoꝛe·Ith despiciunt
me·quō operant̄ opus maligni
ut exigunt illicita desideria
carnis inuoluptatib; ipsoꝝ·Et
quō me despiciunt·ideꝛco fa
ciunt q d uolunt·Ipsi contēp
nunt dm·sic eā negligunt
illi p̄ceptū·Unde ex multo ciens
indignatione mea deputant̄
adplenitudinē mensꝝ suę facere
q d uoluerint·quia uita ęt̄nę fe
licitatis eos fugit·q si nihilū sit.

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hic multo ciens eua deficiamꝰ ta
inpſpiratꝫ ꝑſentis uite quā fugere-
quō durꝫ & immobilesꝰ adfelicitatē
boni ſ. Cōmunacē cū peccatorē in
malis ſuis ꝑſeueratē deſero. uitu
ficans eū qui inſe reſpicit & a pecca
tis ſuis uitam ore meo cū pura pœni
tencia ſe ad me conuertit. Nā ego
ſū columna firme ſtabilitatis que
nūqm deſero quereme me. quō q
me appbendit & ſe in me uite ac ſi
dei cōiungit. nūquā decidet
inpdicionē. Qui uero me habet in
obliuione mtis ſue. ſupbiendo ſe
eleuat ſup me. idē qui in ſe ipſū
magis confidit quā in me ac ido
fiduciā in me contēnit habere
quō pnichilo cōputat gr̄am di.
q̄a in animo ipſius ſū ut uentus
turbinis. ipſe habens me negligentē
in irrisione & ſupbe cū elatione in
deſpatione ñ ppt̄ grauedinē pecca
toꝝ que ꝑ peccauerit ſ. ppt̄ ſupbiā
me deridendo sic dicens. q̄d ē gr̄ā
di. hic ego deficiendo occidā. et inde
tione mea eū erigere nolo q̄a mor-
tuus ē in cēna felicitate. Ş. & heu hoīes
qui ñ habent fiduciā ſe poſſe ſur-
gere de grauioribꝫ culpis peccatoꝝ
ſuoꝝ ſic abicientes omipotem dm et
gr̄am ipſius deſpantes ſcilicet in mi
mia tristicia q̄ſi ñ poſſint ſaluari
de enormitate criminū ſuoꝝ defici
unt pigri ch ame. & acerbe corruunt
in mortē morientes in inferno infer
ori cruciatū mortis cēne. Nē ena lo
quar dedilecti filii mei qui me
ſuſcipiunt. apto ſenſu et uoluntario
animo atq; acuto intellectu. et q̄ me
tu ac fletu tangunt me excipientes
cū gaudio atq; omi amplectentes in
tentione. O flores mei. quidū me ad
ē ſentiunt ſubito gaudent in me. &
ego in illis. Ipſi dulciores ſuauioresq;
mihi ş. ſup̄ fulgentes pciosas marga
ritas in mīte hominū q̄ eas amplectun
tur ardenti deſiderio. Ipſi etiā ş. in
nobiliſſimi quadrati lapides. q̄a in
conſpectu meo in ſēp ş. amabiles. Hos
aſſidue uolo limare & purgare q̄tin
recte ac decenter ponant̄ in celeſti ier-
q̄a ſemp in mtib; ſuis bona uoluntate
mea ꝑpulant̄ nec mea iuſticia poſ
ſunt ſaciari. Nā mox cū tactū meū
ſentiunt ꝑpant ad me. tanquā ce-
uus ad fontē aque. S; ego ſepe relinq̄
eos ita q̄d ipſis uidet̄ q̄ſi ſint ſine
aduentorio. q̄d id circo facio ut exte
rior homo in eis ñ inflet̄ ꝑ ſupbiā.
Tunc plorant ac lugent etiam me
me ipſis ē offensā ſ. ego ſic ꝑ ſeruor
fidē eoꝝ. Ac tam̄ forti manu teneo
eos ſic auferens ab ipſis elationē. nec
ꝑmittens eos cognoscere q̄d ſint in
occultis bonis ſuis. q̄a multiplices
fructus in eis facere uolo. animis
ipſoꝝ dolentib; accordib; eoꝝ uul
neratis indoloribꝫ. ꝑmitto eni mul
to ciens diabolicas ꝑſuaſiones ipſos
inuadere in igneis ſagittis de flam
mis immundicie incendii ardentis ſp̄s
fornicationis que uulnerant cor-
pora eoꝝ in infirmitate fragilis na
ture. & hoc ideirco ꝑmitto q̄tinus

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hoc modo ꝛa forꝛ in buanꝫ inspira
tione spē sci· qđ postea fiant insig
nes p̄ cones & flagrames inuicem·
Ipsi quippe erꝫ in pbatione q̄si au
rū in fornace idē pbati in tribulatione
et in dignatione· ita qđ q̄si nu
chilū computabunꝫ· & qđ sepissime
p̄aptores sub flamma sua denuda
bunꝫ· ac p̄ dissensionē plebis mad
uersinamb; sic agni a lupis dilacera
buntꝫ· Et ut oues dū eas lupꝰ disp
gens dissipat tam̄ nō moriuntꝫ· ita
s̄ & isti hoīes in morte aīe nō mori
emes·s; eo magis uiuentes purgati
in aduersis· Nā bona arbor ut fruc
tū ferat· irrigat̄ circūcidit̄ atq; cir
cūfodit̄· & abra uermes ne fructū
ei comedant abstrahuntꝫ· qđ ē hoc·
Boni scilicet ho nō sit duri·s nec ma
li uoluis ad iusticiā di s; emis ac flexi
bilis ad qđq; bonū a se abscidens
malū· seq; considerans inscrutatio
ne op̄ū suoꝝ· atq; auferens a se in
festationē ledentiū se inimicoꝝ· S;
tam̄ amice quā homo seruat me
in cognitione sua· aut intellectus
ipsius intelligat me intra se· sū et
caput & plantatrix fructuosissimus
& iustus fortitudoq· firme ciuita
tis que edificata ē supra firmā pe
tra· Oīs q̄ fidelis ho· audiat me si
bi dicentē· O ho· ē m̄ conuenies &
congruū ut ho racionalis sine in
tellectu sit· ut irracionale pecus
qđ nō alit̄ faç nisi secm̄ qđ experit
libitus ipsi· O miseri hoīes· q̄ nolunt
scire magnā gr̄am illā quā dꝰ ip
sibus dedit ad similitudinē suā· S; nō
diu potest ee ut uolunt qđ libere &
quasi hereditario iure oīa mala
faciant que desiderant· q̄si hoc ex
natura corporis sui possideant· no
lentes considerare se habere honorē
illū qđ bona op̄a op̄ari ualeant· Dꝰ
in sua ordinatione oīa iuste con
stituit· Et q̄s potest ei repugnare·
Quid ē hoc· Inhuiꝰmodi uidelicet
cōparatione· qđ aliq̄s ordinatorum
di simili exemplo possit cōparari
aut sapientia· aut discretione in
ullis reb; Et cur ē hoc qđ efficaciā
illā que eis data ē sibimetipsis au
ferre uolunt· q̄d bene scilicet &
male facere possunt· Quorū· Nā ego
cū eos tactu meo admoneo qui ut
me ap̄hendunt mox ut me adee
runt· hi bonū op̄us q̄d uolunt
ad effectū meo adiutorio p̄ducere
possunt· qui uero me contēpnunt
in imbecillitate sua & malū cogru
unt· S; p̄tam hoīes excusare se ni
tunt· ita q̄d bona op̄a op̄ari nō pos
sunt· & hoc p̄pter facinus qđ exerci
or ho mei uoluntate sua exercebat
in libertate· Ne o carissimi filii mei·
qui m̄ dulcores in odore sup oīa
aromata estis· audite me uos admo
nentē· Dū tēpus habetis facere bonū
& malū· sincera deuotione colite
dm ur̄m· O uos uerū dulcissimi fi
lii mei qui ascendistis sicut aurora
uos q̄ ardere debetis in caritate ut
sol in radio suo· currite & p̄parate
carissimi mei in uia ueritatis que

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lux mundi ē que ē ihc xp̄c filī di q̄
uos redemit sanguine suo infine
tēpoꝝ ut cū gaudio p̄ transitū ut̄m
puenire possitis ad ipsū-fr̄es mei au
diui eū q̄ sedebat in m̄o dicentē ad
me-Ad desideramb; celestia fidelit̄
credendū et ñ punacit̄ examinan
dū ē quom filī di missus in mundū
a patre natus sit ex virgine-q̄a hu
manus sensus fragili et mortali cor-
pore et grauissimo peccatoꝝ onere
grauatus secreta dī plus dinoscere
ñ potest-quā sp̄s sēs cui uult reue
lauerit- Qua ꝓp̄ p̄ misticū mi
sterii-hec etiā colūna quā uides
in plaga meridiana in p̄fato la pi
deo muro demonstratu edificiu
ultra p̄dictā colūnā uere uirtutis-
significat humanitatē saluato
ris-q̄ conceptus de spū sco natus q;
ex sua uirgine filī ē altis
simi-fortissima scītatis colūna ex
istens-omnē uidelicet ecclāstucā
edificationē sustentans-cui huma
nitas apparet in ardente fide lapidū
fideliū pplōꝝ in bonitate supni pa
tris fortissime opantiū-p̄ declara
tionē uirtutis manifestata-q̄a uir
tute in uno do certificata credēn
tu pplo credtū ē etiā incarnatū dī
uerbū uerū dm cū patre et spū sco
in unitate diuinitatis in uno et
uero do colendū- Que colūna
magna ē et obumbrata intra et extra
idē edificiū apparens-q̄m sēcundo
uere incarnationis magna et in
estimabilis ita humanis mētib; ē ob
umbrata ut ñ possit considerari ñ
q̄tūcūq; possibile ē p̄fidē intuerī-et
mētiorib; diuino cultui laborantib;
fide et ope cognoscī et exterioribus ocio
uacantib; fama et uoce manifestari.
Ysiuq; tuo tā umbrosa appa-
ret ut nec magnitudinē nec altitudinē
ei cognoscere ualeas-q̄a ide filī mis
sus-hoīes immortalitate carnis-
q̄m ꝓpplō morte subtractus erat
quasi obumbratus mortalis scilicet
existens sine oīa macula peccati
apparuit ita tamē q̄d uera ei incar-
natio in mistica magnitudine se
cretoꝝ dī incōp̄hensibilis et inexcel
lentia diuine potentie in estima
bilis omnē cognitionē humani in
tellectus excedat. Sed q̄d in
ita colūnā uere uirtutis ē intus up
tus locus longitudinis trium cubi
torū uacuus q; absq; muro ut ē
supi ostensū ē-hoc ē q̄d incarnati
dī filī dñi uerus cū patre et spū sco
existens-adhuc latet in mēbris
suis que fideles hoīes s̄ qui
usq; ad finē mundi nascituri
s̄-p̄ uniuersa opa mīra capitis
sui effectu. ut supra mirabilit et
ꝺ̄pice edocta es. Qui q̄t et q̄les fu
turi sint in plurimate sup uenien
tiū tēpoꝝ hoc ē in misterio ineffa
bilis uirtutis ipsi candē uirtu
tatē in unitate diuinitatis-fide
li cultura adoraturi-cū locus eoꝝ
qui adhuc nascituri s̄ uacuus
sine edificato muro bonoꝝ opū
sit-Ubi tam fundamētū positū

VIIII· ⁊ 9 ⁊ 9 ⁊ 9 ⁊ XI· ⁊ X· ⁊ ⁊ ⁊

ē-qūo inp̄scientia di s̄-& q̄a eiā
fides saluationis ex quā habem
rl s̄ iā posita fortē consistit-ita
ut homo spē & fiduciā nō habeat
in alio quā in dō nō diffidens de
mdia ei⁹ confidens in eū q̄d for-
tissimū fundamentū fidelis aīe ē-

Q d autē hec umbrosa colūna in .xij.
hoc ipso ędificio in eo dē loco stat
ubi de sup̄ in celestib⁹ misteriis co
rā dō illū magnū & equadratū lu
cidissimiq: candoris splendore ē
prius audistu-qui secretū supni
creatoris designans in maximo
misterio ubi manifestatus ē-hoc
ē q̄d incarnatus di filiⁱ oīa opa
sua-que corporalit̄ in mundo
multas in iurias passus opat⁹ ē-
ea sedm secretā uoluntatē patis
adimpleuit-Q d etiā ille splendor-
designat magnū ac decens in sig
nificatione misteriq; di-quatuorq;
angulos q̄m ad cognitionē xpi
multi ex his qui p quatuor par-
tes mundi nascuntur p uenturi
s̄-atq; ex eius candoris-q̄a lucidis
sima diuinitatis nulla tenebrosi
tas obfuscare potē-ubi ide secre
tū supne & glose maiestatis in
magna profunditate & mysterio
sciētie creatoris omniū qui cun
cta creauit ut pice t apt̄a ita ut ip
si creatori nullus ad hoc inauxi
lio succurrere nec ullus ipsi re
sistendo in hoc repugnare-ea
tamē in uoluntate bonitatis suc
p uerbū suū creans-Unde in eo alī

splendor uelut aurora in se aeriā
in alio purpuree lucis claritatē ha
bens fulget-p quē ubi in mistica ostē
sione mysteriū incarnati filii di de
monstratū ē-q̄o in secreto sūmi di
candor aurore uirginis scilicet ma
rie declarat̄ q̄e in uentre suo filiū
eide celestis & altissimi patris por-
tauit qui purpureū sanguinē suū
clarissima luce saluationis fulgen
tē effudit-sedm q̄d ubi in hac secre
ta uisione incarnato eide filii mi
stica obumbratione ostendit̄. .xiij.

Sed q̄d mp̄ dicta colūna a bimo
usq; ad sūmū ei⁹ in modū scale
ascensus ē-hoc ē q̄d in incarnato
filio di oīs uirtutes plenit̄ opa-
bant̄ q̄ in se uestigia saluationis
relinq-ens ita ut tā pusillus q̄ mag
nus fidelium sibi cōpetenti ē gradū
in ipso reperiat̄ in quo pedē in ascen
sū uirtutū ponat̄ ut ad optima lo
ca p ueniant ubi uirtutib⁹ opandū
ē-Quomodo-In optimis locis bonoꝝ
cordiū aggregant̄ uirtutes ad
celsissimū opus suū-quatinus filiū
di in mēbris suis p ficiant q̄d ē in
electis hoīb⁹; Unde & in ipso ē exem
plū p fectionis oīb⁹; fidelib⁹; qui in
lege di occupati s̄-ut se de bono
torquent ad melioⁱ sciendes ma
nifestationē uere incarnationis-
ubi filiⁱ di uere ac ē incarne demon
stratus ē-in quo fidelissimi⁹ ascen
sus ad celestia repit̄; Propter q̄d etiā
oīs uirtutes di descendentes et
ascendentes onerate s lapidib⁹; ad

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opus suū hic ifte uidef· q̄a inumige
nito di lucidissime uirtutes q̄si
p humanitatē ei descendunt· & q̄si
p diuinitatē ipsius sursū tendunt·
Descendunt enā p ipsū ad corda
fideliū hominū· qui bono corde
uolūtatē suā relinquentes adtrac
ta opa flexibiles se reddunt· sedm
q̄d oparius adleuandū lapidē se
inclinat· quē ad edificiū deferat· In
ipso enā surs̄ū ascendunt· cū eccle
stia opa inhoīb; pfecta do gratula
bunde offert· ut corpus xp̄i infide
lib; mbris, ipsius quamuis cuis pficiat· Ihs
enā q̄si lapides adalciora portant·
qui s̄ pennata & lucida opa quę cū
ipsis hoīes adtumeta suā opant· quo
una quęq; actio ad dm obtunet alas
suas· p q̄s se de stercore humane
mūdi eleuet· fulgentē enā splen
dorē habens p quē ante dm luce
at· q̄a obstruu et abscondi nō potē
q̄d fluit de fonte uite ētne· Nam
ut fons nō debet ee inabscōso s; in
manifesto· ut oīs homo qui sitit
ad ipsū ueniat & hauriat atq; bi
bat· sic filiꝰ di nō ē obstructus nec ab
sconsus electis suis s; manifestus· p
parans se ad retributionē opū ut ea
manifestet iusta remuneratione· xv.
que ppt̄ ipsius uolūtatē ab hoīb;
pficiunt̄· Idcirco fidelis homo am
bulet in fide addm· quiatq; miam
ei· & dabit illi· Non quęrentē autē
inuenietē· uidim fons nō fluit ad
hoīes ipsū solūmodo scientes· nec
ad eū uenīte uolentes· s; illos opor-
tet ad eū accedere si aquā ei hauri
re desiderant· Sic homo faciat· Ad
dm accedat p legē sibi a ipso con
stitutā & inueniet eū· dabit q; illiꝰ
unde & aqua salutaris ita ut amplius
nec esuriē nec sitim sustineat· Ynde
& p dicte uirtutes acutū studiū ide
opus pficiendi habent quō studio
sissime sicut torrentes aque ad opꝰ
diuinū currūt· q̄mus sole fulgentio
ra xp̄i membra capitu suo inlucidis ac q̄sitio
mb; nobilissime pfecta coniungant̄·
Ppt̄ q̄d enā ut audistu fortes oparii
di appellant̄· q̄a strenue in bonis
opib; fideliū hominū semp conuer-
santur· Sed q̄d inter has uirtutes
p̄cipue septē uides quartū enā for-
mas & habitus sedm q̄d t̄ premittit̄
considerasti· hoc ē q̄d inter uirtuosa
opa hec septē uirtutes p̄stantissime
septē ardentissima dona spūs sci de
signant· q̄a in obumbratione spūs sci
uirgo clarissima filiū di sine pecca
to concepit in sanctificatione scilicet scā
rū uirtutū que a patre in eo dē unige
nito di manifestatur· s· q̄si in forma
sua illuminantes corda fideliū et
q̄si in habitu suo in unitate fidei se
dilatantes· ut ysaias seruus mis testatꝰ
dicēs· Egredietur uirga de radice
iesse· et flos de radice eius ascendet· & re
quiescet sup eū spūs dñi· spūs sapien
tie & intellectus· spūs ~~consilii & fortitu-
dinis~~· spūs consilii & fortitudinis·
spūs scientie & pietatis· & replebit eū
spūs timoris dñi· Hoc tale ē· Virgo
maria egressa ē de angustus scla

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rnū obp̄ssionū indulcedine honesta
us morū-ut aliq̄s de domo egred̄ in
qua inclusus comanebat-qui se n̄ de
uat sup̄ ipsā domū s; recto tramite
cor̄ se gradi-& ut rumulus umi de
torcular exprimit n̄ se exaltans
supra ide torcular s; moderate de
fluens in locū suū. Et q̄re uirga-q̄a
n̄ ##spinata morib; nec nodata ire
nis cupidinib; s; plana idē carna
li concupiscentie n̄ copulata-orta
scilicet de radice ieesse-idē ab illo q̄
quasi fundamentū erat regalis p
lis de qua ēa dē illibata mat̄ nata
p̄cessit. Unde & de radice ei⁹ de ur-
ge ascendit suauissim⁹ odor-q̄ fuit
integra uirtutis ei⁹ de uirginis-uo
lans in altissimū modū spū sco ea
irrigante q̄d excepsa alm⁹ flos nat⁹
ē. Quom⁹-ist flos nascit in agro n̄ se
minatus semine-sic surrexit mea
celestis panis-sine radice uirtutis cō
mixtionis-& absq; omi humano
onere-s; tamū natus in suauitate
diuinitatis n̄ tactus ulla indigna
tione peccati uenientis tortuoso ser-
pente nesciente nec eū p̄r sus tangen
te. Unde & ide flos latentē illū dece-
p̄t-ita q̄d surrexit & genus
humanū in peccato conceptū ad al
ta sustulit q̄d ille p̄rius fraudulent̄
deceperat-& impdicionē secū detra
erat. Et quō hic flos filij dī erat rece
ptus sup eū spē dñi-idē spē cū me dini
nitatis. Quom⁹-Quando humilitas
exaltata ē in ascensu ei⁹ de flor-is-ubi
uirtutis one, p̄strata ē superbia quā
prima mulier amendit-cū plus quā
deberet habere uoluit sedā mulierē
seruicio dī se subdere-dū se recog
nouit parua in humilitate confes
sa dīm suū-spē ses ardent in pfore
quietem in quo electa caritas lenit
que saluauit pdītā plebē ab sterg̃s
crimina & scelera hominū. Nā plen
tudo sētialis erat in eo-q̄a uniens hu
mani in ipso radicauit-in quo noxiū
pomū cū sequentib; se nequicis-
arunt-surgente in eo de medicina
mortuoq; que uexillū illud eleua
uit q̄d mortē superauit & contriuit.
Sētialis enī in eo n̄ earū nulla possibi
litate ipso concepto absq; omi pec
cati cōmixtione-sic sepius offendit
in natis hominū q̄ nascunt̄ indiuer-
sitate multiplicii criminū. Et; & cū
ide flos dedit operando & ostendendo
omnē exspiratione iustitie iā fruc
tū implentudine spē ses̄ p̄ulit
quō ipse filij dī indutus carne aptē
mope suo demonstrauit q̄d antea
spē ses̄ mistice & q̄si occulto in
spiratione sua cōmonuit. Qui spē
ses̄ sup eund̄ florē septēplicem re-
quiescere designat-q̄a eū dns oīa
p̄uerbū suū in spū sco erearet. septi
ma die ab omi ope suo requieuit. Et;
& eade dona insignatione sua ge
minant̄ quō corpus & aīa sibi con
uincta simul ingemina dilectione
p̄unctionē spē sci debent operari-
tumore dñi solo posito-q̄a ipse q̄si
in tumore carnali ueneranda unū
sup oīa adorari designat. Unde

ema & spē dñi solus denominatur fortissimis uirtutib; abeo claresc entib; ut a radice ramis pcedunt quo unus ds ē a quo oīa bona uenium & pquē oīa sapiēt dispo sita s. Et qa spē dñi sup ipsū florē requiescit spē ema sapiemie sup eū mansit. quo ubi spē dñi affu it ibi sapiemia ñ deerat. Sic g spē sapiemie & intellectus meo fuit. quo magnus sapiema apparuit eū ds oīa. puerbū suū creauit quia sapiema sic diffusa ē mul to q̄d ide uerbū erat sapiema. s; ide uerbū ñ diu incarnatū in uisibile fuit. id autē incarnatū uisibile apparuit. qm uerbū qd ante omnē creaturā erat in corde patris p qd oīa facta s. & sine quo factū ē mihil. ipsū enim flos sub tempore scilicet emicans in huma nitate. bonū intellectū hoīb; pfe rens suis testificationib;. q̄d ē hoc Sapiemie intellectus congrue ad iungit. qa eū ho ado insapiema creatus sit. creatorē suū digne in telligere debuit. Ergo ante partū uirginale ds intelligendus erat. ab sq; ulla dubitatione. s; p partū uirginale p̄dictū florē in carne pferemē ide flos intelligendus erat ds & homo. s; ñ sine admirati one & iste intellectus pri insisbi lis. uisus ē uisibilis in flore. cui ip se flos hanc intelligibilē causam prulit. q̄d homo scilicet sapiēt intellig dm insactis suis. Quom. Sapiema ē origo bonoꝝ opū. eū ho sapiēt ueneratē dm suū. Cui intel lectus adhesit. quo eū homo psapi ema bonū opatē. na illud adalios dilatat. ma ut bonū odorē & dulcē gustū ab ipso emicantē eū gaudio intelligant meo. Inuirgineo q̄q; isto flore intellectū subsequit con silium. qa homo intellectū habens diuino consilio liberandus erat. Inde spē consiliū & fortitudinis sup eū requiescit. quo hoc consilium apte patrē sine tēpore fuit ut uer bū suū incarnaret. sub tēpore psi ciens oīa opa sua secm uolumatē patris & ostendens obediemā ipse ipsū. ma ut ipsa de eo ad hoīes fulge ret quatenus eū ma infactis suis imi tari addisceremt. Q̄d diu ma appa ruit in fortissima uiri ordinate uolū tate pfortitudinē. qui obdurata s inconsue tudine prauoꝝ morū. ma ineptā

duricia ñ abuem. & d Qua ppter dine sacm mudine d cognoscam spi sacm ñ dulcedi ipse sacm tum. spes adsaluan ter ymor peccatu. Q recte adiu imagina tatē patri tus creatu geniū celes consortiū stimus ē. q me mardo & tum mo ramissim neo flore quit. qa

duriciā mansiens q̄d carnale opus
abiciē. & dī opus aptissime p̄ficiur:
Qua p̄pter & mp̄dicto flore fortiu
dinē sciemia commāt. quo hoīes p̄for-
tiudinē dī ad sciemiā ipsi' ita ut eū
cognoscant puenium. Hinc ē q̄d &
sp̄s sciemie & pietatis in eo erā p̄sup
nā dulcedinē requiē habuit. quo
ipse sciēt miserīs hominū condo
luit. spēs eiā existens p̄ quā inuitat
ad salutationē. cū sceleus mundi sciem
tiā p̄ morte suā abstersit in magna
pietate. Q̄d ē hoc. Sciemie pietas
recte aduungit. q̄a filī dī sciemie
in magna pietate adimplent uolun
tatē patris sui. Ipse enī filī' solus na
tus ex uirgine transfudit in p̄plos
gentiū celestis uirtutis ut sequant
consortiū angelox q̄d pudicicia ca
stimus ē. q̄a uirtus hec surrexit in sup
na pietate sic uidelicet q̄d ingredien
te uirga de esse uirtutes floris hui'
germinarent q̄s prima mulier fuga
uerat diu consensu audiens consiliū
serpentis. ita q̄d in ea cecidit omne
genus humanū carens gaudio sup
ne claritatis. in q̄d floriditas uirge
istius sciemie illud eleuauit p pietatē
in sēcitate saluationis. Quomodo.
fortitudini que diabolū deuincit
adherentē illi sciemiā sp̄s sēs inspi
rat. cū dr̄s p fideles hoīes deuotissi
me inardescib; desiderius agnoscit
eius mo tactu fidelis aīe deside
rantissime amplexat. S; & in uirgi
neo flore pietatē timor dñi subse
quit. q̄a cū pietas in ē fidelib; hoīb;
timorē dñi acquirit ad exp̄lenda
p̄cepta ipsi'. Vnde timor dñi eun
dē florē repleuit. q̄a ipse tantā ple
nitudinē uirtutū in se habuit q̄d
in eo nullus uacuus locus inuenit
ē ubi aut mortifera superbia aut de
lectatio honoris aut p̄uaricatio
legis sedē inuenire potuisset. S; to
tus plenus erat timoris dñi nīque
rem alienā rē ut primus angelus &
ita quesierit. S; honorans patrē
suū in omni ope suo digna ei p̄bēs
obediemiā. Ido & timor dñi inuiey
habet oīs iustitie q̄a ipse ē finis. &
in eū ceterarū uirtutū. ut requie
septima dies ostendit completionē
& ortū creaturarū. Quomodo. Ti
mor excutit & mouet tremorē.
qui radix ē germinandi ut fruc
tuose uirtutes p̄cedant. Vnde &
flos iste plenus timoris dñi ē. q̄a
oīa germina bonoꝝ op̄ū adherent
ei. quo ipse mater eox ē. Flore eode
germinante uiriditatē quarūcūq;
uirtutū. fructu earū p̄ceteris reple
to quamuis oīa bona p̄ficiat. ut
etiā de ipso scriptura sic habet. xvi.

Sicut malū int̄ ligna siluarū.
sic dilectus mis inter filios. Sub
umbra illi' quē desideraui sedi &
fructus ei' dulcis guttur meo. Hoc
tale ē. filī' uirginis dulcissimus ama
tor caste dilectionis. quē app̄hen
dit fidelis aīa desiderans dulcissi
ma ei' amplexione integritatē suā
coronare. relicto carnali uiro et
se copulans xp̄o. cuiq; certissimo

federe amans & inspeculo fidi aspi
ciens. ē pulcherrimus fructus fruc
tu fere arboris. id ē filii uirginis exi
ens de uirginali pudore sicut pomū
de fructuosa floriditate p̄bens q;
escā refectionis esurientib; & sycā
dulcedinis scientib; & hoc modo lig
na siluestria p̄cellens. id ē filios ho
minū q̄ in peccatis concipiunt & e
in ipsis conuersant nec tale fruc
tū afferentes quale ipse attulit
quō ado exiuit plenū fructū sua
mater afferens. alius quidē
nec uiriditatē nec fructū a se ipsis
habentib; s; ab ipso. Quom. Ipse p
incarnationē suā mundo saluato
nē dedit dilectus di filii in filios ho
minū apparens. qui p feruorē ipsi
uirebant & fructū afferebant s; nō
tanta plenitudine fecunditatis q̄nta
ipse repletus erat. q̄a totus sc̄s ado
exiens de uirgine natus ē. Et q̄re
dilectus. Quia ipse hoc conculcat.
q̄d fideli aīe a dcelestia p̄fatam ob
stitit. Vno & sc̄a aīa eq̄ssimo iudi
cio cū dilectū nuncupat. quō p̄fi
de dilectionis se ipsā relinquens.
& in magno certamine carnalium
uoluptatū a dilectō benuole anhe
lans atq; in ardore lacrimabilis
desiderii se ipsā reg̃bans et adhe
ret ut mulier uiro cui cū gaudio
uoluntatis sue desponsata ē. Et
ideo cū in exordio conseruande ca
stitatis a deū incipit suspirare. ad
se ipsā dicit. Volo p̄sternere car
nale uoluptatē in coniunctione
uiri illi. sub cui dilectionis umbra q̄
me ardore ardentis desiderii sui
a contrario igne obumbrauit sedeo.
Quomodo. Dū inebriatū studiū
inei amore habens. subiectū in
igneū ardis amorē in consensu aīe
mee p̄mo. Et ob hoc dulcissimus
fructus ei quē gustabā maia mea
suspirans addm dulcior. m. ē in ea
sup omnē dulcedinē carnis. quā
semel ebā in concupiscentia ipsius.
Et q̄re dulcis. Quō ipse ex uirgine
natus habet dulcissimū saporē &
fortissimū unguentū stillans ut bal
samū q̄d ē resurrecto ad uitā in
qua mortui erecti. s. ac continens
maximā medicinā que tersit uul
nera peccatorū p incarnationē ipsi.
que plenissima sentias & dulcedi
nis inomū genere uirtutū cū uirgi
nitate ē. Vnde o uirginitas que de
ignea accensione consistis. robustis
simū germē q̄d de stella maris emi
cans. omnē spurcitiā turpitudinis
contra seuissima iacula diaboli sēp
dimicans conculcat. gaude mecle
sti armonia inspe consortii angelo.
Quomodo. Spē sēs symphonizat in
tabernaculo uirginitatis. quō ipsa
uerbū di semp ruminat. Quom
possit xp̄m amplexari. cū omī de
uotione ardens inei amore hoc ha
bens in obliuione q̄d in concupis
centia carnis in ardore incendii
fragile in hoīe ē. cum uiro quē nū
quā peccatū tetigit adherens. cui
et sine omī concupiscentia carnis

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coniuncta ē. semp cū illo florens in gaudio regaliū nupciarū. Nunc autē qđ similitudinē impđictis uir- tutib; uidet. ita q̄d omīs ut & alie uir- tutes que supra ubi demonstratū ē uelim uestib; exserico induunt. hoc ē qđ in ordine suo pia unam mutat ē cade luminaria in mūdū. ho minū paratū. ēt quomodo rēdi que uir tutes. modo mollicie indum torū idē lenitatē deuocionis intē spechone scārū animarū uepribus; induricia uicioq; caremū habemus. qđ autē quedā albis crinib; retecto capite & asq; amictu pallioq; incē dunt. hoc ē. qđ ille incopula candoris immoculate ligaturā iunctur. pra uorū morū in mūdū. fideliū hominū nō habent. & qđ ceā sclāribus; studiis circūdare nō s. omīno fugientes uicis strudinē uicioq. S; pma a morte femi neo ē in capite uelata atq; q̄si casu la tanquā cristallus plucida indu ta. q̄a uinculū subiectionis humilit do subiecta portat supna eligere sol licitudine omnē exaltationē diabo licā. p̄sternens. prioq; capm idē xp̄o adherens. humillimū quoq; sacer- dotē & absq; omī puluere peccati purissimū in lucidissima cordis purtate immans quō constrich et humiles puriq; sacerdotes sūmi sacerdotis ē debent. S cda autē ni gros capillos habet. manifeste ostendens. qđ in capite suo xp̄o abstergit nigredinē peccatoꝝ in hoīb;. Tercia uero dissimilis humane formę ui dentur. quō hoc mysteriū habet. ut homīnē ita concumat. q̄tinus ū trat & tremiscat de dī iudicio. unde et speciē carēt hōis. q̄a homo sepe dm p̄ ponens sī mortis eius obliuiscit. qđ ip sa omino facere recusat. Prima q̄q. & q̄rta atq; q̄inta albis tunicis uesti unt. q̄a circūdare s uestē innocen tię quā adā p̄didit transgrediens pia mussionē p̄modū autē incandi dissimo lilio floridissime uirgini tatis cū indumo ope simplicis indo subiectionis recupata insaluationē. qđ amē dm lucet sicut clarissima stella humanis oculis ignescit. o s ceā alba calciamēta habent excepta ūcia scdm speciē hōis nō apparent. quō ipse pulcherrimū opus s in hoīb; qui desideria carnis inse ad nihilū deducunt iuxta exemplū sui saluatoris q̄d ē splendor splendi dissim. una earū hominē nō simulan te q̄a nō habet respectū ulli audacie semp sollicita & nō negligens ut ho qui sepi sumet p communionē obli uiscit ita dispensatrix existens in ste admonitionis. ut q̄sq; fidelis iudicū di caute imitat. & excep ta q̄rta que cristallinis calciamēis miro modo lucentib; calciat quō illa inuolumate sua se constringens pgit lucidissimū mer. xp̄i. ita mor tē ceā in semet ipsa pigneū ardorē spē sci suffocans. Q̄d autē inest de uirtutib; ē dissimilitudo. hoc ē qđ quāuis uni studii unanimita tē habeant tamē diuersa opa in

hominib; opam̄· Propt̄ qđ ea
ꝑma imago ꝑtendit humilitatē
quę prmittit filiū di manifestam̄-
cū dñs qui celū & t̄rā in sua habet
potestate filiū suū mittere ad t̄ras
ñ dedignatus ē· Vnde eā portat
coronā aurea capti suo imposā·
tres ramos alicui⁹ exeuntes habentē-
quō ipsa ceteras uirtutes ꝑcellens
et suauit̄ antecedens coronata ē co
rona aurea· scilicet ꝑciosissima et
fulgentissima incarnatione salua
toris· qui ea q̄si in capite· id ē in hoc
misterio cū incarnatus ē decorauit·
Que triangularis exist̄· q̄a trini
tas ē in unitate & unitas in trinitate·
filiꝰ scilicet cū patre & spū sco unꝰ
dñs & uerꝰ deus oia excellens in altitudi
ne diuinitatis· Et ꝑciosissimis la
pidib; uiridis & rubea coloris & al-
bis baccis multo fulget ornatu· quō
eadē humanitas saluatoris ostēdit
se altissimā & profundissimā
bonitatē suā opis q̄d ide filiꝰ di
opatus ē in mundi tate illa cū uir-
tutes ia indoctrina eiꝰ uirebant·
et in rubore sanguinis ipsius cū
morte passus ē in cruce saluans
hominē· atq; inclarissima albedi
ne resurrectionis & ascensionis eiꝰ·
cū quib; omnib; illuminata & or-
nata ē eccla ut res illa illustrat̄ &
decorat̄ cui ꝑciosi lapides impo
nunt̄· Qđ aut̄ in pectore suo ha
bet speculū lucidissimū in quo
mira claritate imago incarnati
filii di appareat· hoc ē qđ in hum
anitate quę in corde sacrati tēpli ē· in
beatissima et splendidissima secreta
pie & humillime ac splendide firmis
sime q; effulsit ide unigenitus di in
omnib; opib;· suis quę corporalit̄ ges
sit· in quib; se mundo ꝑcipue mani
festauit· Vnde eā & ipsa illustrio
ri parte corda electox fideliū con
signat meis tribunal suū ponens os
actus ipsoꝝ uidelicet regens & diri
gens· q̄a solidissimū fundamentū
omniū bonoꝝ in hoib; ē· uelim eā
in supradicta magna admonitione
sua ostendit· Sed secta designat
carnatē· quō p humilitatē illa qua
filiꝰ di incarnari dignatus ē ostensa
ē eā uera et ardentissima caritas ca
rnatis· cū dñs ita dilexit hominē ut
ꝓpt̄ ipsius amorē unigenitū suū
mitteret incarnandū· Quę tota uidet̄
uitta cinctus aerei multo coloris ui
delicet tā forma quā tunica ipsius·
qua incarnatus di filiꝰ phumanita
tē suā illustrauit fideles & celestes
hoies ut res illa praecinctū illustrat̄
cui imponit̄· ita eos eā incendens
caritate ut unicuiq; homini in di
gentia fidelit̄ subueniant· sic & uirt⁹
hec indut̄ tunica dulcedinis di· hoc
habens officiū· q̄tenus in deuocione
actu & usu omib; hoib; in recto lumi
ne luceat· Ꝑter· qđ eā eide tunice
duę zone in estimabili modo auro
& gemis ornate mirabilit̄ innexte s·
quę s in dulcedine di gemina ꝑcep
ta caritatis bona scilicet & perpua uo
luntate q̄si & auro iustis opib; uelu

ti clarissimus gñis mirabili dono sũm
datoris cõposita ita ut sup utrũq; hu
merũ eide imaginis zona una usq;
adpedes ipsius antr & retro descen
dat· quo eade pcepta immutta soli
citudine portat· unũ scilicet indo
ut inhumero dextro & alterũ in sx
umo ut inhumero sinistro scriptũ ē·
Diliges dñm dm tuũ extorto corde
tuo & extota aĩa tua & exoĩb; uiri
bus tuis & exomĩ mẽte tua· et pximũ
tuũ sicẽ te ipsũ· Hoc tale ē· Sic debes
diligere dñm dm tuũ q; dñs tuus ē·
uidelicet hoc honore q̃d dñatur oĩ
creature· & ds tuus qa ipse ē nhabens
similiũ s; creator omniũ existens·
ita ut ppẽ amorẽ ei in corde tuo pri
mũ excupes & pternas carnẽ corpo
ris tui q̃d ipsi ualde durũ ē· qa pri
mũ deuicta carne p modũ regnabit
spẽ tuus mẽte· & tẽ dm manuma tua
sic intelliges ut mandata ei sciens
custodias atq; ea ñ pigro ope cpleas·
Et deinde hoc modo omis uires cor
poris & anime tue subiciunt· quo
hec prima uictoria in corpore tuo
facta ē· ita ut tẽ in omĩb; his pposi
tis causis dm fortissime in tua mẽte
cõphendas q̃d t tã firmũ ppugna
culũ ē contra insidias inimicoꝝ tuoꝝ·
ita ut formidinẽ ei in pdictis reb;
nullus ptransire ualeat inimicus·
qua mens tua oĩa hec continere
debet in se confirmans & consoli
dans cuncta que agis· Hec g facies
toto corde tota aĩa & omĩb; uiri
bus tuis & exomĩ mẽte tua· ita ut nichil
deficiat tibi in fide· q̃tinus ñ con
sentias ulli rei que repugnat do
te diuidens in aliena· s; ut colligas
te ad dulcedinẽ dilectionis ei· dili
gens & te ipsũ· Quom· Si diligis
dm· diligis salutẽ tuã· Et sicẽ te in
his omĩb; te diligis· sic diliges & pxi
mũ tuũ· qui q̃sq; fidelis homo ē t
pximus existens in xpiano noĩe ac
in fide· ita ut sic gaudeas in dei recta
pspitate & supna saluatione ut fi
deliter in fide conseruẽ· sicut etiã
letaris de tua salute· Hoc g gemi
nũ opus carnatus sit in hoĩe des
cendens usq; ad pedes ei idẽ ad fi
nẽ consũmationis ante ipsũ seili
cet apparens in lege di & retro in
hoĩs uidelicet subuentione· ut &
homo sic carnatẽ secũdũ quatuor
ui recta morte pueniat ad pfectio
nẽ ute· sicẽ etiã eade carnas supi
nis uerbis suis declarat· Tertia
autẽ imago significat tumorẽ
dñi· qui post hanc carnatẽ quã
ds hoib; manifestauit cũ filiũ
suũ pipsis mortẽ subire uoluit
in memb; fidelium surrexit· ita
ut celestia plenius intelligerent
& pfectiũ quã prius adimplerent·
quã nunc uides in eo dẽ seemate
habitu ut in priori uisione eã au
disti· quo incõmutabilis ds simi
li & ñ dissimili honore & reueren
tia habendus ē in omni factura
et creatura ipsius· ut & supi
declaratũ ē· Est quoq; maioris
ac longioris stature quã cete

uirtutes dissimilisq; humane forme
qua ipsa pceteris angustiā extremo
rē infert hoib; na ut magnitudi
nē sume maiestatis et altitudinē xxxj
diuinitatis ipsius pspicacib; oculis
semp considerando pauescant
quo dē omnib; hominib; multa ue
nerationē meminerit ē. qa abipso
et nō a alio creatu s. Unde eiā eadē
uirtus speciē hoīs nō habet. qa con
tradictionē illā ut do nō male factis
resistat ut supdictū ē abiecit figens
tamē unūquēq; cognitionē suā in
dīm. pgensq; rectissima munera uo
luntatis ipsius. Ido et plurimos ocu
los undiq; in se habet tota insapien
tia uidens. qa poculos boni intel
lectus ubiq; se circūspicit. dīm intu
endo inomnib; mirabilib; ei. ut in xxxij
bonis opib; rectū in habeat et imma
nis confusionē diaboli pcognitionē
dī pretranseat. oīs tali modo insapi
entia fulgens et iniquitatē relinquēs.
atq; sapientē domū sibi munita edi
ficans. Induta ē quoq; qsi umbro
so indumento pqđ idē oculi pspicu
itat. qa circūdata ē ualidissima
constrictione frangens desideria
carnis in hoīb; et aspiciens pcaudē
abstinentiā in luū ut in quo mi xxxiij
rifice fulget homo in beatitudine.
Ultroq; ut mere tremit coram me
quo angustiā et extremorē ponit
in cordib; ignitos hominū. ita ut
turbinē et fragilitatē carnis suę
semp habeant in pauore ne uelabant
in peccatis. et ne fiduciā suā in semet
ipsos aut in alios hoīes ponant s; in
eū q regnat in eui uelum etiā ipsa
ut supradictū ē inquietudinis suā
confitet. Quarta uero declarat
obedientiā. quo p timorē illū qui in
reuerentia exhibet pceptis etiā in
eis congrue obedit. Unde et nuciū un
cultū collū portat. qa candidissimas
facit mētes hominū p subiectionē fi
delis obedientis. cū ubiq; fortitudi
nē colli uoluntatis sue deserit et in no
ua agno scilicet filio meo adhereat.
Itaq; manus et pedes candido religa
mine habet ligatas. quo ad opus
xpi et ad uiā ueritatis in albedine
uere fidei ligata ē. nō faciens neq; ua
dens secūm se s; secūm uocē pfidelis
dī. ut etiā in pdictis uerbis suis de
monstrat. Quinta autē designat
fidē. qa p hanc obedientiā qua pplis
pceptis meis obedit mandatu fit
etiā credulus in fide. et a fidelit com
plens inope que sollerter pcipit mad
monitione. Et hec circa collū rubeā
torquē habet. quo undiq; in fortu
dine sua fidelit pseuerans martyr
io sanguinis decorat. fiduciā suā
nō in fallaces animas ponens s; in
do. secūm qđ et ipsa de se ut supra
ostensū ē declarat. Sexta uero p
figurat spē. que p fidē credendi in
dīm surgit ad uitā nitida nō habita s;
in celestib; usq; ad tēpus pcenue re
munerationis celata. ad quā eadē
spes tota desiderio anhelat ut mer
cennarius ad mercedē suā. et ut pu
er ad debitā sibi hereditatē.

Unde ena tunica pallidi coloris in
duit·qa fiducia opis sui q̄si in pallo
re circūdat cū n̄ du in p̄senti remu
nerata ē·ſ; ad q̄d semp gemitib; suspi
rat hoc futuru multa fanguinone ex
pectat·Quod autē crux passionis
crucifixi filii mei amice ea inuere ap
paret ad quā ipsa oculos & manus
cū multa deuocione erigit·hoc ē qd
ad martyriū eiꝰ de unigenti mei ce
lesti desiderio q̄si inuere plurimā fi
duciā in mitib; fideliū parat·ita ut
adeū in mōrē usū fidei & clarissima
opa sua laboris humili & sincera in
tentione erigant·sicut & uirtus ead
supius ostendit in oratione sua·:xx·iij·
Sed sepuma p̄tendit castitatē quō
p̄ quā hoīes spē suā plenit posu
erint in dīm·crescit meis p̄fectū opus·
ita qd se incipiunt a carnalib; desi
deriis constringere in castitate que
in flore carnis acutissime sentit ab
stinentiā·ut iuuencula scilicet sen
tit ardorē concupiscentie nolens ta
men in uirtū respicere·Sic castitas ab
icit omnē spurciciā in pulcherrimis
desideriis·anhelans ad dulcissimū
amatorē suū qui ē suauissimꝰ & a
mantissimꝰ odor omniū bonoꝝ in
delicius cunctarū uirtutū uirtutis
constantie ab amatoribus suis aspi
ciendus in tori pulchritudine. aīe
Unde & ipsa lucidiore & puriore
cristallo tunica uestit·que ita in
candore relucet ut a qua resplen
det cū sole p̄fundit·quia luci
dissima in simplici intentione
& purissima absq; omi puluere ar
dentis libidinis concupiscentiarū
mirabilit confortata p̄ spm scm cir
cūdata ē ueste innocentie lucentis
inclarissima albedine formis aque
uiue·qui ē splendidissimus sol ei⁹ me
clarmatis·Qd uero sup caput ei⁹ ex
pansis q̄si aduolandū alis colūba
stat·uersa sedm faciē illi⁹·hoc ē qd
castitas inimicio suo uelut in capite
suo p̄ expansionē & obumbrationē
alarū ideſt p̄ protectionē spūs sci con
fortata ē faciens ea diabolicarū insi
diarū uicissitudinē transuolare·
cū pigneū amorē sce inspirationis
illuc se dirigens aspicit·ubi castitas
uultū dulcedinis sue manifestat·
Pter·qd apparet ena quasi imen
te ipsius uelum in speculo candi
dissimus infans·cui⁹ fronti inscrip
tū ē innocentia·quō inuisceribus pu
rissime & candentissime uirtutis
huius ē inuiolabilis & pulcherri
ma ceruicis integritas·habens
rudē formā p̄pter integritatē sim
plicis infancie·sic & frons idē cog
nito ei⁹ n̄ arrogantia & elatā sup
biā·s; simplicē ostendit innocen
tiā·Et q̄d in dextera manu regale
sceptū habet sinistrā ad pectus suū
ponens·hoc ē q̄d in dextera salua
tionis p̄filii dī regē cunctoꝝ uita
manifestata ē in castitate·sinistrā
libidinis p̄cunde p̄pugnatorē con
fundente & ad nichilū redigente
in cordib; ea diligentiū·Quomodo.
Qua n̄ uult libidini ullā dimittē

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re libertatē·ſ; ut aceꝛ uoluceꝛ pu
tridū cadauer rapiens conſtringit
& ad nichilū deducit·ſic ipſa libi
dinē coꝛā dō feꝛentē abicit & omīno
conteꝛit ita ut nec ſub ea ſpiꝛare ua
leat·ſedm q̄d etiā inuerbis ſuis ſup
xcv. manifeſtat· Sed q̄d inſūmitate
pfatę obumbratę colūnā alią pul.
cheꝛrimā imaginē uidet·hoc ē q̄d
ſūma & pcellentiſſima pietate om
nipotentis in ipſa incarnatione ſal
uatoꝛis ſplendidiſſima pietate om
nipotentis incarnatione ſaluato
ꝛis ſplendidiſſima uiꝛtus ſcilicet
gr̄a dī manifeſtata ē·quę foꝛtiſſi
ma plenitudo exiſtit in dō moueꝛis
homines penitentią agere·ut pēa
relaxentē abipſis ppetrate neq̄cię·
Quę nudo capite ſtat·q̄a omīb;
eā queremb; apta ē dignitas & cla
ritas ipſius·criſpos & ſubnigros
capillos habens·quō unigenitus dī
ſubtortuoſo & implexo inuigꝛe
dine infidelitatis ſue iudaico po
pulo·humanitate abſq; macula
peccati in uirginea carne induit
ſe·Et faciē uiꝛile habet tamē aꝛ
dentis claritatis·ut eā pſpicue con
ſideꝛare nō poſſis ut faciē hoīs·q̄a
gr̄a dī inuultuoſa uiꝛtute omīpus
dans uitā in uita apparuit·ita aꝛ
dens in clariſſima diuinitate·ut
omnē uiſū tā in mōꝛtē quā eternē
hoīs excedat dū adhuc grauedi
ne coꝛporali grauat̄·nec ita apta
in ſecretis ſuis apparens·ut iudi
cio hominū nuda appaꝛeat·ſ; ab
ſconſa·q̄a iudicia diuine gr̄ę occul
tant ſ·Q̄d autē ē purpurea & ſubni
gri coloꝛis tunica induta·hoc ē q̄d
opus gr̄ę di ardens incaꝛnate ſe in
clinat ad nigredinē peccatoꝛ·q̄ſi in
dignū hominū·Quom̄·ita q̄d mo
uet illos ad ſalutē eoꝛ·leuans deuo
peccati ad ſpectaculū luminis ppe
nitentię·quō ut dies fugat tenebras·
ſic ipſa aufert facinoꝛa reedifican
do in penitentia peccatoꝛes ad uitā·
Cui etiā ſup utꝛūq; humeꝛū eiꝰ de
imaginis·Zona una coloꝛis rubi
cundi etheꝛei ante & ꝛetro uſq; ad
pedes eiꝰ se extendens intexta ē·q̄a
gr̄a dī se inclinans ad fideles hoīes
infoꝛtunidine & pietate ſua·leuat
eos ſurſū ad celeſtia·Quom̄·Hoc ē
his duob; muneꝛib;·Zonaꝛū·tangens
uidelicet anxietatē fragilis caꝛnis
in ſanguinea pugna deſudamus·
& uirtutē roboꝛis aię in eōpe uepen
tis & tꝛahens eos in rubeo & in eroceo
ſplendoꝛe humanitatis & diuinita
tis filii dī·ſcilicet ſeꝛenissimi ſolis ad
amoꝛē ſup nos·ita ut ſibimet ipſi
inconcupiſcentia peccati fidelis
homo reſiſtat in imitatione gr̄ę
tachis uidelicet coꝛā ſe aduersantis
& p̄ ſe admoꝛtificationē uicios
quatin̄ utilit̄ bono fine conſūmet
opa ſua in diuinis meis exoptabili
et delectabili textura·S; q̄d circa
collū habet epiſcopale palliū mira
bili modo auro & p̄cioſiſſimis gē
mis adoꝛnatū·hoc ē q̄d xp̄e filiꝰ
dī ſūmꝰ ſacerdos patriſ exiſtens·

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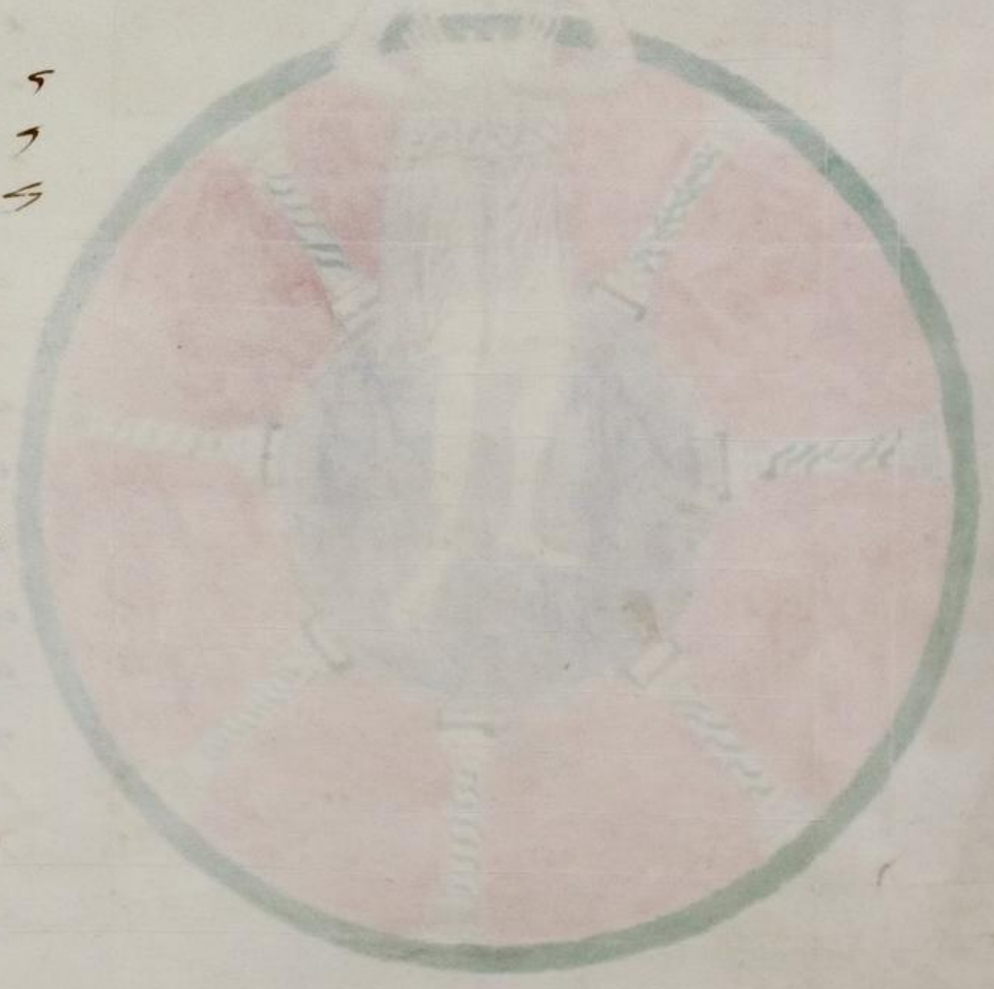
ubiq; in fortissima uirtute sacerdota
le habet officiū. qđ auro sapiēcie & ge
mis uirtutū abimitatorib; ipsius
mēbris eorundē fideliū suoq; pgām
di debet decorari. Vnde & splendor
candidissim' ita eā ubiq; circūdat. ut
nusquā nisi in amēa capite uidelicet
& deorsū usq; ad pedes eī ipsā inspice
re possis. quō serenissimo candore
mīdie. omīpotis gīā ipsius circūdata
ē que in misterio diuinitatis uirtutu
actus tēporib; ante humanitatē salua
toris inuisibilis et incognita latuit.
tamē abeide saluatoris incarnatio
ne ita usq; ad ultimū mēbroq; ipsius
qui circa finē scli futurus ē q̄si hu
mano intellectu possibile ē apcius
inotib; suis manifestata declarat.
S; brachia & manus anq; pedes ipsius
ubi aduidendū obumbrat s. quia
fortitudo & opus anq; finis misteris
grē di in hominib; nulli grauato
corpore adcognoscendū plenius
appareat. Qđ uero splendor q̄ eā
circūdat oculis undiq; plenus
est totusq; uidens. hoc ē qđ diuina
mīdia grē di adiuncta. multas in
serationes oculoq; plurimarū mīdia
rū suarū ostendit. indolores homi
nū aspicientes q̄ dīm sequi deside
rant. omīsq; uidens inconsolatione
et insaluatione animarū ipsoq;.
nullo mō patans uideſ pdmonē s; ui
tā. Atq; hac & illac se diffundit ut
nubes diffluere solet. quō p̄cedit in
stos ut sibi p̄uideant ne cadant. sub
sequens peccatores ut poeniteant. &
resurgant omnib; ipsā querentib;
celesti dono se manifestans. ita ut
nunc lacrimē nunc autē constricho
rē se reddat. q̄a inmiserius & plan
gentib; cordib; fideliū. aliq̄ndo
multa fructuositate exuberat. ali
quando eā in flagitiosis & duris
mentib; peccatoq; se contrahens ppt̄
aridinatē illoq; Propt̄ qđ eā ipsa
p̄cedit & subsequit̄. tangit & mo
net hoīes ut p̄dictū ē. quatinus q̄
filii di eē desiderant uerba eī ar
denter suscipiant. & suscipientes
compleant caduca scilicet contem
nentes & mansura cōplectentes. sic
et ipsa uirtus in superiore exhorta
tione sua filios di alloquit̄. Qui
autē acutas auris interioris intellec
tus habet. hic ardente amore
speculi mei aduerba hec. anhelet.
et ea inconscientia animi sui con
scribat.



Nona vilio tcie partis.

Post hec uidi ultra
pfatā colūnā humanitatis
saluatoris turrim lucidis
simi splendoris pdicto la
pideo muro meridiane
plage eide edificii ma m
positā· ut ima & foras
ipsū edificiū uideri pos
set· tamudimis quidē ubiq; minimorū
parte circumis sui q̄q; cubitor· tan
te aiē altitudinis ut eā discernere ne
quirē· S; & int̄ turrim istā & colūnā
humanitatis saluatoris fundamentū
solūm erat positū· muro ñ diu desup
edificato· s; tamē int̄rupus & uacu
us locus apparens longitudinis erat
cubiti uni· inter eā supra p̄monstra
tū ē· Et turris hec ñ diu fuerat
adplenū edificata· multa tamē soller
cia & uelocitate p plurimos operarios
assidue construebat· habens mer
cuiū summitatis sue septē ppugna
cula mira formositate constructa·
Abinfiore aiē parte p̄dicti edifici·
uidi quasi scalā usq; ad eacuī tur
ris eide erectā & abiuno usq; ad sūmū
ingradib; eiq̄ quandā multitudinē ho
minū flammū igneas facies & alba ue
stimenta s; nigra caligiosa habentiū·
et int̄ eos aliq̄s similis quidē secum·

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ſ; maioris ſtature & ſplendoris: ipſa turrim multa diligentia uidemus. Deinde in ſeptentrionali plaga eiꝰdē edificii uidi mundū & homines q̄de ſemine ade, pertam̄: inter p̄dictū lucidū murū ſpeculamue ſeremue ipſius edificii & ambitū circuli q̄de ſedentes inuicem pendebant discurrentes: ex quib; multi idē edificii intē turrim p̄curſus uoluntatis dei & columnā diuinitatis uerbi ipſius: p p̄fatū murū ſpeculamue ſeremue intrando & exeundo transibant: ut nubes hac & illac diffundit̄. S; qui ipſū edificiū intrabant: candidiſſima ueſte induebantur. Quoꝝ alii de ſuauitate & lenitate eiꝰdē uestis gaudio magno lenificati: ea reti nebant: alii autē q̄ſi de grauedine & difficultate eiꝰ triſtes effectus illā exuere uolebant. Quos benigne uultus hec quā ſeremā dei pridē nominari audierā: ſepius conpescens: unicuiq; eoꝝ dicebat: Conſidera & cuſtodi ueſtē: q̄ indutus es: Iſtidiq; quod q̄dā eoꝝ his uerbis caſtigatus: quā uis idē indumē tū ipſis difficile uideret̄: illud tam cū multo ſudore retinebant: quidā uero eadē uerba ſubſannantes. ueſtēq; ipſā furioſe exuentes abiecerit: ad mundū redeuntes unde uenerāt: multaq; p ſeruantes: multa inutilia ſclariū uanitatū didicerit: Quoꝝ alii unde edificii tandē reuerſi ueſtē q̄m abiecerant nerū uolentes ſibi induebant: alii autē reuertu nolentes: ea de nudati inmundo ignominioſe remanebant. Et uidi q̄d q̄dā ſordidiſſimi & nigerrimi quaſi p̄uſanitā exentati abaquilone uenientes in ipſū edifi cii currebant: turrimq; p̄fatā bachan do inuadentes: inter ſe ut ſerpentes ſibi labant: Ex quib; quidā ab hac ſtulti cia ceſſantes mundi effectu ſ: alius in eadē nequicia & ſorde ſua p ſeuerantib; S; & intra idē edificiū conſpexi uerſus eandē turrim q̄ſi ſepē albi co loris marmoreas columnas: inmira rotunditatē ornatas ſtantes: altitudi nis ſepē cubitoꝝ: & inſūmitate ſua quaſi ferreū & rotundū habentes ta bulatū: decent̄ aliq̄ multū in altitudi nē ſurſū erectū: In cacumine autē eiꝰdē tabulati uidi q̄ſi pulcherrimā imaginē ſtantē: & ad boies inmundū aſpicientē: cuiꝰ caput uelut fulgur tanto nitore radiabat: ut illud ad plenā nō poſſē conſiderare: Et manꝰ ad pectuſ ſuū reuerenter cōpoſue rat: pedib; ipſius in eodē tabulato mihi adiudendū occultatus: Circulū autē inmodū coronę multo fulgen tē ſplendore habebat in capite: S; et tunica aurei coloris induebat̄: in qua a pec tore deorſū uſq; ad pedes: Zona una deſcendens: p̄cioſiſſimarū gē marū ornatu: uiridis ſcilicet albi et rubei atq; aerei purpureo fulgo re mixte lucentis coloris decorabatur: Et clamabat ad boies q̄ in mundo erant dicens: O tardi: cur nō uenitis: Nonne ſuccurrere uobis: ſi ue nire uelletis: cū ceperitis uiā dei cur rere: culices & muſce ſtrepitu ſuo uobis impedimento ſ. S; uos flabellū

p̄ma

inspirationis spē sēi accipitē·& eas
a uobis q̄mo cius abigitē·Vobis cur
rendū ē·& ado uobis ē eā aduu
uandū·Adseruiciū di ñ ficte uos
exhibeat·& confortabimini mani
ipsius· S; in pauimō ipsius edificiī
tres alias imagines uidi·q̄rū una
pfatis colūnis accliuis erat·& reli
que due antē ipsā sibi collateralis
stabant se oīs ad colūnā humani
tatis saluatoris & ad pfatā turrī
dirigentes·Que autē ipsis colūnis
accliuis erat tante latitudinis ap
paruit ut latitudo q̄nq; hominū
sibi astantiū notari posset·tante
autē p certanis ut longitudinē ei'
pfecte discernere ñ ualerē·ita eā
qd pomne hoc edificiū pspiceret·
magnū eā capitē & claros oculos
habens·acutissime inclitū uidebat·
ora candida & plucida existens·
ut serenissima nubes ē·Alia autē
formā hois mea nullā conspexi·
Et pronū edificiū adoīs reliquas
turritis clamauit dicens·
—ōs strenue surgamus·q̄a
lucifer tenebras suas pomnē mun
dū diffundit·& dificemus turres
& confirmemus eas celestib; ppug
naculis·quō idē diabolus aduer
sarius & repugnator ē electox di-
Qui ut primitus plurimū uoluit
& tēptauit in sua claritate·sic eā
nē plurimū uult & tēptat in sua
tenebrositate·Nā malicia & neq̄
cia sua sufflando & spargendo
dilatat·nec ab hoc cessare uult·

Aduersū hec uos celestes milites su
mus ponite·in malicia & nequicia
sua illū superare·alioq̄n hoīes pillus
aduersitate ñ possēt in mundo sal
uari·Et ut ipse in p̄mo ortu suo re
pugnare tēptauit diuinitati·sic eā
imitator ei' antixpe in nouissimo
tēpore resistere tēptabit incarnato
ni dñi·Lucifer cecidit in nucio tem
porū·antixpe quoq; corruet in fine
cox·Tunc q̄s uerus dūs sit cognoscet·
& quis sit qui nūquā cecidit inde
bit·Vt autē lucifer sectatores habu
it demones qui eū a bahumidine ce
li subsecuti s incasū damationis·
sic & adhuc habet hoīes inīa qui eū
subsequunt ad interitū p dictionis·
S; nos uirtutes ponite sum' contra
astucias & exsufflationes ipsius·q̄s
emittit in mundū ad absorbendū
aīas·ita q̄d oīs artes ei' ad nichilū
p nos in animab; iustox redigant·
quatinus ex omī parte confusus ap
pareat·Vnde & p nos dūs agnoscet·q̄a
ñ debet occultari·s; manifestari·quō
iustus ē in omib;·Prior autē illarū
que ante hanc imaginē sibi collate
rales stabant·armata uidebat·
galea scilicet lorica ocreis·ac ferreis
cruribus induta·tenens ita eā imagi
nātū gladiū dextra·hastā autē si
nistra·Et subpedib; suis horribilē
draconē conculcans os illi' ferro ha
ste transuerberabat·ita ut idē in
mundissimas spumas euomeret·S;
& gladiū quē tenebat·q̄si ad feri
endū fortit ubrabat·Et dixit·

fortissime dñs·q̄s potest tibi resi
stere & repugnare· Hoc ñ potest
serpens antiquus·ille draco diaboli
cus· Unde & ego tuo auxilio illi re
pugnare uolo·ita ut nullus m̄ pñ
leat aut me deiciat·nec fortis scelicet
aut debilis·nec princeps aut abiect?
nec nobilis aut ignobilis·nec diues
aut pauꝑ· Ego fortissima calipsē
uolo oīa arma ad bella dī apta fa
cies inuictissima·inquib; eā ē
uolo acutissima·quō nullus me
pfringere potest in fortissimo dō·
pquē eā surripi addeuicendū dia
bolū· Unde & fragilitatē hominū sēp
certissimū ero refugiū·dans molli
cie ipsōꝝ incidentē aciē addefen
dendū se· O suauissime & pissime dñe·
adiuua conantes· Altera uero ima
go ut ceps erat·ita ut immanitati loco
capitis & ūtro q; humero suo capite
appareret·medio tamē aliq̄mulū
sup eminente· Sed ide mediū & qd
ad cuius ei erat tanto fulgore radi
abant ut claritas ipsōꝝ uisū meū
reuerberaret·ita qd inter ū utrūlē an
muliebrē formā haberem pfecte
considerare ñ ualeā·illo autē qd
a sinistris apparebat aliq̄mulū
obscuro & muliebri consuetudine
candido uelamine uelato· Tunica
uero ex albo serico eade imago in
duta fuerat·& candidissimis calci
amentis· Et in pectore suo signū cru
cis habebat·circa qd erā splendor
magnus meo de pectore uelut au
rora fulgens rutilabat· Inde extra

·13· aut̄ nudū tenebat gladiū·quē
pectori suo & eade cruci cū multa
deuocione apposuit· Et undi in
frontē medii capitis scripū·scīas
& in fronte dextri radix boni·& in
fronte sinistri·ñ parcens sibi· Et me
diū ad alia duo aspiciens dicebat·
rior· de scā humilitate· In ipsa
nata sū·ut infans nascēt̄ imma
ne· Ipsū eā educata & confortata
sū·ut pnutrice puer· enutrīt̄ ad
fortitudinē· O aī mea humilitas p
transire & supare oīa contraria·
que alis eā intolerabilia s̄· Et
capitur qd ad dextera ei erat·respi
ciens ad capitur pncipale ante·
go in primo ortu radico in
monte excelsi culminis·qd
dñs ē· Et ido o scīas ut stare possis·
oportet ut adhereā uiscerib; tuis·
Qd aut̄ ad leuā ipsius stabat·eā
ade pncipale capitur sui ūdens
dixerat· Ue·ue·ue·q̄m tā rigi
da & tā inflexibilis sū·qd me tā
uix supare possū·o scīas ad tuū aux
ilū·q̄a sine me stare ñ poteris si
fugero· Ach ach ach bonū negli
gentē·q̄a me tam̄ oportet inquie
tissimā spiā eradicare·que me
pungendo conat̄ ad pdicionē in
pellere·si eā ñ eruero aute quā in
me tota dimergat̄·& ante quā ue
lut̄ in putrido cadauere inme
con foueat̄· o scīas ut libere p seue
rare possis ante·rapacissimū dia
boli laqueū deuitare uolo·& eū
diruꝑe uero dō· Et ita ū q̄se

debat. mst mun dicens. Incarna
w di filio uocamo nou ppli p doctri
nā ipsius mspū scō ad salutationē
sublcuata surgens. confortatione
urtuosq; hominū in exhortatione xv.
beatarū urtutū munita aduersus
mmanissimū hostē cui nullus ho
mmū resistere ualet nisi grā di
adiutus. se inexpugnabilē di ad
uersario exhibet. ut nulla arte insi
diarū ei euelli aut deleri possit xvi.
ado. Vnde et turris hec quā undes
ulta p̄fatā colūnā humanitatis
saluatoris. p̄figurat ecclām que
filii mei incarnatione cōpleta
noua construcio mom̄i bono ope et
orta ē. in fortitudine et altitudine
celestiū actuū ut munitissima turris
ad resistendū iniquitati opposita
diabolo. Qua ppt̄ et lucidissimi xvii.
splendoris ē p̄dicto lapideo muro
meridiane plage eide edificati ta
m posita. ut intra et foras ipsū edi
ficiū uideri possit. qa serenissima
luce humanitatis filii di illustrata.
uuemes lapides p calorē spūs sci hoc
modo succensos in duumo ope ha
bet. ut et mnōri scientie scriptura
rū celestis intellectus ac exōri stul
titie sclārū rerū. nec ñ fidelib; et
infidelib; medificatione illa quā
sumus pat̄ p nigenitū suū op at̄.
apte demonstret. Et tamudi xix.
nis quidē ubiq; mnōri parte car
cumus sui q̄nq; cubitos ē. quo am
plitudinē oīs intime inspechomis
et intentionē w ceus communē me

dinationis p̄gnq; sensus sui ornat
infusione spūs sci cū omnib; iustis
illis qs uerus agnus ei manifestat.
ad honorē ei de agni ut decet spon
si sui remunt. Tanq; autē abundi
dus appareat ut eā discernere ne
quat. q̄a maior abundo et p fun
dras diuine sapientie et scientie in
ecclāstico ope ē. quā cor humanū
fragile et mortale p̄ seruari possit
sua estimatione. Sed q̄d unt turrī
istā et colūnā humanitatis saluato
ris fundamentū sublimodo ē posit
muro ñdū desup edificato. s; tamē
unq; uptus et uacuus locus apparens.
longitudinis cubiti unī. ut t. etā sup
p̄monstratū ē. hoc ē q̄d de ecclā inde
sponsatione filio meo aduincta. mag
nū adhuc p̄conū inscientia di q̄si
infirmo fundamento occultatū manet.
q̄d ñ dū in cōpleto ope p fectionis p
palatū resplendet. s; sine aptione in
humanis cordib; uacat. longitudi
nis tamē uni hōis quo sensus hominū
in potestate uni ueri et omnipotis di s.
nta q̄d etiā homo inscientia boni et
mali p intellectū suū potest capere q̄d
sibi utilis sit. ut et ubi apta ostensio
ne supra manifestatū ē. Et q̄d tur
ris hec ñ dū ē ad plenū edificata.
multa tamē sollertia et uelocitate
p plurimos operatos assidue construi
tur. hoc ē q̄d ea de ecclā ad curstū
et ad statū illū, p̄uenit ad q̄ uen
tura ē. quātus multa sollicitudine
et industria p cedentiū labentiū re
porū immanitatib; et supuenientib;

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filius suus comudie sine dilamone adef
fectū decoris sui ꝑpare nō cesset. xiij.
Habet tamē mercatus sūmanus sue
septē ꝑpugnacula mira fortitu
dine constructa. quō circūdata ē mecl
situdine celestiū opū septē inexpug
nabilib; domus sei spē. que tante ur
bis existūt. ut nullus aduersarī
ca possit destruere. uel ꝓfunditatē
mūrus sue adeo supbe ualeat ꝓmgere.
Quod autē abnīmore parte pdic xiij
n edificen uides q̄si scala usq; ad
cacumē turris eiusdē ecclē.
hoc ē q̄d inopē illo qd̄ supnus pater
unduuno consilio ꝓfiliū suū opatus
ē multa unanimitate gradus flo
rentes unsimplicitate constitutionis
ecclāstice ꝓcessionis s̄ ad altitudinē ce
lestiū secretoꝝ ꝓpungentes. inquib; eccla
consortata ⁊ roborata consistit. Et ab
uno usq; ad sūmū i gradib; ei⁹ quecūq;
multitudo hominū stat. q̄a a ꝑmis
tēporib; desponsationis eiusdē ecclē
usq; ad nuptiale tēpus illud cū ipsa
agne cū sponso suo in pleno numero
filioꝝ suoꝝ gaudebit. in gradib; constitu
tionis p̄ceptoꝝ dei cū quib; ipsa edi
ficata ē. lucebunt aplica luminaria.
eā a tenebris infidelitatis sua tuitio
ne defendentia. Vnde eiā ignea. xvij
facies ⁊ alba uestimēta s; nigra calcia
menta habent. quō intellectuali
sensu eoꝝ idē aplicoꝝ rectoꝝ spectabi
lis fides credere scilicet unumū dīm
patrē sei spē in ipsis q̄si facies ac
censa ē. ita q̄d ⁊ ꝑ purissimā claritatē in uestē bonoꝝ opū coruscō ⁊ celeō
resplendueret. nigris tamē induūtis
pedū apparentes. q̄a tenera infidelita
tis ⁊ sordis multiplicū scelerū in
credulos ꝑfidos ꝓtransierit. q̄s suo ex
emplo aduersū iustitie quāuis multa
diffultate tamē conuertentes ꝓduxerit.
Sed q̄d inter eos aliq̄ similis q̄dē xv.
sceptatus s; maioris statute ⁊ splen
doris appareat. hoc ē qd̄ int eos dē
ecclāsticos defensores ꝑmu fundato
res ipsius ecclē s. qui eā primū post
filiū dei sua ꝑdicatione edificantes.
eundē q̄dē tenorē habent quē ⁊
sequaces eoꝝ qui eos ꝑcipue imitari
noscunt. quō secdm hoc ut illi ꝑcesse
runt sic isti subsecuti s. eā tamē forma
ꝑstantes. q̄a ipsi nullū aliū ꝑdecessorē habebant a q̄ exemplū noue gr̄e
traherent. ꝑter filiū dei ab cui⁹ ore
uerbū unde audierit. atq; eos clari
tate ꝑcellentes. quō fulgore incar
nationis ei⁹ ꝑceptis ꝑsentialit unde
runt. Qui ⁊ ipsā turrī multa dili
gentia inuenient. q̄a sponse dei manu
re diuino suę pietatis sollicitudine
adesse nō cessant. ut in robore suo
pfecte consistat. ut scriptū ē. xvj.
Sicut turris dauid collū tuū.
que edificata ē cū ꝓpugnacu
lis. Omne clipei pendent ex ea. oīs
armatura fortiū. Hoc tale ē. Vt in
carnato filii sūmi rectoris fortis
simi scilicet leonis. ex uirginea flo
ridnate uenientis fortissimū instru
mentū noue gr̄e posita ē. sic fortitu
do fidei tue onoua sponsa incorrup
ta durans. certissimū munimē fide

lis ppli constituta ē. Quomodo fortissimis uiris tuis assumt & adhereāt oīs mundanos filios tuos q̄ mundi endū s̄ noua illustratione de uno & purissimo fonte stillaticū q̄s habes in hac fortunatissima comunchone ut collū reliquo corpori ē unctū ē. ita ut nec destruat nec dissipari possis. sic ē nec uictoriosa instrumenta uestri diaboli potent̄ superari. Quoniā ihūs xp̄i ihu filius dī fortissima turris ē. in qua uictoriosissime milicie fideliū munitissima p̄bationē excercent quib; nullus aduersarius se p̄ualere gl̄iabit. q̄a in se ipse xp̄m uerū dm & hominē continent. p quē in secūda regeneratione oīs cōpago filios tuos in salutē decentissime p̄ten ditur. Vnde & eadē purissima incarnato a pphis p̄dicta. & p̄ciosissimis lapidib; uirtutū adornata. cū p̄pugnaculis aplice doctrine. idē cū plantatoribus iustitie uerī luminis mundum uersū orbē ad salutē credentiū p palata ē. ut hec parabola demonstrat.

xvij. Oīs q̄da urbē marmoreā habens in ipsā uocant plurimiq; ceteris muros ei' interius celant. de quib; ipsa acutissimā limationē in polituq; lapidū exspirant. Quo facto. idē dīs inimico uerbo suo aq̄s aquarū dicebat. ut sua effusione equalitatē facerent supra montes. & hoc eadē pacto. ignē ignis silentē admonuit. ut parua tabernacula parare. Quo cū adimpleto. eadē tabernacula ita mutuū p̄fecerit. ut urbē illā celeri p̄fectu sua excellerent altitudine. Hoc tale ē. Dīs iste ē ille quē nūquā p̄cessit ali' dēmone. s; ipse solus sup oīa & omnib; ē. q̄a michi ante eū nec post eū inuentū ē. ac ideo dīs omnū ē. Hic nobilē urbē chorū scilicet ppheta rū aduersus rabiē sclārū tēpestatū fortē & constantē in sua potestate habuit. ~~quo infusione habuit.~~ quo infusione spe sci repleti erant eū ideo dīs instituit. ita q̄d mens ex spiratione illa suscitauit q̄d misteria eius obscuris uerbis p̄uulgāt. ut p̄mū sonus audit eū n̄ dū uerbū cognoscit. sonū tam̄ p̄phetie ex uero uerbo filio scilicet dī incarnato subsequente. Quia dīs multiplices celestiales incordib; ex fecit cū intellectū ipsos multiplici spū sapientie infudit. ita q̄d inspuali sensu p̄funda dī tā p̄sentis quā futuri inde licet scīt pphetauerit. p quē acutissimos sermones contra contrarios mortis homini p̄ualerit. in quib; durissima corda iudeox ad lenitatē & pietatē felicū actuū p̄uocauerit. S; incarnato uerbo dī celestis pat̄ ideo de filio suo inuens aplis q̄ hoīes existentes segregati essent de cōmuni pplo. ut purissimi riuuli eligunt̄ de ceteris aq̄s fluentib; in plano dicebat eis ut mundatione uere fidei effluerent in orbē tarū deprimentes & comouerentes magnū seisma uersionis sufflatus superbie & exaltatione culture idoloz. quatinus hoīes uerū dm cognoscendo desererent infidelitatē suā impīdicatione illoz. Qua fide impplis roborata. ideo peu

ratoꝝ omniū ignitas mētes electoꝝ suoꝝ
qui accensi fuerant de ignitis cordib.
illoꝝ qꝫ spē scē in igneis linguis ad
uenies uerigerat. suauiter eaꝫ in
spū scō admonuit. ut cōtēptores
mundi effecti in cōtēplatione ce
lestis uite paruuli & pauperes spū cē
ñ abnuerent. s; ut phec parua habi
tacula humiliauit. sibi supnas diui
cias compararent. Que humiliatus
opa dñi cōtēptores caducoꝝ in excel
so studio subtilissima p̄cepta dñi sēp
ruminantes imitarent. ut martyres
uirgines & reliq; suimet abiectores.
ita ~~in hac fuit~~ in hac sui cōtēptione
ad amore cē celestiū ascenderet. ut eaꝫ
agricolas in munea uētis testamēti la
borantes. in uelocitate bonoꝝ studi
oꝝ suoꝝ superent. dū semetipsos
q̄si pnichilo habentes. toto deside
rio ad cēna anhelarent. Vnde &
mille clippei multe pfecte fidei. in noua
cer defensiones pfecte fidei. in noua
gra pendent a filio dei. dū p̄mi pastо
res eccle exemplū a ipso trahentes
& ob spē supnoꝝ semetipsos concul
cantes. catholicā fide sanguinis
sui effusione roboratā. a igneis
iaculis diaboli que uulnerant
animas hominū p̄ueniunt. q̄s mul
tiplices uirtutes armature celestis
milicie inceteris electis subsequen
tes. eaꝫ in hoc seculo amore dei obse
quuntur. Quoꝝ. Quia antiquus ser
pens p̄mo homini pessimū fetore
cōtēptus dei insufflauit. id circo
& ipse diabolus odore omniū
aromatū castratus scilicet & comu
nemq; ac ligaturе p̄ceptoꝝ dei. nec
ñ societatis xp̄i iugū ei' sufferre.
atq; contēptus tocius mundi du
rissime in bis sibi contrarius celestib.
iaculis transfigit. ita qđ a bie dei
decumane dei confusius & conculcat'
mapta siue dapnationis parte asi
delib; abhorreat. Quod autē ~~s~~ xxvij.
in septentrionali plaga eiđē edifi
cii uides mundū & hoies qui de se
mine ade pereant. ut p̄ dicti lucer
dū murū speculatiue scientie ipsi'
edificii & ambitū circuli q̄ de se
dente uno prendit. discurrentes.
hoc ē qđ in carnalib; desideriis que
respicientia a dimbellicatē uer
sanē unitatis sclārū cupiditatū.
mundus & mundiales hoies de
culpa primi parentis posita s. ex.
altera parte scientia boni & mali
ipsis apposita ut ad opus dī pbo
nū accedant & malū effugiant. &
ex altera potestate dei illi' ostensa.
ut & se submaiestate ei' ē sciant &
oīa facta sua a ipso examinari
ñ dubitent. ~~s~~ xxix.
Vnde & multa idē
edificii ut turrim p̄cursus uolun
tatis dei & colūnā diuinitatis uer
bi ipsius p̄ p̄fatū murū speculam
ue scientie intrando & exeundo
transeunt. ut nubes hac & illac
diffundit. q̄a multa diuinū opus
ueteri testamēto & nouo exordio
admonitu aggredientes. ipsū p
speculatiuā scientiā relictis car
nalib; desideriis intrant. multiq.

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uoluptatis suas sequentes illud in
malis concupiscentiis suis ibidē ex
eunt·ita q̄d imoluntate sua siue
ad bonū siue ad malū inuelocitate
nubiū idē inmotione cogitationū
suarū se hac ꝫ illac relaxando de
ducunt·S; q̄d hi qui ipsū ẹdificiū
intrant·candidissima uestē indu
unt·hoc ē q̄d hi q̄ opus dī bona uo
luntate aggrediunt purissima ꝫ
lucidissima uestē uerę fidei ut dīm
cognoscant p̄mūdiam ipsius uesti
unt·Quoꝝ alii desuauitate ꝫ lenita
te eiꝰ de uestis gaudio magno lensi
cam eā retinent·quia contrito ꝫ
humiliato spū imbuti dulcissima
ꝫ lenissima catholica fide ac p̄fusi
inūoꝝ liquore sēitas sēp̄ inūoꝝ·
oculis letant inceleſtibꝫ·ea deuotis
sime adimplentes·ꝫ retinentes quę
ipsis spē sēs inspirat·Alii autē q̄si
de grauedine ꝫ difficultate eiꝰ ui
sus effectū illa excuere uolunt·quō
uelut grauissimo onere ponderan
ti·q̄si difficillima uia impedīti in
quietissima ꝫ amarissima consuetu
dine illicite uoluptatis se intrinse
cus dilaniantes ꝫ macerantes·fide
inopib; suis abicere conant·nec di
uinis p̄ceptis se cōmoneri patiunt·
Quos benigne uirtus hec quā scien
tiā dī nominari audistī sepius con
pescens unicuiq; eoꝝ dicit uerba
admonitionis sue ut p̄dictū ē·qa
altissimi dīs p̄scient mollīri corda
duroꝝ lapidū inhominib; flectit
se inmia sua adeos ut tibi ostensū

ē·frequenti cōmonens illos ut intra
se gemites ꝫ flentes ipsū orent q̄tu
nus eos libēter de importunitate
nequicię sue qua diabolica suasio
ne p̄fusi s·ita ut in hac penitencia
possint reuertu ad intellectū bonę
uoluntatis·recordantes uestis inno
centię quā susceperūt in regeneratio
ne spē ꝫ aque·S; q̄d uides qd q̄dā
coꝝ his uerbis castigati quā uis de
indumentū ipsis indifficile uideat·
illud tamē cū multo sudore retinęnt·
hoc ē q̄d inspiratione spē sēi admo
nti·in fide quā susceperunt q̄si gra
uē ꝫ difficilē inūb; suis uiā arripiunt·
s; eā quā uis multo labore tamē nō de
spantes nec tedio torpentes tandē
p̄ficiunt·Quidā uero eadē uerba
subsannantes·uestēq; ipsā furiose
excutientes abiciunt·ad mundū rede
untes unde uenerūt·multaq; p̄ seru
tantes·multa inutilia sectarū uani
tatū discunt·isti s qui legē dī ꝫ iu
stitiā eiꝰ derisui habentes·fide catho
lica inuanitatib; errorꝝ suoꝝ se denu
dant·eā abnegantes inopib; malig
nis quę p̄unent admortē·ꝫ admun
di huius uanitates se declinant q̄si pri
stine dimiserant·ac libidinosa facta
inartib; puerilis sensitantes·ardentē
gustū sciī discūt·atq; eū diabolicis
irrisionib; sedim decep̄tionē illi p̄ue
runt·Quoꝝ alii inde ẹdificiū tandē
reuersi·uestē quā abiecerant iterū
uolentes sibi induunt·qa isti ad
opus diuinū de uia erroris sui re
deuntes uenium·ꝫ scisma diaboli

q̄d ſcdm uolumatē illi habebant
abiectemſ· habmū uere fidei quē in
baptiſmo ſuſcepeſamt· & quē ipſi in
errorib; ſuis uerū dm deſideremſ ab
iecſamt· ſed uerū eū puro & ſimplici
corde confitemeſ reſumunt· Alii ;
aut̄ reuerſu nolemeſ ea denudari ;
immundo ignominioſe remanent· ;
quo ipſi addm pura penitꝰa re
dire contēpnemeſ· ueſte innocentie ;
ſpoliati· & idcirco nudi a bono fide
liū op̄ū ſ; plem malo uicio& diaboli
carū arcui innequicuſ mundialiū
uanitatū cū maxima confuſione
tā p̄ ſemus ſcti quā futuri uitā ſuā
uſq; ad mortē impenitentes deducūt. xx.
Sed q̄d uides· quom̄ q̄da ſordi ;
diſſimi & nigerrimi q̄ſi pinſa ;
mā excitati a baquilone uenien ;
tes in ipſū edificiū curruū turri q· ;
p̄ſatā bachando inuademeſ· mea ;
ut ſerpentes ſibillant· hoc ē q d q̄da ;
ſceleratu hoīes ſub mobili calore le
uitatis ſordentes p̄nigredinē
diabolice aſpectionis dm deſpici
unt· nec cauſā illā quā deſiderant·
p̄ donū ſci ſp̄ querūt· ſ; diabolica
arte aſſumūt & inuitā aut̄ a parte
dñationis miſſi callida arte diui
nū opus imitant ac furti ſubtrahen
do & palā rapiendo aut̄ inuſamia
bachando· temere p̄nefandiſſimā
pecuniā horribilis diabolice in
gredinis conſtituta adō officia
deglutiunt· & eccleſiam hoc m̄ p̄in
ſanū furorē conturbantes· in ea
ſibilos deceptionis antiqui ſerpen
tis ſpargunt· Quom̄· Diabolica aſtutia
tādiu in cautos hoīes afflant uſq;
dū eos ſedm uolumatē ſuā p̄mor
tifera impietatē occup̄ant· hoc ſibilo
iactantes eccleſiam contaminantes
dū ſic fuſatē poteſtates q̄ intra
dī ordinationē conſtituit ſ· Qui
q̄o hec faciunt a conſpectu meo
impenitentes p̄iecti ſ· nec in his cau
ſis eos ſcio q̄a eas p̄ſe & in p̄me adepti
ſ· ut o ſce ſeruus mis oſtendit dicens·
Ipſi regnauerūt & in exme· principes De ſimoniacis.
exterūt· & in cognoui· Argentū ſuū
& aurū ſuū fecerūt ſibi idola ut in
tuerent· Hoc tale ē· Hoīes uolumatē
ſuā ſequentes· computant & conſti
tuunt in ſemetipſis q̄ q̄d p̄ius eos
appetitus deliberat· Quid ē hoc· Con
cupiſcibilis uidelicet concupiſcen
tia eos q̄ ipſis ſuadet ut domi
nentur hominib; furtiuo & rapto ho
nore· in poſtulato nec ſūpto nec con
ſtituto exme· q d tam aliq̄ndo ma
fieri p̄mitto· ut iudicialis p̄na ſup
ueniat eis de p̄ius uolumatib; ſuis·
quia me in hoc in queſierūt· Et q d
hoc eis p̄deſt· q a in hoc in uiridmatē
ſ; aridmatē habent· & quo hoc in
plamatu· ſ; inutilis herba naſcē
tes abſq; ſtruncō· Infructifere enī
herbe de ſua facile naſcuntur p̄ſe· fruc
tifere aut̄ ſeminant̄ & plantantur
magno labore· Sic p̄mitto q d ali
quando ſtrenū deſiderū hoīs ſine
radice in malo facile floreat plan
tatione bonū in querens· q a uiridi
tatē eſtatis in habet· p̄mittens eā

qđ aliq̄ndo rectū ei⁹ desideriū
bene radicatū inbono fructū p
multas miserias affligat· rigatione
sētatis amaritudinis· quō aspnatur
hiemis caret· Unde etiā sepe mlēs
hoīes pcellum imprincipatu cōmu
nē & umlē pplm· ut mutules herbe
aliq̄ndo excelsiores s umlib;· ipsi
tamē posim inpprius desideriis su
is nī mea plantatione aut tactu
cognitionis dom mei· aut ordina
tionis mee radicatis; hoc iusto iu
dicio pmitto fieri· qa illud ame nī
quesierūt s; intra semetipsos consti
tuerūt· unde & mihi de hoc mundi
cio meo respondebunt· Nā felici
tatē opume doctrine quā manū
suo abomī indignatione infideli
tatis deberūt examinare utar
gentū purgatū a cuncta falsitate·
& umlitatē pfundissime sapien
tie quā inuoluntate sua deberūt
ordinare splendidissima fide sēp
uidentes quom dns colendus ue
nerandus & confitendus sit· faci
unt sibi incontrarietatē uanita
tis· Quom· Ipsi recurruant eā ad
maximā infelicitatē· intellectū
uidelicet suū quē adō habent
insaciabilib; concupiscentiis car
nis suę offerentes· q̄si ferens & pu
trida ipsa caro cōx dns sit· nolen
tes oculos suos erigere addm q̄ for
mauit illos s; uoluntatē suā pdō
habentes· q̄uō secdm hoc uiuunt
ut inse met ipsis ordinant & con
stituunt· Hoc autē idō nī faciunt
ut agrū illū q̄ gignit cibū utre
cīne possideant· ut absit abeo &
impenitentes inppetuū intrent· quō
ille quē pdo colunt mortuus ē sic
& ipsi mortui s· uidelicet tā uendi
tores quā empores spūaliū· hoc
ē desiderantes qđ ame nī quesierūt·
Nā q̄ potestatē prabiē inuadit· ra
qđ racionabile donū spē sēi uena
le facit· quom possent deuendito sal
uari· qa homo q̄ substantiā suā alie
nis uendit· ea nī debet amplius·
Et quom deberet etiā mercator iste
un empta saluatione quā adō no
lebat recipe· s; festinauit eā adipis
ci pecunia· Quā tamē ut adipisceret·
recto iudicio suo dns fieri pmisit· Nā
quib; dns indignatus illud eos fusta
ri pmittit· phoc tamē occulto iudi
cio inpsenti eos puniens & nī insu
tuto· ut scilm qđ inoblitione spē
sēi amauerūt in ipsis confundat ita
qđ p hanc confusionē ad hoc pdu
catū ut addm inpenitencia reuer
tatur· unde & hac pacta remissionē
in futuro consequuntur· Quos dā aut
in hoc tollerat· nī in psenti eos cruci
ans s; iusta ex causa in futuro ostēn
dit q̄d uoluntas ex ipsis in amaris
cruciamb; psit· S; & alios tales tā in
psenti quā in futuro punit· q̄uō p
spicuus intellectus ex intipsis iuste
ac reprobile sua uoluntate se facit·
imitans diabolū in malis suis· Alios
quoq; ad hoc ducere p mittit ut
idē malū inpenitentia ex confun
dat· cū se p p petrata eadē inuisi

in finitū differens· q̄ uoluntatē suā p deo habent· qua
propter ipse ris

cia acrīt̄ punientes illā q̄si putri
dū cadauer abiciunt. Quib; dā ů
ne hoc adipiscant̄ mīdtes resistut.
q̄a si ad illud ꝓgerent penas gt
henales nī effugientes meas fortt̄
cruciari merentt̄. Quicūq; aīt̄
ꝓsumserit aut sibi usurpauerit ca
thedrā potestatis in consilio pat̄
fui qui pecunia ē. quō ipsa pat̄
illis efficit̄ mercatui ipsi ꝓdicio
nē acq̄rens. ab eade dignitate &
ille q̄ dedit & q̄ accepit abiciendus
ē. q̄a si homini pecus suū furti ab
latū & alii uenundatū fuerit ille
cui ablatū ē reptū cū oī iure re
ddit. q̄ uero uendidit aut q̄ emit
absq; contradictione utrq; illud
dimittet. Sic & dignitas potestatis
que secdm iustitiā meā debet pos
sideri. si paliquē furtiuo munere
diripit̄ & malios ꝓ se dissipat̄
ame cū districto iudicio requirt̄.
ac ꝓpterea ille q̄ eā in mercatū po
suit. uel qui eā indigne cōparauit
ualitate illi' iusto iudicio utraq;
carebit. q̄a tēplū nomini meo
consecratū domū rapine fecerit.
Quom̄. Sapientiā & consiliū q̄d
ā me in corde suo habuerit suā sen
tentia in forū posuerit. sibi ex hoc
pecuniā in q̄tus alios ꝓdicione
recipientes. Qua ꝓpt̄ uel mercatū
illū mamona p̄tentia abiecit.
uel in inde in igne diri ardoris
respondebunt. Nā q̄ uilitatē dig
nitatē quā spūs inspūalib; a pcib;
unificat mortuo pcio cōparans
adfetorē scaturientes putredinis
ꝓducere conat̄. ex ipsa p̄sūptionis
puersitate. nisi ei⁹ pentiat in
ꝓdicione ē. ita accensus in spū scō
desertor erroris relinquensq; oīa
filius colūbe petrus. transeuntu
turbini q̄ interrima nigredine
luce uolebat absorbere dicit. xxv.

Pecunia tua tecū sit in ꝓdicio
nē. quō donū dī existimasti
pecunia possideri. Non ē enī tibi
pars neq; sors. in sermone isto. cor
ni tuū nō ē rectū cora dō. Hoc tale
ē. Pecunia fallacis confidentie tue
quā habes maliena re ut dnīm ip
sa aut̄ te habens ut nichilū sit t
in ꝓdicionē gehennalis ignis si
hoc donū q̄d ignei spē sci ē ꝓ nefas
pecunie cōparatū impenitens reu
nueris. quō intransitoria scientia
aīe tue accensionē ei⁹de acutissi
mi inspectoris fallacit̄ existimasti
pecunia possideri. quā diffisus es
te posse habere dono dī. Si aut̄
ob causā hanc pentueris illud q̄d
emisti dimittes pecuniā q; quā ꝓ
ipso dedisti sic ꝓdictā sentes. q̄a
q̄d ēmū ē cū lucro mercari uolu
isti a billo qui te formauit exlimo.
s; te in cade emptione durante.
nī habebis partē lucis in consortio
supnoꝝ angloꝝ. quō in sermone
lingue tue rapacitatē cordis tui
ꝓtulisti. aliud concupiscens quā
cuncta ēme claritatis desiderent.
Unde & cor tuū in hac puersitate
cora dō inuisū ē. hoc uolens ha

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bere p̄emptionē p̄cumę qđ grauis
ado donandu ē. Itaq; deserores
hui' diuini pacti qa illud quererę
deberent gratuito dono sp̄c sc̄i &
n̄ facium iusto iudicio p̄me uanis
simulacris cōparam̄. quō ut illa
opus manuū existimma auerta
tis consorcio s̄ uacua. s;. tam̄ abin
fidelib;. pdō colum̄. sic & ist̄ p̄con
uaricatē femineū munerū illumi
natione sp̄c sc̄i carentes. fallaces
magistri efficiunt̄. n̄ dech inspi
rio aię suę uidua officio illo sint
indigni. s;. inflagrante supbia il
lud abhōib;. accipientes uoluntatē
meā in hoc n̄ considerant. Qua ppt̄
nescio unde sint ipsi q̄si alieni m̀
existentes. qa ob hanc iniustitiā
suā si sic p̄severauerint a me. piec
tu s̄. Si aut̄ ex toto corde pnitue
rint. eos suscipiens. gaudiū sup ip
sos faciā angl̄oꝝ. Sed quā iuis
iniuste agant qui has dignitates
p̄uerso ardore desiderant. nec eis
consentiendū sit qui eas sua neqcia
inuadere nitunt̄. ut p̄dictū ē.
ipsa tam̄ regimina bona a diuina
tē hominū ado bene disposita s̄.
nec eis supbe & pinaciter resistendū
ē. s;. potiꝰ in amore meo obediendū.
Vnde nullus fideliū qui dō uult
digne obēpare opponat se ma
gisterio sibi p̄sidenti. quō illud
imitat̄ honorē di custodiens & pas
cens oues ipsius. q̄nus honorē ca
runde omnū n̄ dissipet̄ malicnū q̄
furē & latro ē. qa ut nullus debet

repugnare dō insipienti resistere
magisterio suo. Ergo oīs homo u
ens in anima & corpore. alioꝝ
se dignitatib;. siue corporales siue
spīales iustitias renitentes eis sub
iectus debet obedire. ut in timore
magisterii earū corrigat̄ constitu
ta lex hominū. ne ipsi deuiantes in
indisciplinata libertate uoluntā
tis suę. sibimetipsis legē ponant.
secdm qđ uoluerint. sic errantes in
uia dñi. qa ne errent ppt̄ hoc pote
stas ado ē. quoñ. Inspiratione sp̄c
sc̄i regimina hominū disposita s̄.
ut ipsa discant hoīes timere dñm.
Que si illi secdm libitū suū incon
uaricatē puerterint. n̄ tam̄ sic in
uoluntate di ē s;. in secreta pmissio
ne eq̄. ut iusto iudicio concupiscen
tia illoꝝ in peruerso ardore addeti
mentū suū compleat̄. Ergo dignita
tes potestatū inspirante ado. aduer
sitatē hominū ob magnā necessita
tē exoꝝ ab ipso iuste ordinant̄ s̄. ne
plebs di more pecudū sine regimi
ne uniens. pdemia queq; instabili
tatis sue incederet. Vnde qui ipsis
repugnat. nolens p̄pulsū sup
bie eis in humilitatis subiectione
ut iustū ē obedire. n̄ hoīb;. contra
dicit. s;. m̀ creatori q̄ cuncta iuste
disponit se p̄tinaciter secdm trans
gressionē ade obicit;. ppt̄ hanc re
bellionē tenebras dampnationis si
bi accumulans. sic & ille de gaudio
meruit̄ as expulsus ē. n̄ ille qui p
uerse nequicie hominū in zelo

xxii.

meo humilit̄ ñ consentit·q̄a isu
ficia inscie dī poci augt quā
minuat·si hoc congruent̄ & oportu
ne fecerit·ſ;is q̄ ipsas dignitates
pelatā supbiā indecent̄ opprime
re uoluerit·quō ille mea dispositi
one adunatē uniuersū ut p̄
dictū ē̄ p̄palat̄ ſ·Et q̄ contra eas
supbe calcitrat inspirationi mee
repugnat·quāuis aliqui minsa
nia ignorantie amore meū ñ in
spicientes easde dignitatib; munit̄ ut
luminaris sue diuinū p̄ceptū p̄uarican
tes se ingerant·q̄d iusto iudicio
ma fieri p̄mitto ut desiderant·ip
si p̄cipissimā examinationē exhoc
ingrauū penitentia aut ingne
gehenne responsuri· Sed q̄d ;xx.iij
uides q̄d exhis q̄dā abhac fluxu ;
cia cessantes mundi effectu ſ·alius ;
in eadē negocia & sordes sua p̄sue ;
rantib;·hoc ē̄ q̄d exeas aliq̄ p̄inspi
ratione diuinā aperiri sinat sua
resipiscentes·p̄purā & ueram peni
tenciā mundari & saluari meren
tur·alius obduratas & impenitentes
bus in eadē callidinatas sue in mun
dicia usq;adfinē uite sue p̄ma
nentib;·atq;na suffocatas·miserā
bilit̄·& crudelit̄ in morte dire
mortis morientib; Quod aut̄ ;xx.iij
inuita p̄dictū conspicis uersus p̄fa ;
tā urbī ecclē q̄si septē albi coloris ;
marmoreas columnas in mirā rotun ;
ditatē ornatas stantes·hoc ē̄ q̄d ;
inope omīpotentis patris admi
nistrū & addecorē noue sponse

spē ses exspirationis sue septē can
didissima sustentacula omnē aduer
sitatē tēpestatū sua fortitudine ab
stergentia declarans·suīmā potesta
tē nec inicū nec finē in rotunditate
ēuitatis habentē manifestauit·Que ;
s altitudinis septē cubitor·q̄a omnē ;
fortitudinē & altitudinē tocī hu
mani intellectus cadē dona excel
lentia eū q̄ cuncta creauit
purissima si de co
lendū demonstrauit· Et in summitate
sua q̄si ferreū & rotundū habent
tabulatū decent̄ aliq̄tulū in altu
dinē sursū erectū·quō in excel
lentia suā claritatis acutā & incōp
hensibilē diuinitatis potestatē design
nant regentē & sustentantē illos
elegantissima rectitudine sua incē
sibiliq̄·q̄ se hic p̄dona sci spē separa
uerunt a carnalib; uoluptatibus· ;xx.v.
Quod aut̄ in acumine eid̄e ta ;
bulatu uides q̄si pulcherrimā ;
imaginē stantē·hoc ē̄ ;
q̄d uirtutis hec altissimo patre an
te omnē creaturā fuit ordinans
in consilio illius quecq; instrumenta
creaturarū·que in celo & in tra con
dita s·ipsa scilicet magnus ornatus
fulgens in dō·latissimusq; gradus
graduū centrarū uirtutū existens
in ipso·eiq; dulcissima amplexio
ne mardentis amoris communicata
ut ripudio·Que ad hoīes in mundū
aspicit·quō illos q̄ eā seq̄ uoluerint
sua p̄uidentia semp regit & custo
dit·eos ualde diligens q̄a con

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flamm impsa. Nā cade imago sapien
tiā dī designat. qa omā ꝓpsā a
do creata s̄ cēregunt. Cui capit uc
lum fulgur tanto nitore radiat ut
illud adplenū nō possis considerare.
quō diuinas tribilis ⁊ blanda oī
creature ē. oīa uidens ⁊ conside
rans. ut oculus hoīs ea diiudicat.
que sibi fuerint apposita. anullo
tam̄ hominū ... inpfundnate
mistē ... riu sui adfinē
ualens ꝓduci. Vnde ⁊ man̄ adpec
tus suū reuerent cōponit. que ē pour
tas sapientie quā adsem ipsā sa
pient constringit. ita qd omē op⁹
suū tali modo dirigit. ut nullus
ei maliquo nec prudentia nec po
tencia resistere possit. pedib; ip
sius in eo de tribulato ⁊ aduiden
ti occultatus. qa uia illi⁹ incor de
patris absconsa nulli hominū pa
tet. soli dō secreta ei⁹ nuda ⁊ ma
nifesta. Qd ū circulū immodū coro
ne multo fulgorē splendore ha
bet in capite. hoc ē qd maiestas dī
inicio ⁊ fine carens incōparabili
nitet honore. tanto candore di
uinitate radiante ut acies morta
lū meniū ipsa reuerberet. S;
qd tunica aurea coloris induit.
hoc ē qd opus sapientie. q̄si inpu
rissimo auro frequent consideta
tur: Qua ppt ⁊ a pectore deorsū
usq; ad pedes zona una descen
dens. p̄ciosissimarū gēmarū or
natu uiridis scilicet albi ⁊ rubei
atq; aerei purpureo fulgore in
ter lucentis colorib; decorat. quō ab
exordio mundi eū primū sapientia
opus suū inaptā ostensionē dedit ia
se usq; ad finē seculoꝝ q̄si una una teren
dis insēis ⁊ iustis mandatis ornata.
ut delicet ꝑma plantatione uiridis
germinis patriarchar̄ et ꝓphetar̄
qui merūnis gemmis laboris sui
maximo desiderio filiū dī flagi
tabant incarnari. ⁊ deinde deco
rata candidissima uirginitate ma
ria inuirgine ⁊ postea inrobustis
sima ⁊ rubente martyrū fide ac
demū incomēplationis purpurea
⁊ lucida carnatē. q̄ dꝫ ⁊ ꝓximus ꝑ
calorē sci spē diligendus ē. qd ita
ad terminū mundi ꝓcedet admo
nitione illi⁹ n̄ cessante. ſ. ~~semp qua~~
~~diu scīm durat emanante~~. ſ; semp
quādiu scīm durat emanante. ut
etiā ea de uirtus in exhortatione
sua declarat ut supra dictū ē.
Sed qd terū in pauimento ipsius
edificii tres alias imagines u
des. hoc ē qd he uirtutes ut rena cal
cantes ⁊ celestia in diuino ope sec
tantes ut ria instrumenta ꝑ que eccla
in filius suis etna pcnt designant.
nutrimū scilicet magistrū ⁊ pug
nā fideliū aduersus diabolū. ac re
uersionē eoꝝ de consensu uicioꝝ. qrū
una ꝑ sanis columnis ē. qa ecclastici doc
tores ꝑ dona sci spūs in bim. requie
capiunt ipsius fortitudine. ⁊ reli
que due ante ipsā sibi collaterales
stant. quo dilecto dī ⁊ ꝓximi ei
exhortatione inistarū continecta

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& sociabili comunc̃ opatione. Vnde & se ō̃s ad colūnā humanitatis
saluatoris & ad p̃fatā turrī dirigunt. qa pars una unitatis filiū
di uerū dīm. & uerū hominē in
ecclā deuotissime coli & adorari
ostendunt. iusticiā p iusticiā ele
uantes. designando undecies in
antiq̃ss scis altissimū dīm & incarnationē filii ipsius saluatorē. amarū. Sed hec imago que ipsis columnis ecclesiis ē p̃figurat iusticiā
di. q̃m ipsa p̃ sapientiā p̃ spīm scm
in hoīb; cū oīb; iusticiis suis tēp̃at-
tamē latitudinis apparens ut la
titudo q̃nq; hominū sibi astantiū
notari potest. q̄d est expansio
q̃nq; sensuū humane capacitatis
cū quib; ipsa in latitudine legis
di conuersat. comunens & conser-
uans a do instituta p̃cepta unic ip
sā diligentib; Que & tamē p̃ceri
tatis ē ut longitudinē ei p̃fecte dis
cernere nō ualeas. nisi eā q̄d p̃mē
hoc edificiū p̃spiciat. qa ipsa in
altitudine sua humanū intellec
tū excedens sursū tendit ad cele
stia. sic q̄d eā in incarnatione
saluatoris de celo p̃spexit cū ide
saluator. scilicet filius di a patre
exiuit. q̃uis ista iusticia existit. una
& multa ecclāstica instrumenta a
spectū suū dirigit. quo illa p̃cā
fabricant & communiunt. ut a multa
p̃pugnacula ad fortissimā turrī
p quā constare possunt comun
guntur. Qua p̃p̄ & magnū caput
& claros oculos habens. acutissime
in cęlū uidet. quo maxima & sūma
bonitas iusticie lucidissimū usū p
incarnatū filiū di hominib; decla
rauit. cū ille in humano corpore
tenuis ac tenebrosis oculis se manife
stauit cęlestia intuens. p dilectione
animarū. Frons candida & pluci
da existit. ut serenissima nubes ē.
q̃a ipsa in candore & puritate
mentis iustos hominū habitat.
qui omē studiū suū ad hoc intendunt. ut iusticie di fidelissime
subdi sint. Vnde & ipsa nubib;
se assimilat. quo in cordib; iustos
gratā sibi habitationē parat. S; q̄d
aliā formā hoīs in ea nullā conspi
cis. hoc ē q̄d celestis & nō terrestris ma
net. secm q̄d & declaratū ē. indeli
cet humanis opib; quib; grauant
hoīes illi nō adherentib; s; que
ipsos ad iusthificationē uite p̃ducu
nt. quo dīs iustus ē. ut & ipsa dia
bolo opposita inope di celestis ur-
bis exhortans supi fidelib; de .xx. viij.
monstrat. Imago autē prio-
larū que autē p̄dictā imaginē sibi collatales stant. ostendit fortitudinē. qa p̃ iusticiā di sur-
git fortitudo. q̃si p̃ceps in conspec
tu sūmi regis recto & sco ope repug
nans inhoīb; cunctis insidiis aduer-
sarioq; armata apparens. indelicet
uirtute omīpotis di quo ipsa fortis
in side fortē resistit diabolice ob
iectioni. Qua p̃p̄ & galea idē sup
no uigore ad salutē credentiū in
ducit. & lorica q̄d ē expīanoq; lege

175v

que ꝓuſticiā quā commet inſe mul
la ſagitta diabolice arus abolet ac
ocreas ſcilicet rectis manerib; indoc
trina principaliū magiſtrox fre
quentatis aq; fortes curotheces q̄
ſ fortissima ⁊ acutissima opa que
fideles ꝓficiunt in xpo. Tenet etiā
euaginatū gladiū dextra idē in
bono ope nudā ⁊ aptā in diuina
ſcriptura dī admonitionē quā ue
rus dī filius in mistica significatione de
nudauit. eū in meliorē dulcedinē nu
cle in directione legis ostendit. ha
stā autē habens sinistra. q̄a fiduciā
ēmox in hac etiā actione designat
infidelib; hoīb; se habere. ubi carna
lib; concupiscentiis ꝓuoluntatē car
nis impugnant. Qd autē sub pedib;
suis horribile draconē conculcat.
hoc ē qd ꝓuā rectitudinis animquȳ
horridū serpentē potestatem suę
subigit. os etiā illi forto hastę trans
uerberans. ita ut de immundissimas
spumas euomat. quo rictus sordi
dissimę ⁊ diabolice libidinis macu
lissima audacia castitatis transiens.
consputionē ardentis libidinis.
qua ille hoīes polluit abeo exter
quet. Vnde ⁊ gladiū quē tenet q̄si
ad ferendū ulbrat. q̄a ds acutissi
mū uerbū suū ad mificere omnē infi
delitatē idolox ⁊ aliox sectarū que
incredulitatis s. inexcusa fortitu
dine manifestant. sic ⁊ uirtus cadē
in sup̄dicta admonitione sua ma
nifestat. Tertia ū imago sētiaē
significat quo cū ꝓfortitudinē di
abolo repugnat. sētas in bonis hoīb;
adornatū celestis milicię ort. Que
tricepſ ē. quo hac trina dignitate
adstantē suū ꝓducit. ita ut in naturali
loco capitis ⁊ in utroq; humero
suo caput apparat. q̄a iusta ⁊ dig
na actione ds caput tocius uere ex
istimationis ⁊ inspectis ⁊ maduersis ex
quib; uel letificari uel contristari
potest homo. metuendus ⁊ ueneran
dus ē. medio tamē alia duo aliq̄ntu
lū sup eminent. quo ille q̄ iudex
bonox ⁊ malox existit oia sup̄eminet
sua eqtate. Ş; qd ide mediū ⁊ qd
ad exteriſ ei ē tanto fulgore radiant
ut claritas ipſox usū tuū reuerbe
ret. ita qd in utrū uirile an muliebrē
formā habeant pfecte considerare
nō ualeas. hoc ē qd sētas in culmine
honoris ⁊ impar te ꝓspitatis ēmę
dulcedinis tanto splendore diuine
gr̄ę ꝓfusa consistit. ut ꝓfunditas
misterii ipsi⁹ ita intellectū hominȳ
excedat ut p̄ grauedine mortalita
tis nec libertatē nec subiectionē ei⁹
in xpo possit intueri. p̄ter quā qd
uiget in ipso. Illo aut̄ capite. qd
a sinistris apparet aliq̄ntulū ob
scuro ⁊ muliebri consuetudine
candido uelamine uelato. quo ꝓ
fecto hec que se fortit̄ constrin
git ob amorē di in aduersitate illa
qua ipsa diabolica infestatione ⁊
humano ope impugnat. q̄si anxie
tatē ⁊ sollicitudinē quom se diui
no auxilio defendat habet. humil
tima subiectione malbedine ⁊ pul

formeri

xxxix.

ermidine xpiam certaminis·se re
deptori sūmo gemmib; fideliū
cordiū cōmēdans· Qđ uero tunica
ex albo serico eadē imago indua
tē· hoc ē qđ ope lucidissimi & sua
uissimi studii inquo ꝑfecta sēnas
filiū immat· circūamicta appare·
candidissimus etiā calciamentis mu
nita·qa ꝑmortē xpi incandore
regenerationis spūs & aque fulget
in mēmb; hominū· ut & ipsi mortē
ei' immorē· Et in pectore suo signū
crucis habet· circa qđ etiā splen
dor magnus in eode pectore ue
lut aurora fulgens rutilat· quo
in memorione mentiū fideliū ipsā
diligentissime complectentiū· re
cordationē passionis xpi ihu ru
minat· hoc etiā ubiq; serenissima
claritate fidi ineisdē mēmb; desig
nans· qđ ille q obediens patri talē
in sēa humanitate sua passus ē uo
luntate patris in pulcherrima au
rora solis que uirgo maria ē sine
macula peccati natus aduenerat·
Qđ autē in dextera nudū tenet gla
diū quē pectori suo· & eode cruci
ci multa deuocione opponit· hoc
ē qđ bono & sco ope ostendit· quo
modo scripturas ꝑ spm sēm denu
dantes· in recordatione mentis electo
hominū qua & ipsi passionis re
deptoris sui dulcissime recordent·
diligit· Unde etiā in desuper in fronte
medii capitis scriptū sēnas· qa in
uisori facie que ē aie absq; ulla
indignatione pudoris ci' gau
dio unde sēnas cognoscit· & in fron
te decuri radix boni· quo ipsa pa
lam unicū & fundamentū in salua
tione sēntans ē· & in fronte sinistri
ni parcens sibi· qa sine corpore mol
liciē & uanitatē carnaliū uolupta
tū abiciens· sep se in districtione
constringit· & ornamenta ceterarū
uirtutū sibi coniungens· ut possit
ꝑfici & ꝑdurare commendit· Et· & me
diū adalia duo aspiciens· & illa
ad ipsū unitatē sua admunicē
confert· quo ipsa fortis in unanimi
tate imōris uisionis & dilectio
nis consistentia· ita ut nullū ex
sine maduritate alteri' durare
ualeat· uerba ēt admonitiones suas
ad pectus hominū dirigunt ut
p̄dicti ē· Qui autē acutas aures
imōris intellectus habet· hic in
ardente amore speculi mei ad
uerba hec anhelet· & ea in conscri
ptis animi sui conscribat·

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columba.

abacuc.

Daniel.

Jeremias.

Ysaias.

Dauid.

Samuel.

Josue.

Ezechiel.

Abrahan.

Ecclīa magna mūdi. qualis fuerit. q̄ ab angelis fr. q̄ ab hoīb; q̄ ab ihū xp̄o edificata sit. q̄ ab ipo ihū xp̄o ecclīa sit in

·m· primi angeli ·m·

Lucā imago erat edē ecclīa sit in

pauimento q̄ ab

R̄ unctione ·m· parti quarto

R̄ unctione sequenti.

Sup pauimentū aut eodem uidimus imagines

Sup pauimentū aut eodem uidimus imagines stare

Sup pauimentū aut eodem uidimus imagines stare

Sup pauimentū aut eodem uidimus imagines stare

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Monstruosū caput ī mulierē

ante usq; ab umbilico deorsū apparuit. Iudei fugā arripuerūt. ⁊ ceteri ad ciuitatē reuersi sunt.

Sepe uis ī iumenta ab umbilico deorsū apparuit.

canis. leo. equus. porcus. lupus.

Collis ⁊ fuga; a priscis habens. ⁊ ab ore cuius ⁊c

habet ⁊ ⁊c. ⁊ ab ore eius ⁊c

Enoch ⁊ helias.

Ad ultimum autem ignis.

Rx in undecima ussione:

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Decima visio. Tercie partis.

Et post hec in
summitate..;

angulū p̄monstrauit edificiū ubi p̄
dicte due partes muri ipsi illa lu ·y·
cida & lapidea uidelicet comune
te erant uidi q̄si septē graduſ can
didissimi lapidis: q̄ ad lapidē illū
magnū sup quē p̄fatus lucidus
sedens imbrono apparuit immo
dū testudinis aduolui uidebam̄.
Et sup eos dē graduſ sedes posita
erat: sup quā iuuenis quidā sedēs
uirile & nobile uultū pallidi tam
coloris & capillos subnigros usq;
adscapulas ipsi descendentes ha
bebat: purpurea tunica indut?.
Qui a capite suo usq; adumbilicū
mihi apparuit: s; abumbilico de
orsū obumbratus m̄ aduidendū
fuerat. Et ipse respiciens inmundū:
maxima foetiditudine uociferaba
tur ad hoīes q̄ in eo erant dicens:
O stulta hoīes q̄ rep̄ide & tur
piter marcentes in uobis met
ipsis: nolentes uel oculū unū api
re aduidendū q̄d inbonitate
spē uri suas: s; semp ardentes opari
malū q̄d habet concupiscentia
carnis ure recusantes ee inbona
conscientia & inrecta speculatio
ne animi uri: q̄si intellectū boni
& mali n̄ habeatis: nec gr̄am hanc
ut malū sciatis deuitare & bonū fa
cere: audite me filiū hoīs dicentē ad
uos: O ho: respice q̄d ces: du coagula
to inuenire matris tue fuisti: fuit
tunc inscius & impotens tui inue
uificatione eras: S; te datus es ubi
spē & motio ac sensibilitas ut uniat
mouearis: & te mouens intelligas
fructū ultimatis: Habes enī scien
tiā bom & mali: atq; efficaciā opan
di: Unde excusare te n̄ uales: q̄n oīa
bona ex his habeas inte: ita ut sūma
inspiratione admonitus dm dili
gas in ueritate & iustitia: t q; resi
stas inconcupiscentia & delectatio
ne iniusticie: ita ut te inbis cruciet:
& hoc modo martyrium meū colas
ubi me ipsi in his ardoribus repug
nans: crucē meā scilicet in uno cor
pore baiolando: idē illicita de
sideria fugiendo cū te delectat
peccare: Et cur ē ubi tanta potestas:
Uidelicet ut deuites malū: & faci
as bonū: Desciemia enī boni & ma
li qua intelligis q̄d homo es: mihi
responsurus es: S; bonū contēpnis
& malū oparis ardens in carnalib;
desideriis: q̄a bonū ubi q̄si graue
uidet malū autē inte facile exci
tat: Et cū hoc ē: n̄ uis te constringe
re: s; libere peccare: Q̄d feci q̄ndo
in cruce passus sū infirmitate
carnis: cū contremui ac angustiat?
sū ego filius hoīs: O bhoc requiro
ate aduersū te martyrium q̄d pa
teris in uoluptate carnis tue & in
reliq̄s tēptationib; ac illicitis desi

derus que s̄ contra uoluntatē meā·
aq; malus huīmodi nequeus que
hec subsequunt̄·in quib; te n̄ potes
excusare q̄n noueris ubi bene & ma
le operis· Sed n̄ abicio copula ·mj·
coste legalis connubiomis·que p
diuinū consiliū constituta ē immul
tiplicationē pretamonis filioꝝ ade·
ubi hoc mucro desiderio plis & n̄
insalsa uoluptate carnis·ab his fit
quib; illud sine iniuria licitū ē·
scdm q̄d cis in lege diuina p̄ceptū
ē·scilicet·scio dedicis & n̄ spū segre
garis·Bonū g̃ q̄d habes ame·dili
gere debes aduersū te·Celestis es in
spū·terrestris in carne·
Vnde que celestia s̄ debes amare·
& que terrestria s̄ conculcare·Inope
autē celestiū demonstro t̄ supnū
p̄muī·inuoluntate ū carnis tue
cui uis p̄ficere q̄d iniustū ē ibi ostēn
do tibi martiriū meū & penas q̄as
sustinui ppt̄ te·ita ut tu incontra
rius desideris t̄ mecupsi resistas·
ppt̄ amorē passionis mee·Pluri
mū intellectū habes inte plurimū
etiā census inde in̄ req̄rēdū aut·Vi
tū ubi dānū ē·multū etiā aute req̄
rendū ē·S; inomnib; his·capiat
& aduersariū tuū sū·Nā supno tac
tu tactus si inuocaueris me·re
sponsū audies ame·Si pulsaueris
adianuā·ubi apiet̄·Inspū acutis
sime scientie q̄ transfusus es·omne
q̄d tibi utile ē habes inte·Et q̄m hoc
est inte·idcirco & oculi mei acutis
sime p̄spicientes considerabunt
quid in ueniant inte·Qua ppt̄
de conscientia tua req̄ro uulnera
& dolorē cordis tui·in quib; te coer
ceas cū senseris te uoluntate tua
trahi· ... ad peccatū·& cū ita
in eo ex ... arseris q̄d tutus
liquefactus uix suspirare uales·
Ecce inspicio te·Quid tē facies·
Si tē in hoc labore uulnerato cor
de & made mutb; oculos & concus
so tumore iudicii mei inuocaue
ris me·& si ita etiā in hoc clamore
p̄seueraueris·ut t̄ succurrā aduer
sus nequicias carnis tue & contra
pugnas maligno; spūū·faciā om
ne q̄d tibi fieri desideras·amq; do
mū habitationis mee ponā inte·
Tunc g̃ fili mi respice q̄nto la ·mj·
bore & sudore magno labo
retur·ante qua semine p̄fundat̄·
S; p̄ qua semine seminat fructū·
dat fructū suū·Ergo adtende·
& considera hec·Nonne recuso
te dare hoc·ut fructū gignat
absq; sudore laboris·S; cui mihi
placuerit ipsa fructib; sup habun
dantē ita replet̄ ut hoies habun
dantissime sufficientia habeant
aliq̄ndo etiā sup habundent·&
cū uoluero ita eis attenuat̄ ut
hoies aliq̄ndo p̄fame uix uiuant·
aliq̄ndo etiā multi ui illi attenua
ti moriant̄·Sedm modū hunc·
hoies p me posim s̄·Homini illi q̄
bono corde sem̄ uerbi mei uolun
tarie suscipit·magna dona spūs
cī ut bono agro sup habundan

uer⁹ tribuo· Ille aut̄ q̄ aliq̄ndo uer⁹
bū meū recipit aliq̄ndo etiā hoc
recipe recusat· ē q̄si ager⁹ q̄ hoc
tēpore uiret· hoc aut̄ apresen· Hic
homo tam̄ omnino ñ . . . . pcr·
q̄a quā uis partū . . . . uiridia
us habet· S; hic poīa mor⁹ē q̄ nulla
intermone uerba mea recipe excop
tat· & q̄ nec admonitione spē sci
nec doctrina hominū cor⁹ suū ex
cutare uult ad bonū· Hec miraris
oho· & scire uis cur hec ita fiant·

·v.

Sed ut nec diuinitatē mortali
obtutu ualeas aspicere· sic nec se
creta q̄ mortali sensu potuis capē·
nisi q̄ntū inp̄missione ipsi⁹ tibi pos
sibile ē· Tu aut̄ uacillantē animo
tuo· huc & illuc uersaris· Vnde ue
lut aqua a calore ardentis cami
ni absorbet̄ sci spē tuus ab inque
tudine stultu animi tui obp̄rimit· ·vj·
q̄m hec scire cupis que ñ s̄ scienda
carni concepte semine humano in
peccatis· Ceua q̄ dignū tuū· & tan
ge nubes· Q̄d nē· S; hoc fieri ñ potē·
Sic nec illud· dū hoc scrutaris q̄d t.
sciendū ñ ē· S; ut herbule sensu re
giones cōphendere ñ ualent· q̄a
sensu & intellectu carent· nescientes
q̄d sint uel q̄d op⁹ sit fructu suo·
q̄m uis circūdent regiones uulta
tis usu· & ut culices aut formice
seu cēta minora aīalia ñ desiderant
dñari sup reliqua sibi similia· aut
scire siue intelligere utrum uel
significationē leonis· seu alioꝝ ma
iorū animaliū· sic nec tu cognosce
re potuis q̄d in scientia dī sit· Q̄d
tu fecisti t ubi fuisti· q̄ndo celū &
tra creata s̄· Qui hec creauit· auxili
tui ñ indiguit· Sic nec nē· Vt quid
scrutaris iudiciū dī· Cui de sup um
bre salutari tactus fueris ostende in
quoī magro cordis tui labores·
& quoī eī colas· Q̄d si labor⁹ ille m̄
placuerit· fructū operumū ubi do·
Sedm laborē tuū· erit & fructus tu
us cū mercede· Nūq̄d do fructū tre
sine labore· Sic etiā nec t facio oho
absq; sudore· quē req̄ro aīe· Habes
eī p̄me illa inte· unquā; potes la
borare· Ergo . . . diligent̄ in la
bore; ex . . . ere· & fructū inde
habebis· & cū fructū habueris· mer⁹
cede exinde consequeris· S; q̄d nē·
Vtu deuoto & puro ac simplici
corde quer⁹ me & inuenietis re
uelabo me· Vtu aut̄ uolunt
mecū ioculari & ludere uolentes
me adire sine labore animi & cogi.
tationis sue· nolentes p̄meditari
q̄d facere debeāt· me scilicet inuo
cando & consensū corporis sui in
spiciendo· uolentes tamū me app̄
hendere q̄si de gū sōno euigilent
repentino motu simulationis &
deceptionis arripientes uiā secta
tis· ut in semetipsis excogitant·
alii uidelicet in abiectione seruitū
negocioꝝ alii in commenta carna
liū alii in urginitatis pudore sup
humeros suos assumētes iugū meī·
existimantes sibi possibile ee· omē
q̄d uoluerint· nolentes uinci q̄

sint. & q̄d sint aut q̄d ꝓficere pos
sint. nec uolentes habere insciemia
sua. q̄s eos formauerit aut q̄s eox
dꝰ sit. uolentes cū tamē habere ut
domesticū suū. qui omnē uolun
tatē ipsox ꝓficiat. Sic nolo dare
donū meū. nec semmare uacuum
agrū inboīe illo qui inhuīmodi
uanitate se in coniungere cēptat.
quasi me malienatione ignoran
te nesciat. Unde & pes eī sepe inlap
sū erit. Cui & dico. O ho. q̄re n̄ inspex
isti agrū animi tui ut eradicares
inutiles herbas & spinas ac tribulos.
me uidelicet inuocando & te ipsū
considerando. anteqūm uelut ebri
& insanus a te ipsū ignorans ue
nires ad me. quo nullū lucidū op⁹
sine adiutorio meo ꝓficere potes.
Nā p⁹ hanc ꝑceptionē qua me
uelut insōno quesisti. cū inseruicio
meo tedio affectus recordatus fue
ris sōni illius unquo prius incon
suetudinalib; peccatis tuis dormi
uisti. ad eadē priora scelera insan⁹
& insciꝰ. bonū atq; adiutorio &
consolatione spūs paraclyti fraudā
tus reuerteris. Tu autē quē quesisti
ductorē & adiutorē ad hec. fallacē
scilicet & deceptabilē animū tuū.
qui te stulte inaritudinē ducebat
sine me facere posses. Et q̄d te ha
bes. Certe te miser & uacuus cades
cora me & cora pplō. atq; ut inutu
lis puluis conculcaberis. Nā q̄d ē
tibi possibile contra me. Nichil. & tu
quid potes mecū. Lucidissima
uidelicet opa que s splendidiora
solis splendore & dulciora in mōre
gustu sup mel & lac. cū desideratu
pplo manifestant. Nā cū reḡris me
unumo intellectu aīe tue ut inbap
tismo p fidē dochus es. nonne facio
tuū q̄d desideras. S; post casū suū
multu gemēdo & dolendo requiris
me. qui prius q̄m caderem me
quesisse debuerant. Quib; manū
mea porrigo dicēs. Quare n̄ quesi
stis me. Nūquid cū quererem me.
abieci uos. Et dico. O ho. si iuxta
pontē profundissime aque stares &
ppē stultissimā iactantiā & tui ob
liuionē ut me inomīb; his causis
despexisti. cū possibile t putabas te
ome q̄d uoluisti q̄si n̄ indigeres
adiutorii mei supbe intra te ipso
diceres. pontē hunc uolo deuitare.
& paqua ambulare nū prudenter
faceres. Q̄d si hoc p̄sūptuose & insi
pienter faceres. certe in eade crastina
que t subiecta adimplentē tua cra
ta ē. spm tuū exalares. S; ne t hoc
contingat p̄caues ppē p̄sentē & ui
sibile timorē aque. te absorberis
immortē. Aut si maximā arborē
abscisā ruere uideres. ne fugeres
ne abea ledereris. Vel si leones aut
ursos aut lupos t obuios aspiceres.
numq̄d si posses p timore quē su
stineres uulta te absconderes. Et cū
corporis lesionē ita fugis. q̄re n̄
deuitas crudelissimā mortē animę
tuę. Nū uidisti
aut audisti. ullū in potuisse rebel

dante casū?

lare. Nā quin ē mecū dissipabit. & sup quē ceciderō confringet. Q̄d fusti q̄ndo cęlū & tra & terra s. quę ma faciunt ut eis consummū est. Tu ū in consilio dī formatus & illuminatione ipsi tactus. p̄cepta ei transgrederis. O magna stultitia. Peramarā quę t subiecta famulat dñm tuū contēpsis & tuā ac cęlū transilis. quę creatorē suū timēs et obediunt & mussionē ipsius adimplent. q̄d tu nō facis cū nec cū incognatione aut inopę tuo uis seire nec adeū respicere. ma ut ue uis ipsū cognoscere. Qua ꝓpt si nō permueris infernus nisto iudicio te suscipiet sic & illū q̄ obduratus de cęlo precipis ē. quē tu imitatus es. Nec tamē cū lapsus fueris clamans fidelit̄ quere me. & subleuabō suscipiā te. Tu aut̄ obo multo ciens uis sūma tangere. q̄ nec infima cōprehendere uales. Unde audi me t

vij. dicentē. Si ꝓpe me admonitus inab itchone sc̄arū negotiō& aut in communia carnaliū iugū meū ferre desiderās. ante q̄m hoc aggrediaris primū clama & in hoc p seuera querens me. & inuabo te. Q̄d si etiā admonitione mea tactus me uis imitari p̄ me respiciens in uirginitatis pudore q̄a ut flos de inocasato agro nascēt sic & ego sine uirili semine natus sū. ostende in agrū animi tui immulta humilitate & alloquere me in largitate imeriō& lacrimarū tua rū & dic. O dns mus. ego indignus ho nō habeo a me ipso hanc causā ꝓficere ut uirginitatē meā possī conseruare. nī tu dñe adiuues me. quia totus culpabilis sū mortu ardentis suci de quo pullulo. in mutus miserus. frequent̄ req̄rēs causā fragilitatis mę. Unde etiā nō possū mea uirtute meretipsū expugnare ingustu dulcedinis carnis mę. cū sū arbor concepta & nata in peccatis. O b hoc tu dñe da mihi uirtute tua igneū donū q̄d inme extinguat hanc causā et hunc ardorē puersitatis. ita ut eū rectus suspirtus bibā de aq̄ fontis uiui. qui me faciat gaudere inuita qui sū eius putre dinis plus aspiciens inopa tene brarū ~~q̄m inopa tenebrarū~~ q̄m inopa lucis. Et si te in hac supplicatione studiosus & constans fueris. agrū illū patro mihi uite quē ysaac filio suo ꝓposuit eū dicebat. ecce odor filii mei sicut odor agri pleni cui benedixē dns. eum deq̄. agrū meū in corde tuo benedicā. & ut etiā subsecutus aie bat ecce dns fratrū tuo& & in cur uent̄ ante te filii matris tuę. amq̄. eodē modo & tu ante cōmunē populū subleuata generatio eris. Ego aut̄ rosas & lilia ac alia optima uirtutū pigmenta in agrū illū semi nabo & eū inspiratione spūs sci assiduę rigabo amq̄. in meradicatione humilitatis absceda a illo malū.

ma ut oculos meos circũferens eos
in uuridmate & in floridmate hui⁹
in corrupu agri pasca· Istud ẽ
meũ & pme· & nõ tuũ o ho nec pte·
Nã ego sũ flos cãpi· qm ut sine
arato⁹ campus gignit florẽ· sic
ego filiꝰ hoĩs sine uirtu cõmixtio
ne genitus sũ ex uirgine· ideoq;
hoc donũ ẽ meũ & nõ tuũ· qa tu
in peccatis conceptus in peccatis
natus es ex corruptione· S; si ide
donũ ame fidelit̃ peteris· illud
ame fiducialit̃ impetrabis· tu q·
dabo ut cosã patre meo consor-
tiũ mecũ habeas in uirginitate·
Hoc autẽ p fragilitate corporis
tui nõ poteris habere sine labore
caloris qui inte ẽ· qa humana
natura fragilitatis sue multoci
ens se ostendit inte· quã de cetera
re nõ uales· quõ caro de carne es·
S; in hoc ferre debes crucẽ meã
& imitari martyrũ meũ te ui
delicet constringendo· ma ut p
me de uincas te quid m̃ semp a
mabile ẽ qa te fragile uasculũ
scio· tẽ & ego uolo tibi cõmunica
re ac cõpati doloribꝫ tuis· Qd si
etiã his aliq̃ndo ceciderit· surgens
cicius penitentiã cor de fac· &
suscipiens saluabo te· Quida
autẽ decepta a diabolo & p du
ram es in malo putant se sci fica
tos ee cũ exactore hominẽ in se
continent a coniugio abicientes
circũcisionẽ m̃as ubi supflua s̃
in immũdis cognationibꝫ & etiã

ab negamus circũcisionẽ spẽ ubi p
ferunt malũ in locutionibꝫ & operibꝫ
suis nolentes scire q̃d hoc flagitio
sũ sit· s; tamẽ tepide obseruamus
ut caro eę integra sit a cõmixtio
ne· renuentes omnino integritati
spẽ suã· Vnde indigni cor ã me s̃· p
iecta scilicet extra legẽ tã carnale
quã spuale· qa nec in carne nec in
spũ secm iustitiã di uixerit· Nã nec
constituta sibi legẽ coniungi renu
erit· nec q̃d plus ẽ quã q̃d in lege p
ceptũ ẽ uirginitatis amorẽ seruа
uerit· Qua ꝓpt̃ indigne oculis meis
s̃· q̃m nescio q̃d sint· Non enĩ uidi
eos in p̃cepto legis ambulare· nec
in hac re q̃d plus facerent quã q̃d
eis p̃ceptũ ẽ· Vnde & repulsi auisio
ne mea s̃· Ego cõparo eos inimici tre
gigneti spinas & tribulos· ac inimi
ces herbas adultos usus· que in alti
tudine & colore suo se similant fo
lis & lilius ac aliis floribꝫ & ꝯ
herbis imẽ sucũ & dulcẽ fructũ
atq; bonũ odorẽ ad medicinã ha
bentibꝫ· & cõparo eos cuprо q̃d se
assimilat auro minus deceptionẽ
& ypocrisin auri habens· q̃m secm
hunc modũ hi hoĩes ostendunt
se habere similitudinẽ prudentiũ
uirginũ· minus fallacia & indigna
tione plenи existentes· Vnde & co
ram me s̃ ut tepidus uentus cui⁹ nec
calor nec frigus ullũ uigorẽ ha
bet· qa nec uales s̃ in calore animi
sui ut p seuerent in uirginitatis
commenta ut ceperit· nec ualent

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in frigore mundane cause ut eam
in sclaris; reb; ut sibi ꝓponunt· Nā
nec exerta legē peccāt ut publicam·
nec in fra legē ut inuſtus ſ; in semet
ipſis ut petimꝰ nec ꝓfecte iuſtꝰ nec in
iuſtꝰ ſ· S; ut catulus immundoꝝ am
maliū abiectꝰ amꝫ ſe ſentiat uilissimꝰ aīaꝫ
fortunidine etatis sue· ſic iſte ꝑpls
picit immortē qm nec se sciat uidere
aduntā· nec in se intelligit fortunidi
nē uirtutū que ſ in domo sapiēme·
Vnde & abore meo exſufflo eos· qa
indigni ſ aſpectu meo ſi ſic in pem
tentes ꝓfecerant· Nunc autē obo·
reſpice inte· Sicut quiſpiā ho ·ix·
minū ubi theſaurū daret qm te
plurimū diligeret ubiq; diceret lu
crare in hoc & eſto diues· ita ut & ſciat
ꝙſ ille ſit q t theſaurū hunc dedit· ut
te oporteret acutiſſime excogitare
quom illū utilē lucri faceret ſ dieē
inte metipſo· Theſaurus dñi mei in
opimo lucro apparere debet inme·
ita ut & ipſe laudet ex hoc· Et cū illū utilē hoc
modo augmentū multiplicaret ſ·
bonus rumor· exinde ad aures illi
qui ubi ipſū dedecat ꝓficeret· Vn
de & ipſe ex hoc recordatus tui ma
gis ut diligeret· ac maiora dona t
conferret· Sic & creator tuus facit·
Ipſe dedit t theſaurū opimū ui
delicet intellectū ualde di
ligenſ te qm creatura ipſius es· ꝑ

ceptaq; t uerba a deo conſtituta le
gis· ut eande intellectū lucrifacias
in bonis opib; diuesq; ſis in uirtutib;·
ita ut ipſe bonus dator· ꝓ hoc dili
gentius cognoſcat· Qua ꝓpt omi
hora te oportet meditari· quom
hoc tā grande donū qd ꝓcepiſti
utile tā cēnſ qm t metipſi factum
in opib; iuſticie ſplendorē ſentiaſ
reddat exte· quatenus hoīes bono ex
emplo tuo puocati deo honorē lau
dis inde exhibeant· Qd cū utilit in
omū iuſticia multiplicauerit· laus
& gratarū acho ad cognitionē di q
inſpū ſcō t uirtutes has inſpirauit
ꝓtinget· unde & ipſe in diam gre
ſue actu conuertens ꝓ dulcedinē
dilectionis ſue ~~actu conuertens ꝓ~~
~~dulcedinē dilectionis ſue actu con~~
~~uertens ꝓ dulcedinē dilectionis ſue~~
ſup habundantē magis te faciet ar·
dere in amore ipſius· ita ut conſola
tione ſpe ſci repletus ſapienter omne
qd bonū e diſcernas & maiora opa
bona facias ardentiſſimo amore
glificans patrē tuū q tibi benigne
dedit hec· Verba autē iſta oues mee
audiant & quicūq; aures uitiorū
ſpē habent ea concipiant· qa m
placet ut ſic opentur hoīes q me cog
noſcunt & diligunt ut & ipſi in ſe
metipſis intelligant q d eſt in do
mis ſpe ſci faciendū ſit· S; in eade
orientali plaga uidi sup pauimētū
pſam edificii coram eode uidente uiros
imagines iuxta ſe ſtantes· & illū
deuotiſſime inſpicientes· Contra

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aquilonē aiē īt circulū illū magnū q̄ de p̄dicto lucido sedente in throno p̄tendebāt̄ & īt̄ id̄e edificiū cū conspexissēt quasi ōia īmane pendentē· & inca imaginē hoīs usq; ad pectus apparentē· & īmundū acutissime p̄spicientē· Ante angulū ū eiusdē edificiū ad austrū uergentē imago alia iuxta ipsū edificiū sup pauimētū appariebat· quē se ad p̄dictū iuuenē cū magna hilaritate conuertebat· Et his imaginib; talis similitudo erat· Ut ceteri uultus q̄s prius uidera· sericis oīs uestiebant̄ indumētis· oīs quoq; albis uelaminib; incapitib; suis obtecte erant· excepta illa que ad exteriorē medie p̄dictarū triū stans nudo capite candidos capillos habere uidebat̄· Nulla aut̄ earū pallio circūamicta fuerat· p̄ter eande mediā ipsarū triū que albo pallio induebat̄· S; tunicis albis oēs uestiebant̄ excepta illa que in rota apparens tunicā subnigrā habebat· & p̄ter hanc que a sinistris medie earundē triū assistens tunica pallii di coloris utebat̄· Oēs etiā calciamēntis albis indute fuerant· excepta media ipsarū triū cui⁹ indumēta pedū nigra uidebant̄· & diuerso colore depicta· S; hec dissimilitudo fuit meis· In pectore imaginis que media fuit triū p̄dictarū si bi astantiū due fenestelle apparuerunt· & sup ipsas ceruus ad dextrā eiusdē imaginis uersus· ita ut ante riores pedes suos sup fenestrā dextrā eiusdē imaginis uersus· ita ut anteriores pedes suos sup fenestrā dextrā & posteriores sup sinistrā posuisset· & se q̄si adcurrendū coaptasset· Et ea dē imago dicebat·

Ego sū fortissima colūna & īmobilis leuitate instabilitatis· ita ut a flabro uentu possit cōmoueri ut foliū arboris q̄d abeo cōmoueat· & hac illac pendat· s; p durare debeo inuicto lapide qui ē uerus filius dī· Et q̄s p̄ualet me cōmouere· Quis potest me ledere· Hoc nō potest fortis aut debilis princeps aut nobilis diues aut paup· q̄n p se uerē inuicto dō q̄ nō cōmouebit̄ in eūdē· Hec ego mouebor· q̄a supra fortissimū fundamentū fundata sū· Nolo enī ee cū adulantib; qui auctoritatis mōs uias spargunt̄ nūquā intrequie stabilitatis p sistentes· s; sēp ad inferiora & deteriora cadentes· Sic aut̄ nō ego· q̄m supra firmā petrā posita sū· S; imago que a dextris ei⁹ erat· p̄dictū ceruū inspiciens aut· Quēadmodū desiderat ceruus ad fontes aquarū· ita desiderat aīa mea ad te dē· Vnde uolo transilire montes & colles acinbecillitatē dulcedinis transitorie utte respiciens tantū simplici corde ad fontē aque uiue· q̄a ipse innumerabili glā plenus ē· cui⁹ suauitate nemo saciari potē tedio saturitatis· Imago aut̄ que a sinistris ei⁹ stabat· ad p̄fatas fenestellas uidens dixē· Semp

aſpicio ſemp̄ ꝛ̄neo lum̄ uerū ⁊ c̄ ñ ꝛ̄.
nec cogitando aut ſuſpirando uel
mouendo ſaciari poſſo p̄ penia
dulcedine que ē in ſup̄no dō. Sed
imago que contra aḡlonē in rota
apparuit. in dextra manu uirtutē
ramuſculū habuit. Ipſa ū rota aſſi
due circū uolubat. ⁊ de imagine
mea immobili p̄manente. In circui
tu aut̄ ei⁹ de rote ſcripū erat. ſiq̄s m̄
miſtrat mihi ſequat̄. ⁊ ubi ſū ego il
luc ⁊ miniſter m̄s erit. ⁊ in pectore
ipſius imaginis ſculptū ego ſū ho
xiij. ſtia laudis inp̄uncta. ⁊ ipſa
imago dicebat. Ymmo tu dabo ede
re de ligno uite q̄d ē in paradyſo
di mei. q̄a fons ſalutis mortē ſub
mergens riuulos ſuos in me tranſ
fudit. ⁊ me uitam̄ in redēptione
fec̄. Imago ū q̄ ꝙ ante angulū ad
auſtrū reſpicientē apparebat tan
ta ſplendoris in facie erat. ut ea p̄
ſecte intuer̄i n̄ poſſē. S; aburroq;
latere ſuo ala albi coloris habebat.
quarū latitudo longitudinē ei⁹ de
xiiij. imaginis ſup̄abat. Et aīt. Quis
tante fortitudinis ē. ut tēptet dō
repugnare. Et q̄s huī audacie
ē. q̄ audeat me denudare ⁊ cor
rūpe immunditie odii ⁊ inui
die. Dō iuſtus ē. ⁊ uī inſincera po
teſtate ⁊ gla. Cū ſemp̄ amplecti uo
lo puro corde ⁊ leta facie. ſemp̄q;
gaudere in omnib; iuſticiis ei⁹. Nolo
aut̄ ē mutabilis. S; ſemp̄ in uno aīo
durare. ⁊ aſſidue dīm laudare. Ynō
nec diabolus nec maliuolus homo
me poterit emollire aut adhanc rabiē
doloſitatis deicere. q̄ſ ſemp̄ in matrix
pacis in recta unanimitate p̄ſeuerē.
Tranſeunte aut̄ mundo. clarī in cele
ſti uiſione apparebo. Poſt hec uidi. ⁊
ecce omē pauimētū p̄dicti edificii mei
ut albū uitrū apparuit. exſe reddens
ſplendore ſereniſſimū. S; ⁊ ſplendor
lucidi illi⁹ ſedentis in throno q̄ omia hec
mihi demonſtrabat. p̄dē pauimētū
uſq; in abyſſū reſplendunt. In cir cui
tu aut̄ illū de ſedente in throno p̄tenſū
⁊ in hoc edificiū. tra tamē apparu
it. ⁊ q̄ſi aliq̄ in multū deorſū uergens ita
ut ide edificiū exinde uelut ſup mon
tē poſitū uideret. Et lucidus q̄ ſede
bat in throno. uerū m̄ dicebat. Filius di
uinus natus ex uirgine ipſe lapis
angularis exiſtens. que hi rep̄bauer̄t
qui in lege dī ob ſalutē ſuā edificare
debuer̄t. q̄d tam facere recuſauer̄t
magis diligentes tenebras quā lucē
⁊ mortē quā uitā. potenter in his reg
nat q̄ tactu ſpē, tono omniſu implen
tudine uirtutū ⁊ bonor̄ op̄ū ſe rapi
entes. Ideirco eiā in ſūmitate orien
talis anguli p̄monſtratu edificii ubi
p̄dicte due partes muri ipſius illa
lucida ⁊ lapidea uidelicet coniunc
te ſ. q̄ſi ſeptē gradus candidiſſimi
lapides uides. quo in altitudine tu
ſtice aurei orientē q̄ lapis angula
ris in diuino ope ē emanantes. ubi
due coniunctiones neceſſarie mu
nitionis ſcilicet ſpeculatiua ſcientia
⁊ humanū opus in unanimitate q̄e
ras ſibi coherent. a dē ſeptenarius

ſcī ardenter ſalubriter ſemetipſos gerer̄i anceſtem.
ad interiora ſp̄s

ascensus candidissime fortunatinis-
plenus rectissima achone existens.
quā dns opat & pficit in homine: ut
in sex dieb; opatus in septimo requiet.

Qui ad lapidē illū magnū sup ℈ xvj.
quē pfatus lucidus sedens in ℈
throno apparet immo diu vestudinis ℈
derent aduolutu uidentē: qa omis ℈
acho que fide & ope ~~infide & ope~~ in
fidelib; hominib; pficit: umori dnī
cui ipse fortissima omipotentia psi
det q; cuncta regit auctoritate pu
dentie ipsius dignissimo cōposito
nis effectu coadunat. Unde & ℈ xvij.
sup eosdē graduſ sedes posita est: ℈
idē sup opa que dns opat in hominib;
firmissimū pthonis firmamentū re
gentis & adiuuantis eos: qa quicūq;
uult cū eo pseuerare nō decidet inq-
rore: quo ipse fortissimū sustentacu
lū existit: sup qd omis iustitia con
stituta ē. Et sup sede iuuenis quidā ℈
sedens: ē constantissimo regimine fi ℈
lius hoīs: filius uidelicet dī inomī iu
stitia cū patre & spū sco regnans dns
unus: uirile & nobile uultū habens. ℈
qua ipse fortissimus leo destruxit
mortē nobili facie sine peccato scili
cet uisibilis ueniens natus ~~natus~~ ex
uirgine: pallidi tam coloris exi
stens: qm cū trenus trenū honorē nō
quesiuit s; humillimo modicus &
paup in sca humilitate apparuit. ℈ xviij.
Unde etiā capillos subnigros usq;
ad scapulas ipsius descendentes ℈
habet: qa iudaicus pplus claritatē
fidei que in incarnatione eidē filii

mei demonstrata ē nō querens obum
bratus in umbra exterioris intellectus
legis pruacitē & infidelitatis tabuit: or-
tus tam in capite iusticie & usq; ad
humerū fortunatinis ubi pfectum
opus in humanitate ipsius filii mei
florut puenies in incredulitate
sua finē accepit. Et purpurata tuni
ca indutus ē: qm in carnale sangui
nē suū fundens: hominē q; pierat
redemit. Quod autē a capite ℈ xix.
suo usq; ad umbilicū t apparet:
hoc ē qd ab incarnatione ipsius
usq; ad psens tēpus opa que ges
sit in ecclia fidelib; manifesta s:
s; ab umbilico deorsū obumbratus
ubi adudendū ē: qa illa que ante
portē hoc usq; ad cōpletionē scli hui
huī in eade ecclia futura s nec u
deri nec sciri potest: n qm tū reue
latione diuina & fide catholica
percipiunt: qm maxime choruscan
tis ut tunc qui ante nouissimū
diē in hominib; manifestande s:
adhuc hominib; incognite latent.
Et ipse respiciens in mundū: qa ℈ xx.
idē filii dī aspectū in die sue
dirigens ad hoies; ppt p̄teritas &
futuras causas dicit fidelissima ver-
ba sue admonitionis ad eos: quin
ipsi insciis ei celestē milicia immen
tur effugientes pricula peccatorū:
& ut fortissime p̄liando supnā fe
licitatē adipiscant: in factis suis
contra dicentes penis impijs. ℈ xxj.
Sed qd in eade orientali plaga ℈
uides sup pauimentū pfati ecli ℈

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fiem corā eode. iuuene. tres imagines
iuxta se stantes & illū deuotissime
inspicientes. hoc ē qd mortu usti
cie carnalia desideria deprimūt.
indispositione oīpus patris ap
parente filio di incarne. he tres
uirtutes indeuotione unanimes
p uirtutē trinitatis constantissime
manifestante s. adipsū dirigentes
aspectū suū. qa illū infidelib; hoīb;
desiderant & quert. Vnde eiā
contra aquilonē inter circulū il
lū magnū q de pdicto lucido se
dente inthrono pcedit. & inter
ide edificiū conspicit qsi rotā in
aere pendentē. & inea imaginē
hoīs usq; ad pectus apparentē &
inmundū acutissime pspicientē.
quia aduersus diabolicas artes
inter secretā potestatē & spūalē edi
ficationē ipsius circumo mdie ei
inimīb; hominū qsi in aere pen
dens. & nē pouncia iustitie di tan
gens nē opus ipsius ineis firmit
& firmans uolunt. inqua pfectio
xpiana inconceptu mundi usq;
ad pectus fortitudinis sue appa
ret qa uirtus hec inrobore for
tissimi certaminis confidens in
dim hoīes immundo seculari con
uersantes acutissimo intuitu ad
monitionis sue cōmonet. ut inab
iectione trenoq; imittit pceden
tis filii di exemplū. constantissi
ma intentione fortit suspirantes
adipsū. Idcirco eiā ante angulū
eiide edificii adaustrū uergentē
imago alia intra ipsū edificiū sup
pauimētū apparens. se adp dictū
iuuenē cū magna hilaritate conuer
tit. qm ut casus hoīs pbonitatē sup
ni patris inardore fructuositatis
restaurarēt aduitā. hec uirtus inplen
titudine diuini opis setaria conculcans
& indulcedine sui affectus se apte ma
nifestans. ad filiū di inconsorto an
gelici ordinis cū gaudio fidelū ho
minū tendit. qa inincarnatione
eiide saluatoris psupnā uirtutē flo
rum. S; his imaginib; una similitu
do ē. qa pari deuotione dim mani
festant inhoīb; qui ipsū inopib;
suis concordit magnificant.
Vnde eiā ut certe uirtutes qs
prius audita sericis oīs uestium
indumentis. qm inuirib; suis reliqs
uirtutib; que ubi supius uelocissi
me demonstrante s dissimiles nē ex
istunt. s; inleui negotio suauissimi
opis fidelū hominū semp ad dim
patrē surstū tendentes. s. Qd autē os
albis uelaminib; incapitib; suis ob
tecte s. hoc ē qd simul incandida
ppositione legalis institutionis cū
magna colligatione ante dim capd
omniū occupante s. ut mulier ante
uirū suū uelari solet. excepta illa
que ad exteris medie p dictarū trium
stans nudo capite candidos capil
los habere uidet. qa eade inp spiritu
roboris psupnā trinitatē apparen
tis nulla sollicitudine hui' seli gra
uata incandore tamū celestis desi
derii quert dissolui & cū xpo.

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Propt̄ qđcuā nulla carū pallio cir
cūamicta ē· qm̄ abomū officio ser
uitutis denudare s̄· ꝑ qđ ab officio
libertatis fuę semꝑ uidelicet incelū
aspicere & addm̄ anhelare possent
impediri· nichil aliud desideran
tes· nisi qđ aīe a rebꝫ separatū ē·
ꝑter eandē mediā ipsarū triū quę
albo pallio induunt̄· ꝑ qđ insusten
tatione diuina pulchritudo dis
creti opis beate legis insinuat̄· cui
quo cadē uirtus ita circūamicta ob
tegit̄ ut homo pallio suo circūdat̄·
s̄· qđ tunicis albis omis uestiunt̄· hoc
ē qđ incandore bonę & absq; nigre
dine prauę morū conuersantur
qui nunequicuis & uicuis obcecate
infidelitatis obtenebrant̄· excepta
illa quę in rota apparens tunicā
sub nigrā habet· qa hęc inuolubi
litate diuine clemētie his actib; cir
cūdata ē quę in districtione sua
carni difficiles s̄· & ꝑter hanc que
a sinistris medie earundē triū· as
sistens tunicā pallidi coloris uidet̄·
ipsa inaduertentie ꝑmunimētū sū
me maiestatis addefensionē sui
circūdata & uallata lacrimabili
merore gemitus opis· in quo flens
& eiulans addm̄ semꝑ suspirat· Ysa
de omis calciamentis albis induit̄ s̄·
quō in morte filii mei lucentes
uiā pacis inimīcis hominū parant
quatinus celestia desiderent· excep
ta media ipsarū triū cui⁹ indumē
ta pedū nigra uidentur· & diuerso
colore depicta· qm̄ hęc sub ꝓtecto
ne di manens· s; magna seismata
infideliū murrisione nigredinis
a uia ueritatis deuiantiū tolerans·
& tam̄ recto tenore fidei decorata
in mortificatione filii mei n̄ diffi
dens· ꝑ multas infestationes diabo
licarū aruū & ꝑdiuersas ~~tribula~~
~~tiones diabolicarū aruū~~ & ꝑdi
uersas tribulationes morū homi
nū in sua fortitudine & pulchri
tudine ꝑseuerans· tendit ad supna·
s; tam̄ dissimiliter do ē ineis· qa
q̄mus unanimes & sibi inuicē in
operatione sint· adherentes· tamen
suas uires unaquęq; in subiectis
sibi hoīb; singulariter demonstrat
inferuore supne claritatis· ·xx.iij·
Vnde imago quę media ē triū
ꝑdictarū sibi astantiū declara
rat constantia· quę columna & mu
nimen ē earū quę sibi adherent
uirtutū· in medio hui⁹ numeri
trinitatē sc̄am significantis se
manifestans & hominib; ut in bo
nis operib; constantes sint ostendens·
qua ecia xp̄c dꝰ & homo opa sua
quę in mundo operatus ē bono fi
ne consūmauit· sic & uirtus hęc
firmamentū trium morū uirtutū in
hoīb; existens· cui magna discipli
na hoies ꝑducit addm̄· Ergo et
in pectore ipsius duc fenestelle ap
parent· q⁹d ē in cordib; hominū
manifestatio celestiū in duobus
speculis fidei demonstrata· qm̄
diuinitas & humanitas in filio di
credenda ē· ꝑ quē uirtus eadē in

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hominib; pfecta a formidine rec
tudinis sue ñ mouebit. S; sup
ipsas fenestras ceruus addextrā
eius de imaginis uersus apparet
qa sup fide hanc q̄d filiꝰ di ds &
homo credit ipse p credulitatē fi
delis ppli firmissime ponit. cū pcur
sū uelocitatis sue celeste desideriū
designans addextrā constantię
ueritat. q̄m urna cōna impfectamia
boni opis reppert. ita ut amictio
res pedes suos sup fenestrā dextrā
& posteriores sup sinistrā ponat.
quia q̄d ipse uerus ds sit nec inñ
quillitate fidei comēpnendū. aut
q̄d uerus homo sit nec meꝰ de fidei
impugnatione abullo dim uera
citer diligentię diffidendū ē. Ynd
& se q̄si adcurrendū coaptat. q̄m
saluatio animarū incursu eꝰ rep
ta ē. cū ipse immagnis doloribꝫ p
perans adpassionē crucis urnā in
ueritatē pfectamib; comulit. ut
& uirtus hec inuerbis sue confessi
onis supra designat. S ed secta
imago que adextris ei ē celeste
desiderii pfigurat. incelū semp
aspiciens & adsaluationē tendens.
pqd constantia pspitatē caducox
ñ appetens. magis felicitatē eiusdē
desiderat. Qua ppt & p̄dicti cer
uū inspicit. q̄a filii di inluci dissi
mo ope suo assidue attendens in
dulcissimis amplexib; illius satura
ri ñ poterit. quēadmodū & supi
in locutione desiderii sui affir
mat. T ercia autē imago asini

stris ei stans ostendit cōpunctionē cor
dis atq; recordationē mtus assidua
contritione exilii sui gemitū & plo
ratū. cui beata effusione constantia
contrarietatē similitudinis parvus que pdi
cio animę ē declinans. aduntā de mor
te festinat. Vnde eiā adp̄fatas fene
stellas videt. q̄m in cordib; fideliū
omnē intentionē suā adfilii di tam
in humanitate q̄m in diuinitate reg
nantē intendens ei dulcedine comu
nia uisione p fruu delectat. sicut eiā
uerbis suis ut p̄dictū ē apta manife
statione demonstrat. S ed imago
que contra aq̄lonē in rota apparet
p fectionē xp̄i & contēptū mundi
p̄tendit. q̄a plenitudo uirtutū in
abiectione sclarū p filiū di apussi
me declarata ē. q̄ inter hoies conuer
satus utrius ñ inhians. inuitatores su
os fortit adcelestia toto ardore cō
monuit anhelare. Que in dextra ma
nu uirtutē ramusculū habet. q̄m in
felicitatē saluationis aię opus uiri
dissimi & pulcherrimi germinis bea
tarū uirtutū q̄d exspiratione spūs
sci p fusū ē continet. Qua ppt & ipsa
rota assidue circū uolutā eadē ima
gine inea immobili p manentē. q̄a
media di pia cō passione se adhoies
flectens. & misertus eox cōpatiens. se
quentib; semp flexibilis ē. p fectio
ne xp̄i in contēptu mundi nullā mo
bilitatē instabilitatis habentē. s; semp
adea tendentē que s sine ulla mu
tabilitatis offensione. Qd autē inter
cursu eidē rote scriptū ē siqs mihi

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mmistrat me sequat. & ubi sū ego illic & mministet mīs erit. hoc ē q̄d ubiq; flexibilis mdia di hoc commet in se q̄d quicūq; filio di obsequiū exhi buerit exemplū ei⁹ imitando. mcēle sti beatitudine gaudebit. cū ipso consortiū sine fine adeptus anglō. Vnde etiā in pectore ipsius imaginis sculptū apparet. ego sū hostia lau dis impunctus. q̄a xp̄c sapiēt. con tēptū docens sclarū. p̄fectū consi lu suu cordib; electoꝝ suoꝝ insinuat q̄d ipsū omīs fidelis aīa hostiā patis oblatū in ligno crucis intima devo tione veneratē & adorat. cū eiā in toto tarū orbe glām & laudē eius uox & lingua omniū fideliū ppt remuneratione ē utq; n̄ cessat resona re. ut eiā ipsa in sup̄dicta loci mo ne sua apte ppalat. Imago uero quę ante angulū adaustrū respici entē apparet significat concordiā rabiē malignoꝝ spirituū fugiemē. s; consortiū beatoꝝ anglōꝝ amplec tentē. cū ipsa obamorē di scissuras infideliū deuitat & aduisionē ppe tuę pacis anhelat. Vnde & tanti splen doris in facie ē. ut eā p̄fecte intueri n̄ possis. q̄m mortifero odio & inui dia carens. maiorē claritatē manu mab; hominū parat q̄m mortalis mens capi ualeat fragili corpore grauata. S; q̄d aduersoq; latere suo ala albi coloris habet quarū latitudo longitudinē eide ima ginis supat. hoc ē. q̄d & in spūs & madūsis adsudorē iusti laboris se coniungentib; eade uirtus, puc tionē suę candidissime bonitatis extendens. plus quippe in latitu dine expansionis suę quā possi det in carnale supnoꝝ tenet. quā in longitudine nascentis humani generis habeat. q̄a finito mundo ipsa sup celos celoꝝ uolans. magis tunc quā nūc in claritate sua ap parebit. ubi nichil tenū nichilq; caducū querit. s; q̄d celeste & et nū ē dulcissima amplexione ama tur. & ubi oīa clara atq; leta p durabunt. abstersa oīi nebula inquitatis. q̄ ad modū & in uerbis pfessionis ipsius uirtutis fidelit denunciat. xx.viij.

Quod uides pauimentū p̄dic n edificii totū ut albū ui trū apparens. & exse reddens splendorē serenissimū. hoc ē q̄d fortitudo uere fidei por tans et explanans opus & ciuita tē di. tota in candore & inspecu lo simplicitatis purissima & pla nissima ē. eade fide cū oīb; op̄ib; adse punctib; in ipsa ciuitate di uigilantē & edificantē quam uis dīs inicio bonoꝝ op̄ū ho minū p̄splendorē serenissime intemptionis tangat. & in fine ex̄ pīaluationē anime acutissime cognoscat. q̄a pacta oratione fi des ipsa ostendit. qua deuotione queq; aīa dīm quesiuit. xxv.viij.

Vnde & splendor lucidi illi sedentis in throno q̄ oīa hec

tubi demonstrat ꝑ dē pauimētū usq;
mabÿssiū resplendet·qm gr̄ā om xxx·v·
mpotemus di cuncta regemus &
oīa quę mhac uisione cognoscis
tubi manifestamus·ꝑ fortitudinē
fidi diabolū mpdicione mortis
ad nichilū redegit· Quom· D̄s ser-
pentē antiquū & mortē ēmę pdi
cionis ꝑ purissimā fidē quę ē mter
generatione spē & aque deiecit
mpfundū ꝑ petuę confusionis for-
mer· ꝓtransiens tenebras mfideli
tatis· cū filius di fideles suos ad
monuit· ut uerba doctrinę suę
abipso accepta mmundū emittę
rent· Sed q̄d mter· circulū illū
desidentę mthrono ꝓtensū· & mtę
hoc edificiū ꝓta tamē apparet·
& quasi aliq̄mulū deorsū uer-
gens· ita ut ide edificiū excinde
uelut sup montē positū uideat·
hoc ē q̄d mter fortitudinē pote
statis omnipotis di & mter electū op
bonitatis ipsius plurimi hoīes s̄·
qui uerā fide abnegantes magis
tēporalia quā ętna sectant· ut s̄
pagani iudei ac falsi xp̄iani sēp
de malo mmalū descendentes·
nec mcaducis reb; speculū carbo
tice fidei sursū aspicientes· s; ma
gis muoluptatib; suis prauū op
mpfundū peccatis ꝓ habere la
borantes· ita ut maximū & pul
cherrimū opus di mter tenebras
hui' infelicitatis· omī hominū il
lud querentia mabitudine sūme
bonitatis pfa apparat· ut io h̄s

xxx·

dilectis euglista mtui clamone diu
na testat dicens· Et sustulit me
mspū mmontē magnū et altū· Et
ostendit m̄ ciuitatē scām ierlm des
cendentē decelo· habentē claritatē
di· Hoc tale ē· Spē eleuat spm· Quom·
mmurtutē sua spē ses trahit hominis
mentē de ponderē carnis· ut possit
uolare mmissione oculoꝝ spē illius
qui mmota uidet ñ obscuratus ce
citate carnalium uoluptatū· Quid ē
hoc· Scilicet spē ses sursū eleuat
spm hoīs admontē celestiū deside
rioꝝ· ut ꝑspicue considerare ualeat
opa opandi quę mspū pagenda s̄·
q̄d ē magnitudo opū di cui mille
artes diabolici opis subtrahere s̄· ita
q̄d eas dñari sic̄ mons planicies ꝓ
ꝑferē· & q̄d mmobile fundamētū
est sicut mons q̄ de loco suo ñ tran
sit· tamē cuā altitudinis existens
q̄d mortalis homo ea msensu suo
enarrare ñ possit q̄a omnē humā
nā prudentiā sup excellit quę de
ꝓmissis mtib; ꝓmanū q̄mantū ascen
dit· Et sic fideli & sēe aīe opa spē
ostendunt· sic̄ etiā celestis ierlm si
ne ope manuū carnis popus aspū
sco dānū spīritalit̄ edificanda ē· ita
magnitudine & altitudine scoꝝ
opū inspū apparent· ut eadē ci
uitas inopib; bonis quę tactu spē
sci fiunt inhoīb; adornabit· qm
ipsa sic supra montē posita et in
innumerosis edificationib; edifica
ta inse nobilissimos lapides q̄ sēe
aīe mmissione pacis s̄ colligit· ab

omī puru
ynde etiā
ut aut fi
sapientia
strat· S; et
ficię pacis
tus ierlm
orta uenie
ne celi· qm
dit & ꝓtam
bona opa
dum & mp
q̄d fidelis
generans
adipiscit·
spē sci ꝓte
bent clarit
nauit· Qui
bonis opib;
ta q̄d ipse
cognoscit
mis cade
mis decora
di bona op
bilib; mira
reuelatio p
ta· ut inspu
inhoīb; pa
parent· I
ds opat ab
& abocciden
lui suū in
ame consti
natū fuerat
qui nouissi
hoc opus su
pdictis mm

omī p̄ imundicie peccam purgatos. Unde ecā cū ipsis p̄ciosis lapidib; ut aurū fulgeāt. qa in bonis hoīb; sapiēa opus suū clarificat. S; eadē opa in rectitudine iustic̄ pacta. cū quib; ecā ipsa eccle stis ut sīm adornata p̄ficīt. unde exorta uenerīt. ī. idelicet de altitudine celi. q̄m ut ros de nubib; descendit & ītam humore suo p̄fundit sic bona opa ad dō in homines descendunt & infusione spūs scī rigant. ita q̄d fidelis ho bonū & suauē fructū generans consorciū supne ciuitatis adipiscīt. Sic g̃ celestia opa p̄donū spūs scī de celo in hoīes uenienta. habent claritatē in ipso a q̄ ecā ema nauerīt. Quom. q̄ia claritas di in bonis op̄ib; iustox hominū fulget ita q̄d ipse tanto ardencius in ea cognoscīt adorat. & colit. p q̄s ut utes eade scā ciuitas ornamēta suis decorat. q̄a homo adiutorio di bona opa faciens. cū innumerabilib; mirabilib; suis ueneratī. Et sic ī reuelatio poculos spūs usa & cognita. ut inspiratione spūs scī recta opa in hoīb; pacta coram dō in supnis apparent. I taq; ut p̄monstratū ē .xxx.ij. dō opat̄ aboriente. & septentrione & aboccidente ad meridiē. ubi p̄filiū suū in dilectione eccl̄e omē q̄d ante constitutionē mundi p̄destinauī fuerat ad effectū illū p̄dicīt qui nouissimus dies ē. sicut ecā hoc opus suū p̄se educens illud cū p̄dictis in mistica designatione turribus & uirtutib; confirmauit & ornauit atq; in summa p̄fectione cōpletū reducet ad semetipsū. Quom. Iustitia iustē actionis post casū ade designata in noe. a nouissimū diē uendit multis miraculis circūuallata que dō in electis suis p̄ diuersa tēpora demonstrare nō cessauit. ut. ī. excaratione in noe. & in ostensione in abrahā & in moyse. & in operatione in filio suo. Quom. Ante tēpora in corde celestis patris erat q̄d filiū suū in fine tē porū. pueā salute & redēptione p̄dm hoīs mittere uoluit in mundū. qui natus ex uirgine oīa que antiqui scī spūs scō repleti p̄dixerant p̄fecto ope cōpleuit. ut dum brachiū hoīs se primū flectit ad opus & ut deinde manus opat̄. Quid ē hoc. Iustitia uidelicet in sto iudicio dī. cū acta de tra floridiana. p̄fectus ē cepit primū in noe mouere ut imprima iuuentu ra humeros tendens ad fortiora in abrahā & in moyse q̄si ad flexibilior ē sedam in electā brachia sic tandē p̄ueniens ad p̄fectū op̄ in filio dī p̄ quē oīa signa & p̄dicta uet̄is legis apto ope cōpleta s̄. & p̄ quē oīs uirtutes cū quib; celestis ī. q. s̄m in filiis suis adornabīt certissima declaratione in regeneratione spūs & aque manifestante s̄. ut manus indignis suis opus q̄d opat̄ ad p̄fectā ostensionē p̄ducīt. Hoc m̄ opus meū ad gl̄am meā & actuā confusio

nē ꝓficio o diabole t ꝓfortitudinē
brachii mei opposuisti maquilone
in septemtrione et occidente nec
ñ ea sedim solis cursū ubi resistens
aboriente et ameridie tarde sub
uertens occidente quatin in
omī parte confusus sis qa mea
mea que mons ē fortitudinis ad
unitatē tuū ourpissime falsator
facio op iusticie et sētatis ita ut
tu deuictus omnino intereas quo
lebas ut plebs mea intraret. Qui aū
acutas aures intioris intellectus
habet hic inardente amore specu
li mei aduerba hec anbelet et ea
inconsciemia animi sui ēscribat.

xi. Visio terre partis.

Ein uidi ad aglonē.

Et ecce ibi q̄nq; bestie stabant qua
rū una erat ut canis igneus s; ñ ar
dens una ut leo fuluꝰ coloris alia
ut equus pallidus alia ut niger
porcus alia ut lupus griseus se ad
occidentē uertentes. Et ibi inocci
dentē coram eis de bestiis uidi q̄dā
collis q̄nq; apices habens apparu
it ita ut aparte cuiq; bestie fu
nis unus adquēq; apicē eidē col
lis extensus ēt omīs subnigri co
loris. p̄ter funē illū q̄ aborte lupi
tendebat q̄ exparte nigri et ex
parte alb; uidebat. Et ecce mon
te uuenē illū quē prius sup an
gulū communem dictū lucidi
et lapideū muri pfam edificii pur
pureā tunica indutū undeq; sup
eundē angulū murū uidi s; nē ab
umbilico suo deorsū in apparentē
ita uidelicet ut abumbilico usq;
ad locū illū ubi uix discerni q̄si
aurora fulgeret ibidē uidit lux
cū cordis suis uultu transuersū iacente
et abipso loco usq; ad mēsurā duo
rum digitorum transpositorum supi tangen
tē talū suū umbrosus ēt ac ut ab
eadē mēsura supi tangente talū
pedes suos lacte candidiores
apparebat. S; et illa muliebris ima
go quā ante abarte q̄d ē ante ocu
los di prius conspexerā nē ea in
ibidē uerū ostensa ē ita tam q̄d
ea modo ea abumbilico uentris
sui deorsū uidere. Ha abumbili
co suo usq; adlocū illū ubi mu
lier cognoscēt uarias et squamo
sas maculas habebat. In eodē aū
loco muliebris cognitionis mon
struosū et nigerrimū caput appa
ruit igneos oculos et aures ut au
res asini et nares et os ut nares et
ut os leonis habens ac magno hia
tu frendens et uidit ferreos ac
horribiles dentes horribilit acu
tos. S; abeodē capite usq; adgre
nua sua eadē imago alba et ru
bea et uidit multa commotione
tunsa erat abipsis autē genib;
usq; adduas bonas que putans
uersū supi tangentes talū albe

Et in fine. none uisiones.

uidebam̄ sanguinea apparebat. ℣
Et ecce idē monstruosū caput se ℣
tamo fragore a loco suo dissoluit. ℣
qđ omīs cāde muliebris imago ℣
in omīb; m̄bris suis inde concute ℣
ret̄. S; & uelut magna massa mul ℣
ti stercoris ipsi capiti coniuncta ℣
ē. unde illud sup quenda montē ℣
se eleuans a imis dinē celoq; ascen ℣
dere tēptauit. Et ecce uelut idē ℣
tonitrui repente uenies idē ca ℣
put tanta formidine repulsit. ℣
qđ & de monte eodē cecidit & qđ ℣
spm suū in mortē emisit. Vnde ℣
subito ferens nebula ipsū montē ℣
totū cōphendit. in qua idē ca ℣
put tanta sorde inuolutū ē ut ℣
astantes ppli in maximū tū orē mit ℣
terent̄. ipsa aut̄ nebula circa ℣
eundē montē aliq̄ in tuitu diu ℣
in morantur. Qđ astans ppls cernēs. ℣
multo tumore concussus adinuicē ℣
dicebat. Heu heu q̄d hoc ē. Q̄d u
det̄ uobis hoc fuisse. Ach nos mi
seros. q̄s nos iuuabit. Aut q̄s nos
liberabit. Nescimus enī. quom̄ de
cepti sum̄. O mīps dns. miserere no
bis. Reuertam̄, igit̄ ppere in ecclā
mentū eu gliū xpī. q̄m ach ach a
mare decepti sum̄. Et ecce pedes ℣
pīsare muliebris imaginis candi ℣
di apparuer̄t. splendorē sup ℣
splendorē solis reddentes. Audi ℣
uiq; uocē de celo m̄ dicentē. primū.
Quā uis oīa q ue in tra s ad
finē suū tendant. ita qđ
mundus in defectu uarijs

suarū postmis ad exemū suū mul
tis erumnis & calamitatib; opp̄s
sus incurret̄. tam̄ sponsa filii mei
tā apīnuncius filii p dictionis. q̄m
ab ipso p dnore in filius suis mul
tū fangata nequaquā commer̄et̄
quāuis aberas multū impugnet̄.
cū ipsa in fine seloq; robustior et
ualidior exurgens pulchrior
& clarior reddat̄. quanñ hoc m
adamplexus dilecti sui suauius
& dulcius p̄cedat. Qđ & hec uisio
q̄m cernis mistice designat. Ysides ℣
enī adaquilonē & ecce ibi q̄nq; ℣
bestie stant. que s̄ in carnalib;
desideriis quib; macula peccati
ñ de ē q̄nq; ferocissimi cursus
tēporalium regnoq; feroces in se
bachantes. Quarū una ē ut ℣
canis igneus s; ñ ardens. q̄a cur ℣ .ij.
sus tempoq; illoq; hoies sue consti
tutionis mordaces habebit. in
sua q̄de estimatione uelut ignis
appetentes s; in iustitia dī ñ ar
dentes. Et una ut leo fulua co ℣ .iij.
loris ē. q̄m cursus ille bellicosos ℣
hoies sustinebit. multa q̄de bel
la mouentes s; in eis rectitudinē
dī ñ inspicientes. q̄a in fulua co
lore regna illa incipient fauga
tionē debilitatis incurrere. .iiij.
Alia aut̄ aut̄ ut equus pallī ℣
dus. q̄a tēpora illa hoies in
diluuio peccati lasciuos. & inue
locitate uoluptatis sue opatio
nē bonarū uirtutū transilien
tes, p ducunt. ubi tunc cor reg

Quā uis oīa q ue in tra s ad
finē suū tendant. ita qđ
mundus in defectu uarijs

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nox illox impallore ruine fuc con
fringet qm rubore formidinis
. v. ⁊ fuc ia pdct. Sed alia ut niger
⁊ porcus: qm cursus ille rechorcs
magna nigredine tristicie in se
metipsis faciem habet: & se lu
to immundicie inuoluem⁹ ui
delicet diuina lege immutus con
tra ricamb; formicationu & alioz
simuliu malox p̄ponem⁹: ac
multa scismata diuinox p̄ceptox
vi. ⁊ inscitate machinam⁹. Alia ⁊
⁊ ut lupus griseus: qa illa tepora
habebunt hoies multas rapinas
ta impotestamb; qm inreligs suc
cessib; sibimetipsis inferem⁹:
cu inbis certaminib; nec nigros
nec albos: s; uelut griseos inuer
sucus suus se ostendem⁹: capta
regnox illox ea diuidentes dei
cium: quo tc uenier tepus irre
tucionis multarū animarū ubi
error erroz abinferno usq; ad
celu erigit: ita qd filii lucis tor
culari martyrioz suox impo
nunt filiu di n negantes s; fi
liu pdicionis abicientes: qui
diabolicus arrib; uoluntates su
⁊ as placere tentabit: Et hec bestie
⁊ se adoccidentē uertunt: qm
hec caduca tepora cu occiden
te sole cadunt qa sic ille ort
& occidit: ita etiā faciunt ho
mines cu hic nascent & cu ille
vii. ⁊ morient. Inde etiā ibi inocci
⁊ dentes corā eis de bestiis uelut
⁊ qda colles qnq; apices habes
⁊ apparet: qa incarnalib; conce
pis centis in ipsis excursib; dis
posita potestas qnq; abundi
⁊ nū p palata ostendit: ita ut a
⁊ bore cuiq; bestie fumus usq; ad
⁊ quecq; apice eide colles excrescit
⁊ s. qm abinicio eorunde tepox
tenor plexitatis adquaq; abun
dine dispositc potestatis prendit:
⁊ omis subnigri coloris p̄ter fune
⁊ illu qd abore lupi tendit qd ex par
⁊ te nigri & ex parte alb; uidetur:
qa iste plexitates s̄ inuaricate
contumacie uoluptatis hominū:
tenore illo qd inuerocitate rapine
posuis e in parte nigredinis mul
tas inqtates prendente ita tam
qd excipsa hi immutto candore
iustitie p̄cedunt qd torrentib; mi
raculis filio p̄dicionis ut ipsi re
sistant occurrent: quēadmodū
seruus mis iob de iusto uiro iusti
cia faciente ostendit dicens: viii.
innocens contra hypocrita sus
citabit: & uincebit iustus uia
sua: & mundis manib; addet for
titudine. Hoc tale e. Qui innocēs
e sanguine opis ide homicidii
& formicationis & similiu malox
opu: uelut ardens scintilla con
tra illu excitat qd sep̄ inopib; suis
mentit. Quom. Qua ille mel no
minat s; uenenu deuorat: & ami
cu uocat que sic inimicu suffocat:
uidelicet cu dulcia uerba sonat
s; int se malicia habet: & cu ami
co blande loquit s; cu insidias

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occidit· S; q̄ habet urgā indigna
peccora a se ipso fugans exrecto m
nere cordis sui habet etiā clara m
nera corā fulgentē sole· q̄m ipse
clara scintilla & clara lux indō sus
citat· q̄si fulgens facula· atq; ma
fortissimis purissimisq; opib; se
circūferens ipsis apponit fortē
loricā et incidentē gladiū· a se
etiā uicia expellens & uirtutes si
bi concilians· Qua ꝓpt etiā in ·xi·
oriente iuuenē illū quē pri sup
angulū coniunctionis p̄dicti luci
di & lapidei muri p̄fati edificii
purpurea tunica indutū uidera
sup eundē angulū terrū uidet· q̄a
oriens iusticie filī hoīs p̄sidens
formidini coniunctionis specu
latiue scientie & humano opi bo
nitatē patris surgū edificantē ubi
idē filī hoīs in uoluntatē patris sui
sanguinē suū p salute mundi fu
dit ut· t· p̄monstratū ē· ibi ipse &
modo sedens in eadē altitudinē
ad confirmationē ueritatis· t· de
nuo p̄mysteria miraculoq; suoq;
manifestat· sic tam ut nē abum
bilico suo deorsū· t· appareat· q̄m
a formidine membroq; suoq; q̄d ē
electoq; ipsī· ubi modo ipse spon
sus eccle uiget usq; ad cōplexionē
eorundē membroq; ipsius multa ad
miranda & obscura signa uidet·
ita uidelicet ut a bumbilico usq;
ad locū illū ubi uir· discernit·
q̄si aurora fulgeat· q̄a a p̄fectio
ne illa cū iā fidelia m̄bra sua p
fectionē formidinis habeant· usq;
ad t̄pus filii p̄dictionis q̄ se uirū
uirtutis ē̄ simulabit· in rectitudi
ne se deuote colentiū fulgorē in
stitue demonstrabit· Unde & ibidē
uidit ira cū cordis sui iniansuetu
sū iacet· q̄d ē in p̄fectione illa q̄
filī iniquitatis multos cruciat· electos inferet gaudiū carnis cōq; q̄
iā ꝓpt· dira tormenta· que incorpo
ribus suis pacium· a corporalib; nex
ib· solutum· ad requiē transeuntes·

Sed a b ipso loco usq; ad m̄suram ·x·
duoq; digitoq; transpositoq; supi
tangentē talū suū umbrosus ē·
q̄m a p̄fectione hac q̄m fidelis
a filio diaboli passuri s· usq; ad
doctrinā duoq; testū scilicet enoch
& helie trena despicientiū & ad sup
na desideria laborē suos ponen
tiū fides ecclastice institutionis
uelut indubio habenda ē· hoīb;
multo merore dicentib;· Quid ē
q̄d dicit· de ihu· iherū ē an non· ·xv·
Sed ab eadē m̄sura supi tan
gentē talū ꝓtinus pedes suos
lacte candidior appare· q̄d ē a
testimonio eorundē testū etiā
p̄mia expectantiū· filio p̄dicto
nis de uicto· filī hoīs ante finē mun
di catholica fide candidissimi
& pulcherrimi fulgebit· ita q̄d ut
pala ueritas ꝓpsiū cognoscat· &
q̄d falsitas in filio iniquitatis ꝓ
oīa abiciat· ut & dauid seruus
m̄s testat· ubi dic· Rex ū leta ·xvi·
bit· indō laudabunt· oīs q̄ iurant

ineo· ꝙa obstructū ē os loquentiū
iniqua· Hoc tale ē; Pfunda scelerata
quę ē magna statura inhoīe scelu
cet pulchrā formā linguarū homi
nū uoluntate & dispositione di
tangens stremuit simphonijs xviij
inaltari dī ꝙa din nouit· & beati
inlaudib; sonantiū mutuū cui rum-
torrens ore uerbox impurissimo
fonte fortissimi dnatoris faciem
tes· cui inp dno tēpore destruunt
hiatus sibilox diabolicarū artiū
que mores hominū turpit ificiunt·
xiiij Sed & illa muliebris imago q̄m
amore altaris q̄d ē ante oculos
di prius conspexerat· nē etiā t ibi
de meritū ostendit· ꝙa sponsa filii
di purissimis orationib; scox instans
& eas supne inḡsionis sedm q̄d t
p̄monstratū ē deuotissime offerēs·
m etiā t in eis de sacrarijs passer
tione iustitie declarat· ita tam q̄d
eā m etiā abumbilico uentis sui de
orsū uideas· q̄m ipsa apertatione
illa q̄ nē ecclastica dignitate pue
bit usq; adplenitudinē filiox ip
sius mutus miraculox misteriis ad xv
tationē multox t manifestatur·
Nā abumbilico suo usq; ad locū
illū ubi mulier cognoscit uari
as & squamosas maculas habet·
q̄d ē a fortitudine illa qua m in
filius suus digne & laudabilit ui
get usq; ad tēpus illud ubi filius
p̄dictionis artes illas q̄s diabolus
p̄me mulieri inmisit p̄fidere co
nabit· uarietatē & duritiā in
obiectionis multox uicioq; tā infor-
nicatorius q̄m inmoratoris & rapa
cib; malis lamentabilit & miserabi
lit sustinebit· Quom· q̄m hi q̄ eā
diligere deberent· eā acrit p̄se
quent· Vnde etiā inco de loco
muliebris cognitionis monstruo
sū & nigerrimū caput apparet·
ꝙa cū artib; p̄me seductionis in
monstruosis turpitudinib; & in
nigerrimis inḡtatib; p dictionis
filius insanies uenter· igneos &
oculos & aures ut aures asini &
nares & os ut nares & ut os leonis
habens· cū furibundos actus neḡs
simi ignis & turpissimos sonitus
contradictionis dm abnegari faci
ens· hoīb; inmittit· ita pessimū fetō
rē sensib; eox infundens ac crude
lissima rapacitate ecclastica insti
tuta dilanians· scilicet magno hia
tu frendens & uelut ferreos ac hor-
ribiles dentes horribilit acuens·
q̄m uoracissimo rictu uicioq; for-
titudinē & insanā mordacitatis
sue sibi consentientib; pessime in
figit· Et a beo de capite usq; ad
genua sua eade imago alba et
rubea & uelut multa contritio
ne tunsa ē· q̄m a pessima decep
tione qua idē filii p dictionis hoīes
primū blande & lenit seducere
conabit· usq; ad tēpus illud cū eos
ia crudeli inflectere & incuruare
tēptabit· ecclā in filius suis albe
dinē uere fidei· s; in ipsa angustia
sanguinei stuporis ac maximas

erunas dñi̊sarū passionū sustinebit·
ipsis aū genib; usq; adduas xvis · q
bonas que ꝑ̄ suersiū supi̊ tan · q
gentes talū albe uident̄ sanguinea q
apparet· q̄a cū ia uelut motionē
oppssionis sue sustinuerit usq;
adduos testes uernatis q̄ ecclām
fortissime communebunt ia circa
consūmationē mundi candorē iu
stitie & rectitudinis ostendentes
sceleratissimas psecutiones & cru
delissimas effusiones sanguinis
inhis qui eundē pdmorē comēp
serint paciet̄· Quid ē hoc· Cū fili?
pdicionis incommutabia doctrina
sua ia fiducia & fortitudinē fal
lacē confortatus acceptū· tē & eccla
incursu festinationis sue nobilis
simo sanguine pfundet̄· ubi et
ipsa tē plenū ia celeste habitacu
lū construet̄· Nā uos o plantee
rerū tē in optimo auro ꝑ san
guinē sēq; fulgebitis· q̄a dia
bolus tē extinguet̄ qm̄ mbra
supni regis psecutus ē· ita q̄d ipse de
magno tēpore suo adnihilū redigēt̄·
Sō uos hoīes q̄ in ipsis habitare de· xvis ·
sideratis· illū fugere· & dñm qui
uos creauit adorare· In sex enī dieb;
pfecit dñs opa sua· & in septimo req̄
euit ab ope suo· Q̄d ē hoc· S ex dies
sex numeri scli s̄· ſ; in sexto noua
miracula mundo edita s̄· ut enā
in sexto die dñs opa sua cōpleuit·
Nunc autē mundus in septimo nu
mero scli ante nouissimū diē ē·
sic in die septimo· Quom· ꝑ pbete

uoces suas cōpleuer̄t· fili? enā mis
uolumtatē meā in mundo pfecit·
& apte euglm in toto mundo pdi
catū ē· ſ; & hoc ꝑtēpus tēpoꝝ pleni
numeri & ꝑ plus tēpoꝝ annoꝝ eide
pleni numeri· quā uis in multa
diuersitate morū hominū· tam
pme bene fundatū pstruit· xviis ·
Sed nē catholica fides impplis
suacillat & euglm ineisde hoīb;
claudicat· fortissima enā uolumi
na que ꝑbatissimi doctores multo
studio enucleauerant utut pi tedio
diffluunt & ab; utte diuinarū
scripturarū ia repesactus ē· unde
nē loquor· p̄ n̄ loquentē hominē
de scripturis· nec edoctū de tpe no
magistro· ſ; ego q̄ sū· dico ꝑ eū noua
secreta & multa mẙstica· que hac
tenus in uoluminib; latuer̄t· uelut
homo facit q̄ limū sibi ꝑ mū cōpo
nit & deinde exco q̄sq; formas secm
uolumtatē suā discernit· O fruc xix
tuosi doctores boni lucri· aiās usās
redimite & hunc sermonē fortū
clamate nec adipsū increduli esto
te q̄a sullū speratis· n̄ illū· ſ; me q̄
ueracē sū comēpnitis· Vos nāq; ꝑ plm
meū sublege mea nutrire debetis·
habentes curā ~~usq; ad pfinitū tēp~~
~~illi? curationis eū deficiet omis cura~~
usq; ad pfinitū tēpus illi? curatio
nis cū deficiet oīs cura omnū labo
ſ; de hoc tēpore habetis tēpora tē
porū pfixe p̄ destinationis· ad tēp?
illud curretis in quo fili? pdictio
nis uenier· conualescite g? & confor-

tammu electi mei p̄cauentis ne inla
queū mortis cadam⁹·ſ; uehementiſſi xxiij.
mū uexillū hoc ſermonū eleuauit &
ſup filiū unigenitus ruit·Nā inerro
re ſemitarū illarū·que p̄currunt
& ſubſequunt̄ filiū p̄dictionis·que
uos amice p̄m nominauit·ueſtigia
illi⁹ imitamini q̄ uos uia ueritatis
edocuit·cū incarne in mundo cū
magna humilitate & nō cū ſuperbia
apparuit·Audite q̄ & intelligite·
xx· Xp̄c cui dicit ecclē·de tēpore no
uiſſimi erroris·Oportet ut
ecclām in ipſa hora cū infine tēpoꝝ xxvij·
maledictus maledictionis uenit·
qui ē maledictio maledictionū·ue
lut filius mis in euangelio de ciuitate
peſſimi erroris teſtat̄ dicens·
xxvj Et tu capharnaū·nūquid uſq;
in celū exaltaberis·uſq; in in
fernū deſcendes·Hoc tale ē·Otii an
tiquū inimicus·foſſa abſconſionis ex
iſtens·ualas ſimulationis ypocri
tarū habens·quoniam in excelſo pa
rietū ſtare poſſes cū oculus tuus
nequicias uicioꝝ inſpiciat·que
ardens lumē ſtercore abſcondunt
dicentes·q̄ſſimilis ē parricide in
ipocriſi·quē ſtultu dñator nom
nāt·Nūq̄d celū immutaculis sig
norū habebis·cū digitū tuū tar
taro immiſiſ·Quom·Opa tua fun
du infernū penetrāt·ineuitabilia
te abſorpta iacebis·ma q̄d etiā ide
infernus ſtercorē illū euomet in q̄
mundus amaritudinē mortis in
p̄dictore p̄dictionū uidebit·S; ca
put ſine uentre & abſq; ceteris mēbris
ee nō debet· Caput ecclē filius dī
eſt·uentr & cetera mēbra que ſequunt̄
ecclā cū filius ſuus ē·Ecclā aute nō du
in mēbris & in filius ſuis p̄fecta ē·ſ;
in nouiſſimo die cū numerus electoꝝ
implebit̄·tc & ecclā plena ē·S; &
tunc in ultimo die turbatio orbis
terrarū fit·cū ego dicā quatuor elemēta
abluo cū illo q̄d mortale in carne
hoīs ē·cū & te inconſūmatione ſeli
plenū gaudiū ſobolis ecclē erit·Iſte
enī p̄dictū ē·in ſex diebus p̄fecit dñs
opa ſua· Quinq; dies q̄nq; nu
meri ſeli ſ;·in ſecreto noua miracula
mundi ſpalata ſ;·uelut in ſexta die
primus homo formatus ē·S; nunc
ſextus numerus finitus ē uſq; ad
ſeptimū numerū·in q̄ nē curſus
mundi uelut in ſeptima die requie
poſitus ē·q̄a labor ille quē primus
fortiſſimi doctores in p̄fundite
clauſoꝝ ſigilloꝝ ſcarū ſcripturarū
habuerūt·modo apertus exiſtens ap
te p̄ferendus ē in lenitate uerboꝝ
uelut uerba hui⁹ libri ſ;·q̄ſi in ſepti
ma quietis die·Sex enī dies opis ſ;·
ſeptima requies ē·numerus dierū
aliuſ nō ē·q̄d ſup ē t obo ſciendū nō ē·
ſ; in ſecreto patris ē·S;·uos oboies
de tēpore hoc·tēpus tēpoꝝ incur
ſu uſo habeti⁹·ante qua homici
da ille ueniat q̄ fidē catholicā p
uertere cupiet·q̄d aute ē de inde
fiat·nec tēpus nec momētū uobis
de hoc ſciendū ē·ſic nec q̄d poſt
ſeptē dies ebdomadis ſit ſcire pote

put sine uenire & absq; ecclie membris
ee ñ debet. Caput ecclie filius dei e-
uenit & ecclia membra que sequuntur
ecclia cui filius suus e. Ecclia autem ñ diu
in membris & in filius suus perfecta e. S; in
nouissimo die cum numerus elector
impletus fuerit & ecclia plena e. S; & cum
in ultimo die turbato orbis statu
fuerit cui ergo dies quinquies centena abluo
cum illo qd mortale in carne hoies e.
cum & cum in consummatione scli plenum
gaudium sobolis ecclie erit. Ipsemi p
dictum e. in sex diebus perfecit dns opa sua.
unusquisq; dies quisq; numeri scli s. in
sexto noua miracula in uteris p
palata s. uidit in secta
die primus homo formatus e. S; nec
secundus numerus finitus e usq; ad
septimum numerum in quo nec cursus
mundi uidit in septima die requie
positus e. qa labor ille que prius
fortissimi doctores in profunditate
clausos sigillos scarum scripturarum
habuerit. nam apostolus existens apte profe
rendus e in lectionibus uerbos uidit
uerba hui libri s. qsi in septima
quietus die. Sex enim dies opis s. sep
tima requies e. numerus dierum
alius ñ e. Qd sup e. et ohomo scien
dum ñ e. s; in secreto patris e. S; uos oho
mines de tempore hoc tempus tempos
incursu uro habeatis. ante qua ho
micida ille ueniat q fide catholi
ca peruertere cupiet. Qd autem dein
de fiat. nec tempus nec momentum uos.
de hoc sciendum e. sic nec qd post
septem dies ebdomadis sit scire pote
stis. s; solus pater hoc nouit q hec
in sua potestate posuit. De diebus
enim ebdomadis aut de temporibus.
tempos scli. amplius et ohomo sciendum ñ e.

Sed post quinq; numeros scli ce- :xx.iiij.
lestia miracula mundo edi
di. sic & in quinq; diebus alia creatu
ra ~~ante hominem creatura~~ ante ho
minem creata fuerat que hominu
subiecta e. Sic enim & plenitudo
paganos & iudeos fuerat & diuer
sa scismata diuersos malos tam gen
tilis quam iudaici populi efferbuerat.
& lex ac. pphetia tam sudauerant.
atq; omnis populi tam in malis quam in
bonis probati erant. ante quam unu
genitus mis carnem de uirgine susci
peret. Nam eum mittere nolui n primis
sis omnibus. his. idcirco ut omnis iustitia
in illo probaret. ut omnis iustitia in illo
scandalizaret. Qd si idem filius mis
primus uenisset. hoc qsi insipienter
factum fuisset uelut homo ille impru
dens agit q fruges suas antequam
maturescant colligere uult. uel si
incarnatio eius in ipsum finem mundi
dilata cet. te sapum ueniret qsi au
ceps ille q aues fraudulenter capit.
illis nescientibus. quorum rete ipsius
irretiuerit. S; filius mis uenit inter
pore illo uelut cum iam dies p nonam
aduesperascendit. scilicet cum iam max
ima uirtute diei abscedente frigus
adesse incipit. ita p quinq; numeros mundi filius mis mundo
affuit. cum mundus iam a occasum
currit. Qd te. Ipse enim ueniens me
dulla legis aptat. ubi aqm legis

in unū cuīsū conuerūt ubi ex
maxima fluenta urrunū emana
re fecit·q̄d tā ūpestiue ucnens
cōpleuit·ut ecclā thee urrunis·q̄s
spūs sēs in eendit firmis radicib; in
hominib; confortarent·ut ut urr
ginitas quā in semetipso amulit
dignissima germina flox suox di
latare posset· Sed insanus ho
micida filius ; scilicet p dicti
onis in breuissimo tēpore ucnit
uelut cū iā dies abscedit·sole in
occasū occidente·indelicet cū no
uissimū tēpus iā cadit & mun
dus tenore suū deserit·Hoc aū
testimoniū o fideles mei audite
& illud deuote adcauta uīam
intelligite·ne uobis nescientib;
terror isti p dictoris repente ue
niens·in ruinā infidelitatis & p
dictionis uos pcipitet·Unde uos
armate·& aduersidissimā pugnā
hoc modo fidelissimis munito
rib; pmonui uos pparare· Cū enī
tēpus illud aduenerit quo iste
nequissimus deceptor horribi
liter apparebit mat illa que isti
fallacē in mundū eiecit a pueri
cia sua in puellari etate diaboli
cis arub; plena uicis in deserto
abiectionis inter nefandissimos
hominū cruenta ē·ibi parentu
bus suis eā nescientib;·nec illis eī
quib;·morat eā scientib;·quā dia
bolus eā illuc ire psuadet & ibi
eā secūm uoluntatē suā·decipien
do cōponit·q̄si angelis sēs sit·Et

xxv.

ido illa abhoīb; se sepat·ut tanto
facilius celari possit·Unde etiā ali
quib; si; tamē paucis uiris nequissimo
latrocinio fornicationis occulte cō
miscet·& tanto studio turpitu
dinis cū illis se pollut uelut angelis.
ses feruore pnauitatis illi eā pficere
iubeat·Et sic in feruentissimo
ardore fornicationis illi filiū p dicti
onis concipit·nesciens deq̄ semine
uiroz illoz eū concepit·Si; lucifer
serpens iudicet aliquis turpi
tudine ista delectatus·coagulatio
nē hanc iusto meo iudicio arrub;
suis afflat·& eā omīb; uiris suis
totā inuentre matris illi possidet·
sic illo p dictore de uentre matris
sue pleno diabolico spū egredien
te·Deinde illa consuetā fornicatio
nē deuitat·& apte stulte & insipi
enti pplo dicit q̄a uirū nī habeat·
nec partē infamis sui sciat·formi
cationē autē q̄m pperauit scām
dicit·unde & ppls illā scām putat
& nominat· Sic filius p dicto
nis arub; usq; ad fortiorē etatē
ueniat·sēp nouo sibi pplo se sub
trahens·Si; mat ipsius eī cū quib; dā
magicis arub; inūdiū tā pplo dīm
colem q̄m nō colem ostendit·sic
eī abeūs faciens uideri & amari·
Qui cū ad plenā etatē puenerit ma
nifeste contrariā doctrinā docebit·
ta in ecclīs meis repugnans tan
tāq; formidinē acq̄rens·ut in mag
na potestate sua se supra nubes ele
uare conet·Nā ego iusto iudicio

mco ꝑmittō cū in diuq̄ sis creaturis
uolumatē suā exercere. q̄m ut diabo
lus in initio dixit similis ero altissi
mo & cecidit. ita cū ꝑmittō ut ide
diabolus in tp̄e nouissimo cadat
cū ipse in hoc filio suo dic̄ saluator
mundi ego sū. Et ut omē sclm fide
lū cognouit q̄d lucifer mendax
fuit cū se in initio dicēs similē d̄o
ē uoluit. sic etiā omīs fideles d̄o ui
dent q̄d iste filius iniq̄tatis mēdax
ē. cū se ante nouissimū dic̄ filio di
simile facit.

Ipse enī ē pessima :xv:viij:
bestia hoīes q̄
ipsū negant imēsi
ciens & regib; ducib; principib; di
uitib; q; se adiungens. humilita
tēq; deprimens ac superbiā eri
gens. orbēq; uarū diabolica arte
sibi subiciens. Potestas nāq; ipsius
usq; ad labrū uenti ꝑcedit. ita q̄d
aerē uidet cōmouere ignēq; de celo
educere. & fulgura tonitrua ac grā
dines ꝑducere. montes etiā euelle
re aq̄s exsiccare. siluis uiriditatē
suā auferre. & q; mari sue sibi suū
reddere. Tales quippe illusiones
in diuersis creaturis ostendit. ut
delicet in humore in uiriditate
& in siccitate earū. & in hoīib; de
ceptiones suas facere nō desinit. Quo
modo. ut id̄ē enī sanis in mente re
egritudinē & infirmis sanitatē.
demones facere ac uētu ꝑmissione
mea illusiones suas ostendit. cada
uer ipsius q̄si uitam mouere faci
ens. q̄d tamē ꝑbreuissimā horā et
nō ꝑlongū spaciū facere uētu ꝑ

mittit. ne hac ꝑsūptione gl̄a di
deridear. Q̄d quidā uidentes meū
confidunt. q̄dā animē & priorē fi
dē suā habere uolunt & eū tamē sibi
ꝑpicuū. Quos tamē durū ledere no
lens. q̄sdā infirmitates ipsis mittit
ut. Qui d̄o medicinā medicosq; que
runt nec curari potuerūt ad ipsū re
curruntes. uēptamen si eos curare ua
leat. S; d̄o eos uidentes debilitatē
quā eis intulit ipsis auferre. unde
eū, ualde amantes. in ipsū credunt. Et sic
multi decipiunt. cū ipsi oculos in
teriores hoīs obnubilant ꝑ quos in
me respicere debuerant uolentes
in p̄hatione animi sui uelut in qua
dā nouitate illa scire que exteriori
bus oculis uidēt & que manib; pal
pant. cōtēpnentes illa inuisibilia
que in me manent & que uera fi
de cōprehendenda s. q̄a mortales
oculi me uidere nō possunt. S; mi
racula mea in obumbratione illis
ostendo quib; uolucro. me ipsū
autē nullus uidebit d̄o in morta
li corpore manet. ni in obumbratio
ne misteriox̄ meox̄ ut seruo meo
moy. si locutus sū. ut scriptū est.

Non enī uidebit me homo. & ui :xv:viij:
uere potest. Hoc tale ē. Ob tanta
mortalitatis suę ignoranciam ponet me clari
tatē diuinitatis meę. ille q̄ mor
talis ē. ita q̄d incorruptibili eine
re mortalē uitā possit habere.
d̄o ut ad sciendū sit de ꝑsona ei⁹ mita
to in me ē. Nā sicut culex uiuere
nō potest si se in flamā ignis mit

mœruos suscitare. Quom. Cū enī aliquando q̄sp̄iā uita euanuerit ꝑ mutationē sal. q̄ uitā uitā deserit. ad
cui⁹ anima in potestate diaboli ē. circa cadauer ipsi⁹

ut·ita ena mortalis ho ñ posset
subsistere si coruscamone duum
tans mq; uideret·ſ; ego mor ta
lib; hominib; quadiu in graue
dine mortalitatis sue grauari
s me ita in obumbratione oſten
do·uelut pictor·ea que inuisi
bilia s ymagines picture sue
hoib; declarat·q;d si oho me di
lexeris ut amplector·& calore
sci spſs ut calefaciat·cui eni bona
inuentione tua me inspexeris
meq; intima fide cognoueris·
ut uecu ego·S; q; me contempnunt
addiabolu se conuertunt·q;m
me scire noluit·Unde & ego ip
sos abicio· xx·yx· Istos aut diabolus
illudit & decipit quomodo
cuiq; sibi placuerit·ita q; ipſi
putant q;d uerum sit·q;cq;d eis
ostendere ut·Et hanc ipsa arte
deceptionis sue diabolus illis
infundit q; in ipsu confidunt·
ita q; ipſi in hac arte diuersa
portenta increaturis secm
uoluntate sua hoib; fallaci
ostendunt·S; tam nec elemta
nec alias creaturas que a do
creante s alio modu transmu
tare possunt·ñ q; solu pdecep
tiones suas quedam monstra ue
lut q;sdam nebulas ineis sibi ere
dentib; fingunt·Na & ada cu
plus quereret q;m habere de
beret·gram paradysi pdidit·
sic & isti uisu & audtu immortis
hois amittunt·q;m dm desert
& diabolu colunt· Secm hunc
modu pdicionis deceptiones arte
suarum inclemus opator·ostendens
in eis pulcritudme dulcedine et
suauitate·secm uoluntate hoium
q;s decipit· Sed hec potestas ea ob
hoc pmissa e·ut fideles in recta fi
de cernant·q;d diabolus nulla po
testate in bonis habet·ſ; solu in ma
lis cum morus·Quicq;d eni iste fili
mi q;tus opatur id in potestate supbia
& crudelitate facit midiam humili
tate & discretione ñ habens·ſ; cu
impio & magno stupore hoies ad
hoc pcipitat ut ipsu sequant·Plu
rimos eni pplos sibi acquirit dies
eis·ut uoluntates suas & pagant·
nec se mutuu in uigilius aut inicia
nus constringant·pponens eis ut
tantu dm suu diligant que se & e
simulat·quatin sic ab inferno li
berari aduta puenant·Unde illi
hoc m decepti dicunt·Oue mise
ris illis q; ante tepora ista fuert·
q; a diris cruciatib; uta sua af
fluxert·pietate di nri heu igno
rantes·Ille eni thesauros & diui
tias eis ostendit ac eos secm uo
luntates ipsoꝝ epulari pmittit·
fallacib; signis doctrina sua fir
mans·ita q; ipsi putant q;d ñ
oporteat eos ullo m corpora sua
constringere & castigare·S; & ex
cisione & iudaismu secm mo
res iudeoꝝ illos obseruare iubet·
foruora pcepta legis que euangelio
cu digna penitencia ingram

conuertit ipsis iuxta uoluntatē
eoꝝ leonora faciens. Et dicē. Qui ad
me conuertit peccata illi delebun
tur. Iuuencq; mecū inētū. Baptis
mū eiā & euglīm filii mei abiect
& oīa p̄cepta illa que eccle tra
dita s̄ deridet. Et uerū sibi famu
lantib; diabolica irrisione dicē.
Videte q̄s & qualis ille insanus
fuerat. Qui hec obseruari p̄cepit
ita sua simplici pplō constituit.

Ego autē p uobis & adglām :xxxj.
usām mori & a morte resur
gere uolo & sic pplm meū ab in
ferno liberabo ut de inceps meū
in regno meo gl̄ose uiuant. Qd il
le fallax se prius fecisse simulauit.
Et deinde dilectis suis dicē. ut eū
gladio p̄cutiāt. atq; immundā sin
donē usq; addiē resurrectionis
sue inuoluant. illis ita deceptis
qd putant se illū occidere & p̄cep
ta ei hoc m̄ pficere. Postea se resur
gere simulans dire maledictio
nis scripturā uelut saluatione
animarū p̄fert. q̄m p̄signo hōib;
tradens. iubet ut ipsū adorent.
Qd si q̄s fidelis p̄p̄ amorē noīs
mei recusauerit. diro cruciatu
tormētoꝝ a billo consūmet. Vnde
oīs q̄ hoc uidebīt. audierint.
maximo admirationis & dubie
tatis stupore concium̄. uelut eiā
iohs dilectus m̄s ostendit dicēs.

Vidi unū de capitib; ei tā q̄m :xxxij.
occisū in morte. & plaga mor
tis ei curata ē. Et admirata ē uni
uersa tra p̄ bestiā. Hoc tale ē. Ego a
matore mysteriorū dī. uidi fallacē &
maledictū in maximis & innume
rabilib; uniq̄q; omnē scīmoīā
circuitū & multiplicib; uicis
eā sanguinē. q̄ arcub; mīdanoꝝ suoꝝ
sanguinē suū in occisione se effun
dere & ita mori assimulabit. ī in
corpore suo cadens. s̄; in fallaci um
bra uelut p̄cussus & moriens est
matus. Vnde eiā in errore fallacīū
uulnerū suoꝝ q̄si mortuus fuerit
simulat. se q̄si a sopore mortis re
uixisse. & ita admirabile & tribile
stupore oīs hoīes q̄ in tota tra s̄
in horrore hui maledicti capient
sic eiā p̄ls magnitudinē & for
midinē goliath exstupuit. cū ev
armatū in bello aduersū se stare
uideret. Et ita ut uides colūne
electoꝝ meoꝝ tā de cruciatib; istis
q̄m de contrariis & insignib; ac
horribilib; signis que ide filii p̄di
cionis emittet. magno stupore pa
uoris cōmoueri uidebunt. gemi
tū lamentabilis anguste emittentes.

Sed duos testes meos q̄s ad id :xxxiij.
p̄parauī in secreto uoluntatis
mee reseruari scilicet enoch & he
liā. ut ipsi repugnēt & ut errantes
aduiā uertatis reducant emittā.
Qui fortissimas & robustissimas
uirtutes fidelib; ostendēt. q̄a cū
uerba testimonii eoꝝ in ore utriq;
sibi eq̄liter cōsentiunt fidē audien
tib; adhibebunt. Nā ideirco hi
duo testes uertatis tādiu p̄me re

seruam s. ut m ipsis p̄cedentib; sermo
eox incordib; electox meox tentat et
solidet. quam eccle meę in magna humilitate subsi
stat. Et ipsi ad filios di quox noīa
xxx.iij. in libro uite s. dicet. Quos rectι
ecclesiastica laude beatarū grā xxx.vj.
rū uite audire et intelligite quę
uobis fiducialit differim. Hic ma
ledictus a diabolo missus e. ut aīas
quę se p̄cepit illi subiecturas merito
rē mittat. Nos enī de hoc mundo
recluſi eram. reseruati in secretis di
quę hoīb; abscondita s. ta q̄d in
sollicitudine et angustia hominū
ñ fuim. Nā ad hoc reseruati sum.
et ad uos missi. ut errorib; isti p̄di
toris contra dicam. Videre g. si uo
bis aut incorporali statura aut in
xxx.v. etate similes sim. Et os q̄ cog
noscere et confuteri ueritū dīm uo
lunt. hos duos senes et uetaces testes
uexillū iustitie di errorē portan
tes subsequunt. in quib errorē de
serentes. q̄m ipsi in magnis p̄conis
et coīa do. et coīa pplo fulgebunt.
uicos et plateas et cuntantes atq;
alia loca ubicūq; filii p̄dictionis c
uaria doctrinā suā efflauerint p
currentes. ac in eis multa signa in xxx.vij.
spū sco facientes. ita ut oīs pplus q
ea uiderit in maxima admiratio
nē ducat. Video autē hec mag
na signa sup firmā petrā solidata
illis dabunt. quam illa cuaria
et falsa signa abiciant. Nā ut ful
gur incendit et cōburit. sic et

filii p̄dictionis pueritia in iquitates et
nequicia sua facē pplos magicis artib;
uelut igne fulguris cōburens. sed
enoch et helias cū recta doctrina qsi
cū ictu tonitrui omnē cohortē illi
ecclesiastes deuincunt. fidelis ita stabi
lentes. Attamen in p̄missione uo
luntatis meę a bello tande consuma
ti. mercede laborum suox in celestib; esse
quunt. Tunc flores doctrine eox ca
dentes. qa uoces ipsox iam in mundo
cessauerint bonū fructū in electis ostēn
dunt. ipsis uerba et rabiē diabolice
artis contēpnentib; in spe sup ne he
reditatis bene firmatis. quēadmodū
et salomon de bono et recto hoīe
ostendit dicens. Domini iusti plurima
fortitudo. et in fructib; impiu con
turbatio. Hoc tale e. Ait tū habitacu
lū ubi contritio et infelicitas ñ ē spe
ciale speculū oculi di in recto hoīe
e. in q̄ ide oculus fortitudinē mi
raculox suox q̄si in appetitu p̄cuci
entis gladii uidet. Si; in p̄cedentib;
factis uelut increscentib; fructib;
superbi cordis q̄d in p̄prius uolupta
tib; suis ruinas edificat. tristicia
illa erit. q̄d ide sup bū cor in spē
hanc ñ confidit que in sup nascā
tur in tate floret. Sed q̄d uides
q̄d ide monstruo ; sū caput se
tanto fragore a loco suo dissolut.
q̄d oīs p̄dicta mulieb̄ris imago in
oīb; mb̄ris suis inde concutit. hoc
e cū se filii p̄dictionis caput in iqua
tis existens. multa arrogantia sup
bie uelut a prauo errore infixe

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sibi neq̃ue tollit· maiorē errorē
arripiens scilicet sup̄ oīs exaltā
ri uolens· idē cū decepuonēs sue
finē accepturę s̄· oīs eccl̄a ī oīb; fi
lius suus tā maiorib; q̃uā minorib;
in maximū timorē mittit· exspec
tans insaniā p̄sūpuonis illi· Et ue
lut magna massa multa sterconis·
ipsi capiti coniungit· unde illud
sup̄ quendā montē se eleuans· alti
tudinē cęlox ascendere cōpiat· q̃a
maxime artes diabolicarū insidia
rū multā in mundiciā afferentiū
eidē filio iniq̃tatis assistentes· ipsi
alas sup̄bię subministrant· ac cū
inanitā p̄sūpuonē erigunt· q̄d
ipse etiā secreta cęlestia se putat
posse penetrare· Quom· N̄ā cū
oīne uolumine diaboli cōpleue
rit· ita q̄d iusto iudicio dī ampli
tamā potestatē iniq̃tatis accru
delitatis siue habere ī p̄mittit·
omnē cohortē suā congregat et
sibi credentib; dicē· q̃a ad cęlos ire
uelit· S; sicē diabolus nescit filiū
dī ad redepuonē animarū nasci·
ta ę iste pessimus cū se in mortis
rū malū omniū maloq; inuolu
forissimū ictū man̄ dī sup̄ se ue
nire ignorat· Et ecce uelut ict̄· xxx·viij·
tonitru repen[illegible]te ueniens idē
capiti tanta formiditate repellit·
q̄d ędem montē eodē cadit ędq̄d
spm suū in mortē emittit· q̃m po
testas dī se manifestans eundē p̄di
tionis filiū tanta uirtute cęli sui
p̄sternit q̄d ędem sup̄bia illa q̃ se
conuta dm et excelsa magno p̄cipio
p̄sūpuonis sue ruit· ędq̄d unā se
flammī suū in mortē cōne dāpnatio
nis sua consūmatus euomit· q̃a
sicē tēptationes filii mei finit s̄
cū ipse tēptat̄ diabolo dicē· uade
sathanas· ędille excess̄ fugit· sic
etiā ędtēptationes iste q̃s idē filī
iniq̃tatis eccl̄e infert· in hoc helo
meo consūmationē accipiet· xxx·ix·
Unde subito ferens nebula ipsū
monte totū cōprehendit· in qua
ide capite tanta sorde inuolut
ut astantes ppli in maximū timorē
mittant· q̃a in mundissim̄ ędinfer
nalis fetor· locū elationis illi̇ totū
replebit· in q̄ ille pessim̄ crimina
tor· tanta immundicia efferuebat·
ut iusto dī iudicio nec in mundo nec
finis eius amodo in memoria ha
beat· q̃m illi ppli cadauer ipsi̇ si
ne uoce inuita p̄stratū ędmulta ta
be p̄fusū uidentes se decepos ędē
cognoscent· ipsa nebula circa eum
de monte aliq̃mulū diuti̇ in mo
rante· q̃m fetor ille diabolicā ela
tionē circū amplectens immunda
ostendit· ut hoīes a billo seducti fe
torē ędimmundiciā illā uidentes
errorē suū declinēt· ędaduertantē
redeant· N̄ā astans ppl̄s hec cernēs
multo timore concutit· q̃a hec vi
dentes maxim̄ horror incurrit·
ita ut lugubres uoces ędflebiles
querelas p̄ferant· ędse grauit̄ er
rasse dicant· Et ecce pedes p̄ fig.xl.
fatę mulie[illegible]bris imaginis

candidi apparent splendorē solis
reddentes. hēc ē qđ fortitudo funda
menta & sustentatio sponse filii mei
multū candorē fidei ostendet & pul
chritudinē illā que omnē pul.
chritudinē ītrinsecā clarissimā supat
demonstrabit. cū filio pdicationis
ut pdictū ē pstrato multo exhis q
erraucrant aduersante renitente.

xl.i. Sed p casū illi impugnando nouis
sim dies insolutione mundi oc
currat. mortalis ho nō queratur. quia
cū scire nō poterit. qm cū pat mab
scondito secretu suu seruauit. Ad
iudiciū q obōies uos pparate. Ist
amē pdictū ē filii pdicationis cū pa
tre suo diabolo & cū omīb; arub;
illi innouissimo tēpore pfiliū meū
fortissimū pliatore supabit. sic
& inimici fortissimi samsonis imp
figuratione ipsi deiecti s. uelut

xl.ij. scripū ē. Concussisq; fortit co
lumis eccl dat dom sup os pn
cipes & ecclīā multitudinē que ibi
erat. multoq; plures uīt fec mori
ens qm ante uiuus occiderat. Hoc
tale ē. filio di scilicet fortissimo
sasoni pmū synagoga cuncta ē.
cuius ipse occulta illa que inuicti testam
to abscondita erant immutabili
doctrina sua distribuit. inīor ē
dulcedinē eide legis que fortior
leone erat. ipsi benigne apiens. s;
ipsa derepit eū faciens ut secreta
ei illuderent indoctrinā illi respi
cere nolens. s; ea magno fastu sup
bie despiciens. Qua ppt ipse cō
monus regnū di abea auferri &
alii gentī dari pdixe. ita in multis
pdigus cū plurima turba ieroso
limā ascendēs infidelitate illoq; q
uestimēta sua inuia strauerūt occi
sa. ubi qđ p misertat illis p miraculā
la reddidit qb; pponsā suā pdic
fuat; & ineo de feruore eande sponsā
suā deseruit. cū domū ei deserta
derelinq pmittaut. s; pat spon
se illi uidelicet diabolica seduc
tio. alii uero idē infidelitati ea
communē. Te filii di astutas uul
pes scilicet aplos emisit. q ignes
cī spē segetes inimicoq; suoq; cō
busserit idē q legalia pcepta ad
spīale intellectū uerterit. ita sy
nagoga cū patre suo cōbusta sci
licet puersa infidelitate. synago
ge euersa. Deinde magnis signis
& stupendis miraculis incredulos
occidit. ita qđ os multo stupore
cōtremuerit cū dicerēt. se time
re romanos uenire & locū & gen
tē ipsoq; tollere. Qua ppt cohortē
suā congregauerit ut illū pderet.
s; ipse abscondit se inmonte in
oratione cū diceret ut si fieri pos
set qđ calix ille ab eo transiret.
s; iudas scarioth is pdidit eū.
tradens eū inmanus inimicoq;
suoq. Ut ipse uim fortitudinis
sue abscondit quā inerme idē
in patre suo habuit. que omī ppto
ignota ē nī qm cū infide capīt ue
lut capilli incapite uidentē. P ea
cū pam uoluit uī fortitudinis

suę ostendit uidelicet mandibu
la asini tollens cū filiab; ierim
diceret ne sup eū s; sup se ipsas
fleret-ma illas occidens scilicet
tyrē finitorę malorę eius pdicens-Et
sic in cruce sanguine cū sanguine fons
fidei de gremio pplo emanauit de
quo ipse bibens nō erubuit-dicēs
etiā qđ sic consūmatū est-Unde
eū exspirauit in gehennā uidelicet-ad mulierē meretricē descen
dit immicis suis eū obsidentib;
eū custodes ad sepulchrū ipsi po
nerent-s; ipse a morte resurgens
eū duab; portis idē eū specialib;
electis suis-et eū cōmuni pplo qs
ex inferno liberauit celeste regnū
petunt-S; sic pulcherrima sponsa
scilicet ecclā ipsi communicata-dili
gentissime adeo quęsiuit quoń
fortitudinē ipsi cognoscere pos
set-Ipse autē uires suas q nō repen
te-s; paulatī et cū diserenone ap
it-Quoń-Cū primū fideles catho
licā fidē percepissent-inuenerī le
ge et in noua usq;-ad pfectā corre
ctionē putabant seq; da illoq; debe
re ambulare-q ue ligatura hum
uū neruoq; s; nō dū pfectā sicut au-
habentiū erat-Unde ecclā rudis
adhuc-multas turbis dicebat-Hec
ē fortitudo sponsi mei-Et pplś
hec audiens uolebat repentino
motu dm inaudita uerboq; tamē
colere-et nō in significatione spē
sci conuersari-S; ita fortitudo ei
cognita nō ē-Deinde uirginitas
uidit nom sunes q; nūquā in ope
fuerāt sic et uirginitas amat nō ē
gloše habita nobilit erecta ē-que
ligatura filiū di fortit q; de ven
git-s; tam eū plenit nō ostendit-
S; ecclā se sursū erigens dicebat-
O uos amici mei-he maxime uir
tutes sponsi mei s-Et subito in
magno strepitu mutuis pplś sup
eū ruit dicens-Nos in maximis u
rib; ei-ipsū cepim-S; nec sic uires
ei manifestare s-Postea in septē
domus spē sci uidit in septē crumb;
illi ecclā solidata ē-ipsis fortis cla
uo infirmatō apliq; pdicatq;
in fixis-Unde rei fidi hoc modo
contracto-ecclā clamabat-O quā
fortis sponsus mis in septē crumb;
suus ē-Et ōs pplī illā audientes in
eū irruerāt-putantes ipsū maiores
uires nō habere-S; et hoc m nō ē agni
ta fortitudo ipsi-Deinde multas
lacrimas ecclā effudit-qa fortitu
dinē sce trinitatis ignorauit-di
cens humanitatē filii di se q; de ui
disse-s; diuinitatē ipsi nō dū pfecte
intellexisse-Unde ipse cōmotus-
in dilecto suo iohe secreta sce tri
nitatis q; tunc boi licitū erat scire-
in honore pacis et in ardore spē sci
manifestauit-Et ita in gremiū
sponse suę caput suū reclinans-ibi usq;-ad maxima
scisimata que filio pdicionis fu
tura s req;escit-Ibi fortitudo ei
ab [illegible] rasis crumb;-ipsi absedet-
eū ho [illegible] mines uno tempore illo

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magis filiū ꝑdicionis ꝙm ipsū seq̄
studeant dicentes. Qd ē o dꝫ. qd ta
lia & tanta miracula uidem. Ec ta
formido ipsi? delinīt. cū iā uera
fides incedat. infidelitatis obnu
bilari uidet. S; uires ei? resurgen
cū enoch & helias apparuerint. Qua
ꝑ ꝑ̄ superbiā & ꝑsuasionē ē fortiter
concutiens filiū ꝑdicionis cū oīb;
diabolicis arub; & cēs uicis deae
cit. multoq; durī? diabolica uicia
conteret cū iā ecclā cū xp̄iano no
mine depsenti & tēporali sclo ad
ēna transibit. ꝙm anima faceret
cū adhuc diuin? cubus in mundo
tēporalit uigeret. Quid ē hoc.
Qua cū iā sclm finē accipiet. ut
& diabolice ꝑsecutiones & uirtu
tū fortissime operationes ihoīb; etiā
tēporalit cessabunt. Qui autē acu
tas aures intīores intellectus ha
bet hic ardentis amore speculi
mea aduerba hec anhelat. & ea
in conscientia animi sui ēscribat

Duodecima uisio Terre

parti

Hec

VII

ruidi. & ecce oīa elem
ta & os creature dire
motu concussa s. ig
nis aer. & aq ua cru
per & tra mouri
fecerit. fulgura & to
nitrua concrepuerit.
montes & siluę ceciderit. ita ut omē
qd mortale erat unā exalaret. Et oīa elemta purgata s. ita ut q eqd
mas sordidū fugeret tali m euanes
ceret. qd amplī n appareret. Et au
diui uocē maximo clamore ꝓ
tū orbē tarū uociferantē & dicen
tē. O uos filii hominū q̄ intra iace
tis. surgite os. Et ecce oīa ossa ho
minū inquocūq; loco tarū erant.
uenire multo mirabo congregata
& sua carne obtecta s. & os boies in
tegris membris & corporib; suis in
sexu suo surrexerit. bonū in claritā
te fulgentes & mali in nigredine
apparentes. ita ut & opus cuiq;
ipso apte uideret. Et q̄da excel
sa inside signa erant. q̄da aute n.
ita ut signa; istoꝝ alii ante facie
sua uenire aureū fulgorē alii uenire
umbrā haberent. quod ipsoꝝ signū

De die iudicij.

VII. uisio. in gen.

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erat·S; subito aborietur maxima ℣
chorusca(tio) effulsit·& ibi immube ℣
filiu(m) hoīs eode(m) uultu qua(m)admodu ℣
immundo fuerat·& apt(us) uulneribꝫ· ℣
cū angelicis choris aduenie(n)tē ui ℣
di·& supra sede(m) cādem(us) s; ñ arden ℣
tis flam(m)e sedem(qu)ē·& sub se hanc ℣
maximā rēp(ub)licā purgamonis ℣
habe(n)tē·& q(uo)d signū erant obuiā ℣
ea(m) aere q(uo)si turbine rapu(m) s· ℣
ubi & p(ri)ā splendorē illū q(uo)d secre ℣
tū supm creatoris designat ude ℣
rā·bonis scilicet animalis ibi separa ℣
tis·S; ipse blanda uoce uelut suan ℣
geliū manifestat iustos celesti reg ℣
no beatificaturū·ac tribili uoce in ℣
iustos infernalibꝫ· penis sic eam ibi ℣
de scriptū ē depmauit·nulla tam ℣
alia inq(ui)sitione & responsione de ℣
opibꝫ· eoꝝ ñ q(uo)d admodū angelica ℣
uox ostendit ibi facta·q(uo)m opus ℣
cuiq; siue bonū siue malū eet in ℣
ipso manifeste apparuit·Qui aut(em) ℣
signū ñ erant alonge in parte ℣
aq(ui)lonis cū diabolica turba sta ℣
bant·nec adiudicū hoc puenerit· ℣
s; tam hec oīa uelut turbine ui ℣
dentes sine ē(ui)de(n)tē iudicu exspecta ℣
bant·& intra se amaros gemit(us) ℣
dabant·Et sic iudicio pacho· ℣
fulgura & tonitrua & uem(en)ti ac ℣
tēpestates cessabant & q(uo)d(a)m(odo) mele ℣
nus transitoriū erat subito eua ℣
nuit·& maxima tranq(ui)llitas fac ℣
ta ē·Tē electi sup splendorē solis ℣
repente splendidi effecti cū eode ℣
filio di·& cū beatis agminibꝫ· an ℣
gelor(um) in gaudio magno celestia ℣
perbant·reprobis cū diabolo et ℣
anglis ei(us) ad loca infernalia cū ℣
magno ululatu tendentib;· Et sic ℣
celū electos recepit·& infernū rep ℣
bos absorbuit·S; subito tanta ℣
gaudia & tante laudes in celestib;· ℣
& tanta tristicia & tanta ululat(us) ℣
in inferno exorti s·ultra quā hu ℣
manus sensus effari possit·Et mox ℣
oīa elemēta in maxima serenitate ℣
resplenduert uelut ex nigerri ℣
ma cuius abstracta fuisset·ita q(uo)d ℣
nec ignis feruorē·nec aer spissitu ℣
dinē nec aqua furorē nec ita fra ℣
gilitatē ampli(us) ulla haberent·Sol ℣
quoq; luna & stelle uelut plurim(um) ℣
ornatus in firmamēto multo splen ℣
dore & decore fulgebant & sine ℣
motu circumonis fixa manebāt· ℣
ita q(uo)d ultra diē & nocte(m) ñ discer ℣
nebant·Et ita nox erat s; dies·Et ℣
finitū ē·hec(que)q; audiui uo cē de ℣
celo in dicentē·Hec mysteria primū.
nouissima tēpo ra ostendunt· ℣
in q(ui)b;· tēporalia tēpora in eternitatē ℣
coruscationis illi(us) que sine fine ē ℣
transmutabunt·Nouissima eni(m) ℣
tēpora multis periculis fatigabun ℣
tur·& occasus mundi uarijs sig ℣
nis demonstrabit·Nā ut uides ℣
in ipso nouissimo die totus orbis ℣
tarū t(er)rarū(que) concutiet tēpestati ℣
bus quassabit·ita ut q(uo)d(a)m(odo) in eo ℣
caducū & mortale ē his calami ℣
tatib;· finiat·q(uo)d ia(m) cursu mundi ℣
cōplexo ipse ampli(us) durare ñ

ponit·ſ; ſcdm diuinā diſpoſi
onē conſūmabit·Sic enī homo
cū ſi. niendus ē mutus infirmi
tatib; p̄uenius deceſſ·ita q̄d eā
in ipſa hora mortis ſue multo·
dolore diſſoluit·ſic quoq; finē
mundi maxime aduerſitatis p̄
current·& ipſū in fine ſuo diuiſi
ōnib; diſſoluent·quo elemta
ōnes ſuos tunc oſtendent·q̄a
eos ampli⁹ exercere n̄ poterit· ·iij·

Repentino & inopinato q̄p
re motu in hoc fine elemta
relaxant·oſ creature cōmouent·
ignis erūpit aer ſoluit·aq; effu
it·tita concutit fulgura feruent·
tonitrua concrepant·montes
ſcindunt·ſilue ruunt·& q̄q̄d
inaere t inaqua t inita mortale
ē unā reddit·ignis cū totū aerē
mouet & aq; totā tā replet·& hoc ·v·
modo oīa purgant·ut q̄q̄d
in mundo ſedimenti ē ita euanes
cat q̄ſi n̄ fuerit·uelut ſal diſſlu
it cū inaquā mittit·

·iij· Sed di
uino p̄cepto ut t p̄ mon
ſtratū ē ad reſurgendū accepto
mortuoꝝ oſſa ubiq; fuerunt
ſuo loco uelut michi oculi con
iungunt & ſua carne tegunt·
nec ullo m̄ retardant·ſ; ſiue ab
igne ſiue abaqua·ſiue abaue·
ſiue abeſtia conſūpta fuerint
extiſſime reſtituunt·ita q̄d ea
hoc m̄ ūa reddit t ut ſal exaq;
ſudat·q̄a oculus m̄s oīa nouit
nec q̄q̄quā me latere potuit·ita

oſ hoīes ia & corpore ſine ulla
corruptione & abſciſione m̄brōꝝ
ſuoꝝ, ſed & in integritate & corporis &
ſexus ſui uelut michi oculi re
ſurgunt·dech fulgorē bonoꝝ op̄
ſuoꝝ habentes·& reꝑbi nigredinē
infeliciū actuū ſuoꝝ portantes·ita
q̄ tibi opa ipſoꝝ n̄ abſcondunt·ſ;
pala in ipſis apparebunt· ·iiij·

Et q̄da ex eis in fide ſignati ſ
q̄da aut n̄·ita ut fide haben
tiū conſcientie; aliōꝝ p̄ opa fidei
in fulgore ſapientie; fulgeant aliōꝝ
uero in tenebroſitate neglect⁹ ſui
appareant·p quę apte diſcernunt·
q̄m illi fidē op̄ib; impleuerit·iſti
aut ea inſem cum ipſis exercuerit·

Quida aut hoc ſignū fidei n̄ habēt·
qua iſti nec in ueteri lege nec in
noua gra cognitionē uiui·& ueri
di habere uoluerit·Et tē mela
ncte lucis ētie ſ; tam inuisi
be qua reꝑbis celeſtis gia abſcon
dita ē filius di in forma humani
tatis & paſſionis ſue q̄m in uolun
tate patris p̄ ſalute humani gene
ris paſſus ē adiudicandū ipſū hu
manū gen⁹ celeſti exercitu circūda
tus aduenier·q̄m pat ei hoc de
dit·ut q̄a ipſe in mundo uiſi
bilit⁹ cōiudicatus fuerat que ui
ſibilia mundi ſ diiudicet·ut
ita ipſe inuiſibilo oſtendit diuiſ·

Et poteſtatē dedit ei & iudiciū
facere·q̄a filius hoīs ē·Hoc ta
le ē·Pat teſtificat de filio ſuo·q̄d
ē hoc·Pat poteſtatē dedit filio

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qm ipse semp cū patre in diuina
tate manens s; humanitatē de
matre accipiens. secm q̄d homo
ē accepit etiā a patre qd oīs creatu
ra ipsū dī filiū sentit. sic & oīs
creatura in creatione forme sue
ado creata subsistit. Et ido quecq;
opa discernunt a filio in q̄cūq;
dignitate & incuriatione sint.
& secm hoc qd collocanda s ea
collocat. ut q̄a ipse homo palpa
bilis & uisibilis in mundo fuit
etiā illa que in mundo uisibilia
fuerīt secm qd iustū ē discernat.
ut delicet in potestate iudiciali ūt
bilis inuistus s; blandus iustus ap
parens. ipsos ita diiudicans qd
etiā purgatione sua clemta sen
tiant. Tunc & q̄ signati s ob ·vij·
uitā iusto iudici n indif
ficultate. s; in multa celeritate ra
puntur. ut q̄m ipsi fide in dīm cre
dentes habuerīt. etiā opa fidei in
eis manifeste appareant. ubi ex
sententia dī achus ex & inbonis et
inmalis n ignorat ut & p monstra
tū ē. ibi enī bonī & mali separabun
tur. q̄a & opa eox dissimilia s. Nā
ibi tā inmalis q̄m inbonis certissi
me appareāt. quom & in puericia. l' iuuentute
& in iuuentute & in se
nio tota etate dū quesierunt. Vbi ·viij·
etiā fulminant ōs flores
lii mei uidelicet patriarche &
pphete q̄ ante incarnationē ipsi⁹
fuerīt. & apli q̄ cū eo in sclo con
uersati s. ac martyres confesso
res. uirgines & unde q̄ ipsū fideliū
imitati s. & illi q̄ eccle mee. ta in secla
rib; q̄m in spualib; p posse erant.
nec n anachorite & monachi q̄ in
castigatione & mortificatione car
nis sue. ppt nom ei de filii mei se
uales fecerīt. qd & inuestitu suo cū
magna humilitate. & caritate an
gelicū ordinē imitantes ostenderīt.
s; q̄ me hoc m in contēplatiua uita
querīt. qd dicunt hec uita gloriosor
illa ē. hoc m q̄si nichilū ē. s; q̄ me
querit in humilitate. in illa conuer
satione que inspiratione spe sci
data ē. hunc in celesti patria in pri
oribus locis collocabo. Deinde ·viij·
celi laudes suas inter
silentio commentur. cū filii dī iudicia
le sententiā & adiustos & adinsti
stos pferet. auscultantes cū reuerēn
tia honoris quom illos diiudicet.
cū blande iustis supna gaudia
tribuet & cū terribilitē in iustos adin
fernales penas mittet. s; ibi nec ex
cusatio nec interrogatio opationū
suarū maior erit. q̄m qd ibi con
scientie hominū & bonox & malox
nude & aperte s. Iusti autē qui ·x·
ibi uerba eōrū. mi iudicis pe
piunt. plurima quidē opa iustitie
fecerīt. s; tam ea inplenitudine p
fectionis dū in seclo uiuerent n
habuerīt. unde & nē in eis diiu
dicandi s. in iusti uero q̄ iudicia
le seueritatē ibi in se sentiunt
mala q̄ de facta p petrauerīt. s;
tam ea n ignorantia diuine ma

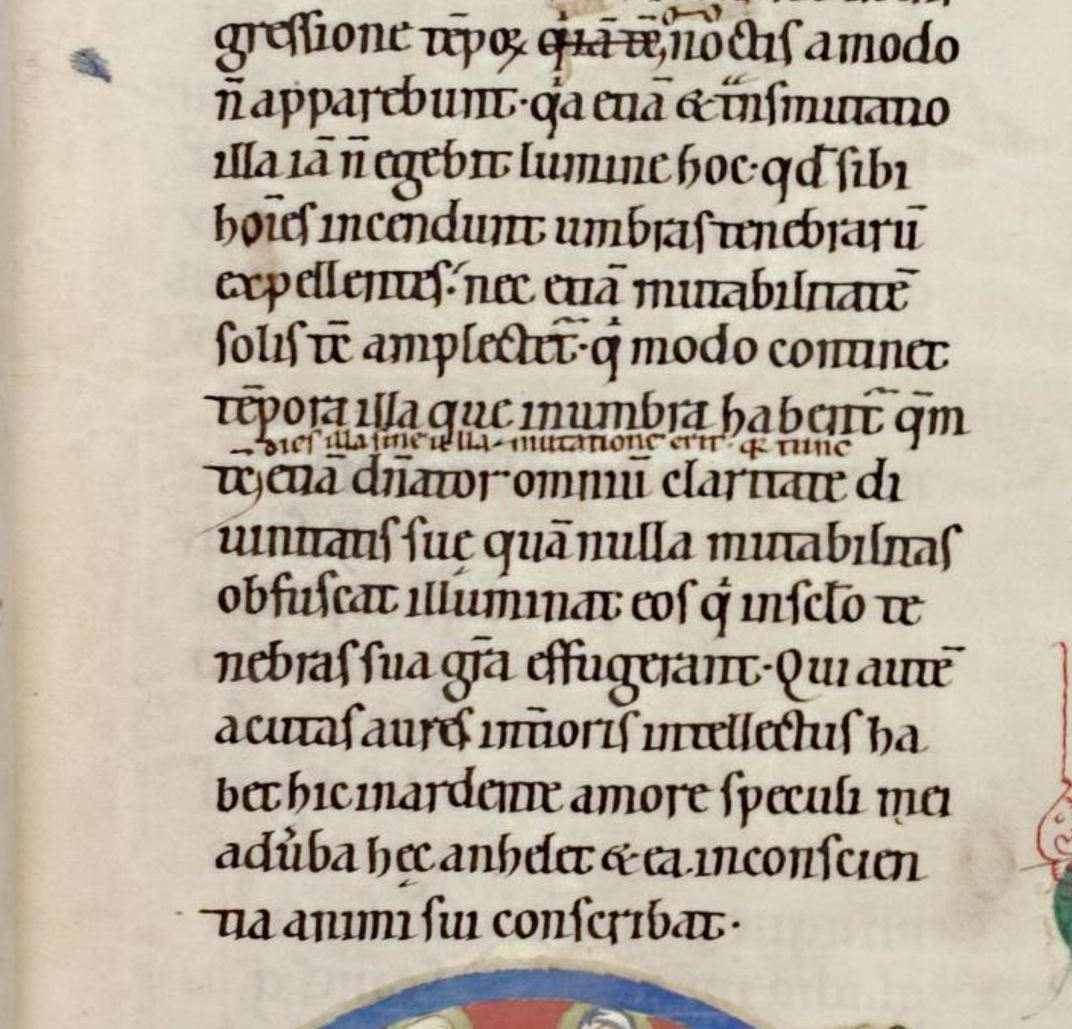
ictatus·qđ ē iniq̃tate p̄ iudicate da
natonis infidelitatis egerūt·æ ido
sententiā eī de iudicis ibi ñ effugi
ent·quō oīa equo ponderē ponde
:xj· 7 randa s·Illi autē q̄ infide signa
7 tu ñ s·q̄m ipsi indm ñ credidērt·
in parte aquisonis idē p̄dicois cū
diabolica turba interim tardant nec
7 adhoc puenunt·s;tam illud inob
7 umbratione uidentes finēq·eī p̄sto :xiij· eugio filī m̄s loquēte dicēs· Et tibus
7 lantes intra se mutuō gemunt·quō hi in supplicīū ētnū·iusti autē in
ipsi infidelitate p̄dutantes ueru uīta ētna·Hoc tale ē·Qui in leno ci
dm ñ cognouērt·qa ipsi nec aute nio omniū malox fecerūt nec sicut
baptismū unuū dm in ueri testamto q̄d iustū ē hauirē in sūma bonitate·
colueūt·nec sub eugio remediū bap p̄ter infidelitatis & nequicie sue
tismatis susceperūt·s;in maledictione in penas ētne p̄dicois dimerguntē·
casus ade p̄seuerauerūt danatonis secdm opa sua infernalia tormēta re
penas habentes·unde & in infideli cipientes·Edificatores uero chorusca
tate sceleruū suox iā iudicati inuenī tionis celestis iuxtā q̄ porus filie syon
:xvij· 7 untē·Sicq; iudicio finito·terores fidelīt instant·fulgebunt in luce u
7 elemēta ox & fulgura tonitrua·& te ētne qua castissima uirgo in secun
7 uenti intēpestatib; cessant·& omīe dnate uirginitatis sue credentib; mi
7 q̄d caducū & transitoriū ē dilabit·:xv· rabilīt amulte·Et ut uides elemēta
7 nec amplī apparebit·s;nisi ex ē desi 7 in maxima claritate & pulchritudine
nit que a calore solis dissolutē·max his omīb; pacis fulgebunt·omni in
ima quiete tranq̄llitatis diuina delicet in pectore nigredinis & sor
:xvij· 7 dispensatione ita exorta·Et 7 dis ablato·Nā ignis sine feruore tunc
7 sic electi splendore ētnā·Ius 7 ut aurora rutilat & aer absq; spissitu
7 habentes una cū capite suo scili 7 dine purissim̄ fulget & aqua sine im
7 cet filio meo·& cū gloso celesti ex petu effusionis & submersionis p̄spicua
eretu in magna glā celestia gaudia 7 et leuis stat·& ita absq; omī fragilitate
petunt·& regni una cū diabolo & & tormentidine fortissima et planissi
cū anglis ipsī ad ētna supplicia in ma apparet·his omīb; in magnā tran
multa contritione tendunt ubi ēt quillitatē ac pulchritudinē transla
nā mortē sibi p̄parata ētnaliter uidēs· tus·S;& sol & luna ac stelle uelut p̄cio
qa magis concupiscentias secum s· sissimi lapides in auro·ita etiā infir
Et sic cetū electos in glām ētnatus manto multa claritate & maximo

finis quia p̄ceptamen

qa iam tē nocts umbra fugabit ita d'tene
bre

fulgore rimlam· nec ultra inquietu
dinē circūuolumo mss suę diē & noc
tē· ad discernendū habent· qa finito
mundo iā immutabilmate s·ita
qđ & nullę tenebre nocts amodo
apparebunt quō tē dies indeficiens
ē· in eā iohs dilectꝰ ms testat dicēs·

Et nox ultra ñ erit & ñ egebunt· lu
mine lucerne neq; solis· qm
dñs dꝰ illuminat illos· Hoc tale ē·
qu thesaurū habet cū mūdū subtra
hit mūdū eā emittit· sic & nox lu
men celat & ut dies tenebras fugat
homini lum affert· ita ñ erit mutꝫ
gressione tēpoꝝ qua tē, nocts amodo
ñ apparebunt· qa eā & mutabilitate
illa iā ñ egebit lumine hoc· qđ sibi
hoīes incendunt umbras tenebraru
expellentes· nec eā mutabilitatē
solis tē amplectēt· q modo comunet
tēpora illa que umbra habent· qm
tē eā dñator omniū claritate di
uinitatis suę quā nulla mutabilitas
obfuscat illuminat eos q̄ infelici te
nebras sua gra effugerant· Qui autē
acutas aures mētis intellectus ha
bet hic ardentē amore speculi mei
adūba hęc audiet & ea inconscien
tia animi sui conscribat·



Terra dñi ē & plenitudo ei⁹ orbis terrarum & uniuersi qui habitant in eo

lucidissimū aerē· in quo auditui in
omīb; p̄dictis significationib; mi
rabili m̄ diuisū genꝰ musicoꝝ in lau
dib; cuius supnoꝝ gaudioꝝ inuia
uerisimis fortit̄ p̄sueramus ac in
querelis reuocatoꝝ ad laudes eorun
de gaudioꝝ· & in exhortatione ur
tutū se exhortamur ad salutē ppl̄oꝝ
quib; diabolice insidie repugnant
s; ipse uirtutes eas opprimunt· ita
tam q̄d sic fideles hoīes tandē aper
tas ad supna p̄petrema· uiscunt·
et sonus ille ut uox multitudinis
in laudib; de supnis gradib; in har
monia simphonians· sic dicebat·

Splendidissima gēma & serenꝫ decus solis· q̄ t in fusus ē fons
saliens de corde patris qui ē unicꝫ
uerbū suū p quđ creauit mundi pri
mā materiā quā cum turbauit·
hoc uerbū efabricauit t pat̄ ho
minē· & ob hoc est ut illa lucida ma
teria p quā hoc ipsū uerbū exspi
rauit omīs uirtutes· ut educ̄ in pma
materia omīs creaturas· Ou suauissi

p mū.

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ma uirga frondens de stirpe ihesse·
o quã magna uirtus ẽ q̃d diuinã
tas inpulcherrimã filiã aspexit·
sicut aq̃la in solẽ oculũ suũ ponit·
cũ supnus pat̃ clarissimẽ uirginis
aduenit·ubi uerbũ suũ in ipsa
incarnari uoluit·Nã in mistico
misterio di illustrata ñre uirgi
nis·mirabilit̃ clarius flos ex ipsa
uirgine exiuit·Et merit̃ dixit·

11. O gloriss̃imi luxuriens angli·
qui infra diuinitat̃ diuinos
oculos cũ mistica obscuritate oĩs
creature aspicis·inardentib; de
sideriis·unde nũquã poteris saci
ari·o quã gl̃osa gaudia illa uita
habet forma·que in uobis ẽ in
tacta abominis prauo ope q̃d p̃mũ
ortũ ẽ in uro socio p̃dmo angli
q̃ uolare uoluit supra omnis late
pinnaculũ di·unde ipse corruo
sus demersus ẽ in ruinã·s; ipsi in
struxit casus consiliando facture
digna di instituit·Nã o uos an
geli q̃ custodimis pplos quoq; for·
ma fulget in facie uestra & o uos ar
changli q̃ suscepistis aias iustoq; &
uos uirtutes·potestates·principa
tus dnationes·& throni q̃ ethis cõ
putatis in q̃nitũ secretũ numerũ·
& o uos cherubin & seraphĩ sigil
lũ secretoq; di·sit laus uobis q̃ lo
culũ antiqui cordis in fonte a
spicitis·Videns enĩ in uitro ẽ in
pat̃·que de corde illi spirat q̃si
facies·hec̃q; dicebat·O

111. Spectabiles uiri q̃ p̃transistis occulta

aspicientes p̃ oculos sp̃s & animan
tes in lucida umbra acutã & uiuen
tẽ lucẽ in uirga germinantẽ·que
sola florum de imo rami radican
tis luminis·uos amicq̃ sci p̃ dextris
saluatorẽ exulũ animarũ·que
immerse fuerant morti q̃ circuistis
ut rote mirabilit̃ loquentes mis
ca motus·q̃ celũ tangit p̃transi
ens ungendo multas aquas·cũ
etiã int̃ uos surrexit lucida lucer
na que ipsũ montẽ p̃currens ostẽ
dit·O uos felices radices cũ q̃b; op̃
miraculoq; ẽ op̃ retinuit p̃cur
rens it̃ p̃spicue umbre planitiũ
ẽ·& o tu ruminans ignea uox p̃cur
rens lumanitẽ lapidẽ subuertentẽ
abyssũ·gaudent incapite uro·& gau
dent multo que ñ uident uitris mul
ti·q̃ ipsũ ardent uocauerit·Et rursũ

111. dixit· O chori s̃ milicie floris
uirge ñ spinate·tu sonus orbis tũ
circuiens regiones insanoq; sensus
epulantiũ cũ portus q̃s expugna
ti p̃ infusiũ adiutorẽ ponentis ra
dices in tabernacula pleni opis
uerbi pat̃·tu etiã nobilis es gens
saluatoris int̃is uia regenerationis
aque p̃ agniũ q̃ te misit in
gladio int̃ecciuissimos canes q̃
suã gl̃am destruxerit in opib; di
gnoq; suoq;·stantiemes ñ manufac
tũ in subiectionẽ manuũ suarũ
inquia ñ inuenerit cũ·Nã o luci
dissima aplorũ turba surgens in
uera agnitione & apiens clausu
rã magistrum diaboli abluendo

capnuos in fonte uiuentis aque: tuc
clarissima lux inmigrantis tenebri-
fortissimūq: genus columnarū spon
sā agni sustentans in omīb: ornamē
tis ipsi⁹ p cui⁹ gaudiū ipsa mat̄ ecc̄le
go ē uocabulata· Agni enī immaculat⁹
ē sponsus ipsi⁹ sponse ecc̄lie immacula
te· Inq: dicebat· O uictoriosissi ·v·
mi triumphatores q in effusione san
guinis uri salutantes edificationē
ecc̄lē inimicis sanguinē agni epulan
tes cū uitulo occiso· o quā magnā
mercedē habetis· q a corpora ūra u
enenes despexistis· unanimes agnū
di ornantes penā ei⁹ inq uos intro
duc̄ in restauratione beredinamis·
Vos flores rosarū q in effusione san
guinis uri beati estis in maximis
gaudiis redolentib: et sudantib: in
empcione que fluc̄ de interiori
ime consilii manentis ante cuī in
illo inq ñ erat estimatio a capite· Sit
honor in ēsortio uro q estis instru
mentū ecc̄lē· et q in uulneribus uri
sanguinis undantis· Et interū dic̄· ·vj·
Successores fortissimi leonis int̄
cēplū et abstrahite dñam inter in
stratione ei⁹· sic̄ angli sonant inlav
dib: et sic̄ ad s̄ pplis in adiutorio·
uos estis int̄ illos q hec facitis sēp
curā habentes in officio agni· O uos
inmatores excelse p̄sone in p̄cio
sissima et gl̄osissima significatione·
o quā magni ē ur ornat⁹ ubi ho pec
dit̄ soluens et stringens in dō pigros
et pegrinos· et ā ornans candidos
et nigros· et magna onera remittis·

Nā et anglici ordinis officia habe
ns· et fortissima fundamēta p̄sens
ubicūq: construenda s·· unde mag
nus ē ur honor· Inq: dicebat· ·vij·
O pulchre facies dīm aspicientes
et maurora edificantes o beate
uirgines quā nobiles estis· in q̄b: rex
se ēsideranit· cū in uobis oīa celestia
ornamēta p̄signauit· ubi et ā sua
ussim⁹ ort⁹ estis in oīb: ornamur re
dolentes· O nobilissima uirtutas q
radicas in sole· et que incandida se
rentante luces in rota· quā nulla ur
na excellentia cōprehendit· tu circū
data es amplexib: diuinox misteriox·
Tu rubes ut aurora· et ardes ut so
lis flāma· Et interū sonat ille ut ·viij·
uox· multitudinis in querelis de
reuocans ad eos dē gradus in marmo
ra sic querebat dic̄· O plang̃s
uox ē hec· maxime doloris· Ach·
ach que dā mirabilis uictoria in
mirabili desiderio di surrexit in
qua delectamo carnis se latent· ab
scondit· heu heu ubi uoluntas et
mina nescium et ubi desiderū hois
lasciuia fugit· Luge luge q̄ in his
innocentia· que impudore bono
integritatē ñ amisisti· et que anta
ricia gutturis animq; serpentis ibi
ñ deuorasti· O uiuens fons· quā
magna ē suauitas tua q facie istox
unc ñ amisisti· s; acute p̄uidisti q̄m
eos de anglico casu abstraheret· q
se estimabant illud habe qd ñ licet
sic stare· Ipse gaudet filia syon· qa ds
et multos reddit q̄s serpens de te

abſcedere uolunt q̄ nē immanori luce
fulgent quā pr̄ illoꝝ causa fuisset.
ijuenſ cū lux debis dic̄. Tortuosū
serpem̄ scandalibam in sua sugge.
stione. q̄ nā plena nō fuerat sic il.
le putabat. Jnde iuram̄ p̄mencip
sū q̄d in his causis feci ampli⁹ ⁊ ap̄li⁹.
q̄m meas oserpens tuū gaudiū p̄ de
ret. q̄a una suggestione am̄putam
q̄d nūq̄m mueniū ē una scuma
o turpissime illusor. ·viij· Ire q̄. soni ille
ut uox multitudinis in exhortam
one uirtutū in aduersor̄ hominꝫ.
et in contradictione repugnantū
diabolicar̄ arcuū. uirtutib⁹ uicia
supantib⁹ & hoīb⁹ tande diuina
inspiratione ad penitentiā rede
untib⁹ in armonia sic clamabat.
Nos uirtutes in do sum⁹. & in do ma
nem⁹ regi regū militam⁹. & masū
abono separam⁹. Nā in p̄mo agone
aparuim⁹ ubi uictrices extitim⁹. du
ille corruit q̄ sup se uolare uolue.
Ergo & nē militem⁹ illis q̄ nos inuo
cant subuenientes. & diabolicas ar-
tes calcantes. & eos q̄ nos imitari uo
luerint ad beatas mansiones p̄du
centes. Querela. aiar̄ in carne po
sitar̄. O nos p̄egrine sum⁹. q̄d feci
mus. ad peccata deuiantes. filie
regis ee debuim⁹. ſ; in ūbra peccatoꝝ
cecidim⁹. O unigens sol. porta nos in
humeris tuis in ultissima hereditā
te quā in ada p̄didim⁹. O rex regū
in tuo p̄lio pugnam⁹. Jnuocamo fi
delis aīe. O dulcis dominas & cosua
uis una inqua p̄feta uestē p̄clara.

illud accipiens q̄d p̄dixi in p̄ma ap
paritione. adhuc suspiro & os uirtu
tes inuoco. Responsū uirtutū. O fe
lix aīa & o dulcis creatura di. que
edificata es in p̄funda altitudine
sapientie di. multū amas. fidelis
anima. O libenter uenā aduos. ut p̄
beatis in osculū cordis. Virt hos de
beā militare tecū o filia regis. S; gra
ta aīa quereris. O gus labor & odu
rū pondus q̄d habeo in uestre hui⁹
uite. q̄a nimis gue in ē contra car
nē pugnare. Virtutes. O aīa uolun
tate di ēstima. ⁊ o felix instrumēti.
q̄re tā debilis es cōtra hoc. q̄d dis
ctum in iurgnea natura. Tu debes
inob superare diabolū. Aīa illa. Suc
curre in adiuuando. ut possim
stare. Sciema di adcande aīā die.
Vide q̄d illud sit q̄ es idigna filia
saluatoris. & esto stabilis. & nūq̄m
cades. Aīa illa. O nescio q̄d facia.
am. ubi fugiā. o ue in nō possū p̄fice
re hoc q̄ sū idigna. Certe illud uolo
abicere. Virtutes. O, felix & sciema.
o misera aīa. q̄re abscondis faciē
tuā cora creatore tuo. Sciema di
ad aīā illā. Tu nescis nec uides nec
sapis illū. q̄ te ēstimat. Aīa illa. Dis
creauit mundū. nō facio illi iniuriā.
ſ; uolo in illo. Suggestio diaboli.
adcande aīā die. famule famule. q̄d
p̄dē t laborare. Respice mundū.
& ap̄lectere te magio honore. Vir
tutes. Heu heu nos infimes plangam⁹
& lugeam⁹ q̄a ouis dni fugit umā.
Humilitas. Ego humilitas regina

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ūtutū dīo. Ysenite adme ōs ūtutes. y cu
rrīā uos ad reqrendū pdītā dragmā.
& ad coronandū mpseuerantia felicē.
Respōsū uirtutū. O gl̄ōsa regina &
osuauissima mediatrix. libenī. uenio.
Humilitas. Ido dilectissimę filię. te
neo uos in regali thalamo. O filię isrl
sub arbore suscitauit uos dns. unde
in hoc tēpore recordamini planctus
nis suę. Gaudete gr filię syon. Suscepit
diaboli. ad humilitatē. & ad rei. qs
ūtutes. Quę ē hec potestas. qd nullus
sit pur dīm. Ego aūt dico. Quolue
rit me & uoluntatē suā seq dabo illi
oīa. Tu v cū tuis seqcib; nichil habes
qd dare possis. qa etiā uos ōs nesci
us qd sitis. Humilitas respondet. Ego
cū meis sodalib; bene scio qd tu es
ille antiquus draco. q sup sūmū uo
lare uoluisti. s; ipse dns in abyssū pcipit
te. Ysirutes. Nos aūt ōs in excelsis habi
tāt. Planctus ide aię penitentis in cor
pore & uirtutes inuocatis. O uos re
gales ūrutes qm speciose. y qm ful
gentes estis in sūmo sole. & qm dul
cis ē usq mansio. y ido o ue m qa a
uobis fugi. Ysirutes. O fugitiue uenu
uenu ad nos. y dns suscipiet te. Penitēs
aīa in corpore. Ach. ach feruens dulce
do absorbuit me in peccatis. y ido
n ausa sū intrare. Ysirutes. Noli timere
nec fugere. qa pastor bon querit in
te pdītā ouē suā. Penitēs aīa in corpe.
Nunc ē m necesse ut suscipiatis me.
qm in uulneribus; feteo qb; antiquus
serpens me cōtaminauit. Ysirutes.
Curre ad nos. y sequere uestigia illa
in qb; nūquā cadet in so ciuitate nra.
& dns curabit te. Penitēs aīa in corpe.
Ego peccator. que fugi uulnā plen
ulceribus; uenia ad uos. ut pbeatis
in scūm redemptionis. Virtutes. O aīa
fugitiua esto robusta. & indue te.
arma lucis. Penitēs aīa in corpe. O tu
oīs milicia regine & ouos candida
lilia ipsi cū rosea purpura. icluna
te uos adme. qa pegrina a uobis
exulaui. y adiuuate me. ut in san
guine filii dei possim surgere. Et o
ulcera medicina humilitas pbe m
auxiliū qa supbia in multis uici
is fregit me. multas cicatrices m
imponēs. Nec fugio adte. y ido sus
cipe me. Humilitas ad ūtutes. O ōs
ūtutes suscipite lugentē peccatorē
in suis cicatrib; ppter uulnera xpi.
& pducite eū ad me. Virtutes ad
penitentē aīā in corpe. Volumus te
reducere. y nolumus te deserere &
oīs celestis milicia gaudet super te.
q decet nos in simphonia sonare.
Humilitas ad eande penitentē aīā.
O misera filia uolo te amplecti. qa
magr medicus dura & amara uul
nera ppter te passus ē. Suggestio
diaboli ad eande penitentē aīā.
Que es. aut unde uenis. Tu amplexa
ta es me. & ego foras eduxi te. s; nec
in recūsione tua cōfundis me. ego aūt
pugna mea deicia te. Penitēs aīa
contra diabolū. Ego ōs uias tuas ma
las ē cognoui. y ido fugi ate. in aūt
o illusor pugno cōtra te. Penitēs aīa.
ad humilitatē. Vnde tu o regina

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humilitas tuo medicamine adiu
ua me. Humilitas aduictoriā. & ad
reliq̄s ītimes. O uictoria que istū in
celo supastī curre cū sodalib; tuis.
& ōs ligare diabolū buc. Uictoria
adīmites. O fortissimi & gloriosissimi
milites. ueníte & adiuuate me istū
fallacē uincere. Uirtutes aduictoriā.
O dulcissima bellatrix ītorrente
fomte q̄ absorbuit lupū rapacē.
o gloria coronata. nos liberā. multa
nos tecū comē illusorē buc. Humili
tas adīmites. Ligate. q̄ istū o uir tu
tes p̄clare. Uirtutes. O regina nrā t.
parcbim? & p̄cepta tua īoīb; adim
plebim? Uictoria. Gaudete o socie.
q̄a antiquus serpens ligat? ē. Uirtu
tes. Laus t. xp̄e rex anglox. O ds q̄s
estu. q̄ utrumne ipso hoc magnū ēsi
lui habuistu q̄d destruē infernale
haustū in publicanis & peccatoribus.
q̄ nūc lucēt īsupna bonitate. Unde
o rex laus t. sit. O pat omips exte fly
te fons uiuigeo ardore. p̄duc filios
tuos in rectū uerum uelox a q̄rū. ma
ne & nos eos hoc mō p̄ducam? ī ēr tm
& uoces iste erant ut uox multitu
dinis. cū multitudo uoces suas īal.
tā extollit. Et sonet? earū ita p̄tīsiū
me. q̄d eas absq; difficultate tardi
tatis uel lexi. Audiuiq; uocē ex
eode lucido aere dicentē mihi. Laudes
supno creatori īcessabili uoce cor
dis & oris dande s. cū ipse nō solū
stantes & erectos s; etiā cadentes et
curuatos in supnis sedib; sua gr̄a
collocat. Unde uides o ho lucidissi

& mū aere candore gaudii supnoq; ciuis
& designante. mq̄ audis īoīb; p̄dictis
& significationib; mirabili mō diuīsū genꝰ
& musicoq; īlaudib; ciuiū supnoq; gaudioq;
& unita uertatis fortit̄ p̄seuerantiā. ac
& īq̄rentis reuocatoq; ad laudes eorunde
& gaudioq;. q̄m ut aer cōprehendit. & sustī
net ea que sub celo s. nta ut audis īoīb;
p̄monstrantis t. mirabilib; dī suauis et
dulcis simphonia. sonat īgaudio mi
racula electoq;. īsupna ciuitate existen
tiū & īdo suaui deuotione p̄sistentiꝰ.
ac īquerentis īcuriatione illoq; q̄s am
quuis serpens p̄dere tēptat. q̄s tam di
uina uirt? ad societatē beatoq; gaudioq;
fortit̄ p̄ducē p̄ferēs īeis illa misteria.
que humanis mentib; adūtā inclinatis
& s incognita. & īexhortatione ad sa
lutē pploq; q̄b; diabolice īsidie repug
nant s; ipse uirtutes eas opprimunt.
ita tam q̄d sic fideles hoīes tandē a
peccatis ad supna p̄penitentiā ītendunt.
quo ibi ītimes inimicb; fideliū adre
dēptionē ipsoq; uicus resistunt q̄b; illi
diabolico afflatu fatigant. s; eas for
tissima fortitudine supatis. hoīes in
peccatis plapsi. diuino nutu ad pen
tentiā reuertuntur. cū p̄q̄rit & deflet
anteriora facta. & cū ēsiderant & cauēt
posteriora. O ua p̄pt & sonꝰ ille ut
uox multitudinis īlaudib; de supnis
gdib; īarmonia simphonia, unanimitate & īconcordia gsam & bono
rē celestiū ciuiū ruminat. ita q̄d &
ipsū hoc sursū tollit q̄d uerbū pala.
p̄fert. Sic & ūbū corp̄ designat.
simphonia ū spīm manifestat. q̄m

&ecclesti armonia diuinitatē denumiat
&uerbū humanitatē filii di ppalat-
Et ut potestas di ubiq; uolans oia
circuit nec ei ullū obstaculū resi
stit·ita &rationalitas hoīs magnā ui
habet i unius uocib; sonare·&torpen
tes aīas aduigilatā in simphonia
excitare·Qd &dauid i simphonia p
phetie suę pbat·&ieremias lamētabi
li uoce i planctu suo ostendit·ita et
tu obo quę es paupcula &fragilis
nature audis i simphonia sonū de
igneo ardore ūginalis pudoris·iam
plexib; uerboꝝ floremus surge·&so
nū de acumine uiuentiū luminū
in supna ciuitate lucentiū·&sonū
de pphetia pfundoꝝ sermonū·et sonū
de dilatione aplōrus mirabiliū uer-
boꝝ·&sonū de effusione sanguinis
fidelit se offerentiū &sonū de officio
sacerdotali secretoꝝ·&sonū de uir-
ginali gdu i supna uiridine floren
tiū·qm supno creatori fidelis crea
tura sua i uoce exultationis &leticie
resultat·&gtes frequentes rependit·
S;&sonū audis ut uocē multitudi
nis i qredis de reuocatis adeosdē gdes
i armonia resonantē·qs simphonia
ñ solū i unanimitate exultationis i
ua rectitudinis fortit psistentiū
gaudet·s;etiā in cordia resuscita
tionis de ua uilicie lapsoꝝ·&tandē
aduersā beatitudinē erectoꝝ exultat·
quō pastor bonus ouē quę perierat cū
gaudio reportauit adgregē·hēq;
ut audis sonū ille ut uox multitudi
nis i exhortatione unitū inadiuto
riū hoīū·&in cōcordi dissone repugnan
tiū diabolicarū artiū inimb; uicia
supamb; &hoīb; tandē diuina in
spiratione ad penitentiā redeuntib;
armonia clamat·qm dulcis con
plexio ē inimb; fidelis hoīes ad
uerā beatitudinē trahentib; s; dira
coarctuatio ē inuicis diabolicarū
insidiarū·ñ tam ita ut uirtutes u
cia ñ superent·s; sic qd inimicos ea oino
debilitent·&sibi cōsentientes auxi
lio supni adiutorii adeptā rebus
onē pacatā penitentiā pducant·ut
etiā i uocib; armonię earū t demon
strat·Nam &simphonia dura
corda emollit·&ipsis humorē cō
punctionis i ducit·ac spm scm ad
uocat·Vnde &uocis iste qs audis s·
ut uox multitudinis·cū multitudo
uocis suas i altū extollit·qa laudes
ubilationū in simplicitate unani
mitatis &caritatis plene·fideles ad
unanimitatē illā ubi nulla discor
dia ē pducunt·cū eos in mētis positos
corde &ore ad supnā remuneratio
nē suspirare faciunt·Et sonus earū
ita pūnsit ut qd eas absq; difficultate
ut tarditatis intelligis·qm ubi di
uina grā opata fuerit·omnē tene
brositatē obūbrationis auferat·il
la pura &lucida faciens quę car-
nalib; sensib; infirmitate carnis
obscura s·Qua ppt qsqs dm fi
delit intelligit laudes i confessas a
fidelit offerat eq; fideli deuotio
ne icessanter iubilet·quēadmodū
et dauid seruus ms spū pfundita

xiiij.

xv.

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xvj.

tus & altitudinis ꝓfusus de me hortat̃
dicẽs. Laudate eū in sono tube. laud
eū in psalterio & cythara. laud eū in
tympano & choro. laud eū in cordis &
organo. laud eū in cymbalis iubilatio
nis. oīs spūs laudet dn̄m. Hoc tale ẽ.
Ihesus q̄ dn̄s simplici ꝛmone pura
deuotione sensus adoratus & diligus.
laud eū in sono tube. idē in sensu
rationalis. q̄a ꝑ dn̄o anglo cum ꝯ
ꝯsemetemb; ip̄dicionē cadente agmi
na beatoꝝ spūū iuenate rationa
bilit̃ ꝑstitert. deoq; fidei dilectione
adhesert. Laudatoq; eū in psalterio
ꝓfunde deuotionis & in cythara mel
liflua canoris. q̄m tuba sonante psal
terū & psalterio canente cythara
ꝓcedit. sic & beatus anglis in amore
uernalis ꝓseuerat; de inde hoīe
creato ꝑ phetas innumerabilib; uocib;
surrexert. q̄s apli in dulcissimis ubis
subsecuti s. Et laud eū in cymbalis
moratificationis. & in choro exultati
onis. q̄a ꝑ cythara & tympanū. ꝑ tym
panū chorus exultat. quēadmodū
aplis ore salutis ꝑdicantib; martyres in honore dn̄i in corporib; suis diu
sa supplicia sustinuert. de q̄b; exin
sacerdotalis officii uerace doctores
surrexert. Laudatoq; eū in cordis
humane redemptionis. & in organo
diuine ꝓfectionis. q̄m in choro exul
tante uoces cordarū & organi se
manifestante. sic et ueris doctorib;
in officio beatitudinis uernante ostendentib; ignes ꝓcesserẽt. que dn̄i filiꝰ
uerū hominē uelut in cordis amauert.
& uerū dn̄m uelut in organo adorauert.
eū ipsū dn̄m uerū hoīem & uerū dn̄m ere
didert. q̄d ẽ hoc. q̄a cū filiꝰ dei psalute
hoīm carnē assumpsit. glām diuinita
tis nō amisit. Vnde & beate ignes ip
sū sibi sponsū diligunt. uerū hoīem in
desponsatione & uerū dn̄m in castitate
ipsū fidei deuotione appehendert.
S; & laud eū in cymbalis bene sonan
tib; idē in bis assertionib; que bonū
sonū in uero gaudio faciunt. eū hoīes
inimis peccatoꝝ iacentes. ad supnā
celsitudinē diuina inspiratione cō
punct. se sursū ab imis tollunt. Lau
datoq; eū in cymbalis iubilationis. u
delicet in assertionib; diuine laudis.
ubi uirtuose ultores uictoriā fortis
sime facientes uicia in hoīb; oppimunt.
& eos forti desiderio ad beatitudinē
uere remunerationis in bonis pseue
rantes ꝓducunt. Vnde oīs spūs q̄ bene
uolentiā habet credendi in dn̄m & ho
norandi eū laudet dn̄m. idē illū q̄
dn̄s oīm ē. q̄a iustū ē ut ille q̄ una
desiderat huic q̄ una ē glificet. Et
uerū audiui uocē exp̄dicto lucido
aere dicentē. O rex altissime laus t̃
sit. q̄ in simplici & in docto hoīe fa
cis hec S; & uerū uox de celo uoca
tione maxima clamabat. dicẽs.
Audite & attendite oēs. q̄ supnā re
muneratione & beatitudinē habe
desideratis. O uos hoīes q̄ credula
corda habetis. & supnā remunera
tionē exspectatis. sermones istos
suscipite. & eos in mūdiosa corda
ura ponite. nec admonitionē istā

uiuisitatione usā recusauit.
Nā ego testificator uerax uerus
unus & uerus loquēs & nō tacēs dr.
dico aūq; uerū dico. Qs in pualere
potuit. Quis hoc cēptauerit. deuciā
eī. Vnde bo mentē nō appēdat
quē mouere nō potuit. S; ī ualle hu
militatis subsistat. S; qs tñ silet ui
as sine aq. Videlicet ille q se īuit
binē uentilat. & q fructū sine
refectione diuidit. Et q̄m tabna
culū meū ibi erit. S; tabna culū mey
ibi ē. ubi spē ses irrigatione suā fun
dit. Qd ē hoc. Ego īmedio sū. Quom.
Quicūq; digne me appēndit. hic
nec īaltitudine nec ipfunditate. nec
in latitudine cadet. Qd ē hoc. Quia
ego sū carnis illa q̄m nec flagrans
supbia deiecit. nec pfundi casus
dilauit. nec latitudo maloꝝ ēcrit.
Nūq̄d nō possū edificare īaltitudine
scabelli solis. Fortes q̄ in uallib; for
mudinē suā ostendunt me ēcēpnūt
hebetes īsomnia turbinū me abici
unt sapientes cibū meū renuunt.
& q̄sq̄s turpī scdm uoluntatē suā
sibi parat. S; ego istos īparuo &
pusillo ēfundā sic goliath īpuero
deiecit. sic & holofernē in iudith
supauit. Vnde & q̄sq̄s mistica ūba
huī libri recusauerit arcū meū
sup eū extendā. & sagittas pha
retre meę. eū tñsfigā. & coronā
q̄ de capite ipsī abicia. atq; eū illis
similabo q̄ in orb cecidert eū ēta
me murmurauert. S; q̄cūq; male
dicta sua comē, ppheta ista, ytu

lerit maledictio illa q̄m ysaac ytu
it sup eū uenit. & benedictione ce
lestis roris repleat. q̄ eā amplexus
fuerit. & q̄ eā in corde suo tenuerit.
ac q̄ eā uiuas planas pduxerit. &
q̄ eā gustauerit & in memoriā suā
posuerit. fiat mons myrre & thu
ris & omniū aromatū. & dilatatio
nibarū benedictionū. de bene
dictione ībenedictionē ascendēs
sic abrabā. atq; noua nupta spon
sa agni sibi illū colūnā in ēspecty
di copulet. S; qs hec ūba digne di
temere absconderit. & ea p rabiē
suā minuerit. aut malicnū locū
alicuī humani sensus causa ab duxe
rit & ita deriserit. ille repbat sit.
Et digne di ēcrescet illū. Laud laud
q̄ dñm beata uiscera mōib; his mi
racul s̄que dr̄s ēstruunt in molli
forma specie excelsi. q̄m ipse p
uidit in p̄ma apparitione coste
uri illi quē dr̄s creauit. Qui autē
acutas aures īteioris intellectus
habet. hic in ardente amore spe
culi mei aduerba hec anhelet. &
ea in ēscientia animi sui conseri
bat. aoy.

"Humbria ma
ri dñi illā preget.

finit. iii. pars libri Iohis d.

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Mechthild of Magdeburg

THE FLOWING LIGHT OF THE GODHEAD

TRANSLATED AND INTRODUCED BY
FRANK TOBIN

PREFACE BY
MARGOT SCHMIDT

1998

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PROLOGUE TO THE LUX DIVINITATIS[1]

Prologue of Brother Heinrich, Lector,
of the Order of Preaching Brothers[2]

We read in the Book of Judges (4:4–5) that the holy woman Deborah, the wife of Lappidoth, full of the spirit of prophecy, was accustomed to set up her tent under a palm tree in the hills of Ephraim, residing there as a solitary to devote herself to God alone. Israel, God's people, would go up to her seeking judgment in all matters. Likewise, the Fourth Book of Kings (2 Kgs 22:14-20) relates that Huldah, a prophetess living in Jerusalem, enlightened by the Holy Spirit as to the hidden judgment of God, informed the holy king Josiah about the coming scourges threatening the people. This just and pious king had sent priests and levites to her so that the holy woman might seek the Lord's guidance and pray on his behalf regarding the imminent misfortunes. Certainly there were at the time high priests of the seed of Aaron and other kinds of priests and levites learned in the law and of high moral integrity; yet, in spite of this, the Holy Spirit did not divulge his secret counsels to them. Rather, for these times he revealed them to these holy women of the weak sex, as he saw fit.

Quite often, in fact, almighty God has chosen what is weak in the world to confound what is stronger for its good. Therefore, let no one wonder or, lacking trust, fall into disbelief if God in the time of grace renews his marvels. He, who in the time of the law of Moses mercifully saw fit to perform similar works, now reveals his mysteries to the fragile sex. Because the people of Israel

believed Deborah's prophecy, they won freedom from oppression and victory over their enemies. Also, a king, a religious man, was found worthy to gain solace and mercy through the prayer and advice of the prophetess Huldah. So, too, shall all who write or read this book, if they approach it with pious intent, attain an increase in solace and spiritual grace, as the Lord promises them in the book itself.

This writing must be read in a pious spirit, however. It must be understood, as is the case with other holy writings, in a wholesome manner and in good faith. In this way the reader will find nothing scandalous or offensive in it, and the writing itself will not be subjected to any perverse claim of falsehood. Its author is the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; it treats Christ and the church, as well as Satan and his body.[3] Its manner of proceeding is both historical and mystical[4]; its purpose is the ordering of the present life, the useful calling to mind of things past, and the prophetic disclosure of things to come. The sincere devotion and dove-like simplicity of the woman through whom this writing was made public should completely suffice to guarantee the truth of what the pious faithful are asked to believe. From childhood she led a pure and innocent life. In her youth, at the urging of the Lord, she left everything she stood to gain and became an exile in a foreign land, leading a life of voluntary poverty. Finally, after many tribulations and at an advanced age, she was received into the community of holy sisters at Helfta. She lived there for twelve years and, as is confirmed by their testimony,[5] she flourished in the perfection of all virtues. She especially practiced charity, humility, long-suffering, and meekness. Raised up above all things by contemplation and made a sharer of divine illuminations and revelations, she was worthy to perceive from the Lord through her prophetic spirit numerous intimate divine mysteries concerning things past, present, and to come. Now, having been received by the Bridegroom of virgins, this holy virgin enjoys fully him whom she loved and whose wondrous love adorned his beloved with many marvels.

The revelations and visions that almighty God has deigned to disclose to his elect are founded upon and have their origin in

the directness of their faith. Their purity of mind demands and expects them. The holiness of their life authenticates and corroborates them. For celestial secrets lie open to such people, and their testimony is greeted with belief by the hearts of those who hear them.

For this reason, before beginning this book, which is written in a primitive tongue and contains certain marvelous and previously unknown mysteries, I thought it worthwhile to point out beforehand a bit about the holiness of the person to whom these things have been revealed by heaven, so that the marvels mentioned in word might have the support of deeds more marvelous. For who shall describe for us more vividly the perfection of the elect than those very ones in whom and through whom God carries out his works? And who could have made known to the church more beneficially or better the perfection of Paul than Paul himself? In like manner, this holy one made public what the divine Spirit had wrought in her and with her, and proclaims his praise and glory.[6]

LATIN FOREWORD WITH TABLE OF CONTENTS AND MIDDLE HIGH GERMAN TRANSLATION[1]

In the year of our Lord 1250 and for almost fifteen years thereafter this book was revealed[2] in German by the Lord through grace to a certain beguine who was a holy virgin in body and spirit. In humble simplicity, in the poverty of exile, weighed down by scorn, and in heavenly contemplation, as is made clear in this writing, she served the Lord with great devotion for more than forty years, following perfectly the footsteps of the brothers of the Order of Preachers. Always progressing day by day, she continually became better. It was compiled[3] by a brother of the aforementioned order and contains many good things, as is noted in these titles:

On the Trinity: II 3; III 9; IV 12 and 14; V 26
On Christ: II 3; IV 14; V 23 and 27
On Our Lady: I 22; II 3; V 23
On the Nine Orders of Angels: I 6; III 1; V 1
On the Special Excellence of Certain Saints: IV 20, 22, and 23
On the Evilness of Demons: II 24; IV 2 and 17; V 1; V 29
On the Dignity of a Human Being: I 44; IV 14
On Rapture and the Separation of the Soul from the Flesh: I 5
On the Description of Heaven: III 1
On the Description of Hell: III 21
On the Many Kinds of Purgatory: II 8; III 15 and 17; V 14 and 15

On Many Virtues and Vices: I 22 and 25; III 7 and 14; IV 4; and on Charity Especially: III 13
On the Order of Preachers at the End of the World at the Time of the Antichrist: IV 27
And on many things unheard of that you shall understand if you read this book nine times in faith, humility, and devotion.[4] Here is prophecy about the past, present, and future. Here also is the Song of the Three Persons: V 26.

[Middle High German translation:]

In the year 1250 after God's birth and for the fifteen years thereafter this book was revealed in German by God to a sister. She was a holy virgin both in body and in spirit. She served God devotedly in humble simplicity, in the poverty of exile, in heavenly contemplation, and weighed down by scorn, for more than forty years, and followed steadfastly and completely the light and the teaching of the Order of Preachers, and went forward from day to day and improved herself daily. But a brother of the same order gathered together and wrote this book; and much good is contained in this book on many subjects, as is noted in this list. You should read it through nine times in faith, humility, and devotion.

Book I

One Should Receive This Book Eagerly, For It Is God Himself Who Speaks the Words[1]

This book I hereby send as a messenger to all religious people,[2] both the bad and the good; for if the pillars fall,[3] the building cannot remain standing; and it signifies me alone and proclaims in praiseworthy fashion my intimacy. All who wish to understand this book should read it nine times.

This Book Is Called a *Flowing Light of the Godhead*

"Ah, Lord God, who made this book?"
"I made it in my powerlessness, for I cannot restrain myself as to my gifts."[4]
"Well then, Lord, what shall the title of the book be, which is to your glory alone?"
"It shall be called a flowing light of my Godhead into all hearts that live free of hypocrisy."

1. How Love and the Queen Spoke to Each Other[5]

The soul came to Love, greeted her with great deference, and said:

"God greet you, Lady Love."
"May God reward you, Mistress and Queen."
"Lady Love, you are indeed perfect."
"Mistress and Queen, that is why I am above all things."
"Lady Love, you struggled many a year before you forced the exalted Trinity to pour itself utterly into the humble virginal womb of Mary."
"Mistress and Queen, that was to your honor and benefit."
"Lady Love, you have now come here to me and have taken from me everything I ever gained on earth."

"Mistress and Queen, you have made a happy exchange."
"Lady Love, you have taken from me my childhood."
"Mistress and Queen, in its place I have given you heavenly freedom."
"Lady Love, you have taken from me all my youth."
"Mistress and Queen, in its place I have given you many a holy virtue."
"Lady Love, you have taken from me possessions, friends, and relatives."
"Come now, Mistress and Queen, that is a petty complaint."
"Lady Love, you have taken from me the world, worldly honor, and all earthly riches."
"Mistress and Queen, I shall make that up to you in one hour with the Holy Spirit on earth, just as you wish it."
"Lady Love, you have brought me to such a pass that my body is racked by a strange weakness."
"Mistress and Queen, in exchange I have given you much sublime knowledge."
"Lady Love, you have devoured my flesh and my blood."
"Mistress and Queen, you have thereby been purified and drawn into God."
"Lady Love, you are a robber; for this as well shall you make reparation."
"Mistress and Queen, then take me."
"Lady Love, now you have recompensed me a hundredfold on earth."
"Mistress and Queen, in addition you may demand God and all his kingdom."[6]

2. *Concerning Three Persons and Three Gifts*[7]

God's true greeting, coming from the heavenly flood out of the spring of the flowing Trinity, has such force that it takes away all the body's strength and reveals the soul to herself, so that she sees herself resembling the saints, and she takes on a divine radiance. Then the soul leaves the body, taking all her power, wisdom, love, and longing. Just the tiniest bit of her life force remains with the body as in a sweet sleep.[8] Then she sees one complete God in three Persons and knows the three Persons in one God undivided.

He greets her in courtly language that one does not hear in this kitchen, clothes her in the garments that one fittingly wears in a palace, and surrenders himself into her power. Then she can

wish for and ask whatever she wants. It is granted her and she is enlightened. What she is not enlightened about is the first cause of the Three Persons.[9] Then he draws her further to a secret place. There she is not permitted to beg on anyone's behalf or ask, because all alone with her he wants to play a game that the body does not know, nor the peasants at their plows, nor knights at their tournaments, nor his lovely mother, Mary—not even she may play it there. Then she soars further to a blissful place of which I neither will nor can speak. It is too difficult; I do not dare, for I am a very sinful person. Yet when infinite God brings the unfathomable soul to the heights, she loses sight of the earth in her astonishment and is not aware of ever having been on earth. Just when the game is at its best, one has to leave it.

Then God in full vigor speaks: "Young Miss, you must go down." She shudders and laments[10] her banishment. She says: "Lord, you have raised me up[11] so high here that I shall not be able to praise you in any fitting degree when in my body. Rather, I shall suffer as an outcast and shall struggle against the body." And he says:

"Oh, dear dove,[12]
Your voice is string music to my ears.
Your words are spices for my mouth.
Your longings are the lavishness of my gift."

She says: "Dear Lord, it has to be as the master of the house[13] commands." And she sighs with all her might, which awakens the body.[14]

Then the body speaks: "Well, woman, just where have you been? You come back so love-struck, lovely, and vibrant, free and witty. Your carrying on has cost me my appetite, sense of smell, color, and all my strength."

She says: "Shut up, murderer! Quit your bellyaching. I'll always be on my guard with you around. That my enemy has been wounded—what do we care about that? It makes me glad."

This is a greeting that has many streams. It pours forth from the flowing God into the poor, parched soul unceasingly with new

knowledge, in new contemplation, and in the special enjoyment of the new presence. O sweet God, inwardly on fire, outwardly blossoming, now that you have given this to the least,[15] I would like to experience the life that you have given to your greatest. For that I would be willing to endure suffering even longer.

No one is able or is permitted to receive this greeting unless one has gone beyond oneself and has become nothing. In this greeting I want to die living.[16] This the blind saints cannot ruin for me. They are the ones who love and do not know.[17]

3. The Handmaids of the Soul and the Blow of Love[18]

All holy Christian virtues are the handmaids of the soul. The sweet listlessness of the soul complains to Love of her troubles:

"Well then, dearest Maiden, for a long time now you have been my chambermaid. Now tell me, where is all this leading? You have hunted me, trapped me, bound me, and wounded me so deeply that I shall never be healthy again. You have meted out to me many a cudgel blow. Tell me, am I ever going to recover from you? If I were not going to be killed by your hand, it would be better for me never to have known you."[19]

Love: "That I hunted you was my fancy.
That I captured you was my desire.
That I bound you made me happy.
When I wounded you, you were joined to me.
When I cudgel you, I take you into my power.
I drove God the almighty from heaven,
Took his human life,
And returned him to his Father in honor.
How do you, vile worm, expect to survive before me?"

The Soul: "Speak, my Empress, I fear a small secret medicine
God has often given to me that I might thrive even in your presence."

Love: "If one does not want the prisoners dead,
One gives them water and bread.
The medicine that God has often given you

Is nothing other than a brief return to human life.
But when your Easter Day comes
And your body receives the death blow,
Then I'll embrace you tightly
And permeate you utterly,
And I'll steal you from your body
And give you to your Lover."

The Soul: "O Love, this letter I have written out of your mouth.
Now give me, Lady, your seal."

Love: "Whoever has succeeded in loving God more than self
Knows well where to get the seal.
It lies between the two of us."

The Soul speaks:
"Be silent, dear one, and speak no more.
Dearest of all maidens, let all creatures, myself included,
Bow down before you.
Tell my Lover that his bed is made ready.
And that I am weak with longing for him."

If this letter is too long, this is the reason: I was on the meadow where I found flowers of all kinds. This is a sweet lament: Who dies of love shall be buried in God.

4. The Soul's Journey to Court During Which God Reveals Himself

When the needy soul comes to the court, she is judicious and refined. She gazes at her God in high spirits. Oh, how tenderly is she welcomed there! She remains silent, longing boundlessly for his praise. With great longing he reveals to her his divine heart. It resembles red gold burning in a great fire of coals. He places her into his glowing heart. When the exalted Sovereign and the little waif thus embrace and are united as water and wine, she turns to nothing and is transported out of herself.[20] When she

has no strength left, he is as lovesick for her as he always was; for he neither increases nor decreases. Then she says:

"Lord, you are my lover,
My desire,
My flowing fount,
My sun;
And I am your reflection."

This is the journey to court of a loving soul that cannot exist without God.

5. *The Torment and the Praise of the Soul*[21]

My body is in great torment, my soul is in sublime bliss; for she has both gazed upon and embraced her Lover in her arms. He causes her, poor wretch, torment. When he draws her up, she flows. She cannot hold herself in check until he brings her within himself. She would like to speak but cannot, so utterly has she been enmeshed in sublime union with the awe-inspiring Trinity. Then he leaves her for a short while, that she might feel longing. She desires his praise but does not know how to find it as she would like. She would even want him to send her into hell that he might be praised beyond measure by all creatures.[22] She looks at him and says to him, "Lord, give me your blessing." He looks at her, draws her up again, and gives her a greeting[23] that the body cannot express.

Then the body speaks to the soul:

"Where have you been?
I can't take it anymore."

And the soul says:

"Quiet, you are a fool.
I want to be with my Lover,
Even if it means you would perish.
I am his joy, he is my torment."

This is her torment. May she never recover!
May you take this torment upon yourself as well,
And may you never escape it!

6. *The Nine Choirs: How They Sing*[24]

Now hear,[25] my Beloved; listen with spiritual ears. Thus do the nine choirs sing:

We praise you, Lord, that you sought us in your humility.
We praise you, Lord, that you have kept us in your mercy.
We praise you, Lord, that you have glorified us in your humiliation.
We praise you, Lord, that you have provided for us in your generosity.
We praise you, Lord, that you have arranged us in rank in your wisdom.
We praise you, Lord, that you have shielded us with your might.
We praise you, Lord, that you have sanctified us with your nobility.
We praise you, Lord, that you have instructed us in your intimacy.
We praise you, Lord, that you have elevated us in your love.

7. *God's Curse in Eight Things*

I curse you:
May your body die.
May your words perish.
May your eyes close.
May your heart dissolve.
May your soul rise up.
May your body remain.
May your human faculties perish.
May your spirit stand in the presence of the Holy Trinity!

8. *The Most Lowly Praises God in Ten Things*

O you burning Mountain.
O you chosen Sun.
O you full Moon.
O you bottomless Well.
O you unscalable Height.

O you Brightness without measure.
O Wisdom without ground.
O Mercy without restraint.
O Might without opposition.
O Crown of all honors!
The most lowly person you ever created praises you.

9. With Three Things You Dwell on the Heights

Those who are on fire in true love and build on the firm ground of truth and bear abundant fruit for a blessed end—they dwell on the heights.

Explanation: This is about the Seraphim.

10. Who Loves God Triumphs over Three Things

Whoever conquers the world,
And takes from his body all useless desires,
And overcomes the devil,
This is the soul that loves God.
If the world gives her a shove,
She does not suffer much.
If the flesh gives her a jolt,
The spirit will not get sick from it.
If the devil gives her a push,
The soul pays no heed.
She loves
And keeps on loving,
And she does not know how to do otherwise.

11. Four Battle for God

O dove free of gall.[26]
O maiden free of blemish.
O knight free of wounds.
O liegeman free of hesitation.
These are the four whom God can count on in battle.

12. The Soul Praises God for Five Things[27]

O Emperor of all honors.
O Crown of all sovereigns.
O Wisdom of all the learned.
O Giver of all gifts.
O Deliverer of all imprisonments.

13. How God Comes to the Soul

I come to my beloved as the dew upon the flower.[28]

14. How the Soul Receives and Praises God

Ah, joyous sight!
Ah, lovely greeting!
Ah, dear embrace!
Lord, the wonder of you has overwhelmed me.
Your grace has crushed me.
O you lofty Crag.
You are so nicely honeycombed.
In you no one can rest but doves and nightingales.

15. How God Receives the Soul

Welcome, my precious dove.
You have flown so keenly over the earth
That your feathers reach to heaven.

16. God Likens the Soul to Four Things

You taste like a grape.
Your fragrance is like balsam.[29]
Your radiance is like the sun.
You are an enhancement of my most sublime love.

17. The Soul Praises God About Five Things

O you pouring God in your gift!
O you flowing God in your love!
O you burning God in your desire!
O you melting God in the union with your beloved!
O you resting God on my breasts![30]
Without you I cannot exist.

18. God Likens the Soul to Five Things

O you beautiful rose among the thorns!
O you fluttering bee in the honey!
O you unblemished dove in your being!
O you beautiful sun in your radiance!
O you full moon in the firmament!
I cannot turn away from you.

19. God Caresses the Soul in Six Ways

You are my softest pillow,
My most lovely bed,
My most intimate repose,
My deepest longing,
My most sublime glory.
You are an allurement to my Godhead,
A thirst for my humanity,
A stream for my burning.

20. The Soul Praises God in Return in Six Ways

You are my resplendent mountain,
A feast for my eyes,
A loss of myself,
A tempest in my heart,
A defeat and retreat of my power,
My surest protection.[31]

21. Of Knowledge and Enjoyment

Love without knowledge is as darkness to the wise soul.[32]
Knowledge without its fruition she likens to the pains of hell.
Fruition short of death she cannot lament enough.

22. St. Mary's Message and How One Virtue Follows Another. How the Soul Was Made in the Jubilus[33] *of the Trinity, and How St. Mary Nursed All the Saints and Nurses Them Still*

The sweet dew of the eternal Trinity gushed forth from the fountain of the everlasting Godhead into the flower of the chosen maid; and the fruit of this flower is an immortal God and a mortal man and a living hope of eternal life. And our Redeemer became a Bridegroom. The bride became exhilarated at the sight of his noble countenance:

Under this immense force she loses herself.
In this most dazzling light she becomes blind in herself.
And in this utter blindness she sees most clearly.
In this pure clarity she is both dead and living.

The longer she is dead, the more blissfully she lives.[34]
The more blissfully she lives, the more she experiences.[35]
The less she becomes, the more flows to her.
The more she fears,...[36]
The richer she becomes, the poorer she is.
The deeper she dwells,[37] the more she expands.
..., the more forbearing she is.
The deeper her wounds become, the more violently she struggles.
The more loving God is to her, the higher she soars.
The more radiantly she shines in the reflected effulgence of the Godhead, the closer she approaches him.
The more she labors, the more contentedly she rests.
..., the more she grasps.
The more quiet her silence, the louder she calls.
..., the greater the marvels she works with his strength in proportion to her power.

The more his desire grows, the more extravagant their wedding
celebration becomes.
The narrower the bed of love becomes, the more intense are the
embraces.
The sweeter the kisses on the mouth become, the more lovingly they
gaze at each other.
The greater the distress in which they part, the more he bestows upon
her.
The more she consumes, the more she has.
The more humbly she takes her leave, the sooner she returns.
The more ardent she remains, the sooner she bursts into flame.
The more she burns, the more beautifully she glows.
The more God's praise is spread abroad, the greater her desire
becomes.

Tell me, where did our Redeemer become the Bridegroom?

In the *jubilus* of the Holy Trinity. When God could no longer contain himself, he created the soul and, in his immense love, gave himself to her as her own.[38]

"What are you made of, Soul, that you ascend so high above all creatures, mingle with the Holy Trinity, and yet remain whole in yourself?"

"You have brought up the question of my origin. I shall tell you honestly: I was made by love in that very place.[39] For that reason no creature is able to give comfort to my noble nature or to open it up except love alone."

"Holy Mary, dear Lady, you are the mother of this wonder. When did this happen to you?"

"When our Father's *jubilus* was saddened by Adam's fall, so that he had to become angry, the Eternal Wisdom of the almighty Godhead intercepted the anger together with me. The Father chose me for his bride—that he might have something to love; for his darling bride, the noble soul, was dead. The Son chose me to be his mother, and the Holy Spirit received me as his beloved. Then I alone was the bride of the Holy Trinity and

mother of orphans, and I brought them before God's eyes so that they might not all sink down, though some did. When I was thus the mother of many a banished child, my breasts became so full of the pure, spotless milk of true, generous mercy that I suckled the prophets and sages, even before I was born. Afterward, in my childhood, I suckled Jesus; later, in my youth, I suckled God's bride, Holy Christianity, under the cross when I was so desolate and wretched, as the sword of the physical suffering of Jesus cut spiritually into my soul."

Both his wounds and her breasts were open.
The wounds poured forth.
The breasts flowed.
The soul was invigorated and completely restored
As he poured the sparkling red wine
Into her red mouth.[40]

As she was thus born and made healthy out of the open wounds, she was like a child, and very young. If she was going to recover completely after her death and birth, God's mother was going to have to be her mother and her nurse. This was and is as it should be, since God is her rightful father and she is his rightful bride. She resembles him in all parts.

"Lady, in your old age you suckled the holy apostles with your motherly instruction and with your powerful prayer, that God might reveal his honor and your will through them. Lady, thus did you suckle then and suckle still the hearts of martyrs with strong faith, the ears of confessors with holy protection, the virgins with your chastity, widows with constancy, married people with kindness, and sinners with patient hope."

"Lady, us, too, you must suckle, for your breasts are still so full that they are not likely to dry up. If you no longer wanted to suckle, the milk would cause you much pain. For truly, I have seen your breasts so full that seven streams pour out at one time from one breast over my body and over my soul. In that hour you relieve me of a labor that no friend of God can bear without

inner suffering. In this same manner, you shall go on suckling until the last day. Then you shall become dry, for then God's children—and your children—will be weaned and fully grown for eternal life. Ah, then we shall know and see with inexpressible joy the milk and even the breasts themselves[41] that Jesus so often kissed."[42]

23. You Should Ask That God Love You Passionately, Often, and Long; Then You Shall Become Pure, Beautiful, and Holy[43]

Ah, Lord, love me passionately, love me often, and love me long. For the more passionately you love me, the purer I shall become. The more often you love me, the more beautiful I shall become. The longer you love me, the holier I shall become here on earth.

24. How God Responds to the Soul

That I love you passionately comes from my nature, for I am love itself. That I love you often comes from my desire, for I desire to be loved passionately. That I love you long comes from my being eternal, for I am without an end and without a beginning.

25. The Way to Suffer Pain Willingly for God's Sake

God guides his chosen children along strange paths. This is a strange path and a noble path and a holy path that God himself trod: that a human being, though free of sin and guilt, suffer pain. Upon this path the soul that aches for God is joyful, for by nature she is joyful to her Lord, who suffered much pain because of his good deeds. Our dear Lord, the heavenly Father, delivered up his most beloved Son to be tormented by the heathens and martyred by the Jews despite his innocence. Now the time has come when some people, who have the appearance of being religious, torment the bodies of God's children and martyr their spirits. For he wants them to resemble his beloved Son who was tormented in body and soul.

26. The Path upon Which the Soul Draws the Senses and Is Free of Suffering of the Heart

It is a rarely traveled and lofty path upon which the devoted soul makes its way and guides the senses as one with sight guides a blind person. On this path the soul is free and lives without inner suffering, for she wants nothing but what her Lord wants, who arranges everything for the best.

27. How You Become Worthy of This Path and Keep to It and Become Perfect

Three things make a person worthy of this path—that one recognize it and enter upon it: first, that one submit to God relinquishing all human control, and that one piously hold on to God's grace and willingly keep it by being forgiving in all things as far as is possible for a human will. The second thing keeping a person on this path is that one welcome all things except for sin alone. The third thing keeping a person on this path is that one do all things equally for God's honor. Thus I think relieving my most basic need counts as much in God's sight as if I were in the highest state of contemplation that a human being can attain. Why? If I do it out of love in order to give honor to God, it is all one and the same. But when I sin, I am not on this path.

28. Love Shall Be Deadly, Boundless, and Unceasing; This Is the Folly of Fools

I delight in loving him who loves me, and I long to love him to the death, boundlessly, and without ceasing. Be happy, my soul, for your Life has died for love of you.[44] Love him so fiercely that you could die for him. Thus you burn ever more without ever being extinguished as a living flame in the vast fire of high majesty.

Thus you become full of the fire of love.
This makes you here utterly happy.

You can no longer teach me anything.
I cannot turn away from love.
I must be its captive.
Otherwise, I cannot go on living.
Where it dwells, there I must remain,
Both in death and in life.[45]
This is the folly of fools
Who live free of anguish.

29. The Beauty of the Bridegroom and How the Bride Should Follow Him in Twenty-Three Steps of the Cross[46]

Look at me, my bride.[47] See how beautiful are my eyes, how comely is my mouth, how on fire is my heart, how agile are my hands, and how swift are my feet. So, follow me! You shall be martyred with me, betrayed in jealousy, hunted in ambush, taken prisoner in hate, bound in obedience, your eyes covered so that one will not tell you the truth, slapped by the rage of the world, brought to trial in confession, struck blows by penance, sent to Herod in derision, stripped naked by abandonment, scourged by poverty, crowned with trials, spat upon by disgrace, bearing your cross in the hatred of sin, crucified in voluntary withdrawal from all things, nailed to the cross by the holy virtues, wounded by love, dying on the cross in holy constancy, pierced in your heart by constant union, taken down from the cross in true victory over all your enemies, buried in oblivion, arisen from the dead in a holy end, and drawn up into heaven in God's breath.

30. The Seven Hours[48]

Matins:	Love in abundance, a sweet delight.[49]
Prime:	Love's longing, a sweet burden.
Terce:	Love's pleasure, a sweet thirst.
Sext:	Love's feeling, a sweet cooling.
Nones:	Love's death, a sweet distress.
Vespers:	Love's flowing, a sweet pouring.
Compline:	Love's rest, a sweet joy.[50]

31. You Should Ignore Scorn

I was deeply scorned, and our Lord said: "Do not be much surprised. Since the precious unguent jar was utterly rejected and spat upon, what is going to happen to the vinegar jar, which has nothing of value about it?"

32. You Should Ignore Honors, Suffering, and Possessions. Be Sad After Sinning

If someone offers you honor, you should be ashamed.
If someone makes you suffer, you should be glad.
If someone does you a favor, you should be afraid.
If you commit a sin against me, you should be sad in your heart.
If you cannot feel sadness, then consider how greatly and how long I was saddened for your sake.

33. Concerning Food, Consolation, and Love

My soul spoke thus to her Lover:

"Lord, your generosity is food for my body wonderfully.
Your mercy is consolation for my soul especially.
Your love is repose for my being eternally."

34. In Suffering You Should Be a Lamb, a Turtledove, and a Bride

You are my lamb in your suffering;
You are my turtledove in your sighing;
You are my bride in your waiting.

35. The Desert Has Twelve Things

You should love nothingness.
You should flee somethingness.[51]
You should stand alone

And should go to no one.
You should not be excessively busy[52]
And be free of all things.
You should release captives
And subdue the free.
You should restore the sick
And yet should have nothing yourself.
You should drink the water of suffering
And ignite the fire of love with the kindling of virtue:
Then you are living in the true desert.

36. Concerning Malice, Good Works, and Concerning a Marvel[53]

With the malice of your enemies shall you be adorned.
With the virtues of your heart shall you be glorified.
With your good works shall you be crowned.
With our mutual love shall you be raised on high.
With my delightful marvel shall you be made holy.

37. The Soul Responds to God Saying She Is Unworthy of These Favors

O dearly Loved One, in undeserved humiliation I take delight.
Virtues of the heart are my desire.
Good works, alas, I do not have.
Our mutual love I sully.
Of your beautiful marvel I am utterly unworthy.

38. God Boasts That the Soul Has Overcome Four Sins

In heaven God boasts about the soul on earth that loves him and says:

"Look, how she who has wounded me comes ascending.
She has cast from her the ape of the world.
She has overcome the bear of wantonness.
She has trod the lion of pride underfoot.

She has torn apart the jaws of the wolf of lust
And, like the hunted stag, comes running to me, the spring.
Like an eagle she rises out of the depths to the heights."[54]

39. God Asks the Soul What She Is Bringing

"You rush restlessly about in your love.
What do you bring me, my queen?"

40. She Replies: Something That Is Better than Seven Things

"Lord, I am bringing you my precious stone.
It is greater than the mountains.
It is wider than the world,
Deeper than the sea,
Higher than the clouds,
Brighter than the sun,
More numerous than the stars.
It weighs more than the whole earth."

41. God Asks in Praise What the Precious Stone Is Called

"O image of my divinity,
Glorified by my humanity,
Adorned with the Holy Spirit:
Tell me, what is your precious stone called?"

42. The Precious Stone Is Called Heart's Delight

"Lord, it is called my heart's delight,
Which I have taken back from the world,
Retained for myself,
And denied to all creatures.
But now I can carry it no further.
Lord, where shall I put it?"

43. Put Your Delight into the Trinity

"The delight of your heart
You shall put nowhere else but into my divine heart
And onto my human breast.
There alone shall you be consoled
And kissed by my Spirit."

44. The Sevenfold Path of Love, the Three Garments of the Bride, and the Dance

"Ah, loving Soul, do you wish to know what your path shall be?"
"Yes, dear Holy Spirit, instruct me."
"When you have passed beyond the need of sorrow
and beyond the pain of confession
and beyond the travail of penance
and beyond the love of the world
and beyond the temptations of the devil
and beyond the influences of the flesh
and beyond cursed self-will

that thrusts many a soul backward with such force that she never achieves genuine love; and when you have struck down all your many foes, then you are so weary that you say: 'Fair youth, I long for you. Where shall I find you?' And the youth says:

'I hear a voice;
It speaks its piece on love.
I have courted her many a day,
But the voice never addressed me.
Now I am moved;
I must hurry to her!
She is the one who bears anguish
And love joined together.'"

In the sweet dew of the morning—this is the cloistered inwardness that first enters the soul—her chamberlains, the five senses, speak thus:

"Lady, you should dress yourself."

"Dear ones, where am I supposed to be going?"

"We have definitely heard it whispered about that the prince intends to come to you in the dew and in the delightful song of the birds. Alas, lady, do not tarry!"

Then she puts on the slip of soft humility, so humble that it cannot bear anything underneath it. Over it comes a white dress of spotless chastity, so pure that it cannot bear anything in thought, word, or touch that might soil it. Then she puts on the cloak of her good name, which she has gilded with all the virtues. She enters into the woods, the company of holy people. There sings day and night the sweetest of the nightingales, the well-modulated union with God; and she hears many a sweet voice of birds, holy knowledge.[55] And still the young man did not come. So she sends out messengers because she is eager to dance. She sent for the faith of Abraham and the longing of the prophets and the chaste humility of our Lady, St. Mary, and all the holy virtues of our Lord Jesus Christ and all the excellence of his chosen ones. Then a splendid dance of praise takes place.

The young man finally comes and says to her: "Young lady, my chosen ones have shown off their dancing to you. Just as artfully should you now follow their lead."

She says:
"I cannot dance, Lord, unless you lead me.
If you want me to leap with abandon,
You must intone the song.
Then I shall leap into love,
From love into knowledge,
From knowledge into enjoyment,
And from enjoyment beyond all human sensations.
There I want to remain, yet want also to circle higher still."[56]

And the young man has to sing thus:
"Through me into you
And through you from me."

[The soul:] "Willingly with you,
Woefully from you."[57]

The young man speaks: "Young lady, you have done very well in this dance of praise. You shall have your way with the Son of the virgin, for you are delightfully weary. Come at noontime to the shade of the spring, into the bed of love. There in the coolness you shall refresh yourself with him."

The young lady says:

"Oh, Lord, that is too much
That she be your partner in love
Who has no love in her,
Unless she is moved by you."

Then the soul speaks to the senses, who are her chamberlains: "Now for a while I am weary of the dance. Leave me; I must go and refresh myself."

And the senses say to the soul: "Lady, if you wish to find refreshing coolness in the love tears of Mary Magdalene, they would certainly soothe you."

[Soul:] "Be still, my lords, you do not understand at all what I mean. Let me be on my own. For a time I want to drink undiluted wine."

[Senses:] "Lady, in the chastity of virgins great love is ready."
"That may be, but it isn't the noblest thing about me."
"In the blood of the martyrs you can cool yourself very well."
"I have been martyred so many times that I can't go there now."
"In the counsel of confessors the pure happily dwell."
"I shall always need counsel about what to do and what not to do; and yet I can't go there just now."
"In the wisdom of the apostles you will find much security."
"I have wisdom with me here. This shall always guide me to choose for the best."
"Lady, the angels are radiant and of love's color. If you wish to refresh yourself, rise up to them."
"The angels' bliss pains me in my love if I am not gazing upon their Lord and my Bridegroom."
"Then refresh yourself in the holy austere life that God granted to John the Baptist."

"The suffering I'm ready to bear, and yet the force of love transcends all austerity."
"Lady, if you want to refresh yourself in love, bow down to the small Child in the lap of the eternal virgin; and taste and see how the Joy of the angels sucked the unnatural milk."[58]

"That is child's love, that one suckle and rock a baby. I am a full-grown bride. I want to go to my Lover."

[Senses:] "Oh, Lady, if you go there,
We shall go completely blind.
The Godhead is so blazing hot,
As you well know,
That all the fire and all the glowing embers
That make the heavens and all the saints glow and burn
Have flowed out from his divine breath
And from his human mouth
According to the plan of the Holy Spirit.
How can you stay there even for an hour?"

[Soul:] "A fish in water does not drown.
A bird in the air does not plummet.
Gold in fire does not perish.
Rather, it gets its purity and its radiant color there.
God has created all creatures to live according to their nature.
How, then, am I to resist my nature?
I must go from all things to God,
Who is my Father by nature,
My Brother by his humanity,
My Bridegroom by love,
And I his bride from all eternity.
Don't you believe I feel him intensely?[59]
He can both burn powerfully and cool consolingly.
Now do not be overly sad.
You shall yet instruct me.
When I return, I shall certainly need your advice;
For the earth is full of snares."

Then the bride of all delights goes to the Fairest of lovers in

the secret chamber of the invisible Godhead. There she finds the bed and the abode of love prepared by God in a manner beyond what is human. Our Lord speaks:

"Stay, Lady Soul."
"What do you bid me, Lord?"
"Take off your clothes."
"Lord, what will happen to me then?"
"Lady Soul, you are so utterly formed to my nature[60]
That not the slightest thing can be between you and me.
Never was an angel so glorious
That to him was granted for one hour
What is given to you for eternity.
And so you must cast off from you
Both fear and shame and all external virtues.
Rather, those alone that you carry within yourself
Shall you foster forever.
These are your noble longing
And your boundless desire.
These I shall fulfill forever
With my limitless lavishness."

"Lord, now I am a naked soul
And you in yourself are a well-adorned God.
Our shared lot is eternal life
Without death."

Then a blessed stillness
That both desire comes over them.
He surrenders himself to her,
And she surrenders herself to him.
What happens to her then—she knows—
And that is fine with me.[61]
But this cannot last long.
When two lovers meet secretly,
They must often part from one another inseparably.[62]

Dear friend of God, I have written for you this path of love. May God infuse it into your heart! Amen.

45. The Eight Days in Which What the Prophets Longed For Was Accomplished[63]

This is a day of longing and blessed joy
in the Annunciation of Christ.
This is a day of peace and dear tenderness
in the Birth of Christ.
This is a day of charity and blessed communion,
Maundy Thursday.
This is a day of generosity and heartfelt love,
Good Friday.
This is a day of might and happy joy,
the Resurrection.
This is a day of faith and the pain of separation,
the Ascension.
This is a day of truth and burning consolation,
Pentecost.
This is a day of justice and the hour of truth,
the Last Judgment.
This is a week whose seven days we should celebrate with constancy.
The eighth day our Lord wants to celebrate on the last day with us all.

46. The Diverse Adornments of the Bride; How She Comes to Her Bridegroom; and How the Retinue Is Composed, Which Is Ninefold

The bride is clothed with the sun and has trodden the moon underfoot, and she is crowned with union.[64] She has a chaplain; this is fear. He has in his hand a golden rod; this is wisdom. The chaplain is clothed with the blood of the lamb and is crowned with honor; and wisdom is clothed with contentment and crowned with eternity. The bride has four bridesmaids. The first is love, who leads the bride. She is clothed with chasteness and is crowned with dignity. The second is humility, who holds the bride. She is clothed with lowliness and is crowned with eminence. The third bridesmaid is sorrow. She is clothed with small grapes[65] and is crowned with joy. The fourth bridesmaid is mercy. She is clothed

with unguents[66] and is crowned with bliss. These two carry the coat of the bride, which is her holy reputation.

She has a bishop, which is faith. He brings the bride before the bridegroom. The bishop is clothed in precious stones and is crowned with the Holy Spirit. The bishop has two knights. The one is might and is clothed with battle and is crowned with victory. The other is daring and is clothed with boldness and crowned with all blessedness.

She has a chamberlain. That is watchfulness. He is clothed with constancy and is crowned with persistence. He carries a light before the bride and from behind her train. The light is understanding. It is clothed with insight and is crowned with generosity. The train is a holy conscience. It is clothed with good intention and is crowned with God's approval. She has a cupbearer, which is longing. He is clothed with desire and is crowned with peace. She has a minstrel who is amiability. His harp is intimacy. He is clothed with favor and crowned with help.

The bride has five kingdoms. The first are her eyes. They are founded in tears and adorned with restraint. The second are thoughts. They are founded in struggle and are adorned with good counsel. The third is speaking. It is founded in usefulness and is adorned with trust. The fourth is hearing. It is founded in the word of God and is adorned with consolation. The fifth is touch. It is founded in strength and is adorned with noble habit. These five kingdoms have an overseer. This is guilt. He is clothed with confession and crowned with penance. She has a judge. He is clothed with discipline and crowned with patience.

The bride has a beast of burden. This is the body. It is bridled with worthlessness: contempt is its fodder and its stable is confession. The pack it carries is innocence. The bride has a crimson silk cloth, which is hope. It is clothed with truth and crowned with song. She has a palm in her hand, which is victory over sin. In her other hand she has a canister that is full of longing and love. This she wants to bring to her Lover. She is wearing a hat of peacock feathers, which are her good name on earth and high honor in heaven. She follows a path, which is meekness. This is clothed with honey and crowned with safety.

And she sings:
"Chosen Lover, I long for you.
You take and give me many a heartache.
I have from you, besides, invisible suffering.
If you, Lord, command,
I shall be freed from myself."

And he speaks:
"Dearest love, think of the hour
When you may grasp the full treasure.
Do not let the time seem too long.
After all, I hold you constantly
Embraced in my arms."

Then our Lord says to his chosen bride:
"Come, my beloved, come. You shall be crowned."[67]

And he gives her a crown of truth that no one may wear but religious people.[68] On the crown one sees four virtues: wisdom and sorrow, longing and perseverance. May God give us all this crown! Amen.

Mechthild of Magdeburg

THE FLOWING LIGHT OF THE GODHEAD

TRANSLATED AND INTRODUCED BY
FRANK TOBIN

PREFACE BY
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PROLOGUE TO THE LUX DIVINITATIS[1]

Prologue of Brother Heinrich, Lector,
of the Order of Preaching Brothers[2]

We read in the Book of Judges (4:4–5) that the holy woman Deborah, the wife of Lappidoth, full of the spirit of prophecy, was accustomed to set up her tent under a palm tree in the hills of Ephraim, residing there as a solitary to devote herself to God alone. Israel, God's people, would go up to her seeking judgment in all matters. Likewise, the Fourth Book of Kings (2 Kgs 22:14-20) relates that Huldah, a prophetess living in Jerusalem, enlightened by the Holy Spirit as to the hidden judgment of God, informed the holy king Josiah about the coming scourges threatening the people. This just and pious king had sent priests and levites to her so that the holy woman might seek the Lord's guidance and pray on his behalf regarding the imminent misfortunes. Certainly there were at the time high priests of the seed of Aaron and other kinds of priests and levites learned in the law and of high moral integrity; yet, in spite of this, the Holy Spirit did not divulge his secret counsels to them. Rather, for these times he revealed them to these holy women of the weak sex, as he saw fit.

Quite often, in fact, almighty God has chosen what is weak in the world to confound what is stronger for its good. Therefore, let no one wonder or, lacking trust, fall into disbelief if God in the time of grace renews his marvels. He, who in the time of the law of Moses mercifully saw fit to perform similar works, now reveals his mysteries to the fragile sex. Because the people of Israel

believed Deborah's prophecy, they won freedom from oppression and victory over their enemies. Also, a king, a religious man, was found worthy to gain solace and mercy through the prayer and advice of the prophetess Huldah. So, too, shall all who write or read this book, if they approach it with pious intent, attain an increase in solace and spiritual grace, as the Lord promises them in the book itself.

This writing must be read in a pious spirit, however. It must be understood, as is the case with other holy writings, in a wholesome manner and in good faith. In this way the reader will find nothing scandalous or offensive in it, and the writing itself will not be subjected to any perverse claim of falsehood. Its author is the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; it treats Christ and the church, as well as Satan and his body.[3] Its manner of proceeding is both historical and mystical[4]; its purpose is the ordering of the present life, the useful calling to mind of things past, and the prophetic disclosure of things to come. The sincere devotion and dove-like simplicity of the woman through whom this writing was made public should completely suffice to guarantee the truth of what the pious faithful are asked to believe. From childhood she led a pure and innocent life. In her youth, at the urging of the Lord, she left everything she stood to gain and became an exile in a foreign land, leading a life of voluntary poverty. Finally, after many tribulations and at an advanced age, she was received into the community of holy sisters at Helfta. She lived there for twelve years and, as is confirmed by their testimony,[5] she flourished in the perfection of all virtues. She especially practiced charity, humility, long-suffering, and meekness. Raised up above all things by contemplation and made a sharer of divine illuminations and revelations, she was worthy to perceive from the Lord through her prophetic spirit numerous intimate divine mysteries concerning things past, present, and to come. Now, having been received by the Bridegroom of virgins, this holy virgin enjoys fully him whom she loved and whose wondrous love adorned his beloved with many marvels.

The revelations and visions that almighty God has deigned to disclose to his elect are founded upon and have their origin in

the directness of their faith. Their purity of mind demands and expects them. The holiness of their life authenticates and corroborates them. For celestial secrets lie open to such people, and their testimony is greeted with belief by the hearts of those who hear them.

For this reason, before beginning this book, which is written in a primitive tongue and contains certain marvelous and previously unknown mysteries, I thought it worthwhile to point out beforehand a bit about the holiness of the person to whom these things have been revealed by heaven, so that the marvels mentioned in word might have the support of deeds more marvelous. For who shall describe for us more vividly the perfection of the elect than those very ones in whom and through whom God carries out his works? And who could have made known to the church more beneficially or better the perfection of Paul than Paul himself? In like manner, this holy one made public what the divine Spirit had wrought in her and with her, and proclaims his praise and glory.[6]

LATIN FOREWORD WITH TABLE OF CONTENTS AND MIDDLE HIGH GERMAN TRANSLATION[1]

In the year of our Lord 1250 and for almost fifteen years thereafter this book was revealed[2] in German by the Lord through grace to a certain beguine who was a holy virgin in body and spirit. In humble simplicity, in the poverty of exile, weighed down by scorn, and in heavenly contemplation, as is made clear in this writing, she served the Lord with great devotion for more than forty years, following perfectly the footsteps of the brothers of the Order of Preachers. Always progressing day by day, she continually became better. It was compiled[3] by a brother of the aforementioned order and contains many good things, as is noted in these titles:

On the Trinity: II 3; III 9; IV 12 and 14; V 26
On Christ: II 3; IV 14; V 23 and 27
On Our Lady: I 22; II 3; V 23
On the Nine Orders of Angels: I 6; III 1; V 1
On the Special Excellence of Certain Saints: IV 20, 22, and 23
On the Evilness of Demons: II 24; IV 2 and 17; V 1; V 29
On the Dignity of a Human Being: I 44; IV 14
On Rapture and the Separation of the Soul from the Flesh: I 5
On the Description of Heaven: III 1
On the Description of Hell: III 21
On the Many Kinds of Purgatory: II 8; III 15 and 17; V 14 and 15

On Many Virtues and Vices: I 22 and 25; III 7 and 14; IV 4; and on Charity Especially: III 13
On the Order of Preachers at the End of the World at the Time of the Antichrist: IV 27
And on many things unheard of that you shall understand if you read this book nine times in faith, humility, and devotion.[4] Here is prophecy about the past, present, and future. Here also is the Song of the Three Persons: V 26.

[Middle High German translation:]

In the year 1250 after God's birth and for the fifteen years thereafter this book was revealed in German by God to a sister. She was a holy virgin both in body and in spirit. She served God devotedly in humble simplicity, in the poverty of exile, in heavenly contemplation, and weighed down by scorn, for more than forty years, and followed steadfastly and completely the light and the teaching of the Order of Preachers, and went forward from day to day and improved herself daily. But a brother of the same order gathered together and wrote this book; and much good is contained in this book on many subjects, as is noted in this list. You should read it through nine times in faith, humility, and devotion.

Book I

One Should Receive This Book Eagerly, For It Is God Himself Who Speaks the Words[1]

This book I hereby send as a messenger to all religious people,[2] both the bad and the good; for if the pillars fall,[3] the building cannot remain standing; and it signifies me alone and proclaims in praiseworthy fashion my intimacy. All who wish to understand this book should read it nine times.

This Book Is Called a *Flowing Light of the Godhead*

"Ah, Lord God, who made this book?"
"I made it in my powerlessness, for I cannot restrain myself as to my gifts."[4]
"Well then, Lord, what shall the title of the book be, which is to your glory alone?"
"It shall be called a flowing light of my Godhead into all hearts that live free of hypocrisy."

1. How Love and the Queen Spoke to Each Other[5]

The soul came to Love, greeted her with great deference, and said:

"God greet you, Lady Love."
"May God reward you, Mistress and Queen."
"Lady Love, you are indeed perfect."
"Mistress and Queen, that is why I am above all things."
"Lady Love, you struggled many a year before you forced the exalted Trinity to pour itself utterly into the humble virginal womb of Mary."
"Mistress and Queen, that was to your honor and benefit."
"Lady Love, you have now come here to me and have taken from me everything I ever gained on earth."

"Mistress and Queen, you have made a happy exchange."
"Lady Love, you have taken from me my childhood."
"Mistress and Queen, in its place I have given you heavenly freedom."
"Lady Love, you have taken from me all my youth."
"Mistress and Queen, in its place I have given you many a holy virtue."
"Lady Love, you have taken from me possessions, friends, and relatives."
"Come now, Mistress and Queen, that is a petty complaint."
"Lady Love, you have taken from me the world, worldly honor, and all earthly riches."
"Mistress and Queen, I shall make that up to you in one hour with the Holy Spirit on earth, just as you wish it."
"Lady Love, you have brought me to such a pass that my body is racked by a strange weakness."
"Mistress and Queen, in exchange I have given you much sublime knowledge."
"Lady Love, you have devoured my flesh and my blood."
"Mistress and Queen, you have thereby been purified and drawn into God."
"Lady Love, you are a robber; for this as well shall you make reparation."
"Mistress and Queen, then take me."
"Lady Love, now you have recompensed me a hundredfold on earth."
"Mistress and Queen, in addition you may demand God and all his kingdom."[6]

2. *Concerning Three Persons and Three Gifts*[7]

God's true greeting, coming from the heavenly flood out of the spring of the flowing Trinity, has such force that it takes away all the body's strength and reveals the soul to herself, so that she sees herself resembling the saints, and she takes on a divine radiance. Then the soul leaves the body, taking all her power, wisdom, love, and longing. Just the tiniest bit of her life force remains with the body as in a sweet sleep.[8] Then she sees one complete God in three Persons and knows the three Persons in one God undivided.

He greets her in courtly language that one does not hear in this kitchen, clothes her in the garments that one fittingly wears in a palace, and surrenders himself into her power. Then she can

wish for and ask whatever she wants. It is granted her and she is enlightened. What she is not enlightened about is the first cause of the Three Persons.[9] Then he draws her further to a secret place. There she is not permitted to beg on anyone's behalf or ask, because all alone with her he wants to play a game that the body does not know, nor the peasants at their plows, nor knights at their tournaments, nor his lovely mother, Mary—not even she may play it there. Then she soars further to a blissful place of which I neither will nor can speak. It is too difficult; I do not dare, for I am a very sinful person. Yet when infinite God brings the unfathomable soul to the heights, she loses sight of the earth in her astonishment and is not aware of ever having been on earth. Just when the game is at its best, one has to leave it.

Then God in full vigor speaks: "Young Miss, you must go down." She shudders and laments[10] her banishment. She says: "Lord, you have raised me up[11] so high here that I shall not be able to praise you in any fitting degree when in my body. Rather, I shall suffer as an outcast and shall struggle against the body." And he says:

"Oh, dear dove,[12]
Your voice is string music to my ears.
Your words are spices for my mouth.
Your longings are the lavishness of my gift."

She says: "Dear Lord, it has to be as the master of the house[13] commands." And she sighs with all her might, which awakens the body.[14]

Then the body speaks: "Well, woman, just where have you been? You come back so love-struck, lovely, and vibrant, free and witty. Your carrying on has cost me my appetite, sense of smell, color, and all my strength."

She says: "Shut up, murderer! Quit your bellyaching. I'll always be on my guard with you around. That my enemy has been wounded—what do we care about that? It makes me glad."

This is a greeting that has many streams. It pours forth from the flowing God into the poor, parched soul unceasingly with new

knowledge, in new contemplation, and in the special enjoyment of the new presence. O sweet God, inwardly on fire, outwardly blossoming, now that you have given this to the least,[15] I would like to experience the life that you have given to your greatest. For that I would be willing to endure suffering even longer.

No one is able or is permitted to receive this greeting unless one has gone beyond oneself and has become nothing. In this greeting I want to die living.[16] This the blind saints cannot ruin for me. They are the ones who love and do not know.[17]

3. The Handmaids of the Soul and the Blow of Love[18]

All holy Christian virtues are the handmaids of the soul. The sweet listlessness of the soul complains to Love of her troubles:

"Well then, dearest Maiden, for a long time now you have been my chambermaid. Now tell me, where is all this leading? You have hunted me, trapped me, bound me, and wounded me so deeply that I shall never be healthy again. You have meted out to me many a cudgel blow. Tell me, am I ever going to recover from you? If I were not going to be killed by your hand, it would be better for me never to have known you."[19]

Love: "That I hunted you was my fancy.
That I captured you was my desire.
That I bound you made me happy.
When I wounded you, you were joined to me.
When I cudgel you, I take you into my power.
I drove God the almighty from heaven,
Took his human life,
And returned him to his Father in honor.
How do you, vile worm, expect to survive before me?"

The Soul: "Speak, my Empress, I fear a small secret medicine
God has often given to me that I might thrive even in your presence."

Love: "If one does not want the prisoners dead,
One gives them water and bread.
The medicine that God has often given you

Is nothing other than a brief return to human life.
But when your Easter Day comes
And your body receives the death blow,
Then I'll embrace you tightly
And permeate you utterly,
And I'll steal you from your body
And give you to your Lover."

The Soul: "O Love, this letter I have written out of your mouth.
Now give me, Lady, your seal."

Love: "Whoever has succeeded in loving God more than self
Knows well where to get the seal.
It lies between the two of us."

The Soul speaks:
"Be silent, dear one, and speak no more.
Dearest of all maidens, let all creatures, myself included,
Bow down before you.
Tell my Lover that his bed is made ready.
And that I am weak with longing for him."

If this letter is too long, this is the reason: I was on the meadow where I found flowers of all kinds. This is a sweet lament: Who dies of love shall be buried in God.

4. The Soul's Journey to Court During Which God Reveals Himself

When the needy soul comes to the court, she is judicious and refined. She gazes at her God in high spirits. Oh, how tenderly is she welcomed there! She remains silent, longing boundlessly for his praise. With great longing he reveals to her his divine heart. It resembles red gold burning in a great fire of coals. He places her into his glowing heart. When the exalted Sovereign and the little waif thus embrace and are united as water and wine, she turns to nothing and is transported out of herself.[20] When she

has no strength left, he is as lovesick for her as he always was; for he neither increases nor decreases. Then she says:

"Lord, you are my lover,
My desire,
My flowing fount,
My sun;
And I am your reflection."

This is the journey to court of a loving soul that cannot exist without God.

5. *The Torment and the Praise of the Soul*[21]

My body is in great torment, my soul is in sublime bliss; for she has both gazed upon and embraced her Lover in her arms. He causes her, poor wretch, torment. When he draws her up, she flows. She cannot hold herself in check until he brings her within himself. She would like to speak but cannot, so utterly has she been enmeshed in sublime union with the awe-inspiring Trinity. Then he leaves her for a short while, that she might feel longing. She desires his praise but does not know how to find it as she would like. She would even want him to send her into hell that he might be praised beyond measure by all creatures.[22] She looks at him and says to him, "Lord, give me your blessing." He looks at her, draws her up again, and gives her a greeting[23] that the body cannot express.

Then the body speaks to the soul:

"Where have you been?
I can't take it anymore."

And the soul says:

"Quiet, you are a fool.
I want to be with my Lover,
Even if it means you would perish.
I am his joy, he is my torment."

This is her torment. May she never recover!
May you take this torment upon yourself as well,
And may you never escape it!

6. *The Nine Choirs: How They Sing*[24]

Now hear,[25] my Beloved; listen with spiritual ears. Thus do the nine choirs sing:

We praise you, Lord, that you sought us in your humility.
We praise you, Lord, that you have kept us in your mercy.
We praise you, Lord, that you have glorified us in your humiliation.
We praise you, Lord, that you have provided for us in your generosity.
We praise you, Lord, that you have arranged us in rank in your wisdom.
We praise you, Lord, that you have shielded us with your might.
We praise you, Lord, that you have sanctified us with your nobility.
We praise you, Lord, that you have instructed us in your intimacy.
We praise you, Lord, that you have elevated us in your love.

7. *God's Curse in Eight Things*

I curse you:
May your body die.
May your words perish.
May your eyes close.
May your heart dissolve.
May your soul rise up.
May your body remain.
May your human faculties perish.
May your spirit stand in the presence of the Holy Trinity!

8. *The Most Lowly Praises God in Ten Things*

O you burning Mountain.
O you chosen Sun.
O you full Moon.
O you bottomless Well.
O you unscalable Height.

O you Brightness without measure.
O Wisdom without ground.
O Mercy without restraint.
O Might without opposition.
O Crown of all honors!
The most lowly person you ever created praises you.

9. With Three Things You Dwell on the Heights

Those who are on fire in true love and build on the firm ground of truth and bear abundant fruit for a blessed end—they dwell on the heights.

Explanation: This is about the Seraphim.

10. Who Loves God Triumphs over Three Things

Whoever conquers the world,
And takes from his body all useless desires,
And overcomes the devil,
This is the soul that loves God.
If the world gives her a shove,
She does not suffer much.
If the flesh gives her a jolt,
The spirit will not get sick from it.
If the devil gives her a push,
The soul pays no heed.
She loves
And keeps on loving,
And she does not know how to do otherwise.

11. Four Battle for God

O dove free of gall.[26]
O maiden free of blemish.
O knight free of wounds.
O liegeman free of hesitation.
These are the four whom God can count on in battle.

12. The Soul Praises God for Five Things[27]

O Emperor of all honors.
O Crown of all sovereigns.
O Wisdom of all the learned.
O Giver of all gifts.
O Deliverer of all imprisonments.

13. How God Comes to the Soul

I come to my beloved as the dew upon the flower.[28]

14. How the Soul Receives and Praises God

Ah, joyous sight!
Ah, lovely greeting!
Ah, dear embrace!
Lord, the wonder of you has overwhelmed me.
Your grace has crushed me.
O you lofty Crag.
You are so nicely honeycombed.
In you no one can rest but doves and nightingales.

15. How God Receives the Soul

Welcome, my precious dove.
You have flown so keenly over the earth
That your feathers reach to heaven.

16. God Likens the Soul to Four Things

You taste like a grape.
Your fragrance is like balsam.[29]
Your radiance is like the sun.
You are an enhancement of my most sublime love.

17. The Soul Praises God About Five Things

O you pouring God in your gift!
O you flowing God in your love!
O you burning God in your desire!
O you melting God in the union with your beloved!
O you resting God on my breasts![30]
Without you I cannot exist.

18. God Likens the Soul to Five Things

O you beautiful rose among the thorns!
O you fluttering bee in the honey!
O you unblemished dove in your being!
O you beautiful sun in your radiance!
O you full moon in the firmament!
I cannot turn away from you.

19. God Caresses the Soul in Six Ways

You are my softest pillow,
My most lovely bed,
My most intimate repose,
My deepest longing,
My most sublime glory.
You are an allurement to my Godhead,
A thirst for my humanity,
A stream for my burning.

20. The Soul Praises God in Return in Six Ways

You are my resplendent mountain,
A feast for my eyes,
A loss of myself,
A tempest in my heart,
A defeat and retreat of my power,
My surest protection.[31]

21. Of Knowledge and Enjoyment

Love without knowledge is as darkness to the wise soul.[32]
Knowledge without its fruition she likens to the pains of hell.
Fruition short of death she cannot lament enough.

22. St. Mary's Message and How One Virtue Follows Another. How the Soul Was Made in the Jubilus[33] *of the Trinity, and How St. Mary Nursed All the Saints and Nurses Them Still*

The sweet dew of the eternal Trinity gushed forth from the fountain of the everlasting Godhead into the flower of the chosen maid; and the fruit of this flower is an immortal God and a mortal man and a living hope of eternal life. And our Redeemer became a Bridegroom. The bride became exhilarated at the sight of his noble countenance:

Under this immense force she loses herself.
In this most dazzling light she becomes blind in herself.
And in this utter blindness she sees most clearly.
In this pure clarity she is both dead and living.

The longer she is dead, the more blissfully she lives.[34]
The more blissfully she lives, the more she experiences.[35]
The less she becomes, the more flows to her.
The more she fears,...[36]
The richer she becomes, the poorer she is.
The deeper she dwells,[37] the more she expands.
..., the more forbearing she is.
The deeper her wounds become, the more violently she struggles.
The more loving God is to her, the higher she soars.
The more radiantly she shines in the reflected effulgence of the Godhead, the closer she approaches him.
The more she labors, the more contentedly she rests.
..., the more she grasps.
The more quiet her silence, the louder she calls.
..., the greater the marvels she works with his strength in proportion to her power.

The more his desire grows, the more extravagant their wedding
celebration becomes.
The narrower the bed of love becomes, the more intense are the
embraces.
The sweeter the kisses on the mouth become, the more lovingly they
gaze at each other.
The greater the distress in which they part, the more he bestows upon
her.
The more she consumes, the more she has.
The more humbly she takes her leave, the sooner she returns.
The more ardent she remains, the sooner she bursts into flame.
The more she burns, the more beautifully she glows.
The more God's praise is spread abroad, the greater her desire
becomes.

Tell me, where did our Redeemer become the Bridegroom?

In the *jubilus* of the Holy Trinity. When God could no longer contain himself, he created the soul and, in his immense love, gave himself to her as her own.[38]

"What are you made of, Soul, that you ascend so high above all creatures, mingle with the Holy Trinity, and yet remain whole in yourself?"

"You have brought up the question of my origin. I shall tell you honestly: I was made by love in that very place.[39] For that reason no creature is able to give comfort to my noble nature or to open it up except love alone."

"Holy Mary, dear Lady, you are the mother of this wonder. When did this happen to you?"

"When our Father's *jubilus* was saddened by Adam's fall, so that he had to become angry, the Eternal Wisdom of the almighty Godhead intercepted the anger together with me. The Father chose me for his bride—that he might have something to love; for his darling bride, the noble soul, was dead. The Son chose me to be his mother, and the Holy Spirit received me as his beloved. Then I alone was the bride of the Holy Trinity and

mother of orphans, and I brought them before God's eyes so that they might not all sink down, though some did. When I was thus the mother of many a banished child, my breasts became so full of the pure, spotless milk of true, generous mercy that I suckled the prophets and sages, even before I was born. Afterward, in my childhood, I suckled Jesus; later, in my youth, I suckled God's bride, Holy Christianity, under the cross when I was so desolate and wretched, as the sword of the physical suffering of Jesus cut spiritually into my soul."

Both his wounds and her breasts were open.
The wounds poured forth.
The breasts flowed.
The soul was invigorated and completely restored
As he poured the sparkling red wine
Into her red mouth.[40]

As she was thus born and made healthy out of the open wounds, she was like a child, and very young. If she was going to recover completely after her death and birth, God's mother was going to have to be her mother and her nurse. This was and is as it should be, since God is her rightful father and she is his rightful bride. She resembles him in all parts.

"Lady, in your old age you suckled the holy apostles with your motherly instruction and with your powerful prayer, that God might reveal his honor and your will through them. Lady, thus did you suckle then and suckle still the hearts of martyrs with strong faith, the ears of confessors with holy protection, the virgins with your chastity, widows with constancy, married people with kindness, and sinners with patient hope."

"Lady, us, too, you must suckle, for your breasts are still so full that they are not likely to dry up. If you no longer wanted to suckle, the milk would cause you much pain. For truly, I have seen your breasts so full that seven streams pour out at one time from one breast over my body and over my soul. In that hour you relieve me of a labor that no friend of God can bear without

inner suffering. In this same manner, you shall go on suckling until the last day. Then you shall become dry, for then God's children—and your children—will be weaned and fully grown for eternal life. Ah, then we shall know and see with inexpressible joy the milk and even the breasts themselves[41] that Jesus so often kissed."[42]

23. You Should Ask That God Love You Passionately, Often, and Long; Then You Shall Become Pure, Beautiful, and Holy[43]

Ah, Lord, love me passionately, love me often, and love me long. For the more passionately you love me, the purer I shall become. The more often you love me, the more beautiful I shall become. The longer you love me, the holier I shall become here on earth.

24. How God Responds to the Soul

That I love you passionately comes from my nature, for I am love itself. That I love you often comes from my desire, for I desire to be loved passionately. That I love you long comes from my being eternal, for I am without an end and without a beginning.

25. The Way to Suffer Pain Willingly for God's Sake

God guides his chosen children along strange paths. This is a strange path and a noble path and a holy path that God himself trod: that a human being, though free of sin and guilt, suffer pain. Upon this path the soul that aches for God is joyful, for by nature she is joyful to her Lord, who suffered much pain because of his good deeds. Our dear Lord, the heavenly Father, delivered up his most beloved Son to be tormented by the heathens and martyred by the Jews despite his innocence. Now the time has come when some people, who have the appearance of being religious, torment the bodies of God's children and martyr their spirits. For he wants them to resemble his beloved Son who was tormented in body and soul.

26. The Path upon Which the Soul Draws the Senses and Is Free of Suffering of the Heart

It is a rarely traveled and lofty path upon which the devoted soul makes its way and guides the senses as one with sight guides a blind person. On this path the soul is free and lives without inner suffering, for she wants nothing but what her Lord wants, who arranges everything for the best.

27. How You Become Worthy of This Path and Keep to It and Become Perfect

Three things make a person worthy of this path—that one recognize it and enter upon it: first, that one submit to God relinquishing all human control, and that one piously hold on to God's grace and willingly keep it by being forgiving in all things as far as is possible for a human will. The second thing keeping a person on this path is that one welcome all things except for sin alone. The third thing keeping a person on this path is that one do all things equally for God's honor. Thus I think relieving my most basic need counts as much in God's sight as if I were in the highest state of contemplation that a human being can attain. Why? If I do it out of love in order to give honor to God, it is all one and the same. But when I sin, I am not on this path.

28. Love Shall Be Deadly, Boundless, and Unceasing; This Is the Folly of Fools

I delight in loving him who loves me, and I long to love him to the death, boundlessly, and without ceasing. Be happy, my soul, for your Life has died for love of you.[44] Love him so fiercely that you could die for him. Thus you burn ever more without ever being extinguished as a living flame in the vast fire of high majesty.

Thus you become full of the fire of love.
This makes you here utterly happy.

You can no longer teach me anything.
I cannot turn away from love.
I must be its captive.
Otherwise, I cannot go on living.
Where it dwells, there I must remain,
Both in death and in life.[45]
This is the folly of fools
Who live free of anguish.

29. The Beauty of the Bridegroom and How the Bride Should Follow Him in Twenty-Three Steps of the Cross[46]

Look at me, my bride.[47] See how beautiful are my eyes, how comely is my mouth, how on fire is my heart, how agile are my hands, and how swift are my feet. So, follow me! You shall be martyred with me, betrayed in jealousy, hunted in ambush, taken prisoner in hate, bound in obedience, your eyes covered so that one will not tell you the truth, slapped by the rage of the world, brought to trial in confession, struck blows by penance, sent to Herod in derision, stripped naked by abandonment, scourged by poverty, crowned with trials, spat upon by disgrace, bearing your cross in the hatred of sin, crucified in voluntary withdrawal from all things, nailed to the cross by the holy virtues, wounded by love, dying on the cross in holy constancy, pierced in your heart by constant union, taken down from the cross in true victory over all your enemies, buried in oblivion, arisen from the dead in a holy end, and drawn up into heaven in God's breath.

30. The Seven Hours[48]

Matins:	Love in abundance, a sweet delight.[49]
Prime:	Love's longing, a sweet burden.
Terce:	Love's pleasure, a sweet thirst.
Sext:	Love's feeling, a sweet cooling.
Nones:	Love's death, a sweet distress.
Vespers:	Love's flowing, a sweet pouring.
Compline:	Love's rest, a sweet joy.[50]

31. You Should Ignore Scorn

I was deeply scorned, and our Lord said: "Do not be much surprised. Since the precious unguent jar was utterly rejected and spat upon, what is going to happen to the vinegar jar, which has nothing of value about it?"

32. You Should Ignore Honors, Suffering, and Possessions. Be Sad After Sinning

If someone offers you honor, you should be ashamed.
If someone makes you suffer, you should be glad.
If someone does you a favor, you should be afraid.
If you commit a sin against me, you should be sad in your heart.
If you cannot feel sadness, then consider how greatly and how long I was saddened for your sake.

33. Concerning Food, Consolation, and Love

My soul spoke thus to her Lover:

"Lord, your generosity is food for my body wonderfully.
Your mercy is consolation for my soul especially.
Your love is repose for my being eternally."

34. In Suffering You Should Be a Lamb, a Turtledove, and a Bride

You are my lamb in your suffering;
You are my turtledove in your sighing;
You are my bride in your waiting.

35. The Desert Has Twelve Things

You should love nothingness.
You should flee somethingness.[51]
You should stand alone

And should go to no one.
You should not be excessively busy[52]
And be free of all things.
You should release captives
And subdue the free.
You should restore the sick
And yet should have nothing yourself.
You should drink the water of suffering
And ignite the fire of love with the kindling of virtue:
Then you are living in the true desert.

36. Concerning Malice, Good Works, and Concerning a Marvel[53]

With the malice of your enemies shall you be adorned.
With the virtues of your heart shall you be glorified.
With your good works shall you be crowned.
With our mutual love shall you be raised on high.
With my delightful marvel shall you be made holy.

37. The Soul Responds to God Saying She Is Unworthy of These Favors

O dearly Loved One, in undeserved humiliation I take delight.
Virtues of the heart are my desire.
Good works, alas, I do not have.
Our mutual love I sully.
Of your beautiful marvel I am utterly unworthy.

38. God Boasts That the Soul Has Overcome Four Sins

In heaven God boasts about the soul on earth that loves him and says:

"Look, how she who has wounded me comes ascending.
She has cast from her the ape of the world.
She has overcome the bear of wantonness.
She has trod the lion of pride underfoot.

She has torn apart the jaws of the wolf of lust
And, like the hunted stag, comes running to me, the spring.
Like an eagle she rises out of the depths to the heights."[54]

39. God Asks the Soul What She Is Bringing

"You rush restlessly about in your love.
What do you bring me, my queen?"

40. She Replies: Something That Is Better than Seven Things

"Lord, I am bringing you my precious stone.
It is greater than the mountains.
It is wider than the world,
Deeper than the sea,
Higher than the clouds,
Brighter than the sun,
More numerous than the stars.
It weighs more than the whole earth."

41. God Asks in Praise What the Precious Stone Is Called

"O image of my divinity,
Glorified by my humanity,
Adorned with the Holy Spirit:
Tell me, what is your precious stone called?"

42. The Precious Stone Is Called Heart's Delight

"Lord, it is called my heart's delight,
Which I have taken back from the world,
Retained for myself,
And denied to all creatures.
But now I can carry it no further.
Lord, where shall I put it?"

43. Put Your Delight into the Trinity

"The delight of your heart
You shall put nowhere else but into my divine heart
And onto my human breast.
There alone shall you be consoled
And kissed by my Spirit."

44. The Sevenfold Path of Love, the Three Garments of the Bride, and the Dance

"Ah, loving Soul, do you wish to know what your path shall be?"
"Yes, dear Holy Spirit, instruct me."
"When you have passed beyond the need of sorrow
and beyond the pain of confession
and beyond the travail of penance
and beyond the love of the world
and beyond the temptations of the devil
and beyond the influences of the flesh
and beyond cursed self-will

that thrusts many a soul backward with such force that she never achieves genuine love; and when you have struck down all your many foes, then you are so weary that you say: 'Fair youth, I long for you. Where shall I find you?' And the youth says:

'I hear a voice;
It speaks its piece on love.
I have courted her many a day,
But the voice never addressed me.
Now I am moved;
I must hurry to her!
She is the one who bears anguish
And love joined together.'"

In the sweet dew of the morning—this is the cloistered inwardness that first enters the soul—her chamberlains, the five senses, speak thus:

"Lady, you should dress yourself."

"Dear ones, where am I supposed to be going?"

"We have definitely heard it whispered about that the prince intends to come to you in the dew and in the delightful song of the birds. Alas, lady, do not tarry!"

Then she puts on the slip of soft humility, so humble that it cannot bear anything underneath it. Over it comes a white dress of spotless chastity, so pure that it cannot bear anything in thought, word, or touch that might soil it. Then she puts on the cloak of her good name, which she has gilded with all the virtues. She enters into the woods, the company of holy people. There sings day and night the sweetest of the nightingales, the well-modulated union with God; and she hears many a sweet voice of birds, holy knowledge.[55] And still the young man did not come. So she sends out messengers because she is eager to dance. She sent for the faith of Abraham and the longing of the prophets and the chaste humility of our Lady, St. Mary, and all the holy virtues of our Lord Jesus Christ and all the excellence of his chosen ones. Then a splendid dance of praise takes place.

The young man finally comes and says to her: "Young lady, my chosen ones have shown off their dancing to you. Just as artfully should you now follow their lead."

She says:
"I cannot dance, Lord, unless you lead me.
If you want me to leap with abandon,
You must intone the song.
Then I shall leap into love,
From love into knowledge,
From knowledge into enjoyment,
And from enjoyment beyond all human sensations.
There I want to remain, yet want also to circle higher still."[56]

And the young man has to sing thus:
"Through me into you
And through you from me."

[The soul:] "Willingly with you,
Woefully from you."[57]

The young man speaks: "Young lady, you have done very well in this dance of praise. You shall have your way with the Son of the virgin, for you are delightfully weary. Come at noontime to the shade of the spring, into the bed of love. There in the coolness you shall refresh yourself with him."

The young lady says:

"Oh, Lord, that is too much
That she be your partner in love
Who has no love in her,
Unless she is moved by you."

Then the soul speaks to the senses, who are her chamberlains: "Now for a while I am weary of the dance. Leave me; I must go and refresh myself."

And the senses say to the soul: "Lady, if you wish to find refreshing coolness in the love tears of Mary Magdalene, they would certainly soothe you."

[Soul:] "Be still, my lords, you do not understand at all what I mean. Let me be on my own. For a time I want to drink undiluted wine."

[Senses:] "Lady, in the chastity of virgins great love is ready."
"That may be, but it isn't the noblest thing about me."
"In the blood of the martyrs you can cool yourself very well."
"I have been martyred so many times that I can't go there now."
"In the counsel of confessors the pure happily dwell."
"I shall always need counsel about what to do and what not to do; and yet I can't go there just now."
"In the wisdom of the apostles you will find much security."
"I have wisdom with me here. This shall always guide me to choose for the best."
"Lady, the angels are radiant and of love's color. If you wish to refresh yourself, rise up to them."
"The angels' bliss pains me in my love if I am not gazing upon their Lord and my Bridegroom."
"Then refresh yourself in the holy austere life that God granted to John the Baptist."

"The suffering I'm ready to bear, and yet the force of love transcends all austerity."
"Lady, if you want to refresh yourself in love, bow down to the small Child in the lap of the eternal virgin; and taste and see how the Joy of the angels sucked the unnatural milk."[58]

"That is child's love, that one suckle and rock a baby. I am a full-grown bride. I want to go to my Lover."

[Senses:] "Oh, Lady, if you go there,
We shall go completely blind.
The Godhead is so blazing hot,
As you well know,
That all the fire and all the glowing embers
That make the heavens and all the saints glow and burn
Have flowed out from his divine breath
And from his human mouth
According to the plan of the Holy Spirit.
How can you stay there even for an hour?"

[Soul:] "A fish in water does not drown.
A bird in the air does not plummet.
Gold in fire does not perish.
Rather, it gets its purity and its radiant color there.
God has created all creatures to live according to their nature.
How, then, am I to resist my nature?
I must go from all things to God,
Who is my Father by nature,
My Brother by his humanity,
My Bridegroom by love,
And I his bride from all eternity.
Don't you believe I feel him intensely?[59]
He can both burn powerfully and cool consolingly.
Now do not be overly sad.
You shall yet instruct me.
When I return, I shall certainly need your advice;
For the earth is full of snares."

Then the bride of all delights goes to the Fairest of lovers in

the secret chamber of the invisible Godhead. There she finds the bed and the abode of love prepared by God in a manner beyond what is human. Our Lord speaks:

"Stay, Lady Soul."
"What do you bid me, Lord?"
"Take off your clothes."
"Lord, what will happen to me then?"
"Lady Soul, you are so utterly formed to my nature[60]
That not the slightest thing can be between you and me.
Never was an angel so glorious
That to him was granted for one hour
What is given to you for eternity.
And so you must cast off from you
Both fear and shame and all external virtues.
Rather, those alone that you carry within yourself
Shall you foster forever.
These are your noble longing
And your boundless desire.
These I shall fulfill forever
With my limitless lavishness."

"Lord, now I am a naked soul
And you in yourself are a well-adorned God.
Our shared lot is eternal life
Without death."

Then a blessed stillness
That both desire comes over them.
He surrenders himself to her,
And she surrenders herself to him.
What happens to her then—she knows—
And that is fine with me.[61]
But this cannot last long.
When two lovers meet secretly,
They must often part from one another inseparably.[62]

Dear friend of God, I have written for you this path of love. May God infuse it into your heart! Amen.

45. The Eight Days in Which What the Prophets Longed For Was Accomplished[63]

This is a day of longing and blessed joy
in the Annunciation of Christ.
This is a day of peace and dear tenderness
in the Birth of Christ.
This is a day of charity and blessed communion,
Maundy Thursday.
This is a day of generosity and heartfelt love,
Good Friday.
This is a day of might and happy joy,
the Resurrection.
This is a day of faith and the pain of separation,
the Ascension.
This is a day of truth and burning consolation,
Pentecost.
This is a day of justice and the hour of truth,
the Last Judgment.
This is a week whose seven days we should celebrate with constancy.
The eighth day our Lord wants to celebrate on the last day with us all.

46. The Diverse Adornments of the Bride; How She Comes to Her Bridegroom; and How the Retinue Is Composed, Which Is Ninefold

The bride is clothed with the sun and has trodden the moon underfoot, and she is crowned with union.[64] She has a chaplain; this is fear. He has in his hand a golden rod; this is wisdom. The chaplain is clothed with the blood of the lamb and is crowned with honor; and wisdom is clothed with contentment and crowned with eternity. The bride has four bridesmaids. The first is love, who leads the bride. She is clothed with chasteness and is crowned with dignity. The second is humility, who holds the bride. She is clothed with lowliness and is crowned with eminence. The third bridesmaid is sorrow. She is clothed with small grapes[65] and is crowned with joy. The fourth bridesmaid is mercy. She is clothed

with unguents[66] and is crowned with bliss. These two carry the coat of the bride, which is her holy reputation.

She has a bishop, which is faith. He brings the bride before the bridegroom. The bishop is clothed in precious stones and is crowned with the Holy Spirit. The bishop has two knights. The one is might and is clothed with battle and is crowned with victory. The other is daring and is clothed with boldness and crowned with all blessedness.

She has a chamberlain. That is watchfulness. He is clothed with constancy and is crowned with persistence. He carries a light before the bride and from behind her train. The light is understanding. It is clothed with insight and is crowned with generosity. The train is a holy conscience. It is clothed with good intention and is crowned with God's approval. She has a cupbearer, which is longing. He is clothed with desire and is crowned with peace. She has a minstrel who is amiability. His harp is intimacy. He is clothed with favor and crowned with help.

The bride has five kingdoms. The first are her eyes. They are founded in tears and adorned with restraint. The second are thoughts. They are founded in struggle and are adorned with good counsel. The third is speaking. It is founded in usefulness and is adorned with trust. The fourth is hearing. It is founded in the word of God and is adorned with consolation. The fifth is touch. It is founded in strength and is adorned with noble habit. These five kingdoms have an overseer. This is guilt. He is clothed with confession and crowned with penance. She has a judge. He is clothed with discipline and crowned with patience.

The bride has a beast of burden. This is the body. It is bridled with worthlessness: contempt is its fodder and its stable is confession. The pack it carries is innocence. The bride has a crimson silk cloth, which is hope. It is clothed with truth and crowned with song. She has a palm in her hand, which is victory over sin. In her other hand she has a canister that is full of longing and love. This she wants to bring to her Lover. She is wearing a hat of peacock feathers, which are her good name on earth and high honor in heaven. She follows a path, which is meekness. This is clothed with honey and crowned with safety.

And she sings:
"Chosen Lover, I long for you.
You take and give me many a heartache.
I have from you, besides, invisible suffering.
If you, Lord, command,
I shall be freed from myself."

And he speaks:
"Dearest love, think of the hour
When you may grasp the full treasure.
Do not let the time seem too long.
After all, I hold you constantly
Embraced in my arms."

Then our Lord says to his chosen bride:
"Come, my beloved, come. You shall be crowned."[67]

And he gives her a crown of truth that no one may wear but religious people.[68] On the crown one sees four virtues: wisdom and sorrow, longing and perseverance. May God give us all this crown! Amen.

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THE

MONKS OF THE WEST,

FROM ST. BENEDICT TO ST. BERNARD.

BY

THE COUNT DE MONTALEMBERT,

MEMBER OF THE FRENCH ACADEMY.

FIDE ET VERITATE.

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4. *Mercia.* — Influence of the King of Northumbria and of the Bishop of Lindisfarne on the conversion of the Mercians. — The son of King Oswy, married to a daughter of the King of Mercia, converts the brother of his wife, and marries him to his sister. — The Celtic missionaries in Mercia. — Unexpected tolerance of the ferocious Penda towards his son and his converted subjects. But he continues his devastations in Northumbria. — Last conflict between him and Oswy. — Battle of Winwaëd. — Defeat and death of Penda, the last hero of Saxon Paganism. — Oswy offers his daughter to God in acknowledgment of the victory, and founds twelve monasteries. — Final triumphs of the Northumbrians and of Christianity. — Conquest and conversion of Mercia. — Its first five bishops issue from Celtic cloisters. — Opposition of the monks of Bardeney to the worship of St. Oswald. — The Mercians, revolting against the Northumbrians, nevertheless remain Christians.

Summary. — Of eight Anglo-Saxon kingdoms, one only is exclusively converted by the Roman missionaries; four are converted by the Celtic monks alone; and two by the combined action of the Celts and of bishops sent from Rome. — Sussex alone remains to be won, where a Celtic colony resides without influence, ... Page 276

BOOK XII.

ST. WILFRID ESTABLISHES ROMAN UNITY AND THE BENEDICTINE ORDER, 634-709.

CHAPTER I.

BEGINNING OF WILFRID'S CAREER — ASSEMBLY OF WHITBY.

Birth and early years of Wilfrid. — Note on his biographer Eddi. — Protected by the Queen of Northumbria, he enters at Lindisfarne, then goes to Rome, where no Anglo-Saxon had yet been. — He passes by Canterbury and stops at Lyons, where he separates from his companion Benedict Biscop, and where the archbishop wishes to give him his niece in marriage. — Wilfrid at Rome. — In returning by Lyons he receives the Romish

tonsure and escapes, against his will, from martyrdom. — Returned to England, he becomes the intimate friend of Alchfrid, son of King Oswy. — New monastery founded at Ripon, from whence the monks of the Celtic ritual are expelled. — Popularity of Wilfrid. — He is ordained priest by a French bishop. — Southern Ireland had already adopted the Romish computation for the celebration of Easter. — The dispute on this question revived by Wilfrid in Northumbria, and division of the royal family. — The King Oswy follows the Celtic ritual; his wife and son that of Rome. — Importance and nature of the Paschal difference. — Moderation of the Romish Church throughout the dispute. — A rivalry of influence mingles with the ritualistic dispute. — Assembly of Whitby, convoked by the king to end the controversy; composition of the assembly: the two chambers: principal persons: on the side of the Celts, the Abbess Hilda and her two communities, the Bishops of Lindisfarne and London; on the side of Rome, the young King Alchfrid, the old deacon James, and Wilfrid. — The authority of Columba unwisely invoked. — The king pronounces for the Romish Easter, and the assembly ratifies his decision. — Bishop Colman protests, abdicates, and returns to Iona, carrying with him the bones of his predecessor St. Aïdan, the Celtic apostle of Northumbria, ... Page 303

CHAPTER II.

WILFRID, BISHOP OF YORK, AND THE GREEK MONK THEODORE, PRIMATE OF ENGLAND.

Colman founds a half-Saxon, half-Celtic monastic colony in Ireland. — He is succeeded in Northumbria by the Anglo-Saxon Eata as prior of Lindisfarne, and by Tuda, an Irishman converted to the Romish ritual, as bishop. — Dedication of the great Monastery of Peterborough, founded by the Christian descendants of Penda, the last Pagan leader; at which Mercians and Northumbrians, Celts and Romanists, are present together; speech of King Wulphere. — Pestilence of 664; death of Tuda; Wilfrid elected Bishop of Northumbria. — Treating the Anglo-Saxon bishops as schismatics, he goes to be consecrated by the Bishop of Paris at Compiègne, and removes his see from Lindisfarne to York. — On his return he is shipwrecked on the coast of Sussex, and fights with the natives. — Celtic reaction against Wilfrid; King Oswy replaces him during his absence by an Irish abbot, Ceadda. — Sanctity and popularity of Ceadda. — The Northumbrians observe the decree of Whitby as to the celebration of Easter, but refuse to retain Wilfrid as bishop. — He retires to his Monastery of Ripon. — He resides with the Kings of Mercia and of Kent. — He assists the holy Queen Ermenilda in completing the conversion of the Mercians. — He introduces the Gregorian chant and the Benedictine rule into Northumbria. — The Kings of Kent and Northumbria leave to the Pope the choice of the new metropolitan of Canterbury. — The Pope chooses a Greek monk Theodore, and associates with him Adrian, an African, and the Anglo-Saxon Benedict Biscop. — They are all three seized on their way by Ebroïn, but released. — The pontificate of St. Theodore, the first metropolitan recognized by all England. — He re-establishes Wilfrid in the see of York, who makes Ceadda bishop of the Mercians. — Holy and peaceful death of Ceadda. — Theodore and Adrian visit all England. — Theodore's ecclesiastical legislation; his book of penance. — He consecrates the Celtic Cathedral

of Lindisfarne. — He creates the parochial system as it now exists, and holds the first Anglo-Saxon council at Hertford. — He fails in increasing the number of bishoprics, but introduces the Benedictine order into the monasteries. — Literary development of the English monasteries due to Theodore and Adrian. — The Church of England is constituted, and the English nation becomes a lever in the hands of the Papacy, . Page 228

CHAPTER III.

BEGINNING OF THE TRIALS OF WILFRID: ST. ETHELDREDA. — 669-678.

Wilfrid, reduced to a subordinate position, reconciles himself to King Oswy, who dies after a prosperous reign of twenty-eight years. — Extension of Northumbrian domination, and of Wilfrid's jurisdiction towards the north. — At the commencement of the new reign, alliance between him and King Egfrid, who triumphs both in the insurrection of the Picts and the invasion of the Mercians. — Episcopal virtues and austerities of Wilfrid. — His confirmation journeys; the child resuscitated. — Wilfrid's monasteries become centres of public education. — Services which he renders to the arts; music, spread of the Gregorian chant. — Great architectural works at York, at Ripon, and especially at Hexham, where he builds the finest church on this side the Alps on land given by Queen Etheldreda. — Connection of Wilfrid with Etheldreda, the first and most popular of English female saints. — Her origin and connections. — Twice married, she succeeds in consecrating her virginity to God. — Wilfrid encourages her in her resistance to King Egfrid, and gives her the veil at Coldingham; Egfrid pursues her. — She flies to Ely. — Legends of her journey. — Foundation and monastic life at Ely. — The major-domo Owen. — Wilfrid continues to advise Etheldreda. — His quarrel with Egfrid provoked by the new queen, Ermenburga. — The Archbishop Theodore interferes in their disputes. — He deposes Wilfrid, and divides his diocese into three new bishoprics, which he confides to Celtic monks. — Wilfrid appeals to Rome. — The saints and great abbots of his country remain indifferent or hostile. — Strange ignorance of ecclesiastical right, even among the saints, ... Page 355

CHAPTER IV.

JUSTICE DONE TO WILFRID AT ROME: IN ENGLAND HE IS DEPOSED, IMPRISONED, EXILED, AND RESTORED. — 678-686.

Wilfrid himself carries his cause to Rome. — A storm lands him in Friesland, where he evangelizes the people. — He thus becomes the first of the Anglo-Saxon apostles of Germany. — Generosity of the King of the Frisians and King of the Lombards, both of whom refuse to deliver him up to Ebroïn. — Wilfrid in Austrasia: Dagobert II. — Wilfrid at Rome. — Theodore and Hilda denounce him to the Pope St. Agathon. — His cause is tried by a council at which the Pope presides. — He obtains justice; but the principle of the division of dioceses is maintained, and the authority of the primate confirmed. Wilfrid hears at Rome of the death of Etheldreda. — He is present at the Council against the Monothelites, and bears witness to the faith of all the Churches of

the British Isles. — He returns to England with the Papal charter for Peterborough. — He is repulsed by the king and assembly of the Northumbrians, and then imprisoned. — Connivance of Archbishop Theodore. — Wilfrid refuses to treat with the king. — He is put in irons at Dunbar: afterwards delivered by the intervention of the Abbess Edda of Coldingham, but exiled. — Obliged to leave Mercia and Wessex, where the brothers-in-law of Egfrid reign, he takes refuge among the Saxons of the South, whom he converts to Christianity. — He teaches them to fish with nets, and frees the serfs on the domains of his new Abbey of Selsey. — His connection with the proscribed Ceadwalla, who becomes King of Wessex, and afterwards dies at Rome. — Theodore again disposes of the diocese of Wilfrid: St. Cuthbert is made bishop of Lindisfarne. — King Egfrid ravages Ireland cruelly: in spite of the entreaties of Bishop Cuthbert he invades Caledonia, and perishes there. — Queen Ermenburga, informed by Cuthbert of the death of her husband, becomes a nun. — Consequences of the defeat of Egfrid. — The Saxon bishop of the Picts takes refuge at Whitby, where Elfleda, sister of Egfrid, had succeeded Hilda. — Archbishop Theodore acknowledges his faults towards Wilfrid: he wishes to choose him as his successor: writes in his favor to the King of the Mercians and to the Abbess Elfleda. — Connection of Elfleda with Bishop Cuthbert. — Aldfrid, long an exile at Iona, becomes King of Northumbria. — Wilfrid is recalled and re-established in his diocese. — Storms raised by him at Lindisfarne, which he abandons to another bishop. — Death of Archbishop Theodore, ... Page 378

CHAPTER V.

SECOND EXILE OF WILFRID, AND SECOND APPEAL TO ROME. — 686–705.

Rupture of Wilfrid with King Aldfrid. — New accusations against Wilfrid. — He is exiled the second time. — He is received by the King of Mercia, who gives him the bishopric of Lichfield. — He there lives eleven years in tranquil obscurity. — Theodore's successor hostile to Wilfrid, as also Abbot Adrian. — Assembly of Nesterfield. — Degrading proposals made to Wilfrid; he rejects them. — His speech. — He appeals to Rome. — Precocious talent of the Anglo-Saxons in diplomacy and despotism. — King Ethelred of Mercia remains faithful to Wilfrid. — The monks of Ripon are excommunicated. — Wilfrid's third voyage to Rome. — Contrast with the first. — Pope John VI. — The trial lasts four months, and occupies seventy sittings. — Wilfrid is acquitted. — Returning to England, he falls ill at Meaux. — His friend Acca. — His life is prolonged in answer to the prayers of his monks. — He is reconciled to the archbishop. — He goes to visit his faithful friend Ethelred, now become a monk at Bardency. — Aldfrid, King of Northumbria, refuses to recognize the sentence of the Holy See. — He dies. — His successor expels Wilfrid within six days, but is himself dethroned. — National assembly on the banks of the Nid. — The Abbess Elfleda and the Ealdorman Bertfrid interpose on behalf of Wilfrid. — General reconciliation. — The Monasteries of Ripon and Hexham given up to him. — Influence of Anglo-Saxon princesses on the destiny of Wilfrid, . Page 411

CHAPTER VI.

THE LAST YEARS OF WILFRID. — 705-709.

Wilfrid's illness assembles all the abbots of his monasteries about him. — He divides his treasures: his farewell to the monks of Ripon. — His last journey to Mercia. — He consecrates the Church of Evesham monastery. — Bishop Egwin of Worcester and the smiths. — Vision of the three virgins in the forest. — Simon de Montfort, creator of the House of Commons, buried at Evesham. — Wilfrid narrates all his life to his successor Tatbert. — His death. — His funeral at Ripon. — His worship and his miracles. — He appears with St. Cuthbert to relieve Hexham against the Scots: the Christian Dioscuri. — His banner appears at the battle of the Standard. — Services which he rendered to the monastic order, to the Church of England, to the universal Church, to the English nation. (Note on the Culdees of York.) — He begins that long succession of pontiff-confessors which has no rival out of the Church of England. — His character, . Page 434

BOOK XIII.

CONTEMPORARIES AND SUCCESSORS OF ST. WILFRID, 650-735.

CHAPTER I.

ST. CUTHBERT. — 637-687.

Contrast between Wilfrid and the saints of the Northumbrian coast. — His glory eclipsed by that of Cuthbert. — Childhood of Cuthbert, a shepherd on the Scottish borders. — He becomes a novice at Melrose. — He evangelizes the Scottish marches. (Note upon the Monastery of Dull, cradle of the University of St. Andrews.) — His austerities: his baths: legend of the otters. — He goes from Melrose to Ripon, from which he is expelled by Wilfrid, along with all the Celtic monks. — He becomes prior at Lindisfarne, where he establishes the customs of Rome and the Benedictine rule. — His life at Lindisfarne in its cloistral and in its external aspect. — His extreme modesty. — He becomes a hermit in a cave of the Isle of Farne. — Popular traditions concerning this portion of his life. — The birds of St. Cuthbert, and the beads of his chaplet. — His charity towards the crowd of penitents who sought him there. — His hospitality. — His humility. — King Egfrid takes him from his rock to make him Bishop of Lindisfarne. — He continues both monk and missionary during his short episcopate. — His compassion for the sufferings of his penitents. — The mad countess. — The mother consoled. — His affection for his foster-mother, for Queen Etheldreda, and the great abbesses Ebba of Coldingham and Elfleda of Whitby. (Note upon the exclusion of women from his monastery.) — His last visit to the Abbess Verca. — He returns to his rock to die. — The abbess's shroud. — Last exhortations of Cuthbert: his death. — His closest friend dies at the same hour on the same day. — Their annual interview upon the rock of Farne. — Great and lasting popularity of his memory. — Translation of his relics to

Durham. — Magnificence and wealth of that cathedral, after Toledo the richest in the world. — Right of asylum. — Efficacy of his protection to the oppressed. — Alfred, Canute, and William the Conqueror. — The independence, almost sovereign, of Cuthbert's successors under the Anglo-Norman monarchy. — He is invoked by the English against the Scottish invasions. — Battle of Neville's Cross. — His banner appears for the last time in the insurrection of the North against Henry VIII. — It is profaned and burned with his body. — His popularity at sea. — The sailor-monks. — Cuthbert, while a child, saw them like sea-birds on the waves. — His appearance to sailors in danger. — The hermit Ethelwold prays for the shipwrecked. — Grace Darling, the Christian heroine of these islands in the nineteenth century, ... Page 455

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ST. BENEDICT BISCOP, AND THE MONASTERIES OF WEARMOUTH AND YARROW.

Benedict Biscop represents science and art, as Wilfrid represents public, and Cuthbert spiritual, life. — His birth and conversion. — His four first expeditions to Rome. — He gains the heart of King Egfrid. — Foundation of Wearmouth. — He brings masons and glassmakers from France. — His fifth and sixth visits to Rome, from which he brings back many relics, books, and pictures. — Important works of painting in the new monasteries. — A Roman abbot teaches liturgical music to all the Northumbrian monasteries, and assures himself of the orthodoxy of the English clergy in respect to the heresy of the Monothelites. — Foundation of Yarrow. — Fraternal union of the two monasteries in imitation of their patrons Saints Peter and Paul. — Benedict takes his nephew Easterwine as his coadjutor. — The occupations of a Saxon noble transformed into a monk. — Death of Easterwine. — Severe illness of Benedict. — His last injunctions. — His touching death by the side of his dying coadjutor. — After him Ceolfrid, the son of an ealdorman, disciple of Wilfrid and Botulph, governs the two monasteries. — History of Botulph, the founder of Boston and apostle of the Benedictine order. — Ceolfrid, as abbot, takes great pains to increase the libraries. — He makes an exchange of a book for an estate with the King of Northumbria. — His desire to die at Rome. — Grief of the six hundred monks who accompanied him to the spot where he embarked. — Their letter to the Pope. — He is able to go only as far as Langres, where he dies. — How Christianity taught the barbarous Saxons to love each other, ... Page 493

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END OF THE CELTIC HERESY — ADAMNAN, EGBERT, ST. ALDHELM.

The king of the Picts requests Ceolfrid to send him architects, and arguments in favor of Roman unity. — Answer of Ceolfrid, in which he quotes from Plato. — The Picts abandon the Celtic peculiarities. — The monks of Iona leave their monasteries rather than adopt the Roman ritual. — Their abbot, Adamnan, biographer of Columba, and the last great personage of the Celtic Church. — His relations with King Aldfrid and the

Abbot Ceolfrid. — He attempts in vain to lead the monks of Iona back to Roman rule, but has more success in Ireland, where he dies. — Iona is brought back to Catholic unity by the Anglo-Saxon Egbert, the head of a colony of Saxon monks in Ireland. — His austere and holy life. — He loses his most intimate friend, who reproaches him for desiring to survive him. — He uses his influence with the Anglo-Saxons to send them as missionaries to Germany. — After thirteen years' struggle, he overcomes the resistance of Iona, and dies on the very day when the feast of Easter is celebrated by both parties together. — Ireland and Caledonia having been thus brought back to Catholic unity, only the Britons of Cambria and Cornwall remain outside its pale, by reason of their national antipathy for the Saxon conquerors. — Note upon Bede's injustice to them. — Attempt of St. Aldhelm to bring them in. — His royal birth, and education — half Celtic, half Roman — at Malmesbury and Canterbury. — He becomes Abbot of Malmesbury. — His literary fame greater than his merit; his vernacular songs; intellectual development of Anglo-Saxon cloisters. — Extent and variety of his studies. — His continual solicitude for souls. — His great monastic character. — His zeal for preaching. — He interferes in favor of Wilfrid. — He goes to Rome to obtain the privilege of exemption for Malmesbury, the monks of which persist in retaining him as abbot, even after his promotion to the episcopate. — Anecdote about the importation of Bibles. — Death of Aldhelm. — His exertions for bringing back Celtic dissenters. — His letter to the King of Cornwall. — The Britons of Cambria, who had resisted all the efforts of Roman and Saxon missionaries, adopt the Roman ritual by the influence of one of their own bishops. — Their pilgrimages to Rome. — End of the struggle. — Opinion of Mabillon. — Resistance proportioned to the dangers which beset the special nationality. — Union the work of Benedictines. — In the Britannic Isles, as among the Gauls, Celtic monasticism conquered and eclipsed by the Benedictine order, ... Page 514

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THE VENERABLE BEDE.

The entire history of this period is summed up in the Venerable Bede. — His works. — Encyclopædical character of his genius. — His theological and scientific writings; his love for the classics. — His *History of the English*. — His scrupulous care to prove its truth. — His soul. — The love of virtue and truth evident in all his writings. — He is himself the type of the noble lives he records. — His life passed entirely in the cloister of Yarrow. — He is spared in his youth by the pestilence which carries off the whole community except himself and his abbot. — His different masters; his diligence in work. — His extensive connections. — His friendship with Abbot Acca. — His works on Holy Scripture. — His celebrated letter to Bishop Egbert of York upon the abuses of ecclesiastical government and monastic life. — His bold freedom does not diminish his authority. — He is accused of heresy in popular drinking songs. — His intimacy with the monks of Lindisfarne. — Narrative of his death by an eye-witness. — His worship and his relics. — Contrast between the country he lived in and the actual condition of Northumberland, ... Page 518

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THE ROYAL MONKS.

The star of Northumbria pales, notwithstanding the erection of the see of York into an archbishopric. — Sad end of the lineage of Oswy. — King Ceolfrid, to whom Bede dedicates his History, becomes a monk at Lindisfarne. — His successor Eadbert follows his example. — Other monk-kings. — Almost each dynasty of the Heptarchy furnishes its share; in East Anglia, Sigebert, who dies on the field of battle; in Essex, Sebbi, who leads back his people to the faith — his desire to die in solitude; and Offa, who dies at Rome; in Mercia, which inherited the preponderating power of Northumbria, Ceonred, the travelling companion and fellow-novice of Offa; Ethelred, founder, monk, and abbot of Bardeney. — Another Mercian king, Ceolred, dies in a debauch. — Ethelbald, pursued by Ceolred, takes refuge in the marsh of Croyland with the hermit Guthlac, who predicts to him that he will be King of Mercia. — What Guthlac had been before he became an anchorite. — His solitary life resembles those of some of the most illustrious saints in the monastic order. — Death of Guthlac. — Foundation of the celebrated Abbey of Croyland upon the site of his cell. — Continuation and end of the reign of Ethelbald. — Remonstrances of the Anglo-Saxon missionaries in Germany. — The supremacy passes from Mercia to Wessex. — Three West Saxon kings abdicate to become monks or pilgrims to Rome: Centwin; Ceadwalla, the friend of Wilfrid, who lives just long enough to be baptized by the Pope; and Ina the friend of St. Aldhelm. — Reign of Ina, the legislator, victor, and pacificator of the Britons; restorer of the Celtic sanctuary of Glastonbury, the first protector of St. Boniface. — In consequence of a surprise prepared for him by his wife, he goes to Rome as a penitent to die, and founds the *Schola Saxonum* there. — Crowd of Anglo-Saxon pilgrims of both sexes to Rome. — Abuses and disorders. — False monks and false pilgrims. — The age of gold a chimera in the Church as elsewhere, ... Page 575

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SOCIAL AND POLITICAL INFLUENCE OF THE MONKS AMONG THE ANGLO-SAXONS.

The conversion and religious organization of England entirely the work of monks. — Their patience and perseverance; letter of Bishop Daniel to the missionary Boniface; no violence; mildness and toleration. — Their influence over the nature they had converted; evil survives, but the good outweighs it. — Alliance between the Church and secular society, without the exclusive preponderance of either. — These apostolic monks were no longer fathers of the desert, but the creators of a Church and nation. — Towns grow up around the great communities. — The monasteries give rise to cathedrals and parishes. — Propagation of the Benedictine order. — Protection assured to the monastic order by the Councils of Beccancelde and Cloveshove. — Religious instruction in the national tongue. — Musical liturgy. — Crosses in the open air. — Services rendered to

education by monasteries and monastic bishops. — St. John of Beverley. — Fondness of the Anglo-Saxon students for horsemanship. — Services rendered to agriculture. — Position of the monks as landlords. — Close alliance between the monastic order and the Anglo-Saxon aristocracy. — Intervention in political matters. — Their place in the national councils. — Authority, composition, and powers of these councils. — The distinction between the temporal and spiritual is not forgotten. — Influence of monks in these assemblies, and through them on laws and manners. — They contribute to the formation of that national unity which, since the ninth century, has never been disturbed. — Their devotion to the cause of the poor: expiation for the sins of the rich gives rise to public almsgiving. — Their zeal for the liberation of slaves; contest between an archbishop and an abbot for a young captive. — The rights of man as well as those of God vindicated by the monks throughout the history of their conquest of England. — Religion is too often left defenceless, but her ministers respect honor and the freedom of thought in regard to the things of God. — The monastic missionaries perfect the national character without changing it; the spirit of the Saxons still lives in modern England; modern liberty, self-government, and parliamentary rule are rooted in the Saxon times. — Conformity of monastic rules with the tone of Anglo-Saxon institutions. — Splendor and prodigality of the aristocracy. — Motives of their gifts. — Abuse of their grants of land. — *Folc-land and boc-land.* — Monastic possessions exempt from military service and from taxes. — Public danger remarked by Bede. — Repression of many abuses by the Council of Cloveshove; it decrees against monastic luxury and wealth, and against the false ideas prevalent as to almsgiving. — The monastic riches arising from the munificence of kings and nobles soon excite envy; fluctuations and oppressions noticed by St. Boniface; necessity of a limit which might be imposed by the Church herself on the increase of monastic possessions. — Their value forms a pretext for spoliation and heresy. — Lacordaire and Mabillon. — A Spanish Benedictine martyred in 1608. — Before reaching this point England becomes the home of Christian propagandism and the instructress of the Teutonic races. — At the death of Bede, Boniface is already the apostle of Germany, ... Page 599

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I.

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The Teutonic barbarians, though less corrupt than the Romans, nevertheless required an immense effort of the Christian apostles to conquer their sensual excesses. — The debt owed by women to Christianity. — The Church could only emancipate women by the ideal of Christian virginity. — This virginity nowhere more honored than among

the Anglo-Saxons. — Influence and authority of abbesses. They appear in the national councils. — Ceremonial of the solemn benediction of a nun.

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Anglo-Saxon queens and princesses in the cloister. — The first nuns trained in France, at Faremoutier, Jouarre, and Chelles. — Saint Botulph and the two East Anglian princesses at Chelles.

Each dynasty of the Heptarchy supplies its share of virgins, wives, and widows.

The Northumbrian nuns already well known, except Bega. — Legend of this princess, an Irishwoman by birth. — Perpetual confusion of history and tradition.

The *Ascings*, or princesses of the Kentish dynasty. — Ethelburga, Queen of Northumbria, afterwards foundress of Lyminge. — Her sister Eadburga, and her niece Earnswida, foundress of Folkestone. — The legend of Domneva and her brothers. — The hind's run in the Isle of Thanet. — Great popularity of St. Mildred. — Legend of the box on the car. — Mildred's sisters. — Milburga and the dead child.

The Mercian princesses. — The race of the cruel Penda furnished the greatest number of saints and nuns. — Three of his daughters nuns, and four of his granddaughters saints.

The *Uffings* of East Anglia. — The three daughters of King Anna who fell in battle. — Withburga and her community fed on hind's milk. — Three generations of saints of the race of Odin at Ely, which had for its three first abbesses a Queen of Northumbria, a Queen of Kent, and a Queen of Mercia. — Wereburga, the fourth sainted Abbess of Ely, and the shepherd of Weedon.

Nuns of the race of Cerdic in Wessex; the wife and sisters of King Ina. — St. Cuthburga, foundress of Winbourne. — The monastery of Frideswida, a West Saxon princess, is the cradle of the University of Oxford: the kiss of the leper.

III.

Literary, biblical, and classical studies among the Anglo-Saxon nuns — chiefly at Barking, under Abbess Hildelida. — St. Aldhelm addresses to them his *Eulogy of Virginity*; his letters to other nuns. — Winbourne, another centre of intellectual activity. — Abbess Tetta and her five hundred nuns; the novices dance on the tomb of their mistress.

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Winbourne, a double monastery. — Origin of these singular institutions. — They flourished chiefly in the Irish colonies in Gaul; from thence introduced into England. — A monastery of men joined to every great abbey of women, and always governed by the abbess. — Interdicted by Archbishop Theodore. — The double monasteries disappeared after the Danish invasion; resemblance to the boys' schools managed by young girls in the United States. — In the seventh and eighth centuries no disorders are remarked in them except at Coldingham. — What were the abuses of the Anglo-Saxon cloisters. — Splendor of dress; attempts upon the modesty of the nuns foreseen and punished by Anglo-Saxon legislation. — Decrees of Archbishop Theodore and Egbert against the criminal relations of the clergy with nuns; their importance should not be exaggerated.

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Excesses of feeling vanish before death, but death itself does not put an end to the sweet friendships of the cloister. — St. Galla. — Hilda and her friend; Ethelburga and her friend; the daughters of Earl Puch. — Visions of light. — The daughter of the King of Kent and the lay sister at Faremoutier. — The shining shroud at Barking; the extinguished lamp.

VII.

History has preserved only these names, but many others have disappeared after glorifying the Church and their country. — Masculine character of these Anglo-Saxon nuns: their monastic ideal unites the types of man, woman, and child.

Conclusion. — The whole ancient Catholic world has perished except the army of sacrifice. — Number and endurance of contemporary vocations, ... Page 645

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BOOK IX.

ST. COLUMBA, THE APOSTLE OF CALEDONIA, 521–597.

"I send thee unto the Gentiles, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified."—ACTS xxvi. 18.

CHAPTER I.

THE YOUTH OF COLUMBA AND HIS MONASTIC LIFE IN IRELAND.

The biographers of Columba. — His different names. — His royal origin. — The supreme kings of Ireland: the O'Neills and O'Donnells; Red Hugh. — Birth of Columba; vision of his mother. — His monastic education; jealousy of his comrades; Kieran; the two Finnians; the school of Clonard. — Vision of the guardian angel and the three brides. — The assassin of a virgin struck by death at the prayer of Columba. — His youthful influence in Ireland; his monastic foundations, especially at Durrow and at Derry; his song in honor of Derry. — His love for poetry; his connection with the travelling bards. — He was himself a poet, a great traveller, and of a quarrelsome disposition. — His passion for manuscripts. — Longarad of the hairy legs and his bag of books. — Dispute about the Psalter of Finnian; judgment of King Diarmid, founder of Clonmacnoise. — Protest of Columba; he takes to flight, chanting the *Hymn of Confidence*, and raises a civil war. — Battle of Cul-Dreimhne; the *Cathac* or Psalter of battle. — Synod of Teltown; Columba is excommunicated. — St. Brendan takes part with Columba, who consults several hermits, and among others Abban, in the Cell of Tears. — The last of his advisers, Molaise, condemns him to exile. — Twelve of his disciples follow him; devotion of the young Mochonna. — Contradictory reports concerning the first forty years of his life.

The biographers of Columba.

ST. COLUMBA, the apostle and monastic hero of Caledonia, has had the good fortune to have his history written by another monk, almost a contempo-

rary of his own, whose biography of him is as delightful as it is edifying. This biographer, Adamnan, was the ninth successor of Columba as abbot of his principal establishment at Iona, and in addition was related to him. Born only a quarter of a century later, he had seen in his childhood the actual companions of Columba and those who had received his last breath.[1] He wrote at the very fountain-head, on the spot where his glorious predecessor had dictated his last words, surrounded by scenes and recollections which still bore the trace of his presence, or were connected with the incidents of his life. A still earlier narrative, written by another abbot of Iona,[2] and reproduced almost word for word by Adamnan, forms the basis of his work, which he has completed by a multitude of anecdotes and testimonies collected with scrupulous care, and which altogether, though unfortunately without chronological order, forms one of the most living, attractive, and authentic relics of Christian history.[3]

His different names.

Like twenty other saints of the Irish calendar, Columba bore a symbolical name borrowed from the Latin, a name which signified the dove of the Holy Ghost, and which was soon to be rendered illustrious by his countryman Columbanus, the celebrated founder of Luxeuil, with whom many modern historians have confounded him.[4] To distinguish the one from the other, and to indicate specially the greatest Celtic missionary of the British Isles, we shall adopt, from the different versions of his name, that of Co-

[1] "Ut ab aliquibus, qui præsentes inerant, didicimus." — ADAMNAN, lib. iii. c. 23.

[2] By Comyn the Fair (*Cummeneus Albus*), the seventh bishop of Iona, 657 to 669. This narrative was first published by Colgan in the *Trias Thaumaturga*, afterwards in the first volume of the *Acta Sanctorum ordinis S. Benedicti*, and finally by the Bollandists, vol. ii. June.

[3] Adamnan, who was born in 624, must have written the biography of St. Columba between 690 and 703, a period at which he gave up the liturgical traditions of the Scots and the direction of the Monastery of Iona to settle near the Anglo-Saxon king of Northumbria, Aldfrid (VARIN, *Premier Mémoire*, p. 172). Adamnan's work was first published by Canisius in his *Thesaurus Antiquitatum* in 1604; afterwards with four other biographies of the same saint by the Franciscan Colgan, in his *Trias Thaumaturga* (Louvain, 1647); by the Bollandists in 1698; and finally by Pinkerton, a Scotch antiquary of the last century. It has just been reprinted, after a MS. of the eighth century, by the Rev. Dr. W. Reeves, for the Celtic Archæological Society of Dublin, with maps, glossary, and appendix; Dublin, 1857. This excellent publication, which is distinguished by an impartiality too rare among learned English authors, has rendered a considerable service both to the hagiography and to the national history of Ireland and Scotland.

[4] Among others, Camden, in the sixteenth century; Fleury at certain points (book xxxix. c. 36); and Augustin Thierry, in the first editions of his *Histoire de la Conquête d'Angleterre*.

lumba. His countrymen have almost always named him *Columb-Kill* or *Cille*, that is to say, the *dove of the cell*, thus adding to his primitive name a special designation, intended to recall either the essentially monastic character of the saint, or the great number of communities founded and governed by him.[5] He was a scion of one of those great Irish races, of whom it is literally true to say that they lose themselves in the night of ages, but which have retained to our own day, thanks to the tenacious attachment of the Irish people to their national recollections, through all the vicissitudes of conquest, persecution, and exile, a rank more patriotic and popular than that of mere nobility or aristocratic lineage. This was the great race of the Nialls or O'Donnells[6] (*clan Domhnaill*), which, native to and master of all the north-western part of the island (the modern counties of Tyrconnell, Tyrone, and Donegal), held sovereign sway in Hibernia and Caledonia, over the two shores of the Scottish sea, during the sixth century. Almost without interruption, up to 1168, kings, springing from its different branches, exercised in Ireland the supreme monarchy — that is to say, a sort of primacy over the provincial kings, which has been compared to that of metropolitan over bishops, but which rather recalls the feudal sovereignty of the Salic emperors, or of the kings of the family of Capet over the great vassals of Germany and France, in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Nothing could be more unsettled or stormy than the exercise of this sovereignty. It was incessantly disputed by some vassal king, who generally succeeded by force of arms in robbing the supreme monarch of his crown and his life, and replacing

His royal origin.

The monarchs or supreme kings of Ireland.

[5] "Qui videlicet Columba nunc a nonnullis, composito a cella et columba nomine, Columcelli vocatur." — Bede, *Hist. Eccles.*, v. 9. "Eo quod multarum cellarum, id est, monasteriorum vel ecclesiarum institutor, fundator et rector fuit." — Notker Balbulus, *Martyrol.*, 9 Jun.

[6] There is a history of the saint in Irish by Magnus O'Donnell, who describes himself as prince of Tyrconnell. It was put together in 1532, and the original MS. is to be found in the Bodleian. It is a legendary compilation, founded upon the narrative of Adamnan, but augmented by a crowd of fabulous legends, though at the same time by important Irish traditions and historical details in honor of the race of O'Donnell, which was that of the saint and of the historian. It has been abridged, translated into Latin, and published by Colgan in the *Triades Thaumaturgæ*. This volume is the second of the author's collected works, entitled *Acta Sanctorum Hiberniæ, seu sacræ ejusdem insulæ antiquitates*, which he was not able to finish, and which unfortunately includes only the saints of the first three months of the year. I have found a copy of this very rare collection in only one of all the Paris libraries, that of St. Geneviève.

him upon the throne of Tara, with a tolerable certainty of being himself similarly treated by the son of the dethroned prince.[7] Besides, the right of succession in Ireland was not regulated by the law of primogeniture. According to the custom known under the name of *Tanistry*, the eldest blood-relation succeeded every deceased prince or chief, and the brother in consequence preceded the son in the order of succession.

The O'Neills and O'Donnells.

After the English conquest, the warlike and powerful race of Nialls was able to maintain, by dint of dauntless perseverance, a sort of independent sovereignty in the north-west of Ireland. The names of the O'Neills and O'Donnells, chiefs of its two principal branches, and too often at war with each other, are to be found on every page of the annals of unhappy Ireland. After the Reformation, when religious persecution had come in to aggravate all the evils of the conquest, these two houses supplied their indignant and unsubdued country with a succession of heroic soldiers who struggled to the death against the perfidious and sanguinary despotism of the Tudors and Stuarts. Ten centuries passed in such desperate struggles have not weakened the traditions which link the saint whose history we are about to tell to those champions of an ancient faith and an outraged country. Even under the reign of Elizabeth, the vassals of young Hugh O'Donnell, called Red Hugh,[8] so renowned in poetical records and popular traditions of Erin, and the most dangerous antagonist of English tyranny, recognized in him the hero indicated in the prophetic songs of Columb-kill, and thus placed his glory and that of his ancestors under the wing of the *dove of the cells*, as under a patronage at once domestic and celestial.[9]

[7] Let us recall in this connection the very ancient division of Ireland into four provinces or kingdoms: — to the north, Ulster, or Ultonia; to the south, Munster or Mommonia; to the east, Leinster or Lagenia; to the west, Connaught or Cannocia. A distinct district, the antique Sacred Middle of Ireland, represented by the counties of Meath and Westmeath, surrounded the royal residence of Tara, celebrated in Moore's melodies, and some ruins of which still remain. This district was exclusively dependent on the supreme monarch. See the map annexed to this volume.

[8] Taken prisoner by the English in his cradle, he died at the age of twenty-nine, in 1602, at Simancas, where he had gone to seek aid from Spain. His brother, the heir of his power in Ireland, also died in exile in Rome, where his tomb may still be seen in San Pietro in Montorio.

[9] Reeves, *Adamnan*, p. 34. O'Curry, *Lectures on the Manuscript Materials of Ancient Irish History*, 1861, p. 328. The eight great races of Ireland, sung by the bards and celebrated in the national history, are these: —

The kindred of Columba.

The father of Columba was descended from one of the eight sons of the great king Niall of the Nine Hostages,[10] who was supreme monarch of all Ireland from 379 to 405, at the period when Patrick was brought to the island as a slave. Consequently he sprang from a race which had reigned in Ireland for six centuries; and in virtue of the ordinary law of succession, might himself have been called to the throne.[11] His mother belonged to a reigning family in Leinster, one of the four subordinate kingdoms of the island. He was born at Gartan, in one of the wildest districts of the present county of Donegal — where the slab of stone upon which his mother lay at the moment of his birth is still shown. He who passes a night upon that stone is cured forever from the pangs of nostalgia, and will never be consumed, while absent or in exile, by a too passionate love for his country. Such at least is the belief of the poor Irish emigrants, who flock thither at the moment when they are about to abandon the confiscated and ravaged soil of their country to seek their living in America, moved by a touching recollection of the great missionary who gave up his native land for the love of God and human souls.

His birth. 7th December, 521.

Before his birth, his mother had a dream, which posterity has accepted as a graceful and poetical symbol of her son's career. An angel appeared to her, bringing her a veil covered with flowers of wonderful beauty, and the sweetest variety of colors; immediately after she saw the veil carried away by the wind, and rolling out as it fled over plains,

O'Neill and O'Donnell,	in the north.	O'Moore and O'Byrne,	in the east.
O'Brien and M'Carthy,	in the south.	O'Connor and O'Rourke,	in the west.

The principality of Tyrconnell, confiscated by James I., contained 1,105,000 acres. "I would rather," said the most illustrious of the O'Neills in 1597, "be O'Neill of Ulster than king of Spain." Nevertheless the chiefs of these two great races are generally described by the annalists of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries as earls of Tyrconnell, a title which had been conferred upon them by the English crown in the hope of gaining them over. The articles upon the O'Neills and O'Donnells in Sir Bernard Burke's interesting work, *Vicissitudes of Families*, should be read on this subject. The posterity of the O'Donnells still flourishes in an elevated position in Austria.

[10] Because he had received nine hostages from a king whom he had conquered.

[11] An ancient life of the saint, in Irish, quoted by Dr. Reeves, p. 269, expressly states this fact, and adds that he gave up his right to the throne only for the love of God.

woods, and mountains: then the angel said to her, "Thou art about to become the mother of a son, who shall blossom for heaven, who shall be reckoned among the prophets of God, and who shall lead numberless souls to the heavenly country."[12] This spiritual power, this privilege of leading souls to heaven, was recognized by the Irish people, converted by St. Patrick, as the greatest glory which its princes and great men could gain.

Education of Columba.

The Irish legends, which are always distinguished, even amidst the wildest vagaries of fancy, by a high and pure morality, linger lovingly upon the childhood and youth of the predestined saint. They tell us how, confided in the first place to the care of the priest who had baptized him, and who gave him the first rudiments of literary education, he was accustomed from his earliest years to the heavenly visions which were to occupy so large a place in his life. His guardian angel often appeared to him; and the child asked if all the angels in heaven was as young and shining as he. A little later Columba was invited by the same angel to choose among all the virtues those which he would like best to possess. "I choose," said the youth, "chastity and wisdom;" and immediately three young girls of wonderful beauty, but foreign air, appeared to him, and threw themselves on his neck to embrace him. The pious youth frowned, and repulsed them with indignation. "What!" they said; "then thou dost not know us?" "No, not the least in the world." "We are three sisters whom our father gives to thee to be thy brides." "Who, then, is your father?" "Our father is God, he is Jesus Christ, the Lord and Saviour of the world." "Ah, you have indeed an illustrious father. But what are your names?" "Our names are Virginity, Wisdom, and Prophecy; and we come to leave thee no more, to love thee with an incorruptible love."[13]

Vision of the three sisters.

[12] "Quoddam miræ pulchritudinis peplum detulit, in quo veluti universorum decorosi colores florum depicti videbantur. . . . Peplum a se elongari volando videbat, camporumque latitudinem in majus crescendo excedere, montesque et saltus majore sui mensura superare. . . . Talem filium editura es floridum, qui quasi unus prophetarum Dei inter ipsos connumerabitur, innumerabiliumque animarum dux ad cœlestem a Deo patriam est prædestinatus." — Adamn., iii. 1.

[13] "Ergo ne angeli omnes ita juvenili ætate floretis, ita splendide vestiti ornatique inceditis? . . . Age ergo, quid eligis ediscere. . . . Tres adsittere virgines admirandi decoris et peregrini vultus, quas statim in ejus amplexus et oscula improviso ruentes, pudicitiæ cultor contracta fronte . . . abigebat. Ergo ne nos non agnoscis quarum basia et amores viliter aspernas? . . .

From the house of the priest, Columba passed into the great monastic schools, which were not only a nursery for the clergy of the Irish Church, but where also young laymen of all conditions were educated. Columba, like many others, there learned to make his first steps in that monastic life to which he had been drawn by the call of God. He devoted himself not only to study and prayer, but also to the manual toil then inseparable, in Ireland and everywhere else, from a religious profession. Like all his young companions, he had to grind over night the corn for the next day's food: but when his turn came, it was so well and quickly done that his companions suspected him of having been assisted by an angel.[14] The royal birth of Columba procured him several distinctions in the schools which were not always to the satisfaction of his comrades. One of the latter, named Kieran, who was also destined to fill a great place in Scotic legend, became indignant at the ascendency of Columba: but while the two students disputed, a celestial messenger came to Kieran and placed before him an auger, a plane, and an axe, saying, "Look at these tools, and recollect that these are all thou hast sacrificed for God, since thy father was only a carpenter; but Columba has sacrificed the sceptre of Ireland, which might have come to him by right of his birth and the grandeur of his race."[15]

Jealousy of his comrades.

We learn from authentic documents that Columba completed his monastic life under the direction of two holy abbots, both bearing the name of Finnian. The first, who was also a bishop, ordained him deacon, but seems to have had him for a shorter time under his authority than the second Finnian, who, himself trained by a disciple of St. Patrick, had long lived in Cambria, near St. David. Columba's first steps in life are thus con-

The two Finnians. Monastic school of Clouard.

Prorsus quæ sitis ignoro. . . . Tres sumus sorores et sponsæ tibi nuper a patre nostro desponsatæ. . . . Ecquis vero est vester pater? . . . Magni estis profecto parentis filiæ; pergite, quæso, etiam nomina vestra recludere." — O'Donnell, *Vita quinta S. Columbæ*, i. 36, 37, 38, ap. Colgan, *Trias Thaumaturga*, p. 394.

[14] "Ordinariæ illis epulæ cibarius panis; labor vero in singulos per vices distributus, nocturna lucubratione grana emolere, ex quibus hujusmodi panis pro communi omnium victu conficeretur. Id labori cum Columbæ, quia contubernalis esset, sæpius obtigisset, prompte et humillime acceptavit." — O'Donnell, i. 42.

[15] "Delapsus e cœlo bonus genius . . . terebram, asciam et securim Kierano præsentans. Hæcce, inquit, aliaque hujusmodi, quibus tuus pater carpentariam exercebat, pro Dei amore reliquisti. Columba vero Hiberniæ sceptrum avito suo et generis potentia sperandum antequam offerretur abrenuntiavit." — O'Donnell, i. 44.

nected with the two great monastic apostles of Ireland and Cambria, the patriarchs of the two Celtic races which up to this time had shown the most entire fidelity to the Christian faith, and the greatest predilection for monastic life. The abbot Finnian who ordained Columba priest, ruled at Clonard the monastery which he had founded, and of which we have already spoken — one of those immense conventual establishments which were to be found nowhere but among the Celts, and which recalled to recollection the monastic towns of the Thebaïd. He had made of his monastery one great school, which was filled with the Irish youth, then, as always, consumed by a thirst for religious instruction; and we again find here the favorite number, so often repeated by Celtic tradition, of three thousand pupils, all eager to receive the instructions of him who was called the Master of Saints.[16]

The assassin of a young girl falls dead before him.

While Columba studied at Clonard, being still only a deacon, an incident took place which has been proved by authentic testimony, and which fixed the general attention upon him by giving a first evidence of his supernatural and prophetic intuition. An old Christian bard (the bards were not all Christians), named Gemmaïn, had come to live near the Abbot Finnian, asking from him, in exchange for his poetry, the secret of fertilizing the soil. Columba, who continued all his life a passionate admirer of the traditionary poetry of his nation, determined to join the school of the bard, and to share his labors and studies. The two were reading together out of doors, at a little distance from each other, when a young girl appeared in the distance pursued by a robber. At the sight of the old man the young fugitive made for him with all her remaining strength, hoping, no doubt, to find safety in the authority exercised throughout Ireland by the national poets. Gemmaïn, in great trouble, called his pupil to his aid to defend the unfortunate child, who was trying to hide herself under their long robes, when her pursuer reached the spot. Without taking any notice of her defenders, he struck

[16] Varin, *Deuxième Mémoire*, p. 47. "Magister sanctorum Hiberniæ, habuit in sua schola de Cluain-Evaird tria millia sanctorum." — *Martyrol. Dungal*, ap. Moore, *History of Ireland*, vol. i. ch. 13. The holy abbot Finnian died in 549. The other Finnian, the first master of Columb-Kill, is also known under the name of Finnbar, and was abbot at Maghbile (Down), and died in 579. It is believed that he was St. Fredianus (Frediano), bishop and patron of Lucca, where there is a fine and curious church under his invocation. Colgan has published the lives of both, 28th February and 18th March, *Acta Sanctorum Hiberniæ*. The two saints are frequently confounded. — Compare Adamnan, i. 1; ii. 1; iii. 4.

her in the neck with his lance, and was making off, leaving her dead at their feet. The horrified old man turned to Columba. "How long," he said, "will God leave unpunished this crime which dishonors us?" "For this moment only," said Columba, "not longer; at this very hour, when the soul of this innocent creature ascends to heaven, the soul of the murderer shall go down to hell." At the instant, like Ananias at the words of Peter, the assassin fell dead. The news of this sudden punishment, the story goes, went over all Ireland, and spread the fame of the young Columba far and wide.[17]

His foundations in Ireland.

It is easy to perceive, by the importance of the monastic establishments which he had brought into being even before he had attained the age of manhood, that his influence must have been as precocious as it was considerable. Apart from the virtues of which his after life afforded so many examples, it may be supposed that his royal birth gave him an irresistible ascendency in a country where, since the introduction of Christianity, all the early saints, like the principal abbots, belonged to reigning families, and where the influence of blood and the worship of genealogy continue, even to this day, to a degree unknown in other lands. Springing, as has been said, from the same race as the monarch of all Ireland, and consequently himself eligible for the same high office, which was more frequently obtained by election or usurpation than inheritance — nephew or near cousin of the seven monarchs who successively wielded the supreme authority during his life — he was also related by ties of blood to almost all the provincial kings.[18] Thus we see him, during his whole career, treated on a footing of perfect intimacy and equality by all the princes of Ireland and of Caledonia, and exercising a sort of spiritual sway equal or superior to the authority of secular sovereigns.

Before he had reached the age of twenty-five he had presided over the creation of a crowd of monasteries. As many

[17] "Carminator . . . habens secum carmen magnificum." — *Vita S. Finniani*, ap. COLGAN, *Acta SS.*, p. 395. "Senex perturbatus tali subitatione Columbam eminus legentem advocavit, ut ambo in quantum valuissent filiam a persequente defenderent. . . . Filiam sub vestimentis eorum jugulavit, et, relinquens jacentem mortuam super pedes eorum, abire cœpit. . . . Quanto, sancte puer Columba, hoc seelus temporis spatio inultum fieri judex justus patietur. . . . Eadem hora qua interfectæ ab eo filiæ anima ascendet ad cœlos, anima ipsius interfectoris descendet ad inferos." — ADAMNAN, ii. 25.

[18] See the genealogical tables, Dr. Reeve's Appendix.

as thirty-seven in Ireland alone recognized him as their founder. The most ancient and important of these foundations were situated, as was formerly that of St. Bridget at Kildare,[19] in vast oak-forests, from which they took their name. The first, Durrow (*Dair-mach, Roboreti campus*), where a cross and well bearing the name of Columba are still to be seen, was erected in the central region called the *umbilical*, or sacred middle of Ireland. The other, Derry (*Doire-chalgaich, Roboretum Calgachi*), is situated in the northern part of the island, in Columba's native province, in the hollow of a bay of that sea which separates Ireland from Scotland. After having long been the seat of a great and rich Catholic bishopric, it became, under its modern name of Londonderry, one of the principal centres of English colonization, and was, in 1690, the bulwark of the Protestant conquest against the powerless efforts of the last of the Stuart kings.[20] But nothing then indicated the possibility of those lamentable changes, nor of the miserable triumphs of inhuman force and wicked persecution.

The young Columba was specially attached to Derry, where he habitually lived. He superintended with care not only the discipline and studies of his community, but external matters, even so far as to watch over the preservation of

[19] See *ante*, p. 546.

[20] Dr. Reeves gives in his appendix G a detailed enumeration of the thirty-seven foundations of Columb-Kill in Ireland. In the north of the island, and in his native province, we remark the name of Raphoe, until lately the seat of a diocese, and Tory, in an isle of the coast of Donegal; in the central district Sord, now *Swords*, seven miles from Dublin, which has retained, like Tory, its *round tower;* and Kells, which gained celebrity only in 807 as the refuge of the monks driven from Iona by the threats of the Norsemen. This monastery was completed in 814, and from that day became the headquarters of the Columbian monks. Here is still to be seen one of the finest round towers of Ireland (seventy feet high); an oratory called *St. Columb-Kill's house;* a cemetery-cross with this inscription on the plinth — *Crux Patricii et Columbe.* Two celebrated Gospels of the Trinity College Bible at Dublin are called the *Book of Kells* and the *Book of Durrow.* In the important work of Dr. Petrie, called *Inquiry into the Origin and Uses of the Round Towers of Ireland*, 1845, 2d ed., p. 430, will be found an engraving of a building near the cemetery of Kells, called St. Columba's house. It is a square building, 23 feet long, 21 broad, and 38 feet high, but not vaulted. The walls are 4 feet in thickness; the roof is of stone, with two gables. It has little circular windows at a height of 15 feet. It was formerly divided into three chambers and two stories. In one of these chambers is to be seen a great flat stone 6 feet long, which is called the bed of Columba. The roof of this building is entirely covered with ivy. In the isle of Tory a round tower, belonging to the monastery constructed by Columba, still remains. Petrie (p. 389) also recognizes round towers in the buildings quoted in connection with the two miracles told by Adamnan, c. 15, in which mention is made of bells and belfries.

the neighboring forest. He would never permit an oak to be cut down. Those which fell by natural decay, or were struck down by the wind, were alone made use of for the fire which was lighted on the arrival of strangers, or distributed to the neighboring poor. The poor had a first right, in Ireland as everywhere else, to the goods of the monks; and the Monastery of Derry fed a hundred applicants every day with methodical regularity.[21]

His songs in honor of Derry.

At a more advanced age our saint gave vent to his tenderness for his monastic creations in songs, an echo of which has come down to us. The text of these songs, such as has been preserved, is probably later than Columba; but it is written in the oldest Irish dialect, and it expresses, naturally enough, the sentiments of the founder and his disciples: —

"Were all the tribute of Scotia[22] mine,
From its midland to its borders,
I would give all for one little cell
In my beautiful Derry.
For its peace and for its purity,
For the white angels that go
In crowds from one end to the other,
I love my beautiful Derry.
For its quietness and its purity,
For heaven's angels that come and go
Under every leaf of the oaks,
I love my beautiful Derry.

My Derry, my fair oak grove,
My dear little cell and dwelling,
Oh God in the heavens above!
Let him who profanes it be cursed.
Beloved are Durrow and Derry,
Beloved is Raphoe the pure,
Beloved the fertile Drumhome,
Beloved are Sords and Kells!
But sweeter and fairer to me
The salt sea where the sea-gulls cry
When I come to Derry from far,

[21] O'Donnell, ap. Colgan, p. 397, 398.

[22] Let us repeat here that the names of *Scotia*, *Scotti*, when they occur in works of the seventh to the twelfth century, are almost exclusively applied to Ireland and the Irish, and were extended later to Scotland proper, the north and west of which were peopled by a colony of Irish Scots, only at a later period. From thence comes the name of *Erse*, *Erysche*, or *Irish*, retained up to our own day, by the Irish dialect, otherwise called Gaelic. In Adamnan, as in Bede, Scotia means Ireland, and modern Scotland is comprehended in the general title of Britannia. At a later period the name of Scotia disappeared in Ireland, and became identified with the country conquered and colonized by the *Scots* in Scotland, like that of *Anglia* in Britain, and *Francia* in Gaul.

It is sweeter and dearer to me —
Sweeter to me." [23]

Nor was it only his own foundations which he thus celebrated: another poem has been preserved which is attributed to him, and which is dedicated to the glory of the monastic isle of Arran, situated upon the western coast of Ireland, where he had gone to venerate the inhabitants and the sanctuaries.[24]

"O Arran, my sun; my heart is in the west with thee. To sleep on thy pure soil is as good as to be buried in the land of St. Peter and St. Paul. To live within the sound of thy bells is to live in joy. O Arran, my sun, my love is in the west with thee." [25]

His taste for poetry,

These poetic effusions reveal Columba to us under one of his most attractive aspects, as one of the minstrels of the national poetry of Ireland, the intimate union of which with the Catholic faith,[26] and its unconquerable empire over the souls of that generous people, can scarcely be exaggerated. Columba was not only himself a poet, but lived always in great and affectionate sympathy with the bards who, at that time, occupied so high a place in the social and political institutions of Ireland, and who were to be met with everywhere, in the palaces and monasteries, as on the public roads. What he did for this powerful corporation, and how, after having been their brother and friend, he became their protector and saviour, will be seen further on.

And his connection with the bards.

Let us merely state at present that, himself a great traveller, he received the travelling bards in the different communities where he lived; among others, in that which he had built upon an islet[27] of the lake which the Boyle traverses before it throws itself into the Shannon. He confided to them the care of arranging the monastic and

[23] See Reeves, pp. 288, 289. The origin and continuation of this poem will be seen further on.

[24] "Invisit aliquando S. Endeum aliosque sanctos, qui plurimi in Ara insula angelicam vitam ducebant . . . in ea insula quam sanctorum vestigiis tritam et monumentis inclytam magno affectu venerabatur." — O'Donnell, book i. c. 105, 106. Compare Colgan, *Act. SS. Hiberniæ*, vol. i. p. 704–714. There were still thirteen churches on this island in 1645, with the tombs of St. Enda and of a hundred and twenty other saints.

[25] Quoted in the *Transactions of the Gaelic Society*, p. 183.

[26] See *ante*, p. 545.

[27] The ruins of a church attributed to Columba are still to be seen there. Two miles from this island, on the banks of a cascade formed by the Boyle, as it throws itself into the lake (Loch Key), rises another monastery founded by him, and which became, in 1161, a Cistercian abbey of some celebrity — the Abbey of Boyle.

provincial annals, which were to be afterwards deposited in the charter-chest of the community; but above all, he made them sing for his own pleasure and that of his monks; and the latter reproached him energetically if he permitted one of those wandering poets to depart without having asked to hear some of his chants, accompanied by his harp.[28]

The monk Columba was, then, a poet. After Ossian and his glorious compeer of the Vosges, he opens the series of two hundred Irish poets, whose memories and names, in default of their works, have remained dear to Ireland. He wrote his verses not only in Latin, but also and more frequently in Irish. Only three of his Latin poems survive; but two centuries ago eleven of his Irish poems were still in existence,[29] which have not all perished, and the most authentic of which is dedicated to the glory of St. Bridget, the virgin slave, patroness of Ireland and foundress of female religious life in the Isle of Saints. She was still living when Columba was born.[30] Through the obscure and halting efforts of this infantine poetry, some tones of sincere and original feeling may yet be disentangled: —

"Bridget, the good and the virgin
Bridget, our torch and our sun,
Bridget, radiant and unseen,
May she lead us to the eternal kingdom!
May Bridget defend us
Against all the troops of hell,
And all the adversities of life;
May she beat them down before us.
All the ill movements of the flesh,
This pure virgin whom we love,
Worthy of honor without end,
May she extinguish in us.
Yes, she shall always be our safeguard,
Dear saint of Lagenia;
After Patrick she comes first,
The pillar of the land,

[28] "Quidam Scoticus poeta. . . . Cur a nobis regredienti Cronano poetæ aliquod ex more suæ artis canticum non postulasti laudabiliter decantari?" — Adamnan, book i. c. 42.

[29] "Diversa poemata S. Columbæ patrio idiomate scripta exstant penes me." — Colgan, *Trias Thaumaturga*, p. 472. He gives the title and quotes the first verse of each Irish poem. Dr. Reeves has given in his Appendix F the Irish text and English translation of two of these pieces, the MS. of which has passed from the hands of the Franciscans of Louvain, where the pious and patriotic Colgan wrote, to the library of Bourgogne at Brussels. They are also to be found in the Bodleian at Oxford, in a MS. which contains thirty-six Irish poems attributed to Columba.

[30] He was born in 519, and she died in 523, according to the chronology of Colgan.

Glorious among all glories,
Queen among all queens.
When old age comes upon us,
May she be to us as the shirt of hair,
May she fill us with her grace,
May Bridget protect us." [31]

It seems thus apparent that Columba was as much a bard as a monk during the first part of his life; he had the vagabond inclination, the ardent, agitated, even quarrelsome character of the race. Like most Irish saints and even monks whom history has kept in mind, he had a passionate love for travelling; [32] and to that passion he added another which brought him more than one misadventure. Books, which were less rare in Ireland than everywhere else, were nevertheless much sought after, and guarded with jealous care in the monastic libraries, which were their sole depositories. Not only an excessive value was put upon them, but they were even supposed to possess the emotions and almost the passions of living beings. Columba had a passion for fine manuscripts, and one of his biographers attributes to him the laborious feat of having transcribed with his own hand three hundred copies of the Gospel or of the Psalter.[33] He went everywhere in search of volumes, which he could borrow or copy, often experiencing refusals which he resented bitterly. There was then in Ossory, in the south-west, a holy recluse, very learned, doctor in laws and in philosophy, named Longarad *with the white legs*, because in walking barefoot his legs, which were covered with white hair, were visible. Columba having gone to visit him asked leave to examine his books. The old man gave a direct refusal; then Columba burst forth in denunciations — "May thy books no longer do thee any

His passion for MSS.

Longarad with the hairy legs.

[31] "Nos defendamur omni tempore
Per meam sanctam de Lagenia
Suppar columna regni,
Post Patricium primarium:
Quæ decor decorum
Quæ regina regia. . . .
Erit post senium
Nostrum corpus in cilicio:
Ejus gratia respergamur.
Nos protegat Brigicta."
Trias Thaumat., p. 606.

[32] "Omnes regni provincias continuo peragrans, urbes, oppida, paga circumiens." — O'Donnell, p. 398.

[33] O'Donnell, ap. Colgan, p. 438. The same number has been seen above attributed to Dega. Irish narratives know scarcely any numerals but those of three hundred and three thousand.

good, neither to thee nor to those who come after thee, since thou takest occasion by them to show thy inhospitality." This curse was heard, according to the legend. As soon as old Longarad died his books became unintelligible. They still exist, says an author of the ninth century, but no man can read them. The legend adds that in all the schools of Ireland, and even in Columba's own cell, the leathern satchels in which the monks and students carried their books, unhooked themselves from the wall and fell to the ground on the day of the old philosopher's death.[34]

Contest about the Psalter, which Columba would have copied against his master's will.

A similar narrative, more authentic but not less singular, serves as an introduction to the decisive event which changed the destiny of Columba, and transformed him from a wandering poet and ardent bookworm into a missionary and apostle. While visiting his ancient master, Finnian, our saint found means to make a clandestine and hurried copy of the abbot's Psalter, by shutting himself up at night in the church where the Psalter was deposited, lighting his nocturnal work, as happened to I know not what Spanish saint, by the light which escaped from his left hand while he wrote with the right. The abbot Finnian discovered what was going on by means of a curious wanderer, who, attracted by that singular light, looked in through the keyhole, and while his face was pressed against the door had his eye suddenly torn out by a crane, one of those familiar birds who were permitted by the Irish monks to seek a home in their churches.[35] Indignant at what he thought a theft, Finnian claimed the copy when it was finished, on the ground that a copy made without permission ought to belong to the master of the original, seeing that the transcription is the son of the original book. Columba refused to give up his work, and the question was referred to the king in his palace at Tara.

King Diarmid, founder of Clonmacnoise. 538 or 548.

King Diarmid, or Dermott, supreme monarch of Ireland, was, like Columba, descended from the great king Niall, but by another son than he whose great-grandson Columba was. He lived, like all the princes of his country, in a close union with the Church, which was represented in Ireland, more completely than anywhere else, by the monastic order. Exiled and persecuted in his

[34] *Festilogium* of Angus the Culdee, quoted by O'Curry.

[35] "Admoto ad januæ fissuram oculo, mirari cœpit. . . . Grus quædam cicurata, quæ in ecclesia erat, incauti hominis oculum impecto rostro effodit." — O'Donnell, book ii. c. 1.

youth, he had found refuge in an island, situated in one of those lakes which interrupt the course of the Shannon, the chief river of Ireland, and had there formed a friendship with a holy monk called Kieran, who was no other than the son of the carpenter, the jealous comrade of Columba at the monastic school of Clonard, but since that time his generous rival in knowledge and in austerity. Upon the still solitary bank of the river the two friends had planned the foundation of a monastery, which, owing to the marshy nature of the soil, had to be built upon piles. "Plant with me the first stake," the monk said to the exiled prince, "putting your hand under mine; and soon that hand shall be over all the men of Erin;" and it happened that Diarmid was very shortly after called to the throne. He immediately used his new power to endow richly the monastery which was rendered doubly dear to him by the recollection of his exile and of his friend. This sanctuary became, under the name of Clonmacnoise, one of the greatest monasteries and most frequented schools of Ireland, and even of Western Europe. It was so rich in possessions and even in dependent communities, daughters or vassals of its hierarchical authority, that, according to a popular saying, half of Ireland was contained within the enclosure of Clonmacnoise. This enclosure actually contained nine churches, with two round towers; the kings and lords of the two banks of the Shannon had their burying-place there for a thousand years, upon a green height which overlooks the marshy banks of the river. The sadly picturesque ruins may still be seen, and among them a stone cross, over which the prince and the abbot, holding between them the stake consecrated by the legend, are roughly sculptured.[35]

Judgment of King Diarmid.

This king might accordingly be regarded as a competent judge in a contest at once monastic and literary; he might even have been suspected of

[36] Clonmacnoise, which is situated on the eastern bank of the Shannon, seven miles below Athlone, and was afterwards made a bishop's see, must not be confounded with Cloyne, though the Latin designation, *Clonensis* or *Cluanensis*, is the same. This great abbey is chiefly remarkable on account of its abbot Tighernach (1088), a much quoted historian, whose annals have been published in the second volume of *Rerum Hibernicarum Scriptores* by O'Connor. Within its vast enclosure was a community of those lay monks called *Culdees*, of whom we shall have occasion to speak further on, who had been created by a lay brother of the monastery called *Conn of the poor*, by reason of his great charity. Later in the twelfth century it passed into the hands of the regular canons of St. Augustin, who retained it up to the general spoliation. — O'Curry, p. 60. *The Gentleman's Magazine* of February, 1864, publishes a plan of the actual condition of Clonmacnoise, with a very interesting notice of the architecture of the ruins by Mr. Parker.

partiality for Columba, his kinsman — and yet he pronounced against him. His judgment was given in a rustic phrase which has passed into a proverb in Ireland — *To every cow her calf*,[37] and consequently, to every book its copy. Columba protested loudly. "It is an unjust sentence," he said, "and I will revenge myself." After this incident a young prince, son of the provincial king of Connaught, who was pursued for having committed an involuntary murder, took refuge with Columba, but was seized and put to death by the king. The irritation of the poet-monk knew no bounds. The ecclesiastical immunity which he enjoyed in his quality of superior and founder of several monasteries ought to have, in his opinion, created a sort of sanctuary around his person, and this immunity had been scandalously violated by the execution of the youth whom he protected. He threatened the king with prompt vengeance. "I will denounce," he said, "to my brethren and my kindred thy wicked judgment, and the violation in my person of the immunity of the Church; they will listen to my complaint, and punish thee sword in hand.[38] Bad king, thou shalt no more see my face in thy province until God, the just Judge, has subdued thy pride. As thou hast humbled me to-day before thy lords and thy friends, God will humble thee on the battle day before thine enemies." Diarmid attempted to retain him by force in the neighborhood; but, evading the vigilance of his guards, he escaped by night from the court of Tara, and directed his steps to his native province of Tyrconnell. His first stage was Monasterboyce, where he heard from the monks that the king had planted guards on all the ordinary roads to intercept him. He then continued his course by a solitary pathway over the desert hills which lay between him and the north of Ireland; and as he went upon his lonely way, his soul found utterance in a pious song. He fled, chanting the *Song of*

Protest of Columba.

He flies, chanting the Song of Trust.

[37] "*Le gach boin a boinin, le gach leabhar a leabhran.*"

[38] "Scito, rex inique, quia amodo faciem meam in tua provincia non videbis donec. . . . Sicut me hodie coram senioribus tuis iniquo judicio despexisti, sic te Deus æternus in conspectu inimicorum tuorum te despiciet in die belli." — Anon. ap. Usserium, *De Primord. Eccles. Brit.*, cited by Colgan, p. 462. "Ego expostulabo cum fratribus et cognatis meis iniquum arbitrium tuum, et contemptam in me temeratamque Ecclesiæ immunitatem . . . et si non meam, at certe Dei regni atque Ecclesiæ causam ducto in te exercitu vindicabunt." — O'Donnell, book ii. c. 7. This is assuredly a much modernized version of Columba's declaration of war; but the true facts are to be found in the unanimous statements of Irish tradition. Adamnan preserves a prudent silence upon all events anterior to the saint's mission to Scotland.

Trust, which has been preserved to us, and which may be reckoned among the most authentic relics of the ancient Irish tongue. We quote from it the following verses: —

"Alone am I on the mountain,
O royal Sun; prosper my path,
And then I shall have nothing to fear.
Were I guarded by six thousand,
Though they might defend my skin,
When the hour of death is fixed,
Were I guarded by six thousand,
In no fortress could I be safe.
Even in a church the wicked are slain,
Even in an isle amidst a lake;
But God's elect are safe
Even in the front of battle.
No man can kill me before my day,
Even had we closed in combat;
And no man can save my life
When the hour of death has come.
My life!
As God pleases let it be;
Nought can be taken from it,
Nought can be added to it:
The lot which God has given
Ere a man dies must be lived out.
He who seeks more, were he a prince,
Shall not a mite obtain.
A guard!
A guard may guide him on his way;
But can they, can they guard
Against the touch of death? . . .
Forget thy poverty a while;
Let us think of the world's hospitality.
The Son of Mary will prosper thee,
And every guest shall have his share.
Many a time
What is spent returns to the bounteous hand,
And that which is kept back
Not the less has passed away.
O living God!
Alas for him who evil works!
That which he thinks not of comes to him,
That which he hopes vanishes out of his hand.
There is no *Sreod*[39] that can tell our fate,
Nor bird upon the branch,
Nor trunk of gnarled oak. . . .
Better is He in whom we trust,
The King who has made us all,
Who will not leave me to-night without refuge.
I adore not the voice of birds,
Nor chance, nor the love of a son or a wife.
My Druid is Christ, the Son of God,

[39] An unknown Druidical term, probably meaning some pagan superstition of the same description as the flight of birds and the knots in the trees, mentioned immediately after.

The Son of Mary, the great Abbot,
The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
My lands are with the King of kings;
My order at Kells and at Moone." [40]

"Thus sang Columba," says the preface to this *Song of Trust*, "on his lonely journey; and this song will protect him who repeats it while he travels."

He raises civil war.

Columba arrived safely in his province, and immediately set to work to excite against King Diarmid the numerous and powerful clans of his relatives and friends, who belonged to a branch of the house of Niall distinct from and hostile to that of the reigning monarch. His efforts were crowned with success. The Hy-Nialls of the North armed eagerly against the Hy-Nialls of the South, of whom Diarmid was the special chief.[41] They naturally obtained the aid of the king of Connaught, father of the young prince who had been executed. According to other narratives, the struggle was one between the Nialls of the North and the Picts established in the centre of Ireland. But in any case, it was the north and west of Ireland which took arms against the supreme king. Diarmid marched to meet them, and they met in battle at Cool-Drewny, or Cul-Dreimhne, upon the borders of Ultonia and Connacia. He was completely beaten, and obliged to take refuge at Tara. The victory was due, according to the annalist Tighernach, to the prayers and songs of Columba, who had fasted and prayed with all his might to obtain from Heaven the punishment of the royal insolence,[42] and who, besides, was present at the battle, and took upon himself before all men the responsibility of the bloodshed.

Defeat of the king while Columba prays against him.

As for the manuscript which had been the object of this

[40] Moone, in the county of Kildare, where the abbatial cross of St. Columba is preserved. The translation here printed is from the version given by Dr. Reeves, with some slight modifications. — *Translator's note.*

[41] "Contulit se ad domus Conalli, Gulbanis et Eugenii proceres carne sibi propinquos, et coram eis de malis injuriis querelam instituit." — COLGAN, *Act. SS. Hibern.*, vol. i. p. 645. Compare the genealogical table of the descendants of Niall given by Dr. Reeves, p. 251. There were ten supreme kings of the branch of Hy-Nialls of the North, or of Tyrconnell, to which Columba belonged, and seventeen of the southern branch, of which Diarmid was a member. These kings alternated for two centuries, mutually killing and dethroning each other. See the notes of Kelly, to Lynch, *Cambrensis Eversus*, vol. ii. pp. 12, 15.

[42] "Diem ineundi prælii jejunio et oratione prævertit, Deum afflicte rogans ut regiæ insolentiæ vindicibus sine suorum damno annuat victoriam." — O'DONNELL, *loc. cit.*

strange conflict of copyright elevated into a civil war, it was afterwards venerated as a kind of national, military, and religious palladium. Under the name of *Cathac*, or *Fighter*, the Latin Psalter transcribed by Columba, enshrined in a sort of portable altar, became the national relic of the O'Donnell clan. For more than a thousand years it was carried with them to battle as a pledge of victory, on the condition of being supported upon the breast of a clerk pure from all mortal sin. It has escaped as by miracle from the ravages of which Ireland had been the victim, and exists still, to the great joy of all learned Irish patriots.[43]

The Psalter of Battle.

Columba, though victor, had soon to undergo the double reaction of personal remorse and the condemnation of many pious souls.[44] The latter punishment was the first to be felt. He was accused by a synod convoked in the centre of the royal domain at Teilte,[45] of having occasioned the shedding of Christian blood, and sentence of excommunication was in his absence pronounced against him. Perhaps this accusation was not entirely confined to the war which had been raised on account of the copied Psalter. His excitable and vindictive character, and, above all, his passionate attachment to his relatives, and the violent part which he took in their domestic disputes and in their continually recurring rivalries, had engaged him in other struggles, the date of which is perhaps later than that of his first departure from Ireland, but the responsibility of which is formally imputed to him by various authorities,[46] and which also ended in bloody battles.

Synod of Teilte, 562. Columba is excommunicated.

[43] The annals of the Four Masters report that in a battle waged in 1497 between the O'Donnells and the MacDermotts, the sacred book fell into the hands of the latter, who, however, restored it in 1499. It was preserved for thirteen hundred years in the O'Donnell family, and at present belongs to a baronet of that name, who has permitted it to be exhibited in the Museum of the Royal Irish Academy, where it can be seen by all. It is composed of fifty-eight leaves of parchment, bound in silver. The learned O'Curry (p. 322) has given a fac-simile of a fragment of this MS., which he does not hesitate to believe is in the handwriting of our saint, as well as that of the fine copy of the Gospels called the *Book of Kells*, of which he has also given a fac-simile. See Reeves's notes upon Adamnan, p. 250, and the pamphlet upon Marianus Scotus, p. 12.

[44] "Cum illata regi Diermitio clades paulo post ad aures sanctorum Hiberniæ pervenit, Columbam, quod tantæ cladis vel auctor vel occasio fuisset, taxabant." — O'Donnell, ii. 5. "In synodo sanctorum Hiberniæ gravis querela contra S. Columbam, tanquam auctorem tam multi sanguinis effusi, instituta est." — Colgan, *Act. SS. Hibern.*, p. 645.

[45] Now Teltown, a little village near Kells, in the county of Meath.

[46] Especially by the argument in Irish of the Latin poem of Columba called *Altus prosator*, which will be mentioned further on. This argument is quoted textually by Dr. Reeves, p. 253. This author is of opinion that

Columba was not a man to draw back before his accusers and judges. He presented himself before the synod which had struck without hearing him. He found a defender there in the famous Abbot Brendan, the founder of the Monastery of Birr. When Columba made his appearance, this abbot rose, went up to him, and embraced him. "How can you give the kiss of peace to an excommunicated man?" said some of the other members of the synod. "You would do as I have done," he answered, "and you never would have excommunicated him, had you seen what I see — a pillar of fire which goes before him, and the angels that accompany him. I dare not disdain a man predestined by God to be the guide of an entire people to eternal life." Thanks to the intervention of Brendan, or to some other motive not mentioned, the sentence of excommunication was withdrawn; but Columba was charged to win to Christ by his preaching as many pagan souls as the number of Christians who had fallen in the battle of Cool-Drewny.[47]

Other wars of Columba. St. Brendan takes up his defence.

It was then that his soul seems first to have been troubled, and that remorse planted in it the germs at once of a startling conversion and of his future apostolic mission. Sheltered as he was from all vengeance or secular penalties, he must have felt himself struck so much the more by the ecclesiastical judgment pronounced against him. Various legends reveal him to us at this crisis of his life, wandering long from solitude to solitude, and from monastery to monastery, seeking out holy monks, masters of penitence and Christian virtue, and asking them anxiously what he should do to obtain the pardon of God for the murder of so many victims.[48] One of these, Froëch, who had long been his friend, reproached him with affectionate severity for

He consults several confessors.

the legendary writers have antedated all these troublesome occurrences out of consideration for the Apostle of Caledonia, in order to concentrate all his eccentricities in the earlier part of his life before his voluntary expiation. Adamnan, who follows no chronological order, keeps silence on most of the events which preceded the voluntary exile of the saint, and only mentions vaguely the synod by which he was excommunicated; but he proves that after that exile Columba several times returned to Ireland, where his influence was always very considerable. "Cum a quodam synodo pro quibusdam venialibus et tam excusabilibus causis, non recte, ut post in fine claruit, excommunicaretur Columba . . . ad eamdem contra ipsum collectam venit congregationem. . . . Hoc tamen factum est in Teilte." — Book iii. c. 3.

[47] COLGAN, *loc. cit.*, p. 645.

[48] "Petens . . . quo scilicet modo post necem multorum occisorum, benevolentiam Dei ac remissionem peccatorum obtinere mereretur." — *Vita S. Molassii*, ap. *Trias Thaumat.*, p. 461.

having been the instigator of that murderous fight. "It was not I who caused it," said Columba with animation; "it was the unjust judgment of King Diarmid — it was his violation of ecclesiastical immunity which did it all." "A monk," answered the solitary, would have done better to bear the injury with patience than to avenge it with arms in his hands." "Be it so," said Columba; "but it is hard for a man unjustly provoked to restrain his heart and to sacrifice justice."[49]

He was more humble with Abban, another famous monk of the time, founder of many religious houses, one of which was called the *Cell of Tears*, because the special grace of weeping for sin was obtained there.[50] This gentle and courageous soldier of Christ was specially distinguished by his zeal against the fighting men and disturbers of the public peace. He had been seen to throw himself between two chiefs at the moment when their lances were crossed at each other's breasts;[51] and on another occasion had gone alone and unarmed to meet one of the most formidable rievers of the island, who was still a pagan and a member of a sovereign family, had made his arms drop from his hands, and had changed first into a Christian and then into a monk the royal robber, whose great-grandson has recorded this incident.[52] When Columba went to Abban, he said, "I come to beseech thee to pray for the souls of all those who have perished in the late war, which I raised for the honor of the Church. I know they will obtain grace by thy intercession, and I conjure thee to ask what is the will of God in respect to them from the angel who talks with thee every day." The aged solitary, without reproaching Columba, resisted his entreaties for some time, by reason of his great modesty, but ended by

[49] "Non ego, sed iniquum in me Diermitii regis arbitrium, et prævaricatio ecclesiasticæ immunitatisisti prælio et malis inde secutis causam præbuit. . . . Præstaret religioso viro injuriam patienter perferre, quam pugnaciter propulsare. Ita est, infit S. Columba, sed injuste provocato haud pronum est erumpentem animi motum, præsertim cum justus esse videtur, cohibere." — O'Donnell, *Vita quinta*, ii. 8.

[50] "Et istud monasterium a multis vocatur *Cealt nà ndèr*, id est cellula lacrymarum: eo quod hominibus ibi a Deo pœnitentiales lacrymæ . . . donantur." — *Vita S. Abbani*, ap. Colgan, lib. i. p. 615.

[51] "Tam appropinquabat ad alterutrum, ut lanceæ eorum ante se mixtæ essent invicem." — *Ibid.*, p. 619.

[52] "Quidam ex regali genere istius terræ . . . heros et tyrannus, qui semper occidit et rapit et vivit in latrociniis . . . videntes comites S. Abbani virum armigerum, horridissimum in incessu et habitu, cum simili turba militum . . . unusquisque hinc et inde cœpit se abscondere. Vir autem Dei fide armatus intrepidus viam ibat. . . . Ego autem qui vitam S. Abbani collegi sum nepos ipsius filii quem baptizavit." — *Vita S. Abbani*, ap. Colgan, lib. i. p. 617.

consenting; and after having prayed, gave him the assurance that these souls enjoyed eternal repose.[53]

Columba, thus reassured as to the fate of the victims of his rage, had still to be enlightened in respect to his own duty. He found the light which he sought from a holy monk called Molaise, famed for his studies of Holy Scripture,[54] who had already been his confessor, and whose ruined monastery is still visible in one of the isles of the Atlantic.[55] This severe hermit confirmed the decision of the synod; but to the obligation of converting to the Christian faith an equal number of pagans as there were of Christians killed in the civil war he added a new condition, which bore cruelly upon a soul so passionately attached to country and kindred. The confessor condemned his penitent to perpetual exile from Ireland.[56] Columba bowed to this sentence with sad resignation — "What you have commanded," he said, "shall be done."[57]

Molaise condemns him to perpetual exile.

He announced his future fate in the first place to his relations, the warlike Nialls of Tyrconnell. "An angel has taught me that I must leave Ireland and remain in exile as long as I live, because of all those whom you slew in the last battle, which you fought on my account, and also in others which you know of."[58] It is not recorded that any among his kindred attempted to hold him back; but when he acquainted his disciples with his intended emigration, twelve among them decided to follow him. The most ardent of all was a young monk called Mochonna, son of the provincial king of Ulster. In vain Columba represented to him that he ought not to abandon his parents and native soil. "It is thou," answered the young man, "who art my father, the Church is my mother, and my country is where I can gather the largest harvest for Christ." Then, in order to render all resistance impossible, he made a solemn vow aloud to leave his country and follow Columba — "I swear

Devotion of the young Mochonna.

[53] "Ut ores pro animabus illorum qui occisi fuerunt in bello commisso nuper nobis suadentibus, causa Ecclesiæ. . . . Et angelus ait: Requiem habebunt." — *Ibid.*, p. 624, after the MS. of Salamanca, which is more complete on this point than the ordinary text.

[54] "Visitavit S. Lasrianum confessorem suum. . . . Divinarum scripturarum scrutator."

[55] Innishmurry, on the coast of Sligo.

[56] *Vita S. Molassii*, ubi supra.

[57] "Quod indictum est, inquit ad Molassium, fiet." — O'Donnell, ii. 5.

[58] "Mihi, juxta quod ab angelo prænionitus sum, ex Hiberniæ migrandum est, et dum vixero exsulandum, quod mei causa per vos plurimi extincti sunt." — *Ibid.*, ii. 4.

to follow thee wherever thou goest, until thou hast led me to Christ, to whom thou hast consecrated me."[59] It was thus, says his historian, that he forced himself rather than offered himself as a companion to the great exile in the course of his apostolical career among the Picts — and he had no more active or devoted auxiliary.

Columba accepted, though not without sadness, as has been seen, the sentence of his friend. He dedicated the rest of his life to the expiation of his faults by a voluntary exile, and by preaching the faith to the heathen. Up to this time we have had difficulty in disentangling the principal events of the first forty years of his life from a maze of confused and contradictory narratives. We have followed what has seemed to us the most probable account, and one most calculated to throw light upon the character of the saint, his people, and his country. Henceforward we shall find a surer guide in Adamnan, who only touches very slightly upon the first half of his hero's life, and who, with an apparent contempt for the unanimous testimony of Irish witnesses, while agreeing that the departure of the saint took place after the battle in which the King of Ireland had been beaten by Columba's kindred,[60] attributes his departure solely to his desire for the conversion of the heathens of the great neighboring isle.[61]

CHAPTER II.

COLUMBA AN EMIGRANT IN CALEDONIA — THE HOLY ISLE OF IONA.

Aspect of the Hebridean archipelago. — Columba first lands at Oronsay, but leaves it because Ireland is visible from its shores. — Description of Iona. — First buildings of the new monastery. — What remains of it. — Enthu-

[59] "Se peregrinationis socium non magis obtulit, quam obtrusit. . . . Tu mihi pater es, Ecclesia mater, et patria ubi uberiorem bene merendi segetem et majorem Christo deserviendi ansam invenero. . . . Te quocumque ieris sequar, donec ad Christum perduxeris, cui me pridem consecraras." — O'Donnell, *Vita Columbæ*, lib. iii. c. 24, 25, 26.

[60] "Post bellum Cule Drebene . . . quo tempore vir beatus de Scotia peregrinaturus primitus enavigavit." — Adamn., i. 7. What is said of the poem called *Altus*, the composition of which was suggested by the remorse of Columba after his three battles, will be seen further on, p. 732.

[61] "De Scotis ad Britanniam pro Christo peregrinari volens, enavigavit." — Adamn., *Præf.* The MS. of Salamanca, quoted by Colgan, adds: "*Ad convertendos ad fidem Pictos.*"

siasm or Johnson on landing there in the eighteenth century. — Columba bitterly regrets his country. — Passionate elegies on the pains of exile. — Note upon the poem of *Altus*. — Proofs in his biography of the continuance of that patriotic regret. — The stork comes from Ireland to Iona.

He who has not seen the islands and gulfs of the western coast of Scotland, and who has not been tossed upon the sombre sea of the Hebrides, can scarcely form any image of it to himself. Nothing can be less seductive at the first glance than that austere and solemn nature, which is picturesque without charm, and grand without grace. The traveller passes sadly through an archipelago of naked and desert islands, sowed, like so many extinct volcanoes, upon the dull and sullen waters, which are sometimes broken by rapid currents and dangerous whirlpools. Except on rare days, when the sun — that pale sun of the North — gives life to these shores, the eye wanders over a vast surface of gloomy sea, broken at intervals by the whitening crest of waves, or by the foamy line of the tide, which dashes here against long reefs of rock, there against immense cliffs, with a forlorn roar which fills the air. Through the continual fogs and rains of that rude climate may be seen by times the summits of chains of mountains, whose abrupt and naked sides slope to the sea, and whose base is bathed by those cold waves which are kept in constant agitation by the shock of contrary currents, and the tempests of wind which burst from the lakes and narrow ravines farther inland. The melancholy of the landscape is relieved only by that peculiar configuration of the coast, which has been remarked by the ancient authors, and especially by Tacitus — a configuration which exists besides only in Greece and Scandinavia.[62] As in the fiords of Norway, the sea cuts and hollows out the shores of the islands into a host of bays and gulfs, of strange depth, and as narrow as profound.[63] These gulfs take the most varied forms, penetrating by a thousand tortuous folds into the middle of the

[62] "Nusquam latius dominari mare, multum fluminum huc atque illuc ferre, nec littore tenus adcrescere aut resorberi, sed influere penitus atque ambire, etiam jugis atque montibus inseri velut in suo." — Tacitus, *Agricolæ Vita*, c. 10. "Diversorum prolixioribus promontoriorum tractibus, quæ arenatis Oceani sinibus ambiuntur." — Gildas, vol. iii. p. 11, ed. Stevens.

[63] "Mare, quo latus ingens
Dant scopuli, et multa litus se valle receptat."
Perseus, Sat. vi.

These lines of Perseus upon the *Riviera* of Genoa describe still better the western coast of Scotland.

land, as if to identify themselves with the long and winding lakes of the Highland interior. Numberless peninsulas, terminating in pointed headlands, or summits covered with clouds; isthmuses so narrow as to leave the sea visible at both sides; straits so closely shut between two walls of rock that the eye hesitates to plunge into that gloom; enormous cliffs of basalt or of granite, their sides perforated with rents; caverns, as at Staffa, lofty as churches, flanked through all their length by prismatic columns, through which the waves of the ocean dash with groans; and here and there, in contrast with that wild majesty, perhaps in an island, perhaps upon the shore of the main land, a sandy beach, a little plain covered with scanty prickling grass; a natural port, capable of sheltering a few frail boats; everywhere, in short, a strangely varied combination of land and sea, but where the sea carries the day, penetrates and dominates everything, as if to affirm her empire, and, as Tacitus has said, "*inseri velut in suo.*"

Such is the present aspect — such must have been, with the addition of the forests which have disappeared, the aspect of those shores when Columba sought them to continue and end his life there. It was from this point that he was to assail the Land of Woods,[64] that unconquerable Caledonia, where the Romans had been obliged to relinquish the idea of establishing themselves, where Christianity hitherto had appeared only to vanish, and which for long seemed to Europe almost outside the boundaries of the world. To Columba was to fall the honor of introducing civilization into the stony, sterile, and icy *Escosse la Sauvage*,[65] which the imagination of our fathers made the dwelling-place of hunger, and of the prince of demons. Sailing by these distant shores, who could refrain from evoking the holy memory and forgotten glory of the great missionary? It is from him that Scotland has derived that religious spirit which, led astray as it has been since the Reformation, and in spite of its own rigid narrowness, remains still so powerful, so popular, so fruitful, and

[64] In Gaelic, *Calyddon*, land of forests, according to Augustin Thierry; according to Camden this name is derived from *kaled*, which means hard and wild.

[65] See the expressions of Jean de Meung, Froissart, and others, collected by M. Francisque Michel, in his fine and learned work, *Les Ecossais en France et les Français en Ecosse*, printed by Gounouilhou, Bordeaux, 1862, p. 3–5. The words addressed by St. Louis when sick to his son are well known: "I pray thee to make thyself loved by the people of thy kingdom; for if thou rulest ill, I had rather that a Scot came from Scotland and reigned in thy place." — JOINVILLE, p. 4.

so free.[66] Half veiled by the misty distance, Columba stands first among those original and touching historical figures to whom Scotland owes the great place she has occupied in the memory and imagination of modern nations, from the noble chivalry of the feudal and Catholic kingdom of the Bruces and Douglases, down to the unparalleled misfortunes of Mary Stuart and Charles Edward, and all the poetic and romantic recollections which the pure and upright genius of Walter Scott has endowed with European fame.

A voluntary exile, at the age of forty-two, from his native island, Columba embarked with his twelve companions[67] in one of those great barks of osier covered with hide which the Celtic nations employed for their navigation. He landed upon a desert island situated on the north of the opening of that series of gulfs and lakes which, extending from the south-west to the north-east, cuts the Caledonian peninsula in two, and which at that period separated the still heathen Picts from the district occupied by the Irish Scots, who were partially Christianized. This isle, which he has made immortal, took from him the name of I-Colm-Kill (the island of Columb-Kill), but is better known under that of Iona.[68] A legend, suggested by one of our saint's most marked characteristics, asserts that he first landed upon another islet called Oronsay,[68a] but that, having climbed a hill near the shore immediately on landing, he found that he could still see Ireland, his beloved country. To see far off that dear soil which he had left forever, was too hard a trial. He came down from the hill, and immediately took to his boat to seek, farther off, a shore from which he could not see his native land. When he had reached Iona he climbed the highest point in the island, and, gazing into the distance,

Columba lands at Iona.

[66] This is evidenced by the wonderful outburst of the *Free Kirk*, produced in 1843 by a local dispute upon the lay patronage of parishes, and which has established in almost every village of Scotland a new community and a new church, sustained by voluntary contributions in face of the official Church, which continues to hold a portion of the ecclesiastical possessions of Catholic times.

[67] See their names in Appendix A of Reeves. Let us at present remark two among them whom we shall meet again further on — Baithen, Columba's secretary, and his successor as abbot of Iona, and Diormit or Dermott, his minister (*ministrator*), the monk specially attached to his person, after the young Mochonna, of whom mention has already been made.

[68] The primitive name was *Hy*, *Hii*, or *I* — that is to say, the isle, *the* isle *par excellence*. Iona, according to various authors, means the blessed isle. This last word is written Iova by Adamnan and the ancient authors; but usage has turned it into Iona.

[68a] To the south of Colonsay, not far from the large island of Islay.

found no longer any trace of Ireland upon the horizon. He decided, accordingly, to remain upon this unknown rock. One of those heaps of stones, which are called *cairns* in the Celtic dialect, still marks the spot where Columba made this desiredly unfruitful examination, and has long borne the name of the Cairn of Farewell.[69]

Description of the isle of Iona.

Nothing could be more sullen and sad than the aspect of this celebrated isle, where not a single tree has been able to resist either the blighting wind or the destroying hand of man. Only three miles in length by two in breadth, flat and low, bordered by gray rocks which scarcely rise above the level of the sea, and overshadowed by the high and sombre peaks of the great island of Mull,[70] it has not even the wild beauty which is conferred upon the neighboring isles and shores by their basalt cliffs, which are often of prodigious height — or which belongs to the hills, often green and rounded at the summit, whose perpendicular sides are beaten incessantly by those Atlantic waves, which bury themselves in resounding caverns hollowed by the everlasting labors of that tumultuous sea. Upon the narrow surface of the island white stretches of sand alternate with scanty pastures, a few poor crops, and the turf-moors where the inhabitants find their fuel. Poor as the culture is, it seems everywhere resisted and disputed by the gneiss rocks, which continually crop out, and in some places form an almost inextricable labyrinth. The only attraction possessed by this sombre dwelling-place is the view of the sea, and of the mountains of Mull and the other islands, to the number of twenty or thirty, which may be distinguished from the top of the northern hill of Iona.[71] Among these is Staffa, celebrated for the grotto of Fingal, which has been known only for about a century, and which, in the time of Columba, moaned and murmured in its solitary and unknown

[69] *Carn cul ri Erin* — literally, *the back turned on Ireland.* Many historians are of opinion that the isle had been formerly inhabited by Druids, whose burying-place is still shown — *Clachnan Druineach.* O'Donnell says that they resisted the landing of the Irish emigrants; but Dr. Reeves contests this idea with very strong arguments. His edition of Adamnan contains a detailed map of Iona, with all the names of places in Celtic.

[70] "Where a turret's airy head
O'erlooked, dark Mull! thy mighty Sound,
Where thwarting tides, with mingled roar,
Part thy swarth hills from Morven's shore."
WALTER SCOTT, *Lord of the Isles*, i. 7.

[71] This hill, the highest in the island, is only 320 feet above the level of the sea.

majesty, in the midst of that Hebridean archipelago which is at present haunted by so many curious admirers of the Highland shores and ruined feudal castles, which the great bard of our century has enshrined in the glory of his verse.[72]

The bay where Columba landed is still called the *bay of the osier bark, Port' a Churraich;* and a long mound is pointed out to strangers as representing the exact size of his boat, which was sixty feet long. The emigrant did not remain in this bay, which is situated in the middle of the isle; he went higher up, and, to find a little shelter from the great sea winds, chose for his habitation the eastern shore, opposite the large island of Mull, which is separated from Iona only by a narrow channel of a mile in breadth, and whose highest mountains,[73] situated more to the east, approach and almost identify themselves with the mountain-tops of Morven, which are continually veiled with clouds. It was there that the emigrants built their huts of branches, for the island was not then, as now, destitute of wood.[74] When Columba had made up his mind to construct for himself and his people a settled establishment, the buildings of the new-born monastery were of the greatest simplicity. As in all Celtic constructions, walls of withes or branches, supported upon long wooden props, formed the principal element in their architecture. Climbing plants, especially ivy, interlacing itself in the interstices of the branches, at once ornamented and consolidated the modest shelter of the missionaries.[75] The Irish built scarcely any churches of stone, and retained, up to the twelfth century, as St. Bernard testifies, the habit of building their churches of wood. But it was not for some years after their first establishment that the monks of Iona permitted themselves the luxury of a wooden church; and when they did so, great

First establishment of the new monastery.

[72] In the *Lord of the Isles* Scott has given a poetic itinerary of all the archipelago so frequented by St. Columba. The powerful Celtic dynasties who, under the title of Lords of the Isles, ruled the Hebrides during the middle ages, were of the clan Macdonald: their sway extended over the district of Morven, which is the part of the main land nearest to Iona.

[73] The highest mountain in Mull is 3178 feet in height.

[74] It is said that Columba retired *in saltibus* to pray. At present the inhabitants of Iona have no other wood than that which is thrown by the sea upon the beach. See in the Appendix No. 1 some notes upon the present condition of Iona.

[75] "Virgarum fasciculos ad hospitium construendum. . . . Binales sudes." — ADAMNAN, ii. 3–7. Dr. Reeves has put together several ancient authorities upon the materials of chapels and churches in Wales and Brittany. "Virgis torquatis muros perficientes . . . musco silvestri solum et hederæ nexibus adornato. . . . Virgas et fenum ad materiam cellæ construendæ . . ."

oaks, such as the sterile and wind-beaten soil of their islet could not produce, had to be brought for its construction from the neighboring shore.[76]

Thus the monastic capital of Scotland, and the centre of Christian civilization in the north of Great Britain, came into being thirteen centuries ago. Some ruins of a much later date than the days of Columba, though still very ancient, mingled among a few cottages scattered on the shore, still point out the site.

"We were now treading," said, in the eighteenth century, the celebrated Johnson, who was the first to recall the attention of the British public to this profaned sanctuary — "we were now treading that illustrious island which was once the luminary of the Caledonian regions, whence savage clans and roving barbarians derived the benefits of knowledge and the blessings of religion. To abstract the mind from all local emotion would be impossible, if it were endeavored, and would be foolish, if it were possible. Whatever withdraws us from the power of our senses, whatever makes the past, the distant, or the future predominate over the present, advances us in the dignity of thinking beings. Far from me, and from my friends, be such frigid philosophy as may conduct us indifferent and unmoved over any ground which has been dignified by wisdom, bravery, or virtue. That man is little to be envied whose patriotism would not gain force upon the plain of Marathon, or whose piety would not grow warmer among the ruins of Iona!"[77]

Columba, who had been initiated into classic recollections, like all the monks of his time, had no doubt heard of Marathon; but certainly it could never have occurred to him that a day would come in which a descendant of the race he came to save should place his humble shelter in the same rank with the most glorious battle-field of Hellenic history.

Columba passionately regrets his country.

Far from having any prevision of the glory of Iona, his soul was still swayed by a sentiment which never abandoned him — regret for his lost country. All his life he retained for Ireland the passionate tenderness of an exile, a love which displayed itself in the songs which have been preserved to us, and which date perhaps from the first moments of his exile. It is possible that their authenticity is not altogether beyond dispute; and that,

[76] "Cum roboreæ . . . duodecim currucis congregatis, materiæ ad nostrum renovandum traherentur monasterium."

[77] Boswell's *Tour to the Hebrides.*

like the poetic lamentations given forth by Fortunatus in the name of St. Radegund,[78] they were composed by his disciples and contemporaries. But they have been too long repeated as his, and depict too well what must have passed in his heart, to permit us to neglect them. "Death in faultless Ireland is better than life without end in Albyn." After this cry of despair follow strains more plaintive and submissive. In one of his elegies,[79] he laments that he can no longer sail on the lakes and bays of his native island, nor hear the song of the swans, with his friend Comgall. He laments above all to have been driven from Erin by his own fault, and because of the blood shed in his battles. He envies his friend Cormac, who can go back to his dear monastery at Durrow, and hear the wind sigh among the oaks, and the song of the blackbird and cuckoo. As for Columba, all is dear to him in Ireland *except the princes who reign there.* This last particular shows the persistence of his political rancor. No trace of this feeling, however, remains in a still more characteristic poem,[80] which must have been confided to some traveller as a message from the exile of Iona to his country. In this he celebrates, as always, the delight of voyaging round the coast of Ireland, and the beauty of its cliffs and beach. But, above all, he mourns over his exile: —

"What joy to fly upon the white-crested sea, and to watch the waves break upon the Irish shore! what joy to row the little bark, and land among the whitening foam upon the Irish shore! Ah! how my boat would fly if its prow were turned to my Irish oak-grove! But the noble sea now carries me only to Albyn,[81] the land of ravens. My foot is in my little boat, but my sad heart ever bleeds. There is a gray eye which ever turns to Erin; but never in this life shall it see Erin, nor her sons, nor her daughters.[82] From the high prow

[78] See *ante*, p. 488.

[79] Published by REEVES, Appendix, p. 275.

[80] REEVES, p. 285–87. The original text of this poem is in very ancient Irish.

[81] *Alba*, *Albania*, is the name generally applied by Irish writers to that part of Great Britain which afterwards became Scotland. It is evidently the same as *Albion*, and later took the form of *Albany*, which has been always employed in the heraldic language of the two kingdoms as a title borne by the princes of the royal house. Everybody knows that the widow of Charles Edward, when married a second time to Alfieri, called herself Countess of Albany.

[82] This seems to refer to a vow which he is said to have made at the moment of his departure, to see neither man nor woman of his country — a vow which he evaded on his journey to the national assembly of Drum-

I look over the sea, and great tears are in my gray eye when I turn to Erin — to Erin, where the song of the birds are so sweet, and where the clerks sing like the birds; where the young are so gentle, and the old so wise; where the great men are so noble to look at, and the women so fair to wed. Young traveller, carry my sorrows with thee, carry them to Comgall of eternal life. Noble youth, take my prayer with thee, and my blessing; one part for Ireland — seven times may she be blessed! and the other for Albyn. Carry my blessing across the sea — carry it to the west. My heart is broken in my breast: if death comes to me suddenly, it will be because of the great love I bear to the Gael.[83]

His regret lasts all his life.

But it was not only in these elegies, repeated and perhaps retouched by Irish bards and monks, but at each instant of his life, in season and out of season, that this love and passionate longing for his native country burst forth in words and in musings; the narratives of his most trustworthy biographers are full of it. The most severe penance which he could imagine for the guiltiest sinners who came to confess to him, was to impose upon them the same fate which he had voluntarily inflicted upon himself — never to set foot again upon Irish soil.[84] But when, instead of forbidding to sinners all access to that beloved isle, he had to smother his envy of those who had the right and happiness to go there at their pleasure, he dared scarcely trust himself to name its name; and when speaking to his guests, or to the

Ceitt by covering his eyes with a bandage, over which he drew his cowl. — REEVES.

[83] The *Gaoidhil* or *Gaëdhil*. This was the name which the Irish gave themselves before the Roman missionaries had given them the name of *Scoti*. It is generally argued that the best known and most authentic, though in our opinion the least interesting, of Columba's Latin poems, dates from the first years of his sojourn at Iona. It is called by the name of *Altus*, from the first word of the first verse —

"Altus prosator vertustus dierum et ingenitus."

It is composed of twenty-four stanzas. The first word of each verse begins with a different letter, in the order of the letters of the alphabet. Each verse comments in very imaginative language on a text of Scripture, indicated in the argument, on such subjects as the Creation, the Fall, Hell, the Last Judgment, &c. The argument (in Irish) of this poem expressly states that it was suggested to Columba by his desire to obtain the pardon of God for his three battles. The text has been published by Colgan. Dr. Todd announces a more complete edition. Colgan states formally that the poem was composed at Iona. He adds that, according to some, the saint occupied some years in meditation on the subject before he wrote it; and that, according to others, he sent it to Pope Gregory the Great, who received it with the most sympathetic respect.

[84] See further on an incident related by Adamnan, i. 22.

monks who were to return to Ireland, he could only say to them, "You will return to the country that you love."[85]

His solicitude for the stork which came from Ireland.

This melancholy patriotism never faded out of his heart, and was evidenced much later in his life by an incident which shows an obstinate regret for his lost Ireland, along with a tender and careful solicitude for all the creatures of God. One morning he called one of the monks and said to him, "Go and seat thyself by the sea, upon the western bank of the island; there thou wilt see arrive from the north of Ireland and fall at thy feet a poor travelling stork, long beaten by the winds and exhausted by fatigue. Take her up with pity, feed her and watch her for three days; after three days' rest, when she is refreshed and strengthened, she will no longer wish to prolong her exile among us — she will fly to sweet Ireland, her dear country where she was born. I bid thee care for her thus, because she comes from the land where I, too, was born." Everything happened as he had said and ordered. The evening of the day on which the monk had received the poor traveller, as he returned to the monastery, Columba, asking him no questions, said to him, "God bless thee, my dear child, thou hast cared for the exile; in three days thou shalt see her return to her country." And, in fact, at the time mentioned the stork rose from the ground in her host's presence, and, after having sought her way for a moment in the air, directed her flight across the sea, straight upon Ireland.[86] The sailors of the Hebrides all know and tell this tale; and I love to think that among all my readers there is not one who would not fain have repeated or deserved Columba's blessing.

[85] "In tua quam amas patria . . . per multos eris annos." — Adamn., i. 17.

[86] "Nam de aquilonali Hiberniæ regione quædam hospita grus, valde fessa et fatigata, superveniet, coram te in litore cadens recumbet; quam misericorditer sublevare curabis, ad propinquam deportabis domum; et post expleto recreata triduo, nolens ultra apud nos peregrinari, ad priorem Scotiæ dulcem, unde orta, remeabit regionem . . . quam ideo tibi sic diligenter commendo, quia de nostræ paternitatis regione est oriunda. . . . Benedicat te Deus, mi fili, quia peregrinæ bene ministrasti hospitæ . . . quæ post ternos soles ad patriam repedabit . . . paulisperque in aere viam speculata . . . recti volatus cursu ad Hiberniam se repedavit tranquillo." — Adamn., i. 48.

CHAPTER III.

THE APOSTOLATE OF COLUMBA AMONG THE SCOTS AND PICTS.

Moral transformation of Columba. — His progress in spiritual life. — His humility. — His charity. — His preaching by tears. — The hut which formed his abbatial palace at Iona. — His prayers; his work of transcription. — His crowd of visitors. — His severity in the examination of monastic vocations. — Aïdus the Black, the murderer of Columba's enemy King Diarmid, rejected by the community. — Penance of Libran of the Rushes. — Columba encourages the despairing and unmasks the hypocrites.—Monastic propaganda of Iona; Columba's fifty-three foundations in Scotland. — His relations with the people of Caledonia: First with the colony of Dalriadians from Ireland, whose king was his relative; he enlightens and confirms their imperfect Christianity. — Ambushes laid for his chastity. — His connection with the Picts, who occupied the north of Britain. — The *dorsum Britanniæ*. — Columba their first missionary. — The fortress gates of their king Brudus open before him. — He struggles with the Druids in their last refuge. — He preaches by an interpreter. — His respect for natural virtue. — Baptism of two old Pictish chiefs. — Columba's humanity: he redeems an Irish captive. — Frequent journeys among the Picts, whose conversion he accomplishes before he dies. — His fellow-workers, Malruve and Drostan; the Monastery of Tears.

However bitter the sadness might be with which exile filled the heart of Columba, it did not for a moment turn him from his work of expiation. As soon as he had installed himself with his companions in that desert isle, from whence the Christian faith and monastic life were about to radiate over the north of Great Britain, a gradual and almost complete transformation became apparent in him. Without giving up the lovable peculiarities of his character and race, he gradually became a model for penitents, and at the same time for confessors and preachers. Without ceasing to maintain an authority which was to increase with years, and which does not seem ever to have been disputed, over the monasteries which he had founded in Ireland, he applied himself at once to establish, on the double basis of manual and intellectual labor, the new insular community which was to be the centre of his future activity. Then he proceeded to unite himself in friendly relations with the inhabitants of the neighboring districts,

Change in Columba: his progress in spiritual life.

whom it was needful to evangelize or confirm in the faith, before thinking of carrying the light of the Gospel further off to the north. He prepared himself for this grand mission by miracles of fervor and austerity, as well as humble charity, to the great profit in the first place of his own monks, and afterwards of the many visitors who came, whether from Ireland or from the Caledonian shores, to seek at his side the healing or the consolation of penitence.

His humility and charity.

This man, whom we have seen so passionate, so irritable, so warlike and vindictive, became little by little the most gentle, the humblest, the most tender of friends and fathers. It was he, the great head of the Caledonian Church, who, kneeling before the strangers who came to Iona, or before the monks returning from their work, took off their shoes, washed their feet, and after having washed them respectfully kissed them. But charity was still stronger than humility in that transfigured soul. No necessity, spiritual or temporal, found him indifferent. He devoted himself to the solace of all infirmities, all misery, and pain, weeping often over those who did not weep for themselves.[87] These tears became the most eloquent part of his preaching, the means which he employed most willingly to subdue inveterate sinners, to arrest the criminal on the brink of the abyss, to appease and soften and change those wild and savage but simple and straightforward souls, whom God had given him to subdue.

In the midst of the new community Columba inhabited, instead of a cell, a sort of hut built of planks, and placed upon the most elevated spot within the monastic enclosure. Up to the age of seventy-six he slept there upon the hard floor, with no pillow but a stone. This hut was at once his study and his oratory. It was there that he gave himself up to those prolonged prayers which excited the admiration and almost the alarm of his disciples. It was there that he returned after sharing the out-door labor of his monks,[88] like the least among them, to consecrate the rest of his time to the study of Holy Scripture and the transcription of the sacred text. The work of transcription remained until his

Prayer and work.

[87] "Cum laborantibus laborabat, cum infirmantibus infirmabatur, cum flentibus semper, et cum non flentibus sæpe flebat. . . . Quando vel pervicaces in nefarium aliquod facinus ruentes cohibere non poterat . . . lacrymas ubertim emittebat." — O'Donnell, lib. iii. c. 40.

[88] "Nullum horæ momentulum transibat, quo non pie occupatum reperiri potuerit. . . . In manuali laboratione cum aliis fratribus non secus ac eorum minimus, collaborabat." — O'Donnell, *Vita quinta*, iii. 37, 39.

last day the occupation of his old age, as it had been the passion of his youth; it had such an attraction for him, and seemed to him so essential to a knowledge of the truth, that, as we have already said, three hundred copies of the Holy Gospels, copied by his own hand, have been attributed to him.

His crowd of visitors.

It was in the same hut that he received with unwearied patience the numerous and sometimes importunate visitors who soon flowed to him, and of whom sometimes he complained gently — as of that indiscreet stranger, who, desirous of embracing him, awkwardly overturned his ink upon the border of his robe.[89] These importunate guests did not come out of simple curiosity; they were most commonly penitent or fervid Christians, who, informed by the fishermen and inhabitants of the neighboring isles of the establishment of the Irish monk, who was already famous in his own country, and attracted by the growing renown of his virtues, came from Ireland, from the north and south of Britain, and even from the midst of the still heathen Saxons, to save their souls and gain heaven under the direction of a man of God.[90]

His scrupulous severity in the examination of monastic vocations.

Far from making efforts to attract or lightly admitting these neophytes, nothing in his life is more clearly established than the scrupulous severity with which he examined into all vocations, and into the admission of penitents. He feared nothing so much as that the monastic frock might serve as a shelter for criminals who sought in the cloister not only a place of penitence and expiation, but a shelter from human justice. On occasion he even blamed the too great facility of his friends and disciples. One of the latter, Finchan, had founded upon Eigg,[91] another Hebridean island, a community resembling that of Iona, and possibly dependent upon it: he had there admitted to clerical orders, and even to the priesthood, a prince of the clan of Picts established in Ireland, Aëdh or Aïdus, called the Black, a violent and bloodthirsty man, who had

[89] "Tuguriolum hospitiolum, in eminentiore loco fabricatum, in quo vir beatus scribebat. . . . Hospes molestus supervenit, sanctumque osculandum appetens, ora vestimenti inclinatum effudit atramenti corniculum." — ADAMNAN, i. 25.

[90] Adamnan has among the list of the first companions of the holy abbot the names of two Saxons, one of whom was a baker, and also that of a Briton, who died first of all the Iona monks. This was that Odhran or Orain who has left his name to the burying-ground, which is still called *Reilig Orain*. "Bonis actibus intentans qui primus apud nos in hac insula mortuus est." — ADAMNAN, iii. 6.

[91] To the north of Iona, near the large island of Skye.

assassinated Diarmid, the king of Ireland. It was this king, as will be remembered, who pronounced the unjust sentence which drove Columba frantic, and was the occasion of all his faults and misfortunes. The abbot of Iona was not the less on this account indignant at the weakness of his friend. "The hand which Finchan has laid, in the face of all justice and ecclesiastical law, upon the head of this son of perdition," said Columba, "shall rot and fall off, and be buried before the body to which it is attached. As for the false priest, the assassin, he shall himself be assassinated." This double prophecy was accomplished.[92]

Let us lend an ear to the following dialogue which Columba held with one of those who sought shelter under his discipline. It will explain the moral and spiritual condition of that age better than many commentaries, and will, besides, show the wonderful influence which Columba, penitent and exiled in the depths of his distant island, exercised over all Ireland. It was one day announced to him that a stranger had just landed from Ireland, and Columba went to meet him in the house reserved for guests, to talk to him in private, and question him as to his dwelling-place, his family, and the cause of his journey. The stranger told him that he had undertaken this painful voyage in order, under the monastic habit and in exile, to expiate his sins. Columba, desirous of trying the reality of his penitence, drew a most repulsive picture of the hardship and difficult obligations of the new life. "I am ready," said the stranger, "to submit to the most cruel and humiliating conditions that thou canst command me." And after having made confession, he swore, still upon his knees, to accomplish all the requirements of penitence. "It is well," said the abbot; "now rise from thy knees, seat thyself, and listen; you must first do penance for seven years in the neighboring island of Tiree, after which I will see you again." "But," said the penitent, still agitated by remorse, "how can I expiate a perjury of which I have not yet spoken? Before I left my own country I killed a poor man. I was about to suffer the punishment of death for that crime, and I was already in irons,

Library of the Rushes.

[92] "Finchanus, Christi miles, Aïdum . . . regio genere ortum, Cruthinium gente, de Scotia ad Britanniam sub clericatus habitu secum adduxit. . . . Qui valde sanguinarius homo et multorum fuerat trucidator. . . . Darmitium totæ Scotiæ regnatorem Deo auctore ordinatum interfecerat. . . . Manus . . . contra fas et jus ecclesiasticum super caput filii perditionis, mox computrescet." — Adamnan, i. 36.

when one of my relations, who is very rich, delivered me by paying the composition demanded. I swore that I would serve him all the rest of my life; but after some days of service I abandoned him, and here I am, notwithstanding my oath." Upon this the saint added that he would only be admitted to the paschal communion after seven years of penitence. When these were completed, Columba, after having given him the communion with his own hand, sent him back to Ireland to his patron, carrying a sword with an ivory handle for his ransom. The patron, however, moved by the entreaties of his wife, gave the penitent his pardon without ransom. "Why should we accept the price sent to us by the holy Columba? We are not worthy of it. The request of such an intercessor should be granted freely. His blessing will do more for us than any ransom." And immediately he detached the girdle from his waist, which was the ordinary formula in Ireland for the manumission of captives or slaves. Columba had besides commanded his penitent to remain with his old father and mother until he had rendered to them the last services. This accomplished, his brothers let him go, saying, "Far be it from us to detain a man who has labored for seven years for the salvation of his soul with the holy Columba." He then returned to Iona, bringing with him the sword which was to have been his ransom. "Henceforward thou shalt be called Libran, for thou art free, and emancipated from all ties," said Columba; and he immediately admitted him to take the monastic vows. But when he was commanded to return to Tiree, to end his life at a distance from Columba, poor Libran, who up to this moment had been so docile, fell on his knees and wept bitterly. Columba, touched by his despair, comforted him, as best he could, without, however, altering his sentence. "Thou shalt live far from me, but thou shalt die in one of my monasteries, and thou shalt rise again with my monks, and have part with them in heaven," said the abbot. Such was the history of Libran, called Libran of the Rushes, because he had passed many years in gathering rushes — the years probably of his penitence.[93]

[93] "Libranus de *Arundineto* . . . plebeius nuper, sumpto clericatus habitu . . . ad delenda in peregrinatione peccamina longo fatigatum itinere. . . . Cui sanctus, ut de suæ pœnitudinis exploraret qualitate, dura et laboriosa ante oculos monasterialia proposuisset imperia. . . . Paratus sum ad omnia quæcumque mihi jubere volueris, quamlibet durissima, quamlibet indigna. . . . Surge et reside. . . . Quid agere oportet de quodam meo falso juramento? Nam in patria trucidavi homuncionem. . . . Machæram belluinis

He encourages the penitents, and unmasks the hypocrites.

This doctor, learned in penitence, became day by day more gifted in the great art of ruling souls; and, with a hand as prudent as vigorous, raised up on one side the wounded and troubled conscience — while, on the other, he unveiled the false monks and false penitents. To a certain monk, who, in despair at having yielded during a journey to the temptations of a woman, rushed from confessor to confessor without ever finding himself sufficiently repentant or sufficiently punished, he restored peace and confidence, by showing him that his despair was nothing but an infernal hallucination, and by inflicting upon him a penance hard enough to convince him of the remission of his sin.[94] To another sinner from Ireland, who, guilty of incest and fratricide, had insisted, whether Columba pleased or not, on taking refuge in Iona, he imposed perpetual exile from his native country, and twelve years of penance among the savages of Caledonia, predicting at the same time that the false penitent would perish in consequence of refusing this expiation.[95] Arriving one day in a little community formed by himself in one of the neighboring islets,[96] and intended to receive the penitents during their time of probation, he gave orders that certain delicacies should be added to their usual repast, and that even the penitents should be permitted to enjoy them. One of the latter, however, more scrupulous than needful, refused to accept the improved fare, even from the hand of the abbot. "Ah!" said Columba, "thou refusest the solace which is offered to thee by thy superior and myself. A day will come when thou shalt again be a robber as thou hast been, and shalt

ornatam dolatis dentibus. . . . Ut quid nobis hoc accipere quod sanctus pretium misit Columba? Hoc non sumus digni . . . liberetur ei pius hic gratis ministrator. . . . Continuo gratis liberavit servum . . . cingulum ex more captivi de lumbis resolvens. . . . Ut tanto tempore patri debitam, sed neglectam redintegres pietatem. . . . Nullo modo nos oportet fratrem in patria retentare qui per septem annos apud S. Columbam in Britannia salutem exercuit animæ. . . . Tu Libranus vocaberis quod sis liber. . . . Qui ideo Arundineti est vocitatus, quia in arundineto multis annis arundines colligendo laboraverat." His death occurred long after that of Columba, at Durrow, one of the first of the great abbot's foundations in Ireland. — ADAMNAN, ii. 39.

[94] "Magna est, o frater, hallucinatio tua. Ego quindecim tibi annos in pane et aqua jejunandos pro pœnitentia injungo, quo tibi vel ipsa pœnitentiæ gravitas persuadeat peccatum tuum esse remissum." — O'DONNELL, vol. i. c. 24.

[95] "Si duodecim annis inter Brittones cum fletu et lachrymis pœnitentiam egeris, nec ad Scotiam usque ad mortem reversus fueris, forsan Deus peccato ignoscat tuo." — ADAMNAN, i. 22.

[96] Himba, the modern name of which is unknown.

steal, and eat the venison in the forests wherever thou goest." And this prophecy too was fulfilled.[97]

Notwithstanding these precautions, and his apparent severity, the number of neophytes who sought the privilege of living under the rule of Columba increased more and more. Every day, and every minute of the day, the abbot and his companions, in the retirement of their cells, or at their outdoor labors, heard great cries addressed to them from the other side of the narrow strait which separates Iona from the neighboring island of Mull. These shouts were the understood signal by which those who sought admission to Iona gave notice of their presence, that the boat of the monastery might be sent to carry them over.[98] Among the crowds who crossed in that boat some sought only material help, alms, or medicines; but the greater part sought permission to do penance, and to pass a shorter or longer time in the new monastery, where Columba put their vocation to so many trials. Once only was he known to have at the very moment of their arrival imposed, so to speak, the monastic vows, upon two pilgrims, whose virtues and approaching death had been by a supernatural instinct revealed to him.[99]

Monastic propaganda of Iona. Foundations of Columba in Scotland.

The narrow enclosure of Iona was soon too small for the increasing crowd, and from this little monastic colony issued in succession a swarm of similar colonies, which went forth to plant new communities, daughters of Iona, in the neighboring isles, and on the main land of Caledonia, all of which were under the authority of Columba. Ancient traditions attribute to him the foundation of three hundred monasteries or churches, as many in Caledonia as in Hibernia, a hundred of which were in the islands or upon the sea-shore of the two countries. Modern learning has discovered and registered the existence of ninety churches, whose origin goes back to Columba, and to all or almost all of which, according to the custom of the

[97] "Ut etiam pœnitentibus aliqua præcipit consolatio indulgeretur. . . . Erit tempus quo cum furacibus furtive carnem in sylva manducabis." — Adamnan, i. 21.

[98] "Alia die, ultra fretum Ionæ insulæ clamatum est, quem sanctus, sedens in tuguriolo tabulis suffulto audiens, clamorem. . . . Mane eadem quarta feria, alius ultra fretum clamitabat proselytus. . . . Quadam die, quemdam ultra fretum audiens clamitantem, sanctus. . . . Valde miserandus est ille clamitans homo, qui aliqua ad carnalia medicamenta petiturus pertinentia, ad nos venit. . . . Ite, ait, celeriter peregrinosque de longinqua venientes regione, ad nos ocius adducite." — Adamnan, i. 25, 26, 27, 32, 43.

[99] "Apud me, ut dicitis, anni unius spatio peregrinari non poteritis, nisi prius monachicum promiseretis votum." — Adamnan, i. 32.

time, monastic communities must have been attached.[100] Traces of fifty-three of these churches remain still in modern Scotland, unequally divided among the districts inhabited by the two races which then shared Caledonia between them.[101] Thirty-two are in the western isles, and the country occupied by the Irish-Scots, and the twenty-one others mark the principal stations of the great missionary in the land of the Picts. The most enlightened judges among the Scotch Protestants agree in attributing to the teachings of Columba — to his foundations and his disciples — all the primitive churches, and the very ancient parochial division of Scotland.[102]

Connection of Columba with the population of Caledonia.

But it is time to tell what the population was whose confidence Columba had thus gained, and from which the communities of his monastic family were recruited. The portion of Great Britain which received the name of Caledonia did not include the whole of modern Scotland; it embraced only the districts to the north of the isthmus which separates the Clyde from the Forth, or Glasgow from Edinburgh. All this region to the north and to the east was in the hands of those terrible Picts whom the Romans had been unable to conquer, and who were the terror of the Britons. But to the west and south-west, on the side where Columba landed, he found a colony of his own country and race — that is to say, the Scots of Ireland, who were destined to become the sole masters of Caledonia, and to bestow

The Irish colony of Dalriadians in Scotland.

[100] Jocelyn, in his *Vie de St. Patrice*, c. 89, attributes a hundred to him; and this number is increased to three hundred by O'Donnell, book iii. c. 32. Colgan has named sixty-six of which Columba must have been, directly or indirectly, the founder (six more than St. Bernard). Fifty-eight of these foundations were in Ireland. But Colgan regards as founded by him almost all the churches built in Scotland before his death in 597. Bede, iii. 4, seems to give Durrow and Iona as the only direct foundations of Columba, and the others as proceeding from these two: "Ex utroque monasterio plurima exinde monasteria per discipulos et in Britannia et in Scotia propagata sunt." But he evidently is in the wrong, so far at least as Derry is concerned. All the communities erected under the supremacy of the abbot of Iona bore the name of *Familia Columba-Cille*.

[101] The enumeration of Dr. Reeves (Appendix H) might be much augmented, according to what he himself says. The thirty-two churches or monasteries *inter Scottos* comprehended those of the Hebridean isles, such as Skye, Mull, Oronsay, even down to the distant islet of St. Kilda, one of the three churches of which bears his name. In those *inter Pictos* is included Incheolm, an island near Edinburgh. These fifty-three, and the thirty-seven already brought to light by Dr. Reeves, make very nearly the number of one hundred given by the author of the *Vie de St. Patrice*.

[102] See specially Cosmo Innes, the modest and learned author of the excellent works entitled *Scotland in the Middle Ages*, 1860, and *Sketches of Early Scottish History*, 1861.

upon it the name of Scotland.[103] More than half a century before, following in the train of many similar invasions or emigrations, a colony of Irish, or, according to the name then in use, of Scots, belonging to the tribe of Dalriadians,[104] had crossed the sea which separates the north-east coast of Ireland from the north-west of Great Britain, and had established itself — between the Picts of the north and the Britons of the south — in the islands and upon the western coast of Caledonia, north of the mouth of the Clyde, and in the district which has since taken the name of Argyll. The chiefs or kings of this Dalriadian colony, who were destined to become the parent stock of those famous and unfortunate Stuarts who once reigned over both Scotland and England, had at that time strengthened their growing power by the aid of the Niall princes who reigned in the north of Ireland, and to whose family Columba belonged. Columba had also a very close tie of kindred with the Dalriadians themselves, his paternal grandmother having been the daughter of Lorn, the first, or one of the first kings of the colony.[105]

500-503.

Columba is related to their chiefs.

He was thus a relation of King Connal, the sixth successor of Lorn, who, at the moment of Columba's arrival, had been for three years the chief of the Scotic emigrants in Caledonia. Iona, where the abbot established himself, was at the northern extremity of the then

[103] We again repeat what it required all the learning of Ussher, White, Colgan, and Ward to prove — namely, that the holy and learned Scotia of the ancients was Ireland. The name of Scotia became the exclusive possession of the Scotch — that is to say, of the Irish colonists in Caledonia — only in the eleventh or twelfth century, in the time of Giraldus Cambrensis, at the moment when the power of the true Scots declined in Scotland under the influence of the Anglo-Norman conquest. The Bollandists have applied the very appropriate name of *Scotia Nova* or *Hiberno-Scotia* to the Scotic colonies in Scotland. — *Vita S. Cadroë*, ap. Act. SS. Martii, vol. i. p. 473, and *Vita S. Domnani*, Act. SS. Aprilis, vol. ii. 487. The modern English also use a title historically exact in describing as North Britain the kingdom of Scotland since its union with England. M. Varin, in the papers which we have already quoted, has proved the obscurity of the political and religious origin of Caledonia. He remarks that, of the three primitive populations successively noted in that part of Great Britain, the only one which has retained its name is that which was the last to arrive upon the soil, which from it is still called Scotland. He is even disposed to believe that Ireland sometimes claimed for herself the credit of the civil and religious acts accomplished in her colony.

[104] These Dalriadians were themselves descended from Picts, who, under the name of *Cruithne* or *Cruithnii*, had long swayed a part of Ireland. — See Reeves, pp. 33, 67, and 94; O'Kelly, notes to the new edition of *Cambrensis Eversus*, of Lynch, vol. i. pp. 436, 463, 495. In Columba's time they still occupied the counties of Antrim and Down.

[105] See the genealogical table of Reeves, p. 8, note 4.

very limited domain of the Dalriadians, and might be regarded as a dependency of their new state, not less than of that of the Picts, who occupied all the rest of Caledonia. Columba immediately entered into alliance with this prince. He visited him in his residence on the main land, and obtained from him, in his double title of cousin and countryman, a gift of the uninhabited island where he had just established his community.[106]

He enlightens and completes their imperfect Christianity.

These Scots who had left Ireland after the conversion of the island by St. Patrick were probably Christians, like all the Irish, at least in name; but no certain trace of ecclesiastical organization or of monastic institutions is visible among them before Columba's arrival at Iona. The apostolate of Ninian and of Palladius does not seem to have produced a durable impression upon them any more than upon the southern Picts.[107] A new apostolical enterprise by Celtic monks was necessary to renew the work at which the Roman missionaries had labored a century before.[108] Columba and his disciples neglected no means of fortifying and spreading religion among their countrymen, who were emigrants like themselves. We see him in the narratives of Adamnan administering baptism and the other rites of religion to the people of Scotic race, through whose lands he passed, planting there the first foundations of monastic communities. Many narratives, more or less legendary, indicate that this people, even when Christian, had great need to be instructed, directed, and established in the good way; while at the same time the Dalriadians showed a certain suspicion and doubt of the new apostle of their race, which only yielded to the prolonged influence of his self-devotion and unquestionable virtue.

Columba was still in the flower of his age when he established himself at Iona; he was not more at the most than forty-two. All testimonies agree in celebrating his manly beauty, his remarkable height, his sweet and sonorous voice, the cordiality of his manner, the gracious dignity of his deportment and person.[109] These external advantages, added to

[106] Tighernach, *Annales;* Adamnan, 574, i. 7.

[107] This explains the name of *apostates* given by St. Patrick to the Scots and Picts of his time — "Socii Scotorum atque Pictorum apostatarum . . . pessimorum atque apostatarum Pictorum."

[108] The Irish Scots, newly converted, reconquered to Christianity the Scots of Caledonia. The Picts, forgetful of Ninian and of Rome, received the gospel the second time from Hibernia in the name of Britain. — Varin, 2d paper.

[109] "Erat aspectu angelicus. . . . Omnibus carus, hilarem semper faciem

the fame of his austerities and the inviolable purity of his life, made a singular and varied impression upon the pagans and the very imperfect Christians of Caledonia. The Dalriadian king put his virtue to the proof by presenting to him his daughter, who was remarkably beautiful, and clothed in the richest ornaments. He asked if the sight of a creature so beautiful and so adorned did not excite some inclination in him. "Without doubt," answered the missionary, "the inclination of the flesh and of nature; but understand well, lord king, that not for all the empire of the world, even could its honors and pleasures be secured to me to the end of time, would I yield to my natural weakness."[110] About the same time, a woman who lived not far from Iona spread for him a more dangerous and subtle snare. The celebrated and handsome exile having inspired her with a violent and guilty passion, she conceived the idea of seducing him, and succeeded in drawing him to her house. But as soon as he understood her design, he addressed to her an exhortation upon death and the last judgment, which he ended by blessing her, and making the sign of the cross. The temptress was thus delivered even from her own temptations. She continued to love him, but with a religious respect. It is added that she herself became a model of holiness.[111]

His chastity put to trial by the king and by a neighbor.

ostendens . . . cujus alta proceritas. . . ." — Adamn., *Præf.*, and i. 1. "Vir tantæ deditus austeritati . . . tamen exteriori forma et corporis habitu speciosus, genis rubicundus et vultu hilaris . . . semper apparebat et omnibus. . . . Colloquio affabilem, benignum, jucundum et interior is lætitiæa Spiritu Sancto infusæ indicia, hilari vultu prodentem se semper exhibebat." — O'Donnell, *Vita quinta*, l. iii. c. 43.

[110] "Puellam valde speciosam purpura, auro, gemmis, aliisque id generis regii amictus ornamentis . . . exornatam . . . coram S. Columba sistit. . . . Percontatus an filiæ et pulchritudo et ornatus placeant. Respondit sanctus omnino placere. Iterum compellat an non etiam ejus formæ ducatur complacentia. . . . Respondit se natura ad talem complacentiam propensum esse. Ecce, inquit rex . . . hiccine est qui nullo carnali desiderio inquinatus deprædicatur? Tunc S. Columba . . . O rex, sciat altitudo tua, et si insita carnis propensio meam naturam ad prohibitas inclinet complacentias, pro universi tamen imperio, honoribus et voluptatibus, si usque mundi finem ad concederetur, me nolle talibus complacenter indulgere." — O'Donnell, lib. ii. c. 39. The king who figures in this anecdote does not appear to have been Aïdan, as O'Donnell would assert. Aïdan began to reign over the Scotic colony only in 574, eleven years after the arrival of Columba at Iona. It must have been his predecessor Connell.

[111] "Ipsum in Ionam jam commorantem, multisque . . . percelebrem. . . . Quamdam de vicino feminam S. viri concupiscentia inflammat (antiquus serpens). . . . Deinde eam aucto crucis signo benedicens, ab omni mox tentatione liberam dimisit. . . . Casto deinceps amore, magnaque reverentia coluit, ipsa tandem sanctitate celebris." — O'Donnell, lib. ii. c. 25.

But it was towards another race, very different from his Scotic countrymen and much less accessible, that Columba felt himself drawn as much by the penance imposed upon him as by the necessities of the Church and of Christendom. While the Irish Scots occupied the islands and part of the western coast of Caledonia, all the north and east — that is to say, by far the greater part of the country — was inhabited by the Picts, who were still heathens. Originally from Sarmatia, according to Tacitus — according to Bede, descendants of the Scythians — these primitive inhabitants of Great Britain, who had remained untouched by Roman or Christian influences, owed their name to their custom of fighting naked, and of painting their bodies in various colors, which had been the wont of all the ancient Britons at the time of Cæsar's invasion. We have already seen that the holy bishop Ninian more than a century before had preached the Christian faith to the Southern Picts[112] — that is to say, to those who lived on the banks of the Forth or scattered among the Britons in the districts south of that river. But while even the traces of Ninian's apostolic work seemed at that moment effaced, although destined afterwards to reappear, the great majority of the Picts — those who inhabited the vast tracts to the north of the Grampians, into which no missionary before Columba had ever dared to penetrate[113] — had always continued heathen. The thirty-four years of life which Columba had still before him were chiefly spent in missions, undertaken for the purpose of carrying the faith to the hilly straths, and into the deep glens and numerous islands of northern Caledonia. There dwelt a race, warlike, grasping, and bold, as inaccessible to softness as to fear, only half clothed notwithstanding the severity of the climate, and obstinately attached to their customs, belief, and chiefs. The missionary had to preach, to convert, and even at need to brave those formidable tribes, in whom Tacitus recognized the farthest off of the earth's inhabitants, and the last champions of freedom — "*terrarum ac libertatis extremos;*" those barbarians who, having gloriously resisted Agricola, drove the frightened Romans from Britain, and devastated and desolated the entire island up to the arrival of the Saxons; and

Columba becomes the missionary of the Northern Picts.

555-575.

The Picts.

[112] Book viii. chap. 1.

[113] "Primus doctor fidei Christianæ transmontanis Pictis ad Aquilonem." — Bede, v. 9. "Gentem illam verbo et exemplo ad fidem Christi convertit." — *Ibid.*, iii. 4.

whose descendants, after filling the history of Scotland with their feats of arms, have given, under the name of *Highlanders*, to the fallen Stuarts their most dauntless defenders, and to modern England her most glorious soldiers.

Columba crossed again and again that central mountain range in which rise those waters which flow, some north and west to fall into the Atlantic Ocean, and some to the south to swell the North Sea — a range which the biographer of the saint calls the backbone of Britain (*dorsum Britanniæ*), and which separates the counties of Inverness and Argyll, as now existing, from the county of Perth, and includes the districts so well known to travellers under the names of Breadalbane, Athol, and the Grampians. This was the recognized boundary between the Scots and Picts,[114] and it was here that the ancestors of the latter, the heroic soldiers of Galgacus, had held their ground against the father-in-law of Tacitus, who even when victorious did not venture to cross that barrier.[115] Often, too, Columba followed the course of that long valley of waters which, to the north of these mountains, traverses Scotland diagonally from the south-west, near Iona, to the north-east beyond Inverness. This valley is formed by a series of long gulfs and of inland lakes which modern industry has linked together, making it possible for boats to pass from one sea to the other without making the long round by the Orcadian Isles. Thirteen centuries ago religion alone could undertake the conquest of those wild and picturesque regions, which a scanty but fierce and suspicious population disputed with the fir-forests and vast tracts of fern and heather, which are still to be encountered there.

The first glance thrown by history upon this watery highway discovers there the preaching and miracles of Columba. He was the first to traverse in his little skiff Loch Ness and the river which issues from it; he penetrated thus, after a long and painful journey, to the principal fortress of the Pictish king, the site of which is still shown upon a rock north

[114] Such at least is the assertion of Adamnan, ii. 46. But his contemporary Bede and all modern authors give another frontier. According to the latter, the Scots extended through all the west of the Caledonian peninsula, and the Southern Picts occupied, to the south of the Grampians, the counties of Perth, Forfar, and Fife. See the map of Scotland in the eleventh century, in the *Sketches of Early Scotch History*, by Cosmo Innes. "Prædicaturus verbum Dei provinciis septentrionalium Pictorum, hoc est, eis quæ arduis atque horrentibus montium jugis ab australibus eorum sunt regionibus sequestratæ." — Bede, iii. 4.

[115] Walter Scott, *History of Scotland*, c. 1.

of the town of Inverness. This powerful and redoubtable monarch, whose name was Bruidh or Brude, son of Malcolm, gave at first a very inhospitable reception to the Irish missionary. The companions of the saint relate that, priding himself upon the royal magnificence of his fortress, he gave orders that the gates should not be opened to the unwelcome visitor; but this was not a command to alarm Columba. He went up to the gateway, made the sign of the cross upon the two gates, and then knocked with his hand. Immediately the bars and bolts drew back, the gates rolled upon their hinges and were thrown wide open, and Columba entered like a conqueror. The king, though surrounded by his council, among whom no doubt were his heathen priests, was struck with panic; he hastened to meet the missionary, addressed to him pacific and encouraging words, and from that moment gave him every honor.[116] It is not recorded whether Bruidh himself became a Christian, but during all the rest of his life he remained the friend and protector of Columba. He confirmed to him the possession of Iona, the sovereignty of which he seems to have disputed with his rival the king of the Dalriadian Scots, and our exile thus saw his establishment placed under the double protection of the two powers which shared Caledonia between them.[117]

He overcomes the resistance of King Bruidh.

But the favor of the king did not bring with it that of the heathen priests, who are indicated by the Christian historians under the name of Druids or Magi, and who made an energetic and persevering resistance to the new apostle. These priests do not seem either to have taught or practised the worship of idols, but

Struggles with the Druids in their last refuge.

[116] "Bridio rege potentissimo." — Bede, iii. 4. "In prima sancti fatigatione itineris ad regem Brudeum . . . ex fastu elatus regio munitionis suæ superbe agens . . . homo Dei, cum comitibus, ad valvas portarum accedens . . . tunc manum pulsans contra ostia, quæ continuo sponte, retro retrusis fortiter seris, cum omni celeritate aperta sunt. Rex cum senatu valde per timescunt." — Adamn., i. c. 35. It is supposed that this royal fortress occupied the site of the vitrified fort of *Craig Pharrick*, on a rock 1200 feet above the Ness, near its embouchure into the Moray Firth. These *vitrified* walls — that is to say, walls the stones of which have been dipped, instead of cement, into a vitreous substance produced by the action of fire — are to be found in some districts of Brittany and of Maine, and are everywhere imputed to the Celtic period.

[117] "Quæ videlicet insula ad jus quidem Britanniæ pertinet, sed donatione Pictorum qui illas Britanniæ plagas incolunt, jamdudum monachis Scotorum tradita, eo quod illis prædicantibus fidem Christi perceperint. . . . Unde et Columba . . . præfatam insulam ab eis in possessionem monasterii faciendi accepit." — Bede, iii. 3, 4. Compare Reeves, p. 76.

rather that of natural forces, and especially of the sun and other celestial bodies. They followed or met the Irish preacher in his apostolic journeys, less to refute his arguments than to hold back and intimidate those whom his preaching gained to Christ. The religious and supernatural character which was attributed by the Druids of Gaul to the woods and ancient trees, was attached by those of Caledonia to the streams and fountains, some of which were, according to their belief, salutary and beneficial, while others were deadly to man. Columba made special efforts to forbid among the new Christians the worship of sacred fountains, and, braving the threats of the Druids, drank in their presence the water which they affirmed would kill any man who dared to put it to his lips.[118] But they used no actual violence against the stranger whom their prince had taken under his protection. One day, when Columba and his monks came out of the enclosure of the fort in which the king resided, to chant vespers according to the monastic custom, the Druids attempted to prevent them from singing, lest the sound of the religious chants should reach the people; but the abbot instantly intoned the sixty-fourth psalm, "*Eructavit cor meum verbum bonum: dico opera mea regi,*" with so formidable a voice, that he reduced his adversaries to silence, and made the surrounding spectators, and even the king himself, tremble before him.[119]

He preaches by an interpreter.

But he did not confine himself to chanting in Latin; he preached. The dialect of the Picts, however, being different from that of the Scots, and unknown to him, it was necessary to employ the services of an interpreter.[120] But his words were not the less efficacious on this account, though everywhere he was met by the rival exhortations or derisions of the pagan priests. His impassioned nature, as ready to love as to hate, made itself as apparent in his apostolic preachings as formerly in the

[118] ADAMNAN, ii 2.

[119] "Dum cum paucis fratribus extra regis munitionem vespertinales Dei laudes ex more celebraret, quidam Magi."

[120] "Verbum vitæ per interpretatorem sancto prædicante viro." — ADAMN., ii. 32. Bede states that there were five different languages spoken in Great Britain, and compares them with the five books of the Pentateuch. "Anglorum videlicet" (that is to say, the Anglo-Saxons), "Britonum, Scottorum, Pictorum et Latinorum quæ meditatione Scripturarum cæteris omnibus est facta communis." —*Hist. Eccl.*, i. 1. The text, which is so important for the history of philology, is not less important as a proof to what point the knowledge of the Holy Scriptures had already spread among the Catholic nations.

struggles of his youth; and ties of tender intimacy, active and never appealed to in vain, were soon formed between himself and his converts. One of the Picts, who, having heard him preach by his interpreter, was converted with his wife and all his family, became his friend, and received many visits from him. One of the sons of this new convert fell dangerously ill; the Druids profited by the misfortune to reproach the anxious parents, making it appear that the sickness of their child was the punishment of their apostasy, and boasting the power of the ancient gods of the country, as superior to that of the Christian's God. Columba having been informed hastened to his friend's aid: when he arrived the child had just expired. As soon as he had done all that in him lay to console the father and mother, he asked to be allowed to enter alone into the place where the body of the child was. There he knelt down and prayed long, bathed in tears; then rising, he said, "In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, return to life and arise!" At the same moment the soul came back to the child's body. Columba helped him to rise, supported him, led him out of the cabin, and restored him to his parents. The power of prayer was thus as great, says Adamnan, in our saint as in Elijah and Elisha under the old law, or in St. Peter, St. Paul, and St. John under the new.[121]

His respect for natural virtue.

While thus preaching faith and the grace of God by the voice of an interpreter, he at the same time recognized, admired, and proclaimed among those savage tribes the lights and virtues of the law of nature. He discovered the rays of its radiance in many an unknown hearer, by the help of that supernatural gift which enabled him to read the secrets of the heart, and to penetrate the darkness of the future; a gift which developed itself more and more in him as his apostolic career went on. One day while laboring in his evangelical work in the principal island of the Hebrides, the one which lies nearest to the main land,[122] he cried out all at once, "My sons, to-day you

[121] "Quidam plebeius" (this term is always used by Adamnan to express a layman, but at the same time a man either rich or of consideration). . . . "Magi parentibus sæpe cum magna exprobratione cœperunt illudere, suosque quasi fortiores magnificare deos, Christianorum Deo quasi infirmiori derogare. . . . Hoc noster Columba cum Elia et Eliseo. . . . Petro et Paulo et Joanni . . . habebat sibi commune virtutis miraculum." — ADAMNAN, ii. 32.

[122] Skye, the same in which Charles-Edward took refuge in 1746, after the defeat of Culloden, and where he met Flora Macdonald.

Baptism of the old Pictish chief in the isle of Skye.

will see an ancient Pictish chief, who has kept faithfully all his life the precepts of the natural law, arrive in this island; he comes to be baptized and to die." Immediately after, a boat was seen to approach the shore with a feeble old man seated in the prow, who was recognized as the chief of one of the neighboring tribes. Two of his companions took him up in their arms and brought him before the missionary, to whose words, as repeated by the interpreter, he listened attentively. When the discourse was ended the old man asked to be baptized; and immediately after breathed his last breath, and was buried in the very spot where he had just been brought to shore.[123]

At a later date, in one of his last missions, when, himself an old man, he travelled along the banks of Loch Ness, always in the district to the north of the mountain range of the *dorsum Britanniæ*, he said to the disciples who accompanied him, "Let us make haste and meet the angels who have come down from heaven, and who wait for us beside a Pict who has done well according to the natural law during his whole life to extreme old age: we must baptize him before he dies." Then hastening his steps and outstripping his disciples, as much as was possible at his great age, he reached a retired valley, now called Glen Urquhart, where he found the old man who awaited him. Here there was no longer any need of an interpreter, which makes it probable that Columba in his old age had learned the Pictish dialect. The old Pict heard him preach, was baptized, and with joyful serenity gave up to God the soul which was awaited by those angels whom Columba saw.[124]

And in Glen Urquhart.

His humanity.

In this generous heart humanity claimed its rights no less than justice. It was in the name of humanity,[125] his biographer expressly tells us, that he begged the freedom of a young female slave, born in Ireland, and the

[123] "O filii, hodie in hac terrula quidam gentilis senex naturale per totam bonum custodiens vitam, et baptizabitur et morietur. . . . Navicula cujus in prora advectus est decrepitus senex Geonæ primarius cohortis, quem bini juvenes de navi sublevantes, ante beati conspectum viri deponunt. . . . Verbo Dei a sancto per interpretem recepto. . . ." — ADAMNAN, i. 33.

[124] "Ultra Britanniæ dorsum iter agens. . . . Properemus sanctis obviam angelis qui de cœlis ad præferendam alicujus gentilici animam emissi nos illuc expectant, ut ipsum naturale bonum per totam vitam usque ad extremam senectutem conservantem, priusquam moriatur, opportune baptizemus. . . . Sanctus senex in quantum potuit comites festinus præcedebat . . . et credens baptizatus est et continuo lætus et securus, cum angelis observantibus ad Deum commigravit." — ADAMNAN, iii. 14.

[125] "Scoticam postulavit servam . . . humanitatis miseratione liberandam." — *Ibid.*, ii. 33.

captive of one of the principal Druids or Magi. This Druid was named Broïchan, and lived with the king, whose foster-father [126] he was, a tie of singular force and authority among the Celtic nations. Either from a savage pride, or out of enmity to the new religion, the Druid obstinately and cruelly refused the prayer of Columba. "Be it so," said the apostle; "but learn, Broïchan, that if thou refusest to set free this foreign captive, thou shalt die before I leave the province." When he had said this he left the castle, directing his steps towards that river Ness which appears so often in his history. But he was soon overtaken by two horsemen who came from the king to tell him that Broïchan, the victim of an accident, was dying, and fully disposed to set the young Irish girl free. The saint took up from the river bank a pebble, which he blessed, and gave to two of his monks, with the assurance that the sick man would be healed by drinking water in which this stone had been steeped, but only on the express condition that the captive should be delivered. She was immediately put under the charge of Columba's companions, and was thus restored at the same moment to her country and her freedom.[127]

The Druid, though healed, was not thereby rendered less hostile to the apostle. Like the magicians of Pharaoh, he attempted to raise nature and her forces against the new Moses. On the day fixed for his departure, Columba found, on reaching, followed by a numerous crowd, the banks of the long and narrow lake from which the Ness issues, and by which he meant to travel, a strong contrary wind and thick fog, as Broïchan had threatened, which the Druids exulted to see. But Columba, entering his boat, bade the frightened

[126] The reciprocal duties of foster fathers and children (fosterage) were minutely regulated by the British laws. In the twelfth century, Giraldus Cambrensis still remarked that among the Irish foster brothers and sisters were united by a tie almost stronger and more tender than brothers and sisters of the same blood. Dr. Lynch, in his *Cambrensis Eversus* (first published in 1662, and re-edited by Prof. Kelly in 1850), enlarges upon the importance of the tie which united the Irish princes and lords to their foster fathers and brothers. He recalls Mordecai, the foster-father of Esther, and Clitus, the foster-brother of Alexander the Great, among many examples of sacred and profane history which support his idea. His new editor asserts (ii. 141, 162) that at the Council of Trent the Irish bishop of Raphoe, Donald MacCongal, demonstrated that *fosterage* and *gossipred* (cognato spiritualis) were the principal safeguard of the public peace in Ireland.

[127] "Scito, Broichane, scito quia si mihi hanc peregrinam liberare captivam nolueris, priusquam de hac revertar provincia, citius morieris. . . . Nunc formidabiliter correptus ancillulam liberare est paratus . . . eademque hora liberata famula sancti legatis viri assignatur." — Adamnan, ii. 33.

rowers set the sail against the wind, and the assembled people saw him proceed rapidly on his course, as if borne by favorable breezes, towards the south end of the lake, by which he returned to Iona. But he left only to make a speedy return, and came so often as to accomplish the conversion of the Pictish nation, by destroying forever the authority of the Druids in this last refuge of Celtic paganism.[128] This sanguinary and untamable race was finally conquered by the Irish missionary. Before he ended his glorious career he had sown their forests, their defiles, their inaccessible mountains, their savage moors, and scarcely inhabited islands, with churches and monasteries.

He completes in his life the conversion of the Picts.

His fellow-workers.

Columba's assistants, in his numerous missions among the Picts, were the monks who had come with him, or who had followed him from Ireland. The fame of the obscure benefactors and civilizers of so distant a region has still more completely disappeared than that of Columba: it is with difficulty that some lingering trace of them is to be disentangled from the traditions of some churches whose sites may yet be found upon the ancient maps of Scotland. Such was Malruve (642–722),[129] a kinsman of Columba, and like him descended from the royal race of Niall, but educated in the great Monastery of Bangor, which he left to follow his illustrious cousin into Albyn, passing by Iona. He must have long survived Columba, for he was for fifty-one years abbot of a community at Apercrossan,[130] upon the north-west coast of Caledonia, opposite the large island of Skye, before he met his death, which was, according to local tradition, by the sword of Norwegian pirates.

Upon the opposite shore, in that striking promontory which forms the eastern extremity of Scotland, a district now known as Buchan, various churches trace their origin to Columba, and to one of his Irish disciples called Drostan. The *mormaer* or chief of the country had at first refused them his permission to settle there, but his son fell dangerously ill,

[128] "Ventum tibi contrarium caliginemque umbrosam superinducam. . . . Christum invocat, cymbulamque ascendens nautis hæsitantibus, ipse constanter factus velum contra ventum jubet subrigi . . . omnique inspectante turba, navigium flatus contra adversos mira occurrit velocitate." — ADAMNAN, ii. 34. The place where he landed is at present occupied by Fort Augustus, at the commencement of the Caledonian Canal.

[129] W. REEVES, *St. Maelrubha, his History and Churches.* Edinburgh, 1861. Compare *Act. SS. Bolland.*, vol. vi. August, p. 132.

[130] At present Applecross. Twenty-one parishes in the north of Scotland were in primitive times dedicated to this saint.

and he hastened after the missionaries, offering them the land necessary for their foundation, and begging them to pray for the dying boy. They prayed, and the child was saved. After having blessed the new church, and predicted that none who profaned it should ever conquer their enemies or enjoy long life, Columba installed his companions in their new home, and himself turned to continue his journey. When Drostan saw himself thus condemned to live at a distance from his master, he could not restrain his tears; for these old saints, in their wild and laborious career, loved each other with a passionate tenderness, which is certainly not the least touching feature in their character, and which places an inextinguishable light upon their heads amid the darkness of the legends. "Then," Columba said, "let us call this place the Monastery of Tears;" [131] and the great abbey which lasted a thousand years upon that spot always retained the name. "He who sows in tears shall reap in joy."

The Monastery of Tears.

[131] Said Columb-Cille: "Let *Déar* (Tear) be its name henceforward." This incident is found in the Celtic language in the most ancient manuscript which exists relative to Scotland; it has been recently discovered in Cambridge, and is of the ninth century. It is about to be published under the name of the *Book of Deir*. Cosmo Innes, *Scotland in the Middle Ages*, p. 325. Whitley Stokes, *Saturday Review*, 8th December, 1860. The Monastery of Deir was rebuilt for the Cistercians by the Earl of Buchan in 1213. The prophecy of Columba was verified in the family of the Earl Marischal, head of the great house of Keith, who was, after the Reformation, the first spoliator of the monastery, which had been given to him by James VI. In vain his wife, a daughter of Lord Home, begged him not to accept the sacrilegious gift. He would not listen to her. The following night she saw in a dream a multitude of monks, clothed like those of Deir, surround the principal castle of the Earl, Dunnotter-Craig, which was situated on an immense rock on the coast. They began to demolish the rock with no other tools than *penknives:* at this sight the Countess hastened to look for her husband, that he might stop their work of destruction; but when she returned the rock and the castle had already been undermined and overthrown by the penknives of the monks, and nothing was to be seen but the fragments of the furniture floating on the sea. This vision was immediately interpreted as the announcement of a future catastrophe, and the use of penknives as a sign of the length of time which should pass before its fulfilment. From that moment this powerful house began to diminish, and finally fell in 1715 in the Stuart rebellion.

CHAPTER IV.

COLUMBA CONSECRATES THE KING OF THE SCOTS. — HE GOES TO THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF IRELAND, DEFENDS THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE HIBERNO-SCOTIC COLONY, AND SAVES THE CORPORATION OF BARDS.

Passionate solicitude of Columba for his relatives and countrymen. — He protects King Aïdan in his struggle with the Anglo-Saxons of Northumbria. — The same king is crowned by Columba at Iona; the first example of a Christian consecration of kings. — The Stone of Destiny: the descendants of Aïdan. — Synod or parliament of Drumceitt in Ireland. — Aedh, king of Ireland, and Aïdan, king of the Irish colonists in Scotland. — The independence of the new Scottish kingdom is recognized through the influence of Columba. — He interposes in favor of the bards, whom the king had proposed to outlaw. — Power and excesses of that corporation. — By means of Columba, the good grain is not burned with the weeds. — The bards' song of gratitude in honor of their savior. — Columba, reproved by his disciple, desires that this song should not be repeated during his life. — Superstitious regard attached to it after his death. — Intimate union between music, poetry, and religion in Ireland. — The bards, transformed into minstrels, are the first champions of national independence and Catholic faith against the English conquest. — Fiercely assailed, they yet continue to exist up to our own day. — Moore's *Irish Melodies*. — The Celtic muse at the service of the vanquished in the Highlands of Scotland as in Ireland.

It would not, however, be natural to suppose that the mission of Columba among the Picts could entirely absorb his life and soul. That faithful love for his race and country which had moved him with compassion for the young Irish girl in captivity among the Picts did not permit him to remain indifferent to the wars and revolutions which were at the bottom of all national life among the Irish Scots as well as the Irish colony in Scotland. There was not a more marked feature in his character than his constant solicitude, his compassionate sympathy, as well after as before his removal to Iona, for the bloody struggles in which his companions and relatives in Ireland were so often engaged. Nothing was nearer to his heart than the claim of kindred; for that reason alone he occupied himself without cease with the affairs of individual relatives. "This man," he said to himself, "is of my

Anxious solicitude of Columba for his relatives and countrymen.

race; I must help him. It is my duty to pray for him, because he is of the same stock as myself. This other is of kin to my mother," &c. And then he would add, "My friends and kindred, who are descended like me from the Nialls, see how they fight!"[132] And from the far distance of his desert isle he fought with them in heart and thought, as of old he had aided them in person. He breathed from afar the air of battle; he divined the issue by what his companions considered a prophetic instinct, and told it to his monks, to his Irish countrymen, and to the Caledonian Scots who sought him in his new dwelling. With better reason still his soul kindled within him when he foresaw any struggle in which his new neighbors the Dalriadian colonists were to be engaged, either with the Picts, whom they were one day to conquer, or with the Anglo-Saxons.

The bell of Iona rings for the battle between the Scots and their enemies.

One day towards the end of his life, being alone with Diarmid his minister (as the monk attached to his personal service was called), he cried out all at once, "The bell! let the bell be rung instantly!" The bell of the modest monastery was nothing better than one of the little square bells made of beaten iron, which are still shown in Irish museums, exactly similar to those which are worn by the cattle in Spain and the Jura. It was enough for the necessities of the little insular community. At its sound the monks hastened to throw themselves on their knees around their father. "Now," said he, "let us pray — let us pray with intense fervor for our people, and for King Aïdan; for at this very moment the battle has begun between them and the barbarians." When their prayers had lasted some time, he said, "Behold, the barbarians flee! Aïdan is victorious!"[133]

The barbarians, against whom Columba rang his bells and called for the prayers of his monks, were the Anglo-Saxons

[132] "Quia est mihi cognationalis, et ex meæ matris parentela. . . . Mei cognationales amici. . . . Nellis nepotes." — Adamn., ii. 40; i. 49; i. 7.

[133] "Subito ad suum dicit ministratorem Diormitium, *Cioccam pulsa*. . . . Nunc intente pro hoc populo et Aidano rege oremus; hac cum hora incipiunt bellum. . . . Nunc barbari in fugam vertuntur, Aidanoque quanquam infelix concessa victoria." — Adamn., i. 8. This *quanquam infelix* refers to the fact that in this battle, *de bello Miathorum* (as this chapter of Adamnan is entitled), the king lost three hundred and three men and two of his sons. His third son also fell in battle against the Saxons: "In Saxonia Celtica in strage." — *Ibid.*, c. 9. Adamnan speaks of the war as *de bello Miathorum*, but he does not explain if these *Miathi*, or *Meatæ*, who are always associated with the Caledonians, were the allies or the enemies of the Dalriadian Scots.

of Northumbria, who were still pagans, and whose descendants were destined to owe the inestimable blessings of Christianity to the monks of Iona and the spiritual posterity of Columba. But at that time the invaders thought only of taking a terrible revenge for the evils which Britain, before they conquered it, had endured from Scoto-Pictish incursions, and of extending their power ever farther and farther on the Caledonian side. As for King Aïdan,[134] he had replaced his cousin-german, King Connall, who had guaranteed to Columba the possession of Iona, as chief of the Dalriadian colony in Argyll. His accession to the throne took place in 574, eleven years after the arrival of Columba; and nothing proves more fully the influence acquired by the Irish missionary during this short interval than Aïdan's resolution to have his coronation blessed by the Abbot of Iona. Columba, though his friend, did not wish him to be king, preferring his brother; but an angel appeared to him three times in succession, and commanded him to consecrate Aïdan according to the ceremony prescribed in a book covered with crystal which was left with him for that purpose.[135] Columba, who was then in a neighboring island, went back to Iona, where he was met by the new king. The abbot, obedient to the celestial vision, laid his hands upon the head of Aïdan, blessed him, and ordained him king.[136] He inaugurated thus not only a new kingdom, but a new rite, which became at a later date the most august solemnity of Christian national life. The coronation of Aïdan is the first authentic instance known in the West. Columba thus assumed, in respect to the Scotic or Dalriadian kingdom, the same authority with which the abbots of Armagh, successors of St. Patrick, were already invested in respect to the kings of Ireland. That this supreme authority and these august functions were conferred upon abbots instead of bishops, has been the cause of much surprise. But at that period of the ecclesiastical history of

Aïdan, king of the Caledonian Scots, 574.

Consecrated by Columba.

[134] "Ædan, rex Scottorum qui Britanniam inhabitant." — Bede, i. 34.

[135] "Qui in manu vitreum ordinationis regum habebat librum." — Adamn., iii. 5. This is the famous *Vitreus Codex* which, according to a narrative given by Reeves, was only shown to Columba by the angel, and did not remain in his hands.

[136] "Aidanum, iisdem adventantibus diebus, regem, sicut erat jussus, ordinavit . . . imponensque manum super caput ejus, ordinans benedixit." — Martene (*De Antiquis Ritibus Ecclesiæ*, vol. iii. l. ii. c. 10, in the treatise *De Solemni Regum Benedictione*) says that the consecration of Aïdan is the first known example of that solemnity.

Celtic nations the episcopate was entirely in the shade; the abbots and monks alone appear to have been great and influential, and the successors of St. Columba long retained this singular supremacy over the bishops.

The Stone of Fate.

According to Scotch national tradition, the new king Aïdan was consecrated by Columba upon a great stone called the Stone of Fate. This stone was afterwards transferred to Dunstaffnage Castle, the ruins of which may be seen upon the coast of Argyll, not far from Iona; then to the Abbey of Scone, near Perth; and was finally carried away by Edward I., the cruel conqueror of Scotland, to Westminster, where it still serves as a pedestal for the throne of the kings of England on the day of their coronation. The solemn inauguration of the kingdom of Aïdan marks the historical beginning of the Scotch monarchy, which before that period was more or less fabulous. Aïdan was the first prince of the Scots who passed from the rank of territorial chief to that of independent king, and head of a dynasty whose descendants were one day to reign over the three kingdoms of Great Britain.[137]

But to secure the independence of the new Scottish royalty, or rather of the young nation whose stormy and poetic history was thus budding under the breath and blessing of Columba, it was necessary to break the link of subjugation or vassalage which bound the Dalriadian colony to the Irish kings. All this time it had remained tributary to the monarchs of the island which it had left nearly a century before to establish itself in Caledonia. To obtain by peaceable means the abolition of this tribute, Columba — who was Irish by heart as well as by birth, yet who at the same time was, like the Dalriadians, his kinsmen, an emigrant in Caledonia, and, like the new king, descended from the monarchs of

[137] Aïdan married a British wife, a daughter of those Britons who occupied the banks of the Clyde, and were neighbors of the Scots. With them for his allies, he made war vigorously, though unfortunately, as will be afterwards seen, upon the Anglo-Saxons. He survived Columba, and died in 606, after a reign of thirty-two years. His direct descendants reigned up to 689. They were then replaced by the house of Lorn, another branch of the first Dalriadian colony, whose most illustrious prince, Kenneth Macalpine, reduced the Picts to recognize him as their king in 842. The famous Macbeth and his conqueror Malcolm Canmore, the husband of St. Margaret, were both descended from Aïdan, or of the lineage of Fergus. The male line of these Scottish kings of Celtic race ended only with Alexander III. in 1283. The dynasties of Bruce and Stuart were of the female line. According to local and domestic traditions, the great modern clans of Macquarie, Mackinnon, Mackenzie, Mackintosh, MacGregor, Maclean, Macnab, and Macnaughten are descended from the primitive Dalriadians.

Ireland — must have seemed the mediator indicated by nature. He accepted the mission, and returned to Ireland, which he had thought never to see again, in company with the king whom he had just crowned, to endeavor to come to an agreement with the Irish monarch and the other princes and chiefs assembled at Drumkeath. His impartiality was above all suspicion; for the very day of the coronation of Aïdan he had announced to him, in the name of God, that the prosperity of the new Scotic kingdom depended upon peace with Ireland, its cradle. In the midst of the ceremony he had said aloud to the king whom he had crowned, "Charge your sons, and let them charge their grandchildren, never to expose their kingdom to be lost by their fault. The moment that they attempt any fraudulent enterprise against my spiritual descendants here, or against my countrymem and kindred in Ireland, the hand of God will weigh heavily upon them, the heart of men will be raised against them, and the victory of their enemies will be assured." [138]

The king of Ireland, Diarmid, who was, like Columba, of the race of Niall, but of the Nialls of the North, and whom our saint had so violently resisted, had died immediately after the voluntary exile of Columba. He perished, as has been mentioned, by the hand of a prince called Black Aedh, chief of the Antrim Dalriadians, who remained in Ireland when a part of their clan emigrated to Scotland. Some time afterwards the supreme throne of Ireland fell to another Aedh, of the southern branch of the race of Niall, and consequently of the same stock as Columba.[139] He was also the

[138] "Inter ordinationis verba . . . prophetare cœpit dicens: Tu filiis commenda ut et ipsi filiis et nepotibus et posteris suis commendent ne per consilia mala eorum sceptrum regni hujus de manibus suis perdant. . . . In me et in posteros meos . . . aut adversus cognatos meos qui sunt in Hibernia." — ADAMN., iii. 5. Colgan, in remarking this passage in his preface, cannot refrain from returning sadly upon the atrocities committed in Ireland by the Scots and Britons of his time, under the last descendants of the Dalriadian dynasty, James I. and Charles I. "Unde moderni Scoto-Britanni, qui cognatos sancti Columbæ in Hibernia nostris diebus ferro et flamma infestant, e suis sedibus pellunt et in ore crudelis gladii mactant, debent prædictam vindictam ore veridico Dei prophetæ prædictam formidare, si inter posteros Aidani regis velint numerari; si non, certe non minus metuenda sunt illa sacri eloquii oracula, quibus dicitur: Qui gladio perimit, gladio peribit." — *Trias Thaum.*, p. 320.

[139] The poet-historian, Thomas Moore, by a singular confusion, looks upon Aedh the Black, the murderer of King Diarmid, and Aedh, son of Aimnire, the king of the Drumkeath parliament, as the same person. — *History of Ireland*, pp. 254, 263, Paris edition. I spare the reader all the other Aedhs or Aïdus, who are to be found mixed up with the history of the age of Columba in the inextricable Irish genealogies. My learned friend, M. Foisset,

friend and benefactor of his emigrant cousin, to whom he had given before his exile the site of Derry,[140] the most important of his Irish foundations. The first synod or parliament of Aedh's reign had been convoked in a place called Drumceitt,[141] the *Whale's Back*, situated in his special patrimony, not far from the sea and the gulf of Lough Foyle, where Columba had embarked, and at the further end of which was his dear monastery of Derry. It was there that he returned with his royal client, the new king of the Caledonian Scots, whose confessor, or, as the Irish termed it, *friend of his soul*, he had become.[142] The two kings, Aedh and Aïdan, presided at this assembly, which sat for fourteen months, and the recollection of which has been preserved among the Irish people, the most faithful nation in the world, for more than a thousand years.

Aedh, king of Ireland, and Aïdan, king of the Irish in Scotland, at the synod of Drumkeath.

The Irish lords and clergy encamped under tents like soldiers during the entire duration of this parliament.[143] The most important question discussed among them was no doubt that of the tribute exacted from the king of the Dalriadians. It does not appear that the Irish king demanded tribute on account of the new kingdom founded by his ancient subjects, but rather on account of that part of Ireland itself, at present the county of Antrim, from whence the Dalriadian colonists had gone, and which was the hereditary patrimony of their new king.[144] This was precisely the position in which the Norman princes, who had become kings of England, while

like a zealous Burgundian as he is, has pointed out to me the resemblance between the name of Aedh, which occurs so often among the Irish princes and kings, and that of the Ædui, the first inhabitants of Burgundy. He thinks, with reason, that the Celts of Gaul, conquered by Cæsar, had also lived, like their brethren in Ireland and Scotland, in clans, and is persuaded that the Ædui of Bibracte signified originally the clan of the sons of Aedh.

[140] Lynch's *Cambrensis Eversus*, vol. ii. c. 9, p. 16.

[141] *Dorsum Cetæ* in Latin, *Drum Ceitt* or *Ceat* in Irish, at present called Drumkeath, near Newtown Limavaddy, in the county of Londonderry.

[142] Irish MS. quoted by Reeves, p. lxxvi. note 4.

[143] "Condictum regum." — Adamnan. "Collectis totius regni optimatibus, universoque clero . . . ad instar militum per papiliones et tentoria turmatim dispersi." — O'Donnell, book iii. c. 2, 5. "Hiberniæ proceribus Drum-Keathian ad leges condendas cocuntibus et quatuordecim mensibus illic hærentibus." — Lynch, c. 9. Colgan, who lived in 1645, narrates that the site of the assembly then was still frequented by numerous pilgrims, and that a procession was formerly celebrated there on the day of All-Saints: "cum summo omnium vicinarum partium accursu." — *Acta Sanctorum Hiberniæ*, vol. i. p. 204. The site is still to be seen upon an elevation at Roe Park, near Newtown Limavaddy. — Reeves, p. 37.

[144] Moore's *History of Ireland*, vol. i. c. 12, p. 256.

still dukes of Normandy, found themselves, five centuries later, in respect to the kings of France. Columba, the friend of both kings, was commissioned to solve the difficulty. According to some Irish authors, the Abbot of Iona, when the decisive moment arrived, refused to decide, and transferred to another monk, St. Colman, the responsibility of pronouncing the judgment. At all events, the Irish king renounced all suzerainty over the king of the Dalriadians of *Albania*, as Scotland was then called. Independence and freedom from all tribute were granted to the Albanian Scots, who, on their side, promised perpetual alliance and hospitality to their Irish countrymen.[145]

The independence of the new kingdom recognized by the intervention of Columba.

Columba had another cause to plead at the parliament of Drumceitt, which was almost as dear to his heart as the independence of the Scotic kingdom and colony of which he was the spiritual head. The question in this case was nothing less than that of the existence of a corporation as powerful as, and more ancient and national than, the clergy itself: it concerned the bards, who were at once poets and genealogists, historians and musicians, and whose high position and popular ascendency form one of the most characteristic features of Irish history. The entire nation, always enamoured of its traditions, its fabulous antiquity, and local and domestic glory, surrounded with ardent and respectful sympathy the men who could clothe in a poetic dress all the lore and superstitions of the past, as well as the passions and interests of the present. In the annals of Ireland, as far back as they can be traced, the bards or *ollambh*, who were regarded as oracles of knowledge, of poetry, history, and music, are always to be found. They were trained from their infancy with the greatest care in special communities, and so greatly honored that the first place at the royal table, after that of the king himself, was reserved for them.[146] Since the introduction of Christianity, the bards, like the Druids of earlier times, whose successors they are supposed to have been, continued to form a powerful and popular band. They were then divided into three orders: the *Filcas*, who sang of religion and of war; the *Brehons*, whose name is associated with the ancient laws of the country, which they versified and recited;[147] the *Seanachies*, who en-

He interposes in favor of the bards.

Power and excesses of this corporation.

[145] Reeves, pp. lxxvi. and 92.

[146] Eugene O'Curry's *Lectures on the MS. Materials of Irish History*. Dublin, 1861.

[147] The code known under the name of *Laws of the Brehons* continued to

shrined in verse the national history and antiquities, and, above all, the genealogies and prerogatives of the ancient families who were specially dear to the national and warlike passions of the Irish people. They carried this guardianship of historical recollections and relics so far as to watch over the boundaries of each province and family domain.[148] They took part, like the clergy, in all the assemblies, and with still greater reason in all the fights. They were overwhelmed with favors and privileges by the kings and petty princes, on whom their songs and their harp could alone bestow a place in history, or even a good name among their contemporaries. But naturally this great power had produced many abuses, and at the moment of which we speak, the popularity of the bards had suffered an eclipse. A violent opposition had been raised against them. Their great number, their insolence, their insatiable greed, had all been made subjects of reproach; and, above all, they were censured for having made traffic and a trade of their poetry — of lavishing praises upon the nobles and princes who were liberal to them, and making others the subject of satirical invectives, which the charm of their verse spread but too readily, to the great injury of the honor of families. The enmities raised against them had come to such a point, that King Aedh felt himself in sufficient force to propose to the assembly of Drumceitt the radical abolition of this dangerous order, and the banishment, and even outlawry, if not, as some say, the massacre of all the bards.

Whom King Aedh proposes to proscribe.

It is not apparent that the clergy took any part whatever in this persecution of a body which they might well have regarded as their rivals. The introduction of Christianity into the country of Ossian, under St. Patrick, seems scarcely, if at all, to have affected the position of the bards. They became Christians without either inflicting or suffering any violence, and they were in general the auxiliaries and friends of the bishops, monks, and saints. Each monastery, like each prince and lord, possessed a bard, whose office it was to sing

regulate the civil life of the Irish even under the English conquest; it was only abolished under James I. at the beginning of the seventeenth century; it had lasted, according to the most moderate calculations, since the time of King Cormac, in 266 — that is to say, fourteen centuries.

[148] "Rei antiquariæ professores et poetas . . . quos tempore gentilismi Druidas, Vates, et Bardos . . . vocabant. . . . His ex officio incumbebat . . . familiarum nobilium et prærogativas studiose observare; regionum agrorumque metas ac limites notare ac distinguere." — O'Donnell, book iii. c. 2 and 7.

the glory, and often to write the annals, of the community.[149] Notwithstanding, it is apparent, through many of the legends of the period, that the bards represented a pagan power, in the eyes of many ecclesiastical writers, and that they were willingly identified with those Druids or Magi who had been the principal enemies of the evangelical mission of Patrick in Ireland and of Columba in Scotland.[150] Even in the legend of Columba[151] it is noted that some among them had determined to make him pay for his ransom according to their custom, and had for this end addressed to him importunate solicitations, threatening, if he refused, to abuse him in their verse.

Notwithstanding, it was Columba who saved them. He who was born a poet and remained a poet to the last day of his life, interceded for them, and gained their cause. His success was not without difficulty, for King Aedh was eager in their pursuit; but Columba, as stubborn as bold, made head against all. He represented that care must be taken not to pull up the good corn with the tares; that the general exile of the poets would be the death of a venerable antiquity and of that poetry which was so dear to the country and so useful to those who knew how to employ it.[152] The ripe corn must not be burned, he said, because of the weeds that mingle with it. The king and the assembly yielded at length, under condition that the number of bards should be henceforward limited, and that their profession should be put under certain rules determined by Columba himself. It was his eloquence alone which turned aside the blow by which they were threatened; and knowing themselves to be saved by him, they showed their gratitude by exalting his glory in their songs and by leaving to their successors the charge of continuing his praise.[153]

The good grain must not be burned with the weeds.

[149] Hersart de la Villemarqué, *La Poésie des Cloîtres Celtiques*, *Correspondant* du 25 Novembre, 1863.

[150] "Poetæ impudentes," says the legend of St. Colman, Boll. Act. SS. Junii, vol. ii. p. 27.

[151] "Cum aliquot vernaculæ seu Hibernicæ poeseos professores, quos bardos vocant, eum nihil tum ad manum habentem, non importune tantum, sed improbe divexassent, nescio quod donativum ab eo sub interminatione invectivi poematis contendentes." — O'Donnell, book i. c. 57.

[152] "Ne inter Antiquariorum vitia extirpanda, simul et interiret venerandæ antiquitatis studium. . . . Artem regno et recte usuris valde proficuam." — O'Donnell.

[153] All the authorities of Irish history, printed or in manuscript, confirm this tradition (see Reeves, p. 79, and Moore, p. 257). Adamnan alone

Columba himself had a profound pleasure in this poetical popularity. The corporation of bards had a chief, Dallan Fergall, who was blind, and whose violent death (he was murdered by pirates) has given him a place among the holy martyrs, of whom there are so few in Ireland. Immediately after the favorable decision of the assembly, Dallan composed a song in honor of Columba, and came to sing it before him. At the flattering sounds of this song of gratitude the Abbot of Iona could not defend himself from a human sentiment of self-satisfaction. But he was immediately reproved by one of his monks, Baithen, one of his twelve original companions in exile, and who was destined to be his successor. This faithful friend was not afraid to accuse Columba of pride, nor to tell him that he saw a sombre cloud of demons flying and playing round his head. Columba profited by the warning. He imposed silence upon Dallan,[154] reminding him that it was only the dead who should be praised, and absolutely forbade him to repeat his song.[155] Dallan obeyed reluctantly, and awaited the death of the saint to make known his poem, which became celebrated in Irish literature under the name of *Ambhra*, or the *Praise of St. Columbcille*. It was still sung a century after his death throughout all Ireland and Scotland, and even the least devout of men repeated it with tenderness and fervor, as a safeguard against the dangers of war and every other accident.[156] It even

Song of gratitude from the bards in honor of their savior.

Superstitious devotion with which this song was regarded.

says nothing of it; but he speaks of numerous songs in the Scotic language in honor of Columba, which circulated everywhere in Scotland and in Ireland.

[154] "Composuit patrio sermone rhythmum illum . . . qui in scholis Antiquariorum publice perlegi et scholiis ac commentariis exponi consuevit." — O'Donnell, book i. c. 6. This poem, which has been the subject of innumerable commentaries, still exists in MS., and is to be published with all the *Liber Hymnorum* by Dr. Todd. Colgan possessed a copy which seemed to him almost unintelligible: "Est penes me exemplar hujus operis egregie scriptum, sed seclusis fusis, quos habet annexos, commentariis, hodie paucis, iisque peritissimis, penetrabile." — *Ubi supra*.

[155] *Vita Sancti Dallani Martyris*, ap. Colgan, *Acta Sanctorum Hiberniæ*, p. 204.

[156] "Ejusdem beati viri per quædam Scoticæ linguæ laudum ipsius carmina, et nominis commemorationem, quidam, quamlibet scleratis laicæ conversationis homines et sanguinarii, ea nocte qua eadem decantaverant cantica, de manibus inimicorum qui eamdem eorumdem cantorum domum circumsteterant, sunt liberati. . . . Pauci ex ipsis, qui easdem sancti viri commemorationes, quasi parvi pendentes, canere noluerant decantationes . . . soli disperierunt. Hujus miraculi testes . . . centeni et amplius. Hoc idem ut contigisse probatur non in uno loco aut tempore, sed diversis locis et temporibus in Scotia et Britannia, simili tamen modo et causa liberationis factum fuisse. Hæc ab expertis uniuscujusque regionis, ubicumque res

came to be believed that every one who knew this Ambhra by heart and sang it piously would die a good death. But when the unenlightened people came so far as to believe that even great sinners, without either conversion or penitence, had only to sing the Ambhra of Columbcille every day in order to be saved, a wonder happened, says the historian and grand-nephew of the saint, which opened the eyes of the faithful, by showing to them how they ought to understand the privileges accorded by God to his saints. An ecclesiastic of the metropolitan church of Armagh, who was a man of corrupt life, and desired to be saved without making any change in his conduct, succedeed in learning the half of the famous Ambhra, but never could remember the other half. It was in vain that he made a pilgrimage to the tomb of the saint, fasted, prayed, and spent the entire night in efforts to impress it upon his memory — the next morning he found that, though he had at length succeeded in learning the latter half, he had completely forgotten the first.[157]

The gratitude of the bards to him who had preserved them from exile and outlawry, has certainly had some share in the wonderful and lasting popularity of Columba's name. Shrined in the national and religious poetry of the two islands, his fame has not only lasted in full brilliancy in Ireland, but it has survived even the Reformation — which has destroyed almost all other traces of their past history as Christians — in the memory of the Celts of Scotland.

Intimate connection of poetry and music with religion in Ireland.

On the other hand, the protection of Columba certainly confirmed the popularity of the bards in the heart of the Irish nation. All opposition between the religious spirit and the bardic influence disappeared from his time. Music and poetry after that period identified themselves more and more with ecclesiastical life. Among the relics of the saints the harps on which they had played found a place. At the first English conquest, the bishops and abbots excited the surprise of the invaders by their love of music, and by accompanying themselves on the harp.[158] Irish poetry, which was in the days

eadem simili contigit miraculo, indubitanter didicimus." — ADAMNAN, i. 1. Let us add that the disciples of Columba continued to cultivate music and poetry after his death. A modern poet, James Hogg, has written some English verses, in themselves insignificant, to an old air which had been sung by the monks of Iona. — WHITELAW, *The Book of Scottish Song*. Glasgow, 1857.

[157] VICOMTE DE LA VILLEMARQUÉ, *Poésie des Cloîtres Celtiques*, after COLGAN and O'DONNELL, *ubi supra*.

[158] "Hinc accidit ut episcopi et abbates et sancti in Hibernia viri citharas

of Patrick and Columba so powerful and so popular, has long undergone in the country of Ossian the same fate as the religion of which these great saints were the apostles. Rooted like it in the heart of a conquered people, and like it proscribed and persecuted with unwearing vehemence, it has come ever forth anew from the bloody furrow in which it was supposed to be buried. The bards became the most powerful allies of patriotism, the most dauntless prophets of national independence, and also the favorite victims of the cruelty of spoilers and conquerors. They made music and poetry weapons and bulwarks against foreign oppression, and the oppressors used them as they had used the priests and the nobles. A price was set upon their heads. But while the last scions of the royal and noble races, decimated or ruined in Ireland, departed, to die out under a foreign sky amid the miseries of exile, the successor of the bards, the minstrel, whom nothing could tear from his native soil, was pursued, tracked, and taken like a wild beast, or chained and slaughtered like the most dangerous of rebels.

The bards, transformed into minstrels, are the chief champions of national independence and the Catholic faith.

In the annals of the atrocious legislation directed by the English against the Irish people, as well before [159] as after the Reformation, special penalties against the *minstrels, bards, rhymers,* and *genealogists,* who sustained the lords and gentlemen in their love of rebellion and of other crimes,[160] are to be met at every step. An attempt was made, under the sanguinary Elizabeth, to give pecuniary recompense to those who would celebrate "her Majesty's most worthy praise." The bargain was accepted by none. All preferred flight or death to this salary of lies. Wandering over hill and dale, hidden in the depths of the devastated country, they perpetuated there the poetic traditions of their condemned race, and sang the glory of ancient heroes and new martyrs, the shame of apostates, and the crimes of the sacrilegious stranger.

In order the better to brave tyranny in the midst of a subdued and silent people, they had recourse to allegory and the elegies of love. Under the figure of an enslaved queen — or

circumferre et in iis modulando pie delectari consueverint. . . . Sancti Kevini cithara ab indigenis in reverentia non modica et pro reliquiis virtuosis et magnis usque hodie habetur." — GIRALDUS, *Cambriæ Descriptio*, c. 12.

[159] For instance, at the parliament of Kilkenny under Edward I.

[160] These are the words of an act of the time of Elizabeth, quoted by Moore, p. 257.

of a woman loved with an everlasting love and fought for with despairing faithfulness, in face of the jealous fury of a step-mother — they celebrated again and again the Irish Fatherland, the country in mourning and tears, once queen and now a slave.[161] The Irish, says a great historian of our own day, loved to make of their country a real being whom they loved, and who loved them. They loved to address her without naming her name, and to identify the austere and perilous devotion which they had vowed to her with all that is sweetest and most fortunate in the affections of the heart, like those Spartans who crowned themselves with flowers when about to perish at Thermopylæ.[162]

Proscribed with vehemence.

Up to the time of the ungrateful Stuarts, this proscription of the national poets was permanent, increasing in force with every change of reign and every new parliament. The rage of the Cromwellian Protestants carried them so far as to break, wherever they met with them, the minstrel's harps [163] which were still to be found in the miserable cottages of the starving Irish, as they were eleven centuries before, at the time when the courageous and charitable Bridget saw them suspended on the wall of the king's palace.[164] Nevertheless the harp has remained the emblem of Ireland even in the official arms of the British empire; and during all last century the travelling harper, last and pitiful successor of the bards protected by Columba, was always to be found at the side of the priest to celebrate the holy mysteries of the proscribed worship. He never ceased to be received with tender respect under the thatched roof of the poor Irish peasant, whom he consoled in his misery and oppression by the plaintive tenderness and solemn sweetness of the music of his fathers.

They nevertheless lasted up to our own day.

The continuance of these distinctive features of Irish char-

[161] "Erin of the sorrows, once a queen, now a slave."

[162] Augustin Thierry, *Dix Ans d'Etudes Historiques.*

[163] "Efferati quidem excursores in obvias quasque lyras earum proscissione multis in locis immaniter sæviant." — Lynch, *Cambrensis Eversus*, book i. c. 4, p. 316. This author, who wrote in 1662, feels himself obliged to give a detailed description of the harp, lest the instrument should disappear in the general ruin of Ireland. "Quare operæ me pretium facturum existimo, si lyræ formam lectori ob oculos ponam, ne illius memoris gentis excidio . . . innexa obliteretur." Charles II., as soon as he was established on the throne, permitted the passing of an act of Parliament "against the vagabond minstrels, to repress their rhymes and scandalous songs."

[164] "Et vidit citharas in domo regis, et dixit: Citharizate nobis citharis vestris." — *Tertia Vita Sanctæ Brigitæ*, c. 75, p. 536, ap. Colgan.

acter through so many centuries is so striking, and the misfortunes of that noble race touch us so nearly, that it is difficult to resist the temptation of leaving behind us those distant ages, and of following through later generations the melancholy relics of all that has been discovered or admired in the most ancient days. We may be pardoned for adding that, if the text of those poetic and generously obstinate protests against the enslavement of Ireland have perished, the life and spirit of them has survived in the pure and penetrating beauty of the ancient Irish airs. Their harmonies and their refrains, which are inimitably natural, original, and pathetic, move the depths of the soul, and send a thrill through all the fibres of human sensibility. Thomas Moore, in adapting to them words which are marked with the impression of a passionate fidelity to the proscribed faith and oppressed country, has given to the *Irish Melodies* a popularity which was not the least powerful among those pleas which determined the great contest of Catholic Emancipation.

The Celtic muse at the service of the vanquished in Scotland as in Ireland.

The genius of Celtic poetry has, however, survived not only in Ireland, in the country of Columba and of Moore, but has found a refuge in the glens of the Scottish Highlands, among those vast moors and rugged mountains, and beside the deep and narrow lakes, which Columba, bearing the light of the faith to the Caledonian Picts, had so often traversed. In those districts where, as in a great part of Ireland, the Erse or Gaelic language is still spoken, the Celtic muse, always sad and always attached to the cause of the people, has been found in recent times, at the most prosaic moment of modern civilization, in the eighteenth century itself, inspiring the warlike songs and laments which the Highlanders have consecrated to the conquered Pretender and his followers slain. And if we may believe a competent and impartial judge,[165] the last effusions of the soul of the Gaelic race surpass, in plaintive beauty and in passionate feeling, even those delicious Anglo-Scottish songs which no traveller can hear without emotion, and which have assured the palm, at least of poetry, to the cause of the Stuarts, which has been so sadly represented by its princes, and so ill served by events, but which the popular and national muse has thus avenged, even for the irremediable defeat of Culloden.

[165] Charles Mackay, *The Jacobite Songs and Ballads of Scotland from 1688 to 1746*, Introduction, p. 18.

CHAPTER V.

COLUMBA'S RELATIONS WITH IRELAND — CONTINUED.

Cordial intercourse of Columba with the Irish princes. — Prophecy upon the future of their sons. — Domnall, the king's son, obtains the privilege of dying in his bed. — Columba visits the Irish monasteries. — Popular enthusiasm. — Vocation of the young idiot afterwards known as St. Ernan. — Solicitude of Columba for the distant monasteries and monks. — He protects them from excessive labors and accidents. — He exercises authority over laymen. — Baithen, his cousin-german and principal assistant. — The respect shown to both in an assembly of learned men.

Cordial intercourse between Columba and the Irish princes.

In the national parliament of Drumceitt which saved the bards, and where all the ecclesiastical chiefs of the Irish nation, along with their princes and provincial kings, were assembled, Columba, already invested by his apostolical labors with great power and authority, found himself surrounded by public homage, and tokens of universal confidence. To all the kings, whose kinsman and friend he was, he preached peace, concord, the pardon of affronts, and the recall of exiles, many of whom had found shelter in the island monastery which owed its existence to his own exile.[166] Nevertheless, it was not without trouble that he obtained from the supreme monarch the freedom of a young prince, named Scandlan, son of the chief of Ossory, whom Aedh detained in prison, in contempt of his sworn faith, and of an agreement to which Columba himself had been a witness. The noble abbot went to the prisoner in his dungeon, blessed him, and predicted to him that he should be twice exiled, but that he should survive his oppressor, and reign for thirty years in his paternal domain. The king yielded on this point, but with a bad grace; he feared the influence of the illustrious exile, and had seen him return to Ireland with dissatisfaction. His eldest son had publicly ridiculed the monks of Iona, and had thus drawn upon himself the curse of Columba, which brought misfortune, for he was afterwards dethroned and assassinated. But the king's second son Domnall, who was still young, took openly the part of the Abbot of Iona, who predicted for him not only a long and glorious

Prophecies of the future.

[166] Adamnan, i. 11, 13.

reign, but the rare privilege of dying in his bed, on the condition of receiving the Holy Communion every eight days, and of keeping at least one in seven of his promises[167] — a somewhat satirical limit, which betrays either the old contradictory spirit of the converted Niall, or the recollection of his own legitimate resentment against certain princes. His prophecy, extremely improbable as it was, in a country where all the princes perished on the battle-field or by a violent death, was nevertheless fulfilled. Domnall, who was the third successor of his father, following after two other kings who were destroyed by their enemies, had a long and prosperous reign; he gained numerous victories, marching to battle under a banner blessed by St. Columba, and died, after an illness of eighteen months, in his bed, or, as Columba specified, with a precision which marks the rareness of the occurrence, on his down-bed.[168] His father, although reconciled to Columba, did not escape the common law. The great abbot bestowed upon him his monastic cowl, promising that it should always be to him as an impenetrable cuirass. After this, he never went into battle without putting on his friend's cowl above his armor. But one day when he had forgotten it, he was killed in a combat with the King of Lagenia or Leinster.[169] Columba had previously warned him against waging war with the people of Leinster, which was the country of his mother, and which he loved with that impassioned clan or family affection which is so distinctive a feature in his character. The Lagenians had not lost the opportunity of working upon this sentiment; for one day, when he was at his Abbey of Durrow, upon their boundary, a numerous assembly of all ages, from children to old men, came to him, and, surrounding him, pleaded with such animation their kindred with his mother, that they obtained from him the promise, or prophecy, that no king should ever be able to overcome them, so long as they fought for a just cause.[170]

He visits his Irish monasteries.

There is no doubt that, after the assembly of Drumceitt, Columba made many journeys to Ireland. The direction of the various monasteries which he had founded there before his voluntary exile, and

[167] Irish MS. quoted by Reeves, p. 38.

[168] "Super plumatiunculam." — Adamnan, i. 15. Compare c. 10.

[169] Lynch, *Cambrensis Eversus*, with Kelly's notes, 17, 19. — O'Donnell, book i. c. 60.

[170] "Id prolixe afflicteque allegata cognatione flagitantes." — O'Donnell, *loc. cit.* Compare Reeves, p. 221.

of which he had kept the government in his own hands, must have led him often back; but after that assembly, his visits were always made notable by miracles of healing, prophecy, or revelation, and still more by the tender solicitude of his paternal heart. Sometimes, towards the decline of his life, while traversing a hilly or marshy country, he travelled in a car, as St. Patrick had done; but the care with which his biographers note this fact, proves that formerly the greater part of his journeys had been made on foot.[171] He did not limit himself to communities of which he was the superior or founder; he loved to visit other monastic sanctuaries also, such as that of Clonmacnoise, whose importance has already been pointed out.[172] And on such occasions the crowding and eagerness of the monks to pay their homage to the holy and beloved old man was redoubled; they left their out-door work, and, crossing the earthen intrenchment, which like the *vallum* of Roman camps, enclosed the Celtic monasteries, came to meet him, chanting hymns. When they came up to him, they prostrated themselves on the ground at his feet, ere they embraced him; and in order to shelter him from the crowd during the solemn processions which were made in his honor, a rampart of branches was carried like a dais by four men, who surrounded him, treading with equal steps.[173] An ancient author even goes so far as to say, that on the occasion of his return and prolonged stay in his native country, he was invested with a sort of general supremacy over all the religious of Ireland, both monks and nuns.[174]

Vocation of the idiot afterwards known as St. Ernan.

During the journey from Durrrow to Clonmacnoise, Columba made a halt at one of his own monasteries, where a poor little scholar, "of thick speech, and still more heavy aspect," whom his superiors employed in the meanest services, glided into the crowd, and stealthily approaching the great abbot, touched the end of his robe behind him, as the Canaanitish woman touched the robe of our Lord. Columba, perceiving it, stopped,

[171] "Per loca aspera et inaquosa. . . . Pergunt sic tota die per loca aspera, cœnosa et saxosa." — O'Donnell, book iii. c. 17. Compare Adamnan, ii. 43.

[172] See *ante*, p. 716.

[173] "Undique ab agellulis monasterio vicinis . . . congregati . . . egressi . . . vallum monasterii, unanimes pergunt. . . . Quamdam de lignis pyramidem erga sanctum deambulantem constringentes . . . ne sanctus senior fratrum multitudinis constipatione molestaretur." — Adamnan, i. 3.

[174] *Vita S. Farannani Confessoris*, 15th February, c. 3, in Colgan, *Acta SS. Hiberniæ*, p. 377. This author, who wrote only in the thirteenth century, cannot be considered of great authority.

turned round, and, taking the child by the neck, kissed him. "Away, away, little fool!" cried all the spectators. "Patience, my brethren," said Columba: then turning to the boy, who trembled with fear, "My son," he said, "open thy mouth and show me thy tongue." The child obeyed, with increasing timidity. The abbot made the sign of the cross upon his tongue, and added, "This child, who appears to you so contemptible, let no one henceforward despise him. He shall grow every day in wisdom and virtue; he shall be reckoned with the greatest among you; God will give to this tongue, which I have just blessed, the gift of eloquence and true doctrine."[175] The boy grew to manhood, and became celebrated in the churches of Scotland and Ireland, where he was venerated under the name of St. Ernan. He himself told this prophecy, so well justified by the event, to a contemporary of Adamnan, who has preserved all the details for us.

Tender care of Columba for his distant monks and monasteries.

These journeys, however, were not necessary to prove Columba's solicitude for the monks who filled his monasteries. He showed the same care when distant as when at hand, by the help of that miraculous foresight which came to the assistance of his paternal anxiety in all their spiritual and temporal necessities. One day, after his return from Ireland, he was heard to stop suddenly short in the correspondence or transcription in which he had been engaged in his little cell in Iona, and cry with all his strength, "Help, help!" This cry was addressed to the guardian angel of the community, and the appeal was made on behalf of a man who had fallen from the top of the round tower which was then being built at Durrow, in the centre of Ireland — so great was his confidence in what he himself called the indescribable and lightning speed of the flight of angels; and greater still was his trust

[175] "Valde despectus vultu et habitu . . . cervicem pueri tenet, ipsumque trahens ante faciem suam statuit. Omnibus dicentibus. . . . Dimitte, dimitte, quare hunc infelicem et injuriosum retines puerum. . . . Sinite, fratres, hunc. . . . O fili, aperi os et porrige linguam . . . cum ingenti tremore. . . . In hac vestra congregatione grandis est futurus et lingua ejus salubri et doctrina et eloquentia a Deo donabitur. Hic erat eminens . . . postea per omnes Scotiæ ecclesias famosus et valde notissimus: qui hæc omnia supra scripta verba Seginco abbati de se prophetata enarravit, meo decessore Failbeo intentius audiente . . . cujus revelatione et ego ipse cognovi hæc eadem quæ enarravi." — Adamnan, i. 3. St. Ernan died in 635. M. de la Villemarqué has cited this incident in his *Légende Celtique*, as a type of the initiation of the children of barbarians into intellectual life by means of the monasteries.

in their protection.[176] Another time, at Iona, in a day of chilly fog, such as occurs often in that sombre climate, he was suddenly seen to burst into tears. When asked the reason of his distress, he answered, "Dear son, it is not without reason that I weep. At this very hour I see my dear monks of Durrow condemned by their abbot to exhaust themselves in this dreary weather building the great round tower of the monastery, and the sight overwhelms me." The same day, and at the same hour, as was afterwards ascertained, Laisran, the abbot of Durrow, felt within himself something like an internal flame, which reawakened in his heart a sentiment of pity for his monks. He immediately commanded them to leave their work, to warm themselves, and take some food, and even forbade them to resume their building until the weather had improved. This same Laisran afterwards came to deserve the name of Consoler of the Monks, so much had he been imbued by Columba with that supernatural charity which, in monastic life, as in every other Christian existence, is at once a light and a flame, *ardens et lucens*.[177]

Authority of Columba over the laymen.

Columba not only retained his superior jurisdiction over the monasteries which he had founded in Ireland, or which had been admitted to the privileges of his foundations, but he also exercised a spiritual authority, which it is difficult to explain, over various laymen of his native island. On one occasion, he is known to have sent his cousin, friend, and principal disciple to the centre of Ireland, to Drum-Cuill, to pronounce sentence of excommunication against a certain family, whose crime, however, is not specified. This disciple was Baithen, whom we have seen to be one of Columba's companions from the moment of his exile, and who warned his superior against the fumes

[176] "In tuguriolo suo scribens. . . . Auxiliare, auxiliare. . . . Duo fratres ad januam sancti . . . causam talis subtæ vocis interrogant. . . . Angelo qui nunc inter vos stabat, jussi. . . . Valde mirabilis et pene indicibilis est angelici violatus pernicitas, fulgure ut æstimo, celeritati paritas." — ADAMNAN, iii. 15.

[177] "Quanta animi teneritudine . . . et quam mirabili divinitus infusæ scientiæ dono . . . non secus ac si oculis præsentes essent, intuebatur." — O'DONNELL, ii. 65. "Quadam brumali et valde frigida die, magno molestatus mœrore, flevit. . . . Non immerito, filiole, ego hac in hora contristor, meos videns monachos quos Laisrannus nunc gravi fatigatos labore in alicujus majoris domus fabrica molestat . . . eodem momento horæ Laisrannus . . . quasi quadam pyra intrinsecus succensus." — ADAMNAN. i. 29. Compare book iii. c. 15 for a similar incident relating to the same Monastery of Durrow and its round tower. Abbot Laisran was a near relative of Columba, and became his third successor at Iona.

of pride, at the time when the bards began to express their enthusiastic gratitude. The gentle Baithen, when he had arrived at the appointed place, after having passed the whole night in prayer under an oak, said to his companions, "No, I will not excommunicate this family before making sure that it will not repent. I give it a year's respite, and during the year the fate of this tree shall be a warning to it." Some time after the tree was struck by lightning; but we are not informed if the family thus warned was brought to repentance.

Baithen, his principal fellow-worker.

Baithen was a man of tender soul, of whom we would fain speak at greater length, if it were not needful to circumscribe the wide and confused records of Celtic hagiography. Columba compared him to St. John the Evangelist; he said that his beloved disciple resembled him who was the beloved disciple of Christ, by his exquisite purity, his penetrating simplicity, and his love of perfection.[178] And Columba was not alone in doing justice to the man who, after having been his chief lieutenant in his work, was to become his first successor. One day in an assembly of learned monks, probably held in Ireland, Fintan, a very learned and very wise man,[179] and also one of the twelve companions of Columba's exile, was questioned upon the qualities of Baithen. "Know," he answered, "that there is no one on this side of the Alps who is equal to him in knowledge of the Scriptures, and in the greatness of his learning." "What!" said his questioners — "not even his master, Columba?" "I do not compare the disciple with the master," answered Fintan. "Columba is not to be compared with philosophers and learned men, but with patriarchs, prophets, and apostles. The Holy Ghost reigns in him; he has been cho-

Testimony to the character of both from an assembly of learned men.

[178] "Nolo hac vice hanc familiam excommunicare donec sciam an ad pœnitentiam convertatur, an non. . . . Dicebat quod . . . in innocentia sincerissima et in simplicitate prudentissima, et in disciplina rigoris perfectorum operum non dissimiles fuerunt." — Act. SS. Bolland., vol. ii. June, p. 238. Let us add what these *Actes* relate of his incessant fervor in prayer: "Cum iter aliquod faceret aut alioquin alloqueretur . . . manus suas sub vestimento suo ad orandum Deum menti alacri interim dirigebat. . . . Inter duas particulas ori appositas, simul inter duo sorbitiuncula . . . et quod difficilius est, tempore metendi cum manipulum in terra collectum portaret ad cervicem, alterna brachia ad cœlum extendens, Tonantem interpellabat." — *Ibid.*, p. 237.

[179] So much so, that the Bollandists suppose this Fintan, described as *filius Lappani* in the Acts of St. Baithen, to be the same as the Fintan, *filius Aidi*, of Adamnan, book ii. c. 32. Compare Reeves, p. 144.

sen by God for the good of all. He is a sage among all sages, a king among kings, an anchorite with anchorites, a monk of monks; and in order to bring himself to the level even of laymen, he knows how to be poor of heart among the poor;[180] thanks to the apostolic charity which inspires him, he can rejoice with the joyful, and weep with the unfortunate. And amid all the gifts which God's generosity has lavished on him, the true humility of Christ is so royally rooted in his soul, that it seems to have been born with him." It is added that all the learned hearers assented unanimously to this enthusiastic eulogium.

CHAPTER VI.

COLUMBA THE PROTECTOR OF SAILORS AND AGRICULTURISTS, THE FRIEND OF LAYMEN, AND THE AVENGER OF THE OPPRESSED.

His univeral solicitude and charity during all his missionary life. — The sailor-monks: seventy monks of Iona form the crew of the monastic fleet; their boats made of osiers covered with hides. — Their boldness at sea: the whirlpool of Corryvreckan. — Columba's prayer protects them against sea monsters. — Their love of solitude leads them into unknown seas, where they discover St. Kilda, Iceland, and the Faröe Isles. — Cormac in Orkney, and in the icy ocean. — Columba often accompanies them: his voyages among the Hebrides. — The wild boar of Skye. — He subdues tempests by his prayer: he invokes his friend St. Kenneth. — He is himself invoked during life, and after his death, as the arbiter of winds. — Filial complaints of the monks when their prayers are not granted. — The benefits which he conferred on the agricultural population disentangled from the maze of fables: Columba discovers fountains, regulates irrigations and fisheries, shows how to graft fruit trees, obtains early harvests, interferes to stop epidemics, cures diseases, and procures tools for the peasants. — His special solicitude for the monkish laborers: he blesses the milk when

[180] "Scitote quod nullus ultra Alpes compar illi in cognitione Scripturarum divinarum et in magnitudine scientiæ reperitur. , . . Numquid ille sapientior est quam sanctus Columba nutricius illius? Ille enim non tam sapientibus litteratis, sed patriarchis et prophetis Dei et apostolis magis comparandus est. . . . Vera humilitas Christi robustissime in eo regnat, tanquam a natura ei hæreret. . . . Cum hoc testimonium vir sanctus in medio sapientum proferret. . . . Ille enim sapiens cum sapientibus, rex cum regibus, anachoreta cum anachoretis, et monachus cum monachis . . . et pauper corde cum pauperibus." — Act. S. Bolland., vol. ii. June, p. 238.

it is brought from the cow: his breath refreshes them on their return from harvest. — The blacksmith carried to heaven by his alms. — His relations with the layman whose hospitality he claims: prophecy touching the rich miser who shuts his door upon him. — The five cows of his Lochaber host. — The poacher's spear. — He pacifies and consoles all whom he meets. — His prophetic threats against the felons and reivers. — Punishment inflicted upon the assassin of an exile. — Brigands of royal blood put down by Columba at the risk of his life. — He enters into the sea up to his knees to arrest the pirate who had pillaged his friend. — The standard-bearer of Cæsar and the old missionary.

Fatherly solicitude and charity the most marked features of his missionary life.

During all the rest of his life, which was to pass in his island of Iona, or in the neighboring districts of Scotland which had been evangelized by his unwearied zeal, nothing strikes and attracts the historian so much as the generous ardor of Columba's charity. The history of his whole life proves that he was born with a violent and even vindictive temper; but he had succeeded in subduing and transforming himself to such a point that he was ready to sacrifice all things to the love of his neighbor. It is not merely an apostle or a monastic founder whom we have before us — beyond and beside this it is a friend, a brother, a benefactor of men, a brave and untiring defender of the laborer, the feeble, and the poor: it is a man occupied not only with the salvation but also with the happiness, the rights, and the interests of all his fellow-creatures, and in whom the instinct of pity showed itself in a bold and continual interposition against all oppression and wickedness.

Without losing the imposing and solemn character which always accompanied his popular fame, he will now be revealed to us under a still more touching aspect, through all the long succession of his apostolic labors, and in the two principal occupations — agriculture and navigation — which gave variety to his missionary life.

Maritime life of the monks of Iona.

For navigation alternated with agriculture in the labors of the cenobites of Iona. The same monks who cultivated the scanty fields of the holy island, and who reaped and threshed the corn, accompanied Columba in his voyages to the neighboring isles, and followed the sailor's trade, then, it would seem, more general than now among the Irish race.[181] Communication was then frequent,

[181] "Lugbeus quadam ad Sanctum die post frugum veniens triturationem. . . . Idem simul cum sancto viro ad Caput Regionis (*Cantyre*) pergens, naucleruin et nautas adventantis barcæ interrogans." — Adamnan, i. 28.

not only between Ireland and Great Britain, but between Ireland and Gaul. We have already seen in the port of Nantes an Irish boat ready to carry away the founder of Luxeuil.[182] The Gaulish merchants came to sell or offer their wines as far as to the centre of the island, to the Abbey of Clonmacnoise.[183] In the life of our saint, seafaring populations,[184] are constantly spoken of as surrounding him, and receiving his continual visits; and exercises and excursions are also mentioned, which associate his disciples with all the incidents of a seafaring life. As a proof of this we quote four lines, in very ancient Irish, which may be thus translated:—

> "Honor to the soldiers who live at Iona;
> There are three times fifty under the monastic rule,
> Seventy of whom are appointed to row,
> And cross the sea in their leathern barks."

Boats of osier covered with hides.

These boats were sometimes hollowed out of the trunks of trees, like those which are still found buried in the *bogs* or turf-mosses of Ireland; but most generally they were made of osier, and covered with buffalo-skins, like those described by Cæsar.[185] Their size was estimated by the number of skins which had been used to cover them. They were generally small, and those made of one or two skins were portable. The abbot of Iona had one of this description for the inland waters when he travelled beyond the northern hills (*dorsum Britanniæ*), which he crossed so often to preach among the Picts.[186] At a later

[182] Vol. i. p. 567. "Navis quæ Scotorum commercia vexerat," says the biography of St. Columbanus.

[183] *Vita S. Kiarani*, c. 31, cited by REEVES, p. 57.

[184] "Nautæ, navigatores, remiges, nautici."

[185] "Corpus navium viminibus contextum coriis integebatur." — *Bell. Civil.*, i. 54.

> "Primum cana salix, madefacto vimine, parvam
> Texitur in puppim cæsoque induta juvenco."
>
> LUCAN, iv.

These boats were called in Celtic *Curach*, from which comes *curruca* or *currica* in monkish Latin. These osier canoes are still in use, under the name of *coracle*, in the Welsh seaports. They are composed of a light construction of willow lathes, covered either with skin or with tarpaulin. After their day's work the fishers put the coracle to dry, and, taking it on their backs, carry it to their cottage door. This has been seen by M. Alphonse Esquiros at Caermarthen. — *Revue des Deux Mondes*, 15th February, 1865.

[186] "Mitte te in navim unius pellis. . . . Carabum ex duobus tantum coriis et demidio factum. . . . Nunc, nunc celerius nostram quam ultra rivum naviculam posuistis in domum, huc citius advehite, et in viciniore domuncula ponite." — ADAMNAN, i. 34.

period the community possessed many of a much larger size, to convey the materials for the reconstruction of the primitive monastery at Iona, and the timber which the sons of Columba cut down and fashioned in the vast oak forests which then covered the whole country, now so sadly deprived of wood. They went like galleys, with sail or oar, and were furnished with masts and rigging like modern boats. The holy island had at last an entire fleet at its disposal, manned and navigated by the monks.[187]

Their boldness at sea.

In these frail skiffs Columba and his monks ploughed the dangerous and stormy sea which dashes on the coasts of Scotland and Ireland, and penetrated boldly into the numberless gulfs and straits of the sombre Hebridean archipelago. They knew the perils to which their insular existence exposed them; but they braved those dangers without fear, accustomed as they were to live in the midst of storms,[188] upon an isle which the great waves of ocean threatened continually to swallow up. Not less alarming was their position when the winds carried them towards the terrible whirlpool, named after a prince of the Niall family, who had been drowned there, the Caldron of Brechan, and which there was always a risk of being driven upon while crossing from Ireland to Scotland. The winds, when blowing from certain directions,

The whirlpool of Corryvreckan.

[187] This passage of Adamnan is very important for the history of the primitive Celtic navigation. "Cum dolatæ per terram pineæ et roboreæ traherentur longæ trabes *et magnæ navium pariter et domus materiæ eveherentur.* . . . Ea die qua nostri nautæ, omnibus præparatis, supra memoratarum ligna materiarum proponunt scaphis per mare et curucis trahere. . . . Per longas et obligas vias tota die properis flatibus, Deo propitio famulantibus, et plenis sine ulla retardatione velis, ad Ionam insulam omnis illa navalis emigratio prospere evenit." — ii. 45. The words in italics are the text given by the Bollandists (*Acta Sanctorum*, Junii, vol. ix. p. 275), which seems to us preferable to that of the MS. followed by Dr. Reeves. There is here question of three kinds of boats: *naves*, *scaphæ*, and *curucæ;* and it is evident that there must have been a workshop on the island for the building of the larger vessels, because great logs of wood were carried there destined to be employed in the building of boats as well as for the monastic buildings. In another passage (Adamnan, ii. 35), a transport boat, *oneraria navis*, is spoken of, manned by monks, and laden with osiers, which the abbot Columba had sent for to a neighboring property: "Virgarum fasciculos ad hospitium construendum."

[188] "Die fragosæ tempestatis et intolerabilis undarum magnitudinis. . . . Quis, ait (sanctus), hac die valde ventosa et nimis periculosa, licet breve, fretum prospere transnavigare potest?" — Adamnan, i. 4. This recalls the lines of the poet —

> "Quid rigor æternus cœli, quid frigora possunt,
> Ignotumque fretum?"
>
> Claudian, *in Consulat. III. Honor.*, v. 54.

hollow out in their whirl such terrible abysses about this spot, that even to our own time it has continued the terror of sailors. The holiest of Columba's guests passed it by with trembling, raising their hands towards heaven to implore the miracle which alone could save them.[189] But he himself, who one day was almost swallowed up in it, and whose mind was continually preoccupied by the recollection of his kindred, imagined that he saw in this whirlpool a symbol of the torments endured in purgatory by the soul of his relative who had perished at that spot, and of the duty of praying for the repose of that soul at the same time as he prayed for the safety of the companions of his voyage.[190]

Columba's prayers protect them against the sea-monsters.

Columba's prayers, his special and ardently desired blessing, and his constant and passionate intercession for his brethren and disciples, were the grand safeguard of the navigators of Iona, not only against wind and shipwrecks, but against other dangers which have now disappeared from these coasts. Great fishes of the cetaceous order swarmed at that time in the Hebridean sea. The sharks ascended even into the Highland rivers, and one of the companions of Columba, swimming across the Ness, was saved only by the prayer of the saint, at the moment when he was but an oar's length from the odious monster, which had before swallowed one of the natives.[191] The entire crew of a boat manned by monks took fright and turned back one day on meeting a whale, or per-

[189] "Nunc in undosis Charybdis Brecani æstibus valde periclitatur, ambasque ad cœlum, in prora sedens, palmas elevat." — ADAMNAN, i. 5. "Est vorago periculosissima marina, in qua, si qua navis intrat, non evadit." — *Vita Sancti Kiarani*, apud REEVES, 263. Compare GIRALDUS CAMBRENSIS, *Topogr. Hiberniæ*, ii. 41. Walter Scott has not omitted this spot in his poetical itinerary —

> "I would
> That your eye could see the mood
> Of Corryvreckan's whirlpool rude,
> When dons the Hag her whitened hood. . . .
> And Scarba's isle, whose tortured shore
> Still rings to Corryvreckan's roar."

It must be remarked that as the name of Scotia has been transferred from Ireland to Scotland, the name of the abyss so feared by the sailors of Iona has also been transferred to the whirlpool which tourists see in the distance between the isles of Scarba and Iona, in the much-frequented route from Oban to Glasgow.

[190] "Illa sunt ossa Brecani cognati nostri, quæ voluit Christus ita nobis ostendi, ut pro defuncti refrigerio, ac pro nostro a præsenti periculo liberatione simul apud Dominum intercedamus." — O'DONNELL, ii. 21, apud COLGAN, p. 434.

[191] ADAMNAN, ii. 27.

haps only a shark more formidable than its neighbors: but on another occasion, the same Baithen who was the friend and successor of Columba, encouraged by the holy abbot's blessing, had more courage, continued his course, and saw the monster bury itself in the waves. "After all," said the monk, "we are both in the hands of God, both this monster and I."[192] Other monks, sailing in the high northern sea, were panic-struck by the appearance of hosts of unknown shellfish, which, attaching themselves to the oars and sides of the boat, made holes in the hide with which the framework was covered.[193]

The love of solitude sends them into unknown seas.

It was neither curiosity nor love of gain, nor even a desire to convert the pagans, which stimulated Columba's disciples to dare all the dangers of navigation in one of the most perilous seas of the world; it was the longing for solitude, the irresistible wish to find a more distant retreat, an asylum still further off than that of Iona, upon some unknown rock amid the loneliness of the sea, where no one could join them, and from which they never could be brought back. They returned to Iona without having discovered what they were in search of, sad yet not discouraged; and after an interval of rest always took to sea again, to begin once more their anxious search.[194] It was thus that the steep and almost inaccessible island of St. Kilda,[195] made famous

Discovery of St. Kilda, the Faröe Isles, and Iceland.

[192] "Ecce cetus miræ et immensæ magnitudinis, se instar montis erigens, ora aperuit patula nimis dentosa. . . . Remiges, deposito velo, valde perterriti . . . illam obortam ex belluino motu fluctuationem vix evadere potuerunt. . . . Cui Baitheneus: Ego et illa bellua sub Dei potestate sumus. . . . Æquor et cetum, ambabus manibus elevatis, benedicit intrepidus. . . . Bellua magna se sub fluctu immergens . . . nusquam apparuit." — ADAMNAN, i. 19. Up to the eighteenth century whales frequented these parts, and they have been seen to capsize fishing-boats. — MARTIN'S *Western Islands*, p. 5. The whales have disappeared, as have also the seals, which as late as 1703 supplied food to the Hebridean islands. The Monastery of Iona kept a flock of them in a neighboring island: "Parvam insulam ubi marini nostri juris vituli generantur et generant." A robber attempted to take them away, but sheep were given up to him in preference." — ADAMNAN, i. 42.

[193] "Quædam, usque in id temporis invisæ mare obtegentes occurrerant tetræ et infestæ nimis bestiolæ quæ horribili impetu carinam et latera, puppimque et proram ita forti ferebant percussura, ut pelliceum tectum navis penetrale putarentur penetrare posse. Prope ranarum magnitudinem aculeis permolestæ, non volatiles, sed natatiles, sed et remorum palmulas infestabant." — ADAMNAN, ii. 42.

[194] "Desertum in pelago intransmeabili invenire optantes." — ADAMNAN, ii. 42. "Baitheneus . . . benedici a sancto petivit cum ceteris, in mari cremum quæsiturus, post longos per ventosa circuitus æquora, cremo non reperto, in patriam reversus." — *Ibid.*, i. 20.

[195] Several religious buildings of a very early date, and a church dedicated

by the daring of its bird-hunters, was first discovered; then far to the north of the Hebrides and even of the Orcades, they reached the Shetland Isles, and even, according to some, Iceland itself, which is only at the distance of a six days' voyage from Ireland, and where the first Christian church bore the name of St. Columba. Another of their discoveries was the Faröe Islands, where the Norwegians at a later date found traces of the sojourn of the Irish monks, Celtic books, crosses, and bells.[196] Cormac, the boldest of these bold explorers, made three long, laborious and dangerous voyages with the hope, always disappointed, of finding the wilderness of which he dreamed. The first time on landing at Orkney he escaped death, with which the savage inhabitants of that archipelago threatened all strangers, only by means of the *recommendations* which Columba had procured from the Pictish king, himself converted, to the still pagan king of the northern islanders.[197] On another occasion the south wind drove him for fourteen successive

Cormac at the Orkneys.

to St. Columba, were to be found in St. Kilda as late as 1758. The inhabitants of the island, though Calvinists, still celebrated the saint's day by carrying all the milk of their dairies to the governor or farmer of the isle, which belonged then to a chief of the clan Macleod. This farmer distributed it in equal portions to every man, woman, and child in the island. — See *History of St. Kilda*, by Kenneth Macaulay. This islet, which is the most western spot in Europe, is celebrated for the exploits of the bird-catchers, who are suspended by long cords over perpendicular cliffs. It has scarcely eighty inhabitants. The site of the chapel called that of Columba is still shown, with a cemetery and some medicinal and consecrated springs. St. Columba's day is still observed by the people.

[196] Landnamabok, ap. *Antiq. Celto-Scand.*, p. 14. Dicuil, who wrote in 795, states that a hundred years before the Faröe Islands had been inhabited by "*eremitæ ex nostra Scotia navigantes*." — Ed. Letronne, p. 39. Compare Innes, *Scotland in the Middle Ages*, p. 101, and Lanigan, *Eccles. History of Ireland*, c. 3, p. 225, where the question of the first discovery of Iceland is thoroughly investigated.

[197] "Brudeo regi, præsenti Orcadum regulo, commendavit dicens: Aliqui ex nostris nuper emigraverunt, desertum in pelago intransmeabili invenire optantes, qui si forte post longos circuitus Orcades devenerunt insulas, huic regulo cujus obsides in manu tua sunt, diligenter commenda . . . et propter supradictam S. viri commendationem, de morte in Orcadibus liberatus est vicina." — Adamnan, ii. 42. This passage will recall that of Ariosto, where he places in the Hebrides the scene of Olympia's deliverance by Roland, and attributes to the inhabitants of these islands the habit of exposing their women to sea monsters: —

> "Per distrugger quell' isola d'Ebuda
> Che di quante il mar cinge è la piu cruda.
> Voi dovete saper ch'oltre l'Irlanda,
> Fra molte, che vi son, l'isola giace
> Nomata Ebuda, che per legge manda
> Rubando intorno il suo popol rapace."
>
> *Orlando Furioso*, ix. 11–12.

days and nights almost into the depths of the icy ocean, far beyond anything that the imagination of man had dreamed of in those days.[198]

Columba, the father and head of those bold and pious mariners, followed and guided them by his ever vigilant and prevailing prayers. He was in some respects present with them, notwithstanding the distance which separated them from the sanctuary and from the island harbors which they had left. Prayer gave him an intuitive knowledge of the dangers they ran. He saw them, he suffered and trembled for them; and immediately assembling the brethren who remained in the monastery by the sound of the bell, offered for them the prayers of the community. He implored the Lord with tears to grant the change of wind which was necessary for those at sea, and did not rise from his knees until he had a certainty that his prayers were granted. This happened often, and the saved monks, on returning from their dangerous voyages, hastened to him to thank and bless him for his prophetic and beneficent aid.[199]

His voyages and visits to the other Hebridean isles.

Often he himself accompanied them in their voyages of circumnavigation or exploration, and paid many visits to the isles of the Hebridean archipelago discovered or frequented by the sailors of his community, and where *cells* or little colonies from the great island monastery seem to have existed. This was specially the case at Eigg, where a colony of fifty-two monks, founded and ruled by a disciple of the abbot of Iona, were killed by pirates twenty years after his death.[200] This

[198] "Cormacus, qui tribus non minus vicibus eremum in Oceano laboriose quæsivit, nec tamen invenit." — ADAMNAN, i. 6. "Postquam a terris per infinitum Oceanum plenis enavigavit velis . . . usque ad mortem periclitari cœpit. Nam cum ejus navis a terris per quatuordecim æstivi temporis dies, totidemque noctes, plenis velis, austro flante vento, ad septentrionalis plagam cœli directo excurreret cursu, ejusmodi navigatio ultra humani excursus modum et irremeabilis videbatur." — *Ibid.*, ii. 42.

[199] "Eadem hora et sanctus noster, quamlibet longe absens corpore, spiritu tamen præsens in navi cum Cormaco erat. Unde . . . personante signo fratres ad orationem convocant. . . . Ecce enim nunc Cormacus cum suis nautis. . . . Christum intentius precatur: et nos ipsum orando adjuvemus. . . . Et post orationem cito surgit, et abstergens lacrymas . . . quia Dominus austrum nunc in aquilonarem convertit flatum, nostros de periculis commembres retrahentem, quos hic ad nos iterum reducat." — ADAMNAN, ii. 42.

[200] The tragedy of Eigg, which took place in 617, deserves special mention. According to Irish annals, St. Donnan, the founder of the community, was the friend and disciple of Columba. Desirous of finding a more solitary retreat, he established himself with some companions in the island in Eigg, which was then inhabited only by the sheep of the queen of the country (many of the islets near Staffa are at present used as pasture). The queen,

was a favorite spot which he loved to visit, no doubt to enjoy the solitude which was no longer to be found at Iona, where the crowds of penitents, pilgrims and petitioners increased from day to day. And he took special pleasure also in Skye, the largest of the Hebridean isles, which, after the lapse of twelve centuries, was recalled to the attention of the world by the dangerous and romantic adventures of Prince Charles-Edward and Flora Macdonald. It was then scarcely inhabited, though very large and covered by forests, in which he could bury himself and pray, leaving even his brethren far behind him. One day he met an immense wild boar pursued by dogs; with a single word he killed the ferocious brute, instead of protecting it; as in similar cases the saints of the Merovingian legends were so ready to do.[201] He continued during all the middle ages the patron of Skye, where a little lake still bears his name, as well as several spots, and monuments in the neighboring isles.[202]

The wild boar of Skye.

Storms often disturbed these excursions by sea, and then Columba showed himself as laborious and bold as the most tried of his monastic mariners. When all were engaged in rowing, he would not

While sailing with his monks he stills the storms by prayer.

informed of this invasion of her territory, commanded that all should be killed. When the murderers arrived on the island it was the eve of Easter, and mass was being said. Donnan begged them to wait until mass was over. They consented, and when the service was at an end the monks gave themselves up to the sword. According to another version the queen or lady of the soil sent pirates (latrones) to kill them. They were surprised singing psalms in their oratory, from whence they went into the refectory, in order that they might die where the most carnal moments of their life had been passed. There were fifty-two of them. This is the version given by the Bollandists, vol. ii. April, p. 487. As if by the special blessing of these martyrs, this isle was still Catholic in 1703, and St. Donnan was venerated.— MARTIN'S *Journey to the Western Islands*, p. 279.

[201] "Cum in Scia insula aliquantis demoraretur diebus, paulo longius solus, orationis intuitu, separatus a fratribus, silvam ingressus. . . . Venatici canes. . . . Ulterius huc procedere noles: in loco ad quem devenisti morere." — ADAMNAN, ii. 26.

[202] This lake has been drained by Lord Macdonald, the present proprietor of the island. The memory and name of Columba are distinctly to be found at *Eilea Naombh*, where a well which he had hollowed in the rock, and the tomb of his mother *Eithne*, are still shown; and also at Tiree, so often mentioned by Adamnan under the name of *Terra Ethice*. In all the bleak islands of the western coast of Scotland, and especially of the district of Lorn (Argyllshire), there are sculptured crosses of curious and varied forms, tombstones, ruined chapels, buildings of coarse construction and singular shape, Druidical stones, and churches more or less ancient, almost always dedicated to Columba. These are carefully described in a small volume with engravings, which has been published anonymously by Thomas Muir, a Leith merchant, entitled *The Western Islands;* Edinburgh, 1861.

remain idle, but rowed with them.[203] We have seen him brave the frequent storms of the narrow and dangerous lakes in the north of Scotland.[204] At sea he retained the same courageous composure in the most tempestuous weather, and took part in all the sailors' toils. During the voyage which he made from Iona to Ireland, to attend with King Aïdan the parliament of Drumceitt, his vessel was in great danger; the waves dashed into the boat till it was full of water, and Columba took his part with the sailors in baling it out. But his companions stopped him. "What you are doing at present is of little service to us," they said to him; "you would do better to pray for those who are about to perish." He did so, and the sea grew calm from the moment when, mounting on the prow, he raised his arms in prayer.

With these examples before them, his companions naturally appealed to his intercession whenever storms arose during any of his voyages. On one occasion he answered them, "It is not my turn; it is the holy abbot Kenneth who must pray for us." Kenneth was the abbot of a monastery in Ireland, and a friend of Columba's who came often to Iona to visit him. At the very same hour he heard the voice of his friend echo in his heart, and, warned by an internal voice, left the refectory where he was, and hastened to the church to pray for the shipwrecked, crying, "We have something else to do than to dine when Columba is in danger of perishing at sea." He did not even take the time to put on both his shoes before he went to the church, for which he received the special thanks of his friend at Iona;[205] an incident which recalls another Celtic legend — that of the bishop St. Paternus, who obeyed the call of his metropolitan with a boot upon one foot only.[206]

[203] *Vita S. Comgelli*, ap. COLGAN, p. 458.

[204] See *ante*, p. 51.

[205] "In mari periclitari cœpit; totum namque vas navis, valde concussum, magnis undarum cumulis fortiter ferebatur. Nautæ tum forte sancto sentinam cum illis exhaurire conanti aiunt: Quod nunc agis non magnopere nobis proficit periclitantibus, exorare potius debes pro pereuntibus. Et intentans precem . . . aquam cessat amaram exinanire . . . dulcem fundere cœpit. Sæva nimis insistente et periculosa tempestate: Hac in die non est meum pro vobis in periculo orare, sed est abbatis Cainnachi sancti viri. . . . Spiritu revelante sancto, supradictam sancti Columbæ interiore cordis aure vocem audiens. . . . Non est tempus prandere quando in mari periclitatur navis sancti Columbæ. . . . Nunc valde nobis proficit tuus ad ecclesiam velox cum uno calceamento cursus." — ADAMNAN, ii. 12, 13.

[206] Vol. i. p. 472. Cainnach or Kenneth, a saint very popular in Scotland, whose name has been borne by several Scottish kings, was abbot of Aghaboe, in the diocese of Ossory. Born about 517, he died in 600, and

He is invoked everywhere as the master of the winds.

Under all these legendary digressions it is evident that the monastic apostle of Caledonia, apart from the prevailing efficacy of his prayers, had made an attentive study of the winds and of all the phenomena of nature which affected the lives of the insular and maritime people whom he sought to lead into Christianity. A hundred different narratives represent him to us as the Eolus of those fabulous times and dangerous seas. He was continually entreated to grant a favorable wind for such or such an expedition; it even happened one day that two of his monks, on the eve of setting out in two different directions, came to him to ask, the one a north wind, and the other a south wind. He granted the prayer of both, but by delaying the departure of the one who was going to Ireland until after the arrival of the other, who went only to the neighboring isle of Tiree.[207]

Thus it happened that from far and near Columba was invoked or feared by the sailors as the master of all the winds that blew. Libran of the Rushes, the generous penitent whose curious history has been already recorded, wishing to return from Ireland to Iona, was turned back by the crew of the boat which was leaving the port of Derry for Scotland. because he was not a member of the community of Iona. Upon which the disappointed traveller mentally invoked across the sea the help of his absent friend. The wind immediately changed, and the boat was driven back to land. The sailors saw poor Libran still lingering upon the shore, and called to him from the deck, "Perhaps it is because of thee that the wind has changed; if we take thee with us, art thou disposed to make it once more favorable?" "Yes," said the monk; "the holy abbot Columba, who imposed upon me seven years of penitence, whom I have obeyed, and to whom I wish to return, will obtain that grace for you." And the result was that he was taken on board, and the journey was happily accomplished.[208]

left his name to the neighboring islet of Inch-Kenneth, near Iona, which was visited by Johnson.

[207] "Simul unanimes postulant ut ipse a Domino postulans impetraret prosperum crastina die ventum sibi dari diversa emigraturis via." — ADAMNAN, ii. 15.

[208] "Clamitans de litore rogitat ut ipsum nautæ cum eis susciperent navigaturum ad Britanniam. Sed ipsi refutaverunt eum, quia non erat de monachis sancti Columbæ. . . . Videntes virum . . . secus flumen cursitantem . . . ad ipsum de navi clamitantes. . . . Qui statim, rate ascensa: In nomine Omnipotentis, ait, cui sanctus Columba inculpabiliter servit, tensis rudentibus, levate velum." — ADAMNAN, ii. 39.

These events took place in his lifetime; but during at least a century after his death he remained the patron, always popular and propitious, of sailors in danger. A tone of familiar confidence, and sometimes of filial objurgation, may be remarked in their prayers, such as may be found among the Celts of Armorica and the Catholic nations of the south of Europe. Adamnan confesses that he himself and some other monks of Iona, embarked in a flotilla of a dozen boats charged with oaken beams for the reconstruction of the monastery, were so detained by contrary winds in a neighboring island that they took to accusing their Columba. "Dear saint," they said to him, "what dost thou think of this delay? We thought up to this moment that thou hadst great favor with God." Another time, when they were detained by the same cause in a bay near the district of Lorn, precisely on the vigil of St. Columba's day, they said to him, "How canst thou leave us to pass thy feast to-morrow among laymen, and not in thine own church? It would be so easy for thee to obtain from the Lord that this contrary wind should become favorable, and permit us to sing mass in thy church!" On these two occasions their desires were granted; the wind changed suddenly, and permitted them to get to sea and make their way to Iona in those frail boats whose spars, crossing upon the mast, formed the august symbol of redemption. More than a hundred witnesses of these facts were still living when the biographer of our saint wrote his history.[209]

This tender and vigilant charity, which lent itself to all the incidents of a sailor's and traveller's life, becomes still more strongly apparent during all the phases of his existence, in his relations with the agricultural population, whether of Ireland, which was his cradle, or of his adopted country Caledonia. Amid the fabulous legends and aprocryphal and childish miracles with which Irish historians have filled out the glorious story of the great missionary,[210] it is pleasant to

[209] "Quodam modo quasi accusare nostrum Columbam cœpimus. . . . Placetne tibi, sancte, hæc nobis adversa retardatio? huc usque a te, Deo propitio, aliquod nostrorum laborum speravimus consolationum adjumentum, te æstimantes alicujus esse grandis apud Deum honoris. . . . Placetne tibi, sancte, crastinam tuæ festivitatis inter plebeios et non in tua ecclesia transigere diem? . . . tui natalis missarum solemnia celebremus. . . . Proinde orantes nautæ vela subrigunt . . . tum nautæ antennas, crucis instar, et vela protensis sublevans rudentibus, prosperis et lenibus ventis eadem die appetentes insulam." — Adamnan, ii. 45.

[210] The pious Franciscan Colgan, who has included in his collection of *Acta Sanctorum Hiberniæ* (unhappily incomplete) so many fables, has, not-

Benefits conferred upon agriculturists.

be able to discover the unmistakable evidence of his intelligence and fruitful solicitude for the necessities, the labors, and the sufferings of the inhabitants of the rural districts, and his active intervention on their behalf. When the legend tells us how, with one stroke of his crosier, he made fountains of sweet waters spring in a hundred different corners of Ireland or Scotland, in arid and rocky districts, such as that of the peninsula of Ardnamurchan;[211] when it shows him lowering, by his prayers, the cataracts of a river so that the salmon could ascend in the fishing season, as they have always done since, to the great benefit of the dwellers by the stream,[212] we recognize in the tale the most touching expression of popular and national gratitude for the services which the great monk rendered to the country, by teaching the peasants to search for the fountains, to regulate the irrigations, and to rectify the course of the rivers, as so many other holy monks have done in all European lands.

It is equally apparent that he had with zeal and success established the system of grafting and the culture of fruit-

withstanding, omitted a crowd of incredible narratives which his predecessors had adopted. "Nonnulla . . . tanquam ex monumentis vel apocryphis, vel ex rerum forte vere gestorum nimia exaggeratione speciem fabulæ præferentibus, consulte omittenda duximus. . . . Quia nobis apparent vel exegetum vel librariorum (qui miris mirabiliora immiscuerunt) licentiis et commentis ita essa depravata ut solum fabularum speciem præferant." — *Trias Thaumaturga*, p. 441. The Bollandists protested with still greater energy, and repeatedly, against the fables which they, nevertheless, thought themselves obliged to reproduce. "Vitæ hujus auctor aliquid habere videtur de genio Hibernico, cui solet esse perquam familiare, ambulare in mirabilibus, in rebus, inquam, supra fidem prodigiosis, ne dicam portentosis." — Vol. iii. August, p. 658. Compare the same volume, p. 742, and vol. ii. July, p. 241, and 299.

[211] "Tergemino pedi in terram ictu, tergeminos fontes erumpere fecit." — O'Donnell, book i. c. 86; Adamnan, i. 12, ii. 10.

[212] "Columba ratus eam fluminis sterilitatem a prædicta cataracta derivari, et in commune vergere accolarum dominorumque ejus ditionis damnum, fluvium benedixit, rupique in Christi nomine jussit tantum subsidere quantum opus esset ut pisces ultro citroque libere commearent. Paruit confestim sancti viri imperio præfracta rupes et . . . facta est demissior, ut exinde et confluentium illuc piscium, præsertim vero salmonum (quorum et frequentissima et copiosissima ab eo tempore per universum fluvium fit captura) ascensui non obsistat, et nihilominus subjecto vertici adeo promineat, ut videatur a naturalibus contra impetuose ruentis fluvii ictum, magis sancti viri merito, quam innata agilitate conscendi." — O'Donnell, *Vita Quinta*, book ii. c. 92. The river here spoken of is the Erne, a river of Ulster, which throws itself into the sea after having crossed the two great lakes called Lough Erne. In recollection of this benefit the historian tells us that all the produce of the fisheries on St. Columba's day was left for the *coarb* — that is to say, for the abbot, who held the first rank among the successors of the saint in the monasteries he had founded.

trees, when we read the legend which represents him to us, at the beginning of his monastic career in Durrow, the most ancient of his foundations, approaching, in autumn, a tree covered with sour and unwholesome fruit, to bless it, and saying, "In the name of Almighty God, let thy bitterness leave thee, O bitter tree, and let thy apples be henceforward as sweet as up to this time they have been sour!"[213] At other times he is said to have obtained for his friends quick and abundant harvests, enabling them, for example, to cut barley in August which they had sown in June — a thing which then seemed a miracle, but is not without parallel in Scotland at the present time.[214] Thus almost invariably the recollection of a service rendered, or of a benefit asked or spontaneously conferred, weds itself in the legend to the story of miracles and outbursts of wonder-working prayer — which, in most cases, were for the benefit of the cultivators of the soil: it is evident that he studied their necessities and followed their vicissitudes with untiring sympathy.

His zeal against epidemics.

In the same spirit he studied and sought remedies for the infectious diseases which threatened life, or which made ravages among the cattle of the country. Seated one day upon a hillock in his island, he said to the monk who was with him, and who belonged to the Dalriadian colony, "Look at that thick and rainy cloud which comes from the north; it has within it the germs of a deadly sickness; it is about to fall upon a large district of our Ireland, bringing ulcers and sores upon the body of man and beast. We must have pity on our brethren. Quick, let us go down, and to-morrow thou shalt embark and go to their aid." The monk obeyed, and, furnished with bread which Columba had blessed, he went over all the district smitten by the pestilence, distributing to the first sick persons he met, water, in which the bread blessed by the exiled abbot, who concerned himself so anxiously about the lot of his countrymen, had been steeped. The remedy worked so well, that

[213] "Quædam arbor valde pomosa . . . de qua cum incolæ loci quoddam haberent pro nimia fructus amaritudine querimonium. . . . Vident lignum incassum abundos habere fructus qui ex eis gustantes plus læderent quam delectarent. . . . In nomine omnipotentis Dei, omnis tua amaritudo, o arbor amara, a te recedat; tua huc usque amarissima nunc in dulcissima vertantur poma. . . . Dicto citius eodemque momento, omnia poma . . . in miram versa sunt dulcedinem." — Adamnan, ii. 2. "Arborem plenam fructu qui erat hominibus inutilis præ nimia amaritudine," it is said in a similar legend told of another Irish saint, Mochoëmoroc. — Ap. Colgan, *Acta Sanctorum Hiberniæ*, p. 592.

[214] *New Statistical Account*, quoted by Reeves, p. 459.

from all parts both men and beasts crowded round the messenger of Iona, and the praises of Christ and his servant Columba resounded far and wide.[215]

Thus we see the saint continually on the watch for those evils, losses, and accidents which struck the families or nations specially interesting to him, and which were revealed to him either by a supernatural intuition or by some plaintive appeal. Sometimes we find him sending the blessed bread, which was his favorite remedy, to a holy girl who had broken her leg in returning from mass; sometimes curing others of ophthalmia by means of salt also blessed; everywhere on his evangelical journeys, or other expeditions, we are witnesses of his desire, and the pains he took, to heal all the sick that were brought to him, or who awaited him on the roadside, eager, like the little idiot of Clonmacnoise, to touch the border of his robe — an accompaniment which had followed him during the whole course of his journey to the national assembly of Drumceitt.[216]

His entire life bears the mark of his ardent sympathy for the laborers in the fields. From the time of his early travels as a young man in Ireland, when he furnished the ploughmen with ploughshares, and had the young men trained to the trade of blacksmith,[217] up to the days of his old age, when he could only follow far off the labor of his monks, his paternal tenderness never ceased to exercise on their account its salutary and beneficent influence. Seated in the little wooden hut which answered the purpose of a cell, he interrupted his studies, and put down his pen, to bless the monks as they came back from the fields, the pastures, or the barns.

[215] "Hæc nubes valde nocua hominibus et pecoribus erit . . . velocius transvolans super Scotiæ portum . . . purulenta humanis in corporibus et in pecorum uberibus nasci faciet ulcera. . . . Sed nos eorum miserati subvenire languoribus, Domino miserante, debemus. Tu ergo, nunc mecum descendens, navigationem præpara crastina die. . . . Cujus rumor per totam illam morbo pestilentiore vastatam regionem cito divulgatus, omnem morbidum ad sancti Columbæ legatum invitavit populum . . . homines cum pecudibus salvati Christum in sancto Columba laudarunt." — ADAMNAN, ii. 7.

[216] "Maugina, sancta virgo . . . ab oratorio post missam domum reversa titubavit. . . . Sorori et suæ nutrici profecturam quæ ophthalmiæ laborabat valde gravi labore. . . . Diversorum languores infirmorum invocato Christi nomine, sanavit . . . ad regum pergens condictum in Dorsi Cete. Aut sanctæ manus protensione . . . aut etiam fimbriæ ejus tactu amphibali." — ADAMNAN, ii. 5, 6, 7, 35.

[217] "Conquerentibus agricolis deesse ad arandum ferramenta, amissum aratri vomerem (restituit); juvenem quemdam . . . nunquam alias fabrilibus assuetum solo verbo protinus ferramentorum fabrum effecit; qui mox ad sancti imperium pro colonis vomerem, cultrumque faberrime cudit." — O'DONNELL, *Quinta Vita*, i. 68.

The younger brethren, after having milked the cows of the community, knelt down, with their pails full of new milk, to receive from a distance the abbot's blessing, sometimes accompanied by an exhortation useful to their souls.[218]

The reapers of Iona perfumed and refreshed by his spirit.

During one of the last summers of his life, the monks, returning in the evening from reaping the scanty harvest of their island, stopped short as they approached the monastery, suddenly touched with strange emotion. The steward of the monastery, Baithen, the friend and future successor of Columba, asked them, "Are you not sensible of something very unusual here?" "Yes," said the oldest of the monks, "every day, at this hour and place, I breathe a delicious odor, as if all the flowers in the world were collected here. I feel also something like the flame of the hearth which does not burn but warms me gently; I experience, in short, in my heart a joy so unusual, so incomparable, that I am no longer sensible of either trouble or fatigue. The sheaves which I carry on my back, though heavy, weigh upon me no longer; and I know not how, from this spot to the monastery, they seem to be lifted from my shoulders. What, then, is this wonder?" All the others gave the same account of their sensations. "I will tell you what it is," said the steward; "it is our old master, Columba, always full of anxiety for us, who is disturbed to find us so late, who vexes himself with the thought of our fatigue, and who, not being able to come to meet us with his body, sends us his spirit to refresh, rejoice, and console us."[219]

The blacksmith carried to heaven by his alms.

It must not be supposed, however, that he reserved his solicitude for his monastic laborers alone. Far from that, he knew how to appreciate the work of laymen when sanctified by Christian

[218] "Sedens in tuguriolo tabulis suffulto. . . . Juvenis ad januam tugurioli in quo vir beatus scribebat, post vaccarum reversus mulsionem, in dorso portans vasculum novo plenum lacte, dicit ad sanctum ut juxta morem tale benediceret onus." — Adamnan, i. 25, ii. 16, iii. 22.

[219] "Post messionis opera vespere ad monasterium redeuntes. . . . Quamdam miri odoris fragrantiam ac si universorum florum in unum sentio collectorum; quanquam quoque quasi ignis ardorem, non pœnalem, sed quodam modo suavem; sed et quamdam in corde insuetam et incomparabilem infusam lætificationem, quæ me subito consolatur et lætificat ita ut nullius mœroris, nullius laboris meminisse possim. Sed et onus quod meo, quanquam grave, porto in dorso, ab hoc loco usque ad monasterium, in tantum relevatur, ut me oneratum non sentiam. . . . Sic omnes operarii sed singillatim profitentur. . . . Scitis quod senior noster Columba de nos anxie cogitet et nos ad se tardius pervenientes ægre ferat nostri memor laboris, et idcirco quia corporaliter obviam nobis non venit, spiritus ejus nostris obviat gressibus, qui taliter non consolans lætificat." — Adamnan, i. 37.

virtue. "See," he said one day to the elders of the monastery, "at this moment while I speak, such a one who was a blacksmith yonder in Ireland — see him, how he goes up to heaven! He dies an old man, and he has worked all his life; but he has not worked in vain. He has bought eternal life with the work of his hands; for he dispensed all his gains in alms; and I see the angels who are going for his soul." [220] It will be admitted that the praise of manual labor, carried to a silly length in our days, had been rarely expressed in a manner so solemn and touching.

His relations with the laymen whose hospitality he received.

It is also recorded that he took pleasure in the society of laymen during his journeys, and lived among them with a free and delightful familiarity. This is one of the most attractive and instructive phases of his history. He continually asked and received the hospitality not only of the rich, but also of the poor; and sometimes, indeed, received a more cordial reception from the poor than from the rich. To those who refused him a shelter he predicted prompt punishment. "That miser," he said, "who despises Christ in the person of a traveller, shall see his wealth diminish from day to day and come to nothing; he will come to beggary, and his son shall go from door to door holding out his hand, which shall never be more than half filled." [221] When the poor received him under their roof, he inquired with his ordinary thoughtfulness into their resources, their necessities, all their little possessions. At that period a man seems to have been considered very poor in Scotland who had only five cows. This was all the fortune of a Lochaber peasant in whose house Columba, who continually traversed this district when going to visit the king of the Picts, passed a night and found a very cordial welcome notwithstanding the poverty of the house. Next morning he had the five little cows brought into his presence and blessed them, predicting to his host that he should soon have five hundred, and that the blessing of the grateful missionary should go down to his children and grandchildren — a prophecy which was faithfully fulfilled. [222]

The five cows of his host at Lochaber.

[220] "Faber ferrarius non incessum laboravit, qui de propria manuum laboratione suarum præmia felix comparuit æterna. Ecce nunc anima ejus vehitur a sanctis angelis ad cœlestis patriæ gaudia." — ADAMNAN, iii. 9.

[221] "De quodam viro divite tenacissimo . . . qui sanctum Columbam despexerat nec eum hospitio receperat . . . et illius avari divitiæ. qui Christum in peregrinis hospitibus sprevit. . . . Ipse mendicabit, et filius cum semivacua de domo in domum perula discurret." — *Ibid.*, ii. 20.

[222] "Hic Nesanus cum esset valde inops . . . hospitaliter et secundum

Gift of a blessed spear to the poacher.

In the same district of Lochaber, which is still the scene of those great deer-stalking expeditions in which the British aristocracy delight, our saint was one day accosted by an unfortunate poacher, who had not the means of maintaining his wife and children, and who asked alms from him. "Poor man," said Columba, "go and cut me a rod in the forest." When the rod was brought to him, the abbot of Iona himself sharpened it into the form of a spear. When he had done this he blessed the improvised javelin, and gave it to his suppliant, telling him that if he kept it carefully, and used it only against wild beasts, venison should never be wanting in his poor house. This prophecy also was fulfilled. The poacher planted his blessed spear in a distant corner of the forest, and no day passed that he did not find there a hart or doe, or other game, so that he soon had enough to sell to his neighbors as well as to provide for all the necessities of his own house.[223]

He pacifies and consoles all those whom he meets.

Columba thus interested himself in all that he saw, in all that went on around him, and which he could turn to the profit of the poor or of his fellow-creatures; even in hunting or fishing he took pains to point out the happy moment and most favorable spot where the largest salmon or pike might be found.[224] Wherever he found himself in contact with the poor or with strangers, he drew them to himself and comforted them even more by the warm sympathy of his generous heart than by material benefits. He identified himself with their fears, their dangers, and their vexations. Always a peacemaker and consoler,

vires unius noctis spatio ministrasset . . . ab eo inquirit cujus boculas numeri haberet . . . quinque. . . . Ab hac die tuæ paucæ vaculæ crescent usque ad centum et quinque vaccarum numerum. Nesanus homo plebeius erat cum uxore et filiis. . . . Vir sanctus, quadam nocte quum apud supramemoratum . . . inopem bene hospitaretur, mane primo de quantitate et qualitate substantiæ plebeium hospitem interrogat." — ADAMNAN, ii. 21. The district of Lochaber, celebrated in the modern wars of Scotland, is situated upon the borders of the counties of Argyle and Inverness, on the way from Iona to the residence of the Pictish king, and was consequently often crossed by Columba.

[223] "Plebeius pauperrimus, mendicus . . . quo unde maritam et parvulos cibaret non habebat quadam nocte. . . . Miselle homuncio, tolle de silva contulum vicina et ad me cujus defer. . . . Quem sanctus excipiens in veru exacuit propria manu, benedicens et illi assignans inopi. . . . Quamdiu talem habebis sudem, nunquam in domo tua cervinæ carnis cibatio abundans deerit. Miser mendiculus . . . valde gavisus . . . veru in remotis infexit terrulæ locis, quæ silvestres frequentabant feræ . . . nulla transire poterat dies in quo non aut cervum aut cervam reperiret in veru infixo cecidisse." — ADAMNAN, ii. 37.

[224] *Ibid.*, ii. 19.

he took advantage here of the night's shelter given him by a rich mountaineer to end a dispute between two angry neighbors;[225] and there made a chance meeting in a Highland gorge with a countryman an occasion for reassuring the peasant as to the consequences of the ravages made in his district by Pictish or Saxon invaders. "My good man," he said, "thy poor cattle and thy little all have fallen into the hands of the robbers; but thy dear little family is safe — go home and be comforted."[226]

Such was this tender and gentle soul. His charity might sometimes seem to have degenerated into feebleness, so great was the pleasure he took in all the details of benevolence and Christian brotherhood; but let there appear an injustice to repair, an unfortunate individual to defend, an oppressor to punish, an outrage against humanity or misfortune to avenge, and Columba immediately awoke and displayed all the energy of his youth. The former man reappeared in a moment; his passionate temperament recovered the mastery — his distinctive character, vehement in expression and resolute in action, burst forth at every turn; and his natural boldness led him, in the face of all dangers, to lavish remonstrances, invectives, and threats, which the justice of God, too rarely visible in such cases, sometimes deigned to fulfil.

Among the many sufferers whom he found on his way, it is natural to suppose that the exiles, who were so numerous in consequence of the discords which rent the Celtic races, would most of all call forth his sympathy. Himself an exile, he was the natural protector of all who were exiled.[227] He took under his special guardianship a banished Pict, of noble family, probably one of those who had received him with kindness, and listened to his teachings at the time of his first missions in Northern Caledonia. Columba confided, or, as

[225] "In domo cujus plebeii divitis. . . . Fortgini nomine . . . ubi cum sanctus hospitaretur, inter rusticanos contendentes duos . . . recta judicatione judicavit." — ADAMNAN, ii. 17.

[226] "Ubi, ait, habitas . . . tuam quam dicis provinciolam nunc barbari populantur vastatores. Quo audito, miser plebeius maritam et filios deplangere cœpit. Valde mœrentem consolans inquit: Vade, homuncule, vade, tua familiola tota in montem fugiens evasit: tua vero omnia pecuscula . . . omnemque supellectilem cum præda sævi raptores rapuere." — *Ibid.*, i. 46.

[227] "Almus pater, exsulum et depressorum pius patronus," says Manus O'Donnell (b. ii. c. 3), who was at once the grandnephew and biographer of the saint, with a sentiment only too natural to a scion of one of those great Irish families which have always preferred exile and destitution to apostasy.

the historian says, recommended, assigned *in manum*, according to the custom which came to be general in feudal times, his banished friend to a chief called Feradagh, who occupied the large island of Islay, south of Iona, praying him to conceal his guest for some months among his clan and dependants. A few days after he had solemnly accepted the trust, this villain had the noble exile treacherously murdered, no doubt for the sake of the articles of value he had with him. When he received the news, Columba cried, "It is not to me, it is to God, that this wretched man, whose name shall be effaced out of the book of life, has lied. It is summer now, but before autumn comes — before he can eat of the meat which he is fattening for his table — he shall die a sudden death, and be dragged to hell." The indignant old man's prophecy was reported to Feradagh, who pretended to laugh at it, but nevertheless kept it in his mind. Before the beginning of autumn, he ordered a fattened pig to be killed and roasted, and even before the animal was entirely cooked gave orders that part of it should be served to him, in order to prove, at the earliest possible moment, the falsehood of the prophesied vengeance. But scarcely had he taken up the morsel, when, before he had carried it to his mouth, he fell back and died. Those who were present admired and trembled to see how the Lord God honored and justified His prophet;[228] and those who knew Columba's life as a young man recalled to each other how, at the very beginning of his monastic life, the murderer of the innocent maiden had fallen dead at the sound of his avenging voice.[229]

Punishment of the exile's assassin.

In his just wrath against the spoilers of the poor and the persecutors of the Church, he drew back before no danger, not even before the assassin's dagger.

Robbers of royal race.

[228] "Quemdam de nobili Pictorum genere exsulem, in manum alicujus Feradachi divitis viri . . . diligenter assignans commendavit, ut in ejus comitatu, quasi unus de amicis, aliquos menses conversaretur. Quem cum tali commendatione de sancti manu viri commendatum suscepisset . . . trucidavit. . . . Non mihi, sed Deo infelix homunculus mentitus est, cujus nomen de libro vitæ delebitur. . . . Antequam de suilla degustet carne arboreo saginata fructu. . . . Despiciens irrisit sanctum. Scrofa nucum impinguata nucleis jugulatur . . . de qua celeriter ex interita partem sibi in veru celerius assari præcipit, ut de ea impatiens prægustans beati viri prophetationem destrueret . . . ad quam extensam manum priusquam ad os converteret . . . mortuus retro in dorsum cecidit. . . . Valde tremefacti, admirantes, Christum in sancto propheta honorificantes glorificarunt." — ADAMNAN, ii. 23.

[229] See *ante*, page 8.

Among the reivers who infested Scottish Caledonia, making armed incursions into their neighbors' lands, and carrying on that system of pillage which, up to the eighteenth century, continued to characterize the existence of the Scottish clans, he had distinguished the sons of Donnell, who belonged to a branch of the family which ruled the Dalriadian colony. Columba did not hesitate to excommunicate them. Exasperated by this sentence, one of these powerful ill-doers, named or surnamed Lamm-Dess (*Right-hand*) took advantage of a visit which the great abbot paid to a distant island, and undertook to murder him in his sleep. But Finn-Lugh, one of the saint's companions, having had some suspicion or instinctive presentiment of danger, and desiring to save his father's life by the sacrifice of his own, borrowed Columba's cowl, and wrapped himself in it. The assassin struck him whom he found clothed in the well-known costume of the abbot, and then fled. But the sacred vestment proved impenetrable armor to the generous disciple, who was not even wounded. Columba, when informed of the event, said nothing at the moment. But a year after, when he had returned to Iona, the abbot said to his community, "A year ago Lamm-Dess did his best to murder my dear Finn-Lugh in my place; now at this moment it is he who is being killed." And, in fact, the news shortly arrived that the assassin had just died under the sword of a warrior, who struck the fatal blow while invoking the name of Columba, in a fight which brought the depredations of these reivers to an end.[230]

Some time before, another criminal of the same family, called Joan, had chosen for his victim one of the hosts of Columba, one of those poor men whom the abbot had enriched by his blessing in exchange for the hospitality which even in their poverty they had not refused. This poor man lived on the wild and barren peninsula of Ardnamurchan, a sombre mass which rises up out of the waves of the Atlantic, and forms the most western point of the Scottish mainland. The benediction of the missionary had brought him good fortune, as had been the case with the peasant of Lochaber, and his five cows, too, had multiplied, and were then more

[230] "In insula Himba commoratus. . . . Ille vero sceleratus, cujus nomen latine *Manus dextera* dicitur. . . . Usque in hanc diem integratus est annus ex quo Lamm-Dess in quantum potuit Finn-Lughum meum meo jugulavit vice; sed et ipse, ut æstimo, hac in hora jugulatur. In aliqua virorum utrinque acta belligeratione, Cronani filii Baithani jaculo transfixus in nomine, ut fertur, sancti Columbæ, emisso, interimit, et post ejus interitum viri belligerare cessarunt." — ADAMNAN, ii. 24.

than a hundred in number. Columba was not satisfied with merely enriching his humble friend, but gave him also a place in his affections, and had even bestowed upon him his own name: so that all his neighbors called him *Columbain*, the friend of St. Columba. Three times in succession, Joan, the princely spoiler, had pillaged and ravaged the house of the enriched peasant, the friend of the abbot of Iona; the third time, as he went back with his bravos, laden with booty, to the boat which awaited him on the beach, he met the great abbot, whom he had supposed far distant. Columba reproved him for his exactions and crimes, and entreated him to give up his prey; but the reiver continued his course, and answered only by an immovable silence, until he had gained the beach and entered his boat. As soon as he was in his vessel he began to answer the abbot's prayers by mockeries and insults. Then the noble old man plunged into the sea, up to his knees, as if to cling to the boat which contained the spoils of his friend; and when it went off he remained for some time with his two hands raised towards heaven, praying with ardor. When his prayer was ended, he came out of the water, and returned to his companions, who were seated on a neighboring mound, to dry himself. After a pause he said to them, "This miserable man, this evil-doer, who despises Christ in his servants, shall never more land upon the shore from which you have seen him depart — he shall never touch land again. To-day a little cloud begins to rise in the north, and from that cloud comes a tempest that shall swallow him up, him and his; not one single soul shall escape to tell the tale." The day was fine, the sea calm, and the sky perfectly serene. Notwithstanding, the cloud which Columba had announced soon appeared; and the spectators, turning their eyes to the sea, saw the tempest gather, increase, and pursue the spoilers. The storm reached them between the islands of Mull and Colonsay, from whose shores their boat was seen to sink and perish, with all its crew and all its spoils.[231]

[231] "Columbanum, quem de paupere virtus benedictionis ejus ditem fecit, valde diligebat. . . . Quidam malefactor homo, bonorum persecutor . . . prosequebatur sancti amicum Columbæ. . . . Accidit ut tertia vice . . . beatum virum, quem quasi longius positum despexerat, ad navem revertens mœste obviam haberet. . . . Immitis et insuadibilis permanens . . . navimque cum præda ascendens, beatum virum subsannabat et deridebat. Quem sanctus ad mare usque prosecutus est, vitreasque intrans aquas usque ad genua æquoreas, levatis ad cœlum ambis manibus, Christum intente precatur. . . . Hic miserabilis homuncio, qui Christum in suis despexit servis, ad

We have all read in Cæsar's Commentaries how, when he landed on the shores of Britain, the standard-bearer of the tenth legion threw himself into the sea, up to the knees in water, to encourage his comrades. Thanks to the perverse complaisance of history for all feats of force, this incident is immortal. Cæsar, however, moved by depraved ambition, came but to oppress a free and innocent race, and to bring it under the odious yoke of Roman tyranny, of which, happily, it has retained no trace. How much grander and more worthy of recollection, I do not say to every Christian, but to every upright soul, is the sight offered to us at the other extremity of the great Britannic Isle, by this old monk, who also rushed into the sea up to his knees — but to pursue a savage oppressor, in the interest of an obscure victim, thus claiming for himself, under his legendary aureole, the everlasting greatness of humanity, justice, and pity!

CHAPTER VII.

COLUMBA'S LAST YEARS — HIS DEATH — HIS CHARACTER.

Columba the confidant of the joys and consoler of the sorrows of domestic life. — He blesses little Hector with the fair locks. — He prays for a woman in her delivery; he reconciles the wife of a pilot to her husband. — Vision of the saved wife who receives her husband in heaven. — He continues his missions to the end of his life. — Visions before death. — The Angels' Hill. — Increase of austerities. — Nettle-soup his sole food. — A supernatural light surrounds him during his nightly work and prayers. — His death is retarded for four years by the prayers of the community. — When this respite has expired, he takes leave of the monks at their work; he visits and blesses the granaries of the monastery. — He announces his death to his attendant Diarmid. — His farewell to his old white horse. — Last benediction to the isle of Iona; last work of transcription; last message to his community. — He dies in the church. — Review of his life and character.

portum, a quo nuper coram vobis emigravit, nunquam revertetur; sed nec ad alias quas appetit, terras . . . cum suis perveniet malis cooperatoribus. Hodie, quam mox videbitis, de nube a borea orta immitis immissa procella eum cum sociis submerget: nec de eis etiam unus remanebit fabulator. . . . Die serenissima, et ecce de mari oborta, sicut sanctus dixerat, nubes cum magno fragore venti emissa, raptorem cum præda inter Maleam et Colonsam insulas inveniens . . . submersit." — Adamnan, ii. 22.

By the side of the terrible acts of vengeance which have just been narrated, the student loves to find in this bold enemy of the wicked and the oppressor a gentle and familiar sympathy for all the affections as well as all the trials of domestic life. Rich and poor, kings and peasants, awoke in his breast the same kindly emotion, expressed with the same fulness. When King Aïdan brought his children to him, and spoke of his anxiety about their future lives, he did not content himself with seeing the eldest. "Have you none younger?" said the abbot; "bring them all — let me hold them in my arms and on my heart!" And when the younger children were brought, one fair-haired boy, Hector (Eochaidh Buidhe), came forward running, and threw himself upon the saint's knees. Columba held him long pressed to his heart, then kissed his forehead, blessed him, and prophesied for him a long life, a prosperous reign, and a great posterity.[232]

Let us listen while his biographer tells how he came to the aid of a woman in extremity, and how he made peace in a divided household. One day at Iona he suddenly stopped short while reading, and said with a smile to his monks, "I must now go and pray for a poor little woman who is in the pains of childbirth and suffers like a true daughter of Eve. She is down yonder in Ireland, and reckons upon my prayers, for she is my kinswoman, and of my mother's family." Upon this he hastened to the church, and when his prayer was ended returned to his brethren, saying — "She is delivered. The Lord Jesus, who deigned to be born of a woman, has come to her aid; this time she will not die."[233]

[232] "Sed nunc si alios juniores habes, ad me veniant, et quem ex eis elegerit Dominus regem, subito super meum irruit gremium . . . quibus accessis. . . . Echodius Buidhe adveniens in sinu ejus recubuit. Statimque sanctus eum osculatus benedixit." — Adamnan, i. 9. Columba had predicted that none of the four elder sons of the king should succeed him, and that they should all perish in war. The three eldest were actually killed in the battle for which Columba had rung the bells of his new monastery (see page 55), and the fourth also died sword in hand "in Saxonia bellica, in strage." The kings of Scotland, whose lineage is traced to the Dalriadians, were probably descendants of the fair-haired Hector.

[233] "A lectione surgit et subridens ait: Nunc ad oratorium mihi properandum est ut pro quadam misellula depreceer femina, quæ nunc in Hibernia nomen hujus inclamitans commemorat Columbæ, in magnis parturitionis, ut filia Evæ, difficillimæ torta punitionibus . . . quia et mihi cognationis est . . . de parentela matris meæ. . . . Ad ecclesiam currit. . . . Nunc propitius Dominus Jesus, de muliere progenitus, opportune miseræ subveniens, prospere prolem peperit; nec hac vice morietur. Eadem hora, nomen ejus invocans, absolnta salutem recuperavit. Ita ab aliquibus postea de Scotia et de eadem regione ubi mulier inhabitabat, transmeantibus, intimatum est." — Adamnan, ii. 40.

He reconciles a pilot's wife with her husband.

Another day, while he was visiting an island on the Irish coast, a pilot came to him to complain of his wife, who had taken an aversion for him. The abbot called her and reminded her of the duties imposed upon her by the law of the Lord. "I am ready to do everything," said the woman — "I will obey you in the hardest things you can command. I do not draw back from any of the cares of the house. I will go even, if it is desired, on pilgrimage to Jerusalem, or I will shut myself up in a nunnery — in short, I will do everything except live with him."

The abbot answered that there could be no question of pilgrimage or of a convent so long as her husband lived; "but," he added, "let us try to pray God, all three, fasting — you, your husband, and myself."

"Ah," said the woman, "I know that you can obtain even what is impossible from God." However, his proposal was carried out — the three fasted, and Columba passed the whole night in prayer without ever closing his eyes. Next morning he said to the woman, with the gentle irony which he so often employed, "Tell me to what convent are you bound after your yesterday's projects?" "To none," said the woman; "my heart has been changed to-night. I know not how I have passed from hate to love." And from that day until the hour of her death she lived in a tender and faithful union with her husband.[234]

But Columba fortunately was connected with other households more united, where he could admire the happiness of his friends without feeling himself compelled to make peace. From his sanctuary at Iona his habitual solicitude and watchful sympathy followed them to their last hour. One day he was alone with one of the Saxons whom he had converted and attached to his community, and who was the baker of the monks; while this stranger prepared his bread, he heard

[234] "De quodam gubernela. . . . De sua querebatur uxore quæ . . . eum ad maritalem nullo modo admittebat concubitum. . . . Omnia quæcumque mihi præceperis, sum parata, quamlibet sint valde laboriosa, adimplere, excepto uno, ut me nullo modo in uno lecto dormire cum Lugneo. Omnem domus curam exercere non recuso, aut etiam si jubeas, maria transiens in aliquo puellarum monasterio permanere. . . . Scio quod tibi impossibile non erit ut ea quæ . . . vel impossibilia videmus, a Deo impetrata donentur. . . . Nocte subsequenti sanctus insomnis pro eis deprecatus est. . . . O femina, si, ut hesterna dicebas die, parata hodie es ad feminarum emigrare monasteriolum? . . . Nunc quem heri oderam, hodie amo: cor enim meum hac nocte præterita, quo modo ignoro, in me immutatum est de odio in amorem. . . . Anima ejusdem maritæ indissociabiliter in amore conglutinata est mariti, ut illa maritalis concubitus debita . . . nullo modo deinceps recusaret." — ADAMNAN, ii. 41.

the abbot say, looking up to heaven — "Oh! happy, happy woman! She goes into heaven with a guard of angels." Exactly a year after, the abbot and the Saxon baker were again together. "I see the woman," said Columba, "of whom I spoke to thee last year coming down from heaven to meet the soul of her husband, who has just died. She contends with powerful enemies for that dear soul, by the help of the holy angels: she gains the day, she triumphs, because her goodman has been a just man — and the two are united again in the home of everlasting consolation."[235]

This vision was preceded and followed by many others of the same description, in which the blessed death of many bishops and monks, his friends and contemporaries, were announced to him. They seem to have been intended to give him a glimpse of that heaven into which God was shortly to call him. Nor was it only at Iona that these supernatural graces were accorded to him, for he did not limit his unwearied activity to the narrow enclosure of that island, any more in the decline of his life than in the earlier period of his emigration. Up to old age he continued to have sufficient strength and courage to return to the most northern regions where he had preached the faith to the Picts; and it was in one of his last missionary journeys, when upon the banks of Loch Ness, to the north of the great line of waters which cuts Caledonia in two, at a distance of fifty leagues from Iona, that he was permitted to see the angels come to meet the soul of the old Pict, who, faithful during all his life to the law of nature, received baptism, and with it eternal salvation, from the great missionary's hands.[236]

At this period the angels, whom he saw carrying to heaven the soul of the just and penitent, and aiding the believing wife to make an entrance there for her husband, continually appeared to him and hovered about him. Making all possible allowance for the exaggerations and fables which the proverbial credulity of Celtic nations have added to the

[235] "Quidam religiosus frater, Genereus nomine, Saxo, pistor, opus pistorum exercens. . . . Felix mulier, felix bene morata, cujus animam nunc angeli Dei ad paradisum evehunt. . . . Ecce mulier, de qua te præsente dixeram præterito anno. Nunc mariti sui religiosi cujusdam plebeii in aere obviat animæ, et cum sanctis angelis contra æmulas pro eo belligerat potestates; quorum adminiculo ejusdem homuncionis justitia suffragante, a dæmoniacis belligerationibus erepta, ad æternæ refrigerationis locum anima ipsius est perducta." — ADAMNAN, iii. 10.

[236] See *ante*, page 50. "Ultra Britanniæ Dorsum iter agens, secus Nisæ fluminis lacum . . . sanctus senex." — *Ibid.*, iii. 14.

legends of their saints,[237] no Christian will be tempted to deny the verified narratives which bear witness, in Columba's case as well as in that of the other saints, to supernatural appearances which enriched his life, and especially his old age. Those wonderful soldiers of virtue and Christian truth needed such miracles to help them to support the toils and live through the trials of their dangerous mission. They required to ascend from time to time into celestial regions to find strength there for their continual struggle against all obstacles and perils and continually renewed temptations — and to learn to brave the enmities, the savage manners, and blind hatreds of the nations whom it was the aim of their lives to set free.

"Let no one follow me to-day," Columba said one morning with unusual severity to the assembled community: "I would be alone in the little plain to the west of the isle." He was obeyed; but a brother, more curious and less obedient than the rest, followed him far off, and saw him, erect and motionless, with his hands and his eyes raised to heaven, standing on a sandy hillock, where he was soon surrounded by a crowd of angels, who came to bear him company and to talk with him. The hillock has to this day retained the name of the Angels' Hill.[238] And the citizens of the celestial country, as they were called at Iona, came often to console and strengthen their future companion during the long winter nights which he passed in prayer in some retired corner, voluntarily exposed to all the torments of sleeplessness and cold.[239]

For as he approached the end of his career this great servant of God consumed his strength in vigils, fasts, and dan-

[237] Let us quote on this point, from the most illustrious of hagiographers, Bollandus himself, in his prefatory remarks to the life of the first Irish saint who came before him: "Multa continet admiranda portenta, sed usitata apud gentem illam simplicem et sanctam; neque sacris dogmatibus aut Dei erga electos suos suavissimæ providentiæ repugnantia; sunt tamen fortassis nonnulla imperitorum libratorum culpa vitiata aut amplificata. Quod in gentilium suorum rebus gestis animadverti oportere nos docuit Henricus Fitzsimon societatis nostræ theologus, egregio rerum usu præditus. . . . Satis est lectorem monuisse ut cum discretione ea legat quæ prodigiosa, et crebro similia miracula commemorant, nisi ab sapientibus scripta auctoribus sunt." — *Acta Sanctorum*, January, vol. i. p. 43.

[238] *Cnocan Aingel* (colliculus Angelorum), in the map of the island by Graham.

[239] "Cum ingenti animadversione dixit: Hodie . . . solus exire cupio, nemo itaque ex vobis me sequatur. . . . Cœlestis patriæ cives . . . sanctum virum orantem circumstare . . . albatis induti vestibus, et post aliquam sermocinationem cum beato viro. . . . Quantæ et quales ad beatum virum in hyemalibus plerumque noctibus insomnen, et in locis remotioribus, aliis quiescentibus, orantem, angelicæ fuerint et suaves frequentationes." — ADAMNAN, iii. 16.

gerous macerations. His life, which had been so full of generous struggles, hard trial, and toil in the service of God and his neighbor, seemed to him neither full enough nor pure enough. In proportion as the end drew near he redoubled his austerities and mortifications. Every night, according to one of his biographers, he plunged into cold water and remained there for the time necessary to recite an entire psalter.[240] One day, when, bent by age, he sought, perhaps in a neighboring island, a retirement still more profound than usual, in which to pray, he saw a poor woman gathering wild herbs and even nettles, who told him that her poverty was such as to forbid her all other food. Upon which the old abbot reproached himself bitterly that he had not yet come to that point. "See," he said, "this poor woman, who finds her miserable life worth the trouble of being thus prolonged; and we, who profess to deserve heaven by our austerities, we live in luxury!" When he went back to his monastery he gave orders that he should be served with no other food than the wild and bitter herbs with which the beggar supported her existence; and he severely reproved his minister, Diarmid,[241] who had come from Ireland with him, when he, out of compassion for his master's old age and weakness, threw a little butter into the caldron in which this miserable fare was cooked.[242]

A supernatural light surrounds him during his nocturnal work and prayers.

The celestial light which was soon to receive him began already to surround him like a garment or a shroud. His monks told each other that the solitary cell in the isle of Himba, near Iona, which he had built for himself, was lighted up every night by a great light, which could be seen through the chinks of the door and keyhole, while the abbot chanted unknown canticles till daybreak. After having remained

[240] O'Donnell, iii. 37. This incredible power of supporting cold in the damp and icy climate of the British Isles is one of the most marked features in the penances which the Irish saints inflicted on themselves. — See Colgan, *Acta SS. Hiberniæ*.

[241] MS. quoted by Reeves, p. 245, Appendix. The name of Diarmid or Diormid — the same as that of the king against whom Columba raised a civil war — was at a later date changed into that of Dermott, which is still to be found among the Irish.

[242] "Cum senio jam gravatus in quodam secessu ab aliis remotiori orationi vocali intentus deambularet. . . . Ecce paupercula hæc femina. . . . Et quid nos qui . . . laxius vivimus? . . . Diermitius . . . qui debebat eam miseliam escam parare . . . per fistulam instillatoriam modicum liquefacti butyri et ollæ . . . infudit. . . . Sic Christi miles ultimam senectutem in continua carnis macerationc usque ad exitum . . . perduxit." — O'Donnell, *Vita Quinta*, iii. 32.

there three days and nights without food, he came out, full of joy at having discovered the mysterious meaning of several texts of Holy Scripture, which up to that time he had not understood.[243] When he returned to Iona to die, continuing faithful to his custom of spending a great part of the night in prayer, he bore about with him everywhere the miraculous light which already surrounded him like the nimbus of his holiness. The entire community was involuntarily agitated by the enjoyment of that foretaste of paradise. One winter's night, a young man who was destined to succeed Columba as fourth abbot of Iona remained in the church while the others slept: all at once he saw the abbot come in preceded by a golden light which fell from the heights of the vaulted roof, and lighted all the corners of the building, even including the little lateral oratory where the young monk hid himself in alarm.[244] All who passed during the night before the church, while their old abbot prayed, were startled by this light, which dazzled them like lightning.[245] Another of the young monks, whose education was specially directed by the abbot himself, resolved to ascertain whether the same illumination existed in Columba's cell; and notwithstanding that he had been expressly forbidden to do so, he got up in the night and went groping to the door of the cell to look in, but fled immediately, blinded by the light that filled it.[246]

These signs, which were the forerunners of his deliverance, showed themselves for several years towards the end of his life, which he believed and hoped was nearer its termination than it proved to be. But this remnant of existence, from which he sighed to be liberated, was held fast by the filial love of his disciples, and the ardent prayers of so many new Christian communities founded or ministered to

[243] "De qua domo immensæ claritatis radii, per rimulas valvarum et clavium foramina, erumpentes, noctu videbantur. Carmina quoque spiritalia et ante inaudita decantari ab eo audiebantur. . . . Scripturarum . . . quæque obscura et difficillima, plana et luce clarius aperta, mundissimi cordis oculis patebant." — ADAMNAN, iii. 18.

[244] "Simulque cum eo (ingreditur) aurea lux, de cœli altitudine descendens, totum illud ecclesiæ spatium replens . . . et penetrans usque in illius exedriolæ separatum conclave ubi se Virgnous in quantum potuit latitare conabatur . . . exterritus." — *Ibid*, iii. 19. Virgnous, or Fergna Brit, fourth abbot of Iona, from 605 to 625. He told this incident to his nephew, by whom it was told to Adamnan.

[245] "Fulguralis lux." — *Ibid.*, iii. 20.

[246] "Cuidam suo sapientiam discenti alumno . . . qui, contra interdictum, in noctis silentio accessit . . . callide explorans . . . oculos ad clavium foramina posuit. . . . Repletum hospitiolum cœlestis splendore claritudinis, quam non sustinens intueri, aufugit." — *Ibid*, iii. 20.

by his zealous care. Two of his monks, one Irish and one Saxon, of the number of those whom he admitted to his cell to help him in his labor or to execute his instructions, saw him one day change countenance, and perceived in his face a sudden expression of the most contrary emotions: first a beatific joy, which made him raise to heaven a look full of the sweetest and tenderest gratitude; but a minute after this ray of supernatural joy gave place to an expression of heavy and profound sadness. The two spectators pressed him with questions which he refused to answer. At length they threw themselves at his knees and begged him, with tears, not to afflict them by hiding what had been revealed to him. "Dear children," he said to them, "I do not wish to afflict you. . . . Know, then, that it is thirty years to-day since I began my pilgrimage in Caledonia. I have long prayed God to let my exile end with this thirtieth year, and to recall me to the heavenly country. When you saw me so joyous, it was because I could already see the angels who came to seek my soul. But all at once they stopped short, down there upon that rock at the farthest limit of the sea which surrounds our island, as if they would approach to take me, and could not. And, in truth, they could not, because the Lord had paid less regard to my ardent prayer than to that of the many churches which have prayed for me, and which have obtained, against my will, that I should still dwell in this body for four years. This is the reason of my sadness. But in four years I shall die without being sick; in four years, I know it and see it, they will come back, these holy angels, and I shall take my flight with them towards the Lord." [247]

He takes leave of the monks at their work.

At the end of the four years thus fixed he arranged everything for his departure. It was the end of May, and it was his desire to take leave of the monks who worked in the fields in the only fertile part of Iona, the western side. His great age prevented him from walking, and he was drawn in a car by oxen. When he

[247] "Facies ejus subita, mirifica et lætifica hilaritate effloruit. . . . Incomparabili repletus gaudio, valde lætificabatur. Tum illa sapida et suavis lætificatio in mœstam convertitur tristificationem. . . . Duo . . . qui . . . ejus tugurioli ad januam stabant . . . illacrymati, ingemisculantes. . . . Quia vos, ait, amo, tristificari nolo. . . . Usque in hunc præsentem diem, meæ in Britannia peregrinationis terdeni completi sunt anni. . . . Sed ecce nunc, subito retardati, ultra nostræ fretum insulæ stant in rupe . . . cum sanctis mihi obviaturis illo tempore, ad Dominum lætus emigrabo." — ADAMNAN, iii. 22.

reached the laborers he said to them, "I greatly desired to die a month ago, on Easter-day, and it was granted to me; but I preferred to wait a little longer, in order that the festival might not be changed into a day of sadness for you." And when all wept he did all he could to console them. Then turning towards the east, from the top of his rustic chariot he blessed the island and all its inhabitants — a blessing which, according to local tradition, was like that of St. Patrick in Ireland, and drove, from that day, all vipers and venomous creatures out of the island.[248]

He visits and blesses the monastic granary.

On Saturday in the following week he went, leaning on his faithful attendant Diarmid, to bless the granary of the monastery. Seeing there two great heaps of corn, the fruit of the last harvest, he said, "I see with joy that my dear monastic family, if I must leave them this year, will not at least suffer from famine." "Dear father," said Diarmid, "why do you thus sadden us by talking of your death?" "Ah, well," said the abbot, "here is a little secret which I will tell thee if thou wilt swear on thy knees to tell no one before I am gone. To-day is Saturday, the day which the Holy Scriptures call Sabbath or rest. And it will be truly my day of rest, for it shall be the last of my laborious life. This very night I shall enter into the path of my fathers. Thou weepest, dear Diarmid, but console thyself; it is my Lord Jesus Christ who deigns to invite me to rejoin Him; it is He who has revealed to me that my summons will come to night."[249]

His farewell to the old white horse.

Then he left the storehouse to return to the monastery, but when he had gone half-way stopped to rest at a spot which is still marked by one of the ancient crosses of Iona.[250] At this moment an ancient and faithful servant, the old white horse which had been em-

[248] "Ad visitandos fratres operarios senex senio fessus, plaustro vectus, pergit. . . . In occidua insulæ Ionæ laborantes parte . . . ut erat in vehiculo sedens, ad orientem suam convertens faciem, insulam cum insulanis benedixit habitatoribus. . . . Ex qua die, viperarum venena trisulcarum linguarum usque in hodiernam diem nullo modo aut homini aut pecori nocere potuere." — ADAMNAN, ii. 28, iii. 53.

[249] "Quod cum benedixisset et duos in eo frugum sequestratos acervos. . . . Valde congratulor meis familiaribus monachis, quia hoc etiam anno si a vobis emigrare me oportuerit, annum sufficientem habebitis. . . . Aliquem arcanum habeo sermusculum (*sic*). . . . Et mihi vere est sabbatum hæc hodierna dies . . . in qua post meas laborationum molestias sabbatizo. . . . Jam enim Dominus meus Jesus Christus me invitare dignatur." — *Ibid*, iii. 23.

[250] The monument called *Maclean's Cross*.

ployed to carry milk from the dairy daily to the monastery, came towards him. He came and put his head upon his master's shoulder, as if to take leave of him. The eyes of the old horse had an expression so pathetic that they seemed to be bathed in tears. Diarmid would have sent the animal away, but the good old man forbade him. "The horse loves me," he said, "leave him with me; let him weep for my departure. The Creator has revealed to this poor animal what he has hidden from thee, a reasonable man." Upon which, still caressing the faithful brute, he gave him a last blessing.[251] When this was done he used the remnants of his strength to climb to the top of a hillock from which he could see all the isle and the monastery, and there lifted up his hands to pronounce a prophetic benediction on the sanctuary he had created. "This little spot, so small and low, shall be greatly honored, not only by the Scots kings and people, but also by foreign chiefs and barbarous nations; and it shall be venerated even by the saints of other Churches."

After this he went down to the monastery, entered his cell, and began to work for the last time. He was then occupied in transcribing the Psalter. When he had come to the 33d Psalm and the verse, *Inquirentes autem Dominum non deficient omni bono*, he stopped short. "I must stop here," he said, "Baithen will write the rest." Baithen, as has been seen, was the steward of Iona, and was to become its abbot. After this the aged saint was present at the vigil service before Sunday in the church. When he returned to his cell he seated himself upon the naked stones which served the septuagenarian for bed and pillow, and which were shown for nearly a century near his tomb.[252] Then he

[251] "Media via ubi postea crux molari lapide infixa, hodieque stans . . . in margine cernitur viæ. . . . Senio fessus, paululum sedens. . . . Ecce albus occurrit caballus, obediens servitor . . . caput in sinu ejus ponens . . . dominum a se suum mox emigraturum . . . cœpit plangere uberumque quasi homo fundere et valde spumeas flere lacrymas. . . . Sine hunc, sine nostri amatorem, ut in hunc meum sinum fletus effundat amarissimi plangoris. . . . Mœstum a se equum benedixit ministratorem." — ADAMNAN, iii. 23.

[252] "Monticellum monasterio supereminentem ascendens, in vertice ejus paululum stans, elevatis manibus, benedixit cœnobium: Huic loco, quamlibet angusto et vili, non tantum Scotorum reges cum populis, sed etiam barbararum et exterarum gentium regnatores cum plebibus suis. . . . Sedebat in tugurio Psalterium scribens. . . . Post talem perscriptum versum paginæ, ad vespertinalem dominicæ noctis missam" (note this singular expression for *vigiles*) "ingreditur ecclesiam. Qua consummata, ad hospitiolum revertens, in lectulo residet pernox, ubi pro stramine nudam habebat petram et pro pulvillo lapidem, qui hodie quasi quidam juxta sepulcrum ejus titulus stat monumenti." — *Ibid*, iii. 23.

intrusted to his only companion a last message for the community: "Dear children, this is what I command with my last words—let peace and charity, a charity mutual and sincere, reign always among you! If you act thus, following the example of the saints, God who strengthens the just will help you, and I, who shall be near Him, will intercede on your behalf, and you shall obtain of Him not only all the necessities of the present life in sufficient quantity, but still more the rewards of eternal life, reserved for those who keep His law.[253]

These were his last words. As soon as the midnight bell had rung for the matins of the Sunday festival, he rose and hastened before the other monks to the church, where he knelt down before the altar. Diarmid followed him, but as the church was not yet lighted he could only find him by groping and crying in a plaintive voice, "Where art thou, my father?" He found Columba lying before the altar, and, placing himself at his side, raised the old abbot's venerable head upon his knees. The whole community soon arrived with lights, and wept as one man at the sight of their dying father. Columba opened his eyes once more, and turned them to his children on either side with a look full of serene and radiant joy. Then with the aid of Diarmid he raised, as best he might, his right hand to bless them all; his hand dropped, the last sigh came from his lips; and his face remained calm and sweet like that of a man who in his sleep had seen a vision of heaven.[254]

He dies in the church, 9th June, 597.

[253] "Hæc vobis, o filioli, novissima commendo verba, ut inter vos mutuam et non fictam habeatis charitatem, cum pace." — Adamnan, iii. 23.

[254] "Post quæ conticuit. . . . Vix media nocte pulsata personante clocca, festinus surgens ad ecclesiam pergit, citiorque ceteris currens, solus introgressus juxta altare. Diormitius ecclesiam ingrediens flebili ingeminat voce: Ubi es, pater? Et necdum allatis fratrum lucernis, per tenebras palpans, sanctum ante altarium recubantem invenit: quem paululum erigens et juxta sedens sanctum in suo gremio posuit caput. Et inter hæc cœtus monachorum cum luminaribus accurrens, patre viso moriente, cœpit plangere. Et, ut *ab aliquibus qui præsentes inerant didicimus*, sanctus, necdum egrediente animo, apertis sursum oculis, ad utrumque latus cum mira vultus hilaritate et lætitia circumspiciebat; sanctos scilicet obvios intuens angelos. Diormitius tum sanctam sublevat ad benedicendum sancti monachorum chorum dexteram manum. Sed et ipse venerabilis pater in quantum poterat, simul suam movebat manum. Et post sanctam benedictionem taliter significatam, continuo spiritum exhalavit. Facies rubens, et mirum in modum angelica visione exhilarata, in tantum remansit, ut non quasi mortui, sed dormientis videretur viventis." — Adamnan, iii. 23. The narrative of Adamnan is an almost literal reproduction of that of Cummian, the first known biographer of the saint.

Such was the life and death of the first great apostle of Great Britain. We have lingered, perhaps, too long on the grand form of this monk, rising up before us from the midst of the Hebridean sea, who, for the third part of a century, spread over those sterile isles, and gloomy distant shores, a pure and fertilizing light. In a confused age and unknown region he displayed all that is greatest and purest, and, it must be added, most easily forgotten in human genius: the gift of ruling souls by ruling himself.[255] To select the most marked and graphic incidents from the general tissue of his life, and those most fit to unfold that which attracts the modern reader — that is, his personal character and influence upon contemporary events — from a world of minute details having almost exclusive reference to matters supernatural or ascetical, has been no easy task. But when this is done, it becomes comparatively easy to represent to ourselves the tall old man, with his fine and regular features, his sweet and powerful voice, the Irish tonsure high on his shaven head, and his long locks falling behind, clothed with his monastic cowl, and seated at the prow of his coracle, steering through the misty archipelago and narrow lakes of the north of Scotland, and bearing from isle to isle and from shore to shore, light, justice, and truth, the life of the conscience and of the soul.

One loves above all to study the depths of that soul, and the changes which had taken place in it since its youth. No more than his namesake of Luxeuil, the monastic apostle of Burgundy, was he of the Picts and Scots a *Columba*. Gentleness was of all qualities precisely the one in which he failed the most. At the beginning of his life the future abbot of Iona showed himself still more than the abbot of Luxeuil to be animated by all the vivacities of his age, associated with all the struggles and discords of his race and country. He was vindictive, passionate, bold, a man of strife, born a soldier rather than a monk, and known, praised, and blamed as a soldier — so that even in his lifetime he was invoked in fight;[256] and continued a soldier, *insulanus miles*,[257] even upon the island rock from which he rushed forth to preach, convert, enlighten, reconcile, and reprimand both princes and nations, men and women, laymen and clerks.

[255] "Animarum dux," said the angel who announced his birth to his mother. This expression is also found in Adamnan (i. 2), but placed in the mouth of Columba, and applied by him to another saint.

[256] See *ante*, page 94, note.

[257] Adamnan, *Præfat.*

He was at the same time full of contradictions and contrasts — at once tender and irritable, rude and courteous, ironical and compassionate, caressing and imperious, grateful and revengeful — led by pity as well as by wrath, ever moved by generous passions, and among all passions fired to the very end of his life by two which his countrymen understand the best, the love of poetry and the love of country. Little inclined to melancholy when he had once surmounted the great sorrow of his life, which was his exile; little disposed even, save towards the end, to contemplation or solitude, but trained by prayer and austerities to triumphs of evangelical exposition; despising rest, untiring in mental and manual toil;[258] born for eloquence, and gifted with a voice so penetrating and sonorous that it was thought of afterwards as one of the most miraculous gifts that he had received of God;[259] frank and loyal, original and powerful in his words as in his actions — in cloister and mission and parliament, on land and on sea, in Ireland as in Scotland, always swayed by the love of God and of his neighbor, whom it was his will and pleasure to serve with an impassioned uprightness. Such was Columba. Besides the monk and missionary there was in him the makings of a sailor, soldier, poet, and orator. To us, looking back, he appears a personage as singular as he is lovable, in whom, through all the mists of the past and all the cross-lights of legend, the man may still be recognized under the saint — a man capable and worthy of the supreme honor of holiness, since he knew how to subdue his inclinations, his weakness, his instincts, and his passions, and to transform them into docile and invincible weapons for the salvation of souls and the glory of God.

[258] "Nullum etiam unius horæ intervallum transire poterat, quo non orationi, aut lectioni, vel scriptioni, vel etiam alicui operationi, incumberet. Jejunationum et vigilarum indefessis laboribus, sine ulla intermissione, die noctuque ita occupatus, ut supra humanam possibilitatem pondus uniuscujusque videretur specialis operis. Et inter hæc omnibus carus, hilarem semper faciem ostendens, spiritus sancti gaudio intimis lætificabatur præcordiis." — Adamnan, *Præf.* ii.

[259] "Ab expertis quibusdam de voce beati psalmodiæ viri indubitanter traditum est. Quæ vox in ecclesia cum fratribus decantatis, aliquando per quingentos passus . . . aliquando per mille incomparabiliter elevata modo audiebatur. Mirum dictu! Nec in auribus eorum qui secum in ecclesia stabant vox ejus modum humanæ vocis in clamoris granditate excedebat. . . . Similiter enim in auribus prope et longe audientium personabat." — *Ibid.*, i. 37. In another passage he calls it "sermone nitidus."

CHAPTER VIII.

SPIRITUAL DESCENDANTS OF ST. COLUMBA.

His posthumous glory: miraculous visions on the night of his death: rapid extension of his worship. — Note upon his supposed journey to Rome, and residence there, in search of the relics of St. Martin. — His solitary funeral and tomb at Iona. — His translation to Ireland, where he rests between St. Patrick and St. Bridget. — He is, like Bridget, feared by the Anglo-Norman conquerors. — John de Courcy and Richard Strongbow. — The *Vengeance of Columba*. — Supremacy of Iona over the Celtic churches of Caledonia and the north of Ireland. — Singular privilege and primacy of the abbot of Iona in respect to bishops. — The ecclesiastical organization of Celtic countries exclusively monastic. — Moderation and respect of Columba for the episcopal rank. — He left behind him no special rule. — That which he followed differed in no respect from the usual customs of the monastic order, which proves the exact observance of all the precepts of the Church, and the chimerical nature of all speculations upon the primitive Protestantism of the Celtic Church. — But he founded an order, which lasted several centuries under the title of the Family of Columb-Kill. — The clan and family spirit was the governing principle of Scottish monasticism. — Baithen and the eleven first successors of Columba at Iona were all members of the same race. — The two lines, lay and ecclesiastical, of the great founders. — The headquarters of the order transferred from Iona to Kells, one of Columba's foundations in Ireland. — The *Coarbs*. — Posthumous influence of Columba upon the Church of Ireland. — *Lex Columcille*. — Monastic Ireland in the seventh century the principal centre of Christian knowledge and piety. — Each monastery a school. — The transcription of manuscripts, which had been one of Columba's favorite occupations, continued and extended by his family even upon the continent. — Historic Annals. — The *Festiloge* of Angus the Culdee. — Note upon the Culdees, and upon the foundation of St. Andrews in Scotland. — Propagation of Irish monasticism abroad. — Irish saints and monasteries in France, Germany, and Italy. — The Irish saint Cathal venerated in Calabria under the name of *San Cataldo*. — Monastic university of Lismore: crowd of foreign students, especially of Anglo-Saxons, in Irish monasteries. — Confusion of temporal affairs in Ireland. — Civil wars and massacres. — Notes upon king-monks. — Patriotic intervention of the monks. — Adamnan, biographer and ninth successor of Columba, and his *Law of the Innocents*. — They are driven from their cloisters by the English. — Influence of Columba in Scotland. — Traces of the ancient Caledonian Church in the Hebrides. — Apostolical mission of Kentigern in the country between the Clyde and the Mersey. — His meeting with Columba. — His connection

with the king and queen of Strath-Clyde. — Legend of the queen's ring. — Neither Columba nor Kentigern acted upon the Anglo-Saxons, who continued pagans, and maintained a threatening attitude. — The last bishops of conquered Britain desert their churches.

The influence of Columba, as of all men really superior to their fellows, and especially of the saints, far from ceasing with his life, went on increasing after his death. The supernatural character of his virtues, the miracles which were attributed to his intercession with God, had for a long time left scarcely any doubt as to his sanctity. It was universally acknowledged after his death, and has since remained uncontested among all the Celtic races. The visions and miracles which went to prove it would fill a volume.

Miraculous visions on the night of his death.

On the night, and at the very hour, of his death, a holy old man in a distant monastery in Ireland, one of those whom the Celtic chroniclers call the victorious soldiers of Christ,[260] saw with the eyes of his mind the isle of Iona, which he had never visited, flooded with miraculous light, and all the vault of heaven full of an innumerable army of shining angels, who went, singing celestial canticles, to bring away the holy soul of the great missionary. Upon the banks of a river,[261] in Columba's native land, another holy monk, while occupied with several others in fishing, saw, as also did his companions, the sky lighted up by a pillar of fire, which rose from earth to the highest heaven, and disappeared only after lighting up the whole scene with a radiance as of the sun at noon.[262]

[260] "Sanctus senex, Christi miles . . . justus et sapiens . . . cuidam æque Christiano militi . . . suam enarravit visionem. . . . Christi victor miles."

[261] The Finn, which, after having marked the boundary between the two countries of Tyrone and Donegal, throws itself into the Foyle, which flows by Derry.

[262] "Hac præterita nocte media, . . . et in hora beati exitus ejus Ionam insulam, ad quam corpore nunquam perveni, totam angelorum claritudine in spiritu vidi irradiatam, totaque spatia aeris usque ad æthera cœlorum eorumdem angelorum claritate illustrata; qui ad sane ipsius animam preferendam, de cœlis missi descenderunt innumeri. Altisona carminalia et valde suavia audivi angelicorum cœtuum cantica eodem momento egressionis inter angelicos sanctæ ipsius animæ ascendentes choros. . . . Ego et alii mecum viri laborantes in captura piscium in valle piscosi fluminis Fendæ subito totum aerei illustratum cœli spatium vidimus . . . et ecce, quasi quædam pergrandis ignea apparuit columna, quæ in illa nocte media sursum ascendens ita nobis videbatur mundum illustrare totum sicuti æsteus et meridianus sol, et postquam illa penetravit columna cœlum, quasi post occasum solis tenebræ succedunt. Non tantum nos . . . sed et alii multi piscatores, qui sparsim per diversas fluminales piscinas ejusdem fluminis piscabantur, sicut nobis post retulerunt, simili apparitione visa, magno pavore sunt perculsi." Adamnan takes pains to prove that he received the account of those nocturnal visions,

Thus began the long succession of wonders by which the worship of Columba's holy memory is characterized among the Celtic races. This worship, which seemed at one time concentrated in one of the smallest islets of the Atlantic, extended in less than a century after his death, not only throughout all Ireland and Great Britain, but into Gaul, Spain and Italy, and even to Rome,[263] which some legends, insufficiently verified, describe him as having visited during the last years of his life, in order to renew the bonds of respectful affection and spiritual union which are supposed to have united him to the great pope St. Gregory, who ascended the pontifical throne seven years before the death of the Hebridean apostle.[264]

Rapid extension of his worship even at Rome.

It was expected that all the population of the neighboring districts would hasten to Iona and fill the island during the funeral of the great

His funeral and his grave at Iona.

the first, from old monks at Iona, to whom it had been told by a hermit from Ireland; and the second, from the very monk who had directed the fishing on that memorable night.

[263] "Et hæc etiam eidem beatæ memoriæ viro a Deo non mediocris est collata gratia qua nomen ejus non tantum per totam nostram Scotiam et omnium totius orbis insularum maximam Britanniam, clare divulgari promeruit, in hac parva et extrema oceani Britannici commoratus (*sic*) insula; sed etiam ad trigonam usque Hispaniam, et Gallias, et ultra Alpes Penninas Italiam sitam pervenire, ipsam quoque Romanam civitatem, quæ caput est omnium civitatum." — ADAMNAN, *in finem.*

[264] According to an account given by Colgan (p. 473), the famous hymn *Altus Prosator* was composed by Columba while the envoys of St. Gregory the Great were at Iona, and was sent by him to the Pontiff, who listened to it standing up, in token of respect. We are obliged to acknowledge the same want of proof in the tradition which connects the holy abbot of Iona with the great wonder-worker of the Gauls, St. Martin, and which attributes to him a work similar to that of the great archbishop who, in our own days, has undertaken to restore to an honorable condition the profaned grave of his greatest predecessor, by rebuilding the basilica which covers that glorious sepulchre. According to the narrative of O'Donnell (book iii. c. 27), Columba, on his return from Rome, went to Tours to seek the gospel which had lain for a century upon the breast of St. Martin, and carried it to Derry, where this relic was exhibited up to the twelfth century. The people of Tours had forgotten the situation of St. Martin's grave; and when they begged Columba to find it for them, he consented, only on condition of being allowed to keep for himself everything found in St. Martin's tomb, except his bones. The legend adds that Columba left one of his disciples there, the same Mochonna who had followed him first to Iona, and that he afterwards became bishop of Tours. This alone is sufficient to disprove the narrative, since at the only period in the life of Columba at which this journey could have taken place, the bishop of Tours was St. Gregory the historian, whose predecessor and successor are well known. Let us remark, at the same time, the curious traditional ties between the Church of Tours and that of Ireland, which lasted for several centuries. St. Patrick, the apostle of Ireland, is supposed to have been the grand-nephew of St. Martin, and to have been encouraged by him in his mission.

abbot; and this had even been intimated to him before he died. But he had prophesied that the fact would be otherwise, and that his monastic family alone should perform the ceremonies of his burial. And it happened, accordingly, during the three days which were occupied with those rites, that a violent wind made it impossible for any boat to reach the island. Thus this friend and counsellor of princes and nations, this great traveller, this apostle of an entire nation which, during a thousand years, was to honor him as its patron saint, lay solitary upon his bier, in the little church of his island retirement; and his burial was witnessed only by his monks. But his grave, though it was not dug in presence of an enthusiastic crowd, as had been looked for, was not the less visited and surrounded by floods of successive generations, who for more than two hundred years crowded there to venerate the relics of the holy missionary, and to drink the pure waters of his doctrine and example at the fountain-head.

The remains of Columba rested here in peace up to the ninth century, until the moment when Iona, like all the British isles, fell a prey to the ravages of the Danes. These cruel and insatiable pirates seem to have been attracted again and again by the wealth of the offerings that were lavished upon the tomb of the apostle of Caledonia. They burnt the monastery for the first time in 801; again in 805, when it contained only so small a number as sixty-four monks; and finally, a third time, in 877. To save from their rapacity a treasure which no pious liberality could replace, the body of St. Columba was carried to Ireland. And it is the unvarying tradition of Irish annals that it was deposited finally at Down, in an episcopal monastery not far from the western shore of the island, between the great Monastery of Bangor on the north, from which came Columbanus of Luxeuil, and Dublin, the future capital of Ireland, to the south. There already lay the relics of Patrick and of Bridget; and thus was verified one of the prophecies in Irish verse attributed to Columba, in which he says

Removal of his remains to Down, in Ireland, where they were laid by those of Patrick and of Bridget.

> "They shall bury me first at Iona;
> But, by the will of the living God,
> It is at Dun that I shall rest in my grave,
> With Patrick and with Bridget the immaculate.
> Three bodies in one grave."[265]

[265] See Reeves, pp. lxxix. 313, 317, 462; compare Colgan, p. 446. These

The three names have remained since that time inseparably united in the dauntless heart and fervent tenacious memory of the Irish people. It is to Columba that the oppressed and impoverished Irish seem to have appealed with the greatest confidence in the first English conquest in the twelfth century. The conquerors themselves feared him, not without reason, for they had learned to know his vengeance. John de Courcy, a warlike Anglo-Norman baron, he who was called the Conqueror (*Conquestor*) of Ulster, as William of Normandy of England, carried always with him the volume of Columba's prophecies;[266] and when the bodies of the three saints were found in his new possessions in 1180, he prayed the Holy See to celebrate their translation by the appointment of a solemn festival. Richard Strongbow, the famous Earl of Pembroke, who had been the first chief of the invasion, died of an ulcer in the foot which had been inflicted upon him, according to the Irish narrative, at the prayer of St. Bridget, St. Columba, and other saints, whose churches he had destroyed. He himself said, when at the point of death, that he saw the sweet and noble Bridget lift her arm to pierce him to the heart. Hugh de Lacy, another Anglo-Norman chief of great lineage, perished at Durrow, "by the vengeance of Columb-cille," says a chronicler, while he was engaged in building a castle to the injury of the abbey which Columba had founded, and loved so much.[267] A century after, this *vengeance* was still popularly dreaded; and some English pirates, who had pillaged his church in the island of Inchcolm, having sunk like lead in sight of land, their countrymen said that he should be called, not St. Columba, but St. *Quhalme*[268] — that is to say, the saint of Sudden Death.

Columba feared by the Anglo-Norman barons.

A nation has special need to believe in these vengeances of God, always so tardy and infrequent, and which, in Ireland, above all, have scarcely sufficed to light with a fugitive gleam the long night of the conquest, with all its iniquities

three bodies were found at Down in 1185, after the disasters of the first English conquest, and again united in one tomb by the bishop Malachi, and by John de Courcy, one of the great Anglo-Norman barons, conqueror (*conquestor*, according to the office) of Ulster. A special holiday was instituted by the Holy See in memory of this translation. The office for this festival, printed first at Paris in 1620, has been given by Colgan at the beginning of his precious work, *Trias Thaumaturga*.

[266] Kelley, note to Lynch, *Cambrensis Eversus*, vol. i. p. 386.

[267] O'Donovan's *Four Masters*, vol. i. pp. 25, 75.

[268] *Quhalme* in Anglo-Saxon meant sudden death, from whence the modern English word *qualm*.

and crime. Happy are the people among whom the everlasting justice of the appeal against falsehood and evil is placed under the shadow of God and the saints; and blessed also the saints who have left to posterity the memory of their indignation against all injustice.

As long as the body of Columba remained in his island grave, Iona, consecrated henceforward by the life and death of so great a Christian, continued to be the most venerated sanctuary of the Celts. For two centuries she was the nursery of bishops, the centre of education, the asylum of religious knowledge, the point of union among the British isles, the capital and necropolis of the Celtic race. Seventy kings or princes were buried there at the feet of Columba, faithful to a kind of traditional law, the recollection of which has been consecrated by Shakespeare.[269] During these two centuries, she retained an uncontested supremacy over all the monasteries and churches of Caledonia, as over those of half Ireland;[270] and we shall hereafter see how she disputed with the Roman missionaries the authority over the Anglo-Saxons of the north. Later still, if we are permitted to follow this narrative so far, at the end of the eleventh century, we shall see her ruins raised up and restored to monastic life by one of the most noble and touching heroines of Scotland and Christendom, the holy Queen Margaret, the gentle and noble exile, so beautiful, so wise, so magnanimous and beloved, who used her influence over Malcolm her husband only for the regeneration of the Church in his kingdom, and whose dear memory is worthy of being associated in the heart of the Scottish people with that of Columba, since she obtained by his intercession that grace of maternity which has made her the origin of the dynasty which still reigns over the British Isles.[271]

[269] "Rosse. Where is Duncan's body?
Macduff. Carried to Colmes-Kill,
The sacred storehouse of his predecessors,
And guardian of their bones."
Shakespeare, *Macbeth.*

[270] "Plurima exinde monasteria per discipulos ejus in Britannia et in Hibernia propagata sunt: in quibus omnibus idem monasterium insulanum, in quo ipse requiescit corpore, principatum tenet."—Bede, iii. 4. "Cujus monasterium in cunctis pene septentrionalium Scotorum et omnium Pictorum monasteriis non parvo tempore arcem tenebat regendisque eorum populis præerat."—*Ibid.*, iii. 3.

[271] Orderic Vital, 1. viii. 702; Fordun, *Scotichronicon*, v. 37. On the summit of the picturesque rock upon which Edinburgh Castle is built, may still be seen the chapel dedicated to St. Margaret, recently restored by order of the Queen. She is the Christian Minerva of that Acropolis of the North.

Let us here reconsider the privilege which gave to the abbots of Iona a sort of jurisdiction over the bishops of the neighboring districts[272] — a privilege unique, and which would even appear fabulous, if it were not attested by two of the most trustworthy historians of the time, the Venerable Bede and Notker of St. Gall. In order to explain this strange anomaly it must be understood that in Celtic countries, especially in Ireland and in Scotland, ecclesiastical organization rested, in the first place, solely upon conventual life. Dioceses and parishes were regularly constituted only in the twelfth century. Bishops, it is true, existed from the beginning, but either without any clearly fixed territorial jurisdiction, or incorporated as a necessary but subordinate part of the ecclesiastical machinery with the great monastic bodies; and such was specially the case in Ireland. It is for this reason that the bishops of the Celtic Church, as has been often remarked, are so much overshadowed not only by great founders and superiors of monasteries, such as Columba, but even by simple abbots.[273] Nevertheless, it is evident that during the life of Columba, far from assuming any superiority whatever over the bishops who were his contemporaries, he showed them the utmost respect, even to such a point that he would not celebrate mass in the presence of a bishop who had come, humbly disguised as a simple convert, to visit the community of Iona.[274] At the same time the

[272] "Habet insula rectorem semper abbatem presbyterum, cujus jura omnis provincia, et ipsi etiam episcopi, ordine inusitato, debeant esse subjecti." — Bede, l. iii. 4. Compare *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, ad an. 565, ed. Giles. "In Scotia insula Hibernia depositio sancti Columbæ, cognomento apud suos Columb-Killi, eo quod multarum cellarum, id est monasteriorum vel ecclesiarum institutor, fundator et rector exstiterit: adeo ut abbas monasterii, cui novissime præfuit et ubi requiescit, contra morem ecclesiasticum primus omnium Hibernensium habeatur episcoporum." — Notker Balbulus, *Martyrologium*. Mabillon quotes the charter of the Irish Abbey of Honau in Germany, where the signature of the abbot precedes those of seven bishops, all bearing Celtic names. — *Annales Benedictini*, vol. ii. Appendix, p. 70. Who were the bishops subject to the primacy of Iona? If Colgan is to be believed — in *Præf., Triad. Thaum.*, "prærogativo forte jurisdictioni legimus concessum, quod ejus abbas primatum et præcedentiam habeat ante omnes Scotorum episcopos" — it must be supposed that all the bishops of Ireland and Scotland were under its authority.

[273] See the curious incident narrated by Adamnan (i. 36), where a bishop hesitated to confer the priesthood on Aidus the Black before having the authority of the abbot of Tiree, an insular *cella* dependent upon Iona. — "Episcopus non ausus est super caput ejus manum imponere, nisi prius presbyter Findchanus . . . suam capiti ejus pro confirmatione imponeret dextram."

[274] "Quidam proselytus ad sanctum venit qui se in quantum potuit occultabat humiliter, ut nullus sciret quod esset episcopus." — Adamnan, i. 44.

abbots scrupulously abstained from all usurpation of the rank, privileges, or functions reserved to bishops, to whom they had recourse for all the ordinations celebrated in the monasteries.[275] But as most of the bishops had been educated in monastic schools, they retained an affectionate veneration for their cradle, which, in regard to Iona especially, from which we shall see so many bishops issue, might have translated itself into a sort of prolonged submission to the conventual authority of their former superior. Five centuries later the bishops who came from the great French abbeys of Cluny and Citeaux took pleasure in professing the same filial subordination to their monastic birthplace.

The uncontested primacy of Iona over the bishops who had there professed religion, or who came there to be consecrated after their election, may be besides explained by the influence exercised by Columba over both clergy and people of the districts evangelized by him — an influence which was only increased by his death.

Was Columba the author of a special rule?

Did the great abbot of Iona, like his namesake of Luxeuil, leave to his disciples a monastic rule of his own, distinct from that of other Celtic monasteries? This has been often asserted, but without positive proof — and in any case no authentic text of such a document exists.[276] That which bears the name of the *Rule of Columb-kill*, and which has been sometimes attributed to him, has no reference in any way to the cenobites of Iona, and is only applicable to hermits or recluses, who lived perhaps under his authority, but isolated, and who were always very numerous in Ireland.[277]

[275] "Accito episcopo . . . apud supradictum Findchanum presbyter ordinatus est." — ADAMNAN, i. 36.

[276] Colgan (*Trias Thaum.*, p. 471) and Hœften (*Disquisitiones Monasticæ*, l. i. tr. 8, p. 84) had in their hands the text of a rule attributed to Columba, and reprinted by Reeves in 1850, but both have acknowledged that it would be applicable only to anchorites. — O'CURRY, *Lectures*, pp. 374, 612. The only proof of the existence of a cenobitical rule originated by Columba, is the mention made of it by Bede in the address of Wilfrid at the celebrated conference of Whitby between the Benedictines and the Celtic monks, which will be discussed hereafter: "De Patre Vestro Columba et sequacibus ejus, quorum sanctitatem vos imitari et *Regulam* ac præcepta cœlestibus signis confirmata." The word *Regula*, however, which occurs so often in the lives of the Irish saints, can scarcely mean anything more than *observance, discipline;* each considerable saint had his own. Reeves has proved that the *Ordo monasticus*, attributed to Columba by the last edition of Holsteinus, does not go farther back than to the twelfth century.

[277] The recluses or anchorites, who passed their life in a little cell containing an altar, at which to say mass, sometimes solitary, sometimes attached to their church (like that of Marianus Scotus at Fulda), existed for a very

A conscientious and attentive examination of all the monastic peculiarities which can be discovered in his biography[278] reveals absolutely nothing in respect to observances or obligations different from the rules borrowed by all the religious communities of the sixth century from the traditions of the Fathers of the Desert. Such an examination brings out distinctly in the first place, the necessity for a vow[279] or solemn profession to prove the final admission of the monk into the community after a probation more or less prolonged; and, in the second place, the absolute conformity of the monastic life of Columba and his monks to the precepts and rites of the Catholic Church in all ages. Authorities unquestionable and unquestioned demonstrate the existence of auricular confession, the invocation of saints, the universal faith in their protection and intervention in temporal affairs, the celebration of the mass, the real presence in the Eucharist, ecclesiastical celibacy, fasts and abstinences, prayer for the dead, the sign of the cross, and, above all, the assiduous and profound study of the Holy Scriptures.[280] Thus the assumption made by certain writers of having found in the Celtic Church some sort of primitive Christianity not Catholic, crumbles to the dust; and the ridiculous but inveterate prejudice which accuses our fathers of having ignored or interdicted the study of the Bible is once again proved to be without foundation.

As to the customs peculiar to the Irish Church, and which were afterwards the cause of so many tedious struggles with the Roman and Anglo-Saxon missionaries, no trace of them is to be discovered in the acts or words of Columba. There

long time in Ireland. Sir Henry Piers has proved the existence of one of these recluses, and described his cell in the county of Westmeath in 1682. — Reeves, *Memory of the Church of St. Duilech*, 1859.

[278] See the Appendix N to the volume of Reeves, entitled *Institutio Hyensis*. It is an excellent epitome of all the monastic customs of the period.

[279] "Votum monachiale voverunt . . . votum monachicum devotus vovit." — Adamnan, i. 31, ii. 39.

[280] To prove our assertion we indicate several passages from Adamnan:

Auricular Confession is expressly pointed out in the history of Libranus, ii. 39.

The Invocation of Saints at each page. Columba is even invoked during his life. Their protection and intervention in temporal affairs, ii. 5, 15, 39, 40.

The celebration of festivals and offices in their honor.

The *real presence* — All the elements of the Eucharist. "A sancto jussus Christi corpus conficere. . . . Eucharistiæ mysteria celebrare pro anima sancta." — Colgan, *Vita Prima*, c. 8; Adamnan, iii. 12.

Solemn mass on Sunday, iii. 12; on other days, i. 40.

is no mention of the tiresome disputes about the tonsure, or even of the irregular celebration of Easter, except perhaps in a prophecy vaguely made by him on the occasion of a visit to Clonmacnoise, upon the discords which this difference of opinion in respect to Easter would one day excite in the Scotic Church.[281]

Order founded by Columba.

His successors.

If Columba made no rule calculated, like that of St Benedict, to last for centuries, he nevertheless left to his disciples a spirit of life, of union, and of discipline, which was sufficient to maintain in one great body, for several centuries after his death, not only the monks of Iona, but the numerous communities which had gathered round them. This monastic body bore a noble name; it was long called the Order of the Fair Company,[282] and still longer the Family of Columb-kill. It was governed by abbots, who succeeded Columba as superiors of the community of Iona. These abbots proved themselves worthy of, and obtained from Bede, one of the most competent of judges, who began to write a hundred years after the death of Columba, a tribute of admiration without reserve, and even more striking than that which he gave to their founder: — "Whatever he may have been," said the Venerable Bede, with a certain shadow of Anglo-Saxon suspicion in respect to Celtic virtue and sanctity, "it is undeniable that he has left successors illustrious by the purity of their life, their great love of God, and their zeal for monastic order; and, although separated from us as to the observance of Easter, which is caused by their distance from all the rest of the world, ardently and closely devoted to the observance of those laws of piety and chastity which they have learned in the Old and New Testaments."[283] These praises are justified by the great number of saints who have issued from the spiritual lineage of Columba;[284] but they should be specially applied to his successors in the abbatial see of Iona, and, in the first place, to his first successor, whom he had himself pointed out, the holy and amiable Baithen, who

[281] ADAMNAN, i. 3.

[282] "Cujus ordo dicebatur pulchræ societatis." — *Vita Sancti Kierani*, apud HŒFTEN, *op. cit.*, pp. 61, 64.

[283] "Qualiscunque fuerit ipse, nos hoc de illo certum tenemus, quia reliquit, successores magna continentia et divino amore regulæque monasticæ insignes . . . pietatis et castitatis opera diligenter observantes." — BEDE, iii. 4.

[284] The number may be seen in Colgan, who names as many as a hundred and twelve, the most part of whom are commemorated in the Irish martyrologies.

was so worthy to be his lieutenant and friend, and could so well replace him. He survived Columba only three years, and died on the anniversary of his master's death.[285] The cruel sufferings of his last illness did not prevent him from praying, writing, and teaching to his last hour. Baithen was, as has been said, the cousin-german of Columba, and almost all the abbots of Iona who succeeded him were of the same race.

Preponderance of the clan in the constitution of Celtic monachism.

The family spirit, or, to speak more truly, the clan spirit, always so powerful and active in Ireland, and which was so striking a feature in the character of Columba, had become a predominating influence in the monastic life of the Celtic Church. It was not precisely hereditary succession, since marriage was absolutely unknown among the regular clergy; but great influence was given to blood in the election of abbots, as in that of princes or military leaders. The nephew or cousin of the founder or superior of a monastery seemed the candidate pointed out by nature for the vacant dignity. Special reasons were necessary for breaking through this rule. Thus it is apparent that the eleven first abbots of Iona after Columba, proceeded, with the exception of one individual, from the same stock as himself, from the race of Tyrconnel, and were all descended from the same son of Niall of the Nine Hostages, the famous king of all Ireland.[286] Every great monastery became thus the centre and appanage of a family, or, to speak more exactly, of a clan, and was alike the school and the asylum of all the founder's kindred. At a later period a kind of succession, purely laic and hereditary, developed itself by the side of the spiritual posterity, and was invested with the possession of most of the monastic domains. These two lines of descendants, simultaneous but distinct, from the principal monastic founders, are distinguished in the historical genealogies of Ireland under the names of *ecclesiastica progenies* and of *plebilis progenies*.[287]

[285] During his short abbacy, it is apparent that all was not unanimous adhesion and enthusiasm. A certain Bevan, described as a persecutor of the Churches, once sent to ask the remains of the meal which the monks of Iona had just eaten, in order to turn them into derision. "Nec ob aliud hoc postulabat, nisi ut causam blasphemiæ ac despectionis fratrum inveniret." Baithen sent to him what remained of the milk which had made the repast of the brethren. After he had drunk it, the scoffer was seized with such suffering, that he was converted, and died confessing his repentance. — Act. SS. Bolland., vol. ii. June, p. 238.

[286] See the genealogical table given by Dr. Reeves, at page 313 of his edition of Adamnan.

[287] Dr. Reeves has thoroughly examined this curious question in a special

After the ninth century, in consequence of the relaxation of discipline, the invasion of married clerks, and the increasing value of land, the line of spiritual descent confounded itself more and more with that of natural inheritance, and there arose a crowd of abbots purely lay and hereditary, as proud of being the collateral descendants of a holy founder, as they were happy to possess the vast domains with which the foundation had been gradually enriched. This fatal abuse made its appearance also in France and Germany, but was less inveterate than in Ireland, where it still existed in the time of St Bernard; and in Scotland, where it lasted even after the Reformation.

It was never thus at Iona, where the abbatical succession was always perfectly regular and uninterrupted up to the invasions and devastations of the Danes at the commencement of the ninth century. From the time of those invasions the abbots of Iona began to occupy an inferior position. The radiant centre from which Christian civilization had shone upon the British Isles grew dim.[288] The headquarters of the communities united under the title of the *Family* or *Order of Columb-kill*, were transferred from Iona to one of the other foundations of the saint at Kells, in the centre of Ireland, where a successor of Columba, superior-general of the order, titulary abbot of Iona, Armagh, or some other great Irish monastery, and bearing the distinctive title of *Coarb*, resided for three centuries more.[289]

We have lingered too long over the great and touching figure of the saint whose life we have just recorded. And it now remains to us to throw a rapid glance at the influence which he exercised on all around him, and even upon posterity.

paper, *On the Ancient Abbatial Succession in Ireland*, ap. Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy, vol. vii., 1857.

[288] Magnus, king of Norway, after having conquered the Hebrides, visited Iona in 1097, and annexed the islands to the bishopric of Sodor and Man (*Sodorensis*), under the metropolitan of Drontheim, which destroyed the ancient ecclesiastical tradition in the island. In 1203, an abbot of Iona, who came from Ireland, and belonged to the family of Columba, is mentioned for the last time. In 1214, there is mention of a priory of the order of Cluny, the origin of which is unknown. — Lanigan, vol. iv. p. 347; Cosmo Innes, p. 110. The temporal sovereignty fell to the famous *Lords of the Isles*, immortalized by Walter Scott, and whose tombs may still be seen there. — See Appendix A.

[289] See the detailed chronology of the forty-nine successors of Columba, and of their arts and laws, from 597 to 1219, in the *Chronicon Hyense* of Reeves, from page 359. These Coarbs have been strangely confounded by Ussher, Ware, Lanigan, and other writers, with the *chorepiscopi* of the continent.

This influence is especially evident in the Irish Church, which seems to have been entirely swayed by his spirit, his successors, and his disciples, during the time which is looked upon as the Golden Age in its history, and which extends up to the period of the Danish invasions, at the end of the eighth century. During all this time the Irish Church, which continued, as from its origin, entirely monastic, seems to have been governed by the recollections or institutions of Columba. The words *Lex Columbcille* are found on many pages of its confused annals, and indicate sometimes the mass of traditions preserved by its monasteries, sometimes the tributes which the kings levied for the defence of the Church and country, while carrying through all Ireland the shrine which contained his relics.[290] The continued influence of the great abbot of Iona was so marked, even in temporal affairs, that more than two centuries after his death, in 817, the monks of his order, *Congregatio Columbcille*, went solemnly to Tara, the ancient capital of Druidical Ireland, to excommunicate there the supreme monarch of the island, who had assassinated a prince of the family of their holy chief.[291]

Posthumous influence of Columba upon the Irish Church.

Lex Columbcille.

It has been said, and cannot be sufficiently repeated, that Ireland was then regarded by all Christian Europe as the principal centre of knowledge and piety. In the shelter of its numberless monasteries a crowd of missionaries, doctors, and preachers were educated for the service of the Church and the propagation of the faith in all Christian countries. A vast and continual development of literary and religious effect[292] is there apparent, superior to anything that could be seen in any other country of Europe. Certain arts — those of architecture, carving, metallurgy, as applied to the decoration of churches — were successfully cultivated, without speaking of music, which continued to flourish both among the learned and among the people. The classic languages — not only Latin but Greek — were cultivated, spoken, and written with a sort of passionate pedantry, which shows at least how powerful was the sway of intellectual influences over these ardent souls. Their mania for Greek was even carried so far that they wrote the Latin of the church books

Great intellectual development of the Irish monasteries.

[290] This occurred in 753, 757, and 778.

[291] *Annals of Ulster*, ann. 817.

[292] "Scripturarum tam liberalium quam ecclesiasticarum."

in Hellenic characters.[293] And in Ireland more than anywhere else, each monastery was a school, and each school a workshop of transcription, from which day by day issued new copies of the Holy Scriptures and the Fathers of the primitive Church — copies which were dispersed through all Europe, and which are still to be found in Continental libraries. They may easily be recognized by the original and elegant character of their Irish writing, as also by the use of the alphabet common to all the Celtic races, and afterwards employed by the Anglo-Saxons, but to which in our day the Irish alone have remained faithful. Columba, as has been seen, had given an example of this unwearied labor to the monastic scribes; his example was continually followed in the Irish cloisters, where the monks did not entirely limit themselves to the transcription of Holy Scripture, but reproduced also Greek and Latin authors, sometimes in Celtic character, with gloss and commentary in Irish, like that Horace which modern learning has discovered in the library of Berne.[294] These marvellous manuscripts, illuminated with incomparable ability and patience by the monastic family of Columba, excited, five hundred years later, the declamatory enthusiasm of a great enemy of Ireland, the Anglo-Norman historian, Gerald de Barry; and they still attract the attention of archæologists and philologists of the highest fame.[295]

Calligraphy in imitation of Columba.

Exact annals of the events of the time were also made out in all the monasteries. These annals replaced the chronicles of the bards; and so far as they have been preserved, and already published or about to be so,

Historic annals.

[293] Reeves's *Adamnan*, pp. 158, 354. In a MS. life of St. Brendan this curious passage occurs: "Habebat . . . missalem librum scriptum Græcis litteris. . . . Et positus est ille liber super altare. . . . Illico jam litteras Græcas scivit sanctus Brendanus, sicuti Latinas quas didicit ab infantia. Et cœpit missam cantare."

[294] Orelli, in his edition of Horace, says that this Codex of Berne, with its Irish gloss, is of the eighth or ninth century: "*Scotice scriptus*, antiquissimus omnium quotquot adhuc innotuerunt."

[295] "Hæc equidem quanto frequentius et diligentius intucor, semper quasi novis obstupeo, semperque magis et magis admiranda conspicio." — Giraldus Cambrensis, *Topogr. Hiber.*, ii. c. 38. Most of these admired and quoted MSS. in Continental or Anglo-Saxon libraries, are of Irish origin, as has been proved by Zeuss, Keller, and Reeves. The MSS. used by the celebrated philologist Zeuss in the composition of his *Grammatica Celtica* (Lipsiæ, 1853) contain Irish glosses upon the Latin text of Priscian, at St. Gall, on St. Paul's epistles, at Wurzburg, on the commentary of St. Columbanus upon the Psalms, which has been brought from Bobbio to Milan, and on Bede, brought from Reichenau to Carlsruhe.

they now form the principal source of Irish history.[295] Ecclesiastical records have naturally a greater place in them than civil history. They celebrate especially the memory of the saints, who have always been so numerous in the Irish Church, where each of the great communities can count a circle of holy men, issued from its bosom or attached to its confraternity. Under the name of *sanctilogy* or *festilogy* (for martyrs were too little known in Ireland to justify the usual term of martyrology), this circle of biographies was the spiritual reading of the monks, and the familiar instruction of the surrounding people. Several of these *festilogies* are in verse, one of which, the most famous of all, is attributed to Angus, called the *Culdee*, a simple brother, miller of the Monastery of Tallach.[297] In this the principal saints of other countries find a place along with three hundred and sixty-five Irish saints, one for each day of the year, who were all celebrated with that pious and patriotic enthusiasm, at once poetical and moral, which burns so naturally in every Irish heart.

Angus, the Culdee.

The name of Culdee leads us to point out in passing the absurd and widespread error which has made the Culdees be looked upon as a kind of monkish order, married and indigenous to the soil, which existed before the introduction of Christianity into Ireland and Scotland by the Roman missionaries, and of whom the great abbot of Iona was the founder or chief. This opinion, propagated by learned Anglicans, and blindly copied by various French writers, is now universally acknowledged as false by sincere and competent judges.[298] The Culdees, a sort of third

The Culdees.

[296] These precious collections were continued by the more recent Orders after the English conquest, and even after the Reformation, up to the seventeenth century. See especially the valuable collection entitled *Annals of the Four Masters*, that is to say, of the four Franciscans of Donegal, which come down to 1634.

[297] See the analysis made of it by O'Curry, *Lectures*, &c., pp. 364, 371, and, after him, M. de la Villemarqué in his *Poésie des Cloîtres Celtiques*.

[298] According to Dr. Reeves, the name of *Culdee* or *Ceile Dei*, answering to the Latin term *Servus Dei*, appeared for the first time in authentic history with the name of this Angus, who lived in 780. It was afterwards applied to the general body of monks, that is to say, to all the clerks living under a monastic rule in Ireland and Scotland. According to the lamented O'Curry, the Culdees were nothing more than ecclesiastics or laymen, attached to the monasteries, and whose first founder was a St. Malruain, who died in 787 or 792. This information, which the author has derived from the two princes of Irish erudition, agrees perfectly with the conclusions of Dr. Lanigan in his very learned and impartial ecclesiastical history of Ireland, vol. iv. p. 295–300; as also with those of the new Bollandists, vol. viii. of October, p. 86, *Disquisitio in Culdeos*, ap. Acta S. Reguli. According to the worthy con-

order, attached to the regular monasteries, appeared in Ireland, as elsewhere, only in the ninth century, and had never anything more than a trifling connection with the Columban communities.[299]

Missionary efforts of the Irish monks out of Ireland.

Still more striking than the intellectual development of which the Irish monasteries were at this period the centre, is the prodigious activity displayed by the Irish monks in extending and multiplying themselves over all the countries of Europe — here to create new schools and sanctuaries among nations already evangelized — there to carry the light of the Gospel, at peril of their lives, to the countries that were still pagan. We should run the risk of forestalling our future task if we did not resist the temptations of the subject, which would lead us to go faster than time, and to follow those armies of brave and untiring Celts, always adventurous and often heroic, into the regions where we shall perhaps one day find them again. Let us content ourselves with a simple list, which has a certain eloquence even in the dryness of its figures. Here is the number, probably very incomplete, given by an ancient writer, of the monasteries founded out of Ireland by Irish monks, led far from their country by the love of souls, and, no doubt, a little also by that love of travel which has always been one of their special distinctions: —

Thirteen in Scotland,
Twelve in England,
Seven in France,
Twelve in Armorica,
Seven in Lorraine,
Ten in Alsatia,
Sixteen in Bavaria,
Fifteen in Rhetia, Helvetia, and Allemania;

tinuators of the *Acta Sanctorum*, the Culdees were not monks, but secular brothers, or rather canons, and appeared at soonest in the year 800. At the same time our learned contemporaries remit to the ninth century that translation of the relics of the apostle St. Andrew, who became the patron saint of Scotland in the middle ages, which the legends have attributed to the fourth or sixth. This translation, made by a bishop named Regulus (Rule), occasioned the foundation of the episcopal see and town of St. Andrews on the east coast of Scotland, in the county of Fife, which was made metropolis of the kingdom in 1472, and possesses a university, which dates from 1411. Very fine ruins of the churches destroyed by the Reformers in 1559 are still to be seen there. Since the preceding note was written, a new publication, by Dr. Reeves, *The Culdees of the British Islands as they appear in History, with an appendix of Evidences*, Dublin, 1864, has summed up and ended all controversy upon this long-disputed question, and given the last blow to the chimeras of sectarian erudition.

[299] Reeves's *Adamnan*, p. 368.

without counting many in Thuringia and upon the left bank of the Lower Rhine; and, finally, six in Italy.

And that it may be fully apparent how great was the zeal and virtue of which those monastic colonies were at once the product and the centre, let us place by its side an analogous list of saints of Irish origin, whom the gratitude of nations converted, edified, and civilized by them, have placed upon their altars as patrons and founders of those churches whose foundations they watered with their blood: —

> A hundred and fifty (of whom thirty-six were martyrs) in Germany,
> Forty-five (of whom six were martyrs) in Gaul,
> Thirty in Belgium,
> Thirteen in Italy,
> Eight, all martyrs, in Norway and Iceland.[300]

In the after part of this narrative we shall meet many of the most illustrious, especially in Germany. Let us confine ourselves here to pointing out, among the thirteen Irish saints honored with public veneration in Italy, him who is still invoked at the extremity of the peninsula as the patron of Tarento under the name of San Cataldo.

San Cataldo, bishop of Tarento.

His name in Ireland was Cathal, and before he left his country to go on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, and to become a bishop at Tarento, he had presided over the great monastic school of Lismore,[301] in the south of Ireland.[302] Thanks to his zeal and knowledge, this school had become a sort of university, to which he attracted an immense crowd of students, not only Irish, but foreigners, from Wales, England, France, and even from Germany. When their education was concluded, a portion of them remained to increase the already numerous communities in the holy and lettered city of Lismore; the others carried back with them to their different countries a recollection of the advantages which they owed to Ireland and her monks.[303]

[300] Stephen White, *Apologia*, in Haverty's *History of Ireland*.

[301] See his acts, in Colgan, p. 542–562, and the Bollandists, vol. ii. May, p. 569–578. Lanigan (vol. iii. p. 121–128) quotes a life of this saint in Latin verse by Bonaventura Moroni. His father, St. Donatus, is supposed to have been bishop of Lecce, in the same province as Tarento.

[302] See the legend of the founder of Lismore, Book VIII. chap. iii.

[303] "Egregia jam et sancta civitas est Lismor, cujus dimidium est asylum, in quo nulla mulier audet intrare, sed plenum est cellis et monasteriis sanctis: et multitudo virorum sanctorum semper illi manet. Viri enim religiosi ex omni parte Hiberniæ, et non solum ex Anglia et Britannia confluunt ad eam, volentes ibi migrare ad Christum." — *Act. Sanct. Bolland.*, vol. iii. May, p. 388. "Ad eam brevi excellentiam pervenit, ut ad ipsum audiendum Galli,

Crowd of foreign students, especially of Anglo-Saxons, in the Irish cloisters.

For it is important to prove that, while Ireland sent forth her sons into all the regions of the then known world, numberless strangers hastened there to seat themselves at the feet of her doctors, and to find in that vast centre of faith and knowledge all the remnants of ancient civilization which her insular position had permitted her to save from the flood of barbarous invasions.

The monasteries which gradually covered the soil of Ireland were thus the hostelries of a foreign emigration. Unlike the ancient Druidical colleges, they were open to all. The poor and the rich, the slave as well as the freeman, the child and the old man, had free access and paid nothing. It was not, then, only to the natives of Ireland that the Irish monasteries, occupied and ruled by the sons of Columba, confined the benefits of knowledge and of literary and religious education. They opened their door with admirable generosity to strangers from every country and of every condition; above all, to those who came from the neighboring island, England, some to end their lives in an Irish cloister, some to search from house to house for books, and masters capable of explaining those books. The Irish monks received with kindness guests so greedy of instruction, and gave them both books and masters, the food of the body and the food of the soul, without demanding any recompense.[304] The Anglo-Saxons, who were afterwards to repay this teaching with ingratitude so cruel, were of all nations the one which derived most profit from it. From the seventh to the eleventh century English students flocked into Ireland, and for four hundred years the monastic schools of the island maintained the great reputation which brought so many suc-

Angli, Scoti, Teutones aliique finitarum regionum quam plurimi Lesmorium conveniunt." — *Officium S. Cataldi*, ap. Lanigan, *loco cit.* This monastic town of Lismore, the seat of a bishopric since united with that of Waterford, must not be identified with another bishopric called Lismore, situated in an island of the Hebridean archipelago. The Irish Lismore is now specially remarkable for a fine castle of the Duke of Devonshire on the picturesque banks of the Blackwater.

[304] "Erant ibidem multi nobilium simul et mediocrium de gente Anglorum qui . . . relicta patria, vel divinæ lectionis, vel continentioris vitæ gratia illo secesserant. Et quidam mox se monasticæ conversationi fideliter mancipaverunt, alii magis circumeundo per cellas magistrorum lectioni operam dare gaudebant, quod omnes Scoti libentissime suscipientes victum eis quotidianum sine pretio, aliis quoque ad legendum et magisterium gratuitum præbere curabant." — Bede, iii. 27, ad ann. 664. There still existed in Armagh, in 1092, a locality called *Trien-Saxon*, inhabited by Anglo-Saxon students. — Colgan, *Trias Thaum.*, p. 300; compare Lanigan, iii. 490, 493.

cessive generations to dip deeply there into the living waters of knowledge and of faith.

Terrible confusions of existence in Ireland.

This devotion to knowledge and generous munificence towards strangers, this studious and intellectual life, nourished into being by the sheltering warmth of faith, shone with all the more brightness amid the horrible confusion and bloody disasters which signalize, in so far as concerned temporal affairs, the *Golden Age* of ecclesiastical history in Ireland, even before the sanguinary invasions of the Danes at the end of the eighth century. It has been said with justice that war and religion have been in all ages the two great passions of Ireland. But it must be allowed that war seems almost always to have carried the day over religion, and that religion did not prevent war from degenerating too often into massacres and assassinations. It is true that after the eighth century there are fewer kings murdered by their successors than in the period between St. Patrick and St. Columba; it is true that three or four of these kings lived long enough to have the time to go and expiate their sins as monks at Armagh or Iona.[305] But it is not less true that the annals of the monastic family of Columba present to us at each line with mournful laconism a spectacle which absolutely contradicts the flattering pictures which have been drawn of the peace which Ireland should have enjoyed. Almost every year, such words as the following are repeated with cruel brevity: —

Bellum.	*Vastatio.*	*Obsessio.*
Bellum lacrymabile.	*Spoliatio.*	*Strages Magna.*
Bellum magnum.	*Violatio.*	*Jugulatio.*

And above all, *Jugulatio.* It is the word which returns oftenest, and in which seems to be summed up the destiny of these unhappy princes and people.

Such an enumeration should give rise to the reflection, what this wild tree of Celtic nature would have been without

[305] These kings are, according to the Annals of Tigherneach —

Comgall, who died a monk at Lotra (? — perhaps Lure) in 710.

Feailhbeartach, who abdicated in 729, and was a monk for thirty years at Armagh.

Domhnall, or Donald III., who died at Iona in 764.

Niall Fiosach, who died at Iona in 777, after having been a monk for seven years.

The principal kings or monarchs of the island are alone mentioned here. As for the provincial kings, or chieftains of clans, who took the monastic habit, it would be impossible to count them. Many are named in the *Cambrensis Eversus* of Lynch, c. 30.

the monastic graft. We can thus perceive with what ferocious natures Columba and his disciples had to do. If notwithstanding the preaching of the monks, a state of affairs so barbarous continued to exist, what might it have been had the Gospel never been preached to those savages, and if the monks had not been in the midst of them like a permanent incarnation of the Spirit of God?

The monks were at the same time neither less inactive nor more spared than the women, who fought and perished in the wars precisely like the men, up to the time when the most illustrious of Columba's successors delivered them from that terrible bondage. A single incident drawn from the sanguinary chaos of the period will suffice at once to paint the almost atrocious habits of those Celtic Christians, and the always beneficent influence of monastic authority. A hundred years after the death of Columba, his biographer and ninth successor, Adamnan, was crossing a plain, carrying his old mother on his back, when they saw two bands fighting, and in the midst of the battle a woman dragging another woman after her, whose breast she had pierced with an iron hook. At this horrible spectacle the abbot's mother seated herself on the ground, and said to him, "I will not leave this spot till thou hast promised me to have women exempted forever from this horror, and from every battle and expedition." He gave her his word, and he kept it. At the next national assembly of Tara, he proposed and carried a law which is inscribed in the annals of Ireland as the *Law of Adamnan*, or *Law of the Innocents*, and which forever freed the Irish women from the obligation of military service and all its homicidal consequences.[306]

Adamnan, the ninth successor of Columba, and his *Law of the Innocents*.

At the same time, nothing was more common in Ireland than the armed intervention of the monks in civil wars, or in the struggles between different communities. We may be permitted to believe that the spiritual descendants of Columba reckoned among them more than one monk of character as warlike as their great ancestor, and that there were as many monastic actors as victims in these desperate con-

[306] "Lex Adamnani. . . . Adamnanus ad Hiberniam pergit et. . . dedit legem innocentium populis." — *Annales Ultoniæ*, an. 696. Compare PETRIE'S *Tara*, p. 147. REEVES, pp. 51, 53, 179. The assembly was composed of forty ecclesiastics and thirty-nine laymen. They also decreed an annual tribute to be collected over all Ireland for the benefit of the abbot of Iona and his successors.

flicts. Two centuries after Columba, two hundred monks of his abbey at Durrow perished in a battle with the neighboring monks of Clonmacnoise; and the old annalists of Ireland speak of a battle which took place in 816, at which eight hundred monks of Ferns were killed. The Irish religious had not given up either the warlike humor or the dauntless courage of their race.

Immortal patriotism of the Irish monks.

Nor is it less certain that the studious fervor and persevering patriotism which were such marked features in the character of Columba remained the inalienable inheritance of his monastic posterity — an inheritance which continued up to the middle ages, to the time of that famous statute of Kilkenny, which is an ineffaceable monument of the ferocious arrogance of the English conquerors, even before the Reformation. This statute, after having denounced every marriage between the two races as an act of high treason, went so far as to exclude all native Irish from the monasteries — from those same monasteries which Irishmen alone had founded and occupied for eight centuries, and where, before and after Columba, they had afforded a generous hospitality to the British fugitives and to the victorious Saxons.

But we must not permit ourselves to linger on the Irish coasts. We shall soon again meet her generous and intrepid sons, always the first in the field, and the most ready to expose themselves to danger, among the apostles and propagators of monastic institutions, upon the banks of the Scheldt, the Rhine, and the Danube, where also they were eclipsed and surpassed by the Anglo-Saxons, but where their names, forgotten in Ireland, still shine with a pure and beneficent light.

Influence of Columba in Scotland.

The influence of Columba, so universal, undeniable, and enduring in his native island, should not have been less so in his adopted country — in that Caledonia which became more and more an Irish or Scotic colony, and thus merited the name of Scotland, which it retained. Notwithstanding, his work has perhaps left fewer authentic traces there. All unite in attributing to him the conversion of the Northern Picts, and the introduction or re-establishment of the faith among the Picts of the South and the Scots of the West. It is also pretty generally agreed to date from his times — even though there is no evidence of their direct subordination to Iona — the great monasteries of Old Melrose,[307] Abercorn, Tyn-

Remains of the ancient Caledonian Church.

[307] Old Melrose, which was the cradle of the great and celebrated Cister-

ninghame, and Coldingham, situated between the Forth and the Tweed, and which afterwards became the centres of Christian extension among the Saxons of Northumbria. Further north, but still upon the east coast, the round towers which are still to be seen at Brechin and Abernethy bear witness to their Irish origin, and consequently to the influence of Columba, who was the first and principal Irish missionary in these districts. The same may be said of those primitive and lowly constructions, built with long and large stones laid upon each other, without cement, which are to be found in St. Kilda and other Hebridean isles, and also upon certain points of the neighboring shore, resembling exactly in form the deserted monasteries which are so numerous in the isles of western Ireland.[308] Another relic of the primitive Church is found in the caves, hollowed out or enlarged by the hand of man, in the cliffs or mountains of the interior, inhabited of old, as were the grots of Subiaco and Marmoutier, and as the caves of Meteores in Albania[309] are still by hermits, or sometimes even by bishops (as St. Woloc, St. Regulus[310]). Kentigern, the apostle of Strathclyde, appears to us in the legend at the mouth of his episcopal cave, which was hollowed out in the side of a cliff, and where the people looked at him from afar with respectful curiosity, while he studied the direction of the storms at sea, and breathed in with pleasure the first breezes of the spring.

Apostleship of St. Kentigern.

The bishop, Welsh by birth, has already been mentioned in connection with the principality of Wales, where, as we have already seen, he founded an immense monastery during an exile, the cause of which it is impossible to ascertain, but which was the occasion of a relapse into idolatry among his diocesans.[311] The district of Strathclyde or Cumbria, on the west coasts of Britain, from the mouth of the Clyde to that of the Mersey — that is to say, from Glasgow to Liverpool —

cian Abbey of Melrose, whose ruins are admired by all travellers and readers of Walter Scott. The site alone now remains.

[308] Studied carefully by Lord Dunraven and other members of the learned company called the Irish Archæological and Celtic Society.

[309] Curzon's *Monasteries of the Levant.*

[310] See above, the note of the Bollandists upon the apostolic labors of St. Regulus. An *auge* or lavatory in stone is still shown near the ruined church of Strath Deveron, which is called St. Woloc's bath, and where mothers came to bathe their sick children. This holy bishop lived in a house built like the first church of Iona. "Pauperculam casam calamis viminibusque contextam." — *Breviarium Aberdonense*, Propr. SS., p. 14.

[311] *Acta SS. Bolland.*, vol. i. January, p. 819.

was occupied by a mingled race of Britons and Scots, whose capital was Al-Cluid, now Dumbarton. A prince called Roderick (Rydderch Haël), whose mother was Irish, and who had been baptized by an Irish monk, hastened, when the authority fell into his hands, to recall Kentigern, who returned, bringing with him a hive of Welsh monks, and established definitively the seat of his apostleship at Glasgow, where Ninian had preceded him nearly a century before without leaving any lasting traces of his passage. Kentigern, more fortunate, established upon the site of a burying-ground consecrated by Ninian the first foundation of the magnificent cathedral which still bears his name.[312]

It was consecrated by an Irish bishop, brought from Ireland for the purpose, and who celebrated that ceremony without the assistance of other bishops, according to Celtic customs. Kentigern collected round him numerous disciples, all learned in holy literature, all working with their hands, and possessing nothing as individuals — a true monastic community.[313] He distinguished himself during all his episcopate by his efforts to bring back to the faith the Picts of Galloway, which formed part of the kingdom of Strathclyde; and afterwards by numerous missions and monastic foundations throughout all Albyn — a name which was then given to midland Scotland. His disciples penetrated even to the Orkney Isles, where they must have met with the missionaries of Iona.[314]

The salutary and laborious activity of Kentigern must often have encroached upon the regions which were specially within the sphere of Columba. But the generous heart of Columba was inaccessible to jealousy. He was besides the personal friend of Kentigern and of King Roderick.[315] The fame of the Bishop of Strathclyde's apostolic

[312] St. Mungo's. This is the name borne by Kentigern in Scotland, and means *dearest*. Kentigern seems to be derived from *Ken*, which means head, and *Tiern*, lord, in Welsh (Bolland., p. 820). The existing cathedral of Glasgow was begun in 1124 by Bishop Jocelyn, a monk of Melrose, who at the same time caused a life of his predecessor Kentigern, derived from ancient authorities, to be written by another Jocelyn, a monk of Furness.

[313] "Accito autem de Hibernia uno episcopo, more Britonum et Scotorum, in episcopum ipsum consecrari fecerunt. . . . In singulis casulis, sicut ipse sanctus Kentigernus, commorabantur. Unde et singulares clerici a vulgo *Culdei* nuncupabantur." — Jocelyn, *Vita S. Kentig.* This last passage, quoted by Reeves, *The Culdees of the British Isles*, p. 27, is not in the text given by the Bollandists.

[314] See above, p. 81.

[315] Adamnan, i. 15.

His meeting with Columba.

labors drew him from his isle to do homage to his rival. He arrived from Iona with a great train of monks, whom he arranged in three companies at the moment of their entrance into Glasgow. Kentigern distributed in the same way the numerous monks who surrounded him in his episcopal monastery, and whom he led out to meet the abbot of Iona. He divided them, according to their age, into three bands, the youngest of whom marched first; then those who had reached the age of manhood; and, last of all, the old and gray-haired, among whom he himself took his place. They all chanted the anthem *In viis Domini magna est gloria Domini, et via justorum facta est: et iter sanctorum præparatum est.* The monks of Iona, on their side, chanting in choir the versicle, *Ibunt sancti de virtute in virtutem: videbitur Deus eorum in Sion.* From each side echoed the Alleluia; and it was to the sound of those words of Holy Scripture, chanted in Latin by the Celtic monks of Wales and Ireland, that the two apostles of the Picts and Scots met at what had been the extreme boundary of the Roman Empire and limit of the power of the Cæsars, and upon a soil henceforth forever freed from paganism and idolatry. They embraced each other tenderly, and passed several days in intimate and friendly intercourse.

The historian who has preserved for us the account of this interview does not conceal a less edifying incident. He confesses that some robbers had joined themselves to the following of the abbot of Iona, and that they took advantage of the general enthusiasm to steal a ram from the bishop's flock. They were soon taken; but Kentigern pardoned them. Columba and his fellow-apostle exchanged their pastoral cross before they parted, in token of mutual affection.[316] Another annalist describes them as living together for six months in the monastery which Columba had just founded at Dunkeld, and together preaching the faith to the inhabitants of Atho, and the mountainous regions inhabited by the Picts.[317]

I know not how far we may put faith in another narrative

[316] "Sancti viri famam audiens, ad illum venire, visitare et familiaritatem ejus habere cupiebat . . . cum multa discipulorum turba. . . . In tertia turma senes decora canitie venerabiles. . . . Appropinquantes ad invicem sancti in amplexus mutuos et oscula sancta ruunt. . . . Venerunt cum sancto Columba quidam filii Belial ad furta et peccata assueti. . . . In signum mutuæ dilectionis alterius baculum suscepit."— Bolland., p. 821. The cross given by Columba to Kentigern was long preserved and venerated in the Anglo-Saxon Monastery of Ripon, Yorkshire.

[317] Hector Boetius, *Hist. Scotorum*, l. ix.

of the same author, which seems rather borrowed from the Gallo-Breton epic of Tristan and Iseult than from monastic legend, but which has nevertheless remained Kentigern's most popular title to fame. The wife of King Roderick, led astray by a guilty passion for a knight of her husband's court, had the weakness to bestow upon him a ring which had been given to her by the king. When Roderick was out hunting with this knight, the two took refuge on the banks of the Clyde during the heat of the day, and the knight, falling asleep, unwittingly stretched out his hand, upon which the king saw the ring which he had given to the queen as a token of his love. It was with difficulty that he restrained himself from killing the knight on the spot; but he subdued his rage, and contented himself by taking the ring from his finger and throwing it into the river, without awakening the guilty sleeper. When he had returned to the town he demanded his ring from the queen, and, as she could not produce it, threw her into prison, and gave orders for her execution. She obtained, however, a delay of three days, and having in vain sought the ring from the knight to whom she had given it, she had recourse to the protection of St. Kentigern. The good pastor knew or divined all — the ring, found in a salmon which he had caught in the Clyde, was already in his hands. He sent it to the queen, who showed it to her husband, and thus escaped the punishment which awaited her. Roderick even asked her pardon on his knees, and offered to punish her accusers. From this, however, she dissuaded him, and hastening to Kentigern, confessed her fault to him, and was commanded to pass the rest of her life in penitence. It is for this reason that the ancient effigies of the apostle of Strathclyde represent him as holding always the episcopal cross in one hand, and in the other a salmon with a ring in its mouth.[318]

The legend of the queen's ring.

But neither Kentigern, whose labors can scarcely be said to have survived him, nor Columba, whose influence upon the Picts and Scots was so powerful and lasting, exercised any direct or efficacious ac-

Neither Kentigern nor Columba affect the Anglo-Saxons,

[318] "Contigit reginam . . . pretiosum annulum ob immensum amorem sibi a rege commendatum eidem militi contulisse. . . . Discopulatis canibus. . . . Fatigatus autem miles extenso brachio dormire cœpit. . . . Quum illa secreto militi in vanum mittens proferre non posset. . . . Lacrymosis precibus rem gestam sancto Kentigerno per nuntium exposuit. . . . Contristatus rex pro illatis reginæ injuriis, et veniam flexis genibus petens." — BOLLAND., p. 820; compare p. 815.

who continue always pagan, and more and more formidable.

tion upon the Anglo-Saxons, who became stronger and more formidable from day to day, and whose ferocious incursions threatened the Caledonian tribes no less than the Britons. It is apparent, however, that the great abbot of Iona, did not share the repugnance, which had hardened into a system of repulsion, of the Welsh clergy for the Saxon race: express mention, on the contrary, is made in the most authentic documents connected with his history, of Saxon Monks, who had been admitted into the community of Iona. One of them, for instance, had the office of baker there, and was reckoned among Columba's intimates.[319] But nothing indicates that these Saxons, who were enrolled under the authority of Columba, exercised any influence from thence upon their countrymen. On the contrary, while the Scotic-Briton missionaries spread over all the corners of Caledonia, and while Columba and his disciples carried the light of the Gospel into the northern districts where it had never penetrated, the Christian faith and the Catholic Church languished and gave up the ghost in the southern part of the island under the ruins heaped up everywhere by the Saxon conquest.

Paganism and barbarism, vanquished by the Gospel in the Highlands of the north, again arose and triumphed in the south — in the most populous, accessible, and flourishing districts — throughout all that country, which was destined hereafter to play so great a part in the world, and which already began to call itself England. From 569 to 586 — ten years before the death of Columba, and at the period when his authority was best established and most powerful in the north — the last champions of Christian Britain were finally cast out beyond the Severn, while at the same time new bands of Anglo-Saxons in the north, driving back the Picts to the other side of the Tweed, and crossing the Humber to the south, founded the future kingdoms of Mercia and Northumbria. It is true that at a later period the sons of Columba carried the Gospel to those Northumbrians and Mercians. But at the end of the sixth century, after a hundred and fifty years of triumphant invasions and struggles, the Saxons had

[319] Cummineus (apud Colgan, p. 320) mentions two Saxons: "Quidam religiosus frater, Genereus nomine, Saxo natione, pictor opere." And subsequently: "Duo ejus discipuli, Lugneus filius Blas et Pillo Saxo genere." Adamnan (iii. 10–22) corrects the conclusions which some authors have drawn from the word *pictor* by employing the words, *opus pistorium exercens*. See *ante*, p. 36.

not yet encountered in any of the then Christian, or at least converted nations (Britons, Scots, and Picts), which they had assailed, fought, and vanquished, either missionaries disposed to announce the good news to them, nor priests capable of maintaining the precious nucleus of faith among the conquered races. In 586 the two last bishops of conquered Britain, those of London and York, abandoned their churches and took refuge in the mountains of Wales, carrying with them the sacred vessels and holy relics which they had been able to save from the rapacity of the idolaters. Other husbandmen were then necessary. From whence were they to come? From the same inextinguishable centre, whence light had been brought to the Irish by Patrick, and to the Britons and Scots by Palladius, Ninian, and Germain.

And already they are here! At the moment when Columba approached the term of his long career in his northern isle, a year before his death, the envoys of Gregory the Great left Rome, and landed where Cæsar had landed, upon the English shore.

BOOK X.

ST. AUGUSTIN OF CANTERBURY AND THE ROMAN MISSIONARIES IN ENGLAND, 597–633.

"Hodie illuxit nobis dies redemptionis novæ, reparationis antiquæ, felicitatis æternæ." — *Christmas Office, Roman Breviary.*

CHAPTER I.

MISSION OF ST. AUGUSTIN.

Origin and character of the Anglo-Saxons. — They have not to struggle, like the Franks, against the Roman decadence. — The seven kingdoms of the Heptarchy. — Institutions, social and political: government patriarchal and federal; seigneury of the proprietors: the *witenagemot* or parliament; social inequality, the *ceorls* and the *eorls;* individual independence and aristocratic federation; fusion of the two races. — The conquered Britons lose the Christian faith. — Vices of the conquerors: slavery; commerce in human flesh. — The young Angles in the Roman market seen and bought by the monk Gregory. — Elected Pope, Gregory undertakes to convert the Angles by means of the monks of his Monastery of Mt. Cœlius, under the conduct of the abbot Augustin. — Critical situation of the Papacy. — Journey of the missionary monks across Gaul; their doubts; letters of Gregory. — Augustin lands at the same spot as Cæsar and the Saxon conquerors in the Isle of Thanet. — King Ethelbert; the queen, Bertha, already a Christian. — First interview under the oak; Ethelbert grants leave to preach. — Entry of the missionaries into Canterbury. — The spring-tide of the Church in England. — Baptism of Ethelbert. — Augustin Archbishop of Canterbury. — The palace of the king changed into a cathedral. — Monastery of St. Augustin beyond the walls of Canterbury. — Donation from the king and the parliament.

Who then were the Anglo-Saxons, upon whom so many efforts were concentrated, and whose conquest is ranked, not without reason, among the most fruitful and most happy that the Church has ever accomplished? Of all the Ger-

manic tribes, the most stubborn, intrepid, and independent, this people seems to have transplanted with themselves into the great island which owes to them its name, the genius of the Germanic race, in order that it might bear on this predestined soil its richest and most abundant fruits. The Saxons brought with them a language, a character, and institutions stamped with a strong and invincible originality. Language, character, institutions, have triumphed, in their essential features, over the vicissitudes of time and fortune — have outlived all ulterior conquests, as well as all foreign influences, and, plunging their vigorous roots into the primitive soil of Celtic Britain, still exist at the indestructible foundation of the social edifice of England. Different from the Franks and Goths, who suffered themselves to be speedily neutralized or absorbed in Gaul, Italy, and Spain by the native elements, and still more by the remains of the Roman Decadence, the Saxons had the good fortune to find in Britain a soil free from imperial pollution. Less alienated from the Celtic Britons by their traditions and institutions — perhaps even by their origin — than by the jealousies and resentments of conquests, they had not after their victory to struggle against a spirit opposed to their own. Keeping intact and untamable their old Germanic spirit, their old morals, their stern independence, they gave from that moment to the free and proud genius of their race a vigorous upward impulse which nothing has ever been able to bear down.

The seven kingdoms of the Heptarchy.

Starting in three distinct and successive emigrations from the peninsular region which separates the Baltic from the North Sea, they had found in the level shores of Britain a climate and an aspect like those of their native country. At the end of a century and a half of bloody contests they had made themselves masters of all that now bears the name of England, except the coast and the hilly regions of the west. They had founded there, by fire and sword, the seven kingdoms so well known under the title of the Heptarchy, which have left their names to several of the existing divisions of that country, where nothing falls into irreparable ruin, because everything there, as in nature, takes a new form and a fresh life. The Jutes, the first and most numerous immigrants, had established in the angle of the island nearest to Germany, the kingdom of Kent, and occupied a part of the coast of the Channel (the Isle of Wight and Hampshire). Then the Saxons, properly so called,

spreading out and consolidating themselves from the east to the south, and from the south to the west, had stamped their name and their authority on the kingdoms of Essex, Sussex, and Wessex.[1] Finally, the Angles laid hold of the north and the east, and there planted, first, the kingdom of East Anglia on the coast of the North Sea, and next that of Mercia in the unoccupied territory between the Thames and the Humber; then, to the north of the latter river, the largest of all the Saxon kingdoms, Northumbria, almost always divided into two, Deira and Bernicia, the confines of which stretched away to join the Picts and Scots, beyond even the limits which the Roman domination had lately reached.

Political and social institutions of the Anglo-Saxons.

This race of pirates and plunderers, hunters and robbers of their kind, possessed nevertheless the essential elements of social order. They made this clearly apparent as soon as they were able to settle down, and to adjust their settlements on that insular soil which the Britons had not been able to defend against the Romans, nor the Romans against the barbarians of the north, nor these last against the hardy seamen from the east. The Anglo-Saxons alone have been able to establish there an immovable order of society, whose first foundations were laid when the missionary monks came to bring to them the lights of faith and of Christian virtue.

At the end of the sixth century the Anglo-Saxons already formed a great people, subject, as the Celtic races had been, to the patriarchal and federal rule, which so happily distinguished those brave and free nations from the rabble corrupted by the solitary despotism of Rome. But among them, as among all the Germanic races, this government was secured by the powerful guarantee of property.

Property.

The wandering and disorderly clan, the primitive band of pirates and pillagers, disappears, or transforms itself, in order to make room for the family permanently established by the hereditary appropriation of the soil; and this soil was not only snatched from the vanquished race, but laboriously won from the forests, fens, and untilled moors. The chiefs and men of substance of these leading families formed a sovereign and warlike aristocracy, controlled by the kings, assemblies, and laws.

The kings all belonged to a kind of caste composed of

[1] Saxons of the East, the South, and the West. The existing county of Middlesex bears witness to the same origin; it is the region inhabited by the Saxons of the Middle.

The kings.

the families which professed to trace their descent from Odin or Woden, the deified monarch of German mythology:[2] their royalty was elective and limited: they could do nothing without the consent of those who accepted them as chiefs, but not as masters. The assemblies, which at first resembled those which Tacitus has recorded as existing among the Germans, and composed of the entire tribe (*volk-mot*) were speedily limited to the elders, to the wise men (*witena-gemot*) to the chiefs of the principal families of each tribe or kingdom, and to men endowed with the double prerogative of blood and property. They were held in the open air, under venerable oaks, and at stated periods; they took part in all the affairs of the body politic, and regulated with sovereign authority all rights that were established or defended by the laws.

The assemblies.

Laws.

The laws themselves were simply treaties of peace discussed and guaranteed by the grand council of each little nation, between the king and those on whom depended his security and his power; between the different parties in every process, civil and criminal; between different groups of free men, all armed and all possessors of lands, incessantly exposed to risk their life, their possessions, the honor and safety of their wives, children, kindred, dependents, and friends, in daily conflicts springing from that individual right of making war which is to be found at the root of all German liberty and legislation.[3]

Social inequalities: *Ceorls* and *Eorls*.

Disparity of rank, which was in ancient times the inseparable companion of freedom, existed among the Saxons, as it did everywhere. The class of freemen — *ceorls* — possessors of land and of political power, who constituted the vital strength of the nation, had under them not only slaves, the fruit of their wars and conquests, but in much greater number servitors, laborers, dependants, who had not the same rights as they possessed; but they in their turn acknowledged as superiors the nobles, the *eorls*, who were born to command, and to fill the offices of priest, judge, and chief, under the primary authority of the king.[4]

[2] Ethelwerdi *Chronic.*, lib. i. p. 474, ap. Savile.

[3] Palgrave, *The Rise and Progress of the English Commonwealth*, London, 1832. Lappenberg, *Geschichte von England*, Hamburg, 1834. Kemble, *Codex Diplomaticus Ævi Saxonici* (London, 1839-48), and *The Saxons in England*, London, 1849. Baron D'Eckstein, various notices and memoirs.

[4] The Anglo-Saxon laws and diplomas, and particularly the charters of

Thus that part of Great Britain which has since taken the name of England, was at this early period made up of an aggregation of tribes and independent communities, among which the exigencies of a common struggle against their warlike neighbors of the north and west helped to develop a gradual tendency towards union. It settled into an aristocratic federation, in which families of a reputedly divine origin presided over the social and military life of each tribe, but in which personal independence was at the base of the whole fabric. This independence was always able to reclaim its rights when a prince more than ordinarily dexterous and energetic encroached upon them. Its influence was everywhere felt in establishing and maintaining social life on the principle of free association for mutual benefit.[5] All that the freemen had not expressly given over to the chiefs established by themselves, or to associates freely accepted by them, remained forever their own inviolable possession. Such, at that obscure and remote epoch, as in our own day, was the fundamental and gloriously unalterable principle of English public life.

The British population, which had survived the fury of the Saxon Conquest, and which had not been able or willing to seek for refuge in the mountains and peninsulas of Wales and Cornwall, seems to have accommodated itself to the new order of things. When the conquest was fully achieved, in those districts where the indigenous race had not been completely exterminated,[6] no traces of insurrection or of general discontent are to be found among the British; and the opinion of those who maintain that the condition of the mass of the British population remaining in the conquered regions was not worse under the Saxon invaders than it had been under the yoke of the Romans, or even under that of their native princes, so reviled by their compatriot the historian Gildas, may be admitted as probable.[7] It may even be sup-

monastic endowments, constantly repeat this distinction between *ceorls* and *eorls*, which is found in the Scandinavian mythology, between the *Karls* and the *Jarls*, the offspring of the intercourse of a god with two different women. See the song of the first Edda, entitled *Rigsmal*. The word *ceorl* is the parent of the *churl* of modern English; as *eorl* is perpetuated in *earl*. The one has fallen in dignity, the other has risen.

[5] Kemble, *Saxons in England*, vol. ii. p. 312.

[6] It has been already stated that in some districts the Saxons annihilated the conquered population. But this was only in exceptional cases. See on this subject the excellent summary of Burke in his *Abridged Essay on the History of England* — a work too much forgotten, though altogether worthy of the greatest of Englishmen.

[7] Such is, especially, the opinion of Kemble, who otherwise generalizes

posed that this fusion of the conquerors and the conquered was productive of great benefit to the former. It would be hard to say whether the heroic tenacity which has become the distinctive characteristic of the English may not have been derived mainly from that vigorous race which, after having coped with Cæsar, proved itself the only one among all the nations subjected to the Roman yoke capable of struggling for two centuries against the invasion of the barbarians.[8]

The vanquished Britons lose the Christian faith.

But this assimilation of the two races could not but operate to the prejudice of the Christian faith. Unlike the barbarian invaders of the Continent, the Saxons did not adopt the religion of the people they had subdued. In Gaul, Spain, and Italy, Christianity had flourished anew, and gained fresh strength under the dominion of the Franks and the Goths; it had conquered the conquerors. In Britain it disappeared under the pressure of the alien conquest. No traces of Christianity remained in the districts under Saxon sway when Rome sent thither her missionaries. Here and there a ruined church might be found, but not one living Christian amongst the natives;[9] conquerors and conquered alike were lost in the darkness of paganism.

It is not necessary to inquire whether, along with this proud and vigorous independence, in which we have recognized a rare and singularly advanced condition of political intelligence and social vitality, the Anglo-Saxons exhibited moral virtues of an equally elevated order. Such an assertion no one would be disposed to believe. Certainly "there existed under this native barbarism noble dispositions unknown to the Roman world. Under the brute the free man, and also the man of heart, might always be discovered."[10] Even more, intermingled with daily outbursts of daring and of violence there might also be found miracles of heroic and simple devotion — of sincere and lofty enthusiasm — which emulated or forestalled Christianity. But alongside of these

too freely upon the exaggerations of history in relation to the oppression or extermination of vanquished nations. The events which since 1772 have occurred in Poland, in Lithuania, in Circassia, and elsewhere, prove that it is very possible, even in the full light of modern civilization, and under princes consecrated before the altar of the living God, to proceed with an invincible determination to the destruction of human races.

[8] La Borderie, p. 231.

[9] Burke, *Works*, vol. vi. p. 216.

[10] Taine, *Histoire de la Littérature Anglaise.*

wonders of primitive virtue, what miracles of vice and crime, of avarice, lust, and ferocity! The religion of their Scandinavian forefathers, whose primitive myths concealed no small amount of traditional truth under symbols full of grace and majesty, was only too soon corrupted or obscured. It did not preserve them from any excess, superstition, or fetishism: perhaps not even from the human sacrifices which were known to all other pagan nations. What could be expected in point of morality from people accustomed to invoke and to worship Worden, the god of massacres, Freya, the Venus of the North, the goddess of sensuality, and all these bloody and obscene gods of whom one had for his emblem a naked sword, and another the hammer with which he broke the heads of his enemies?[11] The immortality which was promised to them in their Walhalla but reserved for them new days of slaughter and nights of debauch, spent in drinking deep from the skulls of their victims. And in this world their life was but too often only a prolonged orgie of carnage, rapine, and lechery. The traditional respect for woman which marked the Germanic tribes was limited among the Saxons, as elsewhere, by singular exceptions, and did not extend beyond the princesses or the daughters of the victorious and dominant race.

Vices of the conquerors.

Such mercy as they ever showed to the vanquished consisted only in sparing their lives in order to reduce them to servitude, and sell them as slaves. That frightful slave-traffic which has disgraced successively all pagan and all Christian nations was among them carried on with a kind of inveterate passion.[12] It needed, as we shall see, whole centuries of incessant efforts to extirpate it. Nor was it only captives and vanquished foes that they condemned to this extremity of misfortune and shame: it was their kindred, their fellow-countrymen; even, like Joseph's brethren, those of their own blood, their sons and daughters, that they set up to auction and sold to merchants who came from the Continent to supply themselves in the Anglo-Saxon market with these human chattels. It was by this infamous commerce that Great

Slavery.

The trade in human cattle.

[11] See the interesting chapter on the religion of the Germans in Ozanam's *Germains avant le Christianisme*, 1847.

[12] "Venales ex Northumbria pueri, familiari et pene ingenita illi nationi consuetudine, adeo ut, sicut nostra quoque sæcula viderunt non dubitarent arctissimas necessitudines sub prætextu minimorum commodorum distrahere." — Willelmus Malmesburiensis, *De Gestis Regum Anglorum*, l. 3.

Britain, having become almost as great a stranger to the rest of Europe as she was before the days of Cæsar, re-entered the circle of the nations, making herself known once more, as in the time of Cæsar, when Cicero anticipated no other profit to Rome from the expedition of the proconsul than the produce of the sale of British slaves.[13]

Nevertheless, it was from the depth of this shameful abyss that God was about to evolve the opportunity of delivering England from the fetters of paganism, of introducing her by the hand of the greatest of the Popes into the bosom of the Church, and, at the same time, of bringing her within the pale of Christian civilization.

Anglo-Saxon children sold at Rome.

Who will ever explain to us how these traffickers in men found a market for their merchandise at Rome? Yes, at Rome, in the full light of Christianity, six centuries after the birth of the Divine Deliverer, and three centuries after the peace of the Church; at Rome, governed since Constantine by Christian emperors, and in which was gradually developing the temporal sovereignty of the Popes. It was so, however, in the year of grace 586 or 587, under Pope Pelagius II. Slaves of both sexes and of all countries, and among them some children, young Saxons, were exposed for sale in the Roman forum like any other commodity. Priests and monks mingled with the crowd that came to bid or to look on at the auction; and among the spectators appears the gentle, the generous, the immortal Gregory.[14] He thus learned to detest this leprosy of slavery which it was afterwards given him to restrict and to contend against, though not to extirpate it.[15]

St. Gregory the Great inquires about, and redeems them.

This scene, which the father of English history found among the traditions of his Northumbrian ancestors, and the dialogue in which are portrayed with such touching and quaint originality the pious and compassionate spirit of Gregory, and at the same time his strange love of punning, has been a hundred times rehearsed. Every one knows how, at the sight of these young slaves, struck with the beauty of their counte-

[13] "Britannici belli exitus exspectatur. . . . Illud cognitum est, neque argenti scripulum ullum esse in illa insula, neque ullam spem prædæ nisi ex mancipiis." — *Epist. ad. Attic.*, iv. 16.

[14] "Die quadam cum advenientibus nuper mercatoribus multa venalia in forum fuissent collata, multique ad emendum confluxissent, et ipsum Gregorium inter alios advenisse, ac vidisse inter alia pueros venales positos." — Bede, ii. 1.

[15] Joan. Diac., *Vita S. Gregorii*, iv. 45, 46, 47. S. Greg., *Epist.*, iv. 9, 13; vii. 24, 38, and elsewhere.

nances, the dazzling purity of their complexions, the length of their fair locks (probably index of aristocratic birth) he inquired what was their country and their religion. The slave-dealer informed him that they came from the island of Britain, where every one had the same beauty of complexion, and that they were heathens. Heaving a profound sigh, "What evil luck," cried Gregory, "that the Prince of Darkness should possess beings with an aspect so radiant, and that the grace of these countenances should reflect a soul void of the inward grace! But what nation are they of?" "They are Angles." "They are well named, for these Angles have the faces of angels; and they must become the brethren of the angels in heaven. From what province have they been brought?" "From Deïra" (one of the two kingdoms of Northumbria). "Still good," answered he. "*De ira eruti* — they shall be snatched from the ire of God, and called to the mercy of Christ. And how name they the king of their country?" "Alle or Ælla." "So be it; he is right well named, for they shall soon sing the Alleluia in his kingdom."[16]

It is natural to believe that the rich and charitable abbot bought these captive children, and that he conveyed them at once to his own home — that is to say, to the palace of his father, where he was born, which he had changed into a monastery, and which was not far from the forum where the young Britons were exposed for sale. The purchase of these three or four slaves was thus the origin of the redemption of all England.

An Anglo-Saxon chronicler, a Christian but a layman, who wrote four centuries later, but who exemplifies the influence of domestic traditions among that people by giving to his own genealogy a very high rank in the history of his race,[17]

[16] "Nec silentio prætercunda opinio quæ de beato Gregorio traditione majorum ad nos usque perlata est. . . . Candidi et lactei corporis, venusti vultus, capillorum forma egregia . . . crine rutila. . . . Intimo ex corde suspiria ducens . . . interrogavit mercatorem. . . . De Britanniæ insula cujus incolarum omnis facies simili candore fulgescit. . . . Heu proh dolor! quod tam lucidi vultus . . . tantaque gratia frontispicii. . . . Bene Angli quasi angeli, quia et angelicos vultus habent . . . Bene quia rex dicitur Aelle. Alleluia etenim in partibus illis oportet decantari." — Bede, *loc. cit.* Paul Diac., *Vita S. Gregorii*, c. 14. Joan Diac., *Vita S. Gregorii*, i. 21. Gotselini, *Historia Maior de Vita S. Augustini*, c. 4. Lappenberg, p. 138. The name of Ælla fixes the date of this incident to a period necessarily prior to the death of this prince in 588.

[17] Ethelwerdi *Chronic.*, lib. ii. c. 1. See his curious preamble to his cousin Matilda, in Savile, and the remarks of Lappenberg, p. 55.

says expressly that Gregory lodged his guests in the *triclinium*, where he loved to serve with his own hand the table of the poor, and that after he had instructed and baptized them, it was his desire to take them with him as his companions, and to return to their native land in order to convert it to Christ. All authors unanimously admit that from that moment he conceived the grand design of bringing over the Anglo-Saxons to the Catholic Church. To this design he consecrated a perseverance, a devotion, and a prudence which the greatest men have not surpassed. We have already seen how, after this scene in the slave-market, he sought and obtained from the Pope permission to go as a missionary to the Anglo-Saxons, and how, at the tidings of his departure, the Romans, after overwhelming the Pope with reproaches, ran after their future pontiff, and, overtaking him three days' journey from Rome, brought him back by force to the Eternal City.[18]

590. Scarcely had he been elected Pope, when his great and cherished design became the object of his constant thought. His intrepid soul dwells on it with an unfailing interest, and his vast correspondence everywhere testifies its existence.[19] While waiting until he should discover the fit man to conduct this special mission, he never forgot the English slaves — the heathen children whose sad lot had been the means of revealing to him the conquest which God had in store for him, and whose brothers were to be found in the slave-markets of other Christian countries. He writes to the priest Candidius, who had the management of the patrimony of the Roman Church in Gaul, "We charge you to lay out the money which you have received, in the purchase of young English slaves, of seventeen or eighteen years of age, whom you shall train in the monastery for the service of God. In this way the coins of Gaul, which are not current here, will be put on the spot to a suitable use. If you can draw anything from the revenues which they say have been withheld from us, you must employ it equally either to procure clothing for the poor or to buy these young slaves. But as they will yet be heathens, they must be accompanied by a priest, who may baptize them if they fall sick by the way."[20] At last, in the

[18] See *ante*, vol. i. p. 361.

[19] *Epist.*, ix. 108, ad Syagrium episc. Augustodunensem. "Cum pro convertendis Anglis-Saxonibus, quemadmodum in monachatu suo proposuerat, assiduis cogitationum fluctibus urgeretur." — Joan. Diac., ii. 33.

[20] "Volumus ut dilectio tua . . . quatenus solidi Galliarum qui in terra

sixth year of his pontificate, he decided to select as the apostles of the distant island, whither his thoughts continually carried him, the monks of the Monastery of St. Andrew, on Mount Cœlius, and to appoint as their leader Augustine, the prior of that beloved house.

The monastery whence issued the apostles of England.

This monastery is the one which now bears the name of St. Gregory, and is known to all who have visited Rome. That incomparable city contains few spots more attractive and more worthy of eternal remembrance. The sanctuary occupies the western angle of Mount Cœlius, and the site of the hallowed grove and fountain which Roman mythology has consecrated by the graceful and touching fable of Numa and the nymph Egeria.[21] It is at an equal distance from the Circus Maximus, the baths of Caracalla, and the Coliseum, and near to the church of the holy martyrs John and Paul. The cradle of English Christianity is thus planted on the soil steeped with the blood of many thousands of martyrs. In front rises the Mons Palatinus, the cradle of heathen Rome, still covered with the vast remains of the palace of the Cæsars. To the left of the grand staircase which leads to the existing monastery, three small buildings stand apart on a plot of grass.[22] On the door of one you read these words — *Triclinium Pauperum;* and within is preserved the table at which every day were seated the twelve beggars whom Gregory fed and personally waited upon. The other is dedicated to the memory of his mother, Silvia, who had followed his example in devoting herself to a religious life, and whose portrait he had caused to be painted in the porch of his monastery.[23]

Between these two small edifices stands the oratory dedicated by Gregory, while still a simple monk, to the apostle St. Andrew, at the time when he transformed his patrimonial mansion into the cloister whence were to issue the apostles of England. In the church of the monastery, which now belongs to the Camaldolites, is still shown the pulpit from which Gregory preached, the bed on which he took his brief repose, the altar before which he must have so often prayed for the conversion of his beloved English. On the façade of the

nostra expendi non possunt apud locum proprium utiliter expendantur. . . . Sed quia pagani sunt . . . volo ut cum eis presbyter transmittatur ne quid ægritudinis contingat in via, ut quos morituros conspexerit, debeat baptizare." — *Epist.*, vi. 7.

[21] Ampere, *L'Histoire Romaine à Rome*, pp. 4, 370, 498.

[22] Gerbet, *Esquisse de Rome Chrétienne*, vol. i. p. 447.

[23] Joan Diac., *Vita Gregorii*, iv. c. 83.

church an inscription records that thence set out the first apostles of the Anglo-Saxons, and preserves their names.[24] Under the porch are seen the tombs of some generous Englishmen who died in exile for their fidelity to the religion which these apostles taught them; and, among other sepulchral inscriptions, this which follows may be remarked and remembered: "Here lies Robert Pecham, an English Catholic, who, after the disruption of England and the Church, quitted his country, unable to endure life there without the faith, and who, coming to Rome, died, unable to endure life here without his country."[25]

Where is the Englishman worthy of the name who, in looking from the Palatine to the Coliseum, could contemplate without emotion and without remorse this spot from whence have come to him the faith and name of Christian, the Bible of which he is so proud — the Church herself of which he has preserved but the shadow? Here were the enslaved children of his ancestors gathered together and saved. On these stones they knelt who made his country Christian. Under these roofs was the grand design conceived by a saintly mind, intrusted to God, blessed by Him, accepted and carried out by humble and generous Christians. By these steps descended the forty monks who bore to England the word of God and the light of the Gospel along with Catholic unity, the apostolical succession, and the rule of St. Benedict. No country ever received the gift of salvation more directly

[24] The following is the exact text of the inscription transcribed by the friendly hand of an eloquent monk of our time and country, Father Hyacinth, of the Barefooted Carmelites: —

EX HOC MONASTERIO
PRODIERVNT

S. GREGORIVS. M. FVNDATOR. ET. PARENS. — S. ELVTHERIVS. AB. — S. HILARION. AB. — S. AVGVSTINVS. ANGLOR. APOSTOL. — S. LAVRENTIVS. CANTUAR. ARCHIEP. — S. MELLITVS. LONDINEN. EP. MOX. ARCHIEP. CANTVAR. — S. IVSTVS EP. ROFFENSIS. — S. PAVLINVS. EP. EBORAC. — S. MAXIMIANVS. SYRACVSAN. EP. — SS. ANTONIVS. MERVLVS. ET. JOANNES. MONACHI. — S. PETRVS. AB. CANTVAR.

HONORIVS. ARCHIEP. CANTVAR. — MARINIANVS. ARCHIEP. RAVEN. — PROBVS. XENODOCHI. IEROSOLYMIT. CURATOR. A. S. GREGORIO. ELECT. — SABINVS. CALLIPOLIT. EP. — FELIX. MESSANEN. EP. — GREGORIVS. DIAC. CARD. S. EUSTACH.

HIC. ETIAM. DIU. VIXIT. M. GREGORII. MATER. S. SILVIA. HOC. MAXIME. COLENDA. QVOD. TANTVM. PIETATIS. SAPIENTIAE. ET. DOCTRINAE. LVMEN. PEPEREREIT.

[25] Quoted in the address of M. Augustin Cochin to the Congress at Malines, 20th August, 1863.

from popes and monks, and none, alas! so soon and so cruelly betrayed them.

Critical state of the Papacy.

Nothing could be more sad and sombre than the state of the Church at the epoch when Gregory resolved to put his project into execution. This great man — by turns soldier, general, statesman, administrator, and legislator, but always, and before all, pontiff and apostle — had need of more than human boldness to take in hand distant conquests, surrounded as he was by perils and disasters, and at a moment when Rome, devastated by plague, famine, and the inundations of the Tiber, mercilessly taxed and shamelessly abandoned by the Byzantine emperors, was struggling against the aggressions of the Lombards, which became every day more menacing.[26] It is not without reason that a writer more learned than enthusiastic represents the expedition of Augustin as an act as heroic as Scipio's departure for Africa while Hannibal was at the gates of Rome.[27]

Journey of the monkish missionaries across Gaul.

Absolutely nothing is known of Augustin's history previous to the solemn days on which, in obedience to the commands of the pontiff, who had been his abbot, he and his forty comrades tore themselves from the motherly bosom of that community which was to them as their native land. He must, as prior of the monastery, have exhibited distinguished qualifications ere he could have been chosen by Gregory for such a mission. But there is nothing to show that his companions were at that time animated with the same zeal which inspired the Pope. They arrived without hinderance in Provence, and stopped for some time at Lerins, in that Mediterranean isle of the Saints where, a century and a half before, Patrick, the monastic apostle of the western isle of Saints, had sojourned for nine years before he was sent by Pope Celestine to evangelize Ireland. But, there or elsewhere, the Roman monks received frightful accounts of the country which they were going to convert. They were told that the Anglo-Saxon people, of whose language they were ignorant, were a nation of wild beasts, thirsting for innocent blood — a race whom it was impossible to approach or conciliate, and to land on whose coast was to rush to certain destruction. They took fright at these tales; and in place of continuing their route, they persuaded Augustin to return to Rome to beseech the Pope to relieve them

[26] See *ante*, vol. i. p. 356.

[27] Kemble, *Saxons in England*, vol. ii. p. 357.

from a journey so toilsome, so perilous, and so useless.[28] Instead of listening to their request, Gregory sent Augustin back to them with a letter in which they were ordered to recognize him henceforth as their abbot — to obey him in everything, and, above all, not to let themselves be terrified by the toils of the way or by the tongue of the detractor. "Better were it," wrote Gregory, "not to begin that good work at all, than to give it up after having commenced it. . . . Forward, then, in God's name! . . . The more you have to suffer, the brighter will your glory be in eternity. May the grace of the Almighty protect you, and grant to me to behold the fruit of your labors in the eternal country; if I cannot share your toil, I shall none the less rejoice in the harvest, for God knows that I lack not good will." [29]

Letters of the Pope. 23d July, 596.

Augustin was the bearer of numerous letters of the same date,[30] written by the Pope first of all to the Abbot of Lerins, to the Bishop of Aix, and to the Governor of Provence, thanking them for the hearty welcome they had given to his missionaries; and next to the Bishops of Tours, of Marseilles, of Vienne, and of Autun; and, above all, to Virgilius, Metropolitan of Arles, warmly recommending to them Augustin and his mission, but without explaining its nature or its aim.

He acted differently in his letters to the two young kings of Austrasia and of Burgundy, and to their mother, Brunehaut, who reigned in their name over the whole of Eastern France. In appealing to the orthodoxy which distinguished beyond all others the Frank nation, he announces to them that he has learned that the English were disposed to receive the Christian faith, but that the priests of the neighboring regions (that is, of Wales) took no pains to preach it to them; wherefore he asks that the missionaries sent by him to enlighten and save the English may obtain interpreters to go with them across the Straits, and a royal safe-conduct to guarantee their safety during their journey through France.[31]

Thus stimulated and recommended, Augustin and his

[28] "Augustini sanctorumque fratrum a maternis visceribus monasterialis ecclesiæ avulserunt. . . . Nuntiatur quod gens quam peterent immanior belluis existeret." — Gotselinus, *Historia Maior*, c. 3, 6. "Perculsi timore inerti . . . ne tam periculosam, tam laboriosam, tam inutilem prædicationem adire deberent." — Bede, i. 23.

[29] "Quatenus etsi vobiscum laborare nequeo, simul in gaudio retributionis inveniar, quia laborare scilicet volo." — Bede, i. 23.

[30] 23d July, 596.

[31] *Epist.*, vi. 53-59.

monks took courage and again set out upon their way. Their obedience won the victory which the magnanimous ardor of the great Gregory had failed to secure. They traversed the whole of France, ascending the Rhone and descending the Loire, protected by the princes and bishops to whom the Pope had recommended them, but not without suffering more than one insult at the hands of the lower orders, especially in Anjou, where these forty men, in pilgrim garb, walking together, resting sometimes at night under no other shelter than that of a large tree, were regarded as were-wolves, and were assailed (by the women particularly) with yellings and abuse.[32]

Augustin lands where previously Cæsar and the first Saxons had disembarked.

After having thus traversed the whole of Frankish Gaul, Augustin and his companions brought their journey to a close on the southern shore of Great Britain, at the point where it approaches nearest to the Continent, and where the previous conquerors of England had already landed: Julius Cæsar, who revealed it to the Roman world; and Hengist with his Saxons, who brought to it with its new name the ineffaceable impress of the Germanic race. To these two conquests, a third — destined to be the last — was now about to succeed. For it is impossible to place in the same rank the victorious invasions of the Danes and the Normans, who, akin to the Saxons in blood and manners, have indeed cruelly troubled the life of the English people, but have effected no radical change in its social and moral order, and have not been able to touch either its language, its religion, or its national character.

The new conquerors, like Julius Cæsar, arrived under the ensigns of Rome — but of Rome the Eternal, not the Imperial. They came to restore the law of the Gospel which the Saxons had drowned in blood. But in setting, forever, the seal of the Christian faith upon the soil of England, they struck no blow at the independent character and powerful originality of the people, whom, in converting them to the true faith, they succeeded in consolidating into a nation.

On the south side of the mouth of the River Thames, and at the north-east corner of the county of Kent, lies a district which is still called the Isle of Thanet, although the name of

[32] "Tot homines peregrinos pedestri incessu et habitu humiles quasi tot lupos et ignota monstra repulere. Mulierculæ simul conglomeratæ tanta . . . insania, tribulatu, despectu, subsannatione, derisione in sanctos Dei sunt debacchatæ. . . . Stabat juxta ulmus ampla . . . sub hac sancti volentes ipsa nocte requiescere." — GOTSELINUS, c. 10.

isle no longer befits it, as the arm of the sea which at one time separated it from the mainland is now little better than a brackish and marshy brook. There, where the steep white cliffs of the coast suddenly divide to make way for a sandy creek, near the ancient port of the Romans at Richborough, and between the modern towns of Sandwich and Ramsgate,[33] the Roman monks set foot for the first time on British soil.[34] The rock which received the first print of the footsteps of Augustin was long preserved and venerated, and was the object of many pilgrimages, in gratitude to the living God for having led thither the apostle of England.[35]

Immediately on his arrival the envoy of Pope Gregory despatched the interpreters, with whom he had been provided in France, to the king of the country in which the missionaries had landed, to announce to him that they came from Rome, and that they brought to him the best of news — the true glad tidings — the promise of celestial joy, and of an eternal reign in the fellowship of the living and true God.[36]

The king's name was Ethelbert, which means in Anglo-Saxon *noble* and *valiant*.[37] Great-grandson of Hengist, the first of the Saxon conquerors, who himself was supposed to be a descendant of one of the three sons of Odin, he reigned for thirty-six years over the oldest kingdom of the Heptarchy — that of Kent — and had just gained over all the other Saxon kings and princes, even to the confines of Northumbria, that kind of military supremacy which was attached to

[33] It is pleasant to know that in this same town of Ramsgate, on the shore where the Abbot Augustin landed, the sons of St. Benedict have been able, after the lapse of thirteen centuries, to erect a new sanctuary, near to a church dedicated to St. Augustin, designed and built by the liberality of the great Catholic architect Pugin. This monastic colony belongs to the new Benedictine province of Subiaco.

[34] In a book entitled *Historical Memorials of Canterbury*, 1855, Dr. Stanley, Dean of Westminster, has examined and determined, with no less enthusiasm than scrupulous exactness, the facts relative to the arrival of St. Augustin. He has confirmed the already old opinion which fixes the very place of his landing at a farm now called *Ebbsfleet*, situated upon a promontory, from which the sea has now withdrawn.

[35] Stanley, p. 14. Oakley, *Life of St. Augustin*, 1844, p. 91. This life forms part of the interesting series of *Lives of the English Saints*, published by the principal writers of the Puseyite school before their conversion.

[36] "Mandavit se venisse de Roma et nuntium ferre optimum . . . æterna in cœlis gaudia et regnum sine fine cum Deo vivo et vero futurum." — Bede, i. 25.

[37] The root *Ethel*, which we shall find in almost all the names, male and female, which we shall quote, corresponds to the German adjective *edel*, noble.

the title of Bretwalda, or temporary chief of the Saxon Confederation.[38]

It was to be supposed that he would have a natural prepossession in favor of the Christian religion. It was the faith of his wife Bertha, who was the daughter of Caribert, king of the Franks of Paris, and grandson of Clovis, and whose mother was that Ingoberga whose gentle virtues and domestic troubles have been recorded by Gregory of Tours.[39] She had been affianced to the heathen king of the Saxons of Kent only on the condition that she should be free to observe the precepts and practices of her faith, under the care of a Gaulo-Frankish bishop, Liudhard of Senlis, who had remained with her until his death, which occurred immediately before the arrival of Augustin. Tradition records the gentle and lovable virtues of Queen Bertha, and her judicious zeal for the conversion of her husband and his subjects. It is believed to have been from her that Gregory received his information as to the desire of the English to be converted, with which he had enlisted the interest of Brunehaut and her sons.[40] The great-granddaughter of St. Clotilda seemed thus destined to be herself the St. Clotilda of England. But too little is known of her life: she has left but a brief and uncertain illumination on those distant and dark horizons over which she rises like a star, the herald of the sun of truth.

Queen Bertha.

Meanwhile King Ethelbert did not immediately permit the Roman monks to visit him in the Roman city of Canterbury where he dwelt. While providing for their maintenance, he forbade their leaving the island on which they had landed until he had deliberated on the course he should pursue. At the close of some days he himself went to visit them, but he would not meet them except in the open air. It is difficult to imagine what pagan superstition made him dread foul play if he allowed himself to be brought under the same roof with the strangers. At the sound of his approach they advanced to meet him in procession.

"The history of the Church," says Bossuet,[41] "contains

[38] Bede, i. 25; ii. 3, 5.

[39] Greg. Turon., *Hist. Franc.*, iv. 26; ix. 26.

[40] "Quam ea conducere a parentibus acceperat, ut ritum fidei ac religionis suæ cum episcopo quem ei adjutorem fidei dederant, nomine Liudhardo, inviolatam servare licentiam haberet." — Bede, *loc. cit.* "Pervenit ad nos Anglorum gentem ad fidem Christianam Deo miserante desideranter velle converti." — S. Gregorii *Epist.*, vi. 58; compare *Epist.*, xi. 29.

[41] *Discours sur l'Histoire Universelle.*

nothing finer than the entrance of the holy monk Augustin into the kingdom of Kent with forty of his companions, who, preceded by the cross and the image of the great king our Lord Jesus Christ, offered their solemn prayers for the conversion of England." At that solemn moment when, upon a soil once Christian, Christianity found itself once more face to face with idolatry, the strangers besought the true God to save, with their own souls, all those souls for whose love they had torn themselves from their peaceful cloister at home, and had taken this hard enterprise in hand. They chanted the litanies in use at Rome in the solemn and touching strains which they had learnt from Gregory, their spiritual father and the father of religious music. At their head marched Augustin, whose lofty stature and patrician presence attracted every eye, for, like Saul, "he was higher than any of the people from his shoulders and upwards." [42]

The king, surrounded by a great number of his followers, received them seated under a great oak, and made them sit down before him. After having listened to the address which they delivered to him and to the assembly, he gave them a loyal, sincere, and, as we should say in these days, truly liberal answer. "You make fair speeches and promises," he said, "but all this is to me new and uncertain. I cannot all at once put faith in what you tell me, and abandon all that I, with my whole nation, have for so long a time held sacred. But since you have come from so far away to impart to us what you yourselves, by what I see, believe to be the truth and the supreme good, we shall do you no hurt: on the contrary, we shall show you all hospitality, and shall take care to furnish you with the means of living. We shall not hinder you from preaching your religion, and you shall convert whom you can." By these words the king intimated to them his desire to reconcile fidelity to the national customs, with a respect for liberty of conscience too rarely found in history. The Catholic Church thus met, from her first entrance into England, that promise of liberty which has during so many ages been the first and most fundamental article of all English charters and constitutions.

Faithful to his engagement, Ethelbert allowed the missionaries to follow him to Canterbury, where he assigned them a dwelling, which still exists under the name of the Stable

[42] "Beati Augustini formam et personam patriciam, staturam proceram et arduam, adeo ut a scapulis populo supereminceret." — Gotsel., *Vita*, c. 45.

Gate. The forty missionaries made a solemn entry into the town, carrying their silver cross, along with a picture of Christ painted on wood, and chanting in unison the response of their litany, "We beseech Thee, O Lord, by Thy pity, to spare in Thy wrath this city and Thy holy house, for we have sinned. Alleluia." It was thus, says a monastic historian, that the first fathers and teachers of the faith in England entered their future metropolis, and inaugurated the triumphant labors of the cross of Jesus.[43]

There was outside the town, to the east, a small church dedicated to St. Martin, dating from the time of the Romans, whither Queen Bertha was in the habit of going to pray, and to celebrate the offices of religion. Thither also went Augustin and his companions to chant their monastic office, to celebrate mass, to preach, and to baptize.[44] Here, then, we behold them, provided, thanks to the royal munificence, with the necessaries of life, endowed with the supreme blessing of liberty, and using that liberty in laboring to propagate the truth. They lived here, says the most truthful of their historians, the life of the apostles in the primitive Church — assiduous in prayer, in vigils, in fasts; they preached the word of life to all whom they could reach, and, despising this world's goods, accepting from their converts nothing beyond what was strictly necessary, lived in all harmony with their doctrine, and ever ready to suffer or to die for the truth they preached. The innocent simplicity of their life, and the heavenly sweetness of their doctrine, appeared to the Saxons arguments of an invincible eloquence; and every day the number of candidates for baptism increased.[45]

Such fair days occur at the outset of all great undertak-

[43] "Ad jussionem regis residentes, verbum Dei vitæ, una cum omnibus qui aderant ejus comitibus, prædicarent. . . . Pulchra sunt quidem verba et promissa, sed quia nova sunt et incerta. . . . Nec prohibemus quin omnes quos potestis fidei vestræ religionis prædicando societis. . . . Crucem pro vexilla ferentes argenteam et imaginem Domini salvatoris in tabula depictam, lætaniasque canentes. . . . Pro sua simul et eorum propter quos et ad quos venerant salute æterna . . . consona voce." — Bede, i. 25. "Tali devotione proto-doctoribus et in fide Christi proto-patribus Angliæ metropolim suam cum triumphali crucis labore ingredientibus: *Aperite portas*," &c. — Gotselinus, *Historia Minor de Vita S. Aug.*, c. 12.

[44] The existing church rebuilt in the thirteenth century, occupies the place of that which is forever consecrated by the double memory of Bertha the Queen and Augustin the Archbishop. The baptismal fonts are shown there in which, according to tradition, King Ethelbert was baptized by immersion.

[45] "Paratum ad patiendum adversa quæque, vel etiam ad moriendum animum habendo. . . . Mirantes simplicitatem innocentis vitæ ac dulcedinem doctrinæ eorum cœlestis." — Bede, i. 26.

The spring-time of the Church in England.

ings. They do not last, thanks to the lamentable and incurable infirmity of all human things; but yet they should never be forgotten nor remembered without honor. They are the blossoming time of noble lives. History serves no more salutary purpose than in transmitting their perfume to us. The Church of Canterbury for a thousand years possessed unparalleled splendors; no Church in the world, after the Church of Rome, has been governed by greater men, or has waged more glorious conflicts. But nothing in her brilliant annals could eclipse the sweet and pure light of that humble beginning, where a handful of strangers, Italian monks, sheltered by the generous hospitality of an honest-hearted king, and guided by the inspiration of the greatest of the Popes, applied themselves in prayer, and abstinence, and toil, to the work of winning over the ancestors of a great people to God, to virtue, and to truth.

Baptism of King Ethelbert.

The good and loyal Ethelbert did not lose sight of them; soon, charmed like so many others by the purity of their life, and allured by their promises, the truth of which was attested by more than one miracle, he sought and obtained baptism at the hand of Augustin. It was on Whit Sunday,[46] in the year of grace 597, that this Anglo-Saxon king entered into the unity of the Holy Church of Christ. Since the baptism of Constantine, and excepting that of Clovis, there had not been any event of greater moment in the annals of Christendom.[47]

A crowd of Saxons followed the example of their king, and the missionaries issued from their first asylumn to preach in all quarters, building churches also here and there. The king, faithful to the last to that noble respect for the individual conscience of which he had given proof even before he was a Christian, was unwilling to constrain any one to change his religion. He allowed himself to show no preference, save a deeper love for those who, baptized like himself, became his fellow-citizens in the heavenly kingdom. The Saxon king had learned from the Italian monks that no constraint is compatible with the service of Christ.[48] It was

[46] 2d June, 597.

[47] Stanley, p. 19.

[48] "Ipse etiam inter alios delectatus vita mundissima sanctorum et promissis . . . quæ vere esse miraculorum quoque multorum ostensione firmaverant. . . . Unitati se sanctæ Ecclesiæ Christi credendo sociare. Quorum fidei et conversioni ita congratulatus esse rex perhibetur, ut nullum tamen cogeret ad Christianismum: sed tantummodo credentes arctiori dilectione,

not to unite England to the Roman Church, it was in order to tear her from it, a thousand years after this, that another king and other apostles had to employ the torture and the stake.

In the meanwhile Augustin, perceiving that he should henceforward be at the head of an important Christian community, and in conformity to the Pope's instructions, returned to France in order to be there consecrated Archbishop of the English by the celebrated Metropolitan of Arles, Virgilius, the former abbot of Lerins, whom Gregory had appointed his vicar over all the churches of the Frankish kingdom. 25th Dec., 597.

On his return to Canterbury he found that the example of the king and the labors of his companions had borne fruit beyond all expectation; so much so, that at the festival of Christmas in the same year, 597, more than 10,000 Anglo-Saxons presented themselves for baptism; and that sacrament was administered to them in the Thames at the mouth of the Medway, opposite that Isle of Sheppey, where is now situated one of the principal stations of the British fleet, and one of the grand centres of the maritime power of Great Britain.[49]

The king's palace converted into a monastic cathedral.

The first of the converts was also the first of the benefactors of the infant Church. Ethelbert, more and more imbued with respect and devotion for the faith which he had embraced, desired to give a notable pledge of his pious humility by transferring to the new archbishop his own palace in the town of Canterbury, and establishing henceforth his royal residence at Reculver, an ancient Roman fortress on the adjacent shore of the island on which Augustin had landed. Beside the dwelling of the king thus transformed into a monastery for the archbishop and his monks, and on the site of an old church of the time of the Romans, a basilica which was hereafter to become, under the name of Christchurch, the metropolitan church of England, was commenced. Of this church Augustin was at once the first archbishop and the first abbot.[50]

quasi concives sibi regni cœlestis, amplecteretur. Didicerat enim a doctoribus auctoribusque suæ salutis, servitium Christi voluntarium, non coactitium esse debere." — Bede, i. 26. Yet Bede himself speaks, farther on, of those who had embraced the faith, "vel favore, vel timore regio." — ii. 5.

[49] S. Gregor., *Epist.*, viii. 30. Stanley, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

[50] The immense cathedral of Canterbury, the reconstruction of which was begun by Lanfranc in the eleventh century, occupies the site of this earlier church and of the palace of Ethelbert.

The Pope had at first designed, as the seat of the new metropolis, the city of London, a Roman colony already famous from the time of the Emperors; whereas he had, perhaps, never heard the name of the residence of the Saxon kings at Canterbury. But London was not within the kingdom of Ethelbert, and the selection of the Pope could not prevail against the motives which determined Augustin to choose, as the head and centre of the religious life of England, the capital of the king who had become his proselyte and his friend, standing, as it did, in the region where he had first landed on British soil, and whose inhabitants had welcomed him with such genial sympathy.[51]

Abbey of St. Augustin at Canterbury.

But the splendors and the influence of the official metropolis were for long ages to be eclipsed, in the opinion of the English people, and of the Christian world, by another foundation, equally owing its origin to Augustin and Ethelbert, the first archbishop and the first Christian king of England. To the west of the royal city, and half-way to that Church of St. Martin whither the queen went to pray, and where the king had been baptized, Augustin, always on the outlook for any traces which the old faith had left in Britain, discovered the site of a church which had been transformed into a pagan temple, and encircled with a sacred wood. Ethelbert gave up to him the temple, with all the ground surrounding it. The archbishop forthwith restored it to its original use as a church, and dedicated it to St. Pancras, a young Roman martyr, whose memory was dear to the Italian monks, because the Monastery of Mount Cœlius, whence they had all come, and where their father Gregory was born, had been built upon lands formerly belonging to his family. Round this new sanctury Augustin raised another monastery, of which Peter, one of his companions, was the first abbot, and which he intended to be the place of his own burial, after the Roman custom which placed the cemeteries out of the towns, and by the side of the highroads. He consecrated this new foundation in the names of the apostles of Rome, Peter and Paul; but it was under his own name that this famous abbey became one of the most opulent and most revered sanctuaries of Christendom. It was for several centuries the burying-place of the kings and primates of England,[52] and at the same time the

[51] Gregor., *Epist.*, xi. 65. Willelm. Malmesburiensis, *De Gest. Reg.*, i. c. 4, and *De Dorobernensibus Episcopis*, p. 111.

[52] Ecclesiastical historians abound in testimonies of admiration for this

first and brighest centre of religious and intellectual life in the south of Great Britain.

Seven years were needed to complete the monastery, the church attached to which could not even be dedicated during the lifetime of him whose name it was to assume and preserve. But some months before his death, Augustin had the satisfaction of seeing the foundation of the first Benedictine monastery in England sanctioned by the solemn ratification of the king and the chiefs of the nation whom he had converted.

The charter of this monastery has been brought to light in our day as the oldest authentic record of the religious and political history of England.[53] Our readers will thank us for quoting the text and the signatures of the witnesses. The Anglo-Saxon king appears in this transaction at once as a Christian prince and as the chief of the aristocratic assembly whose consent was necessary to the validity of all his deeds.[54] He begins thus: — 9th Jan., 605.

immense house, whose patrimony extended to 11,860 acres of land, and whose façade was 250 feet long. Perhaps one could read on that façade these verses quoted by a chronicler, and which recall the inscription on the front of St. John Lateran at Rome: —

> "Hoc caput Anglorum datur esse monasteriorum
> Regum cunctorum fons pontificumque sacrorum."

The abbot of St. Augustin of Canterbury received from Pope Leo IX. in 1055, the privilege of sitting in the first place after the abbot of Mount Cassino, in the general councils. The *Monasticon Anglicanum* of Dugdale, vol. i. p. 23, gives a very curious view of the state of the ruins of this abbey, towards the middle of the seventeenth century; a great tower, called Ethelbert's, but built much later than his time, can still be distinguished. In the *Vestiges of Antiquities at Canterbury*, by T. Hastings, 1813, folio, there are plates representing in great detail the remains, still considerable, but cruelly profaned and neglected, which existed in 1812 — the best preserved portion used as a brewery, and beside it a tavern with an enclosure used for cock-fights. It has been restored recently, to a certain extent, thanks to the munificence of Mr. Beresford Hope, and is used at present as a seminary for the Anglican missions. The house has had several historians, among others William Thorne (*de Spina*), who was abbot about 1358, and chiefly Thomas de Elmham, treasurer of the monastery in 1407, whose chronicle was edited by Mr. Hardwick in 1858, for the collection of *Rerum Britannicarum Medii Ævi Scriptores*.

[53] The authenticity of this deed has been admitted by one of the most learned and competent critics of our day, Sir Francis Palgrave, *Rise and Progress of the British Commonwealth*, vol. ii. pp. 215–18. Kemble, again, in his *Codex Diplomaticus Ævi Saxonici*, vol. i. p. 2, has published it with the asterisk which marks documents suspected or false; but he nowhere enters into any justification of this sentence.

[54] "Convocato ibidem concilio communi, tam cleri quam populi, omnium et singulorum approbatione et consensu, monasterium . . . monachis hic perpetuo Deo servituris . . . cum dotatione, confirmatione ac perpetua libertate donavit." — Elmham, p. 111.

"I, Ethelbert, king of Kent, with the consent of the venerable archbishop Augustin, and of my nobles, give and concede to God, in honor of St. Peter, a certain portion of the land which is mine by right, and which lies to the east of the town of Canterbury, to the end that a monastery may be built thereon, and that the properties hereinafter named may be in full possession of him who shall be appointed thereof. Wherefore I swear and ordain, in the name of Almighty God, who is the just and sovereign judge, that the land thus given is given forever — that it shall not be lawful either for me or for my successors to take any part of it whatsoever from its possessors; and if any one attempt to lessen or to annul our gift, that he be in this life deprived of the holy communion of the body and blood of Christ, and at the day of judgment cut off from the company of the saints.

"† I, Ethelbert, king of the English, have confirmed this gift, by my own hand, with the sign of the holy cross.

"† I, Augustin, by the grace of God archbishop, have freely subscribed.

"† I, Eadbald, son of the king, have adhered.

"† I, Hamigisile, duke, have approved

"† I, Hocca, earl, have consented.

"† I, Angemundus, referendary, have approved.

"† I, Graphio, earl, have said it is well.

"† I, Tangisile, *regis optimas*, have confirmed.

"† I, Pinca, have consented.

"† I, Geddi, have corroborated." [55]

[55] "Ego Ethelbertus, rex Cantiæ, cum consensu venerabilis archiepiscopi Augustini," &c. — KEMBLE, *loc. cit.* The deeds of gift executed by the Anglo-Saxon kings always announce the consent, *ducum, comitum, optimatumque*, and are always signed by the counts and principal lords, or by the bishops and abbots; the formula *Favi*, or *consensi*, or *approbavi*, often accompanies the proper name, which is always preceded by a cross: †. This cross did not occupy the place of the signature, as has been represented, nor did it at all indicate that the subscriber could not write. Kemble, in a note to his preface, p. 91, seems to indicate that the two signatures of Angemundus and Graphio, with the accompanying qualifications, warrant him in ranking the whole deed in the list of apocryphal documents. Palgrave gives, after Somner's *Canterbury*, p. 47, another text with the same title, where the signatures, arranged in the same order, are not accompanied with any qualification. He proves elsewhere, p. 214, that the most disputed of the Anglo-Saxon documents have almost always some authentic deeds as their basis, the original authenticity of which ought not to be called in question on account of real or apparent anachronisms resulting from subsequent amplifications or alterations. Almost all the Anglo-Saxon deeds that we can still read are strongly confirmed, according to him, by what he calls their internal evidence. These charters rest on history, which in its turn rests on them; each thus confirming the other.

CHAPTER II.

HOW POPE GREGORY AND BISHOP AUGUSTIN GOVERNED THE NEW CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

Joy of Gregory on learning the success of the monks. — His letters to Augustin; to the patriarch of Alexandria; to Queen Bertha. — A new monastic colony sent out. — Letter to the king. — Advice to Augustin regarding his miracles. — Opinion of Burke. — Answer of Gregory to the questions of Augustin. — The Pope's arrangements for the heathen; his admirable moderation. — Supremacy over the British bishops accorded to Augustin. — Opposition of the Welsh Celts. — Nature of the dissensions which separated the British from the Roman Church. — Celebration of Easter. — Origin and insignificance of the religious dispute. — It is increased and complicated by patriotic antipathy to the Saxons. — First conference between Augustin and the British. — Miracle of the blind man. — Second conference; rupture. — The abbot of Bangor. — Augustin's threatening prediction concerning the monks of Bangor fulfilled by the fierce Ethelfrid of Northumbria. — Sequel of Augustin's mission. — He is insulted by the fishermen of Dorsetshire. — Foundation of King Ethelbert. — Bishops of London and of Rochester. — Laws of Ethelbert; the first reduced to writing. — Guarantee given to the Church property. — Death of Gregory and Augustin.

Joy of St. Gregory on learning the success of his monks.

Some time before this solemn national consecration of his work, and after the first year of his mission, Augustin had sent to Rome two of his companions — Lawrence, who was to succeed him as archbishop, and Peter, who was to be the first abbot of the new monastery of St. Peter and St. Paul — to announce to the Pope the great and good news of the conversion of the king, with his kingdom of Kent; next, to demand from him new assistants in the work, the harvest being great and the laborers but few; and, lastly, to consult him on eleven important and delicate points touching the discipline and the management of the new Church.

The joy of Gregory when, in the midst of the perils and trials of the Church, and of his own sufferings, material and moral, he saw the realization of his soul's most cherished dream, may be understood. The boldest of his projects was crowned with success. A new people had been brought into the fold of the Church through his gentle but persevering activity. Till the end of the world, innumerable souls would

owe to him their admission to the great brotherhood of souls here below — to the eternal joys that are above. He could not foresee the great men, the famous saints, the immense resources, the dauntless champions, that England was to furnish to the Catholic Church; but neither had he the sorrow of foreknowing the sad revolt which was yet to rob so much glory of its lustre, nor that base ingratitude which has dared to despise or to underrate, in his case as in that of his subordinates, the incomparable blessings which he conferred on the people of England by sending to them the light of the Gospel.

The joy of Gregory, as pure as it was natural, infused its spirit into that vast correspondence in which he has left us so faithful an image of his mind and of his life. To Augustin, as might have been expected, its first overflow was directed. "Glory be to God in the highest," he writes — "glory to that God who would not reign alone in heaven, whose death is our life, whose weakness is our strength, whose suffering cures our sufferings, whose love sends us to seek even in the island of Britain for brothers whom we knew not, whose goodness causes us to find those whom we sought for while yet we knew them not![56] Who can express the exultation of all faithful hearts, now that the English nation, through the grace of God and thy brotherly labor, is illumined by the Divine light, and tramples under foot the idols which it ignorantly worshipped, in order that it may now bow down before the true God?" He then hastened to re-echo into the East the happy news which had reached him from the extreme West. He writes to the patriarch of Alexandria: "The bearer of your letters found me sick and leaves me sick. But God grants to me gladness of heart to temper the bitterness of my bodily sufferings.[57] The flock of the holy Church grows and multiplies; the spiritual harvests gather in the heavenly garners. . . . You announced to me the conversion of your heretics — the concord of your faithful people. . . . I make you a return in kind, because I knew you will rejoice in my joy, and that you have aided me with your prayers. Know, then, that the nation of the Angles, situated at the extremest *angle* of the world,[58] had till now continued in idolatry, worshipping stocks and stones.

[56] "Ne solus regnaret in cœlo, cujus morte vivimus, cujus infirmitate roboramur, cujus passione a passione eripimur, cujus amore in Britannia fratres quærimus quos ignorabamus." — *Epist.*, xi. 28.

[57] "Ægrum me reperit, ægrum reliquit . . . quatenus mentis lætitia immanitatem meæ molestiæ temperaret." — *Epist.*, viii. 30, ad Eulogium.

[58] "Gens *Anglorum*, in mundi *angulo* posita suo." — *Epist.*, viii. 30, ad Eulogium. Always this singular taste for puns!

God inspired me to send thither a monk of my monastery here, to preach the Gospel to them. This monk, whom I caused to be ordained bishop by the Frankish bishops, has penetrated to this nation at the uttermost ends of the earth; and I have now received tidings of the happy success of his enterprise. He and his companions have wrought miracles that seem to come near to those of the apostles themselves, and more than 10,000 English have been baptized by them at one time."

After having thus quickened the zeal of the Egyptian patriarch by these tidings from England, he turns to the queen of the newly converted nation — Bertha, born a Christian, and the granddaughter of a saint — to congratulate her on the conversion to her own faith of her husband and her people, and to encourage her to new efforts by telling her that she was remembered in the prayers of the faithful, not only at Rome, but at Constantinople, and that the fame of her good works had reached the ears of the most serene Emperor himself. "Our very dear sons, Lawrence the priest and Peter the monk, he writes to her, "have rehearsed to me, on their arrival here, all that your Majesty has done for our reverend brother and cobishop Augustin — all the comfort and the charity that you have so liberally bestowed on him. We bless the Almighty, who has seen meet to reserve for you the conversion of the English nation. Even as He found in the glorious Helena, mother of the most pious Constantine, an instrument to win over the hearts of the Romans to the Christian faith, so we feel assured will His mercy, through your agency, work out the salvation of the English. Already, for a long time, it must have been your endeavor to turn, with the prudence of a true Christian, the heart of her husband towards the faith which you profess, for his own well being and for that of his kingdom. Well-instructed and pious as you are, this duty should not have been to you either tedious or difficult. If you have in any wise neglected it, you must redeem the lost time. Strengthen in the mind of your noble husband his devotion to the Christian faith; pour into his heart the love of God; inflame him with zeal for the complete conversion of his subjects, so that he may make an offering to Almighty God by your love and your devotion I pray God that the completion of your work may make the angels in heaven feel the same joy which I already owe to you on earth." [59]

[59] "Qualis erga R. fratrem . . . gloria vestra exstiterit, quantaque illi

About the same time, in revising his commentaries on the Scriptures, and his exposition of the Book of Job, he cannot help adding then this cry of triumph: "Look at that Britain whose tongue has uttered only savage sounds, but now echoes the Hallelujah of the Hebrews! Behold that furious sea — it gently smoothes itself beneath the feet of the saints! These savage clans, that the princes of the earth could not subdue by the sword — see them enchained by the simple word of the priests! That people which, while yet pagan, defied undauntedly the arms and the renown of our soldiers, trembles at the speech of the humble and weak. It knows fear now, but it is the fear of sin; and all its desires are centred on the glory everlasting."[60]

A new monastic colony sent over.

Far, however, from resting indolently in this joy, he remained to his latest day faithful to the warm and active interest with which his beloved England had inspired him.[61] He sent to Augustin a new monastic colony, provided with relics, sacred vessels, priestly robes, the ornaments of the altar, and all that was necessary to give effect to the pomp of religious service. He sent also books, which were intended to form the nucleus of an ecclesiastical library.[62]

23d June, 601.

At the head of this new swarm of monks was a man of noble birth, by name Mellitus, and his companion Justus, who were to succeed each other on the met-

solatia vel qualem charitatem impenderit, retulerunt. . . . Postquam et recta fide gloria vestra munita et litteris docta est, hoc vobis nec tardum nec debuit esse difficile." — *Epist.*, v. 29. It will be observed that this letter is placed in the catalogue of the pontifical correspondence apart from the other letters which Gregory addressed to the husband of Bertha, as well as to the princes and bishops in order to recommend to them the new assistants of Augustin.

[60] "Ecce lingua Britanniæ quæ nil aliud noverat quam barbarum frendere, jamdudum in divinis laudibus Hebræum cœpit alleluia sonare. Ecce tumidus quondam, jam substratus pedibus sanctorum, servit Oceanus. . . . Qui catervas pugnantium infidelis nequaquam metuerat, jam nunc fidelis humilium linguam timet . . . ut prave agere metuat ac totis desideriis ad æternitatis gloriam pervenire concupiscat." — S. Greg., *Moral.*, book xxviii. c. 11.

[61] "Semper pro amatis Anglis vigilantissimus." — Gotselinus, *Hist. Maior*, c. 24.

[62] "Nec non et codices plurimos." — Bede, i. 29. Many of the books sent to Augustin by the hands of the abbot Peter were carefully preserved, and escaped the ravages of time for six centuries. In the days of Henry VIII. Leland still speaks of them with admiration: "Majusculis literis Romanis more veterum scriptis . . . incredibilem præ se ferentes antiquitatis majestatem." An old catalogue of this first consignment of books ends with these words: "This is the origin of the library of the whole English Church." — A. D. 601. In the library of the college of Corpus Christi, at Cambridge, a Latin MS. of the four evangelists is preserved, which, according to an old tradition, is the copy brought from Rome by St. Augustin in 596.

ropolitan throne of Canterbury, and with them Paulinus, the future apostle of Northumbria. The Pope provided them with very urgent letters, all of the same date, for Queen Brunehaut, for her grandsons, kings Theodebert and Theodoric; for their rival king Clotaire of Neustra,[63] who had treated Augustin with great kindness, and heartily seconded his enterprise; and for the bishops of Arles, Lyons, Gap, Toulon, Marseilles, Châlons, Paris, Rouen, and Angers — thus marking beforehand the possible halting-places of the new missionaries.[64]

In a special letter to Virgilius, the legate at Arles, he recommends him most particularly to receive their common brother, Augustin, with the greatest affection, in the event of his visiting him; and he adds: "As it often happens that those who are at a distance need to be made aware of disorders which require to be repressed, if he should inform you of faults on the part of his priests or others, examine everything along with him with the minutest care, and act with the greatest strictness, but ever be heedful that you do not let the innocent suffer with the guilty."[65]

The passionate yet intelligent and impartial tenderness towards his friends, which is one of the most attractive features in Gregory's admirable character, is nowhere more beautifully displayed than in his relations with Augustin. We see him ever engaged in extending and consolidating the authority of his envoy; but not the less anxious for the welfare of his soul, and resolute to give precedence before all else to the interests of the newly Christianized country. He intrusted to the new missionaries a long letter addressed to King Ethelbert, in which, while congratulating him on his conversion, and comparing him to Constantine, as he had compared Bertha to St. Helena, he exhorted him to spread the faith among his subjects — to forbid the worship of idols, to overthrow their temples, and to establish good morals by exhortations, kindnesses, and threats, but above all by his own example. He adds: "You have with you our very reverend brother, bishop Augustin, trained according to the monastic rule, full of the knowledge of the Scriptures, abounding in good works in the sight of God. Hearken

[63] *Epist.*, xi. 61, ad Clotarium Francorum regem.

[64] *Epist.*, xi. 54–62. Compare Bede, i. 29.

[65] "Si communem fratrem Augustinum episcopum ad nos venire contigerit, ita illum dilectio vestra, sicut decet, affectuose dulciterque suscipiat, ut et ipsum consolationis suæ bono refoveat, et alios, qualiter fraterna charitas colenda sit, doceat." — *Epist.*, xi. 68.

devoutly to him, and faithfully accomplish all that he tells you; for the more you listen to what he will tell you on the part of God, the more will God grant his prayers when he prays to Him on your behalf. Attach yourself, then, to him with all the strength of your mind, and all the fervor of faith; and second his efforts with all the force that God has given you."[66]

The same day, in a public letter, he confers on Augustin the right of bearing the *pallium* in celebrating mass, as a reward for having established the new English Church. This honor was to descend to all his successors on the archiepiscopal throne.[67] He constitutes him metropolitan of twelve bishoprics, which he enjoins him to erect in southern England. He gives him authority to appoint whom he will metropolitan bishop in the ancient Roman and episcopal city of York, subordinating to the see of York twelve new bishoprics yet to be erected, but reserving to Augustin during his lifetime the supremacy over the northern metropolitan. Over and above all the bishops to be ordained by him or by the future bishop of York in the conquered territory, Gregory places under the jurisdiction of Augustin all the bishops of Britain, "in order," says the Pope, "that they may learn by your word and by your life how they must believe, and how they must live, in order to fulfil their office and gain an inheritance in heaven."[68] He here treats of the bishops who were established in Wales, or who had fled thither for refuge — the prelates and teachers of the Christian Celtic populations which had escaped the Saxon yoke.

But while he thus openly evidenced the fulness of his confidence and the authority with which he invested Augustin, he addressed to him, in secret, advices meant to preserve him from the dangerous snare of pride. "In our joy," he wrote, "there is much to fear. I know, beloved brother,

[66] "Fanorum ædificia everte, subditorum mores ex magna vitæ munditia, exhortando, terrendo, blandiendo, corrigendo et boni operis exempla monstrando, ædifica. . . . Augustinus episcopus, in monasterii regula edoctus." *Epist.*, xi. 66. It is surprising to find in this beautiful letter a paragraph warning the Saxon king that the end of the world is at hand — that he must watch for it day by day, and not be astonished, seeing that it is near, at marvellous things which are about to happen in England as elsewhere.

[67] Since the schism of Henry VIII., the Anglish archbishops of Canterbury, by the strangest of anomalies, have still preserved this *pallium* in the arms of their see.

[68] "Quatenus ex lingua et vita tuæ sanctitatis, et recte credendi et bene vivendi formam percipiant, atque officium fide ac moribus exsequentes, ad cœlestia, cum Dominus voluerit, regna pertingant." — *Epist.*, xi. 65.

that God has by thee wrought great miracles in this nation. It is right to rejoice that the minds of the English are drawn by visible miracles to the invisible grace; but we ought to fear lest these prodigies incline the weak mind to presumption, and make the inner man fall to a worse depth through vainglory than he is raised up outwardly. When the disciples said to their divine Master, 'Lord, in thy name even the devils are subject unto us,' he answered them, 'Rejoice not because the devils are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven.' The names of all the elect are written there, and yet all the elect work not miracles. And while God thus acts outwardly by thee, thou oughtest, brother beloved, to judge thyself scrupulously within, and to know well what thou art. If thou rememberest that thou hast offended God by word or deed, have thy faults ever present to thy memory to repress the vainglory which may rise in thy heart. Reflect that this gift of miracles is not given to thee for thyself, but for those whose salvation is committed to thee. The reprobate have wrought miracles; and we, we know not even if we are among the elect. It is needful, then, sternly to humble and subdue the mind in the midst of all these prodigies and signs, lest it should seek in them only its own glory and its private advantage. God has given us but one sign whereby we may know his elect: it is this, that we have love one to another."[69]

Immediately after, to reassure the friend whom he had thus corrected, by a return to his wonted tenderness and sympathy, he continues in these terms: "I speak thus because I desire to subdue to humility the soul of my dear hearer. But let even thy humility have confidence. All sinful as I am, I have a sure hope that all thy sins will be remitted unto thee, inasmuch as thou hast been chosen to bring to others the remission of their sins. If there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth more than over ninety and nine just persons that need no repentance, what joy must not there be over a great nation which, in coming to the true faith, repents of all the evil it has done! And it is thou who hast given this joy to heaven."[70]

[69] Fleury, in quoting this letter, says with justice, "Nothing proves more completely the truth of St. Augustin's miracles than these serious counsels of Gregory."

[70] "Hæc autem dico quia auditoris mei animum in humilitate sternere cupio. Sed ipsa tua humilitas habeat fiduciam suam. Nam peccator ego spem certissimam teneo." — *Epist.*, xi. 28.

In one of Gregory's former letters, addressed, not to Augustin, but to his friend Eulogius, Patriarch of Alexandria, the Pope also refers to the miracles which had signalized the mission of Augustin; he does not hesitate even to compare them to the signs and wonders which accompanied the preaching of the apostles.[71] Twelve centuries after Gregory, the greatest genius that modern England has produced, the immortal Burke, bows respectfully before that tradition, misunderstood by his frivolous contemporaries. The introduction of Christianity into any country whatsoever is, according to him, the most inestimable benefit that can be conferred on humanity. Why, then, in view of an end so worthy, should not Providence itself sometimes directly interpose? Miracles, of old time accepted with a blind credulity, have been since rejected with "as undistinguishing a disregard." "But," adds the great orator, "it is the reality or opinion of such miracles that was the principal cause of the early acceptance and rapid progress of Christianity in this island."[72] It is singular that neither Bede nor any other historian gives the least detail of these wonders which awoke at once the admiration, the gratitude, and the prudent deprecations of St. Gregory the Great. But of all possible miracles, the greatest is assuredly "to have detached from paganism without violence a violent people; to have introduced it into the Christian commonwealth, not man by man, and family by family, but at one stroke, with its kings, its warlike nobility, and all its institutions."[73] This king, who believes himself descended from the gods of the Scandinavian paradise, yet who resigns his capital to the priests of the crucified God; this people, fierce and idolatrous, which by thousands prostrates itself at the feet of a few foreign monks, and by thousands plunges into the icy waters of the Thames, in mid winter, to receive baptism from these unknown strangers; this rapid and complete transformation of a proud and victorious, and at the same time sensual and rapacious race, by means of a doctrine pre-eminently fitted to quell lust, pride, and sensuality, and which, once received into these savage hearts, rests forever implanted there, — is not this, of all miracles, the most marvellous, as it is the most indisputable?

[71] "Tantis miraculis vel ipse vel hi qui cum ipso transmissi sunt in gente eadem coruscant, ut apostolorum virtutes in signis, quæ perhibent, imitari videantur." — *Epist.*, viii. 30.

[72] Burke, *Essay towards an Abridgment of English History*, book ii. ch. 1.

[73] Ozanam, p. 159.

Answer of Gregory to the questions of Augustin: true law of Catholic missions.

Finally, after all these letters, Gregory wrote a very long and very detailed answer to the eleven questions which Augustin had put to him, as to the principal difficulties which he had encountered, or which he foresaw might still be met with in the course of his mission. To convey a just idea of this reply, which is an admirable monument of enlightenment, of conciliatory reason, of gentleness, wisdom, moderation, and prudence, and which was destined to become, as has been most justly said, the rule and the code of Christian missions,[74] it would have to be quoted entire; but besides its extreme length, it embraces certain details from which our modern prudery recoils. Here, however, is the substance of its most important passages.

The Pope, consulted as to the use and the division to be made of the offerings of the faithful, reminds Augustin that the revenues of the Church should be divided into four portions; the first for the bishop and his family, because of the hospitality which he ought to exercise; the second for the clergy; the third for the poor; the fourth for the maintenance and repair of churches. "But you," he says to the archbishop — "you who have been brought up in monastic discipline, ought not to live apart from your clergy, but to initiate in the new English Church the life in common which our fathers practised in the primitive Church."[75]

Why, asked Augustin, are there divers customs in the Church, when the faith is one? and why does the liturgy according to which the mass is celebrated in the churches of Gaul (which Bertha probably followed in her oratory of St. Martin), differ from that of the Roman Church?

"You, my brother," replies the Pope, "know the usage of the Roman Church, in which you cannot forget that you were brought up. But if it should happen that you find in the Church of Rome, or in that of Gaul, or in any other, some usage which you believe to be more pleasing to God, I enjoin you to select it with care, and give it a place in the new Church of England. For institutions are not to be loved because of the places whence they are derived; but rather are places to be beloved for the sake of the good institutions that

[74] Ozanam, *Civilisation Chrétienne chez les Francs*, p. 154.

[75] "Interrogatio beati Augustini episcopi Cantuariorum Ecclesiæ. . . . Respondit Gregorius papa urbis Romæ. . . . Tua fraternitas monasterii, regulis erudita, scorsum vivere non debet a clericis suis." — Bede, i. 27. Greg., *Epist.*, xi. 64.

exist therein. Choose therefore among the Churches all that is pious and reasonable, and out of what you thus collect form the use of the English Church." [76]

In these words it is easy to recognize the pontiff who had already braved the criticisms of some petty spirits, by introducing at Rome various usages that were believed to be borrowed from Constantinople, and who had said to his critics, "I shall be always ready to deter my subordinates from evil, but to imitate them in good, borrowing it from it matters not what Church. He is but a fool who could make his primacy a reason for disdaining to learn whatever good can be learnt." [77]

Consulted as to the punishment to be inflicted on sacrilegious robbers, and as to the administration of the Roman law, which imposed on the robber a double or fourfold restitution, Gregory advises that, in the punishment, the poverty or the riches of the depredator be taken into account; and that it be administered always with a fatherly love and a moderation which shall keep the mind within the limits of reason. As to restitution — "God forbid," said he, "that the Church should seek to gain by what she has lost, and to draw a profit from the folly of men." [78]

Augustin had further inquired what rule he should follow in regard to marriages within the forbidden degrees, to the duties of the married state, and how much ought to be retained of the purifications prescribed to women by the Mosaic law. Gregory, in reply, interdicts absolutely marriages between mothers-in-law and sons-in-law, which were common among the Saxons: as also between brothers and sisters-in-law. But, for the latter case, he does not require that converts, who had contracted such marriages before their conversion, should be deprived of the holy communion, "lest,"

[76] "Novit fraternitas tua Romanæ Ecclesiæ consuetudinem in qua se meminit eruditam. Sed mihi placet, sive in Romana, sive Galliarum, seu in qualibet Ecclesia, aliquid invenisti quod plus omnipotenti Deo possit placere, sollicite eligas, et in Anglorum Ecclesiæ quæ adhuc ad fidem nova est, institutione præcipua, quæ de multis Ecclesiis colligere potuisti, infundas. Non enim pro locis res, sed pro bonis rebus loci amandi sunt. Ex singulis ergo quibusque Ecclesiis quæ pia, quæ religiosa, quæ recta sunt, elige: et hæc quasi in fasciculum collecta, apud Anglorum mentes in consuetudinem depone."

[77] "Si quid boni vel ipsa vel altera Ecclesia habet, ego et minores meos quos ab illicitis prohibeo in bono imitari paratus sum. Stultus est enim qui in eo se primum existimat, ut bona quæ viderit discere contemnat." — *Epist.*, x. 12, ad Joann., Syracus. Episc.

[78] "Ita ut mens extra rationis regulam omnino nihil faciat. . . . Absit ut Ecclesia cum augmento recipiat quod de terrenis rebus videtur amittere, et lucra de vanis quærere."

he says, "you should appear to punish them for what they have done in mere ignorance; for there are things which the Church corrects with strictness, and there are others which, for kindness' sake, she tolerates, or prudently overlooks; but always in such wise as to restrain the evil which she bears with, or winks at." He would, in general, treat the English as St. Paul treated his converts — nourishing them not on solid food, but with milk, as newborn babes. Further on "he prescribes to the marriage bed these severe laws which secure health and vigor and the fruitfulness of the Christian family."[79] He does not permit that the woman who has just borne a child should be excluded from the Church, and that thus her suffering should be made a crime.

But he protests with energy against the unnatural custom of mothers who will not be nurses, and who disdain to suckle the children they have brought forth. He sought thus to impress upon the heart of the Saxon woman all a wife's duties, while at the same time he marked her proper place in the Christian family by exalting her dignity and protecting her modesty.[80]

New concessions of Gregory in a letter to the Abbot Mellitus.

Reflection only served to confirm the Pope in this wise and generous indulgence towards the new converts, allied, as it was in him, with a zeal at once pure and ardent for the service and progress of the truth. Scarce had he addressed to Ethelbert the letter in which he exhorted him to destroy the temples of the ancient national worship, when he reconsidered the matter, and a few days later despatched entirely different instructions to Mellitus, the chief of the new mission, whom he had designated abbot, and to whom he had intrusted the letter for the king — hoping to overtake him on his journey. "Since your departure and that of your company," he writes, "I have been much disquieted, for I have learnt nothing of the success of your journey. But when Almighty God shall have carried you in safety to our most reverend brother Augustin, say to him that, after having long revolved in my own mind the

[79] Ozanam, *op. cit.*, 161.

[80] "In hoc enim tempore sancta Ecclesia quædam per fervorem corrigit, quædam per mansuetudinem tolerat, quædam per considerationem dissimulat, atque ita portat et dissimulat, ut sæpe malum quod adversatur portando et dissimulando compescat. . . . Si enixam mulierem prohibemus ecclesiam intrare, ipsam ei pœnam suam in culpam deputamus. . . . Prava autem in conjugatorum moribus consuetudo surrexit, ut mulieres . . . dum se continere nolunt, despiciunt lactare quos gignunt." — *Ibid.* Compare *Epist.* xiv. 17, ad Felicem Messanensem Episcopum.

affairs of the English, I have come to the conclusion that it is not necessary to overthrow all the temples of the idols, but only the idols that are in them. After having sprinkled these temples with holy water, let altars and relics be placed in them; for if they are strongly built, it were well that they were made to pass from the worship of demons to the service of the true God — to the end that the people, seeing that their temples are not destroyed, may the more readily accept the religious change and come to adore God in the places familiar to them. And as it is their custom to slay many oxen in sacrifices to the demons, some solemnity which should take the place of this sacrifice must be established. On the day of the dedication, or on the feast of the martyrs whose relics may be given to them, they may be permitted to make huts of leaves around the temples thus changed into churches, and celebrate the feast with social repasts. But in place of sacrificing beasts to a demon, they will kill them only to be eaten with thankfulness to God who provides their food; and thus, by leaving to them some of the enjoyments of the senses, they will be more easily led to desire the joys of the soul. For it is impossible to change all at once the whole habits of the savage mind: a mountain is not climbed by leaps and bounds, but step by step."[81]

Among the enemies of the Roman Church, pedants and hypercritics are found to accuse St. Gregory of having compromised matters with his conscience in thus opening the entrance of the sanctuary to paganism. Far from sympathizing with them, let us, on the contrary, learn to admire the great and wise teacher who could so well distinguish the essential from the accidental, and who, repudiating the pretensions of minute and vexatious uniformity, and sacrificing the pettiness of prejudice to the majesty of a great design, could thus develop the worship of the truth even among the superstitions of Germanic paganism. Let us admire above all, "a religion which penetrates thus to the depths of human nature — which knows what needful combats against his passions it demands from man, and which has no desire to impose unnecessary sacrifices upon him. The only way of

[81] "Post discessum congregationis vestræ quæ tecum est, valde sumus suspensi redditi, quia nihil de prosperitate vestri itineris audisse nos contigit. . . . Dicite ei quid diu mecum de causa Anglorum cogitans tractavi. . . . Nam duris mentibus simul omnia abscidere impossibile esse non dubium est, quia et is qui summum locum ascendere nitetur, gradibus vel passibus, non saltibus elevatur." — *Epist.*, xi. 76.

knowing human nature is to love it, and it can be won only at this price." [82]

Supremacy accorded to Augustin over the British bishops.

In his last question Augustin had asked how he — as yet the only bishop among the English — should deal by the bishops of Gaul and Britain. Gregory admonishes him not to keep at a distance the bishops of Gaul who might wish to be present at his ordinations of new bishops in England, "for to conduct successfully spiritual affairs it is lawful to draw lessons from temporal affairs; and as, in the world, persons already married are invited together to take part in the festivities of a wedding, so nothing forbids the participation of bishops already ordained in that ordination which is the espousal of man with God." The Pope added: "We do not assign to you any authority over the bishops of Gaul, and you can reform them only through persuasion and good example, except at the risk of thrusting your sickle into another's harvest. As to the British bishops, we commit them entirely to your care, that you may instruct the ignorant, strengthen the feeble, and correct the evil." [83]

Gregory, who knew so well how to read the hearts and win the minds of men, could have only a very imperfect knowledge of the geography as well as of the political condition of Great Britain. He seems to have held on that subject the antiquated notions which prevailed at Rome regarding an island which had been the first to escape from the imperial yoke. He evidently had no idea of the national and only too legitimate antipathy which inflamed the Christian Brittons against the heathen Saxons, who had for a century and a half overrun, ravaged, and usurped their country. He imagined that those Christians, always faithfully united to the Roman Church, who had so energetically repudiated Pelagianism, and whose bishops had sat in the ancient councils presided over by the legates of Rome, would lend a cordial support to the mission of the Roman monks, commissioned by him to evangelize the Saxons. He did not know the implacable hate of the conquered for the conquerors; and he forgot certain points of difference which, though they did not touch the great verities of the Christian faith, and were completely removed from all idea of a national or schismatic

[82] Ozanam, *Œuvres*, i. 167.

[83] "Nam in ipsis rebus spiritualibus ut sapienter et mature disponantur, exemplum trahere a rebus etiam carnalibus possumus. . . . Britannorum omnes episcopos tuæ fraternitati committimus." — *Epist.*, xi. 64.

Church, raised, nevertheless, a formidable barrier between the British clergy and his Roman missionaries.

Augustin at issue with the Celtic bishop.

It is evident that Augustin always showed himself capable of understanding and applying the precepts of his friend and master. No incident of his life, recorded in his history, indicates any opposition to, or departure from, the rules laid down for him by the prudence and charity of Gregory. He was faithful to these rules in his relations with the British bishops placed by the Pope under his jurisdiction, as well as in all other respects. A rapid survey of this conflict would even lead the reader to protest against the unjust and calumnious accusations of which it has been the object, and will prove that Augustin was exclusively guided by a natural desire to put an end to dissensions which impaired the unity of the efforts necessary for the conversion of the Saxons.

Wherein, then, consisted those differences between Rome and the Celtic Christianity of Wales, of Ireland, and of Caledonia, which occupy so prominent a place in the religious history of the sixth and seventh centuries, and which the irritable and haughty zeal of St. Columbanus carried over into France, and with which he tried the patience of St. Gregory;[84] while Augustin, on his side, found in them the chief stumbling-block to his mission in Great Britain? It cannot be too often repeated, that they affected none of the essential doctrines of Christianity, no article of faith defined by the Church either before or since that period, no question of morals, and, above all, that they did not offer any opposition to the supremacy of the Holy See, as it was then exercised or accepted by the rest of the Christian world.

Modern research has finally dispersed all the imaginary chimeras of certain English and German writers who attributed these differences to a pretended influence of Eastern Christianity on the British Churches, of which no authentic trace exists; or more readily still, to a traditional repugnance on the part of the Celtic population to the yoke of Rome — a repugnance belied by the history of the past, as well as by the living testimony of the races, the most tenacious and most illustrious members of which, the Irish and the Armoricans, have purchased, at the cost of the most generous and cruel sacrifices, the right of placing themselves in the foremost rank of the faithful children of the Church of Rome.[85]

[84] See *ante*, vol. i. p. 555.

[85] The most weighty writers of Protestant Germany in our day, such as

The principal difference turned on the question of the date of the festival of Easter. This nice question — the bugbear of all who embark on the study of the primitive annals of the Church — has already emerged in the course of our history, and will often again recur.[86]

The dissension regarding Easter.

From the earliest Christian ages prolonged discussions were raised regarding the day on which the greatest festival of the Church should be celebrated. The Council of Nice fixed the date of the Pascal solemnities for the Sunday after the full moon of the vernal equinox, and that date, sanctioned by the Roman Church, had been received along with the Christian faith by all the Churches of Britain, and had been carried by St. Patrick to Ireland, and by St. Columba to Caledonia. But the Church of Alexandria, having discovered an astronomical error, originating in the employment of the ancient Jewish computation by the Christians, had introduced a more exact calculation, which was adopted by all the Eastern Churches; and the result was, that from the pontificate of St. Leo the Great (440–61) a difference of an entire month had arisen between Easter-day at Rome and Easter-day at Alexandria. Towards the middle of the sixth century, the difference ceased to exist; Rome adopted the calculation of Denys le Petit, which demonstrated clearly the error of the day fixed by the Council of Nice, and from this date uniformity was re-established in the Church. But the Saxon invasion had interrupted the ordinary intercourse between Rome and the British Churches; they retained the ancient Roman usage, and it was precisely their attachment to that usage which was their argument against the more exact computation which Augustin and the Italian monks brought with them, but which the British rejected as suspicious novelties, to receive which would be an insult to the traditions of their fathers.[87] It was thus from their very fidelity to the early teachings of Rome that they resisted the new Roman missionaries.

Giesceler, have already abandoned this hypothesis, so long accepted by their co-religionists. It has been learnedly refuted by the illustrious Professor Döllinger in his *Manual of Ecclesiastical History*, and it may be said annihilated by the two Memoirs of M. Varin on the *Causes of the Dissension between the British and the Roman Church*, published by the Academy of Inscriptions and Belles Lettres, 1858. A digest of the conclusions of these two Memoirs will be found in Appendix II.

[86] See *ante*, vol. i. book vii.

[87] Walter, *Alte Wales*, p. 225. Dollinger, *op. cit.*, i. 2d part, 216.

This cause of dissension, by far the most important, was of a very recent date, and all the disputes that can be made out on other points (except that regarding the form of the tonsure) were equally new, without being at all more essential. If it had been otherwise — had there been the slightest difference touching doctrine or morals between the British and the Roman Church — Augustin would never have been guilty of the folly of soliciting the aid of the Celtic clergy in the conversion of the heathen Saxons. This would have been but to sow the seeds of confusion and discord in the new Church, which it was his business to organize by means of the energetic co-operation of the native Christians and the envoys of Rome.[88]

There is nothing more painful than to meet in history with endless and passionate contentions upon questions and causes which, after some time has passed, are interesting or even intelligible to no human creature. But it is not Christian antiquity alone that offers us such a spectacle: we find it in all ages. And to those who profess to be scandalized at the overweening importance that the most pious minds of their time have attached to equal trifles, it should be enough to recall the determined obstinacy which prompted great nations, such as the English and the Russians, to resist the reform of the Gregorian calendar — the one for nearly two centuries, the other amidst the complete uniformity of the entire civilized world.

It is no less true that, by that obstinate fidelity to a venerable, though false, computation, the British set themselves at variance on this question of Easter, not only with Rome and the whole West, but also with the East, which celebrated that festival, like the Jews, on the precise day of the week on which it fell, while the British, in common with the whole Western Church, always held the celebration on Sunday. But this Sunday was, or might be, another day than that kept as Easter-day at Rome.

Who could imagine that this pitiful and absurd difference should have kept the two Churches for two centuries on a footing of direct hostility? Since the British Celts received their ancient custom from Rome itself, why could they not follow Rome in her perfected reckoning as all the rest of the West did? Why should they have positively decided to hold festival while the Romans fasted; and to fast while at Rome they chanted the Hallelujah?

[88] Dollinger, p. 217. Rees, *Welsh Saints*, p. 288.

Was there not a more serious, a deeper cause for this dissension, of which the Pascal controversy was but the outward aspect? It is impossible to doubt it; and of all causes it was the most natural and excusable — the instinct of national preservation, exasperated by hatred of the triumphant enemy, and expressing itself in distrust of the stranger, who seemed to be an accomplice of that enemy.

Augustin knew well that he needed the aid of the Celtic Christians in order to carry on successfully the great work which the Papacy had intrusted to him. Trained in the conciliatory and moderate school of St. Gregory the Great, fresh from his recent instructions, he was very far from being exclusive in regard to local personages or customs; and in order to effect the conversion of the Saxons, he claimed in all good faith the co-operation of the numerous and powerful clergy who, for more than a century, had been the very soul of the resistance to the heathen, and who peopled those great cloisters of Wales, into which the sword of the invader had never penetrated.

But the British resisted him with a jealous and obstinate opposition. They would not join him in evangelizing their enemies; they had no wish to open to them the gates of heaven.[89]

First conference between Augustin and the British bishops.

509?-603?

Augustin, however, succeeded in obtaining the consent of the principal bishops and doctors of Wales to a conference with him. It was arranged that they should meet on the confines of Wessex, near the banks of the Severn, which separated the Saxons from the Britons. The interview, like that of Augustin with Ethelbert, after his landing in Kent, took place in the open air, and under an oak, which for a long time afterwards was known as Augustin's oak. He began, not by claiming the personal supremacy which the Pope had conceded to him, but by exhorting his hearers to live in Catholic peace with him, and to unite their efforts to his for the evangelization of the pagans — that is to say, the Saxons. But neither his entreaties, nor his exhortations, nor his reproaches, nor the eloquence of his attendant monks joined to his own, availed to bend the Britons, who persisted in appealing to their own traditions in opposition to the new rules. After a long and laborious disputation, Augustin at last said, "Let us pray God, who maketh brethren to dwell together

[89] Varin, Memoir cited.

in unity, to show us by a sign from heaven what traditions we ought to follow. Let a sick man be brought hither, and he whose prayers shall cure him shall be the one whose faith is to be followed." The British consented reluctantly. An Anglo-Saxon blind man was brought, whom the British bishops could not cure. Then Augustin fell on his knees, and implored God to enlighten the conscience of many of the faithful, by giving sight to this man. Immediately the blind man recovered his vision. The British were touched;[90] they acknowledged that Augustin's course was just and straightforward, but that they could not renounce their old customs without the consent of their people, and demanded a second assembly, in which their deputies should be more numerous.

The second conference was held soon after. Augustin there found himself in the presence of seven British bishops and of the most learned doctors of the great Monastery of Bangor, which contained more than 3000 monks, and which was, as we have seen, the centre of religious life in Wales. Before this new meeting, the Britons went to consult an anchorite, much famed among them for his wisdom and his sanctity, and asked him if they ought to give heed to Augustin, and abandon their traditions. "Yes," said the hermit, "if he is a man of God." "But how shall we know that?" "If he is meek and lowly of heart, as says the Gospel, it is probable that he carries the yoke of Jesus Christ, and that it is His yoke he offers you; but if he is hard and proud, he comes not from God, and you ought to give no heed to his discourse. In order to prove him, let him arrive the first at the place of council; and if he rises when you approach, you will know that he is a servant of Christ, and you will obey him; but if he rises not to do you honor, then despise him, as he will have despised you."[91]

The instructions of the anchorite were obeyed. Unfortunately, on arriving at the place of council they found Augustin already seated, *more Romano*, says an historian, and he did not rise to receive them.[92] This was enough to set them

[90] "Ut pace catholica secum habita, communem evangelizandi gentibus pro domino laborem susciperent. . . . Laboriosi atque longi certaminis finem fecit. . . . Quidam de genere Anglorum, oculorum usu privatus. . . . Confitentur intellexisse se veram esse viam justitiæ quam prædicaret Augustinus." — Bede, ii. 2.

[91] "Sin autem vos spreverit, nec coram vobis adsurgere voluerit, cum sitis plures, et ipse spernatur a vobis." — Bede, ii. 2.

[92] "Cum ergo convenisset, et Augustinus *Romano more* in sella residens iis non assurrexisset." — Henr. Huntingdon, iii. 186, ed. Savile.

against him. "If this man," said they, "deigns not to rise at our arrival now, how will he slight us when we shall have acknowledged his authority!" From that hour they became intractable, and studied to thwart him at every point. Neither then nor at the first conference did the archbishop make any effort to induce them to acknowledge his personal authority. Let it be added, to the honor of this headstrong race, and rebellious but earnest and generous clergy, that Augustin did not reproach them with any of those infringements of the purity of the priestly life which some authors have imputed to them.[93] With moderation, in scrupulous conformity to the instructions of the Pope, he reduced all his claims to three main points. "You have," said he, "many practices which are contrary to our usage, which is that of the universal Church; we will admit them all without difficulty, if only you will believe me on three points: to celebrate Easter at the right time; to complete the sacrament of baptism[94] according to the usage of the holy Roman Church; and to preach the word of God along with us to the English nation." To this threefold demand the Celtic bishops and monks offered a threefold refusal, and added that they would never acknowledge him as archbishop.[95] In thus refusing to recognize the personal supremacy of Augustin, they in nowise rejected that of the Holy See. What they dreaded was not a Pope at a distance from them, impartial and universally respected at Rome, but a kind of new pope at Canterbury, within the territory and under the influence of their hereditary foes, the Saxons.[96] And, above all else, they objected to

[93] "Errorem Bretonum . . . quo alia plura ecclesiasticæ castitati et paci contraria gerunt." — Bede, v. 18. Compare Gildas, *De Excidio*, p. 23. Dollinger believes that he refers here to the *subintroductæ*, so often denounced by the councils. He notices elsewhere that the British priests alone have been the object of these accusations, which have never been brought against the other branches of the Celtic Church.

[94] He referred probably to Confirmation.

[95] "Quia in multis quidem nostræ consuetudini, immo universalis Ecclesiæ contrariæ geritis; et tamen si in tribus his mihi obtemperare vultis; ut Pascha suo tempore celebretis, ut ministerium baptizandi, quo Deo renascimur, juxta morem sanctæ Romanæ et apostolicæ Ecclesiæ compleatis, ut genti Anglorum una nobiscum verbum Domini prædicetis, cætera quæ agitis, quamvis moribus nostris contraria, æquanimiter cuncta tolerabimus."— Bede, v. 18.

[96] Hook, the most recent English historian of the archbishops of Canterbury, acknowledges this fact with an impartiality which is not always habitual to him. We shall be excused discussing the pretended anti-papal reply of the orator of Bangor, an English invention, published in the collections of Spelman and Wilkins, and complacently repeated by M. Augustin Thierry. Lingard, Döllinger, *op. cit.*, p. 218, and Professor Walter, have demonstrated

be told of the duty of laboring for the conversion of the odious Saxons, who had slaughtered their forefathers and usurped their lands. "No," said the abbot of Bangor, "we will not preach the faith to this cruel race of strangers who have treacherously driven our ancestors from their country, and robbed their posterity of their heritage."[97]

Threatening prophecy of Augustin against the monks of Bangor.

It is easy to see which of the three conditions Augustin had most at heart by the threatening prediction with which he met the refusal of the British monks. "Since you will not have peace with brethren, you shall have war with enemies: since you will not show to the English the way of life, you shall receive from their hands the punishment of death."

613?

This prophecy was only too cruelly fulfilled some years later. The king of the northern English, Ethelfrid, still a pagan, invaded the district of Wales in which stood the great Monastery of Bangor. At the moment when the battle began between his numerous army and that of the Welsh, he saw at a distance, in an elevated position, a body of men, unarmed and on their knees. "Who are these?" he asked. He was told they were the monks of the great Monastery of Bangor, who, after fasting for three days, had come to pray for their brethren during the battle. "If they pray to their God for my enemies," said the king, "they are fighting against us, unarmed though they be." And he directed the first onslaught to be made against them. The Welsh prince, who should have defended them, fled shamefully, and 1200 monks were massacred on the field of battle, martyrs of Christian faith and of Celtic patriotism.[98] Thus ended, say the annals of Ireland, the day of the slaughter of the saints.[99]

its falsity, already exposed by Turberville in his *Manuale Controversiarum*; Rees, Stephenson, Hussey, and all the modern English writers of any weight, have agreed to renounce it. Let us recall here the learned and deeply-to-be-lamented Abbé Gorini's excellent refutation of the inexcusable errors committed by M. Augustin Thierry in his narrative of the mission of St. Augustin.

[97] Welsh chronicle, entitled *Brut Tysilio*, and Galfrid. Monmouthio, xi. 2, ap. Walter, *op. cit.*, pp. 225, 227.

[98] "Cum videret sacerdotes . . . seorsum in loco tutiore consistere, sciscitabatur quid essent hi, quidve acturi illo convenissent. . . . Ergo si adversum nos at Deum suum clamant, profecto et ipsi quamvis arma non ferant contra nos pugnant. Itaque in hos primum arma verti jubet, et sic cæteras nefandæ militiæ copias . . . delevit . . . ut etiam temporalis interitus ultione sentirent perfidi, quod oblata sibi perpetuæ salutis consilia spreverant." — Bede, v. 18.

[99] *Annales Tighernach*, ad. ann. 606.

An old calumny, revived in our day, makes Augustin answerable for this invasion, and accuses him of having pointed out the monastery of Bangor to the Northumbrian heathens.[100] But the Venerable Bede expressly states that he had been for a long time a saint in heaven when this invasion took place. It is enough that Bede himself, much more Saxon than Christian whenever he treats of the British, applauds this massacre more than a century afterwards, and sees in it Heaven's just vengeance on what he calls the infamous army of the disloyal Welsh — that is to say, on the heroic Christians who, in defence of their hearths and altars, fell beneath the sword of the pagan Anglo-Saxons, under the orders of a chief who, according to the testimony of Bede himself, slew more of the native population than any of his predecessors.[101]

After such an explosion of his own national antipathies, he seems to be singularly little entitled to reproach the Celts of Wales with the steadfastness of their resentment, as he does in stating that even in his time they made no account of the religion of the Anglo-Saxons, and would hold no more communion with them than with pagans.[102]

It is possible, as an ingenious critic has said, that Augustin and his companions did not treat with sufficient tact the national and insular pride of the British, heightened by a long warlike resistance, by the traditions of the monks, and the patriotic songs of the bards.[103] But nothing, I repeat, indicates the slightest departure on his part from the counsel and example of the glorious pontiff whose disciple and emulator he was. Condemned by the obstinacy of the British to deprive himself of their assistance, he none the less continued his "hunt of men," as his biographer calls it, by evangelizing the Saxons, who at least did not wear him out,

[100] This false imputation can be traced back to Geoffrey of Monmouth, bishop of St. Asaph in the twelfth century, and mouthpiece of the national rancors of Wales. Certain obscure writers, unworthy descendants of the Anglo-Saxons, such as Goodwin and Hammond, have adopted it out of hatred of the Romish Church, and not knowing how to reconcile it with Bede's positive assertion of the prior death of Augustin, have pretended that this passage of the Venerable historian had been interpolated. But all the modern editors of Bede have been obliged to acknowledge that the contested passage existed in all the MSS. of that author *without exception*. Compare Lingard, *Anglo-Saxon Church*, vol. i. p. 74; Varin, *Premier Mémoire*, pp. 25-29; Gorini, *op. cit.*, vol. ii. p. 77.

[101] Bede, i. 34.

[102] Bede, ii. 20. See the text already cited, p. 687.

[103] Ozanam, p. 153.

like the Welsh, with their wordiness and their endless discussions.[104] And yet, even among the former he sometimes encountered an opposition which expressed itself in insult and derision, especially when he passed beyond the bounds of Ethelbert's kingdom. On one occasion, while traversing that region of the country of the West Saxons which is now called Dorsetshire, he and his companions found themselves in the midst of a seafaring population, who heaped on them affronts and outrages. These heathen savages not only refused to hear them, but even drove them away with acts of violence, and in hunting them from their territory, with a rude derision truly Teutonic, fastened to the black robes of the poor Italian monks, as a mark of contempt, the tails of the fish which formed their livelihood.[105] Augustin was not a man to be discouraged by such trifles. Besides, he found in other places crowds more attentive and more impressible. And thus he persevered for seven entire years, until his death, in his apostolic journeys — travelling after, as well as before, his archiepiscopal consecration, like a true missionary, always on foot, without carriage or baggage, and adding to his unwearied preaching good works and miracles — here making unknown springs gush from the ground, there healing by his touch the sick believed to be incurable or dying.[106]

Foundations of Ethelbert. Bishoprics of London and Rochester.

Meanwhile Ethelbert did not fail in solicitude for and generosity to the Church of which he had become the ardent disciple. Not content with the gifts which he had bestowed on the two great monasteries of Canterbury — on that which surrounded the metropolitan church, and on the Abbey of St. Peter and

[104] "Vix crediderim Augustinum a quoquam paganorum majori fatigatum verborum ambage. . . . In occidentalem ab Aquiloni plagam divertit, non tam viatoris quam venatoris aut aucupis morem gerens." — GOTSELINUS, *Hist. Maior*, c. 32, 41.

[105] "Plebs impia . . . tota ludibriorum et opprobriorum in sanctos debacchata . . . nec manu pepercisse creditur. . . . Fama est illos effulminandos provenientes marinorum piscium caudas sanctis appendisse." — GOTSELINUS, c. 41.

[106] "Tam post præsulatum quam ante, semper pede, absque vehiculo, patiens ambulando, liber et expeditus prædicationi evangelicæ." — ELMHAM, *Hist. Monaster. S. Augustini*, p. 106. Compare GOTSELINUS, c. 44 and 49. This historian reproduces the story of an old man whose grandfather had, while still young, been a scoffer at the wonderful stranger whom the crowd followed and surrounded as though he were an angel from heaven, because he went about healing all their infirmities. "Cum vero audissem illum omnium debilium ac moribundorum curare corpora, ampliori incredulus cachinnabam vesania." He ended, nevertheless, in being baptized by the hand of Augustin himself.

St. Paul without the walls — he seconded with all his might the introduction of Christianity into a kingdom adjacent to his own and placed under his suzerainty — that of the Saxons of the East, or of Essex, the king of which was the son of his sister, and which was only separated from Kent by the Thames. Augustin having sent thither as bishop the monk Mellitus, one of the new missionaries sent to him by Gregory, Ethelbert built at London, the chief city of the West Saxons, a church, dedicated to St. Paul, intended for a cathedral, which it still is. In his own kingdom of Kent he authorized the erection of a second bishopric, situated at Rochester, a Roman city, twenty miles west of Canterbury; Augustin placed there as bishop another of the new missionaries, Justus by name; and the king caused a cathedral to be built there, which he named after St. Andrew, in memory of the Roman monastery whence Pope Gregory had drawn all the apostles of the Anglo-Saxon race.[107]

All these foundations, destined to last to our own times in spite of so many strange and unhappy changes, invest him with an imperishable claim on the gratitude of Christian posterity; and long afterwards, when the Norman nobility had in their turn seized upon the supreme power and changed the aspect of the Church of England, King Ethelbert became apparent to her as the first who had provided with seignorial strongholds, in the shape of bishops' seats and monasteries, the kingdom which he desired to hold in fee for the Lord God.[108]

Laws of Ethelbert guaranteeing the possessions and peace of the Church.

He did yet more for the Church of his country by securing for her property and her liberties what we may call, in modern rather than just terms, a legal and parliamentary sanction. In one of those periodical assemblies of the sages and chief men of the Saxon people, which bore the name of *Witenagemot*, and which were the origin of the modern Parliament, he caused certain laws — the text of which is still preserved — to be committed to writing and published in the Anglo-Saxon tongue. They confirmed at once the old rights of the people, and the new rights conceded to the new Church. The first of the ninety articles of that legislative act enacts that those who should rob the goods of the Church, of the bishops,

[107] Bede, ii. 3.

[108] "Tum episcopia et monasteria tanquam dominica castella, quibus Dominicum regnum teneatur, liberaliter ac regaliter passim machinatur." — Gotselinus, *Hist. Maior*, c. 23.

or other orders of the clergy, shall make restitution eleven or twelve times beyond the value of the robbery.[109] The same article sanctioned implicitly what the English have since named the *right of sanctuary* — that is, the right of asylum and protection recognized as belonging to the precincts of Churches and monasteries — by visiting the violation of that peace of the Church with a penalty the double of that incurred by violation of the public peace. The whole nation thus sanctioned and ratified the work of its king by placing under the safeguard of penal laws the property and safety of the ministers of the religion which it had adopted.[110]

These laws, long known by the name of *Dooms* or *Judgments of Ethelbert*, are the first written laws known to us, not only of the English, but perhaps of any of the Germanic races. The best informed critics attribute to the influence of the Roman monks on the Anglo-Saxon king, this commencement of the national, or rather penal code.[111] For its enactments were chiefly penal, and we cannot but admire the wisdom of those missionaries who, trained in the traditions of Roman jurisprudence, nevertheless established and sanctioned the principle of pecuniary compensation universally adopted by the Germanic races. In these laws of Ethelbert a classification of social position is clearly apparent from the minutely exact enumeration of crimes committed against the life or safety of men, the honor of women, religion, and public peace. Every trespass is punished by a penalty proportionate — first, to the gravity of the offence, and next, to the rank of the victim. In case of murder, the compensation is due not only to the family of the deceased, but also to the community of which he was a member, and to the king who was his sovereign. This system, applied for the first time to the defence of the Christian Church by the Saxons

[109] "Ut ecclesiæ peculium duodecies, episcopi undecies emendaretur." — According to the instructions given by Gregory to Augustin, this surplus value of the restitution did not profit the Church, which was bound to be content with the simple restoration of what had been taken.

[110] "Inter cætera bona quæ genti suæ conferendo conferebat, etiam decreta illi judiciorum juxta exempla Romanorum, cum concilio sapientium constituit. . . . Volens scilicet tuitionem eis quos et quorum doctrinam susceperat, præstare." — Bede, ii. 5. Compare Kemble, *Saxons in England*, ii. 205; Hook, *op. cit.*, p. 59; Wilkins, *Concilia*, p. 25; Thorpe, *Ancient Laws and Institutes of England*, 1840, c. 1. This last publication, executed by order of the English Government, gives the Saxon text of the laws of Ethelbert, with a very intelligent commentary.

[111] Lappenberg, vol. i. p. 142; Lingard, *Hist. of England*, c. 11; Lord Campbell, *Lives of the Chancellors*, art. Angemundus; especially Phillips, *Geschichte des Angelsachsischchen Rechts*, p. 61.

of Kent, and for the first time reduced to a written form under the guidance of the Roman monks, will be found in all the subsequent legislation of the Saxon kingdoms, which the bishops and monks, successors of Augustin, continued to guide with a strong yet gentle hand into the ways of Christian civilization.

Great men, commissioned by God to begin works which are to be truly great and enduring, seldom live to old age; and when one of them disappears, it often happens that he carries with him on his way to a better world those who have been on earth his companions, servants, and friends. St. Gregory the Great, whose pontificate has left an ineffaceable impression upon the memory of Christendom, and a peerless example in the annals of the Church, reigned only fifteen years. He died in the early month of the year 605, and two months after Augustin followed his father and friend to the tomb.[112] The Roman missionary was interred, after the Roman custom, by the side of the public way, the great Roman road which led from Canterbury to the sea, and in the unfinished church of the famous monastery which was about to assume and to preserve his name.

Death of Gregory and of Augustin.
605.
12th March.
12th May.

The name of Gregory will remain always identified with that conversion of England which was the labor of love of his whole life, and the greatest glory of his pontificate. His large and tender heart had been the first to conceive the thought of that conquest. His patient and conciliating genius, at once ardent and gentle, prudent and resolute, revealed to him the conditions of success. It is to him that the English race — at this day the most numerous and powerful of all Christian races — owes the revelation of the light of the Gospel.

He was the true apostle, the conqueror of England for God, and, through England, of immense countries which she has subjected to her laws, to her language, and to her religion. It is, then, with good reason that the first English historian claims for him this title. "Called," says Bede, "to a supreme pontificate over all the nations already converted to the faith, to our nation which was in bondage to idols, and out of which he has formed a Christian Church, he has been

[112] There has been much dispute about the date of the death of Augustin, which Mabillon had fixed in 607. But the majority of English historians are now agreed upon the date 605. Wharton would even place it as early as 604. — *Anglia Sacra*, vol. i. p. 91.

something more. We may well say of Gregory what Paul said of himself to the Corinthians — that if he has not been the apostle of others, he has been *our* apostle. Yes, we are the seal of his apostleship in the Lord — we, the people whom he rescued from the fangs of the old enemy, to make us partakers of the eternal freedom." [113]

The nature of the means that Gregory employed to accomplish his work, and the moral perfection of the arrangements which he brought to bear on it, are even more to be admired than the work itself; — zeal, devotion, wisdom, moderation, love of souls, and respect for their freedom, pity, generosity, vigilance, indomitable perseverance, divine gentleness, intelligent patience — nothing was awanting in him. We leave the history of his pontificate, and especially of his intercourse with England, with no other regret than that inseparable from witnessing the end of so noble a life; and in losing sight of him, are left uncertain which should be the most admired — his good sense or his good heart, his genius or his virtue.

The figure of St. Augustin of Canterbury naturally pales beside that of St. Gregory the Great; his renown is, as it were, absorbed into the brilliant centre of the Pontiff's glory. And recent English and German historians [114] have taken delight in bringing out the inferiority of the man whom Gregory chose for his vicegerent and his friend. They have vied with each other in decrying his character and services — accusing him by turns of hauteur and of feebleness, of irresolution and of obstinacy, of softness and of vanity, — trying, especially, to heighten and magnify the indications of hesitation and of self-seeking which they discover in his life. Let it be permitted to these strange precisians to reproach him with having stopped short of the ideal of which they pretend to dream, and which no hero of theirs has ever approached. To our judgment, the few shadows which fall on the noble career of this great saint are left there to touch the hearts and console the spirits of those who are, like him, infirm, and charged sometimes with a mission which, like him, they judge to be beyond their strength.

[113] "Quia etsi aliis non est apostolus, sed tamen nobis est; nam signaculum apostolatus ejus nos sumus in Domino. . . . Quod nostram gentem per prædicatores quos huc direxit, de dentibus antiqui hostis eripiens æternæ libertatis fecit esse participem." — Bede, ii. 1.

[114] Stanley, Hook, Lappenberg.

Among the workers of great works who have changed the history of the world and decided the fate of nations one loves to meet with those infirmities, which give encouragement to the common average of men.

Let us, then, preserve intact our admiration and our gratitude for the first missionary — the first bishop and abbot of the English people. Let us give our meed of applause to that council which, a century and a half after his death, decreed that his name should be always invoked in the Litanies after that of Gregory, "because it is he who, sent by our father Gregory, first carried to the English nation the sacrament of baptism and the knowledge of the heavenly country." [115]

CHAPTER III.

FIRST SUCCESSORS OF ST. AUGUSTIN — PAGAN REACTION.

Special characteristics of the conversion of England. — All the details of it are known: it has neither martyrs nor persecutions; it has been the exclusive work of Benedictine or Celtic monks. — All the Roman missionaries were monks; their monasteries served for cathedrals and parish churches. — Laurence, first successor of Augustin. — Mellitus at the council of Rome at 610; Pope's letter to Ethelbert; monks of Saxon origin. — Efforts of Laurence to reconcile the British; his letter to the Irish bishops. — Conversion of the kings of East Anglia and Essex. — Foundation of Westminster; legend of the fisher; King Sebert the first to be buried there; monastic burials; Nelson and Wellington. — Canterbury and Westminster, the metropolis and national necropolis of the English, due to the monks. — Death of Bertha and of Ethelbert; the abbot Peter drowned. — Eadbald, the new king of Kent, remains a pagan; his subjects, as also the Saxons of the East, return to paganism. — Flight of the bishops of London and Rochester; Archbishop Laurence held back by St. Peter. — Conversion of Eadbald. — Apostasy of the king of East Anglia; he admits Christ among the Scandinavian gods. — Mellitus and Justus, the second and third successors of Augustin.

Special characteristics of the conversion of England.

THE preaching of the Gospel in England is marked by several characteristics altogether peculiar to itself, and distinguishing it from those

[115] "Qui genti Anglorum a præfato Papa et patre nostro missus . . . scientiam fidei, baptismi sacramentum et cœlestis patriæ notitiam primus attulit." — *Concilium Cloveshoviense*, anno 747.

revolutions which introduced Christianity into the western nations previously converted to the faith.

In Italy, Gaul, and Spain, the propagation of the Gospel and the extinction of paganism are surrounded with such obscurity that it is impossible to be sure of the date at which the first evangelists of most of the dioceses lived.

Its details known.

In England, on the other hand, nothing is vague or uncertain. Year by year, and day by day, we witness the various phases of the grand event. We take part, as it were, in the very work — the conversion of a great country — which it is so rarely possible to study in detail. We can follow it in all its changes of fortune with the same certainty and precision as if it were an incident in our contemporary missions.

Neither martyrs nor persecutors.

Moreover, in the great lands and illustrious churches which have just been named, the baptism of blood everywhere accompanied or preceded the conversion of the people. Like the apostles at Rome and in the East, the missionaries of the Gospel in the West had, for the most part, to water with their blood the first furrows that they were honored to draw in the field of the divine Husbandman. Even after the great imperial persecutions had come to an end, martyrdom often crowned the apostolate of the first bishops or their auxiliaries.

In England there was nothing at all like this: from the first day of St. Augustin's preaching, and during the whole existence of the Anglo-Saxon Church, there was neither martyr nor persecutor there. When brought within the circle of the pure and radiant light of Christianity, and even before they acknowledged and worshipped it, these fierce Saxons, pitiless as they were to their enemies, showed themselves very much more humanely disposed and accessible to the truth than the enlightened and civilized citizens of Imperial Rome. Not one drop of blood was shed for the sake of religion, or under any religious pretext; and this wonder occurred at a time when blood flowed in torrents for the most frivolous motives, and in that island where afterwards so many piles were to be lighted, and so many scaffolds raised, to immolate the English who should remain true to the faith of Gregory and Augustin.

The conversion the exclusive work of the monks.

A third distinctive feature of the conversion of England is that it was exclusively the work of monks; first, of Benedictine monks sent from Rome — and afterwards, as we shall see, of Celtic monks,

who seemed for a moment about to eclipse or supplant the Italian monks, but who soon suffered themselves to be absorbed by the influence of the Benedictines, and whose spiritual posterity is inseparably connected with that of the Roman missionaries in the common observance of the rule of the great legislator of the monks of the West.

The monastic profession of these first missionaries has been the subject of frequent and long dispute. While it has been admitted that many were of the order to which he himself belonged, it has been denied that all the monks sent by St. Gregory the Great were Benedictines. But the unerring and unrivalled learning of Mabillon has settled the question by irrefutable arguments.[116] It is possible that some clerks or secular priests were to be found among the assistants of the first Archbishop of Canterbury; but it is distinctly proved, by the authority of Bede and of all the earliest records, that Augustin himself and his successors, as well as all the religious of his metropolitan church and the great abbey which bore his name, followed the rule of St. Benedict, like the great Pope whose mission they carried out. Gregory, as has been seen, was desirous of taking advantage of the new ecclesiastical organization of England to introduce

[116] In the preface of the first century of the *Acta Sanctorum Ordinis S. Benedicti*, paragraph 8, Mabillon has completely proved against Baronius and Marsham, one of the editors of the *Monasticon Anglicanum*, that Gregory, Augustin, and their disciples belonged to the order of St. Benedict. The brethren of Saint-Maur, in the life of Gregory placed at the beginning of their edition of his works, have completed the proof (book iii. c. 5, 6, 7). These brief but weighty pages say more on the subject than the folio entitled *Apostolatus Benedictinorum in Anglia, sive Disceptatio Historica de Antiquitate Ordinis Congregationisque Monachorum Nigrorum in Regno Angliæ*, opera R. P. Clementis Reyneri, Duaci, 1626. This ill-arranged and tedious compilation is nevertheless important for the later history of England, on account of the numerous and curious articles which it contains. One of the most curious is the note asked and obtained by the author from the four most celebrated and learned English Protestants of his time, Cotton, Spelman, Camden, and Selden, who unanimously declare that all their researches have led them to the conclusion that St. Augustin, his companions, and his successors, were Benedictines. The English text of this is to be found in Stevens, *Continuation of Dugdale*, vol. i. p. 171. A modern Anglican, Soames, has recently asserted that the Benedictines did not arrive till the tenth century with St. Dunstan; but he has been refuted by the two most distinguished of modern English archæologists, the Protestant Kemble and the Catholic Lingard. The latter, however, is in error in supposing (*History and Antiquities of the Anglo-Saxon Church*, vol. i. p. 152) that Augustin placed in the Cathedral of Canterbury clerks and not monks. He has mistaken the early synonymy of the words *clerici* and *monachi*, in modern times used to express two entirely distinct ideas, but which were employed indifferently from the days of Gregory of Tours to those of the Venerable Bede, and even later.

there that close alliance of the monastic and ecclesiastical life which, to his mind, realized the ideal of the apostolic church. For more than a century that alliance was universal and absolute. Wherever the pagan temples were transformed into churches — wherever the old churches of the time of the Romans and Britons rose from their ruins — there monastic life prevailed among the missionaries who served the cures. The converted country was thus, little by little, overspread by monasteries; the small ones for a long time held the place of rural parish churches; the large served for cathedrals, chapter-houses, and residences for the bishops, who were all produced by the monastic orders.

Laurence, first successor of Augustin. 605-619.

The first thirty-eight archbishops of Canterbury were all monks; and the first four successors of St. Augustin were taken from among the monks of the Monastery of St. Andrew at Rome, whom Pope Gregory had appointed to be his fellow-workmen. During his life, Augustin had chosen as his successor in the primacy his companion Laurence, and had procured his consecration beforehand, thus meaning, with fatherly anxiety, to make the best provision for the frail fortunes of the new-born Church of the English.[117] The new archbishop did honor to the choice which had honored him. He devoted himself nobly to the consolidation of the Church which he had seen founded; he conciliated all hearts, and increased the number of the faithful by the unwearied activity of his preaching no less than by the saintly example of his life.

606-616.

Laurence lived for ten years in an intimate union with the good king Ethelbert, and acted as the medium of communication between that prince and the Holy See. The third successor of Gregory, Boniface IV. — he who consecrated the Roman Pantheon to Christian worship in memory of all the martyrs — exhibited towards the king and the missionary monks of the kingdom of Kent a good-will and confidence worthy of his illustrious predecessor.

[117] "Ne se defuncto adhuc status ecclesiæ tam rudis, vel ad horam pastore destitutus, vacillare inciperet." — Bede, ii. 4. The last historian of the archbishops of Canterbury, Dr. Hook, maintains that Laurence was not a monk, taking as his ground the passage in which Bede describes him as priest to distinguish him from his companion Peter the monk: "Misit continuo Romam Laurentium presbyterum et Petrum monachum." — i. 27. He forgets that this same Peter is himself described as priest some pages farther on: "Primus ejusdem monasterii abbas Petrus presbyter fuit." — i. 33. The title of priest was not at all incompatible with the monastic profession. That point was settled at the Council of Rome in 610 — only then, as now, all monks were not in priest's orders.

Mellitus, the new bishop of the East Saxons, was sent by Laurence to Rome to consult the Pope upon different matters affecting the interests of the Church of England. He was one of the members of the Council of Rome, 27th Feb., 610. in which were promulgated the canons which confirmed the rule of St. Benedict, and accorded to the monks the right of administering the sacraments and of being admitted to all the grades of the priesthood.[118] Mellitus brought back to England the decrees of this council, which he had himself signed along with the other bishops; he brought likewise very gracious letters from the Pope to the archbishop and to the king. "Glorious king," Boniface wrote to Ethelbert, "we accord to you with right good will that which you have demanded of the Apostolic See through our co-bishop Mellitus: to wit, that in the monastery which your holy teacher Augustin, the disciple of Gregory, of blessed memory, consecrated under the name of the Holy Saviour, in your city of Canterbury, and over which our very dear brother Laurence now presides, you should establish a dwelling for monks, living together in complete regularity; and we decree, by our apostolic authority, that the monks who have preached the faith to you may take this new monastic community into association with themselves, and teach its members to live a holy life." [119]

Through the obscurity of this language it seems natural to conclude that the introduction of new monks, probably of Saxon origin, into the Italian community founded by Augustin, is here indicated. A century passed, however, ere an abbot born in England could be chosen to preside over it.

Efforts of Laurence to bring about the conversion of the Britons.

Like Augustin, Archbishop Laurence was not content to labor for the salvation of the Saxons with his monkish brethren only: his pastoral anxiety urged him to search for the means of bringing the Christians of the ancient British race into unity

[118] "Cum idem Papa cogeret synodem episcoporum Italiæ, de vita monachorum et quiete ordinaturus." — Bede, *loc. cit.*

[119] "Fili gloriose, quod ab Apostolica sede per coepiscopum nostrum Mellitum postulatis, libenti animo concedimus; id est, ut vestra benignitas in monasterio in Dorobernensi civitate constituto, quod sanctus doctor vester Augustinus, beatæ memoriæ Gregorii discipulus, sancti Salvatoris nomini consecravit, cui ad præsens præesse dignoscitur dilectissimus frater noster Laurentius, licenter per omnia monachorum regulariter viventium habitationem statuat, apostolica auctoritate decernentes ut ipsi vestri prædicatores monachi monachorum gregem sibi associent et eorum vitam sanctitatum (*sic*) moribus exornent." — Guillelmus Malmesbur., *De Gestis Pontificum Anglorum*, lib. i. p. 118, ed. Savile.

with Rome, so that he and they might work together for the conversion of the pagans. His experience of the conditions under which the Christian religion might be successfully extended made him bitterly deplore the hostile attitude of the Celtic monks, and the polemical rancor which broke out in them whenever they sought or consented to discuss the matters in dispute. It was at the same moment that the illustrious Columbanus impaired the effect of the admirable example which he set to France, Burgundy, and Switzerland, by his extraordinary eccentricities. The rumor of them had reached even Laurence, who could not forbear referring to it in an epistle which he addressed to the bishops and abbots of all Scotia — that is to say, of Ireland — the chief centre of the Celtic Church. Having failed, like Augustin, in a direct advance which, with his two suffragans, he had made to the clergy of the Welsh Britons, he sought to ascend to the source of the evil by writing to their brethren in the neighboring island to expostulate with them on their universal intolerance. His letter begins thus: —

"To our very dear brethren, the lords, bishops, and abbots of Ireland, — we, Laurence, Mellitus, and Justus, servants of the servants of God, greeting. The Holy See having directed us, as is its wont, to these western regions, there to preach the faith to the heathen, we have entered this island of Britain, not knowing what we did. Believing that they all followed the rules of the universal Church, we held in great veneration the piety of the Britons and the Scots. When we came to know the Britons, we thought the Scots were better than they. But now, when the bishop Dagan has come to us from Ireland, and when the abbot Columbanus has betaken himself to Gaul, we know that the Scots differ in nothing from the Britons; for the bishop Dagan has not only refused to partake of our hospitality — he has not even deigned to eat in the place which serves as our dwelling."[120] Dagan was a monk of the great Irish Monastery of Bangor: he had come to confer with the mission at Canterbury, and he had undoubtedly been offended by the firm determination of the Roman prelates to maintain the conditions of liturgical unity. No trace has survived of any overtures towards reconciliation on his part, or on that of any other representative of the Celtic Churches.

The Roman monks were for some time more suc-

[120] Bede, *loc. cit.*

cessful among the Saxon settlements — neighbors or vassals of the monarchy of Ethelbert. The most eastern district of the island — that which, lying between the Thames and the sandy outlets of the Ouse, forms a sort of circular projection looking towards Scandinavia — was occupied, towards the north, by the tribe of East Angles, or English of the East. Their king, Redwald, who had paid a visit to the king of Kent, received baptism like him; and his conversion awakened hopes of the conversion of his people — a population much more numerous than that of the country already won for Christ, occupying as it did the large modern countries of Norfolk and Suffolk, with a part of the shires of Cambridge, Huntingdon, Bedford, and Hertford. Between East Anglia and Kent lay the kingdom of Essex, or of the Saxons of the East, already converted during Augustin's life, thanks to its king Sebert, the nephew of the Bretwalda Ethelbert. This kingdom was particularly important on account of its capital, the ancient Roman colony of LONDON, where Mellitus had been appointed bishop by Augustin.

Conversion of the kings of East Anglia and of Essex.

He had founded there, as we have seen, on the ruins of an ancient temple of Diana, a monastic cathedral dedicated to St. Paul. Soon after, to the west of the episcopal city, and on the site of a temple of Apollo, which had supplanted, after the Diocletian persecution, a church occupied by the first British Christians,[121] the new bishop of London built, with the concurrence of Sebert the king, another church and a monastery dedicated to St. Peter. Thus on the banks of the Thames, as on those of the Tiber, and in expressive and touching remembrance of Rome, the two princes of the apostles found in these two sanctuaries, separate yet near, a new consecration of their glorious brotherhood in the apostolate and martyrdom.

Foundation of Westminster. 610.

This modest monastic colony established itself on a frightful and almost inaccessible site,[122] in the middle of a deep marsh, on an islet formed by an arm of the Thames, and so covered with briers and thorns that it was called Thorney Island. From its position to the west of London it took a new name, destined to rank among the most famous in the world — that of WESTMINSTER, or Monastery of the West.

As far as our history can extend, it will always find the

[121] DUGDALE, *Monasticon Anglicanum*, vol. i. p. 55.

[122] "In loco terribili." — Charter quoted by RIDGWAY, *The Gem of Thorney Island*, p. 4.

national sanctuary of England encircled with growing splendor and celebrity. But at present our business is only to record the legend which brightens its humble cradle — a legend which we have already met with among the British at Glastonbury, and which we shall find among other nations at the beginning of other great monastic foundations — in France at that of St. Denis, in Switzerland at Einsiedlen — and which has exercised on the imagination of the English people an influence more durable and powerful than is generally produced by the best authenticated facts. Up to the sixteenth century it was still told from generation to generation that in the night preceding the day fixed for the consecration of the new church, and while Bishop Mellitus, within his tent, was preparing for the ceremony of the morrow, St. Peter, the great fisher of men, appeared under the form of an unknown traveller to a poor fisherman whose boat was moored on the bank of the Thames opposite the Isle of Thorns. The water was rough, and the river in flood. The stranger persuaded the fisherman to row him across to the opposite bank, and when he landed he made his way towards the new church. As he crossed its threshold, the fisherman with amazement saw the interior of the edifice lighted up. From floor to roof, within and without, a chorus of angelic voices filled the air with a music such as he had never heard, and with the sweetest odors. After a long interval the music ceased, and all disappeared except the stranger, who, returning, charged the fisherman to go and tell the bishop what he had seen, and how he, whom the Christians called St. Peter, had himself come to the consecration of the church which his friend king Sebert had raised to him.[123]

This king Sebert and his wife were buried at Westminster; and subsequently, through many vicissitudes, the great abbey, becoming more and more dear to the Church, to the

[123] "Ecce subito lux cœlestis emicuit. . . . Affuit cum apostolo multitudo civium supernorum . . . aures angelicæ voces mulcebat sonoritas, nares indicibilis odoris fragrantia perfundebat. . . . Nova Dei nupta, consecrante eo qui cœlum claudit et aperit, cœlestibus resplendet luminaribus. . . . Fixis tentoriis a dimidio milliario. . . . Rediit ad piscatorem piscium egregius piscator hominum. . . . Ego sum quem Christiani sanctum Petrum apostolum vocant, qui hanc ecclesiam meam hac nocte Deo dedicavi . . . quam mihi ille meus amicus Sebertus fabricavit." — Ric. Cirencester, *Speculum Hist. de Gestis Reg. Angl.*, ii. 27. Dugdale quotes no less than four original versions of this miracle, extracted from ancient English chronicles. Compare Baronius, *Annal.*, an. 610, c. 10, and *Acta SS. Bolland.*, January i. p. 246. Hook gives a plausible enough explanation of the tradition.

princes, nobles, and people, was the chosen burial-place of the kings and the royal family. It is still, in our time, as every one knows, the Pantheon of England, who has found no nobler consecration for the memory of her heroes, orators, and poets, her most glorious children, than to give them their last resting-place under the vaults of the old monastic sanctuary.[124] Near that sanctuary the royalty of England long sojourned; in one of its dependent buildings the House of Commons held its first meeting;[125] under its shadow the English Parliament, the most ancient, powerful, and glorious assembly in the world, has always flourished, and still remains. Never has a monument been more identified with the history of a people. Each of its stones represents a page of the country's annals!

Canterbury embodies the religious life of England, Westminster has been the centre of her political life and her real capital; and England owes Canterbury, as she owes Westminster, to the sons of St. Benedict.

Death of Queen Bertha.

Meanwhile a shadow was about to fall on the dawn of the faith in England. The noble granddaughter of Clotilda, the gentle and pious Queen Bertha, was dead. She preceded her husband in her death, as in her faith, and was buried beside the great Roman missionary who had given her the joy of seeing her husband's kingdom, and her husband himself, converted to Christianity.

613.

When the first successor of Augustin celebrated the solemn consecration of the great monastic church which was to be the burying-place, or, as they said then, the bed of rest (*thalamus*) for Christian kings and primates, the remains of the queen, and of the first archbishop of Canterbury, were transferred thither; those of the queen were laid in front of the altar sacred to St. Martin, the great

[124] Chatham, Pitt, Fox, Sheridan, Grattan, Canning, Peel — all the great modern orators and statesmen, the poets, the admirals, the generals slain on the battle-field — there repose by the side of Edward the Confessor, and the kings and heroes of the middle ages. The words of Nelson at the moment of beginning the battle of Aboukir, "Now for a peerage or Westminster Abbey!" will be remembered by our readers. In our day the custom has been introduced of burying the great military chiefs at St. Paul's. Nelson and Wellington both rest in the vaults of the church which bears the name and occupies the site of the first foundation of Augustin's companion.

[125] It was in the fine chapter-house of Westminster Abbey that the Commons sat. Although their violent debates were lamented as disturbing the monastic worship, they remained there till the Reformation; when St. Stephen's Chapel, on the site of which the present House of Commons is placed, was allotted to them.

wonder-worker of Gaul, and those of the primate before the altar of his father and friend, St. Gregory.[126] Three years later, Ethelbert, who had married again, also died, and was buried by Bertha's side in the Church of St. Augustin. He reigned fifty-six years, twenty of which he had been a Christian. "He was," says Bede, "the first English king who ascended to heaven, and the Church numbered him among her saints."[127]

And of King Ethelbert. 24th Feb., 616.

Laurence thus remained the sole survivor of all who had taken part, twenty years before, in the famous conference in the isle of Thanet, at which the Saxon king and Frankish queen met the Roman missionaries. His companion, Peter, the first abbot of the monastery of St. Augustin, was drowned on the French coast, some time before, while fulfilling a mission on which King Athelbert had sent him. Laurence had thus to encounter all alone the storm which burst forth immediately after the death of Ethelbert. The conversion of that monarch had not insured that of all his people; and Eadbald, his son who succeeded to the throne, had not embraced Christianity along with his father. The looseness of his morals had helped to keep him in idolatry. When he became king he wished to marry his father's widow, the second wife whom Ethelbert had married after the death of Bertha. This kind of incest, with which St. Paul reproached the first Christians of Corinth,[128] was only too consonant with the usages of several of the Teutonic races;[129] but such a case had been anticipated, and formally forbidden in Gregory's reply to Augustin, when consulted as to the matrimonial relations of the Saxons. This was not Eadbald's only crime. He gave himself up to such transports of fury that he was commonly regarded as beside himself, and possessed with a demon. But his example sufficed to draw into apostasy those who had embraced Christian faith and chastity only from motives of fear, or from a desire to stand well with King Ethelbert.

His successor Eadbald, remaining a pagan, instigates the apostasy of his subjects.

The tempest which threatened to ingulf the recent Christianity of England, became more and more formidable when

[126] Guillelm Thorne, *Chron. S. August.*, p. 1765; Thomas de Elmham, *Hist. Monast. S. August.*, p. 432, ed. Hardivicke; Stanley, *Memorials of Canterbury*, p. 26.

[127] *Act. SS. Bolland.*, vol. iii. February, p. 470.

[128] 1 Corinth. v. 1.

[129] Kemble, *Saxons in England*, ii. 407.

the death of Sebert, nephew of Ethelbert, and founder of Westminster, raised to the sovereignty of the kingdom of Essex his three sons, who, like the son of the king of Kent, had remained pagans. They immediately resumed the public practice of the idolatry which they had but for a short time foregone during the life of their father, and gave full liberty to all their subjects to worship idols. At the same time they still went occasionally to witness the ceremonies of the Christian worship; and one day, when the bishop Mellitus was administering, in their presence, the communion to the faithful, they said to him, with the freedom of their barbarian pride, "Why do you not offer us that white bread which you gave to our father, and which you continue to give to the people in your church?" "If you will be washed," answered the bishop, "in the fountain of salvation, as your father was, you may, like him, have your share of the holy bread; otherwise, it is impossible."

Reaction to heathenism among the East Saxons.

Expulsion of the Bishop of London.

"We have no desire," replied the princes, "to enter your fountain — we have no need of it; but we want to refresh ourselves with that bread:" and as they insisted on it, the bishop repeated again that it was needful that they should be cleansed from all sin before being admitted to the communion. Then they flew into a rage, and ordered him to quit their kingdom with all that belonged to him: "Since you will not gratify us in a matter so simple, you shall stay no longer in our country."[130]

The Bishop of London thus driven away, crossed the Thames, and came into the kingdom of Kent, in order to confer with the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of Rochester as to the course he should pursue. These were the only three bishops of the Christian church in England, and all three lost courage in presence of the new peril which threatened them. They decided that it was better that they should all return to their own country, there to serve God in freedom, than that they should remain uselessly among barbarians who had revolted from the faith. The two bishops were the first to fly, and crossed over to France. Laurence prepared to

Archbishop Laurence wishes to leave England.

[130] "Auxit procellam hujus perturbationis mors Saberci. . . . Barbari inflati stultitia dicebant: Quare non et nobis panem nitidum porrigis. . . . Si vultis ablui fonte illo salutari. . . . Nolumus fontem illum intrare . . . si non vis adsentire nobis in tam facili causa quam petimus, non poteris jam in nostra provincia demorari." — Bede, ii. 5.

follow them, but in the night before his intended departure, wishing to pray and to weep without restraint over that English Church which he had helped to found a quarter of a century before, and which he was now obliged to abandon, he had his bed placed in the church of the monastery where reposed Augustin, Ethelbert, and Bertha. Scarcely had he fallen asleep when St. Peter appeared to him, as Jesus Christ had erewhile appeared to St. Peter himself when the prince of the apostles, flying from Nero's persecution, met on the Appian Way his divine Master coming towards Rome, there to be, in his default, a second time crucified.[131] The prince of the apostles overwhelmed with reproaches, and even scourged till the blood came, the bishop who was ready to abandon Christ's flock to the wolves, instead of braving martyrdom to save it.

On the morrow Lawrence showed his bruised and bleeding sides to the king, who, at the sight, asked who had dared thus to maltreat such a man as he. "It was St. Peter," said the bishop, "who inflicted on me all these blows and sufferings for your salvation."[132] Eadbald, moved and terrified, renounced idolatry, gave up his incestuous marriage, and promised to do his best for the protection of the Church. He called the two bishops, Mellitus and Justus, back from France, and sent them back to their dioceses to re-establish the faith in all freedom. After his conversion he continued to serve God with his people; he even built a new church dedicated to the Holy Virgin, in the monastery founded by St. Augustin, where he reckoned upon being buried beside his father and mother.

After the vision of St. Peter, he is retained by King Eadbald, who is converted.

But he had not the same authority over the other Saxon realms with which Ethelbert had been invested in his capacity of Bretwalda, or military chief of the Saxon federation. He could not succeed in restoring Mellitus to his diocese. The princes of Essex who had expelled him had all perished in a war with the Saxons of the West; but their

[131] Every one has seen at Rome, on the Appian Way, the church called *Domine quo vadis*, built on the spot where, according to tradition, St. Peter put that question to the Lord, who answered him, *Vado Romam iterum crucifigi*. — S. Amer., *Contra Auxentium*.

[132] "Flagellis arctioribus afficiens. . . . An mei, inquit, oblitus es exempli qui pro parvulis Christi . . . vincula, verbera, carceres, afflictiones, ipsam postremo mortem, mortem autem crucis, ab infidelibus et inimicis Christi ipse cum Christo coronandus pertuli. . . . Retecto vestimento . . . quantis esset verberibus laceratus ostendit. Qui . . . inquirens quis tanto viro ausus esset plagas infligere." — Bede, ii. 6.

subjects persevered in idolatry, and the people of London offered the most determined resistance to the re-establishment of the Roman bishop, declaring that they greatly preferred their idolatrous priests.[133]

Defection of East Anglia.

The kingdom of Essex seemed thus altogether lost to the faith; and as to East Anglia, the conversion of its king, Redwald, had not been serious and permanent. No sooner had he returned from the visit to Ethelbert, during which he received baptism, than he allowed himself to be brought back to the worship of his fathers by the influence of his wife and his principal councillors; but he made the same concession to the new religion which had been already accorded to it by a Roman emperor — a concession much more worthy of a Cæsar of the Roman decadence than of the impetuous instincts of a barbarian king. He vouchsafed to assign to the Son of the only true God a place by the side of his Scandinavian deities, and established two altars in the same temple — the one for the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, and the other for the victims offered to the idols.[134]

Of all the conquests made by the envoys of Gregory, there remained now only a portion of the country and of the people of Kent surrounding the two great monastic sanctuaries of Canterbury, — the metropolitan church dedicated to Christ, and the abbey of St. Augustin, then bearing the names of St. Peter and St. Paul. Roman missionaries, one after another, succeeded to the government of these two monasteries, which were now the only centres in which the fire of Christian life still burned in England. During more than a century all the abbots of St. Augustin's monastery were chosen from among the Roman monks, and probably from those who came from Mount Cœlius to follow or join him.[135]

[133] "Nec, licet auctoribus perditis, excitatum ad scelera vulgus potuit recorrigi. . . . Londonienses episcopum recipere noluerunt, idololatris magis pontificibus servire gaudentes. Non enim tanta erat ei, quanta patri ipsius regni potestas, ut etiam nolentibus ac contradicentibus paganis antistitem suæ posset ecclesiæ reddere." — Bede, ii. 6, 7.

[134] "Rediens domum, ab uxore et quibusdam perversis doctoribus seductus, in eodem fano et altare haberet ad sacrificium Christi et arulam ad victimas demoniorum." — Bede, iii. 15. Bede adds that in his lifetime there was a king of East Anglia who in his childhood had seen that temple still standing.

[135] The succession of these abbots, as given by Thomas Elmham in his chronicle of the Abbey of St. Augustin, is as follows: John, † 618; Rufinianus, † 626; Gratiosus, † 638; this last, *Romanus natione*, as well as his

2d Feb., 619. — 624.

Mellitus, Justus, and Honorius companions and successors of Augustin at Canterbury.

In the archiepiscopal see, Laurence, who died three years after his reconciliation to the new king, was succeeded by Mellitus, who thus finally renounced all idea of again settling among the Saxons of the east. After Mellitus, who, though tortured by the gout, showed an indefatigable devotion to his apostolic duties, Justus, the bishop of Rochester, became archbishop. Like Augustin, he received the *pallium*, along with the privilege of ordaining bishops at his pleasure, a privilege conferred upon him by the Pope Boniface V., careful, as his predecessor Boniface IV. had been, to maintain the mission which Gregory had bequeathed to the special charge of the Pontiff. The Pope had received letters from King Eadbald which filled him with comfort and hope; and in placing under the jurisdiction of Archbishop Justus the English not only of Kent but of all the neighboring kingdoms, he exhorted him to persevere with commendable patience in the work of the redemption of the English people.[136]

624-627.

Justus occupied the archbishop's throne for three years only, and was succeeded by Honorius, also a disciple of St. Gregory and St. Augustin, and the last of the companions of the great missionary who was to fill his place in the primacy of the new Christian kingdom.

The Northumbrian Saxons.

In the midst of these mistakes, perils, and difficulties, and while the third successor of Augustin maintained, as best he could, the remains of the Roman mission in the still modest and often menaced metropolis of Canterbury, the horizon suddenly brightened toward the north of England. An event occurred there which seemed to realize the first designs of St. Gregory, and to open new and vast fields for the propagation of the gospel. It is in this northern region that the principal interest of the great drama which gave England to the Church is henceforth to be concentrated.

successor Petronius, † 654; Nathaniel, "quondam cum Mellito a Justo a Roma ad Angliam destinatus," † 667; after him the celebrated Adrian, the African, whose successor Albin, elected in 708, was the first *de gente nostra*, says the historian, and was, moreover, the disciple of Adrian, a great Latinist, Hellenist, and *collaborateur* of Bede.

[136] "Hoc illa repensatione vobis collatum est, qua injuncto ministerio jugiter persistentes, laudabili patientia redemptionem gentis illius expectastis." — Bede, ii. 8.

CHAPTER IV.

FIRST MISSION IN NORTHUMBRIA — ITS SUCCESSES AND ITS DISASTER — BISHOP PAULINUS AND KING EDWIN.

Extent and origin of the Anglo-Saxon settlements in Northumbria; thanks to their compatriot Bede, their history is better known than that of the others. — Ida and Ella, founders of the two kingdoms of Deïra and Bernicia; Bamborough and the Fair Traitress. — War of the Northumbrians and Britons: Ethelfrid the Ravager, conqueror of the Welsh and of the Scots under Aïdan, the friend of St. Columba. — Edwin, representing the rival dynasty, a refugee in East Anglia; on the point of being delivered over to his enemies, he is saved by the queen; vision and promise. — He becomes king of Northumbria and Bretwalda; list of Bretwaldas. — He marries the Christian Ethelburga, daughter of the king of Kent. — Mission of Bishop Paulinus, who accompanies the princess to York. — Influence of women in the conversion of the Saxons. — Fruitless preaching of Paulinus; letters of Boniface V. to the king and queen. — Edwin saved from the poniard of an assassin; birth of his daughter; war against the West Saxons. — Hesitation of Edwin; last effort of Paulinus. — Edwin promises to accept the faith after consulting his parliament. — Speeches of the high priest and of the chief captain. — Baptism of Edwin and of his nobility. — Bishopric and monastic cathedral of York. — The king and the bishop labor for the conversion of the Northumbrians. — General baptism by immersion. — Paulinus to the south of the Humber. — Foundations of Southwell and Lincoln. — Consecration of Honorius, fourth successor of Augustin at Canterbury. — Letter of Pope Honorius to the two metropolitans and to King Edwin. — Prosperous reign of Edwin. — Conversion of East Anglia; foundation of Edinburgh; conquest of Anglesea; public security; the woman and the foster-child; the copper cups; the *tufa of* the Bretwalda. — League of the Saxons and Britons of Mercia against the Saxons of Northumbria: Cadwallon and Penda. — Edwin is killed. — Flight of Paulinus and Ethelburga. — Overthrow of Christianity in Northumbria and East Anglia. — Check of the Roman missionaries; their virtues and their faults. — There remain to them only the metropolis and the abbey of St. Augustin at Canterbury, which continue to be the two citadals of Roman influence.

Origin and extent of the kingdom of Northumbria.

Of all the settlements made by the Teutonic conquerors of Britain, that of the Angles to the north of the river Humber, which seems to divide into two parts the island of Great Britain, and from which is derived the name of Northumbria, was, beyond comparison, the most important. This kingdom occupied

the whole eastern coast from the mouth of the Humber to the Firth of Forth, including the existing counties of York, Durham, and Northumberland, with all the south-eastern portion of modern Scotland. To the west it extended to the borders of the British territories of Cambria and Strathclyde, and even approached, on the frontiers of Caledonia, that new kingdom of the Scots of Ireland which the great missionary Columba had just inaugurated.

Its history the best known through the Northumbrian Bede.

Northumbria was not merely the largest kingdom of the Saxon Heptarchy — it is also that whose history is the most animated, dramatic, and varied — the richest in interesting and original characters. It is that, in short, where the incidents of the conversion of the Anglo-Saxon conquerors, and of the propagation of monastic institutions, appear to us in fullest light. This is naturally explained by the fact that it is the birthplace of the Venerable Bede. This great and honest historian — the English Gregory of Tours, and the father of British history — was born and always lived in Northumberland. Hence in his interesting narratives a natural prominence is given to the men and the affairs of his native region, along with an exact and detailed reproduction of the local traditions and personal recollections which he treasured up and repeated with such scrupulous care.

547.

Bede informs us that about a century after the first landing of the Saxons, under Hengist, in the country of Kent, their neighbors, the Angles, crossing the North Sea, founded on the opposite coast of Britain two colonies, long distinct, sometimes united, but finally combined together under the name of Northumbria.[137] The wall anciently raised by the Emperor Severus from the mouth of the Solway to that of the Tyne to check the Caledonian incursions, was their boundary. The oldest of the two kingdoms was that of the Bernicians to the north. Their chief,

Ida, founder of the kingdom of Bernicia.

Ida — who, like Hengist, claimed to be a descendant of Odin — established his residence in a fortress which he called Bamborough, after his wife Bebba, with that conjugal reverence so often illustrated even among the most savage Germans. The British bards, in return, have named this queen the Fair Traitress, because she was of British origin, and fought in the foremost ranks on the

[137] United from 588 to 633; separated at the death of Edwin in 634; and reunited anew under Oswald and Oswy.

field of battle against her countrymen.[138] The imposing remains of this fortress, situated on a detached rock on the coast, still surprise and arrest the traveller. From this point the invasion of the Angles spread over the fertile valleys of the Tweed and Tyne.

The second colony, that of the Deïrians, to the south, was concentrated principally in the valley of the Tees and in the extensive region which is now known as Yorkshire. The first chief of the Deïrians of whom anything is known, was that Alla or Ella, whose name — pronounced by the young slaves exposed for sale in the Forum — suggested to St. Gregory the hope of soon hearing the Hallelujah echo through his kingdom.[139] This region, to the north of the Humber, was precisely that which had suffered most from the Caledonian incursions; and, according to some authors, the Saxons of Hengist, called in the character of allies by the Britons to their aid, were already established before the arrival of the Deïrian colony. But Ida and his Angles would not in any character hold tenure under their Germanic compatriots from the south of the island, and instead of fighting against the Picts or the Scots they leagued themselves with them to crush the ill-starred Britons.

Ella, founder of the kingdom of Deïra. 559-588.

Ida, who had twelve sons, and who reigned twelve years, used fire and sword against the natives with such animosity that the British bards surnamed him the *Man of Fire*, or the *Great Burner*. They withstood him to the last extremity, and he fell in battle against them. But his grandson, Ethelfrid, took a terrible revenge. He was Ella's son-in-law; and at the death of the latter, and to the prejudice of the rights of the chief's son, Ethelfrid reunited the two kingdoms of Deïra and Bernicia, and mustering to his own standard all the Anglo-Saxons of Northumbria, he subdued or massacred a greater multitude of the Britons than any other of the invading chiefs.[140] He was, says Bede, the ravaging wolf of Holy Writ: in the morning he devoured his prey, and in the evening he divided his spoil. The vanquished, who had

547-559.

588.

Ethelfrid the Ravager,

[138] A. DE LA BORDERIE, *Luttes des Bretons Insulaires contre les Anglo-Saxons*, p. 155.

[139] See *ante*, p. 145.

[140] "Nemo in tribunis, nemo in regibus plures eorum terras, exterminatis vel subjugatis indigenis, aut tributarias genti Anglorum, aut habitabiles fecit." — BEDE, i. 34.

called his grandfather the Burner, had only too good cause to call Ethelfrid the Ravager.

Conqueror of the Scots and Britons. The greatness of Northumbria due to him. 588-616.

He had not, however, like his predecessors, the Caledonians for auxiliaries. They had become Christians, thanks to the apostolic zeal of Columba and his Irish missionaries; and far from seconding the pagan invaders, the Dalriadian Scots, recently established in Great Britain,[141] came to the succor of the Britons, who were their fellow-Christians. Their king, Aïdan — the same who had been consecrated by Columba, the monastic apostle of Caledonia — marched against Ethelfrid at the head of a numerous army. But his friend, the holy monk of Iona, was no longer there, as of old,[142] to protect him with his prayers, and aid him with his ardent sympathies. The Scots and the Saxons met at Degstane, near the existing frontier of England and Scotland. After a desperate struggle the Scots army was cut to pieces; and this defeat put an end forever to any desire on the part of the northern Celts to undertake the defence of their brethren of the south against the Teutonic conquerors.

603.

Having conquered the Scots, the formidable heathen threw himself on the Britons of Wales; and it was then that he fulfilled the prophecy of Augustin by exterminating the twelve hundred monks of Bangor. After this he completed the conquest of Northumbria, and fell, ten years later, in an encounter with his countrymen, the East Angles, under the command of that King Redwald whom we have seen professing Christianity for a time to please King Ethelbert.[143]

607 or 613.

East Anglia, as the name itself indicates, was occupied by a colony of the same race as the Angles of Northumbria. On the death of the first Christian king of Kent, Redwald inherited the title of Bretwalda, which gave him a certain military supremacy over the whole Anglo-Saxon federation. He had given shelter to the son of Ella, who, while still a child, had been dethroned by his brother-in-law, the terrible Ethelfrid. This young prince, named Edwin, grew up at Redwald's court, and had even been married to the daughter of his protector. Ethelfrid, seeing in him a rival and a successor, em-

616.

Edwin, brother-in-law of Ethelfrid, but representing the

[141] "Rex Scotorum qui Britanniam inhabitant." — Bede, i. 34. See *ante*, p. 42.

[142] See *ante*, p. 55.

[143] See *ante*, p. 193.

ployed by turns threats and bribes to induce Redwald to surrender the royal exile. The East Anglian prince was on the point of yielding, when one of the friends of Edwin came by night to apprise him of his danger, and offered to conduct him to a place of refuge, where neither Redwald nor Ethelfrid should be able to discover him. "No," replied the young and generous exile, "I thank you for your good will, but I shall do nothing. Why should I begin again to wander a vagabond through every part of the island, as I have too much done? If I must die, let it be rather by the hand of this great king than by that of a meaner man." Notwithstanding, moved and agitated by the news, he went out, and seated himself on a rock before the palace, where he remained for a long time alone and unnoticed, a prey to agonizing uncertainty.[144]

rival dynasty, takes refuge with the East Angles.

All at once he beheld before him, in the midst of the darkness, a man whose countenance and dress were unknown to him, who asked him what he did there alone in the night, and added, "What wilt thou promise to him who shall rid thee of thy grief, by dissuading Redwald from delivering thee up to thy enemies, or doing thee any harm?" "All that may ever be in my power," answered Edwin. "And if," continued the unknown, "he promised to make thee king, and a king more powerful than all your ancestors, and all the other kings in England?" Edwin promised anew that his gratitude would be commensurate with such a service. "Then," said the stranger, "if he who shall have exactly foretold to you such great fortunes, offers you counsels more useful for your welfare and your life than any of your fathers or kinsmen have ever received, do you consent to follow them?" The exile swore that he would implicity obey him by whom he should be rescued from such great peril and made king.

Vision and promise of Edwin.

Thereupon the unknown placed his right hand upon his head, saying, "When a like sign shall be shown thee, then recall this hour — thy words and thy promise." With this he disappeared so suddenly, that Edwin believed he had spoken not with a man but with a spirit.[145] A moment after

[144] "Si ergo vis, hac ipse hora te educam. . . . Gratias quidem ago benevolentiæ tuæ. . . . Quin potius, si moriturus sum, ille me magis quam ignobilior quisquam morti tradat. . . . Solus ipse mœstus in lapide pervigil . . . cum diu tacitus mentis angoribus et cæco carperetur igni." — Bede, ii. 12.

[145] "Quid mercis dare velis ei qui. . . . Quid si etiam regem te futurum . . . ita ut omnes qui ante te reges in gente Anglorum fuerant potestate transcendas. . . . Tum ille tertio: Si autem qui tibi tanta taliaque dona vera-

his friend came running to announce that he had no longer anything to fear, and that King Redwald, having confided his project to the queen, had been dissuaded by her from his breach of faith.

This princess, whose name has been unfortunately forgotten, had, like most of the Anglo-Saxon women, an all-powerful influence in the heart of her husband. More happily inspired than when she had induced him to renounce the baptism which he had received when with Ethelbert,[146] she showed him how unworthy it would be to sell for gold his soul, and what is more, his honor, which she esteemed the most precious of all jewels.[147]

Edwin becomes king of the Northumbrians.

Under the generous influence of the queen, Redwald not only refused to give up the exiled prince, but having sent back the ambassadors intrusted with the costly presents of Ethelfrid, he declared war against him. The result was that, Ethelfrid having been defeated and slain, Edwin was established as king in Northumbria by his protector Redwald, who was now the chief of the Anglo-Saxon federation. The sons of Ethelfrid, although, on the mother's side, nephews of the new king, were obliged to fly, like Edwin himself in his youth. They went for refuge to the Dalriadian Scots, whose apostle Columba had been. We shall presently see what resulted from this exile, to Northumbria and the whole of England.

616.

Like his brother-in-law Ethelfrid, Edwin reigned over the two united kingdoms of Deïra and Bernicia; and, like him, he waged a vigorous war against the Britons of Wales. Having thus become the dreaded chief of the Angles of the North, he found himself esteemed and sought after by the East Angles, who on the death of their king, Redwald, offered him the sovereignty. But Edwin preferred to repay the protection which he had received from Redwald and his wife by leaving the kingdom of East Anglia to their son. He reserved, however, the military supremacy which Redwald had exercised, as well as the title of Bretwalda, which had passed from the

624.

Edwin becomes Bretwalda.

citer prædixerit. . . . Cum hoc ergo tibi signum advenerit, memento hujus temporis, ac loquelæ nostræ, et ea quæ nunc promittis adimplere ne differas. His dictis, ut ferunt, repente disparuit." — BEDE.

[146] See *ante*, p. 199.

[147] "Postquam cogitationem suam reginæ in secreto revelavit, revocavit eum ille ab intentione . . . ammonens quia nulla ratione conveniat . . . immo fidem suam, quæ omnibus ornamentis pretiosior est amore pecuniæ perdere." — BEDE, *loc. cit.*

king of Kent to the king of East Anglia, but which, after being held by Edwin, was to remain always attached to the Northumbrian monarchy.

We have no precise information regarding the origin or the nature of the authority with which the Bretwalda was invested. It is apparent only that this authority, at first of a temporary and exclusively military character, extended, after the conversion of the different kingdoms of the Heptarchy, to ecclesiastical affairs. It is evident also that it added to the royal dignity the prestige of a real supremacy, all the more sought after that it was probably conferred, not only by the vote of the other kings, but of all the chiefs of the Saxon nobility.[148]

Thus then was accomplished the mysterious prediction of Edwin's nocturnal visitor; he was now a king, and more powerful than any of the English kings before him. For the supremacy of the Bretwalda, added to the vast extent of country occupied by the Angles of the North and East, secured to the king of Northumbria a preponderance altogether different from that of the petty kings of the South who had borne the title before him. Having reached this unhoped-for elevation, and having lost his first wife, a daughter of the king of East Anglia, he sought a second bride, and asked in marriage the sister of the king of Kent, the daughter of Ethelbert and Bertha, a descendant of Hengist and Odin through her father, and of St. Clotilda through her mother. She was called Ethelburga — that is, noble protectress; for this word *Ethel*, which appears so often in Anglo-Saxon names, is simply, as has been already remarked, the German *edel*, noble. Her

He marries the daughter of the first Christian king of Kent.

[148] The *ealdormen* — those whom Bede calls *primates tribuni*. Bede gives the following as the succession of chiefs of the Anglo-Saxon federation, up to the time when the title of Bretwalda became extinct: —

About 560, Ella, king of Sussex.
" 577, Ceawlin, king of Wessex.
" 596, Ethelbert, king of Kent.
" 616, Redwald, king of East Anglia.
" 624, Edwin, } kings of Northumbria.
" 635, Oswald, }
" 645, Oswy, }

Lappenberg believes, with every appearance of reason, that after the death of Oswy, in 670, the authority of the Bretwalda passed to Wulfhere, king of Mercia, whose supremacy over the king of Essex is proved by Bede himself, iii. 30. Mackintosh interprets the term *Bret-walda* by that of *dompteur* or arbiter (*wielder*) of the Britons; but he gives no satisfactory reason for that etymology.

brother Eadbald, brought back by Archbishop Laurence to the Christian faith, at first refused the demand of the king of Northumbria. He answered that it was impossible for him to betroth a Christian virgin to a pagan, lest the faith and the sacraments of the true God should be profaned by making her live with a king who was a stranger to His worship. Far from being offended at this refusal, Edwin promised that, if the princess was granted to him, he would do nothing against the faith that she professed; but, on the contrary, she might freely observe all the rites of her religion, along with all who might accompany her to his kingdom — men or women, priests or laymen. He added that he would not himself refuse to embrace his wife's religion, if after having had it examined by the sages of his council he found it to be more holy and more worthy of God than his own.[149]

It was on these conditions that her mother Bertha had left her country and her Merovingian family to cross the sea and wed the king of Kent. The conversion of that kingdom had been the reward of her sacrifice. Ethelburga, destined, like her mother, and still more than she, to be the means of introducing a whole people to the knowledge of Christianity, followed the maternal example. She furnishes us with a new proof of the lofty part assigned to women in the history of the Germanic races, and of the noble and touching influence attributed to them. In England as in France, and everywhere, it is ever through the fervor and devotion of Christian women that the victories of the Church are attempted or achieved.

But the royal virgin was intrusted to the Northumbrians, only under the guardianship of a bishop charged to preserve her from all pagan pollution, by his exhortations, and also by the daily celebration of the heavenly mysteries. The king, according to Bede, had thus to espouse the bishop at the same time as the princess.[150]

Bishop Paulinus.

This bishop, by name Paulinus, was one of those still surviving Roman monks who had been sent by St. Gregory to the aid of Augustin. He had been twenty-five years a missionary in the south of Great Britain, before

[149] "Nec abnegavit se etiam eamdem subiturum esse religionem si tamen examinata a prudentibus sanctior et Deo dignior posset inveniri." — Bede, ii. 9.

[150] "Ordinatus episcopus . . . sic cum præfata virgine ad regem quasi comes copulæ carnalis advenit." — Bede, ii. 9.

he was consecrated bishop of Northumbria by the third successor of Augustin at Canterbury. Having arrived with Ethelburga in Edwin's kingdom, and having married them, he longed to see the whole of the unknown nation amongst whom he had come to pitch his tent, espoused to Christ. Unlike Augustin, after his landing on the shores of Kent, it is expressly stated that Paulinus was disposed to act upon the Northumbrian people before attempting the conversion of the king.[151] He labored with all his might to add some Northumbrian converts to the small company of the faithful that had accompanied the queen. But his efforts were for a long time fruitless; he was permitted to preach, but no one was converted. 21st July, 625.

In the mean time the successors of St. Gregory watched over his work with that wonderful and unwearying perseverance which is characteristic of the Holy See. Boniface V., at the suggestion, no doubt, of Paulinus, addressed two letters to the king and queen of Northumbria, which recall those of Gregory to the king and queen of Kent. He exhorted the glorious king of the English, as he calls him, to follow the example of so many other emperors and kings, and especially of his brother-in-law Eadbald, in submitting himself to the true God, and not to let himself be separated, in the future, from that dear half of himself, who had already received in baptism the pledge of eternal bliss.[152] He conjured the queen to neglect no effort to soften and inflame the hard and cold heart of her husband, to make him understand the beauty of the mysteries in which she believed, and the rich reward which she had found in her own regeneration, to the end that they twain whom human love had made one flesh here below, might dwell together in another life, united in an indissoluble union.[153] To his letters he added some

Intervention of Pope Boniface V. with the king of Northumbria. 22d Oct., 625.

[151] "Toto animo intendens ut gentem quam adibat, ad cognitionem veritatis advocans, uni viro sponso virginem castam exhiberet Christo. . . . Laboravit multum ut . . . aliquos, si forte posset, de paganis ad fidei gratiam prædicando converteret." — Bede, ii. 9.

[152] "Gloriosam conjugem vestram, quæ vestri corporis pars esse dignoscitur, æternitatis præmio per sancti baptismatis regenerationem illuminatam." — *Ibid.*

[153] "Insiste ergo, gloriosa filia, et summis conatibus duritiam cordis . . . insinuatione mollire dematura. . . . In undens sensibus ejus . . . quantum sit admirabile quod renata præmium consequi meruisti. Frigiditatem cordis . . . succende. . . . Ut quos copulatio carnalis affectus unum quodam modo corpus exhibuisse monstratur, hos quoque unitas fidei etiam post hujus vitæ transitum in perpetua societate conservet." — Bede, *loc. cit.*

modest presents, which testified assuredly either his poverty or the simplicity of the times: for the king, a linen shirt embroidered with gold and a woollen cloak from the east; for the queen, a silver mirror and an ivory comb; for both, the blessing of their protector St. Peter.

But neither the letters of the pope, nor the sermons of the bishop, nor the importunities of the queen, prevailed to triumph over the doubts of Edwin. A providential event, however, occurred to shake, without absolutely convincing him. On the Easter-day after his marriage an assassin, sent by the king of the West Saxons, made his way to the king, and, under the pretext of communicating a message from his master, tried to stab him with a double-edged poisoned dagger, which he held hidden under his dress. Prompted by that heroic devotion for their princes, which among all the Germanic barbarians co-existed with continual revolts against them, a lord named Lilla, having no shield at hand, threw himself between his king and the assassin, who struck with such force that his weapon reached Edwin even through the body of his faithful friend.[154] The same night, the night of the greatest of Christian festivals, the queen was delivered of a daughter. While Edwin was rendering thanks to his gods for the birth of his first-born, the Bishop Paulinus began, on his part, to thank the Lord Christ, assuring the king that it was He who by His prayers to the true God had obtained that the queen should bear her first child without mishap, and almost without pain. The king, less moved by the mortal danger that he had just escaped, than by the joy of being a father without peril or hurt to his beloved Ethelburga, was charmed by the words of Paulinus, and promised to renounce his idols for the service of Christ, if Christ granted him life and victory in the war which he was about to wage against the king who had tried to procure his assassination. As a pledge of his good faith, he gave the new-born child to the bishop, that he might consecrate her to Christ. This first child of the king, the first native Christian of the Northumbrian nation,[155] was baptized on Whit-

Edwin saved from the dagger of an assassin. 20th April, 626.

Birth and baptism of the first-born of Edwin.

[154] "Missus a rege . . . nomine Cuichelmo . . . qui habebat sicam bicipitem toxicatam. . . . Minister regi amicissimus . . . non habens scutum . . . mox interposuit corpus suum ante ictum pungentis, sed tanta vi hostis ferrum infixit, ut per corpus militis occisi etiam regem vulneraret." — BEDE, *loc. cit.*

[155] "Ut regina sospes absque dolore gravi sobolem procrearet. . . . Prima

sunday (Pentecost), along with eleven persons of the royal household. She was named Eanfleda, and was destined, like most of the Anglo-Saxon princesses, to exercise an influence over the destiny of her country.

Edwin came back victorious from his struggle with the guilty king. On his return to Northumbria, though since giving his promise he had ceased to worship idols, he would not at once, and without further reflection, receive the sacraments of the Christian faith. But he made Paulinus give him more fully, what Bede calls, the reasons of his belief. He frequently conferred with the wisest and best instructed of his nobles upon the part which they would counsel him to take. Finally, being by nature a man sagacious and reflective, he passed long hours in solitude — his lips indeed closed, but discussing many things in the depths of his heart, and examining without intermission which religion he ought to prefer.[156]

The history of the Church, if I mistake not, offers no other example of an equally long and conscientious hesitation on the part of a pagan king. They all appear equally prompt alike for persecution or for conversion. Edwin, as the testimony of an incontestable authority reveals him to us, experienced all the humble efforts, the delicate scruples, of the modern conscience. A true priest has said with justice: "This intellectual travail of a barbarian moves and touches us. We follow with sympathy the searcher in his hesitations; we suffer in his perplexities; we feel that this soul is a sincere one, and we love it." [157]

Meanwhile Paulinus saw time passing away without the word of God which he preached being listened to, and without Edwin being able to bow the pride of his intelligence before the divine humility of the cross. Being informed of the prophecy and the promise which had put an end to the

de gente Nordanhymbrorum." — BEDE, *loc. cit.* She married King Oswy, one of her father's successors. We shall see her take a part in the struggle between the monastic and the Celtic influence in Northumbria.

[156] "Non statim et inconsulte sacramenta fidei precipere voluit. . . . Verum primo diligentius . . . rationem fidei ediscere et cum suis primatibus quos sapientiores noverat, curavit conferre, quod de his agendum arbitrarentur. Sed et ipse cum esset vir natura sagacissimus, sæpe diu solus residens, ore quidem tacito, sed in intimis cordis multa secum colloquens, quod sibi esset faciendum, quæ religio servanda tractabat." — BEDE, *loc. cit.*

[157] GORINI, *Défense de l'Eglise*, vol. ii. p. 87. Nothing in this excellent work can surpass the author's refutation, step by step, of M. Augustin Thierry's narrative of the conversion of the Anglo-Saxons. Compare FABER, *Life of St. Edwin*, 1844, in the series of *Lives of the English Saints*.

exile of the king, he believed that the moment for recalling them to him had come.[158] One day when Edwin was seated by himself, meditating in the secret of his own heart upon the religion which he ought to follow, the bishop entered suddenly and placed his right hand upon his head, as the unknown had done in the vision, asking him if he recognized that sign.[159] The king, trembling, would have thrown himself at the feet of Paulinus, but he raised him up, and said gently, "You are now delivered by God's goodness from the enemies that you feared. He has given you the kingdom which you desired. Remember to accomplish your third promise, which binds you to receive the faith and to keep its commandments. It is thus only that after being enriched with the divine favor here, you will be able to enter with God into the fellowship of the eternal kingdom."

Last effort of Paulinus.

"Yes," answered Edwin at length, "I feel it; I ought to be, and I will be, a Christian." But, always true to his characteristic moderation, he stipulated only for himself. He said that he would confer with his great nobles, his friends, and his councillors, in order that, if they decided to believe as he did, they should be all together consecrated to Christ in the fountain of life.

The king promises conversion after having consulted Parliament.

Paulinus having expressed his approval of this proposal, the Northumbrian Parliament, or, as it was then called, the council of sages (*witena-gemot*), was assembled near to a sanctuary of the national worship, already celebrated in the time of the Romans and Britons, at Godmundham, hard by the gates of York. Each member of this great national council was, in his turn, asked his opinion of the new doctrine and worship.[160] The first who answered

Discussion in the assembly.

[158] According to M. Thierry, "this secret had probably escaped Edwin among the confidences of the nuptial couch." Bede says exactly the contrary, though without affirming anything. "Tandem ut verisimile videtur didicit (Paulinus) *in spiritu*, quod vel quale esset oraculum regi quondam cœlitus ostensum." — Bede, ii. 12.

[159] "Cum videret difficulter posse sublimitatem animi regalis ad humilitatem . . . vivificæ crucis inclinari. . . . Cum horis competentibus solitarius sederet, quid agendum sibi esset, quæ religio sequenda sedulus secum ipse scrutari consuesset, ingrediens ad eum quadam die vir Dei." — Bede, ii. 12.

[160] "Quibus auditus et rex suscipere se fidem et velle et debere respondebat. Verum adhuc cum amicis principibus, et consiliariis suis sese de hoc collaturum esse dicebat. . . . Habito enim cum sapientibus consilio, sciscitabatur singillatim ab omnibus, qualis sibi doctrina eatenus inaudita . . . videretur. . . . His similia et cæteri majores natu ac regis consiliarii prosequebantur." — Bede, ii. 13.

was the high priest of the idols, by name Coïfi, a singular and somewhat cynical personage. "My opinion," said he, "is most certainly that the religion which we have hitherto followed is worth nothing; and this is my reason. Not one of your subjects has served our gods with more zeal than I have, and notwithstanding, there are many of your people who have received from you far greater gifts and dignities. But if our gods were not good for nothing, they would have done something for me who have served them so well. If then, after ripe examination, you have found this new religion which is preached to us more efficacious, let us hasten to adopt it." [161]

One of the great chiefs held different language, in which are revealed to us that religious elevation and poetic melancholy wherewith the minds of these Germanic heathens were often imbued. "You remember, perhaps," said he to the king, "what sometimes happens in the winter evenings whilst you are at supper with your ealdormen and thanes; [162] while the good fire burns within, and it rains and snows, and the wind howls without, a sparrow enters at the one door and flies out quickly at the other. During that rapid passage it is sheltered from the rain and cold; but after that brief and pleasant moment it disappears, and from winter returns to winter again. Such seems to me to be the life of man, and his career but a brief moment between that which goes before and that which follows after, and of which we know nothing. If, then, the new doctrine can teach us something certain, it deserves to be followed." [163]

After much discourse of the same tendency, for the assembly seems to have been unanimous, the high priest Coïfi spoke again with a loftier inspiration than that of his first words. He expressed the desire to hear Paulinus speak of the God whose envoy he professed to be. The bishop, with permission of the king, addressed the assembly. When he had finished, the high priest cried, "For a long time I have understood the nothingness of all that we worshipped, for the more I endeavored to search for truth in it the less I

[161] "Profiteor quia nihil omnino virtutis, nihil utilitatis religio illa quam hucusque tenuimus. . . . Si autem Dii aliquid valerent." — Bede, ii. 13.

[162] "Cum ducibus ac ministris tuis." "*Mit thynem Ealdormannum and Thegnum*," is King Alfred's Anglo-Saxon translation of the words of Bede.

[163] "Alius optimatum regis subdidit: Talis mihi videtur, rex, vita hominum . . . quale cum te residente ad cœnam accenso foco in media et calido effecto cœnaculo . . . adveniens unus passerum domum citissime pervolaverit . . . mox de hieme in hiemen regrediens." — Bede, ii. 13.

found it; but now I declare without reserve that in this preaching I see the shining of the truth, which gives life and salvation and eternal blessedness. I vote, then, that we give up at once to fire and to the curse the altars which we have so uselessly consecrated."[164] The king immediately made a public declaration that he adhered to the gospel preached by Paulinus — that he renounced idolatry and adopted the faith of Christ. "But who," asked the king, "will be the first to overthrow the altars of the ancient gods, and to profane their sacred precincts?" "I," replied the high priest; whereupon he prayed the king to give him arms and a stallion, that he might the more thoroughly violate the rule of his order, which forbade him to carry arms and to mount ought but a mare. Mounted on the king's steed, girt with a sword, and lance in hand, he galloped towards the idols, and in the sight of all the people, who believed him to be beside himself, he dashed his lance into the interior of their temple. The profaning steel buried itself in the wall; to the surprise of the spectators, the gods were silent, and the sacrilege remained unpunished. Then the people, at the command of the high priest, proceeded to overthrow and burn the temple.[165]

Baptism of King Edwin, and of the nobility.

12th April, 627.

These things occurred in the eleventh year of Edwin's reign. The whole Northumbrian nobility and a large part of the people followed the example of the king, who was baptized with much solemnity on Easter-day (627) by Paulinus at York, in a wooden church, built in haste while the catechumens were prepared for baptism.[166] Immediately afterwards he built around this improvised sanctuary a large church in stone, which he had not time to finish, but which has since become the splendid Minster of York, and the metropolitan church of the north of England. The town of York had been already celebrated in the times of the Romans. The Emperor Severus and the father of Constantine had died there. The Northumbrians had made it their capital, and Edwin there

[164] "Unde suggero, o rex, ut templa et altaria quæ sine fructu utilitatis sacravimus ocius anathemati et igni contradamus." — Bede, ii. 3.

[165] "Ille respondit: Ego. . . . Rogavit sibi regem arma dare et equum emissarium quem ascendens . . . pergebat ad idola." — Bede, ii. 3. Compare the Saxon version quoted by Lingard, i. 30.

[166] "Accepit rex cum cunctis gentis suæ nobilibus ac plebe perplurima fidem et lavacrum. . . . Ipse doctori et antistiti suo Paulino sedem episcopatus donavit. . . . Baptizatus est ibi sed et alii nobiles et regii viri non pauci." — Bede, ii. 14.

placed the seat of the episcopate filled by his teacher Paulinus. Thus was realized the grand design of Gregory, who, thirty years before, at the commencement of the English mission, had instructed Augustin to send a bishop to York, and to invest him with the jurisdiction of metropolitan over the twelve suffragan bishoprics which in imagination he already saw founded in the north of the country conquered by the Anglo-Saxons.[167]

627-633.

The king and the bishop labored together for six years for the conversion of the Northumbrian people, and even of the English population of the neighboring regions. The chiefs of the nobility and the principal servants of the king were the first to receive baptism, together with the sons of Edwin's first marriage. The example of a king was, however, far from being enough, among the Anglo-Saxons, to determine the conversion of a whole people; and the first Christian king and the first bishop of Northumbria did not, any more than Ethelbert and Augustin, think of employing undue constraint. Doubtless it required more than one effort on their part to overcome the roughness, the ignorance, the indifference of the heathen Saxons. But they had, at the same time, much encouragement, for the fervor of the people and their anxiety for baptism were often wonderful. Paulinus having gone with the king and queen, who several times accompanied him on his missions, to a royal villa far to the north, they remained there, all three, for thirty-six days together, and during the whole of that time the bishop did nothing else from morning till night than catechize the crowds that gathered from all the villages around, and afterwards baptize them in the river which flowed close by. At the opposite extremity of the country, to the south, the name of Jordan is still given to a portion of the course of the river Derwent, near the old Roman ford of Malton, in memory of the numerous subjects of Edwin that were there baptized by the Roman missionary.[168] Everywhere he baptized in the rivers or streams, for there was no time to build churches.[169] However, he built, near Edwin's principal

The king and bishop labor together for the conversion of the Northumbrians.

Baptism *en masse* by immersion.

[167] "Qui tuæ subjaceant ditioni . . . ita duntaxat ut si eadem civitas cum finitimis locis verbum Dei receperit, ipse quoque XII episcopos ordinet, et metropolitani honore perfruatur." — BEDE, i. 29.

[168] *The Times* of 17th March, 1865.

[169] The Glen in Northumberland, the Swale, and especially the Derwent, in Yorkshire, are still mentioned among the rivers in which the bishop baptized thousands of converts by immersion.

palace, a stone church, whose calcined ruins were still visible after the Reformation, as well as a large cross, with this inscription: *Paulinus hic prædicavit et celebravit.*[170]

Passing the frontiers of the Northumbrian kingdom, Paulinus continued his evangelistic course among the Angles settled to the south of the Humber, in the maritime province of Lindsay. There also he baptized many people in the Trent; and long afterwards, old men, who had in their childhood received baptism at his hands, recalled with reverent tenderness the venerable and awe-inspiring stranger, whose lofty and stooping form, black hair, aquiline nose, and emaciated but imposing features, impressed themselves on every beholder, and proclaimed his southern origin.[171] The beautiful monastic church of Southwell consecrates the memory of the scene of one of those multitudinous baptisms; and it is to the mission of Bishop Paulinus on this side the Humber that we trace the foundation of that magnificent Cathedral of Lincoln, which rivals our noble Cathedral of Laon in its position, and even surpasses it in grandeur, and perhaps in beauty.[172]

He commences the Cathedral of Lincoln,

It was in the stone church (Bede always notes this detail most carefully) built by Paulinus at Lincoln, after the conversion of the chief Saxon of that town, with all his house, that the metropolitan bishop of York had to proceed to the consecration of the fourth successor of Augustin in the metropolitan see of Canterbury. Honorius was, like Paulinus, a monk of Mount Cœlius at Rome, and one of the first companions of St. Augustin in his mission to England. He was a disciple of St. Gregory, and had learned from the great pontiff the art of music, and it was he who led the choir of monks on the occasion of the first entrance of the missionaries, thirty years before, at Canterbury.[173] The Pope then reigning was also named Honorius, first of that name. He sent the *pallium* to each of the two metropolitans, and ordained that when God should take to himself one of the two, the

And there consecrates the fifth Archbishop of Canterbury.

628.

625 640.

[170] At Dewsbury, on the banks of the Calder. ALFORD, *Annales Anglo-Saxoniæ*, ap. BOLLAND., vol. vi. Oct., p. 118.

[171] "Quemdam seniorem . . . baptizatum a Paulino . . . præsente rege Adwino. . . . Quoniam effigiem ejusdem Paulini referre esset solitus. . . . Vir longæ staturæ, paululum incurvus, nigro capillo, facie macilenta, naso adunco perenni, venerabilis simul et terribilis aspectu." — BEDE, ii. 16.

[172] All the most beautiful religious edifices of England — York, Lincoln, and Southwell — trace their origin to the episcopate of Paulinus. — FABER, *op. cit.*

[173] HOOK, *Lives of the Archbishops*, pp. 53, 111.

other should appoint a successor, in order to avoid the delay of a reference to Rome, so difficult by reason of the great distance to be travelled by sea and land. In the eloquent letter which accompanied the *pallium*, he reminds the new archbishop that the great Pope Gregory had been his master, and should ever be his model, and that the whole work of the archbishops, his predecessors, had been but the fruit of the zeal of that incomparable pontiff.[174]

The Pope wrote also to King Edwin to congratulate him on his conversion and on the ardor and sincerity of his faith, and to exhort him to read much in the works of St. Gregory, whom he calls the Preacher of the English, and whom he recommends the king to take for his perpetual intercessor with God.[175] But when this letter reached England, Edwin was no more.

Prosperity and beneficence of the reign of Edwin.

The six years which passed between his conversion and his death may certainly be reckoned among the most glorious and happy that it was ever given to any Anglo-Saxon prince to know. He speedily raised Northumbria to the head of the Heptarchy. On the south, his ardent zeal for the faith which he had embraced after such ripe reflection extended its influence even to the populations which, without being subjected to his direct authority, yet belonged to the same race as his subjects. The East Angles, as we have seen, had offered him their crown, and he had refused it. But he used his influence over the young king, who owed to him his elevation to the throne, to induce him to embrace the Christian religion, with all his subjects. Eorpwald thus expiated the apostasy of his father; and Edwin thus paid the ransom of the generous pity that the royalty of East Anglia had lavished on his youth and his exile.

Conversion of the East Angles.

[174] "Dilectissimo fratri Honorio Honorius. . . . Exoramus ut vestram dilectionem in prædicatione Evangelii laborantem et fructificantem sectantemque magistri et capitis sui sancti Gregorii regulam perpeti stabilitate confirmet (redemptor) . . . ut fide et opere, in timore Dei et caritate, vestra adquisitio decessorumque vestrorum quæ per Domini Gregorii exordia pullulata convalescendo amplius extendatur . . . longa terrarum marisque intervalla, quæ inter nos ac vos obsistunt, ac et nos condescendere coegerunt, ut nulla possit ecclesiarum vestrarum jactura per cujuslibet occasionis obtentum quoque modo provenire: sed potius commissi vobis populi devotionem plenius propagare." — Ap. BEDAM, ii. 18.

[175] "Prædicatores vestri . . . Gregorii frequenter lectione occupati, præ oculis affectum doctrinæ ipsius, quam pro vestris animabus libenter exercuit, habetote: quatenus ejus oratio, et regnum vestrum populumque augeat, et vos omnipotenti Deo irreprehensibiles repræsentet." — *Ibid.*, ii. 17,

On the north he extended and consolidated the Anglo-Saxon dominion as far as the isthmus which separated Caledonia from Britain. And he has left an ineffaceable record of his reign in the name of the fortress built upon the rock which commanded the entrance of the Forth, and which still lifts its sombre and alpine front — true Acropolis of the barbarous north — from the midst of the great and picturesque city of Edinburgh (*Edwin's burgh*).

On the west he continued, with less ferocity than Ethelfrid, but with no less valor and success, the contest of the Britons of Wales. He pursued them even into the islands of the channel which separates Great Britain from Ireland; and took possession of the Isle of Man and another isle which had been the last refuge of the Druids from the Roman dominion, and which, after its conquest by Edwin, took the name of the victorious race, *Angles-ey*.

Within his own kingdom he secured a peace and security so unknown both before and after his reign that it passed into a proverb; it was said that in the time of Edwin a woman with her new-born child might traverse England from the Irish Channel to the North Sea without meeting any one who would do her the least wrong. It is pleasant to trace his kindly and minute care of the well-being of his subjects in such a particular as that of the copper cups which he had suspended beside the fountains on the highways, that the passers-by might drink at their ease, and which no one attempted to steal, whether from fear or from love of the king. Neither did any one ever reproach him for the unwonted pomp which distinguished his train, not only when he went out to war, but when he rode peacefully through his towns and provinces, on which occasions the lance surmounted with a large tuft of feathers [176] — which the Saxons had borrowed from the Roman legions, and which they had made the sacred standard of the Bretwalda and the ensign of the supreme sovereignty in their confederation — was always carried before him in the midst of his military banners.

But all this grandeur and prosperity were about to be ingulfed in a sudden and great calamity.

[176] "Sicut usque hodie in proverbio dicitur, etiamsi mulier una cum recens nato parvulo vellet totam perambulare insulam a mari ad mare, nullo se lædente valeret. . . . Erectis stipitibus æreos caucos suspendi juberet. . . . Illud genus vexilli quod Romani *Tufam*, Angli vero *Tuuf* appellant." — Bede, ii. 16.

There were other Angles than those who, in Northumbria and East Anglia, were already subdued and humanized by the influence of Christianity: there remained the Angles of Mercia — the great central region stretching from the Humber to the Thames. The kingdom of Mercia was the last state organized out of the Anglo-Saxon conquest. It had been founded by that portion of the invaders who, finding all the eastern and southern shores of the island already occupied, were compelled to advance into the interior. It became the centre of the pagan resistance to, and occasional assaults upon, the Christian *Propaganda*, which was henceforth to have its headquarters in Northumbria. The pagans of Mercia found a formidable leader in the person of Penda, who was himself of royal extraction, or, as it was then believed, of the blood of Odin, and had reigned for twenty-two years, but who was inflamed by all the passions of a barbarian, and, above all, devoured with jealousy of the fortunes of Edwin and the power of the Northumbrians. Since Edwin's conversion these wild instincts were intensified by fanaticism. Penda and the Mercians remained faithful to the worship of Odin, whose descendants all the Saxon kings believed themselves to be. Edwin and the Northumbrians were, therefore, in their eyes no better than traitors and apostates. But more surprising still, the original inhabitants of the island, the Christian Britons, who were more numerous in Mercia than in any other Anglo-Saxon kingdom, shared and excited the hatred of the pagan Saxons against the converts of the same race. These old Christians, it cannot be too often repeated, always exasperated against the invaders of their island, took no account of the faith of the converted Angles, and would not on any terms hold communion with them.[177] The Welsh Britons, who maintained their independence, but who, for more than a century, had been constantly menaced, defeated, and humiliated by Ida, Ethelfrid, and Edwin, professed and nourished their antipathy with even greater bitterness.[178] Their chief, Ceadwalla or Cadwallon, the last hero of the Celtic race in Britain, at first overcome by Edwin and forced to seek refuge in Ireland and in Armorica,[179] had returned thence with rage redoubled, and with

Alliance of the heathen of Mercia and the British Christians against Edwin,

under Penda,

633-655,

and Cadwallon.

[177] Bede, ii. 20. See vol. i. p. 687, note.

[178] Lappenberg, vol. i. p. 159. La Borderie, *op. cit.*, p. 216.

[179] See his amusing adventures in Richard of Cirencester, vol. ii. p. 32.

auxiliaries from the other Celtic races, to recommence the struggle against the Northumbrians. He succeeded in forming an alliance with Penda against the common enemy. Under these two chiefs an immense army, in which the British Christians of Wales jostled the pagans of Mercia, invaded Northumbria. Edwin awaited them at Hatfield, on the southern frontier of his kingdom. He was there disastrously defeated, and perished gloriously, sword in hand, scarce forty-eight years of age, dying a death which entitled him to be ranked amongst the martyrs.[180] His eldest son fell with him; the younger, taken prisoner by Penda, who swore to preserve his life, was infamously murdered. Northumbria was ravaged with fire and sword, and its recent Christianity completely obliterated. The most barbarous of the persecutors was not the idolatrous Penda, but the Christian Cadwallon, who, during a whole year, went up and down all the Northumbrian provinces massacring every man he met, and subjecting even the women and children to atrocious tortures before putting them to death. He was, says Bede, resolved to extirpate from the soil of Britain the English race, whose recent reception of Christianity only inspired this old Christian, intoxicated with blood and with a ferocious patriotism, with scorn and disgust.[181]

Northumbria is invaded.

Edwin is slain. 11th Oct., 633.

Christianity extinguished in Northumbria.

It is not known why Northumbria, after the death of Edwin and his son, was not subjugated and shared among the conquerors; but it remained divided, enslaved, and plunged once more into paganism. Deïra fell to Osric, cousin-german of Edwin; Bernicia to Eanfried, one of the sons of Ethelfrid, who had returned from his exile in Scotland. Both had received baptism: the one with his cousin at York; the other at the hands of the Celtic monks of Iona. But a pagan reaction was the inevitable consequence of the overthrow of the first Christian king of Northumbria. The two princes yielded to that reaction, and renounced their baptism, but

[180] *Act. SS. Bolland.*, die 12 Octobris.

[181] "Maxima est facta strages in Ecclesia vel gente Nordanhymbrorum. . . . Unus ex ducibus paganus, alter . . . pagano sævior. . . . Quamvis nomen et professionem haberet Christiani, adeo animo et moribus barbarus, ut ne sexui muliebri vel innocuæ parvulorum parceret ætati, quum universos atrocitate ferina morti per tormenta contraderet. . . . Totum genus Anglorum Britanniæ finibus erasurum se esse deliberans; sed nec religioni Christianæ quæ apud eos exorta erat, aliquid impendebat honoris." — Bede, ii. 20. Compare iii. 1.

without gaining anything thereby. The king of Deïra was killed in battle with the Britons; and the king of Bernicia was murdered at an interview which he had sought with the savage Cadwallon.

Flight of Paulinus and of Ethelburga.

Bishop Paulinus did not consider himself called upon to remain a witness of such horrors. His one thought was to place in safety the widow of King Edwin — that gentle Ethelburga who had been confided to him by her brother for a different destiny: he brought her back by sea to her brother's kingdom, with the daughter and the two youngest sons whom she had borne to Edwin. Even beside her brother, the king of Kent, she was afraid to keep them in England; and wishing to devote her own widowhood to God, she intrusted them to the king of the Franks, Dagobert, her cousin,[182] at whose court they died at an early age. As to Paulinus, who had left in charge of his church at York only a brave Italian deacon, of whom we shall speak hereafter, he found the episcopal see of Rochester vacant in consequence of the death of the Roman monk, who was the titular bishop, and who, sent by the primate to the Pope, had just been drowned in the Mediterranean. Paulinus was invested with this bishopric by the king and by the archbishop Honorius, whom he had himself consecrated at Lincoln; and there he died, far from his native land, after having labored during forty-three years for the conversion of the English.

Thus appeared to crumble away in one day and forever, along with the military and political pre-eminence of Northumbria, the edifice so laboriously raised in the north of England by the noble and true-hearted Edwin, the gentle and devoted Ethelburga, the patient and indefatigable Paulinus, and by so many efforts and sacrifices known to God alone. The last and most precious of Edwin's conquests was not

[182] The following is the table of the relationship between the queen of Northumbria and the king of Austrasia: —

CLOTAIRE I.

CARIBERT, king of Paris.	CHILPERIC I.
BERTHA, wife of Ethelbert.	CLOTAIRE II.
ETHELBURGA, wife of Edwin.	DAGOBERT I.

Dagobert mounted the throne of Austrasia in 628, three years after Ethelburga's marriage.

destined to survive him long. His young kinsman, the king of the East Angles, was no sooner converted than he fell beneath the poignard of an assassin; and, like Northumbria, East Anglia relapsed altogether into the night of idolatry.[183]

Repulse of the Romish missionaries everywhere, save in the kingdom of Kent.

After thirty-six years of continual efforts, the monastic missionaries sent by St. Gregory the Great had succeeded in establishing nothing, save in the petty kingdom of Kent. Everywhere else they had been baffled. Of the six other kingdoms of the Heptarchy, three — those of the Saxons of the South and of the West, and the Angles of the Centre [184] — remained inaccessible to them. The three last — those of the Saxons of the East, of the Angles of the East and North [185] — had successively escaped from them. And yet, except the supernatural courage which courts or braves martyrdom, no virtue seems to have been awanting to them. No accusation, no suspicion, impugns their all-prevailing charity, the fervent sincerity of their faith, the irreproachable purity of their morals, the unwearying activity, the constant self-denial, and austere piety of their whole life.

How, then, are we to explain their defeat, and the successive failure of their laborious efforts? Perhaps they were wrong in not sufficiently following the example of our Lord Jesus Christ and His apostles — in not preaching enough to the humble and poor — in not defying with proper boldness the wrath of the great and powerful. Perhaps they were wrong in addressing themselves too exclusively to the kings and warlike chiefs, and in undertaking nothing, risking nothing, without the concurrence, or against the will, of the secular power.[186] Hence, without doubt, these changes of fortune, these reactions, and sudden and complete relapses into idolatry, which followed the death of their first protectors; hence, also, these fits of timidity, of discouragement, and despair, into which we see them falling under the pressure of the sudden changes and mistakes of their career. Perhaps, in short, they had not at first understood the national character of the Anglo-Saxons, and did not know how to gain and to master their minds, by reconciling their own Italian customs and ideas with the roughness, the independence, and the manly energy of the populations of the German race.

[183] Bede, ii. 15.
[184] Wessex, Sussex, Mercia.
[185] Essex, East Anglia, Northumbria.
[186] Lingard, *Anglo-Saxon Church*, vol. i. pp. 40, 74.

At all events, it is evident that new blood was needed to infuse new life into the scattered and imperfect germs of Anglo-Saxon Christianity, and to continue and carry out the work of the missionary monks of Mount Cœlius.

These monks will always have the glory of having first approached, broken, and thrown seed upon this fertile but rebellious soil. Others must water with the sweat of their toil the fields that they have prepared, and gather the harvest they have sown. But the sons of St. Gregory will none the less remain before God and man the first laborers in the conversion of the English people. And, at the same time, they did not desert their post. Like mariners intrenched in a fort built in haste on the shore that they would fain have conquered, they concentrated their strength in their first and indestructible foundations at Canterbury, in the metropolitan monastery of Christ Church and the monastery *extra muros* of St. Augustin, and there maintained the storehouse of Roman traditions and of the Benedictine rule, along with that citadel of apostolic authority which was for centuries the heart and head of Catholic England.

BOOK XI.

THE CELTIC MONKS AND THE ANGLO-SAXONS.

CHAPTER I.

ST. OSWALD AND THE REVIVAL OF CHRISTIANITY IN NORTHUMBRIA.

The Celtic monks revive, in Northumbria, the work of conversion abandoned by the Roman monks. — Oswald, son of Ethelfrid, the Ravager, an exile among the Scots, is baptized according to the Celtic rite. — He returns to Northumbria, plants there the first cross, and gains the battle of Denisesburn over the Mercians and Britons. — He reigns over the whole of Northumbria, and makes it the predominant power in the Anglo-Saxon Confederation. His desire to convert his kingdom to Christ. — The Italian deacon, James, keeps Christianity alive in Deïra; but in Bernicia everything has yet to be. — Oswald begs for missionaries from the Celtic monasteries. — Failure of the first missionary from Iona: he is succeeded by Aïdan. — Bede's eulogy of the Abbots of Iona. — The religious capital of the north of England is fixed in the monastic isle of Lindisfarne: description of that island: its resemblance to Iona. — Authority of the abbots of Lindisfarne even over the bishops. — Virtues of the monk-bishop Aïdan: his disinterestedness: his care of children and slaves. — King Oswald acts as assistant and interpreter to the missionary Aïdan. — Oswald marries the daughter of the King of Wessex, and converts his father-in-law. — Note regarding the local and provincial opposition of the monks of Bardeney. — War with Penda, chief of the coalition of the Britons and Mercians. — Battle of Maserfeld: Oswald is killed there at the age of thirty-eight. — Venerated as a martyr. — Miracles wrought at his tomb. — Prediction of Bishop Aïdan with regard to his hand.

The work of conversion among the English, though interrupted in the south by a pagan reaction, and buried, on the north, in the overthrow of the first Christian king of Northumbria, was to undergo but a momentary eclipse — the providential prelude of a more sustained effort and decisive triumph. The spiritual conquest of the island, abandoned for a time by the Roman missionaries, was now about to be taken up by the Celtic monks. The Italians had made the

first step, and the Irish now appeared to resume the uncompleted work. What the sons of St. Benedict could only begin, was to be completed by the sons of St. Columba. The great heart of the first abbot of Iona, inspiring his spiritual descendants, was thus to accomplish the noble design of the holy Gregory. The spirit of unity, submission, and discipline, was to be instilled into their minds, somewhat against their will, by Wilfrid, a Saxon convert; and their unwearied activity and invincible perseverance were destined to triumph over every obstacle, stimulating and seconding the zeal of the Italian missionaries and reviving the sacred fire amongst the Benedictine monks, into whose ranks they finally fell. Thus wrought upon, moulded and penetrated on every side by monastic influence, the whole nation of the Anglo-Saxons was soon to acknowledge the law of Christ. Its kings, its monks, its bishops and saints, were to take a foremost place among the children of the Church, the civilizers of Europe, the benefactors of mankind, and the soldiers of the Cross. The history of this transformation we shall attempt to set forth in the narrative which follows.

Forty-eight years after Augustine and his Roman monks landed on the shores of pagan England, an Anglo-Saxon prince invoked the aid of the monks of Iona in the conversion of the Saxons of the north.

This prince was Oswald, son of Ethelfrid the Ravager, and of the sister of the martyred King Edwin. After the defeat and death of his father, the son of the great enemy and conquerer of the Scots had, while yet a child, sought a refuge, along with his brothers and a numerous train of young nobles, among the Scots themselves. He there found the same generous hospitality which, twelve centuries later, the descendants of the Anglo-Saxons showed to the French princes, descendants of a race continually and gloriously hostile to England. In that exile he passed the seventeen years of the reign of his uncle Edwin, as Edwin himself had lived in exile during the reign of his brother-in-law and persecutor Ethelfrid. But between these two representatives of the two dynasties which divided Northumbria, and succeeded each other in the sovereignty, there was this difference, that the young Edwin had sought and found an asylum among his pagan fellow-countrymen; while the banishment of Oswald led him into intercourse with people of a race and religion differing from his own. Since the apostolate of Columba, the Scots and Picts had become entirely Christian; and among

Oswald, son of the King of Northumbria, an exile with the Scots.

them Oswald and his companions in misfortune learned the truths of Christianity, and were all baptized, but according to the rite of the Celtic Church, which differed from the Roman.[1]

He is baptized according to the Celtic rite.

After the overthrow of Edwin and the Deïrian dynasty, of which he was the head, the princes of the Bernician family returned to Northumbria, from which they had been banished for seventeen years.[2]

The elder, Eanfrid, as has been stated, fell by the sword of the Briton Cadwallon, after having renounced the Christian faith. But his younger brother Oswald was a man of a very different stamp. At the head of a small but resolute band, of whom a dozen at most were Christians like himself, he undertook to reconquer his country, and did not hesitate to carry on the struggle against the immense forces of the formidable Briton, nor even to attack him in pitched battle.

He undertakes to reconquer Northumbria from the British.

The two armies, so unequal in numbers, met near that great wall which the Emperor Severus had erected from sea to sea to keep back the Picts, and which divided Northumbria into two nearly equal parts. This rampart, which had neither restrained the Picts in their invasions of the south, nor the Saxons in their conquests to the north, was then, though not intact, still standing; as indeed even now its vast remains may be traced on the steep hill-tops and uplands, covered with heath, or strewn with basalt rocks, which give to that district of England an aspect so different from that of her ordinary landscapes. Flanked by a fragment of the Roman wall, the Anglo-Saxon prince occupied a height where his feeble forces could defy the attack of the numerous battalions of Cadwallon.[3] On that height, which was

[1] "Filii præfati regis . . . cum magna nobilium juventute apud Scotos sive Pictos exulabant ibique ad doctrinam Scotorum catechizati et baptismatis sunt gratia recreati." — Bede, iii. 1.

Fleury, Lanigan, and many other historians, have supposed that these expressions of Bede applied to the Irish, who, as we have seen above, bore the name of Scots long before that name had been communicated, by an Irish colony, to the inhabitants of Caledonia. But no valid proof is to be found in ancient authors to confirm this supposition.

[2] To help the reader to find his way through the labyrinth of the two Northumbrian dynasties, the history of which, here begun, will be largely followed up in this volume, we add (see Appendix VI., p. 752) a genealogical table, to which he will do well to make frequent reference.

[3] See for the description of the battle-field a recent publication of the learned society which, under the name of a famous archæologist, Surtees, has for thirty years devoted itself to bringing to light the monuments of Northumbrian history, viz., *The Priory of Hexham*, edited by James Raine, 1864; vol. i., preface, page xi., and app. ii.

Oswald plants the first cross in Bernicia on the eve of the battle with the British.

afterwards called *Heaven's Field*,[4] and which still bears the name of St. Oswald, on the eve of the day of decisive battle, the young and ardent warrior held erect with his own hands a large wooden cross, which had been hastily made by his orders, while his companions heaped the earth round it, to keep it firm in its position; then prostrating himself before it, he said to his brothers in arms, "Let us all fall on our knees, and together implore the living and true and Almighty God in His mercy to defend us against the pride and fierceness of our enemy; for that God knows our cause is just, and that we fight for the salvation of our nation. Yes, it is for our salvation and our freedom that we must fight to-day against those Britons, whom our fathers gloried in challenging, but who now prophesy the extirpation of our race."[5]

The Britons themselves might seem to have an equal right to offer this prayer, for they had long been Christians, and after all had only retaken their native soil from the grasp of foreign invaders.[6] But a century of possession had given the latter a conviction of their right; and the bloody cruelties of Cadwallon had dishonored his patriotism. Oswald, moreover, represented the cause of advancing Christianity; for the Britons did nothing to convert their enemies, and the cross which he planted was the first which had been as yet seen in Bernicia.

[4] "Vocatur locus ille in lingua Anglorum *Hefenfelth*, quod dici potest latine Cœlestis Campus." — Bede, iii. 1. A chapel dedicated to St. Oswald marks the spot so well described by Bede, near the small town of the same name, a little to the north of Hexham and of the railway from Newcastle to Carlisle. The battle is known by the name of *Denisesburn*, from the brook on the bank of which the British king perished in his flight.

[5] "Fertur quia facta cruce citato opere ac fovea præparata, ipse fide fervens hanc arripuerit ac foveæ imposuerit, atque utraque manu erectam tenuerit, donec, adgesto a militibus pulvere, terræ figeretur. . . . Flectamus omnes genua et Dominum omnipotentem vivum ac verum in commune deprecemur, ut nos ab hoste superbo et feroce sua miseratione defendat; scit enim ipse quia justa pro salute gentis nostræ bella suscepimus." — Bede, iii. 2. The more recent historians throw especial light on the patriotic side of this struggle. "Exprobrandi pudoris rem ventilari allegans, Anglos cum Britannis tam iniquo marte confligere, ut contra illos pro salute decertarent quos ultro *pro gloria* consueverunt lacessere. Itaque pro libertate audentibus animis et viribus effusis decertarent, nihil de fuga meditantes: tali modo et illis provenire gloriam et annuente Deo patriæ libertatem. . . . Cædwallum, virum, ut ipse dictitabat, in exterminium Anglorum natum." — Wilh. Malmesb., i. 44; Ricard. de Cirenc., *Spect. Hist. de Gest. Reg. Angl.*, ii. 36.

[6] A. de la Borderie, *Lutte des Britons Insulaires*, p. 221.

Apparition of St. Columba to Oswald.

On the evening of the same day, and during the night which preceded the contest which was to fix his destiny, Oswald, asleep in his tent, saw in a dream the holy St. Columba, the apostle and patron of the country of his exile and of the Church in which he had received his baptism. The warlike abbot of Iona, who had been dead for thirty-six years, appeared to him, shining with an angelic beauty; erect, and with that lofty stature that distinguished him in life, he stood and stretched his resplendent robe over the whole of the small army of exiles as if to protect it; then addressing the prince, he said, as God said to Joshua before the passage of the Jordan, "Be of good courage and play the man. At the break of day march to the battle: I have obtained for thee from God the victory over thine enemies and the death of tyrants: thou shalt conquer, and reign." The prince, on awaking, told his vision to the Saxons who had joined him, and all promised to receive baptism, like himself and the twelve companions of his exile, if he should return a conqueror.[7] Early on the morrow the battle began, and Oswald gained a victory as complete as it was unlikely. Cadwallon, the last hero of the British race — victor, according to the Welsh tradition, in forty battles and in sixty single combats — perished in this defeat. The Britons evacuated Northumbria never to return, and withdrew behind the Severn. Those who remained to the north of the Dee, in the territory which has since been divided into the counties of Chester, Lancaster, and Westmoreland, submitted to the Northumbrian sway, which henceforth extended from the Irish Channel to the North Sea, tracing the line of the east coast as far as Edinburgh. There still remained, however, out of Wales and to the south of the Wall of Severus, in the region adjoining Caledonia, a district bathed by

Battle of Denisesburn. — Defeat and death of Cadwallon.

[7] "Pridie . . . in suo papilione supra pulvillum dormiens, sanctum Columbam in visu videt forma coruscantem angelica; cujus alta proceritas vertice nubes tangere videbatur . . . suum regi proprium revelans nomen, in medio castrorum stans, excepta quadam parva extremitate, sui protegebat fulgida veste. . . . Confortare et age viriliter, ecce ego tecum: hac sequente nocte de castris ad bellum procede; hac enim vice mihi Dominus donavit ut hostes in fugam vertantur tui. . . . Totus populus promittit se post reversionem de bello crediturum et baptismum suscepturum, nam tota illa Saxonia gentilitatis et ignorantiæ tenebris obscurata erat, excepto ipso rege Oswaldo, cum duodecim viris, qui cum eo Scotos inter exulante, baptizati sunt." — Adamnan, *Vita S. Columbæ*, v. 1. He obtained this fact from his predecessor at Iona, the Abbot Failbe, who had heard it told by Oswald himself to the fifth abbot of Iona.

the waters of the Solway, full of lakes and hills like Caledonia itself, and then, as now, known by the name of Cumbria or Cumberland, where the Britons continued independent, relying on the support of the Scots, and in alliance with the people of their own race who dwelt on the banks of the Clyde. But they fell, and, though subdued, agreed in bestowing upon the son of the Ravager — the grandson of the Burner — the Saxon who had nobly vanquished them, the name of *Lamn-Gwinn;* which means, according to some, "the Shining Sword," according to others, "the Liberal Hand." [8]

Oswald makes the two Northumbrian kingdoms into one, which becomes the leading power among the Anglo-Saxons.

635-642.

Nothing is known of the course of events which, after the defeat and death of the great British chief, confirmed Oswald in the undisputed sovereignty of the whole of Northumbria and the temporary supremacy of the entire Saxon Heptarchy; but we find him entitled Emperor of all Britain, by a writer almost contemporary with himself.[9] Not only, says Bede, had he learned to possess in hope the heavenly kingdom which his forefathers knew not; but in this world God gave him a kingdom vaster than that possessed by any of his ancestors. He reigned over the four races who shared Britain among them — the Britons, the Scots, the Picts, and the Angles.[10] No doubt this supremacy was but partially acknowledged, especially beyond the limits of the Anglo-Saxon territory; but Northumbria, when united under one king, could not fail to become at once the chief power of the confederation. Oswald, who was the great-grandson of Ina on his father's side, and grandson of Ella on his mother's,[11] had a natural right to unite the two realms of Deïra and Bernicia, while at the same time delivering them from the humiliating and bloody yoke of the Britons and Mercians. He seems to have had a special affection for Bernicia, his father's country, in which he lived, and whose ancient boundaries on the Caledonian side he extended or re-established. But he succeeded, we are told by the Northumbrian Bede, in reconciling and binding into one state

[8] A de la Borderie, *op. cit.* Lappenberg, p. 157.

[9] Cumineus, half a century prior to Bede, says, in his *Life of Columba*, c. 25 — "Totius Britanniæ imperator a Deo ordinatur."

[10] "Non solum incognita progenitoribus suis regna cœlorum sperare didicit; sed et . . . omnes provincias et nationes Britanniæ, quæ in quatuor linguas, id est Britonum, Pictorum, Scotorum, et Anglorum, divisæ sunt, in ditione accepit." — Bede, iii.

[11] See the genealogical table, Appendix I.

the two tribes which, although of the same race, had lived in continual conflict. He made of the two a real nation.[12]

He is the sixth Bretwalda.

Oswald was the sixth of the great chiefs or suzerains of the confederation who bore the title of *Bretwalda*,[13] before whom was carried the *tufa*, or tuft of feathers, which was the emblem of supreme authority, and which after this was used by none save by the Northumbrian kings. It is supposed that this dignity was conferred or ratified by the suffrage, not only of all the kings of the Heptarchy, but also of the principal chiefs or barons of each tribe. It was at first exclusively military; but it became under Oswald and his successors, as it had already been with Ethelbert of Kent, a means of exercising great influence in religious matters. For Oswald was not only a true king and a gallant soldier, but also a good Christian, destined to become a saint; and in the power with which he found himself invested he saw chiefly the means of defending and propagating the faith which he had received with his baptism from the hands of the sons of Columba.

As soon as Oswald was established on his father's throne, his first and dearest thought was to bring back and to procure the triumph in his own country of that religion which had been the consolation of his exile. For this end missionaries, ministers of the word of God, were necessary above all things. It did not occur to him to seek them in the Church of Canterbury, the monastic centre which already existed on English soil, and whence ten years before had come Paulinus, the first apostle of Northumbria. He does not seem to have even thought of the noble and worthy Roman deacon, James, whom Paulinus, on abandoning his metropolitan see of York, had left alone behind him; and who, re-

Oswald seeks missionaries from the Celtic monasteries.

The deacon James.

[12] "Hujus industria regis, Deirorum et Berniciorum provinciæ, quæ catenus ab invicem discedebant, in unam sunt pacem et velut unum compaginatæ in populum." — *Hist. Eccles.*, iii. 6.

[13] The list of the Bretwaldas as given by Bede (ii. 5) may be quoted here: —

560. Ella, King of the South Saxons.
579. Peawlin, King of the West Saxons.
596. Ethelbert, King of the Jutes of Kent.
616. Redwald, King of the East Angles.
630. Edwin, King of the Northumbrians, or Northern Angles.
635. Oswald, King of the Northumbrians.
642. Oswy, King of the Northumbrians.

To this list Lappenberg thinks should be added the name of Wulphere, King of the Mercians, or Angles of the Middle, from 656 to 675.

maining gallantly at his post during the storm of invasion and havoc, had continued to baptize and preach, and to snatch his prey from the old enemy.[14] This deacon, however, was the lieutenant of a bishop to some extent identified with the Deïrian dynasty, and the family of King Edwin, which had exiled, robbed, and supplanted the family of Oswald, and which he had just supplanted in his turn. Was it for this reason, as has been supposed,[15] that Oswald sought no aid from the Roman missionaries? Is it not more natural to conclude that he was chiefly influenced by his remembrance of the generous hospitality which he had found among the Scots, and of the instructions of those from whom in early manhood he received baptism and the other sacraments of the Church? Be this as it may, it was to the Scotic Church that he addressed himself— that is to say, to the heads of monasteries ruled by the traditions and institutions of Columba, that great abbot of Iona who appeared to him in his dream the night before the decisive battle, to promise him victory and a crown.[16]

Under the influence of that Celtic patriotism which inflamed the Britons against the conquering strangers, and which was no less unwilling to concede to them a share in eternal salvation than in the British soil, the Scotic or Irish Church seems up to this time to have refrained from all effort to spread the Gospel among the Saxons. But the time had come to adopt a different course. As though it had only awaited the signal given by Oswald, the Celtic Church, aided by the brave missionaries who sprang from that monastic reformation of which Iona was the centre, immediately began to light up with its radiance the whole northern region of Saxon Britain, from whence it went on into the territory where it had been preceded by the Roman missionaries, and where the two apostolic agencies finally met.[17]

The Scottish monks replied with heartiness to the appeal of the exile, now a conqueror and sovereign. But the first

[14] "Virum utique industrium ac nobilem in Christo et Ecclesia . . . virum utique ecclesiasticum et sanctum, qui multo ex hinc tempore in ecclesia manens, magnas antiquo hosti prædas, docendo et baptizando, eripuit." — Bede, ii. 16, 20.

[15] Varin. — Faber, *Life of St. Oswald.*

[16] "Mox ubi regnum suscepit, desiderans to tamgentem Christianæ fidei gratia imbui. . . . Misit ad majores natos Scotorum, inter quos exsulans ipse baptismatis sacramenta cum his qui secum erant militibus, consecutus erat, petens, ut cujus doctrina ac ministerio gens quam regebat Anglorum dominicæ fidei et dona disceret et susciperet sacramenta." — Bede, iii. 3.

[17] Varin, Deuxième Mémoire, p. 9.

effort of their zeal was not fortunate. Their first representative seems to have been animated by that spirit of pedantic rigor, by that stubborn and intolerant austerity, which have often shown themselves in the national character of the Scots along with Christian devotion and self-denial, and which culminated in the too celebrated Puritans. This missionary, by name Corman, attempted in vain to preach the Gospel to the Northumbrians, who heard him with opposition and dislike. After some time he returned to Iona; and in rendering an account of his mission to those who had sent him — that is to say, to the elders of the monastery — he declared that he could make nothing of the Angles, that they were a race of untamable savages, and of a stubborn and barbarous spirit. This report greatly disquieted and perplexed the fathers of the synod, who ardently desired to impart to the English people the gift of salvation which had been asked from them.[18] They deliberated for a long time, until at length one of the assembly, Aïdan, a monk of Iona, said to the discomfited preacher, "It seems to me, my brother, that you have been too hard upon these ignorant people: you have not, according to the apostolic counsel, offered them first the milk of gentle doctrine, to bring them by degrees, while nourishing them with the divine Word, to the true understanding and practice of the more advanced precepts."[19] At these words every eye was turned to Aïdan: his opinion was thoughtfully discussed, and the debate ended in an acknowledgment that he was the man wanted for the mission, since he was endowed with that discernment which is the source of all virtues. There was, as we have seen, a bishop in the Monastery of Iona, so that Aïdan was at once consecrated missionary and bishop of Northumbria.[20]

Failure of the first Scottish missionary.

He is succeeded by Aïdan.

He received his mission from the whole brotherhood and from the Abbot of Iona, Seghen, the fourth successor of Co-

[18] "Austerioris animi vir qui cum . . . prædicans nihil proficeretur, nec libenter a populo audiretur . . . in conventu seniorum retulerit, quia nil prodesse docendo genti . . . potuisset, eo quod essent homines, indomabiles, et duræ ac barbaræ mentis. . . . At illi . . . tractatum magnum in concilio quid esset agendum, habere cœperunt, desiderantes quidem genti quam petebant solutem esse, sed de non recepto prædicatore dolentes." — Bede, iii. 5.

[19] "Lac mollioris doctrinæ . . . donec paulatim enutriti verbo Dei, ad capienda perfectiora et ad facienda sublimiora Dei præcepta sufficerent."

[20] "Omnium qui considebant ad ipsum ora et oculi conversi . . . ipsum esse dignum episcopatu, ipsum ad erudiendos incredulos et indoctos mitti debere decernunt, qui gratia discretionis, quæ virtutum mater est, ante omnia probatur imbutus, sicque illum ordinantes, ad prædicandum miserunt."

lumba, in the monastic metropolis of the Hebrides, the fourth of these great monks to whom Bede himself, somewhat prejudiced as he was against their holy founder, could not refuse the testimony that they were as illustrious for their self-denial as for their love of God and of strict monastic order. The venerable historian could find but one grievance wherewith to charge them and their delegate Aïdan — viz., their fidelity to Celtic observances as to the celebration of Easter, which the clergy of the south of Ireland had abandoned, to conform to the new usage of Rome,[21] but which the Scots of the north of Ireland and of all Caledonia obstinately preserved as they had received it from their fathers.[22]

Everything had to be done, or done over again, in the once Christian Northumbria. To the south, in Deïra, the ravages of Cadwallon and Penda do not seem to have left any traces of the mission of Paulinus except the solitary church at York, where the deacon James had maintained the celebration of Christian worship, and which, begun by Edwin, was completed by Oswald. In Bernicia we must conclude that the Roman Bishop restricted himself to itinerating missions, followed by those general baptisms of which we have spoken, but that he had not founded there any permanent station, since, until the cross was planted by Oswald on the eve of his victory over the Britons, it is said that no one had ever seen a church or an altar, or any emblem of the Christian faith.[23]

It was thus a hard task, and one well worthy of a follower of Columba, which presented itself to the monk of Iona, trained in the school of that great missionary.[24]

[21] In 630, at the Synod of Leighlin, thanks to the efforts of two monks, Laserian, superior of the 1500 monks of Leighlin, and Cummian, the disciple of Columba, and author of a famous letter, of which we shall presently hear more, in connection with this wearisome discussion. Compare Lanigan, *Ecclesiastical History of Ireland*, vol. ii. chap. 15.

[22] "Qualiscumque fuerit ipse . . . reliquit successores magna continentia ac divino amore regularique institutione insignes. . . . Ab hac ergo insula, ab horum collegio monachorum, ad provinciam Anglorum instituendam in Christo, missus est Ædan, accepto gradu episcopatus." — Bede, iii. 4. 5.

[23] "Nullum Christianæ fidei signum, nulla ecclesia, nullum altare in tota Berniciorum gente erectum est, priusquam hoc sacræ crucis vexillum novus militiæ ductor, dictante fidei devotione, contra hostem immanissimum pugnaturus statueret." — Bede, iii. 2, 11.

[24] That is to say, under his successors, for although Aïdan, ordained bishop in 635, might very well have seen and heard Columba, who died in 597, yet no proof can be found in support of Colgan's assertion, which ranks him, as well as his successors Finan and Colman, among the direct disciples of the great abbot (*Trias Thaumaturga*, pp. 487, 489). He bases this assertion

Aïdan had brought with him several of his brethren, and the number of Celtic monks who came to help him increased from day to day. It became necessary to assign to them, or rather to create for them, a centre of operations. The king left to Aïdan the choice of the seat of his bishopric. Although his diocese comprised the whole of Northumbria, he does not seem to have thought of occupying the vacant see of York. Whether he yielded in this to the prejudices and dislikes which separated the Scots from Roman usages, or whether he was unwilling to quit the northern district, where the mission of Paulinus had left the fewest traces, and where, consequently, he had most work to do, it is certain that he chose to place his episcopal monastery at a distance from the churches founded by the Roman monks in the southern part of the country. He preferred a position a little more central, near the royal residence of Oswald, and on the coast, but much nearer the Firth of Forth than the mouth of the Humber, which mark the two extreme limits of Oswald's kingdom to the north and south.

The monastic capital of Northumbria is fixed in the isle of Lindisfarne.

This choice of a residence shows that, as a monk of Iona, ambitious of following in every respect the example of the great apostle of his race, founder of the sanctuary whence he issued, Aïdan took pleasure in imitating St. Columba even in local particulars. Like him he settled his community in an island near the shore, almost as small, as insignificant, and as barren as Iona was when the holy exile from Ireland landed there. Its position was even in some sort a repetition, in the North Sea, and to the east of Great Britain, of the position of Iona upon the opposite coast, and on the shore of the Atlantic.

Amid the waves of the Northern Sea, opposite the green hills of Northumberland and the sandy beach which extends between the border town of Berwick on the north, and the imposing ruins of the feudal fortress of Bamborough on the south, lies a low island, flat and sombre, girt with basaltic rocks, forming a kind of square block, which terminates to the north-west in a long point of land stretching towards the mouth of the Tweed and Scotland. This Island bears the impress of melancholy and barrenness. It can never

simply on the mention of three persons bearing these names in the biography of Adamnan. Colgan himself deprives this argument of all weight by proving that there are in the Irish calendar 23 saints of the name of Aïdan, and 109 of the name of Colman or Colomban.

have produced anything but the sorriest crops and some meagre pasturage. There is not a tree, not an undulation, not one noticeable feature, save a small conical hill to the south-west, now crowned by a strong castle of picturesque form, but recent construction. In this poor islet was erected the first Christian church of the whole district, now so populous, rich and industrious, which extends from Hull to Edinburgh. This was Lindisfarne — that is to say, the Mother Church, the religious capital of the north of England and south of Scotland, the residence of the first sixteen bishops of Northumbria, the sanctuary and monastic citadel of the whole country round — the Iona of the Anglo-Saxons. The resemblance of Lisdisfarne to Iona, of the colony to the metropolis, the daughter to the mother, is striking. These two isles, once so celebrated, so renowned, so influential over two great and hostile races, have the same sombre and melancholy aspect, full of a wild and savage sadness. Religion only could people, fertilize, and tranquillize these arid and desolate shores.

The island chosen by Aïdan is, however, an island during only a portion of each day. As at Mont St. Michel in France, twice in the twenty-four hours the ebbing tide leaves the sands uncovered, and the passage can be made on foot to the neighboring shore,[25] though not always without danger, for many stories are told of travellers drowned in attempting to cross to the holy isle at low water. From this new abode Aïdan, looking southward, could descry far off the rock and stronghold of Bamborough, where Oswald, after the example of his grandfather Ida, had established his capital. His eye, like his heart, could there hail the young and glorious prince who was his friend, his helper, and his rival.

Nothing is known of the early history of St. Aïdan. When he first appears to us he is already a monk at Iona, and clothed with a certain authority among his brethren. Even when raised to the episcopate, he remained always a monk, not only in heart, but in life. Almost all his Celtic fellow-workers, whether from Ireland or Scotland, were monks like himself, and followed the cenobitical rule of their order and country. A hundred years after Aïdan, the system which he had established at Lindisfarne was still in full vigor; and, as

[25] "Insula hæc, accedente reumate, quotidie his undis spumantibus maris alluitur, totiesque refluis maris sinibus, antiqua terra relinquitur." — Reginaldi Monachi Dunelmensis, *Libellus de Admirandis B. Cuthberti Virtutibus*, c. 12.

in his day, the bishop was either himself the abbot of the insular community, or lived there as a monk, subject, like the other religious, to the authority of the abbot, elected with the consent of the brotherhood. The priests, deacons, choristers, and other officials of the cathedral church, were all monks.[26] But this monastic discipline and order would have availed little if the missionary-head of the institution had not possessed the character common to great servants of the truth, and been endowed with those virtues which the apostolical office demands.

Apostolic virtues of the monk-bishop Aïdan.

Bede,[27] who was born twenty years after the death of the monk-bishop, and who lived all his life in the country which was fragrant with the memory of Aïdan's virtues, has made his character and life the subject of one of the most eloquent and attractive pictures ever drawn by the pen of the venerable historian. The praise which he awards to him is not only more expressive and more distinct than that given to any other of the monastic apostles of England, but also so much the less to be suspected of partiality, that it is qualified by the most energetic protests against his Celtic peculiarities. "He was," Bede tells us, "a pontiff inspired with a passionate love of goodness; but at the same time full of a surpassing gentleness and moderation." Faithful to all the noble teachings of his monastic cradle, he appeared to the future clergy of Northumbria as a marvel of self-denial and austerity. He was the first to practise what he taught, and none could ever reproach him with having failed to fulfil, to his best ability, all the precepts of the gospels, of the apostles, or the prophets.

Indifferent to all worldly possessions, Aïdan expended in alms all that he received from the kings and rich men. To the astonishment of the Saxons, who were, like the modern English, excellent horsemen, and valued nothing more highly than the horse, it was always on foot that the bishop went through town and country, penetrating everywhere — now

[26] "Monachi erant maxime qui ad prædicandum venerant. . . . Monachus ipse episcopus Ædan." — Bede, *Hist. Eccles.*, iii. 3. "Et monasticum cum suis omnibus vitam semper agere solebat; unde ab illo omnes loci ipsius antistites usque hodie sic episcopale exercent officium, ut regente monasterium abbate quem ipsi cum consilio fratrum elegerint, omnes . . . monasticam per omnia cum ipso episcopo regulam servent." — Bede, *Vit. S. Cuthberti*, c. 16.

[27] It is to Bede we owe all that is known of Aïdan, as of so many other personages of the seventh century. — Compare *Act. SS. Bolland.*, vol. vi. Augusti, p. 688

among the rich, now among the poor — baptizing those who were still heathen, confirming in the faith those who were already Christians, and stimulating all to alms-giving and good works. All who accompanied him, monks or laymen, had to devote a certain portion of each day to meditation — that is to say, to reading the Bible and learning the Psalter. Unwearied in study, humble and peaceful, charitable and sincere, he was especially distinguished by zeal against the sins of the rich. Far from sparing any of their vices or excesses, he rebuked them with the greatest sharpness: and contrary to the received custom, he never made any present to the chiefs or nobles, restricting himself to simple hospitality when they came to visit him, and giving away to the first beggar whom he met the gifts which they heaped upon him. But the priestly courage which armed him against the pride of the powerful was transformed into tender and watchful solicitude when he had to defend the feeble, to relieve the needy, or to comfort the unfortunate. His, in a word, was the heart of a true priest and apostle, disdainful of all false grandeur and vain prosperity, and victorious over all the mean and perverse tendencies of his time, and of all times.[28]

Aïdan retained nothing for himself of all the gifts of land which the generosity of the Saxon kings and nobles bestowed upon the Church, whose doctrines they had just embraced. He was content with Lindisfarne and the scanty fields of his poor little isle. But he reserved for himself, wherever it was possible in the vast *villæ* of the kings and nobles, a site for a chapel, with a small chamber attached, where he prepared his sermons, and in which he lodged during his incessant and prolonged journeys.[29]

[28] "Scripsi hæc . . . nequaquam in eo laudans vel eligens hoc quod de observantia paschæ minus perfecte sapiebat, immo hoc multum detestans . . . sed quasi verax historicus. . . . Quantum ab eis qui eum novere didicimus, summæ mansuetudinis et pietatis et moderaminis virum. . . . Unde (ab Iona) inter alia vivendi documenta, saluberrimum abstinentiæ et modestiæ clericis exemplum reliquit. . . . Cuncta et urbana et rustica loca, non equorum dorso, sed pedum incessu. . . . Sive adtonsi, seu laici, meditari deberent, id est aut legendis Scripturis aut psalmis discendis operam dare. . . . Nunquam divitibus honoris sive timoris gratia, si qua deliquissent reticebat; sed aspera illos invectione corrigebat. . . . Nullam potentibus seculi pecuniam, excepta solummodo esca si quos hospitio suscepisset, unquam dare solebat. . . . Animum iræ et avaritiæ victorem, superbiæ simul et vanæ gloriæ contemptorem . . . auctoritatem sacerdote dignam, redarguendi superbos ac potentes, pariter et infirmos consolandi, ac pauperes recreandi vel defendendi clementiam." — Bede, iii. 3, 5, 17.

[29] "In hoc habens ecclesiam et cubiculum, sæpe ibidem diverti ac manere, atque inde ad prædicandum circumquaque exire consueverat: quod ipsum

Like St. Gregory the Great, whom, though not his disciple, he emulated in well doing, he took an especial interest in the education of children and the emancipation of slaves. From the beginning of his mission he attached to himself twelve English youths, whom he educated with the greatest care for the service of Christ, and of whom one at least became a bishop. Every church and monastery founded by him became immediately a school where the children of the English received from Aïdan's monks an education as complete as that to be had in any of the great Irish monasteries.[30] As to slaves, he devoted principally to their redemption the gifts which he owed to the munificence of the Anglo-Saxons, endeavoring especially to save such as, to use Bede's expression, had been "unjustly sold," — which means, probably, those who were not foreign prisoners, or who had not been condemned to slavery as the punishment of crime. For it has been already stated, and it must be kept in mind, that the Saxons, as well as the Celts, made no scruple of selling their brethren and their children like cattle. The freedmen were carefully instructed by Aïdan, numbered among his disciples, and frequently raised to the priesthood.[31] Heathen barbarism was thus assailed and undermined in its very citadel by monks, both from the north and from the south, and by slaves promoted to the rank of priests.

He takes especial care of the young and of slaves.

The king and the bishop rivalled each other in virtue, in piety, in ardent charity, and desire for the conversion of souls. Thanks to their mutual and unwearied efforts, every day saw the Christian religion spreading farther and taking deeper root; every day joyous crowds hastened to feed on the bread of the Divine Word, and to plunge into the waters of baptism; every day numerous churches, flanked by monasteries and schools, rose from the soil. Every day new gifts of land, due to the generosity of Oswald and the Northumbrian nobles, came to swell the patrimony of the monks and the poor. Every day, also, new missionaries, full of zeal and fervor, arrived from Ireland or Scotland to help on the work of

King Oswald helper and interpreter to Bishop Aïdan.

. in aliis villis regiis solebat, utpote nil propriæ possessionis, excepta ecclesia sua et adjacentibus agellis, habens." — Bede, iii. 17.

[30] "Imbuebantur præceptoribus Scotis parvuli Anglorum una cum majoribus studiis et observatione disciplinæ regularis." — Bede, iii. 3.

[31] "Ad redemptionem eorum qui injuste fuerant venditi. . . . Multos quos pretio dato redemerat, suos discipulos fecit, atque ad sacerdotalem usque gradum erudiendo atque instituendo provexit." — Bede, iii. 5.

Aïdan and Oswald, preaching and baptizing converts. And at the same time James the Deacon, sole survivor of the former Roman mission, redoubled his efforts to help forward the regeneration of the country in which he had already seen the faith flourish and decay. He took advantage of the restoration of peace, and the increasing number of the faithful, to add, like a true disciple of St. Gregory, the teaching of music to the teaching of religion, and to familiarize the English of the north with the sweet and solemn melody of the Roman chant, as already in use among the Saxons of Canterbury.[32]

Oswald did not content himself with giving his friend Aïdan the obedience of a son and the support of a king, in all that could aid in the extension and consolidation of Christianity. He himself gave a personal example of all the Christian virtues, and often passed whole nights in prayer, still more occupied with the concerns of the heavenly kingdom than with those of the earthly realm which he had so ably won, and for which he was so soon to die. He was not only lavish in alms, giving of his riches, with humble and tender charity, to the humble and the poor, to the sick, to travellers, and to needy strangers who came to the bishop to be nourished with the Word of Life. In addition he constituted himself Aïdan's interpreter; "and it was," says Bede, "a touching spectacle to see the king, who had, during his long exile, thoroughly learned the Celtic tongue, translating to the great chiefs and the principal officials of his court, the earls and thanes, the sermons of the bishop, who as yet spoke but imperfectly the language of the Anglo-Saxons.[33]

The tender friendship and apostolic brotherhood which thus united the king and the bishop of the Northumbrians

[32] "Exin cœpere plures per dies de Scotorum regione venire. . . . Construebantur ecclesiæ per loca, confluebant ad audiendum verbum populi gaudentes, donabantur munere regio. . . . Qui quoniam canendi in ecclesia erat peritissimus, recuperata postmodum pace in provincia et crescente numero fidelium, etiam magister ecclesiasticæ cantionis juxta morem Romanorum seu Cantuariorum multis cœpit existere." — Bede, iii. 3, 11, 20.

[33] "Qui temporalis regni gubernacula tenens, magis pro æterno regno semper laborare solebat. . . . Pauperibus et peregrinis semper humilis, benignus et largus. . . . Semper, dum viveret, infirmis et pauperibus consulere, eleemosynas dare, opem ferre non cessabat. . . . Pulcherrimo sæpe spectaculo contigit, ut evangelizante antistite qui Anglorum linguam perfecte non noverat, ipse rex suis ducibus ac ministris interpres verbi extiteret cœlestis, quia tam longo exilii sui tempore linguam Scotorum plene didicerat." — Bede, iii. 12, 9, 6, 3.

has, perhaps more than anything else, contributed to exalt and hallow their memory in the annals of Catholic England.

Oswald was too active, too popular, too energetic, and too powerful not to make his actions and influence felt beyond the bounds of his own kingdom. Like Edwin, whom he resembles in so many points, notwithstanding the rivalry of their two families, he turned his thoughts and his steps to the south of the Humber. Edwin had converted, for a time at least, his neighbors and vassals, the East Anglians. Oswald went further, and contributed largely to the conversion of the most powerful kingdom of the Heptarchy, next to Northumbria — that of the Saxons of the West, Wessex — a kingdom which was destined to absorb and supplant all the others. The kings of this nation also professed to be of the blood of Odin; they were descended from a chief called Cerdic, perhaps the bravest of all the invaders of the British soil, and who had consolidated his conquests by forty years of craft and war. It was among this warlike race that Oswald sought a wife; but, contrary to ordinary precedent, it was, in this new union, the husband, and not the wife, who took the initiative in conversion. When he went for his bride, Kineburga, into the country of the West Saxons, the King of Northumbria met there an Italian bishop, who had undertaken their conversion, finding them entirely pagan. He did his best to second the laborious efforts of the foreign missionary, and the king, whose daughter he was about to wed, having consented to be baptized, Oswald stood sponsor for him, and thus became the spiritual father of him whose son-in-law he was about to become.[34] He took back to Northumbria with him the young convert, who soon bore him a son, little worthy of his sire, but yet destined at least to be the founder of a monastery which acted a part of some importance in the history of his people.

Oswald marries the daughter of the King of Wessex, and converts his father-in-law.

All this prosperity was soon to end, as all that is good and beautiful ends here below. The terrible Penda was still alive, and, under the iron hand of that redoubtable warrior, Mercia remained the stronghold of paganism, even as Northumbria had become under Edwin and Oswald the centre of Christian life in Great Britain. He had left unrevenged the death of his

Invasion of Penda at the head of the Mercians and Britons.

[34] "Cum omnes paganissimos inveniret. . . . Pulcherrimo et Deo digno consortio, cujus erat filiam accepturus in conjugem, ipsum prius secunda generatione Deo dictatum sibi accepit in filium." — Bede, iii. 7.

ally, the Briton Cadwallon; he had done nothing to hinder the accession and establishment of a new Christian king in Northumbria. But when that king essayed to cross the river which formed the boundary of the two kingdoms, and to unite to his domains a province which had always belonged to the Mercians,[35] Penda, notwithstanding his age, resumed his old inveteracy towards those whom he saw — again like Edwin — deserting the worship of their common ancestor Odin, and claiming an insupportable supremacy over all the Saxons, Pagan or Christian. He accordingly renewed with the Britons the alliance which had already been so disastrous to the Northumbrians, and, placing himself at the head of the two combined armies, waged for two years a sanguinary war against Oswald, which ended in a decisive battle at Maserfeld, on the western border of Mercia and Northumbria.[36] The struggle was fierce; the brother of Penda perished in the fight, but Oswald, the great and beloved Oswald, shared the same fate. He died on the field, in the flower of his years, at the age of thirty-eight. There he fell — the historian of the English Church says with emphasis — fighting for his country. But his last word, his last thought, was for heaven, and for the eternal welfare of his people. "My God," said he, on seeing himself encircled with enemies, overwhelmed by numbers, and already pierced by a forest of arrows and lances — "my God, save their souls."[37] The last cry of this saintly spirit, this young hero, remained long graven on the memory of the Saxon people, and passed into a proverb to denote those who prayed without ceasing in life and in death.

Battle of Maserfeld, 5th August, 642. Oswald is slain.

The ferocity of Penda was not even satisfied by the death of his young rival. When the dead body of the king of Northumbria was brought from the battle-field into his pres-

[35] Oswald, whether as a conqueror or only as bretwalda or chief of the confederation, had invaded that province of Lindsey, where Paulinus had founded the Cathedral of Lincoln, where the monks themselves reproached the sainted King of Northumbria, forty years after his death, with having wished to rule over them.

[36] According to some, near Winwick, in Lancashire; according to others, at Oswestry, in Shrewsbury.

[37] "Ubi pro patria dimicans a paganis interfectus est. . . . Vulgatum est autem et in consuetudinem proverbii versum quod etiam inter orationes vitam finierit. . . . Cum armis et hostibus circumseptus, jamjam videret se esse perimendum, oravit pro animabus exercitus sui. Unde dicunt in proverbio: *Deus, misercre animabus, dixit Oswald cadens in terra.*" — Bede, iii. 9, 12. "Cum stipatoribus fusis ipse quoque ferratam silvam in pectore gereret." — Wilhelm. Malmesb., *De Gest.*, lib. i. c. 3.

ence, the old savage caused the head and hands of the hero to be cut off, and set up on stakes, to intimidate both conquerors and conquered. The noble remains were thus exposed for a whole year, till his brother and avenger, Oswy, carried them away. The hero's head was then taken to Lindisfarne, to the great monastery which he had so richly endowed, and where his holy friend Aïdan awaited it; but his hands were deposited in a chapel in the royal fortress of Bamborough, the cradle of that Northumbrian dominion which the arms of his ancestors had founded, and which his own had so valiantly restored.

Thus perished, at the age of thirty-eight, Oswald, ranked by the Church among her martyrs, and by the Anglo-Saxon people among its saints and heroes of most enduring fame. Through the obscurity of that thankless and confused age, the eye rests gratefully on this young prince, reared in exile among the hereditary enemies of his race, who was consoled for the loss of a throne by his conversion to Christianity: who regained the kingdom of his fathers at the point of the sword, and planted the first cross on his native soil, at the moment when he freed it from the usurper; crowned by the love and devotion of the people on whom he bestowed the blessings of peace and of supreme truth, spending his very life for its sake; united for a few short years to a wife whom, in marrying, he had made a Christian; gentle and strong, serious and sincere, pious and intelligent, humble and bold, active and gracious, a soldier and a missionary, a king and a martyr, slain in the flower of his age on the field of battle, fighting for his country and praying for his subjects. Where shall we find in all history a hero more nearly approaching the ideal, more richly gifted, more worthy of eternal remembrance, and, it must be added, more completely forgotten?

Oswald is venerated as a martyr.

It was long, however, before his name was forgotten. During the whole Anglo-Saxon period, and even after the Norman Conquest, under the Plantagenets, this gallant soldier, great king, and generous Christian, continued to be the object of popular veneration. The chroniclers and poets of the time vied with each other in celebrating his fame. "Who, then," said one of them, with that mingling of classic associations and Christian ideas so habitual to the monks and all the writers of the middle ages —"Who, then, is Hercules? who is Alexander the Great? who is Julius Cæsar? We are taught that Hercules conquered himself, Alexander conquered the world, and Cæsar

the enemies of Rome; but Oswald conquered at once the world, his enemies, and himself."[38]

The monks of the great and magnificent Church of Hexham went in procession every year to celebrate the day consecrated to him at the site of the cross which he had planted on the eve of his first victory. But the love and gratitude of the Christian people gave a still greater glory to the place of his defeat and death. Pilgrims came thither in crowds to seek relief from their sufferings, and had each a miraculous cure to relate on their return. The dust which his noble blood had watered was collected with care and conveyed to great distances as a remedy for disease, or a preservative from the evils of life. By dint of carrying away this dust a hollow was scooped out of a man's size, and which seemed the ever-open tomb of this martyr of his country. On seeing the turf around this hollow clothed with an unwonted verdure, more delicate and beautiful than elsewhere, travellers said that the man who had perished there must needs have been more holy and more pleasing in God's sight than all the other warriors who rested beneath that sward.[39] The veneration of which his remains were the object spread not only among all the Saxons and Britons of Great Britain, but even beyond the seas, in Ireland, and among the Greeks and the Germans. The very stake on which the head of the royal martyr had been fixed was cut up into relics, the fragments of which were regarded as of sovereign efficacy in the healing both of body or of mind. These things provoke a pitying smile from the wise and witty, who in times and countries enslaved by the ascendency of numbers and physical force are not forbidden to philosophize. But no safer or sweeter asylum has ever been found for humiliated patriotism, violated justice, or vanquished freedom, than the pious tenderness with which Christian nations once surrounded the tomb and relics of those who died for the faith and their rights.

[38] "Quis fuit Alcides? Quis Cæsar Julius? Aut quis
Magnus Alexander? Alcides se superasse
Fertur; Alexander mundum, sed Julius hostem.
Se simul Oswaldus et mundum vicit et hostem."
— Ap. Camden, *Britannia*, iii. 493.

[39] "Contigit ut pulverem ipsum ubi corpus ejus in terram corruit . . . multi auferentes . . . qui mox adeo increbuit, ut paulatim ablata exinde terra fossam ad mensuram staturæ virilis reddiderit. Quidam de natione Britonum, iter faciens juxta ipsum locum, vidit unius loci spatium cetero campo venustius ac viridius: cœpitque sagæci animo confiecre quod nulla esset alia causa insolitæ illo in loco viriditatis, nisi quia ibidem sanctior cetero exercitu vir aliquis fuisset interfectus." — Bede, iii. 9, 10.

A kind of prophecy, that Oswald's bones would become relics, had been made to him by Aïdan, on the following occasion: —

Prediction of Aïdan in regard to Oswald's hand.

The bishop had made it a rule to accept very rarely those invitations to the royal table which were considered, among the Germanic races, as signs of the most marked distinction. When he did go he was present only at the beginning of the repast, after which he would hasten away to apply himself, with his monks, to reading or prayer. But one Easter-day the monk-bishop, being at dinner with the king, and seated beside him, had just raised his hand to bless a silver dish filled with delicacies which was placed before Oswald, when the officer to whom the charge of the poor was specially intrusted, suddenly entered to announce that there was a crowd of beggars in the street who besought alms of the king. Oswald immediately gave orders that the food, and the silver dish which contained it, the latter broken in pieces, should be divided among the beggars. As he stretched out his hand to give this order, the bishop seized it and cried, "May this hand never perish!"[40] The following year it was severed from his body, and picked up on the battle-field where he gave his life for God and his people; and the hand of the royal martyr, enshrined in the sanctury of the ancient Northumbrian capital, continued entire and incorruptible for centuries, was seen and kissed by innumerable Christians, and disappeared only in that abyss of spoliation and sacrilege in which Henry VIII. ingulfed all the monastic glories and treasures of England.

[40] "Adceleravit ocius ad legendum aut orandum egredi. . . . Discus argenteus regalibus epulis refertus, jamjam essent manus ad benedicendum panem missuri. . . . Ministrum cui suscipiendorum inopum erat cura delegata. . . . Pontifex qui adsidebat . . . apprehendit dextram ejus et ait: *Nunquam inveterascat hæc manus.*" — BEDE, iii. 5, 6. The Bollandists prove (vol. ii. Aug., p. 87) that the hand still existed in the sixteenth century.

CHAPTER II.

NORTHUMBRIA UNDER THE SUCCESSORS OF OSWALD — THE CELTIC BISHOPS — THE GREAT ABBESSES, HILDA AND EBBA.

Oswald's successors in Northumbria: Oswy in Bernicia; Oswin in Deïra. — Oswin's intimacy with Bishop Aïdan. — The son of the mare and the son of God. — New outrages of Penda. — Aïdan stops the burning of Bamborough. — Struggle between Oswy and Oswin. — Murder of Oswin. — Death of Aïdan twelve years after his friend. — The double monastery of Tynemouth, built above the tomb of Oswin. — The wife of the murderer dedicates a monastery to the expiation of the murder. — Reign of Oswy, who was venerated as a saint, notwithstanding his crime, because of his zeal for the truth. — Successors of Aïdan at Lindisfarne, sent by the monks of Iona. — Episcopate of the Scot Finan. — He builds the Cathedral of Lindisfarne of wood. — Colman, second successor. — Novitiate at Melrose. — The young Anglo-Saxons go to study in Ireland. — The female monasteries of Northumbria. — Heïa, the first nun. — Hartlepool. — Aïdan gives the veil to Hilda, princess of Deïra: her rule of thirty years at Whitby. — Description of the place. — The six bishops who issued from the double monastery. Ceadmon, the cowherd, vassal of Hilda; the first Anglo-Saxon poet; precursor of Milton, he sings the Paradise Lost; his holy life and death. — The Princess Ebba, of the rival dynasty, sister of Oswald and Oswy, foundress and Abbess of Coldingham: she also rules for thirty years. — Notable disorders in her monasteries. — Fervor and austerity of the Northumbrian monks: extraordinary fasts: different characteristics of Lindisfarne, Coldingham, and Melrose. — A precursor of Dante. — Foundation of Lastingham: Cedd, monk of Lindisfarne. — Testimony borne by the Romano-Benedictine Bede to the virtue, disinterestedness, and popularity of the Celtic missionaries. — Nevertheless, resistance and opposition are not awanting. — Contrast and fickleness of character in the kings as in the people. — Joy of the natives of the coast on seeing the monks shipwrecked.

Oswald's successors in Northumbria.

On the death of Oswald Northumbria fell a prey, first to the ravages of Mercian invasion, then to the complications and weakness of a divided succession. Like the Merovingian, and even the Carlovingian Franks, although with a less fatal obstinacy, the Anglo-Saxons, and particularly the Angles of Northumbria, could not resist the inclination which led them to accept or to incite the division of a kingdom among several princes as soon as there appeared

several heirs of a deceased king. It must be supposed that these divisions answered in England, as in France, to certain distinctions of race, or to certain exigencies of local or provincial self-government, which could not be reconciled with the existence of one supreme authority. Oswald left a son in childhood, whose claims were not at that moment taken into consideration. His brother Oswy, still in the flower of his youth, and, though much less saintly than Oswald, no less a good soldier and valiant captain, at once took his place in Bernicia — that is to say, in the northern part of Northumbria. As for Deïra, it fell to a prince of the Deïrian dynasty, grand-nephew to Ella, the founder of that race,[41] and son of that ill-fated Osric who had reigned for a year only over Southern Northumbria after the downfall of his cousin Edwin in 633 — a short reign, which left him scarce time enough to renounce the baptism which he had received from the hands of Paulinus, and to perish under the sword of Cadwallon's Britons. His son, called Oswin, had been saved while yet a child by his friends, who sent him out of Northumbria, and had passed his youth in exile, like Edwin, and the two brothers Oswald and Oswy. Exile seems to have been the necessary and salutary apprenticeship of the Northumbrian kings.

Oswy in Bernicia.

Oswin, king in Deïra. 642-51.

On hearing of the death of Oswald he claimed his right of succession. The old subjects of his father and grand-uncle gladly received him.[42] The principal nobles met in assembly, acknowledged his hereditary right, and proclaimed him King of the Deïrians; and for seven years he governed them to the satisfaction of all. He was still very young, of lofty stature, endowed with remarkable comeliness and grace — a matter of no small importance in an age and among a people extremely sensible to external advantages. But he had, in addition, all the virtues which were then regarded as proofs of sanctity. His extreme gentleness, his charity, and, above all, his humility, were universally extolled. He was, moreover, so accessible, so courteous and generous, that the noblest

[41] See the genealogical table, Appendix VI., p. 752.

[42] "Audiens Oswinus exulans, quod, Oswaldo defuncto, regnaret Oswin pro fratre suo, inito cum suis consilio ad regnum Deïrorum regressus, ab omni plebe lætante recepitur. . . . Omnibus ejus beneficia postulantibus hilariter impendebat." — Joan. Tynemouth, ap. Bolland., t. iv. Aug., p. 63. "Parvo temporis intervallo principes primatesque regni convenerunt in unum communicatoque unanimiter consilio B. Oswinum hæredi tatis juris successorem Deïrorum dominum in regem sublimantes." — *Vita Oswini*, p. 3, *in the Publications of the Surtees Society*, 1838.

lords of all Northumbria vied with each other in seeking the honor of serving among those officers of his household whom the Latin historians designate in England, as elsewhere, by the name of *ministeriales*.[43]

His connection with Aïdan.

Although Oswin had been exiled among the Saxons of Wessex, and not in Scotland, like his cousins and rivals Oswald and Oswy, and had been thus entirely out of contact with the Celtic monks, he was already a Christian when he returned to Northumbria, and did not hesitate to recognize the episcopal authority of Aïdan. During his whole reign the monk of Iona, now bishop of Lindisfarne, continued to travel throughout the two kingdoms which formed his immense diocese — not confining himself to preaching in the new churches, but going from house to house to foster beside the domestic hearth the seeds of the new-sown faith.[44] It was a special pleasure to him on such occasions to rest under the hospitable roof of the young king of Deïra, with whom he always lived in as tender and thorough a union as that which had united him to Oswald.

The son of the mare and the son of God.

An oft-repeated anecdote, which reveals at once the pleasant intimacy of their relations and the noble delicacy of their minds, has been left us by Bede. Aïdan, as we have said, performed all his apostolic journeys on foot, but it was the king's wish that he should have at least a horse to cross the rivers, or for other special emergencies; he gave him accordingly his best steed, splendidly caparisoned. The bishop accepted it, and made use of it; but being, as Bede calls him, "the father and worshipper of the poor," it happened ere long that, meeting a man who asked alms, he leaped down from his royal courser, and gave it, harnessed as it was, to the beggar. The king, being informed of this, said to Aïdan, as they were going to dinner together, "Lord bishop, what do you mean by giving my horse to that beggar? Had I not many other horses of less value, and property of every kind to give in alms, without the necessity of giving that horse that I had expressly chosen for your own special use?" "What is this you say?" re-

[43] "In maxima omnium rerum affluentia et ipse amabilis omnibus præfuit. . . . Aspectu venustus et statura sublimis et affatu jucundus et moribus civilis et manu omnibus nobilibus et ignobilibus largus. . . . Unde contigit ut . . . undique ad ejus ministerium de cunctis prope provinciis viri etiam nobilissimi concurrent." — Bede, iii. 14.

[44] "Propter nascentis fidei teneritudinem provinciam circumeundo fidelium domos intrare verbique divini semina pro captu singulorum in agro cordis eorum cominus spargere." — *Vit. Osw.*, p. 4.

plied Aïdan. "O king, the horse, which is the son of a mare, is it dearer to you than the man who is the son of God?" As he said this they entered the banqueting hall. Oswin, who had just returned from the chase, approached the fire with his officers, before sitting down at the table, and while he warmed himself, thought over the words of the bishop; then all at once taking off his sword, he threw himself at the feet of the saint, and implored his pardon. "No more," said he, "shall I speak of it, and never more shall regret anything of mine that you give to the children of God." After which, reassured by the kind words of the bishop, he sat down joyously to dine. But the bishop, on the contrary, became very sad, and began to weep. One of his priests inquired the cause of his sadness; upon which he replied in the Celtic tongue, which neither Oswin nor his attendants understood, "I know now that the king will not live long; never until now have I seen a king so humble; and this nation is not worthy of such a prince."[45]

This little tale, Ozanam truly says, forms a perfect picture; it discloses in those barbarous times a sweetness of sentiment, a delicacy of conscience, a refinement of manners, which, more than knowledge, is the sign of Christian civilization.

The sad foreboding of the saint was realized only too soon. But it was not, like his predecessors, under the assault of the fierce Penda and the coalition of Mercians and Britons that the amiable and conscientious Oswin was to perish. Penda, however, had resumed his devastating career, and continued for thirteen years longer to ravage Northumbria. But he seems to have entertained less unfriendly feelings to his neighbors the Deïrians and their king, than to the Bernicians, and Oswy the brother of his last victim. It is in the north of the two kingdoms that we again find him carrying

[45] "Desiliens ille præcepit equum ita ut erat stratus regaliter, pauperi dare: erat enim . . . cultor pauperum ac velut pater miserorum. . . . Quid voluisti, Domine Antistes, equum regium quem te convenichat habere, pauperi dare? Numquid non habuimus equos viliores plurimos . . . qui ad pauperum dona sufficerent? . . Quid loqueris, rex? Num tibi carior est ille filius equæ, quam ille filius Dei. . . . Porro rex (venerat enim de venatu) cœpit consistens ad focum calefieri cum ministris, et repente inter calefaciendum recordans verbum quod dixerat illi Antistes, discinxit se gladio suo . . . festinusque accedens ante pedes episcopi corruit. . . . Quia nunquam deinceps aliquid loquar de hoc, aut judicabo quid et quantum de pecunia nostra filiis Dei tribuas. . . . Lingua sua patria quam rex et domestici ejus non noverant. . . . Nunquam ante hoc vidi tam humilem regem." — Bede, iii. 14.

everywhere fire and sword,[46] and attempting to give to the flames the royal fortress of Bamborough. There also we find Aïdan, the benefactor and protector of the country. Penda, not having been able to reduce the fortress either by assault or by investment, caused an enormous pile to be erected all round the rampart. He heaped on it all the wood of the surrounding forests, the driftwood from the beach, the beams, and even the thatch of the cottages in all the neighboring villages which he had destroyed; then, as soon as the wind blew from the west, he set fire to the mass, with the hope of seeing the flames reach the town. Aïdan was at the time in the islet of Farne, an isolated rock in the open sea, a little to the south of Lindisfarne, and nearly opposite Bamborough, to which he often went, quitting his episcopal monastery to devote himself in solitude and silence to prayer. While he prayed he saw a cloud of black smoke and jets of flame covering the sky above the town where his dear Oswald once dwelt. Lifting his eyes and hands to heaven, he cried, with tears, "My God, behold all the evil that Penda does us!" At the same moment the wind changed, the flames whirled round upon the besiegers, destroying many of them, and they speedily abandoned the siege of a place so evidently under Divine protection.[47]

Aïdan saves the capital of Northumbria from being burnt by Penda.

As if this formidable and pitiless enemy was not enough to desolate Northumbria, there arose in the heart of Oswy a jealous animosity which soon ripened into civil war. After seven years of union between the two kings of Bernicia and Deïra, occasions of estrangement, ever increasing, began to arise between them. These were owing, it cannot be doubted, to the preference which, we have already remarked, was shown by so many of the Northumbrian lords for the pleasant and cordial service of King Oswin. Oswy marched against the Deïrians. Oswin likewise put himself at the head of his army; but it was much less numerous than that of the king of Bernicia, and when the moment of battle arrived, he said to the chiefs and lords of his country that he was reluctant to make them risk their lives for him whom they had raised from the position

Struggle between Oswy and Oswin.

[46] "Cum cuncta quæ poterat ferro flammaque perderet." — Bede, iii. 17.

[47] "Plurimam congeriem trabium, tignorum, parietum, virgarum et tecti fenei et his urbem in magna altitudine circumdedit . . . ventis ferentibus globos ignis ac fumum, . . . *Vide, Domine, quanta mala facit Penda.*" — Bede, iii. 16.

of a poor exile to be their king, and who now did not shrink either from renewed exile or death itself.[48] He then disbanded his troops and sought refuge with an earl on whom he thought he could rely, having just conferred on him, after many other bounties, the very manor of Gilling where he reckoned on finding an asylum. This wretched traitor gave him up to Oswy, who had the cruelty to kill him. One companion, Tondhere by name, alone remained to him. Oswin, resigned to his own death, besought that his friend might be spared; but he refused to survive his prince, preferring to sacrifice himself to that sentiment of passionate devotion which, among the Saxons, had preceded Christianity, and which justifies the title of knight prematurely applied to this brave and loyal adherent by one of the martyr's biographers.[49]

Oswin is put to death. 20th Aug., 651.

The king and his knight thus perished together; and twelve days afterwards the glorious Bishop Aïdan followed the king he loved to the tomb.[50] He fell sick during one of his innumerable missionary expeditions, and died under a tent which had been pitched in haste to shelter him at the back of a modest church which he had just built. He expired with his head resting against one of the buttresses of the church. It was a death which became a soldier of the faith upon his own fit field of battle.[51]

Aïdan dies twelve days later.

The body of Aïdan was carried to his monastic cathedral of Lindisfarne. But that of his royal friend, Oswin, was deposited in a chapel dedicated to the blessed Virgin, and situated on a granite headland almost entirely surrounded by the sea, at the mouth of the Tyne, a river which was then the boundary line between the two Northumbrian states of Deïra and Bernicia, and which is now one of the principal arteries of the maritime commerce of England. Ere long, over the sacred remains of this martyr, who was beloved and honored by the Northumbrians of both kingdoms as their father and lord on earth, and their patron saint in heaven, there rose

The double monastery of Tynemouth, founded on Oswin's tomb.

[48] Joann. Tynemouth., l. c.

[49] "Malnit miles morti succumbere quam mortuo domino, etiamsi copia daretur, supervivere." — *Ibid.* Compare Bede, l. c.

[50] "Non plus quam duodecimo post occisionem regis quem amabat die." — *Ibid.*

[51] "Tetenderunt ægrotanti tentorium, ita ut tentorium parieti adhæreret ecclesiæ. Adclinis destinæ quæ extrinsecus ecclesiæ pro munimine erat adposita."

one of those double monasteries which included both monks and nuns within two separate enclosures, but under one government.[52] The nuns whose office it was to pray upon his tomb came from Whitby, which was already governed with a splendor as great as her authority was absolute, by the Abbess Hilda, herself sprung, like the martyred Oswin, from the Deïrian dynasty and the race of Ella. The vicissitudes of this great monastery throughout the invasions of the Danes and Normans; the constant or ever-reviving veneration with which the remains of St. Oswin were regarded, even after the remembrance of his friend Aïdan was totally effaced;[53] the protection which the poor, the afflicted, and oppressed long found under the shadow of his sanctuary, and under the shelter of what was called the *Peace of St. Oswin*, will possibly be related in the sequel of our narrative, or by other and more competent pens. We must content ourselves at present with merely pointing out the beautiful remains of the conventual church which was rebuilt in the thirteenth century, and which is enclosed within the fortress which defends the entrance of the Tyne. The seven great arcades, whose time-worn relics rise majestically against the sky from the height of their rock, produce a vivid effect on the traveller who arrives by sea, and nobly announce England's adoration of the ruins she had made.[54]

Some years later, on the very spot where Oswin had perished, at Gilling, near Richmond, a monastery was reared in expiation of so foul a crime, by the wife of his murderer. This was no other than Eanfleda, daughter of King Edwin, she whose birth had contributed to the conversion of her father,[55] who had been the first-born of Christ in the Northumbrian kingdom, and who, after the overthrow of Edwin and the Roman mission in Northumbria, had been carried in her cradle by Bishop Paulinus into the country

Eanfleda, daughter of King Edwin, and wife of Oswy, consecrates a monastery in expiation of her husband's crime.

[52] "Ut dominum et patrem in terris, defensorem reputarent in cœlis: unde processu temporis ad majorem martyris gloriam sanctimoniales virgines de cœnobio S. Hildæ abbatissæ ad corpus ejus introductæ, usque ad persecutionem Danicam . . . in supremo religionis culmine permanserunt." — MATH. WESTM., ad ann. 1065. Compare BOLLAND., t. iv. Aug., pp. 58, 59.

[53] "De sancto rege Oswino nonnulla dudum audieram, sed sancti Aydani episcopi nec nomen ad me pervenerat," says a traveller, miraculously cured in the twelfth century. — *Vita Oswini*, p. 32.

[54] There is a large and handsome recent work on the Monastery of Tynemouth, entitled, *History of the Monastery founded at Tynemouth in the Diocese of Durham, to the honor of God, under the invocation of the B. V. M. and St. Oswin, King and Martyr, by* WILLIAM SIDNEY GIBSON. London, 1846, 2 vols. 4to.

[55] See p. 210.

of her mother, Ethelburga, daughter of the first Christian king of Kent.

Oswy, who was as able as he was ambitious, readily perceived that it was not enough to murder a rival in order to secure himself in the exclusive sovereignty of Northumbria. He had previously wished to conciliate the opposing dynasty by a matrimonial alliance, as his father Ethelfrid had done.[56] In pursuance of this purpose, he had despatched to Canterbury, with Aïdan's approval and blessing, a priest respected for the gravity and sincerity of his character,[57] and abbot of one of the new monasteries,[58] to obtain from Queen Ethelburga, if she still lived, the hand of her daughter. His suit was granted, and the exiled princess returned to reign over the kingdom that she had quitted in her blood-stained cradle. In this double Northumbrian dynasty, the history of which is at once so dramatic and romantic, and so closely interwoven with the history of the conversion of the English, exile was almost always the forerunner of the kingly office, or of sainthood. Eanfleda, cousin-german of the murdered king, and wife of the king who killed him, obtained permission from her husband to build a monastery on the spot where the murder had been committed, that prayers might be offered there forever for two souls, that of the victim and that of the murderer. The government of this new foundation was intrusted to Trumhere, himself a scion of the family of Deïrian princes, and one of those Anglo-Saxons who, like the negotiator of Eanfleda's marriage, had been trained and raised to the priesthood by the Celtic monks.[59]

Abbot Trumhere.

Upon this noble daughter of Edwin, restored from exile to reign over the country of her ancestors as the wife of the cruel Oswy, the mind rests with emotion. A natural desire arises to attribute to her influence the happy change which appears to have been wrought in the character of Oswy from the day on which she induced him to expiate the crime with which he was stained,

Reign of Oswy. 642-670.

[56] See the genealogical table of the two races in Appendix VI., p. 752.

[57] "Utta, multæ gravitatis vir et ob id omnibus, etiam principibus seculi honorabilis." — Bede, iii. 15.

[58] At Gateshead on the Tyne, opposite Newcastle. Compare Smith's notes on Bede, iii. 21. There was still at Gateshead, in 1745, a Catholic chapel, which was burnt by the populace out of hatred to Prince Charles Edward. — Camden's *Britannia*, Gough's edition, vol. iii. p. 123.

[59] "De natione quidam Anglorum, sed edoctus et ordinatus a Scotis . . . propinquus et ipse erat regis occisi: in quo monasterio assiduæ orationes pro utriusque regis, id est, et occisi, et ejus qui occidere jussit, salute æterna fierent." — Bede, iii. 24.

by founding this monastery. Forgetful of this crime, all the historians unite in extolling the virtues and exploits which distinguished the after portion of his prolonged and active reign. He did not continue at first, after the assassination of Oswin, the undisputed master of all Northumbria; he had to give up at least a part of Deïra to the young son of his brother Oswald, Ethelwald by name. But he retained, notwithstanding, an evident preponderance, not only in Northumbria, but in all England, the dignity of *Bretwalda* having fallen to him uncontested. The great event of his reign is the overthrow of the fierce heathen, Penda of Mercia, an event which sealed the final victory of Christianity among the Anglo-Saxons. But both before and after this culminating point of his prosperity, Oswy displayed so ardent and consistent a zeal for the extension and establishment of the Christian religion, that he was finally admitted to a place, sometimes too easily accessible, in the English martyrology.[60]

Aïdan's successors at Lindisfarne, sent by the monks of Iona.

Nevertheless, neither the zeal of Oswy, nor the purer ardor of his illustrious predecessor, could have prevailed against the various and formidable obstacles which the Gospel had to encounter among the Anglo-Saxons, had they not been directed, enlightened, and sustained by the admirable clergy whom Aïdan and his successors had trained in the cloisters of Lindisfarne and its dependent monasteries.

In regard to the succession of bishops in the new diocese of Lindisfarne, it is necessary to keep in mind the very significant difference between the usages followed by the Roman and those of the Celtic missionaries in the election of bishops. The first four successors of Augustine at Canterbury were all, as we have seen, chosen from among the Italian monks who had accompanied him to England: but they all belonged to that first mission, and were all freely chosen by their companions, old or new, in place of being successively sent from Rome, as the bishops of Lindisfarne were from Iona. In fact, at each vacancy in the see of Lindisfarne, the monks of Iona, who regarded that monastic cathedral, and perhaps the whole of christianized Northumbria, as their exclusive property, hastened to despatch a monk of their community to replace him who had rendered his soul to God. The Scottish monks, thus placed during thirty years

[60] 15th February: Compare *Act. SS. Bolland.*, vol. ii. Feb., p. 801.

at the head of the Church of the North of England, showed themselves thoroughly worthy of the saintly school whence they issued, and of the glorious mission to which they were consecrated. But it is, nevertheless, important to note that, either owing distance or some other cause, Rome left to her missionary communities, her apostolic colonies, a liberty which was not possible under the harsh discipline of the Celtic Church.

The first monk sent from Iona to replace the noble Aïdan, is known by the name of St. Finan.[61] His episcopate was prosperous; it lasted ten years,[62] and was not interrupted by any melancholy event, such as those which had troubled the life of Aïdan by taking from him his two royal friends. Finan always lived on good terms with King Oswy, and before going to join his predecessor in heaven, he had the happiness of introducing to the Church the heads of the two great Saxon kingdoms, who came to seek baptism at the gates of Lindisfarne. In that island-sanctuary, where we must remember that the bishop was often in ecclesiastical subjection to the local abbot of the monastic community, Finan caused a cathedral to be built, not of stone, like that which Paulinus and Edwin had commenced at York, but according to the Celtic custom, and like the churches built by Columba and his Irish monks: it was made entirely of wood, and covered with rushes, or rather with that long rough sea-grass, whose pivot-like roots bind together the sands on the sea-shore, and which is still found in great abundance on the island, as well as on the sandy beach which has to be crossed before the traveller can reach Lindisfarne.[63]

Episcopate of the Scot Finan. 651-661.

He builds of wood the Cathedral of Lindisfarne.

[61] "Et ipse illo ab Hii Scotorum insula ac monasterio destinatus." — Bede, iii. 25. Cf. *Act. SS. Bolland.*, vol. iii. Feb., p. 21.

[62] The Breviary of Aberdeen, quoted by the Bollandists, affirms that Finan's promotion to the episcopate was preceded by a kind of election or postulation proceeding from the clergy and people of Northumbria, the nuns included: "Congregatis cleri populique concionibus, virorum et mulierum utriusque sexus, unanimiter S. Finanum in episcopum Lindisfarnensem Spiritus Sancti gratia eligi instanter postulaverunt et solemniter assumpserunt." But besides the fact of our finding no trace of any similar election in these ancient monuments, it appears to us incompatible with the formal testimony of the almost contemporary Northumbrian Bede: "Interea Aidano de hac vita sublato, Finan pro illo gradum episcopatus, a Scotis ordinatus ac missus, acceperat." — Bede, iii. 25.

[63] "Fecit ecclesiam episcopali sede congruam: quam tamen more Scotorum, non de lapide, sed de robore secto totam composuit atque arundine texit." This herb is called in English *bent*, and the sandy flats which it covers, and which extend along all the coast of Northumbria and of southern Scotland, take the name of *links*.

Vast as was his diocese, which embraced the two great Northumbrian kingdoms, and great as must have been his influence over the other Saxon provinces, Finan seems farther to have preserved and exercised an authority not less complete over the country of his origin, the kingdom of the Dalriadian Scots. The Scots annalists all speak of a certain King Fergus, who, by his violence and exactions, had raised the indignation of the Scottish clergy, and called down upon himself a sentence of excommunication from the bishops of Lindisfarne, Finan and his successors.[64] These Celtic bishops were at all times far from courtly. Finan left among the Anglo-Saxons the reputation of a man rough and intractable,[65] and we shall see that his successor was no less difficult than himself.

Colman, second successor of Aïdan. 661-664.

He was succeeded by Colman, a monk of Iona, sent forth by that community, like Aïdan and Finan, to govern the Northumbrian Church,[66] and to evangelize the Northern Anglo-Saxons. He is believed to have been born in Ireland, and on this account he is held in honor there. It has even been supposed that in him might be recognized one of those young disciples of Columba, whose rustic labors the great Abbot blessed and encouraged from the threshold of the cell in which he pursued his solitary studies.[67] True or false, this tradition accords with history, which shows us in Colman a pontiff penetrated with the same spirit as his predecessors, and always worthy of the monastic sanctuary which, for more than a century, was rendered illustrious by the genius and memory of Columba.

Novitiate of Melrose.

Lindisfarne, as may easily be supposed, did not suffice for the training, or indeed for the shelter of the army of monks employed by the Celtic bishops in the spiritual conquest of Northumbria. To the north of the Tweed, the present boundary between England and Scotland, and about half-way from Lindisfarne to the Scots frontier,

[64] Boece and Leslie, ap. Bolland., l. c.

[65] "Quod esset homo ferocis animi." — Bede, l. c.

[66] "Et ipse missus a Scotis. . . . Venit ad insulam Hii unde erat ad prædicandum verbum Anglorum genti destinatus." — Bede, iii. 23; iv. 4.

[67] Adamnan, ii. 16. It is very difficult, however, to admit the identity of the *Colman* of whom Adamnan speaks with Colman the bishop of Lindisfarne: supposing he had been but twenty years of age at the date of Columba's death in 597, he would have been above eighty at the time of his promotion to the episcopate in 661, and would have been nearly one hundred when he died in 675. Comp. Lanigan, op. cit. vol. iii. pp. 59–61.

they established a kind of branch or establishment for novices, where the monks destined for the labors and trials of the apostolate were received and trained. Some of these, like their bishops, came from Iona, Ireland, and the land of the Scots, while others were taken from the ranks of the Saxon converts.[68] This outpost of Lindisfarne and Iona bore the name of *Melrose* — not the Cistercian Melrose, with the name of which Walter Scott has made us familiar, while its picturesque ruins attract all the visitors of the famous quadrilateral formed by the four most beautiful ruins in Scotland, Kelso, Jedburgh, Dryburgh, and Melrose — but a more ancient and more holy Melrose — whose memory has been too much effaced by its brilliant offspring. It was situated on a kind of rounded promontory almost completely encircled by the winding current of the Tweed, the banks of which at this part of its course are very abrupt and thickly wooded. The spot was one of profound solitude, as the very name indicates (*Mailross* or *Mul-ross*, desolate point);[69] and here was raised a sanctuary, which was for many years the centre of light and life to all the surrounding country, long frequented by pilgrims, whose paths are still pointed out, and from whence issued many of the saints most venerated in the south of Scotland and north of England.[70]

The young Anglo-Saxons in the Irish monasteries.

The first Abbot of Melrose was Eata, one of the twelve young Saxons whom the first Celtic bishop chose for himself as the first-fruits of his episcopate.[71] But neither the zeal of the pastors nor the fervor of the converts was satisfied with those fountains of life and knowledge which gushed forth in Northumbrian soil. Older and more abundant springs were necessary to them. A crowd of youths, some the sons of thanes or nobles, others of the lowest rank, left their country

[68] VARIN, second paper.

[69] The site is still called *Old Melrose*. It is occupied by a pretty country-house, which belonged in July, 1862, to a Mr. Fairholme. It is not more than three miles from the magnificent ruins of the celebrated Cistercian abbey of the same name, the richest and most powerful of all the Scottish abbeys, and which still contained one hundred monks in 1542, when it was destroyed by the Reformers. — MORTON'S *Monastic Annals of Teviotdale;* Edin. 1832, folio. WADE'S *History of St. Mary's Abbey, Melrose*, 1861, Edin.

[70] Boisil, first prior of Melrose, whose name is preserved in the neighboring village of *Newtown St. Boswell's;* Eata, first abbot of Melrose, then bishop of Lindisfarne; and especially the celebrated and popular Cuthbert, of whom more anon.

[71] See preceding chapter, p. 239.

to cross the sea and visit the distant island which was the cradle of their bishops and missionaries — not the monastic isle of Iona, but the great island of Ireland, where Columba and most of his disciples were born. Of these young Anglo-Saxons, some, inflamed with the love of study or of penance, at once enrolled themselves in the crowded ranks of those great Irish communities where the monks were counted by hundreds and even by thousands; others travelled from monastery to monastery, from cell to cell, seeking the masters who suited them best, and giving themselves up under these masters to the delight of *reading* — that is to say, of study, without binding themselves by any other obligation. All were received with magnificent hospitality by the Scots of Ireland, who freely lavished on them not only food and clothing but books and instruction.[72] All the students who remained in Ireland, as well as those who returned to England, continued to retain a natural prepossession in favor of the ancient insular rites, and to be imbued with that peculiar spirit which so long characterized the Christianity of the Celtic races.

Thus began, under the most honorable conditions, and motives as pure as they were generous, the first historical relations between England and Ireland — between the two races, Saxon and Celtic, who were destined by an unhappy mystery to tear one another in pieces even before religion divided them; one of whom, repaying these early benefits by the blackest ingratitude, has long tarnished the lustre of her glory by the perverse stubbornness of her despotism.

The convents of Northumbria.

While so many young Northumbrians, as yet scarcely escaped from the darkness of idolatry, were thus rushing towards the very heights of ascetic life, or plunging with passionate enthusiasm into the studious and learned career of which Ireland was the great centre, and the Celtic cloisters the principal home, their sisters found asylums where peace and freedom were guaranteed to those whom the service of God and the vows of Christian virginity drew into them. Thanks to the solicitude of the missionary bishops of the line of Columba, the dignity, authority, and moral power which universal report from Tacitus downward agrees in according to the Germanic woman, assumes in the cloister a new, more durable, and universal form, without, however, lessening the duty and right which

[72] See the text of Bede (iii. 27) already quoted, p. 126.

she was acknowledged to possess of occasional intervention in the gravest concerns and most solemn deliberations of the commonwealth.

The principal monasteries destined to afford a home and stronghold to the noble daughters of the conquering Saxons were established on the coast of Northumbria, where already Bamborough and Lindisfarne, the military and the religious capitals of the country, were planted, as if the waves of that sea which their warlike ancestors had crossed, and which flowed direct from the coasts of Germany to beat upon the shores of the conquered island, were to be their safeguard against the dangers of the future. The first of these monasteries was built on the borders of Deïra and Bernicia, on a wooded promontory where the deer then found a covert, and which has since become, under the name of Hartlepool, one of the most frequented ports on the coast.[73] It was founded by a Northumbrian, Heïa by name, the first woman of her race who embraced conventual life, and who received the veil and religious consecration from the hands of Bishop Aïdan.[74] The life of a community, and especially the functions of superior, soon, however, became fatiguing to Heïa, who betook herself to a solitary retreat in the interior of the country. Aïdan replaced her by a descendant of Odin and of Ella, a princess of the blood-royal and of the Deïrian dynasty. This was Hilda, grand-niece of Edwin, the first Christian king of Northumbria, and father of the queen who shared the throne and the bed of Oswy.

Hartlepool. About 645.

Aïdan gives the veil to the first Northumbrian nun, then to the Princess Hilda. 649.

This illustrious lady seemed to be called by her genius and character even more than her rank to exercise a great and legitimate authority over her compatriots. Born in exile, during the sovereignty of Ethelfrid, among the Saxons of the West, where her mother died a violent death, she had returned with her father on the restoration of his race in 617. In her early youth she had been baptized, with her

[73] "Heruteu, id est, insula cervi." — Bede, iii. 24. *Hert* or *hart*, stag; *eu*, isle. We shall take leave throughout to use the modern names of towns and monasteries instead of the Saxon names, which divers erudite modern writers have tried to reintroduce. We shall then say Whitby and not *Streaneshalch*. Hartlepool and not *Heruteu*, Hexham and not *Halgulstadt*.

[74] "Quæ prima feminarum fertur in provincia Nordanhymbrorum propositum vestemque sanctimonialis habitus, consecrante Ædano episcopo, suscepisse." — Bede, iv. 23. It will be seen farther on whether it is possible to adopt the common opinion which confounds this first Northumbrian nun with St. Bega (*St. Bees*), the Irish princess, who is mentioned at another place.

uncle King Edwin, by the Roman missionary Paulinus, which did not, however, prevent her from leaning during her whole life to the side of the Celtic missionaries. Before consecrating her virginity to God, she had lived thirty-three years *very nobly*, says Bede, among her family and her fellow-citizens. When she understood that God called her, she desired to make to Him a complete sacrifice, and forsook at once the world, her family, and her country.[75] She went into East Anglia, the king of which had married her sister, and whence she designed to cross over to France, in order to take the veil either at Chelles, where her widowed sister was one day to devote herself to God,[76] or in some of the monasteries on the shores of the Marne, which sprang from the great Irish colony of Luxeuil, and whither the Saxon virgins already began to resort.[77] She spent a whole year in preparations for her final exile, but she was not permitted to carry it out. Bishop Aïdan authoritatively recalled her to her own country, and settled her there, obtaining for her a small estate sufficient to support a single family, and situated on the banks of the Wear, a little river which has now become, like the Tyne, one of the greatest arteries of English shipping.

Hilda, Abbess of Hartlepool. 649.

There she lived as a nun with a very few companions until Aïdan summoned her to replace the foundress of the Monastery of Hartlepool, where she was invested with the government of a large community.[78]

[75] "Desiderans exinde, si quo modo posset, derelicta patria et omnibus quæcunque habuerat, in Galliam pervenire. . . . Quo facilius perpetuam in cœlis patriam posset mereri." — Bede, iv. 23.

[76] Bede seems to imply that Hereswintha, Queen of East Anglia, was already a nun at Chelles, when Hilda wished to take the veil there; which would be an impossibility, as Hilda became Abbess of Hartlepool before Aïdan's death in 651, and her sister could scarcely take the vows before the death of her husband, King Anna, slain in 654. It is then to the close of Hilda's cloister life that Bede's words must apply: "In eodem monasterio soror ipsius Hereswid . . . regularibus subdita disciplinis ipso tempore coronam exspectabat æternam." — Cf. Thomas Eliensis, ap. Wharton, *Anglia Sacra*, t. i. p. 595. Besides, the Monastery of Chelles, which a vague tradition refers to St. Clotilda, was actually founded by the Saxon Bathilda, and she became Queen of Neustria only on her marriage with Clovis II. in 649. Some uncertainty, farther, rests on this Heriswida. Pagi (*Critic. in Baronium ad an.* 680) maintains that she became a nun in 647 — seven years before her husband's death. Various English historians give her for husband, not Anna, but one of the brothers of that prince, Ethelher or Edric.

[77] See vol i. p. 614.

[78] The original monastery of Hartlepool, destroyed in the ninth century, like all others on the Northumbrian coast, by the Danes, was not restored, but replaced later by a convent of Franciscans. An ancient church, dedicated to St. Hilda, still exists, near which excavations carried on between

Nine years later, when the peace and freedom of Northumbria had been secured by the final victory gained by King Oswy over the Mercians, Hilda took advantage of a gift of land sufficient for ten families, which that prince had granted her, to establish a new monastery at Streaneshalch, now Whitby, a little to the south of her ancient abbey, and on the same coast. Then foundress of Whitby. 658.

Of all the sites chosen by monastic architects, after that of Monte Cassino I know none grander and more picturesque than that of Whitby. It is even, in certain aspects, still more imposing than the Benedictine capital, as being near the sea. The Esk, which flows through a hilly country, unlike the ordinary levels of England, forms at its mouth a circular bay, commanded on every side by lofty cliffs. On the summit of one of these rocks, 300 feet above the sea, Hilda placed her monastery, on a platform of green and short seaside turf, the sides of which slope abruptly to the northern ocean. From this spot the eye wanders now over the uplands, valleys, and vast heaths of this part of Yorkshire, now along the rough precipices which line the coast, now on the wide horizon of the sea, whose foaming waves break against the perpendicular sides of the great rocky wall which is crowned by the monastery. The dull roar of the tide accords with the sombre tints of the rocks, which are rent and hollowed out by its force; for it is not here, as on the shores of the channel, where the whiteness of the cliffs has gained the name of Albion for the island of Great Britain. The precipices of the Yorkshire coast are, on the contrary, as dark in color as they are abrupt and rugged in outline.[79] Nothing now remains of the Saxon monastery: but more than half of the abbey church, restored by the Percies in the time of the Normans, still stands, and enables the marvelling spectator to form to himself an idea of the solemn grandeur

1833 and 1843 brought to light several Anglo-Saxon tombs, with the emblems and names of women — *Hildithryth*, *Hildigyth*, *Cannygyth*, *Berchtgyd*, *Bregusvid* — which seem to have been those of nuns of the Anglo-Saxon community. The last of these names is that of the mother of Hilda, and several of the others are found in the correspondence of St. Boniface with the Saxon nuns. This discovery has given rise to an interesting work, without date or author's name, entitled *Notes on the History of St. Begu and St. Hild*. Hartlepool.

[79] Not so the rocks which border the inner bay formed by the embouchure of the Esk. They are of a brilliant white, and these bright cliffs in the midst of the great black rocks of the coast explain why the Danes, after having destroyed the monastery of Hilda, gave the name of Whitby (*Whiteby*, white dwelling) to the establishment they created there.

of the great edifice. The choir and the north transept are still complete, and offer one of the most beautiful models of English architecture. The two façades of the east and north each with three rows of three-pointed windows, are of unrivalled elegance and purity. The beautiful color of the stone, half worn away by the sea-winds, adds to the charm of these ruins. A more picturesque effect could not be imagined than that of the distant horizon of the azure sea, viewed through the great hollow eyes of the ruinous arches. These majestic relics are now preserved with the respect habitually shown by the English to the monuments of the past ; but they cannot always withstand the destroying action of time and the elements. The great central tower fell in 1830. Let the intelligent traveller lose no time, therefore, in visiting one of the oldest and most beautifully situated ruins in Europe, and let him there accord a prayer, or at least a remembrance, to the noble daughter of the Northumbrian kings, who of old erected on this desert rock a pharos of light and peace for the souls of men, by the side of the lighthouse designed to guide the mariners on that stormy sea![80]

The original name, Streaneshalch, signified *The Isle of the Beacon*, and it was probably by this service conferred on the people of the coast that Hilda inaugurated her reign on this promontory, for it was a true reign, temporal as well as spiritual. At Whitby, as at Hartlepool, and during the thirty years that she passed at the head of her two houses, she displayed a rare capacity for the government of souls, and for the consolidation of monastic institutions. This special aptitude, joined to her love of monastic regularity, and her zeal for knowledge and ecclesiastical discipline, gave her an important part to play, and great influence. Her society was sought by Bishop Aïdan, and all the religious who knew her, that they might learn those secrets of divine love and natural wisdom which dwelt

Her reign of thirty years.

[80] The principal details of this monastic church, which is of the beautiful order known as the *Early English*, are perfectly rendered in the magnificent folio published by Edmund Sharpe, an architect, and entitled *Architectural Parallels selected from Abbey Churches*, London, 1848, 121 plates. It was 300 feet long by 70 broad. It is marked by one curious peculiarity; it describes a curve, slightly bending towards the south, so that the door in the western façade is not in an exact line with the central window of the choir. These ruins are now part of a farm belonging to Sir Richard Cholmondeley. The town of Whitby, situated at the foot of these ruins, on the Esk, is a very flourishing seaport, and much frequented by bathers.

in her. The kings even, and princes of her blood, or of the adjacent provinces, often came to consult her, asking enlightenment which they afterwards joyfully acknowledged themselves to have received. But she did not reserve for the great ones of the earth the treasures of her judgment and charity. She scattered around her everywhere the benefits of justice, piety, peace, and temperance. She was ere long regarded and honored as the mother of her country, and all who addressed her gave her the sweet name of mother, which she so well deserved. Not only in Northumbria, but in distant regions, to which the fame of her virtue and enlightenment had penetrated, she was to many the instrument of their salvation and conversion.[81] And in her two communities especially she secured, during a rule of more than thirty years, the supremacy of order, union, charity, and equality, so much, that it became usual to say to the proud Northumbrians, that the image of the primitive Church, wherein was neither rich nor poor, and where all was common among the Christians, was realized at Whitby.

But the most touching particular of all in the enthusiastic narrative of the venerable Bede, is that which proves the passionate tenderness felt for her by her daughters, especially by the young virgins whom she prepared for religious life in a separate house, by the discipline of a novitiate establishment regularly constituted and attentively superintended.[82]

Nor did the royal abbess confine herself to the government of a numerous community of nuns. According to a usage then very general, but principally prevailing in Celtic countries, a monastery was joined to the nunnery. And Hilda inspired the monks subject to her authority with so great a devotion to their rule, so true a love of sacred literature, and so careful a study of the Scriptures, that this mon-

[81] "Quam omnes qui noverant, ob insigne pietatis et gratiæ Matrem vocare consueverant . . . nam et episcopus Aïdan et quique noverant eam religiosi pro insita et sapientia et amore divini famulatus, sedulo eam visitare . . . solebant. . . . Regularis vitæ institutioni multum intenta. . . . Tantæ autem erat ipsa prudentiæ, ut non solum mediocres in necessitatibus suis, sed etiam reges ac principes nonnunquam ab ea quærerent consilium et invenirent. . . . Quam omnes qui noverant, ob insigne pietatis et gratiæ Matrem vocare consueverant. . . . Etiam plurimis longe manentibus ad quos felix industriæ ac virtutis ejus rumor pervenit, occasionem salutis et correctionis ministravit."

[82] "Cuidam virginum . . . quæ illam immenso amore diligebat. . . . In extremis monasterii locis seorsum posita ubi nuper venientes ad conversionem feminæ solebant probari, donec regulariter institutæ in societatem congregationis susciperentur."

astery, ruled by a woman, became a true school of missionaries, and even of bishops.[83] Many ecclesiastical dignitaries, as remarkable for their virtue as for their learning, were sent forth by it;[84] one of whom in particular, St. John of Beverly, attained a degree of popularity rare even in England, where the saints were of old so universally and so readily popular.

The cowherd Ceadmon, a vassal of Hilda, the first Anglo-Saxon poet.

But neither the kings nor princes who consulted the great abbess on her sea-girt promontory, nor the bishops, nor even the saints nurtured in her school, occupy in the annals of the human mind, or in the learned researches of our contemporaries, a place comparable to that held by an old cowherd who lived on the lands belonging to Hilda's community, and whose memory is inseparably connected with hers. It is on the lips of this cowherd that the Anglo-Saxon speech first bursts into poetry, and nothing in the whole history of European literature is more original or more religious than this first utterance of the English muse. His name was Ceadmon. He had already reached an advanced age, having spent his life in his humble occupation, without even learning music, or being able to join in the joyous choruses which held such a high place at the feasts and social gatherings of all classes, both poor and rich, among the Anglo-Saxons as among the Celts. When it was his turn to sing at any of these festal meetings, and the harp was handed to him, his custom was to rise from table and go home. One evening, when he had thus withdrawn from his friends, he went back to his humble shed and went to sleep by the side of his cattle. During his slumber he heard a voice, which called him by name, and said to him, "Sing me something;" to which he replied, "I cannot sing, and that is why I have left the supper and come here." "Sing, notwithstanding," said the voice. "But what, then, shall I sing?" "Sing the beginning of the world; the creation." Immediately on receiving this command, he began to sing verses, of which before he had no knowledge, but which celbrated the glory and power of the Creator, the eternal God, worker of all marvels, father of the human race, who had given to the sons of men the heavens for their roof, and the

[83] "Tantum lectioni divinarum Scripturarum suos vacare subditos . . . faciebat, ut facillime viderentur ibidem qui ecclesiasticum gradum, hoc est, altaris officium apte subirent, plurimi posse reperiri." — Bede, iv. 23.

[84] Bede names six with the highest eulogies — "Quinque episcopos omnes singularis meriti ac sanctitatis viros. . . . Vir strenuissimus et doctissimus, atque excellentis ingenii vocabulo Tatfrid, de ejusdem abbatissæ monasterio electus."

earth for their dwelling-place. On awaking, he recollected all that he had sung in his dream, and hastened to tell all that had happened to him to the farmer in whose service he was.[85]

The Abbess Hilda, when the story was repeated to her, called for Ceadmon and questioned him in the presence of all the learned men whom she could assemble around her. He was made to relate his vision and repeat his songs, and then different passages of sacred history and various points of doctrine were explained to him, that he might put them into verse. The next morning he was again called, and immediately began to recite all that had been told him, in verses which were pronounced to be excellent. He was thus discovered all at once to possess the gift of improvisation in his mother tongue. Hilda and her learned assessors did not hesitate to recognize in this a special gift of God worthy of all respect and of the most tender care. She received Ceadmon and his whole family within the monastic community of Whitby, and afterwards admitted him to the number of monks who were under her rule, and made him carefully translate the whole Bible into Anglo-Saxon. As soon, accordingly, as the sacred history and the gospel were narrated to him, he made himself master of the tale, ruminated it, as Bede said, as a clean animal ruminates its food, and transformed it into songs so beautiful that all who listened to him were delighed.[86] He thus put into verse the whole of Genesis and Exodus, with other portions of the Old Testament, and afterwards the life and passion of our Lord and the Acts of the Apostles.

His talent and his poetic faculty thus went on day by day to fuller development, and he devoted numerous songs to such subjects as were best calculated to induce his companions to forsake evil and love and practise the good: the terrors of the last judgment, the pains of hell, the joys of paradise, the action of Divine Providence in the world — all these great and momentous subjects were in their turn woven

[85] "Nonnunquam in convivio cum esset lætitiæ causa decretum ut omnes per ordinem cantare deberent, ille ubi appropinquare sibi citharam cernebat, surgebat a media cœna. . . . Dum relicta domo convivii egressus esset, ab stabula jumentorum . . . ibique membra dedisset sopori. Cædmon, canta mihi aliquid . . . at ille: Nescio cantare. . . . Canta principium creaturarum." — Bede, iv. 24.

[86] "Ipse cuncta, quæ audiendo discere poterat, rememorando secum et quasi mundum animal ruminando in carmen dulcissimum convertebat; suaviusque resonando doctores suos vicissim auditores suos faciebat."

into his verse. The fragments that remain enable us to estimate the earnest and impassioned inspiration, strongly Christian and profoundly original, which characterized these first efforts of genius, barbarous, but subdued and baptized.

The precursor of Milton.

The Northumbrian cowherd, transformed into a monk of Whitby, sang before the abbess Hilda the revolt of Satan and Paradise Lost a thousand years earlier than Milton, in verses which may still be admired even beside the immortal poem of the British Homer.[87] Notwithstanding Bede's assertion that poetry cannot be translated from one language to another without losing its honor and dignity, we shall borrow from the nervous pen of one of our contemporaries a translation which conveys a just idea of the sombre and wild genius of this truly biblical poet.[88] "Why," says Satan, speaking of God, "should I implore His favor, or bow myself before Him with obedience? I can be a god like Him. Up with me, brave companions who will not fail me in the struggle? brave-hearted warriors who have chosen me for your chief! illustrious soldiers! With such warriors, in truth, one can choose a side; with such combatants one can seize a post. They are my zealous friends, faithful in the warmth of their hearts. I can, as their chief, govern in this kingdom; I have no need to flatter any one; I will be His subject no more!"

He is vanquished, and hurled into the city of exile — into the abode of groans and hatred — into the hideous eternal night, the darkness of which is broken by smoke and crimson flames. "Is this," he says, "the narrow spot in which my master shuts me up? How different from the dwellings that we know on high in the kingdom of heaven! Oh! if I had the free power of my hands, and if I could issue forth for once, for one winter only, I and my army! But bands of iron

[87] This fragment of Ceadmon's poem on the revolt of Satan, discovered by Archbishop Usher, and printed for the first time in 1655, has been preserved, and frequently published since that date. It has been republished with learned annotations by Dr. Bouterweck, *De Cedmone poeta Anglo-Saxonum vetustissimo brevis Dissertatio*, at Elberfeld, 1845. Sir F. Palgrave, one of the most competent critics of English history and literature, justly remarks that there are in this fragment passages so like the *Paradise Lost* that some of Milton's lines read like an almost literal translation. There was an interval of a thousand years between them, Ceadmon dying about 680, and Milton in 1674. Compare Sharon Turner's *History of the Anglo-Saxons*, l. iv. c. 3.

[88] "Neque enim possunt carmina, quamvis optime composita, ex alia in aliam linguam ad verbum sine detrimento sui decoris ac dignitatis transferri."

surround me — chains bind me down helpless. I am without a kingdom. The fetters of hell shackle me so firmly, clasp me so tightly! Here are huge flames; above and below I have never seen so horrible a place. The fire never languishes — its heat ascends above hell. The rings that encircle me, the manacles that gnaw my flesh, keep me from advancing, and close the way before me; my feet are tied, my hands imprisoned. Thus has God shut me in." Since nothing can be done against Him, it is against His own creature, man, that the enemy must turn. To him who has lost all, revenge is still left; and in securing that, the vanquished may yet be happy and rest placidly even under the weight of the chains with which he is laden.[89]

His holy life.

It would, however, be a totally mistaken idea to recognize in the Abbess Hilda's dependant nothing but a poet or literary pioneer; he was above all a primitive Christian, a true monk, and, in one word, a saint.[90] His mind was mild and humble, simple and pure; he served God with tranquil devotion, grateful for the extraordinary grace that he had received from heaven. But he was so full of zeal for monastic regularity that he opposed with great vehemence the transgressors of the rule — an error for which he seems to have felt some compunctions at the very point of death. No frivolous or worldly subjects ever inspired his verse; he composed his songs only that they might be useful to the soul, and their solemn beauty did even more for the conversion than for the delight of his countrymen. Many were moved by them to despise this world, and to turn with ardent love to the divine life. Many Englishmen after him, says Bede, have tried to compose religious poems; but no one has ever equalled the man who had only God for his master.[91]

[89] This translation is borrowed from *L'Histoire de la Littérature Anglaise*, by M. Taine. The author of that work, in which so much talent is mixed up with so many lamentable errors, says very justly of Ceadmon: "Thus is true poetry born. . . . It does but repeat, over and over, one passionate burden. These are the songs of the ancient servants of Odin, now tonsured and wrapt in a monk's frock. Their poetry remains unchanged. They think of God, as of Odin, in a succession of images, brief, crowded, impassioned, like successive flashes of lightning. The Satan of Milton exists in that of Ceadmon as a picture exists in a sketch, for both derive their picture from the race, and Ceadmon has found his materials in the warriors of the North, as Milton in the Puritans."

[90] The Bollandists have devoted a special article to him (vol. ii. Feb., p. 552), *De S. Cedmono, cantore theodidacto;* but they make no material addition to what we learn from Bede.

[91] "Erat vir multum religiosus et regularibus disciplinis humiliter subditus. . . . Quadam divina gratia specialiter insignis. . . . Quicquid ex

His gentle death. About 680.

He died as poets seldom die. At the very beginning of his illness he desired his bed to be made in that part of the infirmary which was assigned to the dying, and while smiling and talking cheerfully with his brethren, asked for the *viaticum*. At the moment when he was about to administer the communion to himself, according to the usage of the period, and while holding in his hands the holy eucharist, he asked all those who were round him if any one had any grudge against him, or any complaint to make. All answered, No. Then said he, "I too, my children, have a mind at peace with all God's servants." A little after he had made his communion, as they were about to awaken the monks for matins, he made the sign of the cross, laid his head on the pillow, and fell asleep in silence, to awake no more.[92]

Apart from the interest which attaches to Ceadmon from a historical and literary point of view, his life discloses to us essential peculiarities in the outward organization and intellectual life of those great communities which in the seventh century studded the coast of Northumbria, and which, with all their numerous dependants, found often a more complete development under the crosier of such a woman as Hilda than under superiors of the other sex. It is apparent that admission to the benefits of monastic protection and shelter was not confined to isolated monks, but was extended to whole families.[93] And the example of Hilda also discloses how earnest was the desire of the superiors of monasteries to instruct the ignorant masses, and to familiarize them, by instruction in the vulgar tongue, or by poetic paraphrases, with Holy Scripture and Christian doctrine.

divinis litteris per interpretes disceret hoc ipse post pusillum. . . . Verbis poeticis maxima suavitate et compunctione compositis in sua, id est, Anglorum, lingua proferret. . . . Alii post illum in gente Anglorum religiosa poemata facere tentabant, sed ei nullus æquiparari potuit: non ab hominibus . . . sed divinitus adjutus gratis canendi donum accepit. . . . Unde nihil unquam frivoli et supervacui poematis facere potuit; sed ea tantummodo quæ ad religionem pertinent. . . . Simplici ac pura mente tranquillaque devotione Domino servierat." — BEDE, l. c.

[92] "In proxima casa, in qua infirmiores et qui prope morituri esse videbantur, induci solebant. . . . Cum ibidem positus vicissim aliquo gaudente animo, una cum eis qui ibidem ante inerant, loqueretur et jocaretur. . . . *Et tamen*, ait, *afferte mihi eucharistiam*. Qua accepta in manu, interrogavit si omnes placidum erga se animum et sine querela controversiæ ac rancoris haberent. . . . Sicque se cœlesti muniens viatico . . . reclinavit caput ad cervical, modicumque obdormiens, ita cum silentio vitam finivit."

[93] "Susceptum in monasterium cum omnibus suis fratrum cohorti adsociavit." — BEDE, l. c.

Whitby, with its lighthouse and its great monastery, was the most southerly place of refuge on that Northumbrian coast, still so formidable to sailors, which at that time was lined with so many sanctuaries. At the northern extremity of the same coast, beyond Lindisfarne, on what is now the frontier of Scotland, at Coldingham, rose also, as at Whitby, two monasteries — the one for men and the other for women — both founded and governed by one abbess. While Hilda, the Deïrian princess, ruled her monasteries on the shores of her father's kingdom, Ebba, a princess of the rival dynasty, granddaughter of Ida the Burner, daughter of Ethelfrid the Ravager, but sister of the sainted King Oswald, and of Oswy the reigning king, formed on the sea-coast of Bernicia another manastic centre, which was yet to hold an important position, and to work out a stormy history. It had been the intention of her brother to give her in marriage to the king of Scots — a union meant undoubtedly to strengthen or to re-establish the alliance of the restored family of Ethelfrid with the Scottish dynasty which had offered the exiles such generous hospitality during the reign of Edwin, the chief of the race by which they had been exiled. Ebba, however, was obstinately opposed to this marriage. Her family had all embraced, during their banishment, the principles of the Christian faith, and it was now her desire to advance to the practice of the counsels of the Gospel. It was not from the hands of Aïdan, but from those of Finan, his successor at Lindisfarne, that she received the veil:[94] Oswy left her at liberty to devote herself to God, and gave her a piece of land on the banks of the Derwent where she might found her first monastery, which received the name of Ebba's Castle.[95] But the principal scene of her activities was Coldingham, in a situation which she seems to have chosen in emulation of that of Whitby. Her great and famous monastery was built, not on the spot now called by her name,[96] but on the summit of an isolated promontory which still bears the title of St. Abb's Head, or Cape, and which abruptly terminates the range of the Lammermoors, thrusting itself out into the German Ocean. From this headland, or rather precipice, which rises perpen-

Ebba, princess of Bernicia, becomes Abbess of Coldingham.

[94] *Act. SS. Bolland.*, vol. v. August, p. 197.

[95] Ebbæ-Castrum, whence Ebbchester, a village in the county of Durham.

[96] It owes this name to a priory founded by a colony of monks from Durham in 1098, and very richly endowed by the kings of Scotland.

dicularly for more than 500 feet from the level of the sea, the view embraces, on the north, the Scotch coast to the farther side of the Forth, and, on the south, the English coast as far as the holy isle of Lindisfarne and the royal acropolis of Bamborough. A small ruined chapel is all that remains to mark the site of the great sanctuary of Ebba, who was, like Hilda, placed at the head of a double community of men and of women, and presided over the religious life of northern Northumbria with no less success, and for an equal length of time, taking her part, also during nearly thirty years, with no less authority in the affairs of her country.[97]

She also reigns for thirty years 650-683.

She did not always succeed, however, in maintaining amongst her daughters the fervor and the regularity of which she herself gave an example. That relaxation of discipline from which, by a mysterious and terrible jndgment of God, the religious orders have never been able to preserve themselves, and which was destined to invade so speedily the Anglo-Saxon cloisters, made its way into Coldingham even during the lifetime of the foundress. She was warned of this by a holy priest of her community who had come from Ireland with the other Celtic missionaries, and who was called Adamnan, like the historian and successor of Columba at Iona As he went with the abbess through the vast and lofty buildings which she had erected upon her promontory, he said to her with tears, "All that you see here, so beautiful and so grand, will soon be laid in ashes." And as the astonished princess exclaimed against his prophecy, "Yes," continued he; "I have seen in my vigils an unknown one who has revealed to me all the evil that is done in this house, and the punishment that is prepared for it. He has told me that he has visited each cell and each bed, and that everywhere he has found the monks and the nuns either wrapt in a shameful sleep, or awake to do evil. These cells, intended for prayer or for study, are made use of sometimes for irregular repasts, sometimes for senseless gossip and other frivolities. The virgins consecrated to God, employ their leisure in weaving garments of excessive fineness, either to attire themselves as if they were the brides of men, or to bestow them on strangers. For this the vengeance of heaven will

Disorders noted in the community of Coldingham, by the monk Adamnan.

[97] "Sanctimonialis femina et mater ancillarum Christi, nomine Ebba, regens monasterium . . . religione pariter et nobilitate cunctis honorabilis." —BEDE, *Vita S. Cuthberti*, c. 10.

send fire to consume the place and chastise its inhabitants." It is evident that these scandals were not by any means so serious as many that occurred elsewhere and at a later period; but in the midst of the general fervor of the new Christians of England they seemed to deserve fire from heaven. Ebba, thus warned, did what she could to amend the state of affairs, and the fire which devastated for the first time her great community did not break out till after her death.[98]

Fervor and austerity of the Northumbrian monks.

It is right to give this incident with some minuteness, for it is the only symptom of decay which we have discovered in the period. With this one exception, no cloud, of which history has preserved any record, obscures the renown of the regular clergy of Northumbria. The universal admiration won for the monastic capital of Lindisfarne by the regularity, the fervor, and the extraordinary austerity of its numerous inhabitants, is proved by all witnesses as with one voice. Their fasts, which came to them by tradition and obligation from Ireland, excited special wonder — fasts very much more meritorious in that raw, damp climate, than those of the fathers of the desert under the burning sky of the East, and which contrasted strangely with the habitual voracity of the Anglo-Saxons, whose sons began to people Lindisfarne and its dependencies. In Ireland the Cenobites, and especially the Anchorites, frequently lived on bread and water alone.[99] Two centuries later, a German[100] monk related to his wondering countrymen that the usage of the Scotic monks who inhabited Ire-

[98] "Cuncta hæc quæ cernis ædificia publica vel privata, in proximo est ut ignis absumens in cinerem convertat. . . . Singulorum casas ac lectos inspexi . . . omnes et viri et feminæ aut somno torpent inerti, aut ad peccata vigilant. Nam et domunculæ quæ ad orandum vel legendum factæ erant, nunc in commissationum, potationum, fabulationum et cæterarum sunt illecebrarum cubilia conversæ, virgines . . . quotiescunque vacant, texendis subtilioribus indumentis operam dant. . . . Post obitum abbatissæ redierunt ad pristinas sordes, immo scleratiora fecerunt." — Bede, iv. 25. Honest Bede, always so careful in stating the source of his narratives, does not fail to tell us that he had these details from a priest of Coldingham, who, after the fire, fled for refuge to the Monastery of Yarrow, in which the author of the *Ecclesiastical History of the English* composed his work. Let us add that regular discipline was promptly re-established in Ebba's monastery, and that in the following century, at the invasion of the Danes in 870, the nuns, in order that they might not attract the passion of these barbarians, cut off their noses and lips; thus, in saving their honor, winning the glory of martyrdom.

[99] Bede, v. 12.

[100] Ratramnus Corbeiensis, *Contra Græcos*, lib. iv.

land was to fast all the year round, except on Sundays and feast-days, and never to eat before nones or vespers. Bishop Aïdan induced all the communities of monks and nuns in Northumbria to adopt the fast which he observed himself — namely, to eat nothing before nones on the Wednesdays and Fridays of every week, except those between Easter and Pentecost.[101] At Lindisfarne, for more than a century, wine and beer were totally unknown; and the first relaxation of this severity was introduced in favor of a king of Northumbria who became a monk there in 737.[102]

Elsewhere these customs were improved upon by still more notable austerities. At Coldingham, the Adamnan of whom we recently spoke, expiated a youthful fault by taking food only twice a-week, on Sundays and Thursdays, while, at the same time, he often passed the whole night in vigils. He adopted this system from remorse and fear of God, but the love of God at last transformed it into a delight.[103] At Melrose, a monk was held in veneration who, having fallen into a trance, had one of those visions of heaven and hell which made many of the Celtic monks persecutors of Dante. It was his custom to plunge into the waters of the Tweed which flowed by the monastery, to pray there, and that even when the river was covered with ice, which he had to break before he could enter the stream. "Brother Drychthelme," some one called to him from the bank, "how can you bear such cold?" "I have seen it harder and colder," he quietly answered.[104]

A forerunner of Dante.

When a new monastery was to be founded, the Celtic missionaries and the monks trained in their school thought they could not better inaugurate it than by redoubling their fervor and austerity. The son of the sainted King Oswald, who held a kind of provincial royalty in Deïra, determined to establish a monastery where he might hear the word of God, and, above all, where he

Foundation of Lastingham. 648-660.

[101] Bede, iii. 5.

[102] Roger Hoveden, ap. Lingard, i. 227.

[103] "Quod causa divini timoris semel ob reatum compunctus cœperat, jam causa divini amoris delectatus præmiis indefessus agebat." — Bede, iv. 25.

[104] "De fluentibus circa eum semifractarum crustis glacierum, quas et ipse contriverat quo haberet locum standi sive immergendi in fluvio. . . . Mirum, frater Drychthelme, quod tantam frigoris asperitatem ultra rationem tolerare prævales. . . . Frigidiora ego vidi . . . austeriora ego vidi." — Bede, v. 12. Bede is careful to mention, as he always does when he relates his marvels, that he has the story from a certain Irish monk, who, as well as the wise Northumbrian King Aldfrid, had often visited and conversed with this Drychthelme.

might be buried, and be benefited after his death by the powerful help of the prayers of those who served God in that place. For this purpose he applied to a monk of Lindisfarne, who had become a missionary bishop among the Saxons of the East, persuading him to accept one of his estates as an endowment. This man of God — Cedd by name — chose a spot among the mountains as difficult of access as possible, and which seemed fit rather for the haunt of bandits or wild beasts than of men. He then proceeded to purify the spot he had selected by prayer and fasting, and asked leave from the king to remain there in prayer the whole of Lent. During this retreat he fasted every day except Sunday till evening, and then took only a little bread, an egg, and some milk and water. Such, said he, was the custom of those from whom he had learnt the rules of monastic discipline;[105] and such was the beginning of the Monastery of Lastingham, between York and Whitby, which was established on the model of Lindisfarne. We shall hereafter see its abbots holding an honorable place in the annals of the Church of England.[106]

Testimony borne by Bede to the virtues of the Celtic missionaries.

Let us quote once more, in evidence of the virtues of the monks and bishops who converted the north of England, the unquestionable testimony of the celebrated historian, who was at once their adversary and their successor, but who, notwithstanding his dislike, and his strangely exaggerated description of their special peculiarities, yet rendered to the services and virtues of the Celtic missionaries that signal homage which generous hearts delight to accord to the vanquished whom they honor. "The greatness of their disinterestedness and self-denial was very apparent," says Bede, "after their retreat." At Lindisfarne and elsewhere they had only such buildings as were absolutely necessary for existence and decency.[107] They had neither money nor cattle: what the rich gave them they immediately distributed to the poor. They did not consider themselves bound to receive with

[105] "Ne tunc quidem nisi panis permodicum, et unum ovum gallinaceum cum parvo lacte aquæ mixto percipiebat. Dicebat hanc esse consuetudinem eorum a quibus normam disciplinæ regularis didicerat. . . . Expleto studio jejuniorum et orationis, fecit ibi monasterium . . . et religiosis moribus, juxta ritus Lindisfarmensium ubi educatus erat, instituit." — Bede, iii. 23. Whence we can see, says Fleury, that in that country neither milk, nor even eggs, were forbidden in Lent. — *Hist. Eccl.*, l. xxxix. c. 4.

[106] There is still to be seen at Lastingham a beautiful church, believed to be one of the oldest in England.

[107] "Paucissimæ domus . . . illæ solummodo sine quibus conversatio civilis esse nullatenus poterat." — Bede, iii. 26.

splendor the lords and nobles who came to their monasteries for the sole purposes of prayer and to hear the word of God. Kings themselves, when they came to Lindisfarne, brought no more than five or six attendants with them, and contented themselves with the ordinary fare of the brethren. These apostles desired to serve God only, and not the world — they sought to win men through the heart only, not through the stomach. Thus the monkish frock was held in great veneration. Wherever a clerk or a monk appeared he was received with welcome as a true servant of God. Those who met him by the way hastened to bow their heads before him and receive his benediction. Their discourses were listened to by attentive crowds. Every Sunday these crowds flowed into the churches of the monasteries, to gather there the seed of life. As soon as a priest appeared in a village, all the inhabitants clustered round him begging him to preach to them. The priests and clerks travelled through the country only to preach, to baptize, to visit the sick, to save souls. They were so entirely free from all desire of gain, that the princes and nobles had to force them to accept the lands and estates necessary for the founding of monasteries.[108]

Opposition and resistance are not wanting.

It is not, however, to be supposed, that the conversion of Northumbria and of the six other kingdoms of the Heptarchy was carried through without hinderance and convulsions. The monastic historians have made the mistake of dwelling too lightly on the resistance and the revolts which their heroes had to encounter, and which added so much to the merit of what they achieved in the sight of God, as well as in that of man. But enough is visible to enable us easily to fill up what they have left untold. During the two centuries which separate the arrival of Augustine from the accession of Egbert, the perpetual conflict of the savage and uncontrollable nature of the Saxon kings with their new faith and the authority of the bishops and monks, is apparent. Changeable as Proteus, we see them constantly escaping by abrupt changes from all the efforts made to obtain a salutary influence over them. The king who to-day distinguished himself by the fervor of his devotions, and his munificence to the new establishments, would to-morrow abandon himself to all the debaucheries and excesses

Contrasts and uncertainty of character among the kings,

[108] "Tota enim tunc fuit sollicitudo doctoribus illos, Deo serviendi, non sæculo; tota cura cordis excolendi, non ventris." — Bede, iii. 26.

suggested, or pardoned, by heathen instinct. Others sought in the very monasteries, and among the virgins consecrated to God, a prey attractive beyond all other to their ungovernable sensuality. Intestine wars, usurpation, murder, pillage, abominable tortures, violence, and spoliation of every kind, sully at every turn the pages which have preserved to us so many pious and touching incidents. And it was not the kings and chiefs only that were hard to win: the people presented the same difficulties, the same disappointments. In vain the holy bishops and monks, produced so rapidly and in such numbers by the Saxon race, endeavored to win souls and purify them by an exhaustless charity, bestowing with free hands on the poor all the treasures that they received from the rich. Frequently the revolt was open, and the apostle of a district found himself obliged to fly into solitude or exile, there to await the dawn of better days. Sometimes an unforeseen calamity, famine or pestilence, sufficed to convulse the minds of a people, who then in a body would abjure the faith of Christ, and return to their ancient gods. On one side the monks had to struggle without intermission against old customs, which all their zeal could not avail to extirpate, — against the inveterate belief in witchcraft, against the practice of the slave trade, with all its refinements of greed and debauchery ;[109] while, on the other, dull resistance, murmurs, and threats accompanied the work of salvation.

And among the people.

On the north-east coast of England, where the Celtic missionaries had just founded such illustrious monasteries, certain tribes of the coast took vows for their destruction. Bede himself, from whom we have just borrowed so striking a picture of the popularity which surrounded them in Northumbria, forgot, in that description, various particulars which he has recorded elsewhere. It is he who tells how, when the little vessels of the monks, abroad in foul weather, ran the risk of being swamped at the mouth of the Tyne, a crowd of spectators assembled on the shore exulting in their danger, mocking at their self-devotion, and crying with savage irony — "Well done ! this will teach them to live differently from everybody else. Perish the fools who would take our ancient customs from us, imposing new ones which God knows how we can observe !"[110]

Joy of the people of the coast at seeing the monks shipwrecked.

[109] Turner, *op. cit.*, book vii. c. 9, p. 53.

[110] "Stabat in altera amnis ripa vulgaris turba non modica . . . cœpit

Nevertheless, truth and goodness conquered everything. In the long run the humble courage and generous perseverance of the missionaries triumphed over the fury, cunning, and opposition of fallen nature in these children of barbarism. The soldiers of Christ,[111] as from that time the monks were called, remained masters of the field of battle.

CHAPTER III.

PROPAGATION OF CHRISTIANITY BY THE KINGS AND MONKS OF NORTHUMBRIA. — FINAL TRIUMPH OF NORTHUMBRIA UNDER OSWY.

Influence of the three Northumbrian Bretwaldas and their Celtic clergy on the other kingdoms of the Heptarchy.

1. *East Anglia.* — Vicissitudes of Christianity. — The king, converted by Edwin, is assassinated. — His brother, exiled in France, returns a convert with the missionary bishop, Felix. — The king and the bishop evangelize East Anglia. — Supposed origin of Cambridge. — The Irish monk, Fursy, assists in their work. — The visions which make him a forerunner of Dante. — King Sigebert becomes a monk; he issues from his cloister to fight, armed with a staff, against Penda; and dies on the field of battle. — A king-monk among the Cambrians perishes in the same way fighting against the Saxons. — Anna, the successor of Sigebert, is, like him, killed by Penda.
2. *Wessex.* — Christianity is brought hither by King Oswald and the Italian bishop, Birinus. — Oswald, son-in-law and godfather of the King of the West Saxons. — Popular verses about Birinus. — The son of the first Christian king, who had continued a heathen, and had been dethroned by Penda, is converted during exile; re-established in Wessex, he summons thither as bishop a Frank who had been educated among the Celts, but afterwards desires a bishop acquainted with Anglo-Saxon. — Foundation

irridere vitam conversationis eorum, quasi merito talia paterentur, qui communia mortalia jura spernentes, nova et ignota darent statuta vivendi. . . . Rustico et animo et ore stomachantes. . . . Nullus, inquiunt, hominum pro eis roget, nullus eorum misereatur Deus, et qui veteres culturas hominibus tulere, et novæ qualiter observari debeant nemo novit." — Bede, *Vita S. Cuthberti*, c. 3. This anecdote refers to the time when Cuthbert, though he had reached the age of adolescence, was not yet a monk. He became a monk at fifteen. He was born in 637. It was, therefore, about 650 or 651, and exactly at the time of the great Northumbrian foundations at Hartlepool, &c.

[111] "Milites Christi." — Bolland., t. ii. Jun., p. 236.

of Malmesbury and of Winchester. — An English abbot at Glastonbury. — The Anglo-Saxons begin to occupy the episcopal sees. — A West Saxon becomes the first English Archbishop of Canterbury. — Ercombert, King of Kent, destroys the idols.

3. *Essex.* — King Oswy converts his friend Sigebert, King of Essex, baptized by Finan in the villa of the Northumbrian king. — A monk of Lindisfarne becomes Bishop of London. — The first Christian king of Essex killed by his cousin, because he is too ready to forgive. — The first bishop dies of the plague, and thirty of his friends go to die on his tomb. — Relapse of the East Saxons into idolatry. — A new king and a new bishop, educated by the Celts, bring them back to the faith.
4. *Mercia.* — Influence of the King of Northumbria and of the Bishop of Lindisfarne on the conversion of the Mercians. — The son of King Oswy, married to a daughter of the King of Mercia, converts the brother of his wife, and marries him to his sister. — The Celtic missionaries in Mercia. — Unexpected tolerance of the ferocious Penda towards his son and his converted subjects. But he continues his devastations in Northumbria. — Last conflict between him and Oswy. — Battle of Winwæd. — Defeat and death of Penda, the last hero of Saxon Paganism. — Oswy offers his daughter to God in acknowledgment of the victory, and founds twelve monasteries. — Final triumphs of the Northumbrians and of Christianity. — Conquest and conversion of Mercia. — Its first five bishops issue from Celtic cloisters. — Opposition of the monks of Bardeney to the worship of St. Oswald. — The Mercians, revolting against the Northumbrians, nevertheless remain Christians.

Summary. — Of eight Anglo-Saxon kingdoms, one only is exclusively converted by the Roman missionaries; four are converted by the Celtic monks alone; and two by the combined action of the Celts and of bishops sent from Rome. — Sussex alone remains to be won, where a Celtic colony resides without influence.

The extension of Christianity by the Celtic monks of Northumbria in the other kingdoms of the Heptarchy.

From the cloisters of Lindisfarne, and the heart of those districts in which the popularity of ascetic pontiffs such as Aïdan, and martyr kings such as Oswald and Oswin, took day by day a deeper root, Northumbrian Christianity spread over the southern kingdoms. Whether this gradual invasion is to be attributed to the preponderating influence of the last three Bretwaldas, all Christians and Northumbrians, or simply to the expansive force of Celtic missionary labor, can never be discriminated. But what is distinctly visible is the influence of Celtic priests and missionaries everywhere replacing or seconding the Roman missionaries, and reaching districts which their predecessors had never been able to enter. The stream of the divine word thus extended itself from north

to south, and its slow but certain course reached in succession all the peoples of the Heptarchy. Life and light infused themselves through all, and everywhere, along with the immaculate sacrifice, the hymns of a people freed from the yoke of idolatry rose towards the living God.

Let us state rapidly the progress of the pacific invasion made by the Celtic monks, trained in the school of the great Columba, into the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms south of the Humber.[112]

I.

CONVERSION OF EAST ANGLIA.

Vicissitudes of Christianity in East Anglia.

We have seen how Edwin, the first Christian Bretwalda of Northumbria, employed his influence over the country where he had spent his exile to convert the king of East Anglia. Unfortunately this first conversion had not been more durable than that of Northumbria itself under Edwin. Eorpwald, the Christian king, had been assassinated soon after his conversion,[113] and this important kingdom, which comprehended so large a part of eastern England, fell back into idolatry. The singular law which made exile the cradle of the faith and the apprenticeship of royalty to so many Anglo-Saxon princes, appears among the Angles of the East as well as among those of the North. Sigebert, the brother of the murdered king, exiled in France from his youth, was there baptized, and there too had come to admire and understand monastic life. Recalled to reign over his own country, he brought thither with him at once the true faith and the life of the cloister. He was accompanied by a Burgundian bishop of the name of Felix, who placed himself under the jurisdiction of Honorius, Archbishop of Canterbury, and was by him appointed missionary bishop of the East Angles.[114] For seventeen years this foreign bishop

636.

King Sigebert and Bishop Felix.

[112] In order to a full understanding of this chapter, the maps must be consulted.

[113] In preference to the chronology of Bede's annotators, I follow, as far as regards East Anglia, that of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, which is also adopted by the Bollandists in the Life of St. Felix (vol. i. Mart., p. 780).

[114] The seat of this bishopric was first established at Dunwich, then, that town having been ingulfed by the sea, was transferred successively to Elmham, to Thetford, and finally to Norwich, where it still exists.

diligently sowed the seed of eternal life in his new diocese.[115] As in Northumbria, the king and the bishop labored in concert to extend religion and also Christian instruction, for they founded several schools for the literary education of the young English, in imitation of those that Sigebert had seen in France, and which Felix provided with masters obtained from the great monastic school of Canterbury.[116] The origin of the celebrated University of Cambridge has been attributed by many to these monastic schools.

Origin of the University of Cambridge.

But they were not content to imitate Northumbria at a distance; they entered into close relations with the new Celtic mission of that kingdom. The holy bishop Aïdan became the object of the respectful emulation of the Burgundian Felix, who, like him, had come from across the seas to evangelize the English, and who was encouraged in his respect for the Celtic abbot by the example of the Archbishop Honorius himself, notwithstanding Aïdan's obstinate attachment to Celtic custom in respect to the celebration of Easter as opposed to the Roman usage, of which the metropolitan church of Canterbury was the natural guardian in England.[117]

Ere long a Celtic missionary appeared to assist in the joint work of the king and the bishop. This was an Irish monk, named Fursy, of very noble birth, and celebrated from his youth in his own country for his knowledge and his visions. It would be pleasant to follow the example of Bede, to pause in the tale, and leave the vicissitudes of missionary history in England, to repose ourselves for a little amidst the wonderful revelations of this famed precursor of Dante. Bede had his account of these visions from an old East Anglian monk of his community, as pious as he was truthful, who had heard the Irish saint himself recount his visions. Their character was such that this wonderful man, though but scarcely covered by a thin garment during the rude winters of that English coast, frozen by the east winds, was covered with perspiration at

The Irish monk Fursy. 638-650.

[115] "Totam illam provinciam juxta sui nominis sacramentum, a longa iniquitate atque infelicitate liberatam, ad fidem et opera justitiæ ac perpetuæ felicitatis dona perduxit." — Bede, iii. 15.

[116] "Ea quæ in Gallia bene disposita vidit imitari cupiens. . . . Pædagogos ac magistros juxta morem Cantuariorum." — Bede, iii. 18. Cf. Wilhel. Malmesb.; Florent. Wigorn; Henric. Huntingd.; Bolland., t. ii. Mart., p. 781.

[117] "Hæc dissonantia paschalis observantiæ, vivente Ædano, patienter ab omnibus tolerebatur. . . . Ab omnibus etiam qui de pascha aliter sentiebant, merito diligebatur . . . ab ipsis quoque episcopis Honorio Cantuariorum et Felice Orientalium Anglorum venerationi habitus est." — Bede, iii. 25.

the bare recollection of the moving and frightful trances which his spirit had passed through.[118]

Fursy's visions of the punishments of hell.

In the chief of these visions, which Ampère and Ozanam agree in regarding as one of the poetic sources of the *Divina Commedia,* the Irish monk was permitted to contemplate the chastisements reserved for the most abominable sins of his times. "Look," said an angel to him — "look on these four fires that consume the world: the fire of falsehood, for those who renounce the promises of their baptism; the fire of avarice, for those who prefer this world's riches to the love of Heaven; the fire of discord, for those who fear not to injure souls for trifling cause; the fire of impiety, for those who scruple not to spoil and defraud the lowly and the feeble."[119]

This Irish monk came into East Anglia, as he had gone to other countries, to serve God in preaching the Gospel; but one of his visions determined him to remain here longer than was usual to him. The eloquence of his words and the example of his virtues contributed much to the conversion of the heathen, and the confirmation of the Christians in their new faith.[120] King Sigebert received him with great respect, and gave him a large estate surrounded with wood and near the sea, where he might found a monastery. The buildings and wealth of this foundation were afterwards much augmented by the kings and nobles of East Anglia.[121]

At a later period, King Sigebert, who was not only a great Christian and a great philosopher for his time, but also a great warrior, harassed with the contests and troubles of his earthly royalty, resolved to occupy himself no longer with any occupation save the things of the kingdom of heaven, nor to fight except for the King Eternal.[122] Accord-

[118] "De nobilissimo genere Scotorum. . . . Superest adhuc frater senior monasterii nostri qui narrare solet. . . . Adjiciam quia tempus hiemis erat acerrimum et glacie constrictum, cum sedens in tenui veste vir, ita inter dicendum propter multitudinem memorati timoris vel suavitatis, quasi ut media æstatis caumate sudaverat."

[119] "Hi sunt quatuor ignes qui mundum succendunt. . . . Tertius dissentionis, cum animos proximorum etiam in supervacuis rebus offendere non formidant. Quartus impietatis, cum infirmiores exspoliare et eis fraudem facere pronihilo ducunt." — *Act. SS. O. S. B.*, t. iii. p. 289.

[120] "Cupiens pro Domino, ubicumque sibi opportunum inveniret peregrinam ducere vitam. Angelica visione admonitus cœpto verbi ministerio sedulus insistere." — Bede, iii. 19.

[121] At Burghcastle, in the present county of Suffolk.

[122] "Vir per omnia christianissimus atque doctissimus. . . . Tantumque rex ille cœlestis regni amator factus est, ut ad ultimum relictis regni negotiis . . . atque accepta tonsura pro æterno rege militare curaret." — Bede, ii. 16; iii. 18.

ingly he received the tonsure, and entered as a monk the monastery which he had bestowed on his Celtic friend, the Irish Fursy.[123] He thus set the first example, among the Anglo-Saxons, of a king abandoning secular life and sovereignty to enter the cloister; and, as we shall see, his example was not fruitless.

King Sigebert becomes a monk.

But he was not permitted to die as he hoped in the cloister. The terrible Penda, that scourge of the Saxon confederation, and unwearied leader of the heathen, hated his Christian neighbors in the east as well as those of the north. At the head of his numerous Mercians, reinforced by the implacable British, he invaded and ravaged East Anglia with as much fury and success as had attended him in Northumbria. The East Angles, terrified and very inferior in numbers, recollecting the exploits of their old king, sought Sigebert in his cell to place him at the head of their army, his valor and warlike experience being well-known to the soldiers. It was in vain to resist; he could not but yield to the solicitations of his former subjects; but that he might remain faithful to his recent vows he armed himself only with a staff, not with a sword. His devotion was useless; all that he could do was to die for his faith and his country. It was thus, with his staff in his hand, that the king-monk perished at the head of his troops under the sword of the enemy.[124]

He dies fighting for his country. 635.

We may appropriately recall here an incident altogether analogous to this Saxon king's self-sacrifice, the hero of which was a British king fighting against the Saxons. Both had become monks, and were forced in their own despite to leave the cloister and die on the battle-field. Both are too closely connected with our subject to be passed over in silence.

Like Sigebert, the king-monk Teudric falls in battle, but against the Saxons.

Thirty years before the sacrifice of the king of East Anglia — about the year 610 — Teudric, a valiant Welsh king, conqueror in all the battles waged during his reign, abdicated the throne in order to prepare by a period of penitence for

[123] "S. Furseo dedit locum ad construendum monasterium, in quo et ipse post modum relicto regno monachus factus est." — Gervas. Dorob., *Act. Pont. Cantuar.*, p. 1636. But Bede says that he entered a monastery *quod sibi fecerat*, and which is supposed to have been that which has since been known by the name of St. Edmundsbury. — Cf. *Liber Eliensis*, p. 14, ed. 1848.

[124] "Sperantes minus animos militum trepidare, præsente duce quondam strenuissino et eximio, sed ipse professionis suæ non immemor." — Bede, l. c.

death. He concealed himself in an islet formed by the picturesque course of the Wye, in the wild and solitary spot to which the more recent ruins of the Cistercian abbey of Tintern have attracted crowds of sight-seers. But in the reign of his son, the Saxons of Wessex, under King Ceolwulf, crossed the Severn, which had formed their boundary for more than a century, and ravaged the country as far as the Wye. At his people's cry of distress the generous old man left the solitude where he had lived for ten years, and once more led the Christians of Wales to battle with the Pagan Saxons. He awaited the latter at the ford by which they meant to cross the river which bathed the banks of his solitude. A brilliant victory was the reward of his generous devotion. At the mere sight of the old king, armed at all points and mounted on his war-horse, a panic spread among the Saxons, long accustomed to fly before him; but in the flight one of them turned back and gave him a mortal blow. He perished thus in the arms of victory, his skull split open by a Saxon sword. A thousand years afterwards his heroic remains and venerated relics were identified by means of this shattered skull in the stone coffin wherein his faithful followers had buried him, at the confluence of the Severn and the Wye, six miles distant from the battle-field on which he gave up his life for the safety of his country.[125]

King Anna, successor of Sigebert, killed, like him, by Penda. 635-654.

Anna, Sigebert's successor, sprung like him from the race of Uffa, who founded the East Anglian kingdom, had a longer and less stormy reign. Like Sigebert, he was the zealous helper of Felix and Fursy, the Burgundian bishop and the Celtic monk, in the work of converting his kingdom. Like him, he founded numerous monasteries, and like him had the honor to die fighting for his people, invaded and decimated by the hateful Penda. Though he did not become a monk like Sigebert, he left a numerous offspring destined to adopt the life of the cloister, and thus to expiate the guilty weakness of his brother, who succeeded him, and who, although himself a Christian, became the ally of the heathen Penda in his attacks upon the Christians of Northumbria.[126]

[125] F. Godwin, *De Præsulibus Angliæ*, p. 593, ap. Lingard, vol. i. p. 152; Lappenberg, p. 54; *Liber Landavensis*, pp. 133, 134; La Borderie, *op. cit.*, p. 54, who refers this occurrence to the year 575, while Lappenberg fixes it, after an Anglo-Saxon chronicler, on the 3d January, 610.

[126] Fursy, after having founded in East Anglia various double communities of monks and nuns according to the Celtic usage (*De Virtutibus S. Fursei*, ap. Mabillon, *Act. SS. O. S. B.*, vol. ii. p. 296), quitted the ceno-

II.

CONVERSION OF WESSEX.

Christianity carried to the Saxons of the West by King Oswald and Bishop Birinus.

What Edwin had been to the Angles of the East, his saintly and generous successor, Oswald, was to the Saxons of the West, who under Cerdic, one of those bloodthirsty and warlike chiefs who were said to descend in a direct line from the great god Odin, had founded the most western colony of the Saxon immigration, a colony which had become a kingdom of much vaster extent than the kingdoms of the eastern or southern Saxons, or that of the Jutes of Kent. This realm, which extended from the Thames to the Severn, condemned by its position to endless struggles with the Britons of Wales and of Cornwall — a race always thrilling with patriotic hatred of the invader, and destined in the future to absorb the seven other kingdoms of the Heptarchy [127] — was governed in the time of Oswald by two brothers, Cuichelm, from whose attempt at assassination Edwin had barely escaped, and Cynegils, the father of a princess whom Oswald had asked in marriage. When Oswald came in person for his bride, he met at the residence of the King of Wessex a missionary called Birinus.[128] This bishop — who was perhaps not a monk, and whose origin is unknown — had acquired the Saxon language at Genoa, a port much frequented by the Anglo-Saxons, where the bishop of the place had consecrated him. He had been commissioned by Pope Honorius I. to continue the work of the conversion of the Saxons, and had promised in return that he would sow the seed of life even beyond the territory of the Angles, where no preacher had yet penetrated. But landing on the coast of Wessex,[129] he found the population

bitic life in order to become an anchorite. Then seeing East Anglia more and more ravaged by the incursions of the heathens of Mercia, he decreed the dissolution of his communities and departed to France, where he was well received at the court of Clovis II., that great protector of the Irish monks. He there founded the Monastery of Lagny, and died in 650. We have already spoken of him among the successors of St. Columbanus in France, and we shall find his brother and his disciples among the Irish missionaries in Belgium.

[127] "Britannos antiquæ libertatis conscientia frementes, et ob hoc crebram rebellionem meditantes." — Wilhelm. Malmesb., i. 2.

[128] "An fuerit monachus non constat." — Mabillon, *In SS. II. Sæc. Prætermissis.* Cf. Surius, *De Probatis Sanctorum Vitis*, t. vi. p. 771.

[129] In the existing counties of Dorset or Hants.

there, which no doubt he supposed to be already Christianized, still plunged into the darkness of utter Paganism, and devoted himself to their conversion, believing this to be the best way of keeping his promise.[130]

634.

Oswald becomes the son-in-law and the godfather of the King of Wessex.

The influence of the pious and zealous Oswald came most fortunately to aid the missionary's arguments; and when King Cynegils consented with all his people to be baptized, his son-in-law became his godfather.[131] The baptism was performed at Dorchester, which was erected into a bishopric for Birinus by the twofold authority of Cynegils, as provincial king, and of Oswald, as Bretwalda or supreme head of the Saxon confederation.[132]

The success of the mission of Birinus was rapid and complete. He founded many churches and converted multitudes. Many years after the close of his long and fruitful pontificate, popular songs intended for choral singing still celebrated the memory of the *Roman exile*,[133] who had come to emancipate the Saxons of the West from bondage to their idols, and blessed the day which had seen him land on their coasts.

[130] "Promittens se illo (Papa) præsente in intimis ultra Anglorum partibus quo nullus doctor prædecessisset, sanctæ fidei semina esse sparsurum. . . . Sed Gewissorum gentem ingrediens, cum omnes ibidem paganissimos inveniret." — BEDE, iii. 7.

[131] "Cum rex ipse catechizatus, fonte baptismi cum sua gente ablueretur contigit . . . pulcherrimo prorsus et Deo digno consortio, cujus erat filiam accepturus in conjugem, ipsum prius secunda generatione Deo dicatum sibi accepit in filium." — BEDE, iii. 7.

[132] Not the existing county town of Dorsetshire, but a place near Oxford, on the Thames. The episcopal see was, later, transferred to Lincoln. The Saxons of Wessex had two other celebrated bishopries — Winchester, the cathedral of which Birinus is understood to have founded; and Sherborne, afterwards transferred to Salisbury. The clergy of all these cathedrals were monks.

[133] "*Dignus honore pater* micat aureus ecce BIRINUS;
Sanctus adest omni *dignus honore pater*.
Exul ad hunc populum qui venit ab urbe Quiritum;
Pro Christo pergens, *exul ad hunc populum*. . . .
Hostica barbaries omnis sedatur in illo;
Deque lupo fit ovis *hostica barbaries*. . . .
Liber adest populus, sub longo tempore servus;
Nunc Christo famulans, *liber adest populus*. . . .
Sit benedicta dies in qua maris alta petisti;
Huc quæ te duxit, *sit benedicta dies*."

This popular song has been published from a MS. of Alençon by M. Edelstand du Méril (*Poésies Inédites du Moyen Age;* Paris, 1854, p. 277). The learned editor marks the systematic repetition of the first hemistich as a kind of refrain meant for a choir of singers. The same MS. contains poems in which he notes the same kind of rhythm, in honor of two other monastic apostles of the Anglo-Saxons — St. Ethelwald and St. Swithin.

The assassin Cuichelm himself was touched, and received baptism on his death-bed, with his son. But the son of Cynegils, Cenwalch, refused to renounce the religion of his ancestors; and when he succeeded to the throne, it might have been supposed that the work of Oswald and Birinus would be overturned by one of those pagan reactions which had already thrown back into idolatry the subjects of the first Christian king of Kent, as well as the Saxons and Angles of the East. But it does not appear that the new king originated any persecution, or indeed any change whatever; and, singular to say, it was the ferocious heathen Penda who was the instrument of Divine mercy in bringing the young unbeliever to the truth which he had refused to receive at his father's conversion. The terrible King of Mercia, whose sister Cenwalch had refused, avenged that injury by declaring war against him. The new converts of Wessex were no more able than those of Northumbria or East Anglia to resist the savage energy of the Mercian pagans; Cenwalch was defeated, dethroned, and exiled. But for him, as for Oswald and Oswy, exile was the cradle of the faith. He sought refuge with the pious King Anna, and in that family of saints[134] he learned to know and to love the faith of Christ. When he was reinstated in his kingdom, he and his people held to their new religion with inviolable fidelity, and during his reign of thirty years he lent active and intelligent assistance in the extension of the Christian faith and of the monastic order. On the death of Birinus, who, notwithstanding his quality of missionary and bishop sent from Rome, has left no trace of his relations with the Roman colony of Canterbury, the Celtic element reappeared among the Saxons of the West, in the person of a Frank, named Agilbert, who had long studied in the Irish monasteries,[135] from which he had newly arrived when he offered himself to King Cenwalch to carry on the work of the deceased bishop. In this he acquitted himself so well that the king, delighted with his learning and activity, induced him to agree to become the bishop of the kingdom. But at the end of ten years, the same king, who understood nothing but Saxon, grew tired

648.

650.

Cenwalch wishes to have a bishop who

[134] "Nam et ipse apud quem exulabat rex erat vir bonus, et bona et sancta sobole felix." — Bede, l. c.

[135] "Venit de Hibernia pontifex quidam, nomine Agilbertus, natione quidem Gallus, sed tunc legendarum gratia Scripturarum in Hibernia non parvo tempore demoratus." — *Ibid.*

can preach in Anglo-Saxon.

of listening to sermons delivered either in Latin or in that Celtic tongue which he considered barbarous. He does not, however, seem to have been animated by any systematic hostility against the British Celts, who formed a numerous class amongst his subjects; for while he fulfilled a promise made at his father's death-bed, and founded for his Saxons at Winchester the great monastery which has become one of the most important monuments of English architecture,[136] he at the same time protected and favored the national sanctuary of the Celts at Glastonbury. A deed of gift exists in which he engages the monks of that British sanctuary to pray for the Saxon king beside the tomb of Arthur. In his reign, it is true, a Saxon for the first time became abbot of the great Celtic monastery ;[137] but, on the other hand, it was also under him that the Celt Maïdulphe, a professed monk, and at the same time a distinguished philosopher,[138] came from Ireland or Scotland to lay the humble foundations of an abbey which preserves a trace of his name in the later splendors of Malmesbury.

Nevertheless King Cenwalch wanted a bishop who spoke Saxon,[139] and found him in the person of a certain Vini, who had been ordained in France; and for whom he constituted a new bishopric in connection with his recent monastic establishment of Winchester. Agilbert, however, instead of congratulating himself, as he ought to have done, on seeing the far too extensive field of his labors diminished, to the great profit of his flock, by the arrival of this fellow-workman native to the soil, was so irritated that he threw up his episcopate and returned to France, where he became Bishop of Paris.

The Anglo-Saxons gradually obtain the episcopal sees.

The need of and wish for native bishops increased, however, more and more among the Anglo-Saxons. The first who was invested with the episcopal dignity was Ithamar, a native of Kent, who was summoned to succeed the aged Paulinus in the see of Rochester, where the latter had found an honorable retreat after his flight from Northumbria. It was the Archbishop

644. Honorius of Canterbury, himself a Roman monk, like his four predecessors, who chose Ithamar, ac-

[136] Dugdale, *Monasticon Anglicanum*, t. i. p. 31.

[137] *Ibid.*, p. 12.

[138] "Natione Scotus, eruditione philosophus, professione monachus." — Wilh. Malmesb., i. 2.

[139] "Rex qui Saxonum tantum linguam noverat, pertæsus barbaræ loquelæ, subintroduxit in provinciam alium suæ linguæ episcopum." — Bede, l. c.

knowledging him to be a man fully capable of rivalling both in knowledge and virtue the Roman bishops who had hitherto occupied the two Kentish bishoprics.[140]

The small kingdom of Kent, which owed its importance, and perhaps the maintenance of its independence, to the possession of the metropolis of Canterbury, was at this time governed by Ercombert, grandson of the first Christian king, who showed himself even more zealous than his grandsire for the new religion. He enforced the observance of Lent by severe penalties, and gave orders for a general destruction of the idols and heathen temples which had been spared for the previous fifty years, notwithstanding the conversion to Christianity of the great majority of the inhabitants.[141] It was in his reign that, on the death of the archbishop, the last survivor of Augustin's Italian mission, the rank of metropolitan was, after two years' hesitation and delay, conferred, for the first time, on an Anglo-Saxon. The newly converted realm of Wessex had the honor of furnishing to England her first native primate. This fifth successor of Augustin was named Frithona, but thought fit to change that Teutonic name for the purely Roman one of *Deusdedit*. He was consecrated by the English Ithamar, and did not hesitate to remain in friendly relations, or rather to resume intercourse, with the Celtic bishops, who up to this time had scarcely recognized the supremacy of the Church of Canterbury.[142]

640–664.

653.

Frithona, the West Saxon, is Archbishop of Canterbury, 6th March, 655.

III.

CONVERSION OF THE SAXONS OF THE EAST.

Whatever may have been the influence of the saintly King Oswald on the conversion of the West Saxons, it was assuredly less direct and less effectual than that of his brother and successor Oswy upon the Saxons of the East and the midland Angles. It must, indeed, be acknowledged that, of all the Northumbrian

Action of Northumbria on the kingdom of Essex.

[140] "De gente Cantuariorum, sed vita et eruditione antecessoribus suis æquandum." — Bede, iii. 14.

[141] "Cum avus et pater sitra destructionem idolorum fidem nostram coluissent." — Will. Malmesb., *De Gest. Reg. Angl.*, l. i. c. 1.

[142] Hook, *op. cit.*, p. 131.

kings, it is Oswy, stained as he was with the innocent blood of King Oswin, who did most for the extension and defence of Christianity in England.

King Oswy converts his friend King Sigebert. 653.

Sigebert, named *the Good* — king of those West Saxons whom we recently saw driving Mellitus from his bishopric of London, and renouncing the faith which had been urged on them by the preachings of that companion of Augustin, and the influence of the Bretwalda Ethelbert — was Oswy's special friend. Sigebert the Good had dethroned the posterity of those three princes who demanded the communion from the hands of the Christian bishop without having been baptized.[143] He frequently came into Northumbria to visit Oswy as a friend, but doubtless also as the Bretwalda, the sovereign of the confederation, who alone was able to protect the petty kingdom of Essex against its much more powerful neighbors of Wessex and Mercia. Oswy, on those occasions, spoke much to him on the subject of idolatry; he took pains to make him understand that gods could not be made by the hand of man of stone or wood, the rest of which might be put to the vilest uses; but that rather far he should believe in a God incomprehensible and invisible, but all-powerful and eternal, able to govern the world which He has created, and which He will judge, whose throne is in heaven, and not made of worthless metal, and who promises everlasting rewards to such as learn His will and do it on earth. Sigebert suffered himself to be won over by these brotherly and repeated exhortations. After long deliberation with his faithful counsellors, according to the invariable custom of the Saxon kings, and fortified by their unanimous assent, he received baptism, along with his whole court,[144] at the hands of the Celtic bishop Finan, in a royal villa of the Northumbrian kings, called *Ad Murum* (on the wall), from its proximity to the famous rampart built by the Emperor Severus to restrain the incursions of the Caledonians.[145]

[143] See above, p. 197. Compare Lappenberg, Genealogical Table B. of vol. i.

[144] "Fidem quam olim . . . abjecerant . . . instantia regis Oswin receperunt . . . frequenter solebat eum hortari . . . hæc et hujus modi multa cum rex Oswin regi Sigeberto amicabili et quasi fraterno consilio sæpe inculcaret; tandem juvante amicorum consensu credidit, et facto cum suis consilio cum exhortatione, faventibus cunctis et adnuentibus fidei baptizatus est." — Bede, iii. 22.

[145] *Ad Murum.* This spot is believed to have been at Walton, or rather at Wallbottle, near Newcastle.

A monk of Lindisfarne becomes Bishop of London. 653.

The new Christian was unwilling to return to his kingdom without being accompanied by missionaries commissioned to preach to his people the faith which he had just embraced. For these instructors he applied, naturally, to his friend and brother the king, whom he regarded as the author of his own conversion. Oswy gave him a monk of the great Celtic Monastery of Lindisfarne, named Cedd, a Northumbrian by birth, who had already distinguished himself in a mission to the pagans of Mercia.[146] Cedd accordingly went over the whole kingdom of Sigebert, and gathered in a first and ample harvest of souls; after which he returned to Lindisfarne, to be there consecrated bishop of the West Saxons, whose capital and episcopal see, formerly occupied by the Roman monk Mellitus, was at London. The monk of Lindisfarne succeeded where the monk of Mount Cœlius had failed. He ordained numerous priests and deacons to assist him in preaching and baptizing, and founded many churches and monasteries, in which he endeavored to induce the best of his converts to adopt the life of the cloister, as far at least as the rudeness of their habits would permit.[147] He himself made continued journeys to Lindisfarne, in his native Northumbria, to renew his spirit, and to draw from the stern penances and bracing traditions of his order the energy he needed to cope with the difficulties of his task.[148]

The end of King Sigebert the Good shows, with sufficient plainness, the nature of those difficulties, and the combination of firmness and sagacity which was required to overcome them. One of the earls, or principal lords of the country, a near kinsman of the king, having persevered in an illicit connection in spite of the repeated representations of the bishop, Cedd excommunicated him, forbidding any one to enter his house or to eat with him. The king took no notice of this prohibition, and at the invitation of the earl went to dine with him. As he left the house he met the bishop.

[146] Bede. iii. 21. Compare *Act. SS. Bolland.*, t. i. Jan., p. 373.

[147] "In quibus collecto examine famulorum Christi, disciplinam vitæ regularis, in quantum rudes adhuc capere poterant, custodire docuit." — Bede, iii. 23.

[148] "Solebat . . . sæpius etiam suam, id est Northanhymborum, provinciam exhortandi gratia, revisere." — Bede, iii. 23. It was in one of these journeys that he was detained by the son of King Oswald, who reigned over a part of Deira, and who had at his court as priest a brother of Cedd. This prince, Ethelwald by name, persuaded Cedd to accept an estate from him, in order to found a monastery, which might serve as the place of his burial — the Monastery of Lastingham, of which we have spoken above, p. 273.

Both were on horseback, and dismounted to greet each other. The king, affrighted, threw himself at the feet of the bishop, imploring pardon for his fault. The bishop, irritated, touched him with the staff which he carried in his hand, and said to him, "Since you have not chosen to abstain from entering the house of that reprobate, there you shall die."[149]

Death of King Sigebert of Essex. 660.

And, in fact, some time after, the same earl and his brother slew the king, whose kinsmen they were. When they were asked the reason of their crime, they assigned no other than the anger they felt at seeing the chief of their race pardon his enemies so readily — granting pardon as soon as it was asked, according to the precept of the Gospel. And certainly, adds honest Bede, we may believe that such a death sufficed, not only to expiate his disobedience to the bishop, but also to increase his merits in the sight of God.

Death of Cedd and of his thirty friends. 664.

This zealous prelate, whom we shall meet again farther on, survived his royal convert, whom he had so severely judged, and baptized Sigebert's successor. Afterwards, in one of his too frequent excursions to Northumbria, Cedd was seized with a contagious malady, and died at the Monastery of Lastingham, which he had founded, and of which one of his three brothers, like himself all priests and monks of Lindisfarne, was abbot. When the news of his death reached his diocese, thirty East Saxons, whom he had made monks, started in all haste for the north. They sought the monastery where lay the body of their father and founder, with the intention of living there near his remains, or dying and finding their last repose beside him, if such were the will of God. Their desire was quickly granted. At the end of a few days they all died of the same disease that had cut short the bishop's life.[150] How is it possible but to esteem, in spite of his severity, a bishop capable of inspiring such a rare affection? And how, also, is it possible not to love those rough Saxons, scarce converted, but moved even in the cloister by that passionate self-devotion, by that necessity of giving life for the beloved which, in the midst of their natural fierceness, continued the distinctive feature of the Anglo-Saxon race?

[149] "Episcopus pariter desiluit: sederat enim et ipse in equo. . . . Dico tibi quia noluisti te continere a domo perditi et damnati illius, tu in ipsa domo mori habes." — Bede, iii. 22.

[150] "Cupientes ad corpus sui patris, aut vivere, si sic Deo placeret, aut morientes ibi sepeliri." — Bede, iii. 23.

Relapse of the East Saxons into idolatry. King Sebbi.

Yet, notwithstanding, these same Saxons, so easily gained and attached by the light and the virtue of the Gospel, often fell back with a lamentable and surprising facility into the depths of Paganism. Bishop Cedd and his thirty friends were scarcely dead when the people whose apostle and master he had been, apostatized almost in a body. The same disease which had taken from them their bishop, so terrified the East Saxons by its ravages that the king, nobles, and people rivalled each other in their eagerness to restore the temples and altars of offended Woden, hoping thus to ward off the contagion from themselves. Happily another king, named Sebbi, uncle and colleague of the apostate, stood firm, and succeeded in bringing back the whole nation to Christianity, with the aid of the Bishop of the Mercians, a Saxon by birth, but, like so many other pontiffs and missionaries, trained by the Celtic monks of Iona and Lindisfarne.[151] The narratives of Bede, which serve to guide us across the maze of the races and dynasties of the Heptarchy, were taken by him from the lips of a priest who had accompanied this very active and zealous bishop in his unwearied journeys throughout all the corners of the kingdom of Essex, to preach the faith and raise up again the altars of Christ. According to his testimony, the inhabitants were turned back to idolatry less by hostility against Christianity than by indifference as to the future life, of which many denied the very existence. But as soon as the churches were reopened, a multitude of Christians reappeared, who loudly declared they would rather die in the faith of the resurrection of our Lord than live under the impure shadow of their idols.[152]

665.

[151] "Iarumanus, Anglicus natione, sed a Scotis episcopis ordinatus." — *Anglia Sacra*, t. i. p. 425.

[152] "Diligentes hanc vitam et futuram non quærentes, sive etiam non esse credentes. . . . Juxta quod mihi presbyter qui comes itineris ille et cooperator verbi extiterat, referebat. . . . Magis cum fide resurrectionis in illo mori, quam in perfidiæ sordibus inter idola vivere cupientes." — Bede, iii. 30.

IV.

CONVERSION OF THE MERCIANS, OR MIDLAND ENGLISH.

Influence of the king and bishop of the Northumbrians in the conversion of the Mercians.

The personal influence of King Oswy as a preacher of the Gospel, the royal villa at the foot of the old Roman wall, scene of the baptism of the first converts, and the intervention of the Celtic bishop Finan as administrator of the sacraments — all these details, which impress a special character on the conversion of the Eastern Saxons, are identically reproduced in the history of the conversion of the Mercians. But it will be understood how much more difficult and important this task must have been, when the fierceness of the bloody wars, waged during the thirty years of Penda's reign against Christian Northumbria, is considered, and especially when the vast extent of the kingdom of Mercia, almost as large as Northumbria itself, and embracing all the country that lies between the Thames, the Humber, and the Severn, is called to mind. The population of this kingdom was composed of very diverse elements, — first, of great numbers of the conquered Britons; then of Saxon settlers;[153] and, finally, of Angles, especially concentrated on the south-west frontier of Northumbria.[154] Towards the end of his long reign, the ferocious Penda had intrusted the government of the Angles of the Middle to his eldest son Peada. It was through him that Christianity and the Northumbrian influence penetrated into Mercia, and succeeded in beginning operations upon this formidable remnant of darkness, encircled on all sides by newly Christianized states, which still offered a vast and inviolable asylum to Saxon Paganism.

The Mercian Prince Peada asks in marriage the daughter of King Oswy.

As elsewhere, love and marriage had a certain part to play in this revolution. During one of those truces which the sagacious policy of Oswy continued to obtain from ill-starred Northumbria, always bathed in blood or wrapt in flames by the implacable chief of the Mercians, the young Peada, who had

[153] Among others, the Wuiccas on the west, and the Girwas on the east, who are often mentioned by the historians of the period. They had their own kings, whose charters figure among the very limited number of those whose authenticity is recognized by Kemble.

[154] These Angles bore the name of *Middle Angles*, or English of the Middle, to distinguish them from the East Angles, or Angles of the East.

all the virtues and all the external advantages which the Saxons prized most highly in their kings, came into Northumbria to ask the hand of Alchfleda, the daughter of Oswy. Oswy replied that he could not give his daughter to an idolater, and that, in order to win her, Peada and the nation of Angles governed by him must be converted and baptized. The young prince then put himself under instruction, most probably by Bishop Finan; and from the moment when he understood the teachings, and especially the promises, of the Christian faith, the hope of the resurrection, and of that future and everlasting life which the Saxons of the East had been so unwilling to admit, he declared that he would become a Christian, even though the princess whom he sought to wed were refused to him.[155] But Peada seemed to be drawn towards the light of truth even less by his love to Alchfleda than by his friendship for Alchfrid, the brother of the princess. Alchfrid was already his brother-in-law, having married the King of Mercia's daughter, in whom he had found not only a Christian, but a saint,[156] destined to confirm by a new example the providential law, which, amidst the desendants of Odin, selected those who were most marked by the obstinacy and ferocity of their paganism as the progenitors of a race of saints, and especially of saintly women. It would be desirable to have fuller details of the circumstances which brought these two young princes together, and made them friends and brothers before they became related by marriage. We know only that it was Alchfrid who, of all the preachers of the truth, exercised the strongest influence upon the convictions of his friend. The future King of the Mercians received baptism from Bishop Finan at the villa near the Roman wall on the same spot, and almost at the same date, as the King of the West Saxons. The eorls, the thanes, and the men of war (called at a later period counts, lords, and knights) who had accompanied the young Peada to the Northumbrian court, were baptized all along with him, as were also their servants.[157]

Oswy's son marries Penda's daughter.

Union of the two brothers-in-law.

Baptism of Peada.

653.

[155] "Juvenis optimus, ac regis nomine ac persona dignissimus . . . nisi fidem Christi et baptisma cum gente cui præerat, acciperet. At ille, audita prædicatione veritatis, et promissione regni cœlestis, speque resurrectionis ac futuræ immortalitatis, libenter se Christianum fieri velle confessus est, etiamsi virginem non acciperet." — Bede, iii. 21.

[156] Her name, like that of the wife of the heroic Oswald, was Kyneburge, and, later, she became a nun along with her sister Kyneswitha.

[157] "Persuasus maxime ad percipiendam fidem a filio regis Oswin . . .

Missionaries from Lindisfarne in Mercia.

When the Mercian prince, carrying back with him his young wife, returned a Christian from a country which had already been Christianized for twenty years, his companions formed a most precious and effectual nucleus for the complete conversion of Mercia. Oswy had added to their party, in the capacity of missionaries, four monks trained at Lindisfarne, and endowed with the knowledge and virtues which seemed to him needful for the evangelizing of the new province which was to be won over to Christianity. Three of them were Anglo-Saxons, and among these three was Cedd, whom Oswy almost immediately recalled, to intrust him with the mission to the Eastern Saxons. The fourth, named Diuma, was a Celt by birth, and it was he who became the first bishop of the Mercians. These missionaries obtained a rapid and unhoped-for success. The Middle Angles listened to them with manifest sympathy, and every day the nobles and the common people flocked in great numbers to be baptized.[158]

Penda's toleration of his Christian subjects.

The behavior of the savage Penda to his newly converted son and his companions was as singular as it was unexpected. It was to have been looked for that this fierce and unwearied enemy of the Christian kings and nations near him would become the violent persecutor of his own Christian subjects. But it was not so; and, indeed, the history of his frightful ravages in Northumbria and elsewhere records no special indication of enmity against the Christians: no doubt he did not spare them, but there is no proof of his having persecuted them with a peculiar hatred. As to his own kingdom, not only did he take no steps to punish his eldest son and the other converts, but he allowed the Northumbrian missionaries freely to preach the Gospel to all who wished to hear them in those districts, the exclusive sovereignty of which he had reserved to himself. This barbarian ravager and pagan gave thus an example of toleration by which many Christians in ages more enlightened than his might be profited. He confined himself to evincing haughtily his dislike and contempt for those who, after having received the faith of

qui erat cognatus et amicus ejus. . . . Baptizatus cum omnibus qui secum venerant comitibus ac militibus eorumque famulis universis." — Bede, iii. 21.

[158] "Qui ad docendam baptizandamque gentem illius, et eruditione et vita videbantur idonei . . . prædicabant verbum et libenter auditi sunt, multique quotidie nobilium et infimorum, abrenuntiatâ sorde idolatriæ, fidei sunt fonte abluti." — Bede, iii. 21.

Christ, did not practise its works. "Those who despise," said he, "the laws of the God in whom they believe, must be despised as wretches." [159]

Penda, however, continued none the less the pitiless foe of the princes and people of Northumbria. This bloodthirsty and stubborn hatred led him to his destruction.

Last struggle between Oswy and Penda.

It was only at the last extremity that Oswy resolved to engage in a final conflict with the terrible enemy who had conquered and slain his two predecessors, Edwin and Oswald. It has been seen that he married his son and his daughter to children of Penda; and he gave him another of his sons as a hostage. But Penda would not consent to any durable peace. During the thirteen years that had elapsed since the overthrow of Oswald and the accession of Oswy, he had periodically subjected Northumbria to frightful devastations. In vain Oswy, driven to desperation, offered him all the jewels, ornaments, and treasures of which he could dispose, as a ransom for his desolated and hopeless provinces. The arrogant and fierce octogenarian refused everything, being resolute, as he said, to exterminate the whole Northumbrian race, from first to last. "Well, then," said Oswy, "since this heathen contemns our gifts, let us offer them to one who will accept them — to the Lord our God." [160] He then made a vow to devote to God a daughter who had just been born to him, and at the same time to give twelve estates for the foundation of as many monasteries. After this he marched at the head of a small army against Penda, whose troops were, according to Northumbrian tradition, thirty times more numerous. Besides his Mercians, Penda led to battle a crowd of auxiliaries under the command of thirty chiefs who bore the title of king; first of all, the implacable Britons, his constant allies against the Angles of the North; then a body of East Anglians; and finally, by an inexcusable treason against his country and his uncle, the nephew of Oswy, the son of his

[159] "Nec prohibuit Penda rex quin etiam in sua, hoc est, Merciorum natione, verbum, si qui vellent audire, prædicaretur. Quin potius odio habebat et despiciebat eos quos fide Christi imbutos, opera fidei non habere deprehendit, dicens contemnendos esse eos et miseros qui Deo suo quem crederent obedire contemnerent." — Bede, iii. 21.

[160] "Cum acerbas atque intolerabiles pateretur irruptiones . . . dummodo ille provincias usque ad internecionem vastare desineret . . . qui totam ejus gentem a parvo usque ad majorem delere atque exterminare decreverat. . . . Si paganus nescit accipere nostra donaria, offeramus ei qui novit, Domino nostro Deo." — Bede, iii. 24.

brother, who had been killed by Penda, the same Ethelwald who reigned over a portion of Deïra.

Battle of Windwæd, 15th Nov., 655.

Notwithstanding the enormous disparity of the forces, the battle, which was fought on the banks of a river near the site of the present town of Leeds, was lost by Penda. The traitor Ethelwald sought safety in flight as soon as the struggle commenced, but the other allies, Britons and East Anglians, were exterminated. The vanquished in their flight found the river in flood, so that a larger number perished in the waters than by the sword.

Death of Penda, the last champion of paganism.

Penda was slain fighting valiantly in the *mêlée*. Thus perished at the age of eighty years, after a reign of thirty, the conqueror and murderer of five Anglo-Saxon kings,[161] the last and indefatigable champion of paganism among the Anglo-Saxons, the ally and too effective instrument of the vengeance of the old British Christians against their converted invaders.[162]

Final triumph of Northumbria and of the Christian cause.

This battle decided the fate of England: it not only insured the emancipation and temporary preponderance of Northumbria; but it put a period to the struggle which for 200 years the British had maintained against the Anglo-Saxons. Henceforth there might be partial resistance and local conflicts, but there was no general attempt, with any chance of success, to repel the progress of invasion. All the little British kingdoms which occupied the existing counties of Chester, Lancashire, and Westmoreland, on the coast of the Irish Channel, were finally swept away and taken possession of by the Saxons of Northumbria.[163]

Farther, it sealed the political and military triumph of the new religion, in the very bosom of the Heptarchy, over that external and official paganism which was the religious tradition of the nation. But this triumph was far from being sufficient for the designs of God, and for the deliverance of

[161] Two kings of Northumbria, Edwin and Oswald; and three of East Anglia, Sigebert, Egeric, and Anna.

[162] "Fertur quia tricies majorem pagani habuerint exercitum . . . triginta legiones ducibus nobilissimis instructas . . . duces regii triginta qui ad auxilium venerant pene omnes interfecti." — Bede. Compare La Borderie, *op. cit.*, pp. 223–225. The battle-field is now called Winn Moor, and the river the Broad Are.

[163] La Borderie, *op. cit.*, p. 227. Cumbria alone remained to them: the country of the Kymri or Cumbrians, now Cumberland, formed a small kingdom which recovered its independence after the death of Oswy's sons, and maintained it till the tenth century, like the other small British kingdom of Strathclyde, between the Solway and the walls of Severus.

the souls of men. There was an inner paganism, infinitely more difficult to overcome — the paganism of the savage morals and uncurbed passions of a conquering race. The valiant sword of the Northumbrians might well gain the mastery over oppressors and ravagers; but the word, and above all, the virtue, of the monks was needed to propagate and consolidate the faith, and root it deeply in the heart and life of the victors.

How Oswy, when victorious, fulfilled his vow.

Oswy faithfully kept his word to God and to the Christian people. He set apart the twelve estates to be thenceforth monastic property — six in the north and six in the south of his double kingdom — to form an endowment for monks who should substitute for the warlike service by which these domains were usually held an unceasing prayer for eternal peace.[164] He then took his daughter Elfleda, who was but yet a year old, and consecrated her to God by the vow of perpetual virginity. Her mother, the daughter of Edwin, first Christian King of Northumbria, had been thus dedicated to God from her birth, but only by baptism, and as a token of the gratitude of a still pagan father for the protection of the Christians' God. The daughter of Oswy was to be the price of a yet greater gift of Heaven — the conclusive victory of his race, and of the Christian faith in his country: the sacrifice thus imposed on her reminds us of that of Jephthah's daughter. It will be seen that, far from desiring to escape her vow, she showed herself, during a long life, always worthy of her heavenly bridegroom. The king took her from the caresses of her mother, to intrust her, not, as we might have supposed, to his sister the Abbess Ebba of Coldingham, but to Hilda, a princess of the rival dynasty, who nearly ten years before had been initiated into monastic life by bishop Aïdan.

His daughter Elfleda a nun in her cradle.

Oswy achieves the conversion of Mercia.

After the overthrow of Penda, Oswy, now master of Mercia, in right of his victory, undertook with his accustomed zeal to effect the conversion of that kingdom. He left a portion of it to his son-in-law Peada, the son of his terrible opponent, whose ardor in the Christian cause seconded all his efforts for the extension of the true faith. The monk Diuma, born in Ireland, and one of the four missionaries whom Peada had

The first five bishops of Mercia

[164] "In quibus, ablato studio militiæ terrestris ad exercendam militiam cœlestem, supplicandumque pro pace ejus æterna, devotioni sedulæ monachorum locus facultasque suppediteret." — Bede, iii. 24.

are Celtic monks.

brought from Northumbria at the time of his marriage, was consecrated by the bishop of Lindisfarne, and appointed Bishop of all Mercia, including therein the nation of the Middle Angles already converted under Peada. It was necessary that two distinct races should thus be united in one diocese, because of the small number of priests who were worthy of promotion to the episcopate.[165] The pontificate of Diuma was short, but fruitful. At his death he was succeeded by another Irishman, Ceolach, who was reckoned among the disciples of Columba, the great Celtic missionary, as coming from the Monastery of Iona,[166] to which he returned after some years of a too laborious episcopate in Mercia, to seek the peace of cloistered life in that citadel of Celtic monachism. The third Bishop[167] of Mercia, Trumhere, an abbot in Northumbria, and an Anglo-Saxon by birth, came, like his brethren, from the Celtic cloisters, and was, like them, consecrated by the Bishop of Lindisfarne.[168] His two successors, Jaruman and Ceadda, had the same origin; the one was born in Ireland, and the other, a Saxon by birth, had been ordained by the Scots.[169]

It is thus evident that the extension of Christianity and the government of the Church among the Saxons of Mercia were entirely under the influence of Scotch or Anglo-Celtic monks, disciples and spiritual descendants of St. Columba.

659.

This state of matters was not at all altered when the Mercians, rising under three of their principal chiefs, shook off the yoke of Oswy, and took as their king a youthful son of Penda, whom these three earls had kept in concealment since the overthrow of his father. They drove out the officials of the Northumbrian king, but they kept, with the bishop the faith which had come to them from Northumbria, and which was to them now no less dear than their freedom and their reconquered frontiers. They desired,

[165] "Paucitas enim sacerdotum cogebat unum antistitem duobus populis præfici." — Bede, iii. 21. It should be observed that these two races were long before united under the same kings.

[166] Colgan, *Trias Thaumaturga*, p. 488.

[167] Trumhere had been abbot of the Monastery of Gilling, founded by Queen Eanfleda, on the spot of her cousin King Oswy's murder. See above, p. 253.

[168] "Diuma, natione Scotus. . . . Ceollach et ipse de natione Scotorum . . . reversus est ad insulam Hii, ubi plurimorum caput et arcem Scoti habuere cœnobium. . . . Trumheri, de natione quidem Anglorum, sed edoctus et ordinatus a Scotis." — Bede, iii. 21, 24.

[169] "Anglicus, sed a Scotis ordinatus." — *Anglia Sacra*, vol i. Cf. Eddius, *Vita S. Wilfrid.*

they said, to be free, with a king of their own race, on earth, without ceasing to serve Christ, the true and eternal King, so as to gain His kingdom of heaven.[170]

The Mercian monks of Bardeney refuse to receive the body of the holy Northumbrian king Oswald. 675.

Twenty years later, this stubborn repugnance of the Mercians to the yoke of their Northumbrian neighbors manifested itself with painful distinctness among the monks of one of the principal monasteries of the country. It was at Bardeney, in that province of Lindsay (Lincolnshire), the conquest of which had already cost good King Oswald his life. His niece, the daughter of Oswy had become queen of Mercia. It was her desire that this monastery, which was especially dear to her as well as to her husband, should receive the remains of her uncle. The bones of the sainted king arrived one evening, borne in a chariot, at the gate of the monastery, but the monks refused to receive them. "We know well," said they, "that he is holy; but he is not of our country, and in other days he subdued us by force."[171] It was necessary to yield to this explosion of patriotic rancor, and the sacred body had to remain all night in the open air. The next morning the monks were told that a luminous column had descended from heaven on the car which bore the corpse of the Northumbrian king, and had been seen by all the country round about. Upon this they thought better of it, and opened the door of their church to the uncle of their protectress.

His relics thenceforth remained there revered by all. A banner of purple and gold placed over his shrine betokened his twofold dignity as saint and king. But it is not the less necessary to note this first and instinctive outburst of a local and provincial patriotism, sometimes even more powerful than the popular devotion, a new explosion of which long after brought about the murder of the pious queen who had striven so anxiously to endow Mercia with the relics of the great Northumbrian saint.[172] For the history of these times

[170] "Ejectis principibus regis non proprii, fines suos fortiter simul et libertatem receperunt. Sicque cum suo rege liberi, Christo vero rege pro sempiterno in cœlis regno, servire gaudebant." — Bede, iii. 24.

[171] "Quia etsi sanctum eum noverant, tamen quia de alia provincia ortus fuerat et super eos regnum acceperat, veteranis eum odiis etiam mortuum insequebatur." — Bede, iii. 11. It is plain that this passage does not favor the interpretation of Father Faber, who sees in the conduct of the monks of Bardeney a repugnance to the Celtic rite and the Scots saints. — *Life of St. Oswald*, p. 68.

[172] "Ut regia viri sancti persona memoriam haberet æternam, vexillum ejus super tumbam auro et purpura compositum adposuerunt." — Bede,

and races never allows us to forget that barbarism was always ready to reclaim its ancient rights even amidst the blossoming of Christian virtues and monastic austerities.

The entire narrative is very confused, very obscure, in great measure unknown, and much forgotten. But across these darkling foundations of the primitive history of Christian races stirs everywhere a potent and heroic breath, the breath of life, of the true and noble life — that breath which has made out of the confused masses of barbarism those modern Christian nations, free and manly, among whom the place held by England is known to all.

V.

Summary of the successive conversion of the kingdoms of the Heptarchy. 597-655.

In summing up the history of the efforts made during the sixty years between the landing of Augustin and the death of Penda to introduce Christianity into England, the results may be stated thus: Of the eight kingdoms of the Anglo-Saxon Confederation, that of Kent alone was exclusively won and retained by the Roman monks, whose first attempts among the East Saxons and Northumbrians ended in failure. In Wessex and in East Anglia the Saxons of the West and the Angles of the East were converted by the combined action of Continental missionaries and Celtic monks. As to the two Northumbrian kingdoms, and those of Essex and Mercia, which comprehended in themselves more than two-thirds of the territory occupied by the German conquerors, these four countries owed their final conversion exclusively to the peaceful invasion of the Celtic monks, who not only rivalled the zeal of the Roman monks, but who, the first obstacles once surmounted, showed much more perseverance and gained much more success.

All the kingdoms of the Heptarchy have thus passed under our review except that of Sussex, or the Saxons of the South. It was the smallest of all, but one of the earliest founded;[173] and the first German invaders of the southern coast of Great

1. c. This daughter of Oswy was named Osthryda. She frequently lived at Bardeney, where she received the visits of the neighboring abbesses, whom she was able to interest in the veneration of her uncle. She was assassinated by the nobles of Mercia in 697. It will be seen farther on, that her husband King Ethelred afterwards became a monk.

[173] By Ælla in 477.

Britain were notorious among all the others for their ferocity and their invincible vigor. Although they were next neighbors to the kingdom of Kent, the Roman missionaries, Augustin's companions, have left no trace of their presence among them, if indeed they ever tried to penetrate there. The Celtic monks, more enterprising or more persevering, made their way thither to form a first station, an advanced post, as it were, of their future army. They founded the very small Monastery of Bosham, protected on one side by the sea, on the other by forests, and here vegetated five or six monks who came from East Anglia, the nearest Northumbrian province, under the leadership of an Irishman, the compatriot and disciple of that Fursy whose strange visions were everywhere narrated. There they served God as they best could, humbly and poorly ; but not one of the Saxons of the country would listen to their preaching, still less adopt their manner of life.[174] This is the only example known to us of a complete failure. And yet the people of Sussex, although the last of all the Saxons to receive the Gospel, owe, as we shall see, that blessing to a monk trained in the school of the Celtic missionaries. This monk, however, by forsaking the rule of his first masters, in order to connect himself more closely with Roman tradition and authority, produced in the new Church of England a revolution which it now remains for us to record.

[174] "Monachus quidam de natione Scotorum, vocabulo Dicul, habens monasteriolum permodicum. . . . In humili et paupere vita Domino famulantes. Sed provincialium nullus eorum vel vitam æmulari vel prædicationem curabat audire." — Bede, iv. 13. Compare iii. 19.

BOOK XII.

ST. WILFRID ESTABLISHES ROMAN UNITY AND THE BENEDICTINE ORDER, 634–709.

"Sanctus haberi
Justitiæque tenax, factis dictisque mereris?
Agnosco procerem."—JUVENAL.

CHAPTER I.

BEGINNING OF WILFRID'S CAREER—ASSEMBLY OF WHITBY.

Birth and early years of Wilfrid. — Note on his biographer Eddi. — Protected by the Queen of Northumbria, he enters at Lindisfarne, then goes to Rome, where no Anglo-Saxon had yet been. — He passes by Canterbury and stops at Lyons, where he separates from his companion Benedict Biscop, and where the archbishop wishes to give him his niece in marriage. — Wilfrid at Rome. — In returning by Lyons he receives the Romish tonsure and escapes, against his will, from martyrdom. — Returned to England, he becomes the intimate friend of Alchfrid, son of King Oswy. — New monastery founded at Ripon, from whence the monks of the Celtic ritual are expelled. — Popularity of Wilfrid. — He is ordained priest by a French bishop. — Southern Ireland had already adopted the Romish computation for the celebration of Easter. — The dispute on this question revived by Wilfrid in Northumbria, and division of the royal family. — The King Oswy follows the Celtic ritual; his wife and son that of Rome. — Importance and nature of the Pascal difference. — Moderation of the Romish Church throughout the dispute. — A rivalry of influence mingles with the ritualistic dispute. — Assembly of Whitby, convoked by the king to end the controversy: composition of the assembly: the two chambers: principal persons; on the side of the Celts, the Abbess Hilda and her two communities, the Bishops of Lindisfarne and London; on the side of Rome, the young King Alchfrid, the old deacon James, and Wilfrid. — The authority of Columba unwisely invoked. — The king pronounces for the Romish Easter, and the assembly ratifies his decision. — Bishop Colman protests, abdicates, and returns to Iona, carrying with him the bones of his predecessor St. Aïdan, the Celtic apostle of Northumbria.

WHILE the bishops and monks of Celtic origin were gradually establishing their authority, together with that of the Christian faith, in the greater part of the land of the Heptarchy, protected by the ægis of the Northumbrian kings, and without any ostensible relation either with Rome or with the Roman colony and its official metropolis of Canterbury, a young Anglo-Saxon, destined to transform the Church of England, was growing up unknown. More powerful than the missionaries sent from Rome, it was to be given to him, after many a struggle and many a defeat, to extend the authority of the Holy See over all Anglo-Saxon Christianity, to re-establish, even to his own prejudice, the supremacy of the metropolitan see instituted by Gregory, and to substitute everywhere the rule of St. Benedict for the observances and ascendency of the sons of St. Columba.[1]

Birth and early years of Wilfrid. 634.

This young man was named Wilfrid, and belonged by birth to the highest nobility of Northumbria. He was born in 634, the day after the death of King Edwin, the flight of Bishop Paulinus, and the apparently irreparable downfall of the Romish mission in the north of England.

Of him, as of all the greater saints, and especially of St.

[1] The life of Wilfrid was written by one of his companions, the monk Eddi, surnamed Stephen, whose work is regarded as the most ancient monument of Anglo-Saxon literature after those of St. Adhelm. Venerable Bede did not write till later. He was evidently acquainted with the text of Eddi, which he has sometimes reproduced, but without quoting him, while extenuating to the utmost all the wrongs attributed to the bishops and kings with whom Wilfrid had to contend. This life, so curious and so important for the ecclesiastical history of the seventh century, had remained unknown to Mabillon and the Bollandists when they published, the former his volume of the Acta of this century in 1672, and the latter their third volume of April in 1675. Some time afterwards Mabillon was informed that the MS. of Eddi was found in the Cottonian Library at Oxford. It was communicated to him by Gale, a learned Englishman, and he published it in the supplement to his fifth volume. Gale republished it soon after in his collection of the *Scriptores Historiæ Britanniæ XV.* (Oxonii, 1691), with the new chapters discovered in a manuscript at Salisbury. They were reprinted by Mabillon in the last volume of his *Acta Sanctorum Ordinis S. Benedicti*, with a warm and touching homage to his English correspondents: "Sic integrum exhibemus opus tamdiu desideratum omnibus litteratis, qui humanissimis et clarissimis viris Bernardo et Gaelo gratias meeum habebunt immortales." After this contempory author, and Bede, who follows him so closely, the life of Wilfrid was written in Latin verse by an English Benedictine of the ninth century named Fridegod, whose poem, though ridiculous in style, contains some new details; then in the twelfth century by the celebrated Eadmer and by William of Malmesbury. Cf. *Act. SS. O. B.*, vol. iii. p. 150, and vol. v. p. 632. The collection called *Lives of the English Saints*, published by the Puseyites in 1844, contains a *Life of St. Wilfrid* by the Rev. Mr. Faber, who died an Oratorian in 1864.

Columba and St. Bernard, it is related that his birth was accompanied by a prophecy of his future glory. The house where his mother lay appeared all at once enveloped in a flame which seemed to reach to heaven. The frightened neighbors rushed to extinguish the fire, when they were met by the attendants of the new mother, who said to them. "Be at ease, it is not a fire, but only this child who is just born." Such a prodigy naturally drew attention to the infant, and all the more because his father was one of the principal nobles of the country, and the boy himself, as he grew up, displayed a singularly gracious nature. While he was still in the cradle, he lost his pious mother, and his father having married a second time, he resolved at thirteen years of age to escape the persecutions of a harsh and haughty stepmother by leaving home and devoting himself to God. For this the consent, not only of his father, but also of King Oswy as chief of the nation, was necessary. At his age a young Anglo-Saxon noble was already treated as a man; he asked and obtained accordingly from his father a suit of armor, with horses and servants in sufficient number to enable him to appear at court in a manner worthy of his rank. Thus equipped he went to seek, not King Oswy, but his queen. He found her surrounded by the leaders of the nobility whom he was accustomed to see and to wait upon at his father's house, and who were already disposed in his favor on account of his intelligence and modesty. They presented him to the young queen, who was only seven or eight years older than himself, and whose heart he gained as much by his youthful grace as by the refinement and truthfulness of his intellect.[2]

He is protected by Queen Eanfleda. 648.

The queen herself was no other than that Eanfleda whose baptism, it may be remembered, had given the signal for the conversion of Northumbria,[3] and who had been the first Christian of the kingdom. Her father was the martyr King Edwin, and her mother Ethelburga, daughter of the royal

[2] "De inclyta gentis Anglorum prosapia . . . nobilitate natus." — EADMER, *Vita*, n° 4. "De utero matris suæ valde religiosæ. . . . Omnes concito cursu pavidi advenerunt. . . . Sustinete . . . ecce modo infans hic natus est. . . . Omnibus in domum patris sui venientibus aut regalibus sociis aut eorum servis edocte ministravit. . . . Privigna (*noverca*, FREDEGODUS) enim molesta et immitis. . . . Pergens itinere usquequaque invenirent reginam regis . . . et per nobiles viros quibus ante in domo patris sui ministrabat laudatus præsentatusque est reginæ . . . erat decorus adspectu et acutissimi ingenii." — EDDIUS, c. 1, 2. "Ut merito a majoribus quasi unus ex ipsis amaretur, veneraretur, amplecteretur." — BEDE, v. 19.

[3] See p. 210.

convert of Augustin, who still lived in the monastery of Lymington, where she had passed her widowhood in retirement. Eanfleda herself was destined to end her days in the cloister under the crosier of that daughter whom she dedicated to God in order to obtain the defeat of the tyrant Penda. The antecedents and the character of the Queen of Northumbria naturally influenced her in favor of the young noble's desire. She granted him, or prevailed with her husband to grant him, authority to renounce all public and military service in order to enter upon a religious life, in which she promised to watch over him. She then confided him to the care of a favorite follower of the king, who himself afterwards retired from the world. This aged warrior conducted his young and noble charge to the great monastic sanctuary of Northumbria at Lindisfarne. There Wilfrid won all hearts as he had won the queen's. His humility and ardor for monastic rule, no less than his passion for study, marked him out for the affectionate admiration of the cenobites. He soon learned the whole Psalter in the version of St. Jerome, and made the contents of all the other books which he found in the library of the monastery his own.[4]

He obtains from the king permission to become a monk at Lindisfarne. 648.

Thus the years of his youth flowed on at Lindisfarne; but before he yielded the half of his long hair to the scissors, which, cutting bare the upper part and front of his head, would have impressed on him the monastic tonsure according to the Irish fashion, he began to find out that all was not perfect in those Celtic rules and traditions of which Lindisfarne was the centre and stronghold in England. With a sagacity much admired by his historians, he determined to make a journey which no other Anglo-Saxon had yet undertaken, and to go to Rome, not merely to obtain the remission of his sins and the blessing of the Mother of the Churches, but also to study the monastic and ecclesiastical observances which were followed under the shadow of the See of St. Peter. The monks of Lindisfarne being informed by their pupil of this extraordinary project, not only used no attempts at dissuasion, but actually encouraged him to accomplish it;[5]

He undertakes a journey to Rome, where no Anglo-Saxon had yet been.

[4] "Concedit in quod petierit, ut sub suo consilio et munimine serviret. . . . Quidam nobilis ex sodalibus regis valde sibi amabilis et fidelis, Cudda. . . . Omnibus statim in amore factus est. . . . Omnem psalmorum seriem memorialiter et aliquantos libros didicit." — Eddius, c. 2.

[5] "Adhuc laicus capite. . . . Adhuc inattritam vitam genti nostræ tentare in cor adolescentis ascendit." — Eddius, c. 23. "Necdum quidem adtonsus,

nothing could better prove their good faith and implicit subordination to Catholic unity. Wilfrid then went to ask his father's blessing, and to confide his plans to his royal protectress. Queen Eanfleda, who, after the murder of her father, had taken refuge in the country of her mother at Canterbury, was too much the spiritual daughter of the Romish missionaries not to approve of Wilfrid's design. She sent him with warm recommendations to her cousin-german Ercombert, King of Kent,[6] praying that prince to keep the young pilgrim with him until he should be able to find suitable companions for so long a journey.

652. On his arrival at Canterbury Wilfred exercised the same fascination upon the King of Kent as upon all those who had known him from his childhood. Seeing the young and handsome Northumbrian wholly given up to prayer and study, Ercombert conceived for him the most ardent attachment, and kept him at his court for a whole year. Wilfrid took advantage of this interval to study and adopt the Romish usages as they could be learned in the Roman colony at Canterbury, which was still governed by a missionary brought over by St. Augustin, Archbishop Honorius, now his fourth successor. He took the trouble to substitute, in his happy and flexible memory, the fifth edition of the old version of the Psalter, which was then used in Rome, for the version corrected by St. Jerome, which he had learned by heart at Lindisfarne, and which was used in the Celtic Church as well as in the Churches of Gaul and Germany.[7] Meantime the

Passes through Canterbury. 627-633.

verum eis quæ tonsura majores sunt virtutibus, humilitatis et obedientiæ non mediocriter insignitus. . . . Animadvertit paulatim adolescens animi sagacis, minime perfectam esse virtutis viam quæ tradebatur a Scottis proposuitque animo venire Romam, et qui ad sedem apostolicam ritus ecclesiastici sive monasteriales servarentur, videre. . . . Laudaverunt ejus propositum eumque id . . . perficere suadebant." — BEDE, 1. c.

[6] ETHELBERT, first Christian king, died in 613, married BERTHA, granddaughter of ST. CLOTILDE.

EADBALD reigned from 616 to 640.	ETHELBURGA, wife of EDWIN, King of Northumbria.
ERCOMBERT reigned from 640 to 664.	EANFLEDA, born 626, wife of OSWY, King of Northumbria.

[7] "Rex vero . . . servum Dei . . . mirifice diligebat . . . Psalmos quos prius secundum Hieronymum legerat, more Romanorum juxta quintam editionem memorialiter transmutavit. . . . Secundum petitionem reginæ languentis tædio. . . . Perrexit cum benedictione parentum suorum. . . . Omnibus affabilis . . . corpore strenuus . . . pedibus velox . . . tristia ora nunquam contraxit . . . alacer et gaudens navigio." — EDDIUS, c. 3. "Supervenit illo alius adolescens de nobilibus Anglorum." — BEDE, 1. c.

Queen of Northumbria, impatient for the return of her favorite, urged upon King Ercombert that Wilfrid should commence his pilgrimage, and soon afterwards the monarch gave him leave to depart, sending with him another young Northumbrian noble, Biscop Baduging, equally distinguished by his zeal for study, equally inflamed with the desire of visiting Rome, and whom, under the name of Benedict Biscop, we shall afterwards see filling an important part in the monastic history of his own province.

Thus they started; and it is easy to imagine the joy and ardor of these young and brave Christians, when, after having rapidly crossed the Straits, they began their journey through France. Wilfrid especially, with all the enthusiasm of his age, pursued his way, strong and unwearied, with an affability and gayety which nothing could alter. His companion, a little older, was of a more austere temper; thus it was impossible that they should long agree.[8] On their arrival at Lyons, Biscop proceeded immediately to Rome, while Wilfrid remained some months with the Archbishop Delphinus. Here also was displayed the marvellous empire which this youth obtained over the hearts of the most different persons, from the young queen of his own country and the warlike comrades of his father, to this Gallo-French prelate who was so charmed with him, with the pure and candid soul which was well reflected in the serene beauty of his countenance, that he offered to adopt him as his son, giving him his niece in marriage, and the government of the whole of an adjoining province. But Wilfrid replied, "I have made a vow; I have left, like Abraham, my kindred and my father's house in order to visit the Apostolic See, and to study there the rules of ecclesiastical discipline, that my nation may profit by them. But if God gives me life I will return this way and see you again."

634.

At Lyons, he parts from his companion, St. Benedict Biscop.

The archbishop, recognizing the earnest sincerity of his vocation, let him depart for Rome with all his suite; for the young and high-born Northumbrian did not travel as a simple pilgrim, but with all kinds of guides and baggage.[9]

[8] "Decedente ab eo austeræ mentis duce." — Eddius, c. 3.

[9] "Videns in facie serena quod benedictam mentem gerebat. . . . Si manseris mecum fiducialiter, dabo tibi vicinam partem Galliarum ad regendum virginemque filiam fratris mei in uxorem, et te ipsum adoptivum filium habebo. . . . Sunt vota mea Domino . . . ut visitem sedem apostolicam et ecclesiasticæ disciplinæ regulas didicerim in augmentum regis nostræ. . . . Cum ducibus et opibus." — Eddius, c. 4. "Cunctis simul quæ necessitas poscebat itineris largiter subministratis." — Bede, l. c. This Archbishop

Wilfrid at Rome. 634.

On entering Rome, his first thought was to hurry to the Church of St. Andrew, from whence Augustin and the first missionaries to England had set out. Kneeling before the altar, where there was a copy of the Gospels, he implored the Apostle St. Andrew, for the love of that God whom he had confessed by his martyrdom, to open his mind, and to atone for the rustic plainness of his Saxon tongue by giving him grace to study, to understand, and to teach the English nation the eloquence of the Gospel. After which, as he began to visit, one by one, all the sanctuaries of the Eternal City, he met with a wise and holy man, Archdeacon Boniface, one of the principal counsellors of the Pope, who took pleasure in instructing the young stranger as his own child, carefully explaining to him the four Gospels, the ecclesiastical discipline, and the calculation of Easter, which the Celts of Britain and Ireland refused to admit. Finally he presented him to the Pope, to whom he explained the object of the journey of this youthful servant of God: the Pontiff placed his hand upon the head of the young Englishman, blessed, and prayed for him. Thus Wilfrid left Rome, assuredly without suspecting the harsh and cruel trials which were fated to bring him back thither so often again.[10]

Wilfrid receives the Romish tonsure at Lyons.

In returning from Rome, Wilfrid, as he had promised, again stopped at Lyons to see the archbishop, who received him with all his former tenderness, still insisting upon making him his heir. He even remained three whole years with this prelate, occupied in completing his ecclesiastical education among the learned doctors whom he found at Lyons, as if his desire had been to arm himself completely against Celtic usages, by comparing the teaching received at Rome with the venerable traditions of the earliest Gallican Church. Here, too, he received from the hands of the archbishop the tonsure which he preferred,

Delfin or Delphinus is one of the most disputed personages in the history of the seventh century; see the article consecrated to him by the Bollandists in vol. vii. of September, p. 720 to 744. It is he who is venerated in the diocese of Lyons under the name of St. Annemond or St. Chamond.

[10] "De remissione peccatorum suorum, pro qua instantius orabat, per hoc certificari postulabat, si de ingenii sui tarditate et linguæ suæ rusticitate, ipsius interventu, absolvi mereretur." — Ricardi Hagulstadensis, *Hist.*, c. 3. "Ut pro sua intercessione Dominus ei legendi ingenium et docendi in gentibus eloquentiam Evangeliorum concedisset. . . . Qui ponens manum benedictam super caput adolescentuli servi Dei, cum oratione benedixit eum." Eddius, c. 5. The Pope was probably Eugenius I., elected in 654, during the exile of the holy martyr Pope Martin I.

no longer that Celtic tonsure which shaved the top and front of the head from one ear to the other, leaving the hair to hang down behind, which the Romans, it is not known why, called the tonsure of Simon the Magician; nor the Oriental tonsure, which completely bared the head, and which was believed to be that of St. Paul; but the Roman tonsure, that of St. Peter, which removed all the hair except a circle round the skull, representing the form of the crown of thorns.

The extreme importance attached to this difference of tonsure, puerile and insignificant as it is in our eyes, will no longer astonish us when we remember the great significance of long hair among all barbarous races, and above all among our Merovingians. Long hair in men was not only the mark of royal or very noble birth, but also a sign of power, daring, and pride. Apart even from the question of ritual unity, Wilfrid and the Romans, without doubt, saw in the persistence of the Celts in wearing long hair, at least at the back of their heads, a vestige of pride and want of discipline incompatible with the ecclesiastical profession, and especially with the life of the cloister.

Wilfrid's visit to Delphinus was cut short by the death of the archbishop, who perished a victim to the tyranny of Ebroïn, then governor of Neustria and Burgundy in the name of the Regent Bathilda, the French queen, once an English slave, who was afterwards to become a nun and a saint. Delphinus was seized in his metropolitan city by the soldiers of Ebroïn, who dragged him to Chalons, and there put him to death. Wilfrid followed him, in spite of the entreaties of the martyr; with the incomparable enthusiasm and heroism of youth, he hoped to partake the fate of his protector. "What could be better," he said, "than to die together, father and son, and to be with Christ?" After the murder of the archbishop, when Wilfrid, stripped of his vestments, waited his turn, the chiefs of the party asked who this handsome youth, so eager for death, might be? and when they were told that he was a foreigner, of the race of those famous conquerors of Great Britain who were feared all over the world, they resolved to spare him. After this, as soon as he had superintended the burial of his spiritual father, he returned to England.[11]

Despite himself he escapes martyrdom.

[11] "Amor magis ac magis crescebat inter eos. . . . A doctoribus valde eruditis multa didicit. . . . Tonsuræ de ore apostoli formulam, in modum coronæ spineæ caput Christi cingentis . . . libenter suscepit. . . . Nihil est

These details may perhaps appear too minute; but they will be pardoned on account of the interest which attaches to the early years of a man destined to exercise, throughout half a century, a preponderating influence over his country, and, through her, over the power and freedom of the whole Church. Nor is it a matter without interest to seize in their very birth the manifestations of that mysterious and disinterested attraction which drew towards Rome, and towards Roman ideas and practices, this noble and daring scion of a barbarous race, this champion whose impassioned constancy contributed so powerfully in the future to link the destinies of England, and, by her means, of Germany and the whole west, to the foot of the apostolic throne.

Wilfrid, after his return to England, becomes the intimate friend of the son of Oswy.

On his return to England, Wilfrid, from the first, by the crown-like form of his tonsure, set up a visible and permanent protest against the ascendency of Celtic customs. He thus signified his intention to enter upon the struggle as soon as the opportunity should present itself. It is not known whether he returned to Lindisfarne — at any rate he did not remain there. He was soon summoned to the court of the young Alchfrid, son of King Oswy, whom the latter had just associated in the kingdom. We have already noticed the touching friendship of Prince Alchfrid for the son of the cruel enemy of the Northumbrians, Penda of Mercia, and his influence on the conversion of the Mercians.[12]

melius quam pater et filius simul mori et esse cum Christo. . . . Quis est iste juvenis formosus qui se præparat ad mortem? . . . Transmarinus de Anglorum gente ex Britannia. . . . Parcite illi et nolite tangere eum." — Eddius, c. 6. "Quod tunc temporis magno terrori quamplurimis erat, sua scilicet Anglorum natio." — Eadmer, n. 11.

[12] Most historians have confounded this Alchfrid, eldest son of Oswy, with his younger brother Aldfrid. Bede, however, has carefully distinguished them by the orthography of their names, and Lappenberg has put this distinction beyond a doubt. Alchfrid, the eldest, who married a daughter of Penda in 653, and was the friend of Wilfrid, died before his father; Aldfrid, probably a natural son of Oswy, educated and for a long time protected at Iona, only returned to succeed Egfrid, the second son and successor of Oswy, and to be the implacable adversary of Wilfrid. See the genealogical table Appendix VI., p. 752. It must be allowed, however, that the confusion which prevails throughout the primitive history of the Anglo-Saxons is greatly augmented by the fondness they had for giving to the children of one family names almost identical: thus, Oswald, Oswin, Oswulf, Osred, Osric, Ostrytha, in the dynasty of Northumbrian kings; Sebert, Sigebert, Sigehere, Sigeherd, in that of the kings of Essex; Ceawlin, Ceolric, Ceolwulf, Ceanwalch, Ceadwalla, in that of the kings of Wessex; Penda and Peada in Mercia, &c. This custom was not peculiar only to the royal families; the Bishop Ceadda had three brothers, Cedd, Cælin, and Cynnbill, all monks like himself.

This young prince, the son of a father who had been instructed in the school of the Scottish monks, and of a mother baptized and educated by the Romish missionaries, had inclined from his cradle to the religious exercises of his mother. He had always loved and sought to follow the Roman rules. At the news that the favorite of his mother, the young and noble Wilfrid, already so well known by his piety at Lindisfarne, had arrived from Rome, and was teaching the true Easter with all the regulations of the Church of St. Peter, Alchfrid sent for him, received him like an angel come from God, and fell at his feet to demand his blessing. Then, after discussing thoroughly the usages of the Roman Church, he conjured him, in the name of God and St. Peter, to remain with him, and instruct both himself and his people. Wilfrid willingly obeyed. To the irresistible attraction which, in his earliest youth, he had exercised over all hearts, there was now joined the authority of a man who had travelled, studied, and seen death and martyrdom close at hand. This increase of influence did but increase the affection of Alchfrid. The young prince and the young monk, one in soul, became still more one in heart; they loved each other with a passionate tenderness, which every day increased. The friendship of David and Jonathan, so often quoted by monastic annalists, appeared to the Northumbrians to be reproduced in that which existed between the son of their king and his youthful countryman.[13]

New monastery of Wilfrid at Ripon, from which the monks who adhere to Celtic rites are expelled.

Wilfrid, with his Roman tonsure, and his ideas still more Roman, could not remain at Lindisfarne. Alchfrid therefore sought not merely to retain him near to himself, but also to create for him a great monastic establishment of which he should be the head, and from whence his influence might spread itself over the Northumbrian Church.[14] The young king had already founded a new monastery at Ripon, in a fine situation, at the confluence of two rivers, and in the

[13] "Catholicas Ecclesiæ regulas sequi semper et amare didicerat." — Bede, v. 19. "Audiens servum Dei. . . . Verum Pascha prædicantem et S. Petri ecclesiæ disciplinam multiplicem didicisse, quam maxime rex diligebat. . . . Mirifice anima utriusque in alterum conglutinata erat, sicut animam David et Jonathæ in alterum compaginatam legimus . . . de die in diem inter eos amor augebatur." — Eddius, c. 7.

[14] Eddi and Bede mention a former donation given by the young king to Wilfrid, and situated at Stanford or Stamford. But no important foundation resulted from this, and they do not even agree as to the position of the domain. We will merely remark that it supported only ten families, while that of Ripon sufficed for forty, according to the Saxon mode of valuing land.

very heart of Deira; he had given it to monks of the Celtic ritual, all the religious communities in the country being composed either of monks of Scottish origin or of Northumbrians educated by the Scots. The first occupants of Ripon had come from Melrose, under the conduct of Abbot Eata, one of the twelve young Saxons whom St. Aïdan, the first Celtic missionary to Northumbria, chose for his future fellow-laborers; and had among them, in the capacity of steward, a young monk named Cuthbert, who was also destined to fill a great position, and to eclipse Wilfrid himself in the devotion of the northern English.[15]

Alchfrid had endowed this foundation with a domain so large that it was inhabited by forty families. But soon, under the influence of those Roman predilections which the return of Wilfrid developed in his mind, he required the new community of Ripon to celebrate Easter at the date fixed by Rome, and to renounce the other customs in which the Celtic Church differed from that of Rome. They unanimously declared that they would rather go away and give up the sanctuary which had just been given them, than abandon their national traditions. Alchfrid took them at their word, and gave them their dismissal. Abbot Eata and the future St. Cuthbert returned to Melrose, and Wilfrid was installed in their place by his royal friend, with the express intention of thus giving him the means of propagating the rules and doctrines which he preferred. Thus the war commenced — a war of which Wilfrid did not live to see the end, although he carried it on for more than half a century.[16] 661-664.

Wilfrid was now at the brightest moment of his life. He employed the bounty of his friend to carry out the generous impulses of his heart, and scattered round him abundant

[15] "Famulus Domini Cuthbertus officio præpositus hospitum." — Bede, *Vita S. Cuthberti*, c. 7.

[16] Nothing can be more singular than the different manner in which the same historian gives an account of the same events in two different works. And this historian is no other than the Venerable Bede! In his *Ecclesiastical History* he seems to treat the expelled monks as obstinate rebels: "Quia illi (qui Scottos sequebantur) data sibi optione maluerunt loco cedere quam mutare suam consuetudinem et Pascha catholicum cæterosque ritus canonicos juxta Romanæ et apostolicæ ecclesiæ consuetudinem recipere, dedit (Alchfridus) hoc illi quem melioribus imbutum disciplinis ac moribus vidit." — *Hist. Eccles.*, iii. 25, v. 19. In his life of Cuthbert he honors them as the victims of an unexpected storm: "Quia fragilis est et mare freti volubilis omnis seculi status, instante subito turbine, præfatus abbas Eata cum Cuthberto et ceteris quos secum adduxerat fratribus, domum repulsus est, et locus monasterii, quod condiderat, aliis ad incolendum monachis datur." — C. 8.

alms; he saw the ideas so dear to him spreading and strengthening themselves; he rejoiced in the protection of a prince who was to him at once a brother and a son; and, to sum up all, he was almost as dear to the people of Deïra as to their king. The nobles and other Northumbrians idolized him, and regarded him as a prophet.[17]

Wilfrid is ordained priest by a Frankish bishop.

The young abbot, however, was not yet a priest; and it was the earnest desire of Alchfrid that his friend should be his confessor, and remain in some degree attached to his person.[18] The whole of Northumbria was then under the rule of Colman, the Celtic Bishop of Lindisfarne; but it was not from him that Wilfrid could have willingly received the sacrament of ordination. However, at this juncture the king received a visit from Agilbert, a Frenchman by birth, educated in Ireland, who, having become Bishop of the kingdom of Wessex, had lost half of his diocese because the king of the country, weary of listening to sermons which were not in Saxon, had chosen to constitute another bishop without Agilbert's consent. He therefore, not willing to sanction this abuse of power, had renounced his see.[19] Although the King of Wessex was the intimate friend of Alchfrid, it was to the Northumbrian court that the displaced bishop first came to seek a refuge before returning to his own country. Alchfrid made known to him the virtue and good repute of Wilfrid, enlarging upon his humility, his fervor in prayer, his prudence, goodness, and sobriety — the latter being a virtue always greatly admired by the Anglo-Saxons, who practised it very little — and last, and above all, the gift which he had of commanding with authority and preaching with clearness. "Such a man is made to be a bishop," said Agilbert, who did not hesitate to ordain him priest in his monastery at Ripon, and, as Alchfrid had requested, for the personal service of the prince and his court.[20]

639-663. The influence of Wilfrid must have grown rapidly during the four or five years which followed his

[17] "Non solum rex sanctum abbatem diligebat, sed omnis populus, nobiles et ignobiles eum habebant quasi prophetam Dei, ut erat." — Eddius.

[18] "Desiderante rege ut vir tantæ eruditionis et religionis sibi specialiter individuo comitatu sacerdos esset ac doctor." — Bede, v. 19.

[19] See above, p. 286. Cf. Bede, iii. 7.

[20] "Dicens virum esse . . . sobrium . . . plenum auctoritatis . . . non vinolentum . . . et bene docentem sermone puro et aperto: ideo rogo te ut imponas super eum presbyteri gradum et sit mihi comes individuus. . . . Talis utique debet episcopus fieri." — Eddius, c. 9.

return to England, and he must have displayed great energy in his attack upon the Celtic spirit of the nation, to have brought about so promptly the decisive crisis which we are about to record. It must be remarked that he alone took the initiative and the responsibility. In this conflict, the object of which was to secure preponderance of Rome, we can find no trace of any mission or impulse whatever from Rome. The Roman colony of Canterbury, whose chief was an Anglo-Saxon, lent no direct assistance; and in Northumbria, as in the neighboring kingdoms, — converted to Christianity by Celtic apostles, — Wilfrid found no aid except the recollection of the abortive efforts of the first Romish missionaries, or the limited influence possessed by priests who had accompanied princesses of the race of Hengist, when they entered by marriage other dynasties of the Anglo-Saxon descendants of Odin; unless it were the testimony of travellers who, arriving from Canterbury or France, might express their astonishment to see the northern Christians, converts of Scottish missionaries, celebrating Easter at a different time from the rest of Christendom.[21]

There was indeed one fact which might encourage him to attempt again, in another region and under circumstances far less favorable, the enterprise in which Augustin had failed. Of the four countries in which the Celtic Church reigned Ireland, Wales, Scotland proper, and Northumbria, with their four monastic citadels of Bangor on the sea, Bangor on the Dee, Iona, and Lindisfarne, Ireland, the cradle and chief home of Celtic traditions, had begun in heart to return to Roman unity. Thirty years before, a council had been held at Leighlin, in the south of the island, at the suggestion of Pope Honorius I., who had invited the Scots of Ireland to celebrate Easter according to the common practice of the Church. The fathers of this council, after much animated discussion, had decided that wise and humble men should be sent to Rome, as sons to their mother, to judge of the ceremonies there. These deputies declared, on their return, that they had seen the faithful from all parts of the world celebrating Easter on the same day at Rome. On their report the Romish cycle and rules relative to the paschal calculations were adopted by all the south of Ireland. This decision had been chiefly brought about by the efforts of a disciple and spiritual descendant of

Southern Ireland adopts the Romish Easter.

[21] Bede, l. c.

Columba, a monk named Cummian, then abbot of one of the Columbian monasteries in Ireland. Abbot Cummian[22] had been obliged to defend himself against the attacks which his partiality for Roman usages brought upon him, by an apologetic letter, still preserved, where his erudition displays itself in an innumerable throng of texts and calculations. He sums up in these decisive words: "Can there be imagined a pretension more perverse and ridiculous than that which says: Rome is mistaken, Jerusalem is mistaken, Alexandria is mistaken, Antioch is mistaken, the whole world is mistaken; the Scots and the Britons alone make no mistake?"[23] But the example of the south of Ireland did not affect the north of the island, and still less the Picts and Scots of Caledonia. The arguments of Cummian could not convince the direct successor of Columba, the Abbot of Iona.[24] He, and all his community, obstinately retained the Irish computation; and as it was precisely at this period that the missionaries sent from Ireland relighted in Northumbria the light of the faith, extinct since the death of King Edwin and the flight of Bishop Paulinus, it is easily apparent how it happened that the erroneous calculation of Easter, according to the Celts, took root everywhere together with the new doctrine. It is not even certain that Wilfrid was aware that anything favorable to his views had occurred in that part of Ireland which was furthest from Northumbria, for we do not find any mention of it in his acts or discourses.

The usage in Northumbria as to the celebration of Easter before Wilfrid.

As long as St. Aïdan, the first Celtic apostle of Northumbria, lived, the idea of finding fault with his method of celebrating the greatest feast of that religion which he taught and practised so well, had entered into no man's mind. Whether he himself was ignorant of the difference of ritual, or whether, knowing it, he did not choose to withdraw himself from the usages of his race and of the parent monastery of Iona, he was not the less the object of universal confidence and ven-

[22] He must not be confounded with Cumin called the White (Cumineus albus), Abbot of Iona from 657 to 669, author of the oldest biography of St. Columba.

[23] "Quid pravius sentire potest de ecclesia matre quam si dicamus: Roma errat, Hierosolyma errat, Alexandria errat, totus mundus errat; soli Scoti et Britones rectum sapiunt!" — Cummianus Hibernus, *Epist. de Controversia Paschali*, *in* Usserii *Sylloge*, ii.

[24] Segienus, descendant in the fourth degree from the grandfather of Columba, and fourth Abbot of Iona, from 623 to 652. — Cf. Lanigan, *Eccles. Hist. of Ireland*, ii. 389. Döllinger, *Kirchengeschichte*, p. 221.

eration.[25] Under his successor, Bishop Finan, the question had been raised by one of the Lindisfarne monks, Irish by birth, who had travelled and studied in France and Italy. This monk, named Ronan, became involved in a violent quarrel with the Bishop of Northumbria upon the subject. He had led back a few to the Roman observance of Easter, and persuaded others to study the matter; but the bishop, harsh and passionate as Columba himself had sometimes been, far from being convinced, was only embittered by the remonstrances of Ronan, which served chiefly to make him a declared adversary of the Roman cause.[26]

When Finan died, leaving Bishop Colman — like himself, Irish by birth and a monk of Iona — as his successor at Lindisfarne, the dispute became at once open and general. Wilfrid had succeeded in sowing agitation and uncertainty in all minds; and the Northumbrians had come so far as to ask themselves whether the religion which had been taught to them, and which they practised, was indeed the religion of that Christ whose name it bore.[27] 662.

Division in the royal family as to Easter.

The two Northumbrian kings mingled in the struggle on different sides. Oswy, the glorious vanquisher of Penda, the liberator of Northumbria, the conqueror and benefactor of Mercia, the Bretwalda or military and religious suzerain of the Anglo-Saxon confederacy, naturally exercised a much greater influence from that of his young son, whom he had associated with himself in the kingdom. And the mind of Oswy, who had been baptized and educated by Celtic monks, who spoke their language perfectly, and was probably desirous of conciliating the numerous Celtic populations who lived under his rule from the Irish Sea to the Firth of Forth, did not go beyond the in-

[25] The judgment of Bede on this aspect of the life of Aïdan deserves to be quoted at length, as much on account of its reserve as of its praises: — "Quod autem pascha non suo tempore observabat, vel canonicum ejus tempus ignorans, vel suæ gentis auctoritate ne agnitum sequeretur devictus, non adprobo, nec laudo. . . . Hæc dissonantia paschalis observantiæ vivente Ædano patienter ab omnibus tolerabatur qui patenter intellexerant, quia etsi pascha contra morem eorum qui ipsum miserant facere non potuit, opera tamen fidei, pietatis et dilectionis, juxta morem omnibus sanctis consuetum, diligenter exsequi curavit: unde ab omnibus etiam his qui de Pascha aliter sentiebant, merito diligebatur." — iii. 17, 25.

[26] "Quin potius, quod esset homo ferocis animi, acerbiorem castigando et apertum veritatis adversarium reddidit." — Bede, iii. 25.

[27] "Unde movit hæc questio sensus et corda multorum, timentium ne forte, accepto Christianitatis vocabulo, in vacuum currerent aut cucurrissent." — Bede, iii. 25.

structions of his early masters.[28] Notwithstanding he had to contend within the circle of his family, not only with his son Alchfrid, excited in behalf of the Romish doctrine by his master and friend Wilfrid, but also with his queen, Eanfleda, who did not need the influence of Wilfrid to make her entirely devoted to the Roman cause, since, on returning from exile to marry Oswy, she had brought with her a Canterbury priest — Romanus by name, and Roman in heart — who guided her religious exercises. Under the direction of Romanus, the queen and all her court followed Roman customs. Two Easter feasts were thus celebrated every year in the same house; and as the Saxon kings had transferred to the chief festivals of the Christian year, and especially to the greatest of all, the meeting of their assemblies, and the occasion which those assemblies gave them of displaying all their pomp, it is easy to understand how painful it must have been for Oswy to sit, with his earls and thanes, at the great feast of Easter, at the end of a wearisome Lent, and to see the queen, with her maids of honor and her servants, persisting in fasting and penitence, it being with her still only Palm Sunday.[29]

This *discord*, as Bede says, with regard to Easter, was the capital point of the quarrel which divided the Anglo-Saxons into two bodies according as they had received the faith from Roman or Celtic missionaries. The differences remarked by Augustin in his struggles with the British clergy appear henceforward reduced to this one. The great reproach addressed to the Celtic clergy by the envoy of Pope Gregory, that they despised the work of converting the Saxons, is no longer in question. Our Celts of the North had succeeded only too well, according to Wilfrid, in converting and even in ruling two-thirds of Saxon England. Nor at this phase of the quarrel is there any further mention either of baptismal ceremonies, or of the customs contrary to ecclesiastical celibacy,[30] or of any of the other points formerly contested. The

[28] "Illorum lingua optime imbutus, nihil melius quam quod illi docuissent æstimabat." — Bede, l. c.

[29] "Observabat et regina Eanfleda cum suis juxta quod in Cantia fieri viderat. . . . Et cum rex Pascha dominicum solutis jejuniis faceret, tunc regina cum suis persistens adhuc in jejunio diem Palmarum celebrare." — Bede, l. c.

[30] It is now clearly shown that, in the Celtic Church, the deacons and priests never strayed from the Romish doctrine of celibacy. Their continence has been attacked, as that of the Briton clergy by Gildas, but no one has been able to prove that they regarded marriage as a remedy for this incontinence. There were depraved priests, there were also clerks not having

difference of the two tonsures to which Wilfrid attached such great importance, and which must have struck from the first the eyes and attention of the Anglo-Saxon converts, is not even named in the long discussions of which we still possess a record.[31] All turn exclusively on the celebration of Easter.

In what the difference with regard to Easter consisted.

Nothing could be more fanciful and more complicated than this Pascal calculation; nothing more difficult to understand, and especially to explain. Let us try, however, to draw forth some clear ideas from the depths of the endless dissertations of contemporary authors and even of more recent historians. Since the earliest days of Christianity a division had existed as to the proper date for the celebration of Easter. Some churches of Asia Minor followed the custom of the Jews by placing it on the fourteenth day of the first lunar month of the year. But all the churches of the West, of Palestine, and of Egypt, fixed upon the Sunday after the fourteenth day of the month nearest to the vernal equinox, so as not to keep the feast along with the Jews, and the general Council of Nice erected this custom into a law of the Church. Those who had not accepted this law, but persisted in celebrating the fourteenth day, were held as heretics and schismatics, under the name of *quartodecimans*. The imputation of complicity in this heresy made against the Celtic Church by the chiefs of the Roman clergy in a bull addressed in 640, during the vacancy of the Holy See, to the bishops and abbots of the north of Ireland, was most unjust.[32] The only mistake made by the Celts was that of neglecting to keep themselves informed of the difficulties which arose as to the manner of determining the commencement of the first lunar month, which ought to be the Pascal month. As has been already said in respect to the dispute between St. Augustin and the Britons of Cambria,[33] they had remained faithful to the custom which prevailed at Rome itself when Patrick and the other missionaries to the British Isles brought thence the light of the Gospel. At that period, in Rome and in all the West, the ancient Jewish cycle of eighty-four years was universally followed to fix this date. The Christians of Alexandria, however, bet-

received the higher orders who lived with their wives — but nothing more, and especially no excuse for setting up, either as a doctrine or as a regular habit, the marriage of priests.

[31] However, Bede, who has preserved all these discussions, says, in speaking of the tonsure: "Et de hoc questio non minima erat." — iii. 26.

[32] Bede, ii. 19.

[33] See p. 175.

ter astronomers than those of Rome, and specially charged by the Council of Nice to inform the Pope of the date of Easter of each year, discovered in this ancient cycle some errors of calculation, and after two centuries of disputes they succeeded in making the Roman Church adopt a new Pascal cycle, that which is now universally received, and which limits the celebration of Easter to the interval between the 22d of March and the 24th of April. The Celtic churches had no knowledge of this change, which dated from the year 525 — that is to say, from a time when the invasions of the Saxons probably intercepted their habitual communications with Rome: they retained their old Jewish cycle of eighty-four years, and adhered obstinately to it. They celebrated Easter always on Sunday, but this Sunday was not always the one which had been appointed by the Romish Church after the new calculations. Thus it happened that King Oswy was eight days in advance of his wife, and complained of having to rejoice alone in the resurrection of Christ, while the queen was still commemorating the commencement of the passion in the services for Palm Sunday.

On this diversity, then, which was in appearance so slight and trifling, turned the great dispute between the Celtic and Roman monks, between those who had first begun the conversion of the Anglo-Saxons, and those who had so happily completed it. It is amazing to note the vehemence and the duration of a dispute so bitter on a subject so insignificant. Certainly there was something painful in being unable to persuade the new believers to celebrate the greatest festival of their religion on the same day; but, on the other hand, it is evident that all these Catholics must have been profoundly agreed as to the important questions of faith and practice, since they could attach so much weight to a difference of astronomical calculation.

Moderation of the Romish Church during all this struggle.

Let us at the same time remark that throughout this controversy the Roman Church displayed an exemplary moderation, and always acted in conformity with the paternal instructions given by St. Gregory the Great to St. Augustin. She did not impose upon Wilfrid the mission he had taken upon himself. It was not at Rome, but at Lyons, that he received that tonsure which the Romans themselves do not seem to have taken much pains about. Rome never treated as schismatics or heretics those Celtic dissidents, the most illustrious of whom,

Columbanus of Luxeuil and Aïdan of Lindisfarne, have always had a place in her martyrology. She never proceeded otherwise than by way of counsel and exhortation, without insisting on violent measures, and patiently awaiting the returning calm of excited spirits, giving to all an example of prudence, moderation, and charity.[34]

A competition for influence mingles with the ritualistic dispute.

On the other hand, it is clearly evident that under the veil of a question purely ritual, was hidden one of political and personal influence. The precocious greatness of Wilfrid and his ambitious fervor might well awaken hostility among the clergy and nobles of Northumbria; his pretensions, which seemed so many audacious innovations, were of a kind to wound a people but recently converted, and instinctively inclined to attach great importance to the external forms of the new faith. But it was above all a struggle of race and influence. On one side the Celtic spirit, proud, independent, and passionate, of which the great Abbot of Iona was the type, and of which his sons, the apostles of Northumbria, were the representatives; on the other, the spirit of Rome, the spirit of discipline and authority, imperfectly personified by its first envoys, Augustine and Paulinus, but endowed with a very different degree of vigor and missionary energy, since the moment when an Anglo-Saxon of the type of Wilfrid had constituted himself its champion. England was the stake of this game. All the future of that Christianity which had been so laboriously planted in the island, depended on its issue.

Parliament of Whitby. 664.

It is this which gives a truly historical interest to the famous conference of Whitby, convoked by King Oswy, for the purpose of regulating and terminating the dispute which troubled his kingdom and the neighboring countries. He desired that the question should be publicly debated in his presence, and in that of the *Witenagemot*, or parliament, composed not only of the principal ecclesiastics and laymen of the country, but of all those who had a right to sit in the national councils of the Anglo-

[34] "Der Römischer Stuhl benahm sich im ganzen auch hier mit der ihm eigenen umsichtigen Weisheit und Liberalität." This is the testimony rendered by the illustrious Döllinger in his excellent account of this controversy, *Handbuch der Kirchengeschichte*, i. 2, 227. The learned historiographer of the Irish Church, Lanigan, professor of theology at Pavia, who wrote about 1828, quotes the excesses of the ultra-orthodox English converts, who would admit nothing to be good, or even tolerable, except what was practised at Rome, even in matters which the Romans themselves held of no importance, vol. iii. p. 68.

Composition of the assembly.

Saxons. It is to be remarked that here, for the first time in the history of these assemblies, a sort of division into two chambers like that which has become the fundamental principle of parliamentary institutions is visible. Bede states that the king consulted the nobles and the commoners, those who were seated and those who stood round, precisely like the lords and commons of our own days.[35]

The Celtic party.

The place chosen for the assembly was on the sea-coast, and in the centre of the two Northumbrian kingdoms, at Streaneshalch or Whitby, in the double monastery of monks and nuns governed by the illustrious Hilda, a princess of the Northumbrian blood-royal, who was now fifty years of age, and thus joined to the known sanctity of her life[36] maturity of age and experience sufficient for the government of souls. Although baptized by Bishop Paulinus at the time of the first Romish mission to the court of her grand-uncle King Edwin, she was completely devoted to Celtic traditions, doubtless from attachment to the sainted Bishop Aïdan, from whom she had received the veil. Her whole community were of the same party which had been hitherto favored by King Oswy, and was naturally represented by Colman, Bishop of Lindisfarne, at that time the only prelate in the vast kingdom of Northumbria. He, with all his Celtic clergy, attended the council, as well as Cedd, a monk of Lindisfarne, who had become Bishop of the East Saxons, among whom he had re-established the episcopal see of London, after the expulsion of the Romish missionaries. Bishop Cedd, Anglo-Saxon by birth, but educated in Ireland before he became a monk in the Hiberno-Scottish monastery of Lindisfarne,[37] was to act as interpreter in the conference between the Celts on one side and those who spoke only Latin or English on the other, and he acquitted himself of these functions with a most watchful impartiality.

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[35] "Hæc dicente rege, elevatis in cœlum manibus, faverunt adsidentes quique, sive adstantes, majores una cum mediocribus." — Bede. "Beisitzende und umstehende, Adel und Gemeine." — Lappenberg, p. 165. This reminds one of the famous passage of Tacitus: "De minoribus rebus principes consultant; de majoribus omnes: ita tamen, ut ea quoque quorum penes plebem arbitrium est, apud principes pertractentur." — *De Mor. Germ.*

[36] "Præsenti Sancta-Moniali piissima Hilda." Such is the testimony borne to her by Eddi, the biographer of Wilfrid, whose adversary she always was.

[37] At least this is to be supposed from the comparison of different passages of Bede (iii. 23, 28; iv. 3), on the youth of the two brother bishops, Cedd and Ceadda.

The side opposed to the Celts had at its head the young King Alchfrid and the Bishop Agilbert; the latter, though educated in Ireland, not having hesitated to embrace the cause of those Roman customs which prevailed in France, his native country. Wilfrid was the soul of the discussion he had so warmly desired, and its special orator: he appeared in the arena in all the glow of youth and talent, but supported by two venerable representatives of Roman missions to England — the priest Romanus, who had accompanied the Queen from Canterbury; and James, the aged, courageous, and modest deacon, sole relic and sole surviving witness of the first conversion of Northumbria under the father of Eanfleda, who had remained alone, after the flight of St. Paulinus, for nearly forty years, evangelizing Northumbria and observing Easter according to the Roman custom, with all those whom he had preserved or restored to the faith. The Roman party.

All being assembled, perhaps in one of the halls of the great monastery of St. Hilda, but more likely, from the great numbers, in the open air on the green platform which then, as now, surmounted the abrupt cliffs of Whitby, and from whence the eye wanders far over those waves which bore the Saxons to the shores of Great Britain; King Oswy opened the proceedings by saying that as they all served the same God and hoped for the same heaven, it was advisable that they should follow the same rule of life and the same observance of the holy sacraments, and that it would therefore be well to examine which was the true tradition they ought to follow. He then commanded his bishop, Colman, to speak first, to explain his ritual, and to justify its origin. "I have," said the Bishop of Lindisfarne, "received the Pascal usage which I follow from my predecessors who placed me here as bishop; all our fathers have observed the same custom; these fathers and their predecessors, evidently inspired by the Holy Ghost, as was Columba of the Cell, followed the example of John the apostle and evangelist, who was called the friend of our Lord. We keep Easter as he did, as did Polycarp and all his disciples of old. In reverence for our ancestors we dare not, and we will not, change." [38] Then the king gave leave to Agilbert to speak, that he might describe the reasons of his The king opens the conference.

[38] "Patres nostri et antecessores eorum manifeste Spiritu Sancto inspirati, ut erat Columcille. . . . Nec hoc audemus pro patribus nostris, nec volumus mutare." — Eddius, c. 10.

different observance; but the poor bishop, remembering that he had lost his vast diocese of Wessex through his imperfect knowledge of Anglo-Saxon,[39] begged that his disciple Wilfrid might be allowed to speak in his place. "We think precisely alike," said Agilbert, "but he can better express our thoughts in English, than I could through an interpreter.[40] Then Wilfrid began, "We keep Easter as we have seen it kept by all Christians at Rome, where the blessed apostles, St. Peter and St. Paul, lived, taught, suffered, and are buried. He had seen the same rule observed in Italy and in Gaul, where we have studied; we know that it is so in Africa, in Asia, in Egypt, in Greece, and throughout Christendom, in spite of all difference of language and of country. It is only the Picts and Britons who, occupying the two most remote islands of the ocean, nay, but a part even of those islands, foolishly persist in contradicting all the rest of the world." [41]

Colman replied, "It is strange that you speak of our traditions as absurd, when we only follow the example of the great apostle who was thought worthy to lay his head upon the breast of our Saviour, and whom the whole world has judged to be so wise." The dialogue then continued in a less excited manner. In this discussion the bishop displayed the natural haughtiness of his race, and the abbot that persuasive eloquence already so dear to the Anglo-Saxons, who were charmed to hear their own barbarous language spoken perfectly by a man cultivated and formed by the learning of Italy and Gaul. As for the question itself, both had recourse to extremely poor arguments. Wilfred quoted Scripture, where there is not a single word as to the Pascal cycle, and the decretals of the universal Church, of which only one relates to the matter, that of the Council of Nice, which contents itself with the decision that Easter should always be celebrated on Sunday, a particular which the Irish observed equally with the Romans. Instead of limiting himself to the statement that the rules established at Rome had been and ought to be adopted everywhere, he also affirmed that St.

[39] See above, page 286.

[40] "Loquatur, obsecro, vice mea discipulus meus Wilfridus presbyter; ille melius ipsa lingua Anglorum quam ego per interpretem." — Bede, iii. 25.

[41] "Præter hos tantum et obstinationis eorum complices, Pictos dico et Britones, cum quibus de duabus ultimis oceani insulis, et his non totis, contra totum orbem stulto labore pugnant. . . . Mirum quare stultum appellare velitis laborem nostrum." — Bede, l. c.

Peter had established the custom then followed at Rome, as if that custom had been always the same, and had not, in fact, been changed nearly a century before, to be brought into accordance with the best astronomical calculations. But Bishop Colman either knew nothing or understood nothing of this change, and was not able to cite it against his adversary. He perpetually recurred to the examples of St. John and the fathers of the Celtic Church, and with more vehemence still quoted Columba, whose life, so minutely described by the contemporaries of this very council of Whitby,[42] contains no trace of peculiar attachment to the Celtic Easter, but shows that he merely followed with simplicity the ancient usage transmitted by St. Patrick to the Irish monks. Nothing gives us reason to suppose that the great Abbot of Iona, if once informed of the universal prevalence of the Roman custom, would have been opposed to it.

"Can we admit," said Bishop Colman, "that our most venerable father Columba, and his successors, men beloved of God, have acted contrary to the Divine Word? Many of them have given proof of their sanctity by miracles; and as for me, who believe in that sanctity, I choose to follow forever their teaching and their example." Here Wilfrid had the better of the argument. "As to your father Columba and his disciples, with their miracles, I might answer that, at the day of judgment, many will say to our Lord, that they have done miracles in His name, and He will answer that He never knew them. But God keep me from speaking thus of your father! it is better, when one is ignorant, to believe good than evil. I do not therefore deny that they were servants of God, and beloved by Him: no doubt they loved Him in their rustic simplicity, with the most pious intentions. I do not think there was much harm in their observance of Easter, because no one had told them of more perfect rules. If a Catholic calculator had been presented to them, I believe they would have followed his counsel as they followed the commandments of God which they knew. But as for you, without doubt you sin, if, after having heard the decretals of the Apostolic See, and even of the universal Church, con-

[42] The first of these biographers, Cumin the White, was at that very time Abbot of Iona, from whence Colman came; and the second Adamnan, then a monk in Ireland, was already forty years old in 664. The latter does not mention the Pascal difference except to relate the prophecy of Columba during his visit to Clonmacnoise, "De illa quæ post dies multos ob diversitatem paschalis festi orta est inter Scotiæ ecclesias discordia." — Lib. i. c. 3.

firmed by Holy Scripture, you still despise them. Even admitting the sanctity of your fathers, how can you prefer, to the Church spread over the whole earth, this handful of saints in one corner of a remote island? Finally, for your Columba (and I would willingly say our Columba, so far as he was the servant of Christ), however holy or powerful by his virtues he may have been, can we place him before the chief of the apostles, to whom our Lord himself said — 'Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it; and I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven'?"[43]

Close of the king's speech.

The Saxon king then addressed his bishop, "Is it true, Colman, that these words were said by our Lord to St. Peter?" "It is true, O king," was the answer. "Can you then," rejoined the king, "show me a similar authority given to your Columba?" "No," said the bishop. "You are then," continued the king, "both agreed that the keys of heaven were given to Peter by our Lord?" "Yes," answered the two adversaries together. "Then," said the king, "I say, like you, that he is the porter of heaven, and that I will not oppose him, but on the contrary, obey him in all things, lest when I reach the doors of the celestial kingdom, there be no one to open them for me if I am the adversary of him who carries the keys. In all my life I will neither do nor approve anything or any person that may be contrary to him."[44]

The assembly adopts the Romish usages.

The whole assembly approved this conclusion of the king by vote, holding up their hands, both the nobles who were seated, and the freemen who stood round,[45] and all decided to adopt the Roman

[43] "Justius multo est de incognitis bonum credere, quam malum; unde et illos Dei famulos et Dei dilectos esse non nego, qui simplicitate rustica, sed intentione pia Deum dilexerunt . . . quos utique credo, si quis tunc ad eos catholicus calculator advenerat. . . . Etsi enim patres tui sancti fuerint, numquid universali quæ per orbem est ecclesiæ Christi, eorum est paucitas uno de angulo extremæ insulæ præferenda. Etsi sanctus erat et potens virtutibus ille Columba vester, immo et noster si Christi erat." — BEDE, iii. 25. The dubious and slightly disdainful tone used by the young Wilfrid in speaking of the great Columba, of whose life he was evidently ignorant, is remarkable. However, this speech is only found in Bede, himself singularly hostile to Columba. Eddi, the contemporary and companion of Wilfrid, attributes to him much more humble language, of which he quotes little. Fleury, relating this scene, believes that he spoke against St. Columbanus of Luxeuil.

[44] "Ille est ostiarius et clavicularius, contra quem concluctationem controversiæ et judiciorum ejus in vita mea non facio, nec facientibus consentio." — EDDIUS, c. 10. Cf. BEDE, l. c.

[45] "Hæc dicente rege, elevatis in cœlum manibus, faverunt adsidentes quique, sive adstantes." — BEDE.

custom. The sitting ended without any discussion of the other contested points, which, no doubt, were regarded as settled by the first decision. Of the three bishops who had taken part in the deliberation, Agilbert, ex-Bishop of the Western Saxons, embarked for his own country, and Cedd, Bishop of the East Saxons, who had acted as interpreter to the two adverse parties, renounced the customs of Lindisfarne, in which he had been educated, and returned to his diocese of London to spread the Roman usages there.

Bishop Colman protests, abdicates, and returns to Iona.

But Colman, Bishop of the Northern Anglo-Saxons, refused to recognize the decision of the council. He could not resign himself to see his doctrine despised, and his spiritual ancestors depreciated; he feared, also, the anger of his countrymen, who would not have pardoned his defection.[46] Notwithstanding the affection and veneration showed for him by King Oswy, he determined to abandon his diocese. Accordingly, taking with him all the Lindisfarne monks of Scottish origin, who would neither give up the Celtic Easter nor shave their heads in Roman fashion, he left Northumbria forever, and went to Iona to consult the fathers of the order, or family of St. Columba. He carried with him the bones of his predecessor St. Aïdan, the founder of Lindisfarne, and first Celtic evangelist of Northumbria, as if the ungrateful land had become unworthy to possess these relics of a betrayed saint, and witnesses of a despised apostleship. Undoubtedly this holy bishop, whose virtues, like those of his predecessors, draw, in this supreme hour, an eloquent and generous homage from the venerable Bede, would have done better to have yielded and remained in his diocese conforming to the customs of Rome. But what heart is so cold as not to understand, to sympathize, and to journey with him along the Northumbrian coast and over the Scottish mountains, where, bearing homewards the bones to his father, the proud but vanquished spirit returned to his northern mists, and buried in the sacred isle of Iona his defeat and his unconquerable fidelity to the traditions of his race?

[46] "Propter timorem patriæ suæ." — Eddius, l. c. "Videns spretam suam doctrinam, sectamque esse despectam." — Bede, iii. 26. Cf. iv. 4.

CHAPTER II.

WILFRID, BISHOP OF YORK, AND THE GREEK MONK THEODORE, PRIMATE OF ENGLAND.

Colman founds a half-Saxon, half-Celtic monastic colony in Ireland. — He is succeeded in Northumbria by the Anglo-Saxon Eata as prior of Lindisfarne, and by Tuda, an Irishman converted to the Romish ritual, as bishop. — Dedication of the great Monastery of Peterborough, founded by the Christian descendants of Penda, the last Pagan leader; at which Mercians and Northumbrians, Celts and Romanists, are present together; speech of King Wulphere. — Pestilence of 664; death of Tuda; Wilfrid elected Bishop of Northumbria. — Treating the Anglo-Saxon bishops as schismatics, he goes to be consecrated by the Bishop of Paris at Compiègne, and removes his see from Lindisfarne to York. — On his return he is shipwrecked on the coast of Sussex, and fights with the natives. — Celtic reaction against Wilfrid; King Oswy replaces him during his absence by an Irish abbot, Ceadda. — Sanctity and popularity of Ceadda. — The Northumbrians observe the decree of Whitby as to the celebration of Easter, but refuse to retain Wilfrid as bishop. — He retires to his Monastery of Ripon. — He resides with the Kings of Mercia and of Kent. — He assists the holy Queen Ermenilda in completing the conversion of the Mercians. — He introduces the Gregorian chant and the Benedictine rule into Northumbria. — The Kings of Kent and Northumbria leave to the Pope the choice of the new metropolitan of Canterbury. — The Pope chooses a Greek monk Theodore, and associates with him Adrian, an African, and the Anglo-Saxon Benedict Biscop. — They are all three seized on their way by Ebroïn, but released. — The pontificate of St. Theodore, the first metropolitan recognized by all England. — He re-establishes Wilfrid in the see of York, who makes Ceadda bishop of the Mercians. — Holy and peaceful death of Ceadda. — Theodore and Adrian visit all England. — Theodore's ecclesiastical legislation; his book of penance. — He consecrates the Celtic Cathedral of Lindisfarne. — He creates the parochial system as it now exists, and holds the first Anglo-Saxon council at Hertford. — He fails in increasing the number of bishoprics, but introduces the Benedictine order into the monasteries. — Literary development of the English monasteries due to Theodore and Adrian. — The Church of England is constituted, and the English nation becomes a lever in the hands of the Papacy.

Colman founds a monastic colony in Ireland.

It was not only the priests of Celtic origin, Irish or Scotch, who refused to sanction by their presence the introduction of Roman practices at Lindisfarne; Colman was also accompanied by thirty

Anglo-Saxon monks, perfectly versed in the study and offices of monastic life, who preferred the Celtic observances to those of Rome. After a short sojourn at Iona, he led these emigrants to his native country, and established himself with them in a desert island on the west coast of Ireland called *Innisbowen*, or the Isle of the White Heifer, a name it still retains. But when confined in this islet, beaten by the waves of the great ocean, the Anglo-Saxons, whose devotion to Celtic tradition had been strong enough to sever them from their country, were unable to live amicably with the Irish, their former companions at Lindisfarne. They quarrelled about a purely material matter, which manifests even thus early the natural incompatibility of the two races who were destined afterwards upon Irish soil to fight more cruel battles. The Irish monks wandered all the summer through about their favorite spots, probably in many instances their native places; but on their return in winter they expected to share the harvest which their English brethren had painfully cultivated and gathered in.[47] Colman was obliged to separate them; leaving the Irish in their island, he installed the Anglo-Saxons in a monastery which, under the name of Mayo, flourished greatly, and which a century later still continued to be occupied by English monks, fervent and laborious, who had, however, returned from Celtic usages to the orthodox rule, and probably to Benedictine discipline, which Wilfrid had established at the same time as he introduced conformity to the usages of Rome.

The new prelates in Northumbria.

Colman, however, while withdrawing from Lindisfarne all his Celtic countrymen, and those of the Anglo-Saxons who sympathized with them, had no intention of handing over definitely to the enemy the sacred isle in which his predecessors had delighted to recognize a new Iona. Before setting out on his voluntary exile, he begged his friend King Oswy to allow the remaining monks at Lindisfarne to take for their superior that Eata whom Aïdan had chosen among his twelve first Northumbrian disciples, and who, out of love to Celtic traditions,

[47] "Eo quod Scotti tempore æstatis quo fruges erant colligendæ, relicto monasterio, per nota sibi loca dispersi vagarentur; ut vero hieme succedente redirent, et his quæ Angli præparaverant, communiter uti desiderarent." — Bede, iv. 4. Is not this precisely the fable of the Grasshopper and the Ant? and is it not curious to discover, in a hidden corner of monkish history, a fresh proof of the radical difference and fatal incompatibility of the two races, Celtic and Saxon? This intractable Bishop Colman died in 674 or 676; he is reckoned among the saints of the Irish martyrology.

had given up the monastery at Ripon, in which Wilfrid succeeded him, and had again become abbot of Melrose — that is to say, of the novitiate establishment of the Celtic monks in Northumbria. The king consented, and the confidant and friend of Colman became superior of Lindisfarne, with the title of prior, but the full authority of an abbot.

After this it became necessary to proceed immediately to replace Colman as bishop of all Northumbria. His successor was one of his own countrymen, who resided in the diocese, and, indeed, during the pontificate of Colman, had been famed for his virtues and apostolical activity. This monk, named Tuda, had been educated in the monasteries of southern Ireland; he had already conformed to the Roman ritual in the questions of the celebration of Easter and the form of the tonsure — these customs having been, it is said, adopted thirty years before by the district of Ireland to which he belonged. It was only, therefore, by his Celtic origin, that he was attached to the ancient traditions of the diocese. He died some months afterwards of a terrible pestilence, which in this year, 664, made cruel ravages in the British Isles. He was the last of the Celtic bishops of Northumbria.[48]

Before his death, however, there occurred a great religious and national solemnity, at which he was present, and which was celebrated in this same critical year of 664, so decisive, under more than one aspect, for England. This solemnity seems to have united in sincere and unanimous enthusiasm all the principal personages of the most important states of the Heptarchy, and it exhibits, in a special degree, the increasing ascendency of that Roman influence of which Wilfrid was henceforward the victorious champion. Its object was the dedication of a new monastery in Mercia, the kingdom which had been so long the stronghold of Saxon paganism and the seat of an obstinate resistance to the missionary spirit of Northumbria.

Conversion to Christianity of the descendants of Penda.

By one of those transformations so frequent among the Germanic races at the period of their entrance into the Christian life, all the descendants of the fierce Penda, the most obstinate and invincible of pagans, were destined to become intrepid champions of Christianity, or models of monastic life.

[48] "Famulus Christi Tuda qui erat apud Scottos austrinos eruditus, atque ordinatus episcopus, habens juxta morem provinciæ illius coronam tonsuræ ecclesiasticæ et catholicam temporis paschalis regulam observans." — Bede, iii. 26.

Of his eight children who are known to us, three sons who reigned successively distinguished themselves by their religious zeal, the third becoming a monk after a reign of thirty years; while three daughters, two of whom are counted among the saints of the English calendar, ended their lives in the cloister. The eldest son, Peada, who was son-in-law of Oswy, brother-in-law and friend of Alchfrid, and the earliest Christian of Mercia, continued to reign over one part of the kingdom, even after the defeat and death of his father, who perished under the avenging sword of Oswy. The father-in-law and son-in-law, united more closely by their faith than the father and son had been by the ties of blood, determined to consecrate their alliance by founding a great monastery in honor of God and St. Peter, and chose for this purpose a retired situation in the east of Mercia.

Foundation of Peterborough.

Such was the origin of the Abbey of Peterborough, the burgh or castle of St. Peter,[49] the most ancient of those famous houses destined to rise successively in the midst of the vast fens which formed a sort of natural frontier between the eastern and central Saxons, between Mercia and East Anglia.

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Peada died a violent death when the work was but beginning.[50] But it was taken up, and continued by his young brother Wulphere, whom the Mercians, in revolt from Northumbrian domination, had chosen for their chief, who had been, like his elder brother, baptized by the second Celtic bishop of Lindisfarne,[51] and who always showed an ardent zeal for the extension and consolidation of Christianity in his kingdom. His younger brothers and his two sisters, one of them the wife of the young King Alchfrid of Northumbria, the friend of Peada and Wilfrid, and all the *witan* — that is to say, the wise men and nobles, whether lay or ecclesiastical, of his public council [52] — encouraged him to the utmost in finishing the first great monastic foundation in their vast territory.

Solemn dedication of Peter-

The abbot appointed from the beginning of the work was a monk named Sexwulf, descended from

[49] It was at first called Medehamstede, which means *the house in the meadow.*

[50] By the treachery of his wife, daughter of Oswy, and sister of his friend Alchfrid, who, having married Peada's sister, was doubly his brother-in-law. — Bede, iii. 24. *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, ad an. 665.

[51] *Act. SS. Bolland.*, vol. ii. February, p. 689.

[52] *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle:* Gibson's ed., Latin-Saxon text, p. 34; Giles's ed., English text, p. 321.

borough. 664. a great and noble family, devoted to the service of God, and much beloved by the Mercian Saxons. King Wulphere enjoined him to spare nothing to complete his brother's work magnificently, promising to be answerable for all the expense. When the building was finished the King of Mercia invited, for the day of consecration, the King of Northumbria, who was his godfather although he had become his political adversary, and whose dignity of Bretwalda entitled him to preside at the grand solemnities of the Saxon people; and with him the two kings of the neighboring states of Essex and East Anglia, the Archbishop of Canterbury and Bishop of Rochester,[53] who were the first Anglo-Saxon monks raised to the episcopate; Wini, who had taken the place of Agilbert as Bishop of the Saxons of the West;[54] the two bishops of Mercia and Northumbria,[55] both educated in Celtic monasteries; and, last of all, Wilfrid, on whom all eyes had been turned by his late victories. Around these distinguished guests, both lay and ecclesiastical, were ranged all the earls and thanes, or great landed proprietors of the kingdom.[56] It was therefore really a great political assembly as well as a religious one. When the Archbishop had ended the ceremony of dedication, and consecrated the monastery to St. Peter, St. Paul, and St. Andrew, King Wulphere, placing himself in the midst of his family and his nobles, spoke thus: — "Thanks be to the most high and almighty God for the good deed which I do to-day in honor of Christ and St. Peter! All, as many as are here present, be witnesses and sureties of the donation which I make to St. Peter, to the Abbot Sexwulf and his monks, of the land and water, the fens and brooks here mentioned. . . . It is a trifling gift; but I will that they hold and possess it so royally and freely that no impost may be levied upon it, and that the monastery may be subject to no other power on earth, except the Holy See of Rome, for it is hither that those of us who cannot go to Rome will come to seek and to visit St. Peter. I implore you, my brother, and you, my sisters, be witnesses

[53] Frithona and Ithamar.

[54] He was soon expelled from this usurped diocese; but thanks to the protection of Wulphere, he became Bishop of London, purchasing the see, according to Bede, who does not explain how the King of Mercia could dispose of the bishopric of the East Saxons. — *Eccles. Hist.*, iii. 7, 28. Lappenberg concludes that Wulphere became Bretwalda after the death of Oswy.

[55] Jaruman and Tuda.

[56] "Et ibi fuerunt omnes illius thani quotquot essent in suo regno. . . . Cum comitibus, cum ducibus, et cum thanis." — *Chron. Anglo-Sax.*, p. 35. Cf. Hook, *Lives of the Archbishops*, t. i. p. 131.

to this for the good of your souls, and sign it with your hands. I implore those who shall succeed me, whether my sons, my brothers, or others, to maintain this donation, as they wish to obtain eternal life, and to escape eternal torment. Whoever shall take away from it, or add to it, may the keeper of the celestial gates take away from, or add to, his part in heaven." The four kings, the five bishops, the two brothers and two sisters of the king, the earls and lords, successively signed the act of donation with the sign of the cross, repeating this formula, "I confirm it by my mouth and by the cross of Christ."[57] The document which contained the donation having been drawn up in accordance with the royal speech, the four kings and two princesses signed it first, then the bishops, and after them Wilfrid, who describes himself on this occasion as a "priest, servant of the Churches, and bearer of the Gospel among the nations."[58]

Immediately following upon these events, came a terrible pestilence, which ravaged England, and chose its most illustrious victims among those prelates of whom we have been speaking. It carried off first Bishop Cedda, who had acted as interpreter at Whitby, and his thirty friends, of whose touching death at Lastingham we have already heard;[59] and after him the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of Northumbria, both of whom had signed the deed of dedication of the new monastery of St. Peter.[60] It became necessary, therefore, to provide for the see which the death of Tuda had left vacant, that of Northumbria, the largest and most important of all the English bishoprics. The Roman party believed itself so strong as to be able to disregard the tradition, not yet very venerable, which made that great see the right of the Celtic monks. They determined to go further back, to the recol-

Wilfrid is promoted to the bishopric. 664.

[57] All these details are taken from the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, the most important and most authentic of all the historic monuments of the Anglo-Saxon epoch, after the History of Bede. Kemble, and after him several recent authors, see only modern interpolations in these passages relating to the Abbey of Peterborough, but give no direct proof of this opinion. Kemble, however, describes the consent of the assembly, half lay and half clerical, to the king's donation. (*Codex Diplomat.*, nº 984.) M. Augustin Thierry has quoted the speech of Wulphere as authentic (*Hist. de la Conquête*, t. i. p. 88, edit. of 1846), and I do not see any reason for not following his example. The most complete version of the deed is in Dugdale's *Monasticon* (vol. i. p. 63). There will be found in the Appendix some notes on the present condition of this famous abbey.

[58] "Ego Wilfridus presbyter, famulus ecclesiarum, et bajulus evangelii Dei in gentes, affectavi."

[59] Page 290.

[60] Bede, iii. 25, 28, &c.

lections of the first mission sent from Rome, which, passing by Canterbury, was established at York by the Benedictine Paulinus. Besides this, the young king, Alchfrid, was impatient to see his friend Wilfrid master of spiritual authority in the kingdom which had been brought back by him to unity with Rome. He obtained the consent of his father, the Bretwalda Oswy, and both together reassembled the Witenagemot, to proceed to the election of a bishop, whose determination it should be to make Roman usages the law of his conduct. The Northumbrian thanes, consulted by the two kings, replied with one voice that no one in the whole country could be more worthy of the episcopate than Wilfrid, who was already priest and abbot. He himself was present at the assembly, and wished at first to decline the election. But he was commanded in the name of the Lord, and on the part of the kings and people of Northumbria, to submit his will to their unanimous choice.[61]

This was a great victory for the Roman observances. It was never forgiven by the vanquished, and Wilfrid had to bear the penalty during all the remainder of his life. The Northumbrian dissenters submitted to the decision of Whitby, but they retained an implacable antipathy to the conqueror. The great Abbess Hilda, the Celtic monks of Lindisfarne, all those who remained faithful to the sacred memory of St. Aïdan, and to that still more venerated, of Columba, appeared to have taken against Wilfrid the oath of Hannibal. Reduced to powerlessness on the Pascal question, in respect to which they could not struggle against Rome with the whole Church at her back, they regained the advantage when only the person of Wilfrid was concerned, who, dear as he was to the king's son, was perhaps for that very reason less liked by Oswy, who, though he adopted the Roman Easter, could not destroy all traces of attachment to the ideas and customs of his youth.

He does not wish to be consecrated by any of the bishops of his own country, not even by the

Wilfrid, meantime, chose this occasion to exhibit, yet more than at Whitby, the bigoted and exclusive side of his character.

[61] "Reges concilium cum sapientibus suæ gentis . . . inierunt, quem eligerent in sedem vacantem, qui voluisset sedis apostolicæ doctrinam sibi facere et alios docere. . . . Neminem habemus meliorem et digniorem nostræ gentis quam Wilfridum . . . consenserunt reges et omnis populus huic electioni, et Wilfridum omnis conventus in nomine Domini accipere gradum episcopalem præcepit." — Eddius, c. 2.

Metropolitan of Canterbury. Although they were all in communion with the Holy See, and though many of them are still venerated as saints,[62] he took upon himself, on his own authority, to class them with schismatics. "My lord kings," he said, "I must first of all consider the best means of reaching the episcopate according to your election, without exposing myself to the reproaches of true Catholics. There are in this island many bishops whom it is not my business to accuse, but they have ordained Britons and Scots whom the Apostolic See has not received into communion, because it does not receive those that hold communion with schismatics.[63] I therefore humbly beseech you to send me into Gaul, where there are many Catholic bishops, so that I may receive the episcopal character without opposition to the Holy See." He thus confounded together the whole Celtic clergy of Great Britain and Ireland as schismatics, though his apologists have not left us the least trace of any Papal decision which authorized him in taking this attitude. However, the two kings made no objection, but, on the contrary, gave him a numerous train and enough money to present himself to the Franks with the pomp he loved, and which suited the bishop of a great kingdom. He thus crossed the sea and went to Compiègne to seek his friend Agilbert, formerly Bishop of the West Saxons, who had just been made Bishop of Paris. Agilbert received him with all honor as a confessor of the faith. Wilfrid was consecrated with the greatest solemnity, and with the assistance of twelve other bishops. He was carried through the church, in the midst of the crowd, on a golden throne, by the hands of bishops, who chanted hymns, and who were alone admitted to the honor of supporting his throne. He was instituted Bishop, not of Lindisfarne, like his four predecessors, but of York, like Paulinus, the first bishop sent from Canterbury and from Rome, as if by this means to efface all trace of the Celtic mission in Northumbria.[64]

crated by any English bishop.

[62] Faber, p. 44.

[63] At least this seems to be the meaning of the somewhat obscure language his friend Eddi attributes to him: "O domini venerabiles reges. . . . Sunt hic in Britannia multi episcopi, quorum nullum meum est accusare: quamvis veraciter sciam quod haud quatuordecim anni sunt, ut Britones et Scoti ab illis sint ordinati, quos nec apostolica sedes in communionem recepit, neque eos qui schismaticis consentiunt."—C. 12.

[64] "Tale consilium bene regibus complacuit, præparantes ei navem et auxilia hominum et multitudinem pecuniæ. . . . In sella aurea sedentem more eorum sursum elevarunt, portantes in manibus soli episcopi intra oratoria, nullo alio attingente. . . . Post spatium temporis ad sedem episcopalem

Shipwreck and combat on the coast of Sussex.

His stay in France was probably too much prolonged, and his return was not without disaster. While he was crossing the Channel, and the clergy who accompanied him, seated on deck, replaced the ordinary songs of the sailors by chanted psalms, a fearful storm arose, by which they were wrecked on the coast of Sussex — the smallest kingdom of the Heptarchy, inhabited, as its name indicates, by the Southern Saxons. The ebbing tide having left the ship aground, the people in the neighborhood made a rush to avail themselves of that right to wreck and derelict always so dear to maritime populations, and which has been too long maintained even among the most Catholic, as in our own Bretagne. As the Southern Saxons were still pagans, we can scarcely admit, with one of Wilfrid's biographers, that they were excited against him by the malice of Celtic Christianity; but they did not the less manifest their intention of taking possession of the vessel, and giving the shipwrecked strangers their choice between death and slavery. Wilfrid tried to pacify them, offering all he possessed for the liberty of himself and his followers. But the pagans were excited by one of their priests, who, standing on the cliffs, cursed, like Balaam, the people of God, and looked as if he meant to destroy them by sorcery. One of Wilfrid's followers, armed, like David, with a sling, flung a stone at the heathen pontiff, whose skull it shattered; and his corpse fell upon the sands. At this sight the rage of the savages redoubled, and they prepared to take the vessel by storm. Wilfrid's Northumbrians, one hundred and twenty in number, resolved to defend themselves. They swore, according to Saxon custom, not to abandon each other, and to think of no alternative save a glorious death or victory. Wilfrid and his priests, kneeling on the deck, prayed while the others fought. Three times the ferocious wreckers mounted to the assault, and three times they were repulsed. They were preparing for a fourth attack, under the command of their king, who had been attracted by the hope of booty, when the tide suddenly turned, lifted the stranded vessel, and saved the travellers from their enemies. They landed peaceably at Sandwich, on the same Kentish coast where Augustin and his companions had for the first time trodden the coast of England.[65]

Ebracæ civitatis hunc emiserunt." — Eddius, 1. c. Cf. Bede, iii. 28; Fridegodus, *Vita Rhythmica*, c. 11.

[65] "Canentibus clericis et psallentibus laudem Dei pro celeusmate in choro. . . . Mare navem et homines relinquens . . . littora detergens, in abyssi

A painful surprise awaited them. During the prolonged absence of Wilfrid the mind of Oswy had changed. The victory of Whitby, like all other victories, was less complete than it at first seemed to be. The Celtic party, apparently destroyed by the unanimous vote of the assembly, had now revived, and regained its credit with the Bretwalda. The return of Oswy to his former predilections for the Celtic Church, in which he had been baptized and brought up, may probably be ascribed to the influence of the holy Abbess Hilda of Whitby, princess of the Northumbrian blood-royal, to whom the king had confided his daughter when consecrating her to God as the price of his victory over the Mercians and the completed liberation of his country.[66] As long as she lived Hilda remained faithful to the Celtic traditions, and her opposition to Wilfrid never relaxed.[67] It has also been supposed that Oswy had begun to be jealous of his son Alchfrid, and of the influence procured for him with the Roman party by his close alliance with Wilfrid, although it was Oswy himself who had associated his son with him in the royalty, and although his position as Bretwalda or suzerain of the Anglo-Saxon Confederation might have reassured him on that score.[68] But the confidant and biographer of Wilfrid affirms that the Celts (whom he most unjustly styles quartodecimans), with the aid of the devil, persuaded the king to take advantage of the absence of Wilfrid to appoint one of their party Bishop of York in his place.[69]

Celtic reaction against Wilfrid. King Oswy replaces him by the Irishman Ceadda.

It is unanimously allowed that the man whom Oswy substituted for Wilfrid was a saint. His name was Ceadda,[70] a monk of Anglo-Saxon birth, but

Saintly character of Ceadda, the

matricem recessit. . . . Stans princeps sacerdotum idololatriæ coram paganis in tumulo excelso, sicut Balaam . . . ut suis magicis artibus manus eorum alligare nitebatur . . . retrorsum cadavere cadente sicut Goliathus in arenosis locis. . . . Inito pactu, ut nullus ab alio in fugam terga verteret, sed aut mortem cum laude, aut vitam cum triumpho habere mererentur." — Eddius, c. 13.

[66] See above, p. 297.

[67] Varin, account already quoted. William of Malmesbury, l. c.

[68] Faber, p. 46. A trace of this rivalry between father and son is clearly shown in this passage of Bede: — "Rex Alchfrid misit Wilfridum ad regem Galliarum, qui eum consecrari faceret episcopum. . . . Imitatus industriam filii rex Osviu misit Cantiam, virum sanctum." — iii. 28.

[69] "Oswiu rex, male suadente invidia, hostis antiqui instinctu, alium præarripere inordinate sedem suam edoctus, consensit ab his qui quartadecimanam partem contra apostolicæ sedis regulam sibi elegerunt." — Eddius, c. 14.

[70] He is venerated in England under the name of St. Chad. "Religiosissimum admirabilem doctorem, de insula Hibernia venientem." — Eddius, c. 14. Bede, iii. 21, 23; iv. 2.

Intruded successor of Wilfrid.

who had been a disciple of St. Aïdan. He was a brother of Bishop Cedd or Cedda, who had acted as interpreter at Whitby, and whose death, followed by that of his thirty friends, we have already mentioned. Ceadda had succeeded his brother as Abbot of Lastingham, the monastery which was, after Lindisfarne, the principal seat of the Celtic spirit in Northumbria. It was Oswy's desire, however, that the new bishop should be consecrated, not by the prelates of the Celtic ritual, but at Canterbury by the Saxon metropolitan,[71] who had always preserved a good understanding with the people of the north. But when Ceadda arrived at Canterbury he found that the terrible pestilence of 664 had carried off the archbishop, whose successor was not yet appointed. He then went to the land of the Eastern Saxons to obtain consecration from Wini, of whom we have heard at Whitby and Peterborough, but who also appears to have been moved by a reactionary impulse against the vote of the Council, since he called to his aid, in the consecration of Ceadda, two British bishops who had remained faithful to the Pascal usage of the Celts.[72] On his return to Northumbria, Ceadda peaceably took possession of his diocese, and displayed there the virtues which have for so long made his name popular among the English. Well versed in Holy Scripture, he drew from it rules of conduct which he never disregarded. His humility, his sincerity, the purity of his life, his love for study, excited the admiration of the Northumbrian people, to whose evangelization he devoted himself, visiting the cities, villages, and castles, nay, even the most retired hamlets, not on horseback, according to the favorite custom of the Saxons, but on foot, like the apostles, and like his master and predecessor St. Aïdan.[73]

It does not appear, however, that Ceadda or any other of the Celtic adversaries of Wilfrid attempted to reverse the decision of the Council of Whitby, or to maintain or re-establish either the Celtic observance of Easter or the tonsure from ear to ear. It is probable that the opposition which arose against Wilfrid, continually increasing in violence, was directed less against Roman doctrines or practices than against himself personally. His precocious influence, and

[71] Frithona, also called Deusdedit.

[72] "Absumptis in societatem ordinationis duobus de Britonum gente episcopis, qui dominicum paschæ diem . . . secus morem canonicum, a quarta decima usque ad vigesimam lunam celebrant." — Bede, iii. 28.

[73] "Oppida, rura, casas, vicos, castella propter evangelizandum, non equitando . . . peragrare." — Bede, iii. 28.

still more his violent proceedings against the Irish and their disciples, roused the popular dislike; for it is proved that, wherever he had the power, he allowed the Celts only the choice of giving up their own customs or returning to their native country.[74]

Wilfrid retires to the Monastery of Ripon.

Thus dispossessed of his see, Wilfrid regained all his influence by the moderation and dignity of his conduct. He was only thirty years of age. His youth might have excused some irritation, some warmth easy to be understood in the presence of so manifest an injustice. But far from yielding to this, he displayed the prudence and mature mind of a statesman, together with the humility and charity of a saint. He, so rigid an observer of the canon law, so scrupulous with regard to liturgical irregularities, had here to oppose an inexcusable abuse of power, a direct violation of the laws of the Church — he had to vindicate an evident right, solemnly conferred by the Northumbrian king and nation, and solemnly consecrated by the Church. And yet he preferred to be silent, to withdraw himself, and to trust to the justice of God and of the future. Thus the saint begins to be visible in his character; and it must not be forgotten, as an additional claim upon our interest, that the pious usurper of the see was himself already accounted a saint, and placed by public veneration in the high rank which he has for nine hundred years maintained in the regard of English Catholics.

He stays with the Kings of Mercia and Kent.

Wilfrid, whose episcopal character no one could despise, but who had no longer a diocese, retired calmly, and even joyfully, to the Monastery of Ripon, which he held by the generosity of the young King Alchfrid, and there lived in study and seclusion.[75] It may be supposed that his friend Alchfrid went thither to console him — if, indeed, he were living at the time of Wilfrid's return; for from that moment he disappears from history, though there is no record of his death. But Wilfrid was not long permitted to remain in his monastery. Wulphere, King

[74] "Ipse perplura catholicæ observationis moderamina ecclesiis Anglorum sua doctrina contulit. Unde factum est, ut, crescente per dies institutione catholica, Scotti omnes qui inter Anglos morabantur aut his manus darent, aut suam redirent ad patriam." — Bede, iii. 28. "Hic primus verum pascha, ejectis Scottis, in Northumbria docuit." — Thom. de Elmham., *Hist. Monast. S. Augustini*, p. 198.

[75] "Placido vultu et hilari pectore cœnobium suum in Ripon repetiit, ibique cum magna mentis stabilitate." — Ricard. Hagulstad., *Hist. Eccles. Hagust.*, c. 6.

of Mercia, the founder of Peterborough, invited him to his kingdom, where at that time there was no bishop.[76]

Although this kingdom had been converted and governed by Celtic monks, Wulphere was naturally drawn to favor the champion of the Roman ritual, by his marriage with Ermenilda, daughter of the King of Kent, and, consequently, sprung from that race which first received the teachings of Rome from the lips of St. Augustin. She was niece of Eanfleda, Queen of Northumbria, who had been the first protectress of Wilfrid, and who had carried back from her exile and education at Canterbury so faithful an attachment to the Roman customs. King Wulphere, Queen Ermenilda, and the Abbot Wilfrid, therefore labored together to extend and consolidate the Christian faith, in that vast kingdom of Mercia, which already began to rival Northumbria in importance.

St. Ermenilda, Queen of Mercia, afterwards abbess of Ely.

Thanks to the great territorial donations made to him by the king, Wilfrid was able to found several monasteries, in one of which he was destined to end his life. He thus lent powerful aid in achieving the happy results which were chiefly due to Queen Ermenilda. This gentle and noble woman, who, like so many other princesses of the race of Hengist, ended her days in the cloister, and is inscribed in the list of saints, had been chosen by God to complete the transformation into Christians of those terrible Mercians, who, more than all the other Anglo-Saxons, had remained faithful to their national paganism, and had been so long the terror of the new-born Christianity of England. She succeeded as much by her bounties and good example, as by her energetic perseverance. The unwearied activity of her self-devotion was only equalled by her angelic sweetness. She never ceased her exertions until, after a reign of seventeen years with Wulphere, idolatry had completely disappeared from Mercia. Then, on the death of her husband, she entered the monastery, where her mother awaited her, and which had been founded by her aunt.[77]

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[76] Bishop Jaruman had been sent by Wulphere to lead back to the true faith the Eastern Saxons, who, since the great pestilence of 664, had fallen into idolatry. See above, p. 291.

[77] "Sua dulcedine, blandifluis hortamentis, moribus ac beneficiis indomita mulcens pectora, ad suave Christi jugum rudes populos et indoctos excitabat. . . . Nec requievit invicta, donec idola et ritus dæmoniacos extirparet. . . . *Act. SS. Bolland.*, vol. ii. Feb., p. 691. The history of the Monastery of Ely, founded by St. Etheldreda, and of which Ermenilda succeeded her mother, Sexburga, as abbess, will be found further on.

In order to understand clearly the aspect of these earliest ages of the political and religious history of England, it is needful to remember the ties of blood which united all the kings and princesses of different dynasties who governed the kingdoms of the Heptarchy, and claimed their descent from Odin. This relationship frequently serves to guide us through the maze of incidents which favored or retarded the preaching of the Gospel. Thus the gentle and noble Ermenilda was the sister of Egbert, King of Kent, who, faithful, like her, to the traditions of his family, always showed himself full of zeal for religion such as Augustin had preached it to his ancestor Ethelbert, and full of affection for Wilfrid. Accordingly, after the death of Augustin's fifth successor, the metropolitan see having remained vacant for some years, Egbert invited the Abbot of Ripon to preside over the spiritual government of his kingdom, and to provide for the ordinations.

Egbert, King of Kent. 664-673.

Wilfrid exercised this provisional authority for three years; dividing his time between his Northumbrian monastery, and the diocese of Canterbury, where he made many friends, whose aid he secured for the benefit of his Abbey of Ripon. One of his first acts was to bring to Ripon two monks of the monastery of St. Augustin, good musicians, who introduced among the Anglo-Saxons the Gregorian chant, always used at Canterbury; and it is to one of these, named Hedd, or Eddi, that we owe the extremely valuable and curious biography of his bishop. With these singers Wilfrid brought also masons, or rather architects, *cæmentarii*, and other artists or workmen, all, no doubt, monks of the same monastery, whose talents he proposed to employ in the great building of which he already dreamed. Finally, he brought from the first sanctuary created by the Benedictines in England, a gift yet more precious and more fruitful than music or architecture, the rule of St. Benedict, which no one had hitherto attempted to introduce into the Northumbrian monasteries.[78] Wilfrid constituted himself its ardent and zealous missionary, advancing its adoption side by side with that

666-669.

Wilfrid introduces the Gregorian music and the Benedictine rule into Northumbria.

[78] "Cum cantatoribus Æddе et Æona et cæmentariis omnisque pæne artis ministerio in regionem suam revertens cum regula Benedicti, instituta ecclesiarum bene melioravit." — EDDIUS, c. 14. "Nonne ego curavi . . . quomodo vitam monachorum secundum regulam S. Benedicti patris, quam nullus ibi prius invexit, constituerem?" — *Ibid.*, c. 45. Cf. MABILLON, *Act. SS. O. S. B.*, t. v. p. 633, puis *Annales Benedictini*, lib. xv. n. 64.

of the Roman tonsure, the exact observance of Easter, and the harmonious and alternate chanting of the liturgy. He succeeded thoroughly; for it is to him and to him alone that we must attribute the gradual but rapid substitution of the Benedictine rule for Celtic traditions in the great and numerous communities which the sons of St. Columba had created in the north of England. It has been already made apparent in the life of St. Columba, that there was no fundamental difference between monastic life as regulated by the great legislator of Monte Cassino, and that practised at Iona and in the other communities of Ireland and Great Britain. The only difference that can be indicated as distinctly characteristic of monastic life among the Celts, is a certain increased austerity in fasts and other mortifications, and a more decided application to the copying of manuscripts.[79] But in the opinion of Wilfrid, as in the general interest of the Church, it was of great consequence that the powerful regular army of Saxon Christianity should march under the same flag, and answer to the same watchword. The watchword and the flag had been brought from Rome by the Benedictine missionaries of Mont-Cœlius, and confided to the two great monastic foundations of Canterbury, from whence Wilfrid brought them to make of them the supreme, and henceforward ineffaceable, characteristics of English ecclesiastical organization.

Choice of a new metropolitan.

However, the aspect of affairs was about to undergo another change. It was needful to find a successor for Archbishop Deusdedit. For this purpose, the King of Northumbria, Oswy, made use of the superior authority in ecclesiastical affairs which seems to have been accorded to the Bretwalda; he showed, at the same time, that though the Celtic party, by appealing to the recollections of his youth, had been able to persuade him to make Wilfrid the victim of an unjust exclusion, he remained, nevertheless, sincerely submissive to the primacy of the Holy See, which he had so solemnly recognized at Whitby. After consulting with the young King Egbert of Kent and the chiefs of the Anglo-Saxon clergy, he appointed a monk of Canterbury, named Wighard, universally known to be worthy of the episcopate, a Saxon by birth, but trained in the school of the first missionaries sent from Rome by St.

667.

[79] As to the election of abbots, which was one of the most essential bases of the Benedictine rule, it appears that Wilfrid himself departed from it without hesitation by naming to his monks the successor they were to give him. —Eddius, c. 61.

Gregory,[80] and thus uniting all the conditions necessary to satisfy at once the exigencies of the national spirit and those of the most severe orthodoxy. Then, still acting in conjunction with the King of Kent, he did what had never before been done by an English king, nor, indeed, so far as I know, by the king of any newly converted nation; he sent the archbishop-elect to Rome to be consecrated by the Pope, so that he might be able to ordain perfectly orthodox bishops in all the churches of England.

Referred by King Oswy to the Pope.

Wighard had but just arrived at Rome, when he died there with nearly all his attendants. The two kings then resolved to leave to the Pope the choice of the new metropolitan of England.

But great as was Oswy's zeal and humility in yielding to Roman supremacy, the want of eagerness displayed by Vitalien, who was then Pope, in using the power thus given up to him, was equally remarkable. He replied to Oswy that he had not yet been able to find a person suited for so distant a mission, but promised to make further attempts to find one, and in the mean time congratulated the king on his faith, exhorting him to continue to conform, whether with regard to Easter, or to any other question, to the traditions of the Apostles Peter and Paul, whom God had given to the world as two great lights, to enlighten every day the hearts of the faithful by their doctrine; and exhorted him to complete the work of the conversion and union of the whole island in the same apostolic faith. He sent him, at the same time, some relics of different martyrs, and a cross containing a portion of the chains of St. Peter for Queen Eanfleda, the friend of Wilfrid. "Your wife," said the Pope, "is our spiritual daughter; her virtues and good works are our joy, and that of all the Roman Church, and they bloom before God like the perfumed flowers of spring."[81]

[80] "Intellexerat enim veraciter quamvis educatus a Scottis, quia Romana esset catholica et apostolica ecclesia. . . . Cum electione et consensu sanctæ ecclesiæ gentis Anglorum. . . . Virum nomine Vigherdum qui a Romanis B. Gregorii papæ discipulis in Cantia fuerat omni ecclesiastica institutione sufficienter edoctus." — Bede, *Hist. Eccles.*, iii. 29; *Hist. Abbatum in Wiramutha et Girvum*, n. 3.

[81] "Hominem docibilem et in omnibus ornatum antistitem, secundum vestrorum scriptorum tenorem, minime valebimus nunc reperire pro longinquitate itineris. . . . Festinet vestra celsitudo, ut optamus totam suam insulam Deo Christo dicare. . . . De cujus pio studio cognoscentes, tantum cuncta sedes apostolica una nobiscum lætatur, quantum ejus pia opera coram Deo fragrant et vernant."

St. Theodore, a Greek monk, seventh Archbishop of Canterbury.

After a new and long search the Pope fixed his choice on Adrian, an African by birth, and Abbot of a monastery near Naples, equally versed in ecclesiastical and monastic discipline, and in the knowledge of Greek and Latin. Adrian made no objection either to the distance or to his ignorance of the Anglo-Saxon language, but he declared himself unworthy of the episcopate, and pointed out to the Pope a monk whose age and qualifications accorded better with this difficult mission. This was a monk named Andrew, attached to a nunnery in Italy, and who was judged worthy to be chosen; but his bodily infirmities obliged him to give up the appointment. Then Adrian, again urged by the Pope, proposed to him another of his friends, a Greek monk named Theodore, born, like St. Paul, at Tarsus, but then living at Rome, of good life and morals, of a knowledge so profound and various, that he was surnamed the Philosopher,[82] and already of a venerable age, being sixty-six years old. This proposition was accepted by the Pope, but with the condition that the Abbot Adrian should accompany his friend to England, to watch over his proceedings, that nothing contrary to the orthodox faith might be introduced into the Church, as was too often done by the Greeks. This precaution was justified by the cruel and sanguinary dissensions which then disturbed the Eastern Church, occasioned by the heresy of the Monotheists, and the constant interference of the Byzantine emperors in questions of faith. The matter being thus arranged, Theodore, who had his head entirely shaved, after the custom of the Eastern monks, was obliged to defer his journey for four months, that his hair might grow, before he could receive the crown-shaped tonsure of the West. As soon as his hair had been properly shaved, he was consecrated by the Pope, and started with the Abbot Adrian for England.

The Pope joins with him the African Adrian and the Anglo-Saxon Benedict Biscop.

26th March, 668.

But to the Asiatic and the African, so strangely chosen to rule the Anglo-Saxon Church, and who so well fulfilled their task, the Pope wisely determined to add a third, whose help, especially at the commencement of their mission, would be indispensable to them. This was the young Northumbrian noble, Benedict Biscop, whom we have seen start from England to make his pilgrimage to Rome with Wilfrid, parting

[82] "Sæculari simul et ecclesiastica philosophia præditum virum, et hoc in utraque lingua, græca scilicet et latina." — Bede, *Hist. Abbatum*, c. 3. Cf. *Hist. Ecclesiast.*, iv. 1.

from him at Lyons. After his first journey, Benedict returned to England, and gave his countrymen an ecstatic account of all that he had seen at Rome, every recollection of which he cherished. These recollections drew him a second time to Rome, where, after new studies and new enjoyments, he received the tonsure, and embraced a monastic life at the great sanctuary of Lerins, where Abbot Aygulphe had just introduced the Benedictine rule.[83] After remaining two years in this still venerated isle, he was unable to resist his desire of returning to Rome out of devotion to St. Peter. He arrived there for the third time in a trading vessel, and remained until Pope Vitalien commanded him to give up this pilgrimage in order to accomplish a much more meritorious one by returning to his own country as guide and interpreter to the new archbishop.[84] Benedict obeyed, and seventy years after the mission of St. Augustin, the three envoys started for England to take possession of it, as it were, a second time, in the name of the Church of Rome.

The apostolic travellers arrested on their journey by Ebroïn.

But their journey was not without hinderance; it took them more than a year to go from Rome to Canterbury. Instead of finding in France, as Augustin had done, the generous assistance of a queen like Brunehilde, the new missionaries became the prey of the tyrant Ebroïn, mayor of the palace, the first of those great statesmen, too numerous in our history, whom posterity has so meanly admired or absolved, and who, to the misfortune of our country, sought the triumph of their personal greatness only in the universal abasement and servitude of others. The presence of these three personages, a Greek, an African, and an Anglo-Saxon, all bearing recommendations from the Pope, appeared suspicious to the all-powerful minister. The Byzantine emperor, Constantine II., at that time still sovereign of Rome, which he had lately visited and pillaged, but where he talked of re-establishing the seat of empire, had excited the anxiety of Ebroïn, who

[83] Alliez, *Histoire du Monastère de Lérins*, 1860, vol. i. p. 371. I am glad to mention, in passing, this monograph as one of the best works of our time on monastic history.

[84] "Ad patriam reversus studiosius ea quæ videt ecclesiasticæ vitæ instituta diligere et quibus potuit prædicare non desiit. . . . Non pauca scientiæ salutaris quemadmodum et prius hausta dulcedine. . . . Adveniente nave mercatorio, desiderio satisfecit. . . . Et quia Benedictum sapientem, industrium, religiosum ac nobilem virum fore conspexit (papa) huic . . . cum comitibus suis commendavit episcopum . . . cui pariter interpres existere posset et ductor." — *Hist. Abbatum*, c. 2, 3.

imagined that the Papal messengers might be charged with the management of some plot between the Emperor and the Anglo-Saxon kings against the Frankish kingdom of Neustria and Burgundy, of which he regarded himself as chief. The Abbot Adrian appeared to him the most dangerous, and he therefore detained him a prisoner for two years after the release of the others. Meanwhile, thanks to the direct intervention of King Egbert, the Archbishop Theodore was enabled to reach England, and solemnly take possession of his see. His first act was to confide to his pious companion, Benedict Biscop, the government of that great abbey near Canterbury which contained the sepulchres of the archbishops and kings, and which had been dedicated by St. Augustin to St. Peter, though it is now only known by the name of the Apostle of England. Benedict remained there as superior until the arrival of Adrian, to whom it was transferred by the new archbishop, according to the Pope's commands that the African abbot and the monks who accompanied him should be established in his diocese.[85]

27th May, 669.

671.

The arrival of St. Theodore marks a new era in the history of the Anglo-Saxons.[86]

Pontificate of St. Theodore. 669-690.

There must have been, indeed, a stern courage and a holy ambition in this grand old man to induce him, at sixty-seven years of age, to undertake so laborious a task as that of the spiritual government of England. The history of the Church presents few spectacles more imposing and more comforting than that of this Greek of Asia Minor, a countryman of St. Paul, a mitred philosopher[87] and almost septuagenarian monk, journeying from the shores of the East to train a young nation of the West — disciplining, calming, and guiding all those discordant elements, the different races, rival dynasties, and new-born forces, whose union was destined to constitute one of the greatest nations of the earth.

He is the first metropolitan recognized by all England.

Thanks to the assistance of the powerful King of Northumbria, the new Archbishop of Canterbury found himself invested, for the first time, with authority recognized by all the Anglo-Saxons. This supremacy, which the intelligent desire of the Bret-

[85] Bede, *Hist. Eccles.*, iv. 1; *Hist. Abbat.*, c. 3.

[86] Lingard, *Anglo-Saxon Church*, vol. i. p. 77.

[87] "Cofamulum et coepiscopum nostrum, magnæ insulæ Britanniæ archiepiscopum et philosophum." — *Epist.* Agathonis *Papæ ad Imp.*, ap. Baronium, an. 680.

walda Oswy for union with Rome enabled him to exercise, was solemnly recognized by Pope Vitalien, who renewed in his favor all the prerogatives conferred by Gregory the Great on Augustin and the see of Canterbury, omitting all mention of the second see which Gregory had wished to establish at York.[88] This supreme authority over all the Churches of Great Britain, whatever their antiquity or origin, had been, in the hands of Augustin and his successors, only a title and a right; in those of the venerable Greek monk, it now became, for the first time, a powerful and incontestable reality.

He reestablishes Wilfrid in the see of York.

The first use which he made of this supremacy was to repair the injustice of which Wilfrid had been the victim. Oswy seems to have made no opposition; he yielded to the apostolic authority, whose decrees Theodore made known to him.[89] He thus crowned his reign by an act of reparation and of repentance, in allowing the man whom he had unjustly expelled[90] to be re-established in the episcopal see of the capital of his kingdom. The humble and pious Ceadda, who, by some strange forgetfulness of duty, had consented to replace Wilfrid, made no opposition to the application of canon law, which deprived him of his usurped see. He said to the archbishop, "If you are certain that my episcopate is not legitimate, I will abdicate it voluntarily; I have never thought myself worthy of it, and only accepted it in obedience." Upon which, as Wilfrid, when dispossessed by him, retired to the Monastery of Ripon, he himself returned to that of Lastingham, founded by his brother, from whence he had been taken to be made bishop. He lived for some time peacefully in this retreat. But the generous Wilfrid appreciating the vir-

[88] "Is primus erat in archiepiscopis, cui omnis Anglorum ecclesia manus dare consentiret." — Bede, iv. 2. Cf. Guill. Malmesb., *De Gest. Pontif., Angl.*, i. 1. "Nobis visum est te exhortari et in præsente commendare tuæ sagacissimæ sanctitati omnes ecclesias in insulas Britanniæ positas. Omnia ergo quæ a S. Gregorio prædecessore nostro Augustino sincello suo statuta sunt atque firmata vel etiam per sacrum usum pallii concessum, nos tibi in ævum concessimus." — *Diplomo of Pope Vitalien* in *Act. SS. Bolland.*, t. vi. Septembris, p. 59.

[89] "Veniens ad regem . . . statuta apostolicæ sedis, unde emissus venerat, secum deportans." — Eddius, c. 15.

[90] It must be observed that Wilfrid was only bishop, never archbishop, of York. The metropolitan dignity attached by St. Gregory to that see disappeared after the flight of Paulinus, and was restored only in 735 to Egbert, known by the letter addressed to him by the venerable Bede, and by many relics of ecclesiastical legislation published in the *Ancient Laws and Institutes of England.*

tues of the holy intruder, whose diocese he had continued to inhabit, was determined to bring them back again to the light. The bishopric of the kingdom of Mercia having become vacant, he persuaded his faithful friend Wulphere to summon Ceadda thither, and gave up to him for his residence a place called Lichfield, previously bestowed by the king on Wilfrid, that he might establish an episcopal see there, either for himself or for another.[91] Theodore and Ceadda both consented to this plan. The only condition made by the archbishop was that the bishop should be consecrated anew, with the assistance of Wilfrid, on account of the irregularity caused by the presence of the two Britons who had assisted at his first consecration.[92] In other respects, Theodore never ceased to do him all the honor which his holy life deserved; and as, from love to his work, and according to the custom of the first Northumbrian bishops of Celtic race, Ceadda persisted in traversing on foot the immense extent of his new diocese, the primate commanded him to use a horse, and himself held the stirrup to oblige the humble bishop to mount.[93] With admirable delicacy, Wilfrid assigned to this innocent usurper the care of continuing the task which had occupied and consoled himself during his disgrace. For three years Ceadda occupied the same position in Mercia which Wilfrid himself had occupied, aiding the noble efforts of the king, and the holy Queen Ermenilda, to destroy the last traces of idolatry. In the intervals of repose left him by his pastoral journeys, he inhabited a little monastery which he had built near his cathedral, that he might there continue his life of prayer and study with seven or eight monks, his friends. It was here that he died, leaving behind him a noble example of humility, wisdom, fervor, and voluntary poverty. The narrative

Ceadda, the intruded saint, is made bishop in Mercia by Wilfrid.

His death. 2d March, 672.

[91] "Si me nosti episcopatum non rite suscepisse, libenter ab hoc officio discedo: quippe qui neque me unquam hoc esse dignum arbitrabar." — Bede, iv. 2. "Ille servus Dei verus et mitissimus. . . . Sciebat (Wilfridus) sub Wulfario rege fidelissimo amico suo locum donatum sibi." — Eddius, c. 15. Lichfield, erected into a metropolis some time during the eighth century, and still a bishopric, derived its name from the number of bodies of martyrs killed in the reign of Diocletian which have been discovered there — *Leich* or *Lich-field*.

[92] This is the first application of a canon which afterwards became law: "Qui ordinati sunt Scotorum vel Britonnum episcopi, qui in pascha vel tonsuræ catholica non sunt ordinati ecclesiæ, iterum a catholico episcopo manus impositione confirmentur." — Ap. Thorpe, p. 307.

[93] "Ipse cum sua manu levavit in equum, quia nimirum sanctum esse virum comperit." — Bede, iv. 3.

of his last days was transmitted by the monk who attended him to the venerable Bede, always so scrupulous in indicating the sources from which he drew the materials for his religious history of the English nation. "My father," said a disciple to the dying bishop, "dare I ask you a question?" "Ask what thou wilt." "I conjure you to tell me what are those sounds of celestial harmony which just now we heard, and which sometimes descend from heaven, and sometimes return thither; are they not the ineffable strains of angels?" "Thou hast then heard and recognized the voice from on high which must not be spoken of before my death. Yes; it is they. The angels are come to call me to that heaven which I have always loved and desired; they have promised to return in seven days to take me with them." And when the day of deliverance and recompense arrived, the witness of this happy death saw not only heaven open and the angels appearing; he seemed to see also the brother of the dying man, his inseparable companion in former days, and, like him, a bishop and monk, descending from the opening heaven to seek the soul of Ceadda and conduct it to eternal happiness. Many details of this nature, floating on the bosom of an ocean of forgotten ages and races, show us how, among these rude converts, so rapidly transformed into austere monks and saints, natural affection preserved all its empire, and mingled, in sweet and holy union, with the grandeur and beauty of their supernatural vocation.[94]

The Asiatic Theodore and the African Adrian make a visitation of England.

Having thus regulated or re-arranged the government of souls in the two largest kingdoms of the Saxon confederation, Northumbria and Mercia, the venerable archbishop pursued, with an activity in no way relaxed by age, the task which the Holy See had assigned him. He successively traversed all the provinces of the island already occupied by Anglo-Saxons. With the aid of the former bishops, and of those whom he ordained wherever they were wanting, he applied himself, in all the kingdoms, to pacify the sanguinary feuds of princes and nobles, to re-establish canonical order and

[94] "Vocem suavissimam cantantium atque lætantium de cœlo ad terras usque descendere. . . . Obsecro ut dicas quod erat canticum illud lætantium. . . . Revera angelorum fuere spiritus qui me ad cœlestia, quæ semper amabam ac desiderabam, præmia vocare venerunt. . . . Scio hominem in hac insula adhuc in carne manentem qui . . . vidit animam Ceddi fratris ipsius cum agmine angelorum descendere de cœlo, et assumpta secum anima ejus, ad cœlestia regna redire." — Bede, vi. 3. This brother was Bishop Cedd, who had acted as interpreter at Whitby.

ecclesiastical discipline, to correct abuses, to spread good morals, and to regulate, according to Roman custom, the celebration of Easter.[95] He is believed to have originated on this occasion that ecclesiastical law which commanded all fathers of families to repeat daily, and to teach to their children, the Lord's Prayer and the Creed in the vulgar tongue.[96]

Abbot Adrian accompanied him everywhere, and seconded him in all things. These two aged monks, one Asian and the other African, were received, listened to, and obeyed by the Anglo-Saxons with that affectionate deference which in Christian hearts triumphs so easily over the prejudices and opposition of a narrow nationality. They repaid the popular attachment by their unwearied zeal for the souls and hearts of the people, preaching to them evangelical truth, with that intelligent and practical solicitude which makes true apostles.

Ecclesiastical legislation of Theodore. *Liber Pœnitentialis.*

The authentic monuments of their zeal are all preserved in the imposing collection of moral and penal institutes known as the *Liber Pœnitentialis* of Archbishop Theodore,[97] which has served as the model of so many other analogous collections. It is there apparent that if great excesses and shameful disorders had already appeared among the new Christians of England, these were kept in check by all the resources of spiritual fatherhood and priestly vigilance. It is surprising to find among these Germanic populations the traces of refined corruption mingled with the brutal vices of barbarians; but the art and authority which could inflict for every sin, even when confessed and pardoned, a penalty either public or secret, according to the circumstances, is all the more admirable. The punishments are generally of excessive severity, induced, it would seem, by the rudeness of barbarous manners, on which it was necessary first to act by means of intimidation. No doubt they were soon practically evaded by the equivalents of alms and other good works. At the same time, in this code set forth by a Greek prelate sent from Rome, there appears no trace of Roman or Byzantine law. On

[95] "Peragrata insula tota. . . . Libentissime ab omnibus suscipiebatur atque audiebatur . . . per omnia comitante et co-operante Adriano. . . . Gratiosi ad pacificandum invicem inimicos." — Bede, iv. 2.

[96] Hook, i. 152. I have not been able to find this rule among the Acts of Theodore, but it is several times repeated in the *Monumenta Ecclesiastica* of the following century. See Thorpe, *passim*.

[97] The most complete version is found in the great collection of Thorpe, *Ancient Laws and Institutes of England*. Cf. Hook, op. cit., vol. i. p. 169.

the contrary, it embodies the entire penal system of the Germanic laws, founded on the principle which required a punishment for every offence, or a compensation for every punishment.[98] And as it is always pleasant to find a loving and tender heart among the masters and teachers of the people, it is delightful to read, at the end of one of the most ancient manuscripts of this formidable code, a few lines, in which the archbishop thus commends his work and his soul to a prelate, one of his friends: "I beseech thee, noble and pious bishop, to pour out at the feet of God the abundance of thy prayers for Theodore, the poor stranger whom thou lovest."[99]

In the course of this apostolic journey, Theodore naturally visited Lindisfarne, as well as the chief seats of the other dioceses. The metropolis of Celtic resistance was obliged to acknowledge the authority of the Roman metropolitan, who imprinted upon it the seal of subordination and union by dedicating, under the name and in honor of St. Peter, the monastic cathedral of the Celtic bishops which Bishop Aïdan had commenced to build, in the Scottish mode, and entirely in wood, many years before.[100]

He organizes the parochial system.

It is to these pastoral visits of Archbishop Theodore that all agree in tracing back the commencement of parochial organization, — above all, in the south of England. Until then, the monasteries had been almost the only permanent centres of faith and religious instruction. The bishops issued from their monasteries to preach and to baptize; they were constantly wayfaring.[101] The monks, especially those of the Celtic monasteries,

[98] See some curious details in Elmham, p. 206, on the foundation of a monastery due to the application of this system of compensation.

[99] "Te nam, sancte speculator,
Verbi Dei digne dator,
Pontificum ditum decor,
Hæddi, pie presul, precor,
Pro me tuo peregrino
Preces funde Theodoro."

This was addressed to Hedda, Bishop of the West Saxons at Winchester, in 676, much praised by Bede, v. 18. A distinction must be made between the singer Hedd or Eddi, biographer of Wilfrid; Bishop Hedda, his contemporary and colleague at Winchester; Bishop Ceadda, who supplanted him at York; and Bishop Cedd, brother of Ceadda. The narrator condemned to open a way through this forest of obscure names, so easily confounded, and so subject to infinite alteration from the pens of more recent annalists, may well claim the sympathy of his readers.

[100] Bede, iii. 25.

[101] "Longe lateque omnia pervagatus." This is the eulogy which falls perpetually from the pen of Bede.

traversed the country, stopping at different stations previously indicated to administer the sacraments, just as is now done in lands under the charge of missionaries, and in certain districts of Ireland.[102] But churches, regularly served by monks or secular priests, were speedily built on the continually increasing estates of the great abbeys and monastic cathedrals. The kings and nobles obtained from bishops and abbots the right of choosing in the monastery, or among the cathedral clergy, some priests who might, for the good of their souls, accompany them on their expeditions, or live with them in their rural residences. Theodore availed himself of this custom to lay the foundations of a parochial system, by persuading the princes and great proprietors to build churches on their domains, and to attach to them a resident priest, with an endowment in land or in fixed rents; in return for which they should have the right of choosing their priests. From this right has grown the system of church patronage, such as it now subsists in England, with the special impost, not yet abolished, called church-rate, levied on all the proprietors of a parish for the keeping of the church in repair: so true is it that everything bears the trace of solidity and permanence in the country which twelve centuries ago was constituted as a nation by that union of the Church with the Anglo-Saxon race, of which Italian and Greek monks such as Theodore and Augustin were the plenipotentiaries.[103] Nearly all the present names of counties date from this epoch. All the dioceses of that time exist still; everything has remained so unchanged, that a map of the country in the tenth century might serve for to-day; while there remains not one single trace of the ancient territorial divisions of France and Germany.

Theodore is anxious to increase the number of dioceses.

After having thus laid the foundation of parishes, it was Theodore's desire to proceed to a new episcopal division. Hitherto, except in Kent, each kingdom of the Heptarchy had formed a diocese, each king choosing to have one bishop of his own,

[102] See above, pages 237 to 240, the first missions in Northumbria.

[103] "Hic excitavit fidelium voluntatem ut in civitatibus et villis ecclesias fabricarentur, parochias distinguerent, et assensus regios his procuravit; ut si qui sufficientes essent super proprium fundum construere ecclesias earumdem perpetuo patronato gauderent; si inter limites alterius alicujus dominii ecclesias facerent, ejusdem fundi domini notarentur pro patronis." — Thos. de Elmham, *Hist. Monast. S. Augustini*, p. 289; Hook, i. 159. Cf. Lappenberg, p. 190; Kemble, c. 9; and, above all, Lingard, *Antiquities of the Anglo-Saxon Church*, vol. i. pp. 156–197. The secular priests placed in these parishes took afterwards the name of mass-priests.

and only one. Northumbria, long divided into two kingdoms, had never formed more than one diocese, of which the seat was sometimes in the ancient Roman metropolis of York, sometimes in the sacred isle of Lindisfarne; and this diocese, even after a partial division, remained so vast that the venerable Bede mentions a large number of districts which had never yet been visited by their bishop.

The extreme inequality of extent and population in the different Saxon kingdoms, which a single glance at the map will make apparent, had thus led to a similar difference between the dioceses; those of the north and the centre being far too large for the administration of one man. But Theodore here met with the resistance which is almost always produced in similar cases. He convoked a council at Hertford in the fourth year of his pontificate, the first ever held in the Anglo-Saxon Church; but was obliged to adjourn his proposition, as he himself relates in the official report of the deliberations of this assembly, dictated by himself to his notary.[104] At the same time, he reserved to himself the means of returning to the charge by decreeing that the national council should meet once a year at a place called Cloveshoe, according to Saxon fashion, in the open air. He was happier, however, in the two canons regarding monasteries which he proposed, and which were unanimously adopted by the bishops and numerous abbots attached to the Roman ritual who composed the council.[105] Of these canons, naturally marked by the Benedictine spirit, since the greater part of the bishops in the council were sons of St. Benedict, the first forbade bishops to disturb monasteries in any way, or to despoil them of their goods; the second forbade monks to pass from one monastery to another without the permission of the abbot. This was a consecration of the vow of *stability*, which, though often neglected, was not the less an essential distinction of the order of St. Bene-

Council of Hertford. 24th Sept., 673.

[104] "Nonum capitulum in commune tractatum est, ut plures episcopi, crescente numero fidelium, augerentur: sed de hac ad præsens siluimus.— Bede, iv. 5. This notary Titillo, whose presence is proved by Theodore and Bede, seems to us to answer the objection raised by Kemble to the authenticity of Ethelbert's donation to Augustin on account of the mention of a referendary in that document.

[105] "Concilium episcoporum, una cum eis qui canonice patrum statuta et deligerent et nossent, magistris ecclesiæ pluribus."— Bede, iv. 5. Of the eight bishops then in England, five assisted in person at the council, and Wilfrid was represented there by his envoys.

dict from the great monastic communities of the East or of Celtic countries.[106]

The literary progress of the English monasteries due to Theodore and Adrian.

The monasteries having been thus placed under the most imposing safeguard by the Greek metropolitan of England, there yet remained for him, as well as for his African assistant, Adrian, an intellectual and literary development as worthy of the admiration as of the gratitude of posterity. Both were profoundly attached to and imbued with, not only ecclesiastical knowledge, but secular learning, that double intellectual current of which the middle ages never ceased to give examples. Theodore had brought with him a copy of Homer, which he read perpetually, and which was long preserved and admired by his ecclesiastical descendants.[107] They gathered round them, in the monasteries where they lived or which they visited, a crowd of young and ardent disciples, whom they led daily to the fountain of knowledge. While explaining Holy Scripture to them with particular care, they taught their scholars also ecclesiastical astronomy and arithmetic, which served to establish the Pascal computation, and afterwards the art of composing Latin verses. But it was chiefly the study of the two classic tongues which flourished under their care. These became so general that, sixty years after, there were still monks trained in the school of Adrian and Theodore who spoke Greek and Latin as readily as Anglo-Saxon. At the same time, music and chanting, hitherto cultivated only in the monasteries of Canterbury and by the deacon James at York, spread all over England.[108] Monasteries thus transformed into schools and homes of scientific study could not but spread a taste and respect for intellectual life, not only among the clergy, but also among their lay-protectors,

[106] "*Tertium.* Ut quæque monasteria Deo consecrata sunt, nulli episcoporum liceat ea in aliquo inquietare, nec quicquam de eorum rebus violenter abstrahere. *Quartum.* Ut ipsi monachi non migrent de loco ad locum, hoc est, de monasterio ad monasterium, nisi per demissionem proprii abbatis, sed in ea permaneant obedientia quam tempore suæ conversionis promiserunt." — BEDE, iv. 5. That Theodore did not intend to permit the monasteries to absorb all religious life, to the detriment of the secular clergy, is proved by this article of the *pœnitentialis:* "Nec libertas monasterii est pœnitentiam sæcularibus judicare, quia proprie clericorum est." — THORPE, p. 307.

[107] GODWIN, *De Præsulibus Angliæ*, p. 41.

[108] "Literis sacris simul et sæcularibus abundanter ambo instructi, congregata discipulorum caterva, scientiæ salutaris quotidie fluminia irrigandis eorum cordibus emanabant. . . . Sed et sonos cantandi in ecclesia. . . . Ab hoc tempore per omnes Anglorum ecclesias discere cœperunt." — BEDE, iv. 2.

the friends and neighbors of each community. Under the powerful impulse given to it by the two Roman monks, England became almost as important a literary centre as Ireland or Italy.[109]

While recalling this peaceful and luminous period of which Theodore and Adrian were the stars, the enthusiasm of the venerable Bede breaks out into a kind of dithyramb: "Never," he says, "since the Anglo-Saxons landed in Britain, had more happy days been known. We had Christian kings, at whose bravery the barbarous nations trembled. All hearts were inflamed by the hope of those celestial joys which had just been preached to them; and whosoever wished to be instructed in sacred learning found the masters that he needed close at hand." [110]

Let us add, to characterize with more precision this pontificate of Theodore, that he was the last foreign missionary called to occupy the metropolitan dignity in England, and that the Greek monk succeeded, as has been justly remarked, in transforming into an indigenous and national establishment, into a public and social institution, that which had hitherto been only a missionary church. This transformation could only have been made by that special and supreme authority with which, at the demand of the Anglo-Saxons themselves, the Oriental archbishop had been invested by the Holy See, and the result was to give to the popes a whole nation as a lever for their future action both upon nations already Christian and upon those which still remained to be converted.

CHAPTER III.

BEGINNING OF THE TRIALS OF WILFRID: ST. ETHELDREDA. — 669-678.

Wilfrid, reduced to a subordinate position, reconciles himself to King Oswy, who dies after a prosperous reign of twenty-eight years. — Extension of Northumbrian domination, and of Wilfrid's jurisdiction towards the north. — At the commencement of the new reign, alliance between him and King

[109] Hook, t. i. p. 165. Mignet, *Mémoire sur la Conversion de l'Allemagne par les Moines*, p. 25.

[110] "Neque unquam prorsus feliciora fuere tempora . . . dum omnium vota ad nuper audita cœlestis regni gaudia penderent." — Bede, iv. 2.

Egfrid, who triumphs both in the insurrection of the Picts and the invasion of the Mercians. — Episcopal virtues and austerities of Wilfrid. — His confirmation journeys; the child resuscitated. — Wilfrid's monasteries become centres of public education. — Services which he renders to the arts; music, spread of the Gregorian chant. — Great architectural works at York, at Ripon, and especially at Hexham, where he builds the finest church on this side the Alps on land given by Queen Etheldreda. — Connection of Wilfrid with Etheldreda, the first and most popular of English female saints. — Her origin and connections. — Twice married, she succeeds in consecrating her virginity to God. — Wilfrid encourages her in her resistance to King Egfrid, and gives her the veil at Coldingham; Egfrid pursues her. — She flies to Ely. — Legends of her journey. — Foundation and monastic life at Ely. — The major-domo Owen. — Wilfrid continues to advise Etheldreda. — His quarrel with Egfrid provoked by the new queen, Ermenburge. — The Archbishop Theodore interferes in their disputes. — He deposes Wilfrid, and divides his diocese into three new bishoprics, which he confides to Celtic monks. — Wilfrid appeals to Rome. — The saints and great abbots of his country remain indifferent or hostile. — Strange ignorance of ecclesiastical right, even among the saints.

Wilfrid reduced to a subordinate position.

WHILE the Archbishop Theodore received everywhere the credit of the intellectual and moral prosperity of England, Wilfrid, re-established in his see, but eclipsed by the popularity and authority of the primate, appears to have been thrown back into a subordinate position. Nevertheless it was he who had given the first signal for this renewal of Roman influence in England, who had gained the decisive battle of Whitby, who had begun, supported, and decided the struggle against the insular spirit and its exclusive tendencies, and who, in more than one trial, had paid the price of his spontaneous devotion. And it was a stranger from the depths of Asia Minor who came to reap what he had sown, while not one special mark of pontifical approbation or gratitude had honored the first author and most intrepid champion of this happy revolution. In contemplating the triumphs of Theodore, there only remained for him to say, like the precursor of our Saviour, "He must increase, but I must decrease," and to prove the disinterestedness and sincerity of his soul, by lending all the assistance possible to his venerable rival.

Wilfrid reconciled to King Oswy.

This he did by sending deputies to the council of Hertford. Enough occupation besides remained to him in dividing his life between the duties of the episcopate and those of his monastic profession. Reduced to

a secondary rank, he could yet find ample satisfaction for his zeal for the good of souls and of the Church, above all, since his reconciliation with Oswy. This reconciliation was complete, and accompanied by such an adhesion to the opinions of Wilfrid on the part of the Bretwalda, that, having fallen ill, he conceived the project of going, if he recovered — he, the first of Saxon kings — to pass the remainder of his life near the tombs of St. Peter and St. Paul at Rome. He implored Wilfrid to accompany him, promising him new gifts to keep up that pomp and magnificence of worship which was so dear to the bishop. But the death of Oswy put a stop to this project. He died at the age of fifty-eight, after a reign of twenty-eight years, which had been signalized by the deliverance of his country, and by the overthrow of the pagan domination of the Mercians, and which, had it not been stained by the murder of the pious Oswin, would have been the most glorious and happy in the Saxon annals. He was buried at Whitby, in the great maritime monastery to which he had given his daughter as the price of his decisive victory over the pagans. This daughter, Elfleda, on becoming abbess ten years after the death of her father, claimed his remains, and placed them beside those of her maternal grandfather Edwin, the first Christian king among the northern English, so that the two greatest princes of the two rival Northumbrian dynasties reposed together in this monastic necropolis.[111]

Who dies. 15th Feb., 670.

This famous Oswy, last and greatest Bretwalda of whom history keeps any record, had established in the north of his kingdom a supremacy still more extensive in some respects, and more durable, than in the south. Passing the frontiers which his predecessors Edwin and Oswald had given to Northumbria on the Caledonian side, he subjugated all the territory between the Forth and the Tay.[112] But it was chiefly in the east of the central peninsula, in those districts which have since received the names of Lothian and the Marches, that he impressed on the institutions, manners, and language, that Anglo-Saxon character which, throughout the history of Scotland, remains so visibly distinct from the manners and traditions of Caledonia. Hence

Supremacy of Oswy in the North.

[111] "In hoc monasterio et ipsa et pater ipsius Oswi et pater matris ejus Edwinus et multi alii nobiles in ecclesia S. Petri sepulti sunt." — Bede, iii. 24.

[112] "Perdomuit . . . gentem Pictorum maxima ex parte regno Anglorum subjecit." — Bede, iii. 24.

arose that partition of Scotland during the whole of its independent existence between two influences, or rather between two races, nominally ruled by the same kings, but distinct by language, laws, cultivation, and all the habits of life, and almost always at bitter feud with each other.[113]

Extension of the diocese of Wilfrid.

Oswy's victories over the race which had formerly sheltered his youth and exile extended, out of all proportion, the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Northumbria, which had been originally established at Lindisfarne in the centre of the kingdom, but which, since the restoration of Wilfrid, had been fixed at York, much further south. The crosier of Wilfrid thus extended not only over the two primitive kingdoms of Bernicia and Deira, but also over three provinces inhabited by the vanquished races, the Picts of Lothian, the Britons of Cumberland, and the mingled population of Britons, Scots, and Picts in Galloway.[114] His spiritual authority was recognized, at least nominally, by all the Celtic races, and it cannot be doubted that he used all his efforts to root out from among them, as from among the Northumbrians, the customs of their fathers. This also, was, no doubt, one of the causes of that flood of resistance and discontent which was to sweep him away in the end.

His union with the new King Egfrid.

Oswy was replaced on the Northumbrian throne by his son Egfrid. During the first years of the new reign the concord between the king and the bishop was complete. The Picts, however, imagined that the youth of Egfrid would furnish them with an opportunity of regaining all that his father had taken from them. A general insurrection took place, seconded by all the auxiliaries which could be provided by the unconquered tribes of Caledonia. But Egfrid, a worthy successor of the valiant kings Oswy and Oswald, put himself at the head of a troop of cavalry, surprised his enemies, and exterminated them. We are not told whether religion had any part in this war, but it is plain that all the desires of Wilfrid were for the triumph of the Northumbrians by the language of his friend Eddi, who speaks of the Picts as brutes (though they were already Christians), describes as *bestial* their hatred of the Saxon yoke, and rejoices that two rivers were so choked with their corpses that it was almost possible to cross dryshod to attack the survivors and

Victories over the insurgent Picts. 670.

[113] Augustin Thierry, *Dix Ans d'Etudes Historiques*, p. 166.

[114] "Wilfrido administrante episcopatum, nec non et omnium Northymbrorum, sed et Pictorum, quousque rex Oswin imperium protendere poterat." — Bede, iv. 3. Cf. Varin, memoir already quoted.

bring them again under the detested yoke which fifteen years later they succeeded in throwing off forever.[115]

Wilfrid must have been more embarrassed when Wulphere, his old and faithful friend, the protector of his disgrace, the husband of the gentle Ermenilda, too faithful to the traditions of his father Penda, tried in his turn to destroy the young Egfrid, and to render Northumbria again tributary to Mercia. But he soon decided for his hereditary chief, and joined his exhortations, in the name of the men of God, to those addressed by the Northumbrian Parliament to the king, to excite him to a most vigorous resistance, in which they triumphed.[116] Thus it was not Northumbria, but Mercia, which became tributary. Egfrid even seized a whole province to increase his kingdom, already so vast, and never allowed the Mercians to regain their independence till after the accession of Ethelred, brother of Wulphere, who had married the sister of the victor.[117]

And over the Mercians.

Egfrid and Wilfrid were now both victorious: one over the enemies who had menaced his kingdom in the north and south; the other over the dissidents who occupied so large a portion of his diocese. During several years of a very temporary alliance, which was destined to end in the most bitter enmity, they combined all the power of their double authority to strengthen the edifice of Northumbrian royalty, and the just supremacy of Roman customs, over the vanquished Celts and the tributary Mercians. The young king showed great deference to the already celebrated prelate who had been the friend of his elder brother. Harvests of unusual abundance seemed to the people a pledge of celestial protection; and, as in the other parts of England, the harmony of the priesthood and royalty, under the auspices of a great bishop, seemed about to bring in an era of general peace and prosperity.[118]

[115] "Tenero adhuc regno, populi bestiales Pictorum feroci animo subjectionem Saxonum despiciebant. . . . Statim equitatu exercito præparato . . . stragem immensam populi subruit, duo flumina cadaveribus mortuorum replens, ita . . . ut supra siccis pedibus ambulantes, fugientium turbas occidentes persequebantur, et in servitutem redacti populi . . . subjecti jugo captivitatis jacebant." — Eddius, c. 18.

[116] "Rex vero, consilio senum patriam custodire, ecclesias Dei defendere episcopo docente, in Deo confisus." — *Ibid.*, c. 19.

[117] Bede, iv. 12. See genealogical tables VI. and VIII., Appendix, pp. 000, and 000.

[118] "Wilfrido episcopo ad austrum super Saxones, ad aquilonem super Britones et Scotos, Pictosque regnum ecclesiarum multiplicabatur. . . . Rex et regina simul Wilfrido obedientes facti, pax et gaudium in populis, anni frugiferi." — Eddius, c. 20, 18.

Episcopal virtues of Wilfrid.

The power of Wilfrid was used only for the good of souls, commencing with his own. He was surpassed by no one in those works of piety and mortification which the numerous temporal cares that oppressed him rendered yet more dear and yet more necessary. His nights passed in prayer, his days in studying the Holy Scriptures, perhaps edified and surprised his visitors and daily companions less than his fasts and abstinence. Saxon intemperance was confounded by the example of this powerful personage, the first in the country, except the king, who never permitted himself to drink more than the contents of a small phial, even when he was most exhausted, and after a long journey on foot under a burning sun. As to purity of body and soul, he believed that he preserved it by washing from head to foot in cold but consecrated water every night, summer and winter ; and he preserved this habit — borrowed, perhaps, unconsciously, from the austerities of Celtic monachism [119] — until he was forbidden to continue it by the Pope, on account of his age.[120]

His zeal for good was tempered, at this time at least, by great moderation. We are told expressly in considering this epoch of his life, that he had made himself dear to all the different races of his immense diocese, from the Humber to the Clyde. He multiplied, as much as possible, the priests and deacons necessary for the new parishes, which were everywhere formed ; but he reserved to himself the principal part in the fatigues and obligations of an apostolic ministry. He travelled, sometimes on foot, sometimes on horseback, in all weathers and all seasons, through his great province, to baptize, to preach even in the smallest hamlets, and, above all, to administer the rite of confirmation. Everywhere eager crowds pursued him and surrounded him, to obtain the benefit of the sacraments from his hands.[121] It was in one of these journeys that an incident occurred, at the village of Tiddafrey, which ought to be recorded here. While the ceremony of confirmation was go-

His journeys for confirmation.

[119] See p. 101.

[120] "In conviviis tam abstinenter vivebat, ut numquam solus, quamvis parvissima phiala esset, potu consumpsisset, aut pro calore sitiens, aut. . . . In vigiliis et orationibus, in lectione et jejuniis quis similis ei? . . . Corpus in aqua benedicta nocturnis horis inclementer æstate ac hieme consuetudinarie lavavit." — Eddius, c. 20.

[121] "Omnibus gentibus charus et amabilis. . . . Inter sæculares undas fluctuantes moderate novas ecclesias gubernabat. . . . Equitante et pergente ad varia officia episcopatus sui." — Eddius, c. 20, 17.

ing on, a poor mother, agonized by the loss of her first born, made her way, weeping, through the crowd, with the little body of her child clasped to her heart. Having reached the first rank among the mothers, who pressed forward with their children, she presented her dead son to the bishop among the living, as if to be confirmed with them. Wilfrid, leaning over the child, perceived that it was dead. Then, comprehending how it was, he paused beside the desolate mother, and watched her a while in silence; upon which she threw herself at his feet, covering them with tears and kisses, and with a voice broken by sobs, adjured him to give her back her child. "O, holy man," she cried, "beware how you destroy the faith of a desperate woman! Help me to believe; restore my child to life, and baptize it. To God and to you it is still living. Courage! fear not to do it in the strength of Christ!" Wilfrid remembered the Canaanite of the Gospel. He knelt in prayer. Then placing his right hand on the heart of the child, he felt that it beat, and so restored it to life. After having thus raised it up, and baptized it, he returned it to the mother, exacting a promise that at seven years old she should bring it to him to be trained as a servant of God.[122] This miracle may or may not be believed; but who can refuse to be touched by the cry of the mother? and it is pleasant to find in Wilfrid that goodness of heart which God sometimes gives to great disputants and stern champions, and which alone renders them completely irresistible.

The child restored to life.

Let us add, to return to the dark reality of earthly things, that the mother, once in possession of her child, would not give him up, but fled with him to the Britons[123] — that is to say, to the enemies of the saint, probably in Cumbria, which was also in the diocese of Wilfrid, and from whence it was necessary for an officer of the bishop to bring the child back by force to his benefactor. He afterwards became a monk at Ripon, where he was called the bishop's son.

It is not easy to understand how Wilfrid should have needed unwilling recruits to fill his monaster-

The monasteries of Wilfrid be-

[122] "Amaro animo susurrans, mœrore et onere fatigata . . . habens primogenitum mortuum sub sinu pannis involutum. . . . Coram facie agnoscentis cecidit in terram . . . adjuravit eum audaciter . . . pedes deosculabatur, lacrymis irrigavit, . . . 'O sanctissime, noli orbatæ mulieris fidem extinguere, sed credulitatem meam adjuva: suscita eum et baptiza; tibi enim et Deo vivit: in virtute Christi ne dubites." — Eddius, c. 17.

[123] "Latentem sub allis Britonum," Eddi says.

come centres of public education.

ies, when the number of monks who thronged to them is one of the best established facts in his history. Besides, the Northumbrian monasteries, like others, were schools, and many of the children received there enrolled themselves among their masters. Some important details in the life of our saint prove that the education given in monasteries was a true public education, and fitted youths for the world as well as for the cloister. It is expressly said that the Anglo-Saxons of high rank, the earls and thanes, were eager to confide their children to Wilfrid, to be brought up in his monastic establishments; and that at the end of their education they chose between the service of God and that of the king. If they decided on a secular and military life, Wilfrid sent them to the king fully armed, as he himself at fourteen years of age had appeared before Queen Eanfleda.[124]

Services rendered by Wilfrid to the arts. Music.

During all the course of his laborious episcopate, Wilfrid was moved, by the love of God and the love of souls, to make great efforts for the consecration, to the service of the Church, of those inexhaustible treasures of art which at that time found refuge alone in the monastic order. Music, above all, appeared to him an indispensable auxiliary of the new faith. He was not content with establishing within his monasteries a course of musical instruction, the teachers of which he had brought from the great school of Gregorian song at Canterbury; but with the help of Stephen Eddi, who has left us the story of his life, he spread this instruction through all the churches of the north of England. Thanks to him, the Anglo-Saxon peasants mingled with their labors as well as with their prayers the sweet and solemn chanting of psalms in the Gregorian tones.[125] Thanks to him, Northumbria become a great centre of music, rivalling the school of Canterbury, in which the priests and

[124] "Principes et sæculares viri nobiles filios suos ad erudiendum sibi dederunt, ut aut Deo servirent, si eligerent, aut adultos, si maluissent, regi armatos commendaret." — Eddius, c. 20.

[125] Faber, pp. 62, 66. "Sed et sonos cantandi in ecclesia, quos eatenus in Cantia tantum noverant, ab hoc tempore per omnes Anglorum ecclesias discere cœperunt . . . primusque magister Nortanhymbrorum ecclesiis Æddi . . . invitatus de Cantia." — Bede, iv. 3. There is a second curious passage regarding other companions of Wilfrid: "Cantatorem quoque egregium, vocabulo Maban, qui a successoribus discipulorum B. papæ Gregorii in Cantia fuerat cantandi sonos edoctus, ad se suosque instituendos accersiit, ac per annos duodecim tenuit: quatenus et quæ illi non noverant, carmina ecclesiastica doceret: et ea quæ quondam cognita longo usu vel negligentia inveterare cœperunt, hujus doctrina priscum renovarentur in statum. Nam et ipse episcopus Acca cantator erat peritissimus." — Bede, v. 19.

the faithful renewed their musical education periodically, as at the fountain head — a fact which must have associated the noble memory of Wilfrid with the solemn and consoling modulations of a popular and traditional liturgy.

His great architectural labors,

But ecclesiastical architecture offered him a still wider field; and the results obtained by his exertions roused his contemporaries to an enthusiasm the echo of which has descended to us. Born with a taste for art and building, and also with a decided love of pomp and magnificence, he devoted all these natural dispositions to the service of God.[125] At the head of the monkish *cæmentarii*, whom he had brought from Canterbury, he began by thoroughly repairing the primitive Cathedral of York, which had been founded by Paulinus, the first Roman missionary, and where Edwin, the first Christian king, with his daughter Eanfleda, had been baptized. Since the translation of the bishopric to Lindisfarne, this church had been like a place abandoned. The rain entered on all sides, and birds built their nests in it. Wilfrid, like a prudent architect, began his work by covering the roof with lead; he then put transparent glass in the windows; and finally caused the stones injured by damp to be washed and scraped. It seems even possible that he may have been the inventor of that white-washing which has since been so greatly abused;[127] after which he provided the restored cathedral with rich ornaments and a territorial endowment.

At the Cathedral of York;

But he was much more prodigal towards his beloved Monastery of Ripon, which he held by the gift of his first friend Alchfrid, and which had been the first centre of his independent and missionary action. He built there a vast basilica, dedicated to St. Peter, which excited universal amazement. Nothing had ever been seen equal to its lofty porches and columns of polished stone, nor, above all, to its magnificent Book of the Gospels, covered with plates of gold set with precious stones, which Wilfrid, for the good of his soul, had caused to be transcribed in letters of gold on purple vellum, and which he placed on the altar the day that the church was dedicated. On the day of

At his old Monastery of Ripon;

[126] "Crescebat ergo cum sæculari sumptu . . . pontifici nostro, amico sponsi æternalis, magis ac magis ardentissimus amor sponsæ."

[127] "Culmina corrupta tecti renovans, artificiose plumbo puro detegens, per fenestras introitum avium et imbrium vitro prohibuit; per quod tamen intro lumen radiabat Parietes lavans, secundum prophetam super lucem dealbavit." — Eddius, c. 15. "Ipse illas alba calce dealbavit." — Guill. Malmesb., *De Gest. Pontif. Angl.*, l. iii. f. 148.

this ceremony, in presence of King Egfrid, his brother, the neighboring abbots, the ealdormen,[128] the earls, lords, and other principal Saxons, Wilfrid, standing before the altar, turned towards the people who filled the church, and solemly declared his right to all the lands and churches, enumerating them by name, which had been conceded to him by the kings, with consent of the bishops and assembly of nobles of the country, and which were situated principally in that district which the British clergy had abandoned when flying before the swords of the Saxons. Thus his hostility against the Celtic Christians reappeared, even in the midst of this joyful solemnity, which ended in true Saxon fashion with a grand banquet, where the Abbot of Ripon entertained all the guests, and which lasted three days and three nights.[129]

At the new Abbey of Hexam.

The magnificence displayed by Wilfrid at Ripon was yet again surpassed in an entirely new foundation at Hexham, situated much further north, in the heart of Bernicia, not far from the place where the sainted King Oswald had planted, for the first time, the cross on the soil of Northumbria, and commenced that struggle which had secured the greatness and independence of his country. It was there — near to the blood-stained cradle of Northumbrian Christianity, at the foot of the lofty wall built as a defence against the Picts by the Emperor Severus, a little below the junction of the two branches of the Tyne, on a plain surrounded by undulating hills — that Wilfrid chose the site of a great monastery, destined, though he little suspected it, to be his own last asylum.[130] As he had dedicated his first abbey to St. Peter, he dedicated this to St. Andrew, the pat-

[128] This is the title then given to the greatest Saxon lords, earls, or governors, more or less hereditary, of provinces, — from hence the modern word alderman. The ealdorman is translated in the Latin works of the time by the word *dux*, and his functions were similar to those of the lord-lieutenant of each English county, or of the supreme courts of the kingdom of Hungary, the constitution of which so faithfully reproduced most of the English institutions.

[129] "Basilicam polito lapide a fundamentis in terris usque ad summum ædificatam variis columnis et porticibus suffultum. . . . Inauditum erat sæculis nostris miraculum. . . . Invitatis regibus, cum abbatibus præfectisque et subregulis totiusque dignitatis personæ. . . . Coram regibus enumerans regiones quas ante reges . . . et in illa die cum consensu et subscriptione episcoporum et omnium principum, illi dederunt. . . . Consummato sermone, magnum convivium trium dierum eo noctium . . . lætificantes inierunt." — Eddius, c. 27.

[130] This site is perfectly described in a recent publication of the Surtees Society, which contains a complete history of Hexham — *The Priory of Hexham, its Chroniclers, Endowments, and Annals*, by James Raine. Durham, 1864.

ron of the church in which he had first prayed on arriving at Rome, and from whence the first apostles of England had been sent. The surprise and admiration which his previous works had awakened became indescribable at the sight of the deep foundations dug, and immense stones placed in them for the basement of a church which, when finished — with its porches and pillars, its numerous naves and clerestories, its vast vaults underneath, its spiral staircases and galleries, and the imposing height of its spires — was regarded for two centuries as the most beautiful on this side the Alps, and as a kind of reproduction of Roman ambition.[131]

The monk mason fallen from the summit of the building.

From the pinnacle of one of these towers, which was of unheard-of height, a young monk upon one occasion fell to the ground, breaking his arms and legs on the pavement. The rest believed him dead, and were about to carry him away in a coffin, when Wilfrid, in tears, stopped the bearers, collected the whole community, and said to them: — "Pray all of you to God, with lively faith, that He would grant us the grace which He gave to St. Paul, that He would restore this child to life, and that the enemy may not have such occasion to rejoice in our work." The general prayer was granted. The medical members of the community bound up the broken limbs of the young monk, who recovered slowly, and lived long. This incident proves that Wilfrid himself directed the works,

[131] "Cujus profunditatem in terra cum domibus (?) mirifice politis lapidibus fundatam, et super terram multiplicem domum . . . variis linearum anfractibus viarum, aliquando sursum, aliquando deorsum, per cochleas circumductam, non est meæ parvitatis explicare . . . neque ullam domum aliam citra Alpes montes, talem ædificatam audivimus." — Eddius, c. 21. "Ibi ædificia minaci altitudine murorum, erecta . . . multa proprio sed et cæmentariorum, quos ex Roma munificentiæ attraxerat, magisterio . . . nunc qui Roma veniunt allegant ut qui Hagulstadensem fabricam vident, ambitionem Romanam se imaginari jurent." — Guillelm. Malmesb., *De Gest. Pontif.*, l. iii. f. 155. The successor of Wilfrid collected here a crowd of relics placed in shrines. Each triforium, formed by the intercolumniation of the edifice, was occupied by one of these shrines. This wonderful church, with all its riches, was burnt by the Danes in 875. Nothing now remains but the crypt, of which a plan, extremely curious and complicated, will be found in the excellent *Introduction to the Study of Gothic Architecture*, by Mr. J. H. Parker, p. 11. This crypt is now covered by the beautiful Abbey Church, rebuilt in the twelfth century, the choir and transept of which have preserved their original beauty, the nave having been destroyed by the Scots in 1296. Those among my readers who are interested in architecture will forgive an old archæologist for presenting to their notice the text of Richard, Prior of Hexham, who wrote about 1150, and who had seen the ruins of Wilfrid's church. It will be found in Appendix V., p. 000.

and that the monks of the monastery mingled with the *cæmentarii* by profession whom Wilfrid had brought from Canterbury, or even attracted from Rome by the offer of large salaries.[132]

A hundred years later, an illustrious Northumbrian monk, who has been adopted by France and received into the number of her distinguished men, the great Alcuin, begged the sons of Wilfrid to reckon him among the number of their familiar friends, referring at the same time to the admiration excited, even beyond the seas, by the magnificent dwelling left to them by their founder. "Oh, noble posterity of saints," he wrote to them, "heirs of their honors and of their spotless life, inhabitants of that dwelling so marvellous in beauty, walk in the footsteps of your fathers, so that, passing from the splendor of your earthly home, you may be worthy, by the grace of God, to rejoin those from whom you are descended in the kingdom of eternal beauty." [133]

Connection of Wilfrid with Queen Etheldreda.

The land on which the new Monastery of Hexham was built had been given to Bishop Wilfrid, not by the king, but by the queen, Etheldreda, whose personal estate it was, a part of her dowry.[134] It was the residence he preferred to all others, as much on account of the calm which he enjoyed there as from his tender affection for the giver.[135] It is now time to turn to this saint, whose life was so singular, whose influence over the destiny of Wilfrid was so marked, and in whom we must recognize the earliest, and for a long time the most popular, of all the English female saints.[136]

[132] "Cum ædificarent cæmentarii murorum altitudines, quidam juvenis de pinna enormis proceritatis elapsus ad terram . . . ultima spiramina trahens jacebat. . . . Pontificis lacrymantis moratione . . . spiritum vitæ recepit et alligantes medici ossa confracta de die in diem melioratus est." — EDDIUS, c. 22. See preceding note in respect to the Roman workmen.

[133] "Ædilberto episcopo et omni congregationi in ecclesia sancti Andreæ Deo servientium, Alchuinus vestræ clientellus caritatis in Christo salutem . . . O nobilissima sanctorum progenies patrum! illorum honoris venerabilisque vitæ successores et pulcherrimorum habitatores locorum vestrorum, sequimini vestigia patrum: ut de his pulcherrimis habitationibus ad eorum, qui vos genuerunt, æternæ beatitudinis consortium, in cælestis regni pulchritudinem, Deo donante, pervenire mercamini." — ALCUINI *Opera*, ed. Froben. 1777, t. i. p. 196.

[134] RAINE, p. xiv. This territory, known by the name of Hexhamshire, was twelve miles long and three broad.

[135] "Præ ceteris quibus præfuit ecclesiis, hanc creberius visitavit, devotius coluit." — ÆLRED, *De Sanctis Eccles. Hagustaldensis*, c. 1. "Tum ob amorem dilectissimæ dominæ suæ, tum propter secretiorem et quietiorem vitam." — RICARD. HAGUSTALD., *De Ant. et Moderno Statu ejusdem Ecclesiæ*, c. 2.

[136] Under the name of St. Audrey. This name, now quite fallen into disuse, is given by Shakespeare to one of his characters in *As You Like It*.

Etheldreda no doubt, like all the princes and princesses of the Anglo-Saxon dynasties, believed herself descended from Odin; but at least she was undoubtedly of the family of the Uffings, the royal race in East Anglia. Her father, King Anna, married a Northumbrian princess, sister of the Abbess Hilda, and grand niece of Edwin, first Christian king of Northumbria. It was to avenge the death of this father, who had fallen under the sword of the sanguinary Penda, that King Oswy, her father-in-law, made war on the Mercians, and not only delivered East Anglia, but also conquered and occupied Mercia. Etheldreda was the sister of Ermenilda, Queen of the Mercians, who had so well seconded Wilfrid in the work of converting her people.[137] She had also another sister, married to that King of Kent who was so zealous for the destruction of idols.[138] And she was niece, through her mother, of Hilda, the holy and powerful Abbess of Whitby, whose authority, though no doubt weakened since the victory gained by Wilfrid over her friends at Whitby itself, was, notwithstanding, always great throughout Northumbria.

Like all princesses whose history has fallen into the region of legends, the chroniclers boast of her precocious piety, the fervor and stainless purity of her early years. Nevertheless, she loved ornament; and on her death-bed still remembered the weight of the necklaces and jewels with which her delicate throat had been loaded.[139] These ornaments gave additional brilliancy to her great beauty, which excited, it is said, the passion of all the neighboring princes.[140] The most ardent of these, the Prince of the Gyrwiens, a Saxon colony established in the marshy country which separates East Anglia from Mercia, asked her in marriage, and obtained her from her father, two years before the death of that king on the field of battle.[141] Etheldreda, however, having resolved to follow the example of the 652.

[137] See above, p. 340.

[138] See p. 287. Cf. Bede, iv. 22; and Thomas, *Historia Eliensis*, i. 2, 25, ap. Act. SS. O. S. B. sec. ii. A new edition of this historian is published by Stewart, London, 1848.

[139] "Merito in collo pondus languoris porto, in quo juveneulam me memini supervacua monilium pondera portare." — Bede, iv. 19.

[140] "Ab ipsis infantiæ rudimentis sobrietati et pudicitiæ indulgens. . . . Accedunt plurimi formæ virginis excellentiam admirantes. . . . Innumeris ejus pulchritudo principibus complacebat: et venusta faciei ejus pulchritudo ad puellares promovebat amplexus." — Thom., *Eliens.*, § 4.

[141] "Postulatur a Tomberto principe . . . qui in amorem virginis totum animum informandum instituit. . . . Alligatur licet invita conjugali copulæ. . . . Desponsata matrem Domini meruit imitari. . . . In quorum copula

blessed Virgin Mary, and to consecrate herself wholly to God, resisted to the utmost the will of her father, and succeeded in preventing the consummation of her marriage during the three years that she passed with the tender and generous Tombert. He died; and the young widow supposed herself forever delivered from the matrimonial yoke, and free to give herself up to Christ. But it was not so. Egfrid, the son and heir of the great King of Northumbria, the most powerful prince of the Anglo-Saxon nation, became in his turn enamoured of her. Her resistance was as vain as in the first instance. The entreaties of her uncle, who had succeeded her father as King of East Anglia, and those of all her relations, compelled her to a second marriage, which no doubt seemed to them a new and precious pledge of alliance between the two kingdoms.[142] The impas-
659. sioned Egfrid bestowed on her, in full sovereignty, considerable possessions, of which the vast territory of Hexham, which she afterwards gave to Wilfrid, formed part.

When Wilfrid became bishop, he acquired at once, as has been seen, a great influence over the king, and the queen was not slow to show him still greater confidence and affection.[143] But what must have been the surprise and irritation of the young king, whom the powerful testimony of his contemporary Bede represents to us as very pious and highly beloved by God,[144] when he found that Etheldreda persisted, as in her former marriage, in keeping her virginity for God! Like the terrible Clotaire, the husband of St. Radegonde, a century previous, he found that he had married not a woman, but a nun.[145] But although he loved not less than Clotaire the wife who refused to belong to him, he respected and feared her more. She seemed to him more his lady and mistress than his equal and queen. Several years thus passed; the refusals of Etheldreda serving only to increase his passion. He then determined to apply to Wilfrid, well

non commixtione carnis unum corpus, sed, ut creditur, in Christo unus erat animus. . . . Ignara maritalis negotii, indefessis precibus apud Deum obtinuit, ut illam custodiret immaculatam." — *Ibid.*

[142] "Gaudebat solutam se esse in Christi libertate de jugo conjugii. . . . Ægfridus . . . inflammatur in amorem virginis, opes confert innumeras, dotesque spondet multiplices. . . . Principis petitio vehementius facta est . . . licet invita . . . adquievit unanimi parentum voluntati." — THOM., *Eliens.*, c. 4, 8.

[143] See above, p. 358. "Quem virgo regina præ omnibus in regno dilectum et electum habuerat." — *Id.*, c. 15.

[144] *Vita S. Cuthberti*, c. 24.

[145] "Dicebat se habere jugalem monacham, non reginam."

knowing what was the empire of the bishop over the conscience of Etheldreda, as well as over her heart, since he was the man for whom she had the greatest affection.[146] He offered him, as Wilfrid himself related to the venerable Bede, large estates and much money as the price of the queen's consent to his wishes. Bede only sees in Wilfrid on this occasion a witness to the incorruptible virginity of the saint. But, if we are to believe the official panegyrist of Etheldreda, it was Wilfrid who encouraged her in her resistance, while at first pretending to second the views of the king, in order to preserve his favor. In his secret conferences with her, he showed her heaven as the reward of her perseverance. She made to him the vow of chastity, and he then counselled her to ask from the king a formal separation, that she might consecrate herself to God in a monastery. Egfrid at first refused this absolutely; but after long disputes — after twelve years of so strange and stormy a union, vanquished by the prayers and tears of her whom he ever loved with so faithful a passion — he suffered a kind of consent to be torn from him to the departure of his unconquerable wife.[147]

[146] "Acriores Ægfrido stimulos adjicit, et ad copulam virginis feroces illius animos vehementer incendit . . . (sed) reginam impudice non tetigit, neque constristavit . . . quoniam non ut reginam aut parem, verum tanquam dominam per omnia venerabatur. . . . Tamen optat ille debitum a conjuge." — Thom., *Eliens.*, t. i. 8, 9.

[147] Respect for truth obliges me to give entire the text on which this singular history rests. In the first place that of the contemporary Bede, whose curiosity, at first incredulous, may be remarked; next that of the monk of Ely, who did not write until five centuries after the death of Etheldreda, but who lived in the monastery which she had founded, and surrounded with all the memorials which she had herself brought and left there, and which had passed from mouth to mouth until his time. "Data est regi præfato cujus consortio cum duodecim annis uteretur, perpetuæ tamen mansit virginitatis integritate gloriosa: sicut mihimet sciseitanti cum hoc an ita esset, quibusdam venisset in dubium beatæ memoriæ Wilfrid episcopus referebat; dicens se testem integritatis ejus esse certissimum: adeo ut Ægfridus promiserit se ei terras ac pecunias multas esse donaturum, si reginæ posset persuadere ejus uti connubio, quia sciebat illam nullum virorum plus illo diligere." — Bede, iv. 19. "Vidit ejus assiduam cum beato præsule familiaritatem. . . . Hinc Dei præconem rex frustra fatigat præmiis. . . . Wilfridus voti virginei fautor existens, vigilantis animi sagacitate procurabat, ne qua femineæ mentis inconstantia virgo mutaret. . . . Dissimulavit provide, tanquam regi favens et desiderii sui efficaciam reginæ persuadendam pollicens; veritus ne, sicut contigit, ob rem hujusce modi offensum illum haberet. . . . Sic Dei virtute prædita, per consilium sancti præsulis nullatenus regi assensum præbuit; egitque vir beatus sua industria ut potius divortium quæreret. . . . Princeps, nec facile adquiescit graviterque dolendum se asserit, si aliquando contingat a conjuge dilecta ferre divortium, licet ei nunquam conjunctus esset more conjugatorum. Postulat iterum regina, fletibus et diutinis postulationibus tanto importunius insistit. . . . Rex tandem victus ipsius importu-

She was no sooner furnished with this tardy and painful acquiescence in her wishes, than she hastened to Coldingham, to the great seaside monastery governed by Ebba, aunt of the king, and sister of his predecessors Oswald and Oswy.

Wilfrid gives her the veil at Coldingham.

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Egfrid pursues her.

Wilfrid very soon followed, to give her the veil and black robe, which should henceforward prove her new position as a nun.[148] Soon after, however, Egfrid followed her to her retreat; unable to endure her absence and the sacrifice she had imposed on him, he came with the furious determination of reclaiming her, and asserting his rights. The Abbess Ebba saw that she could not resist the violence of her nephew; she advised the queen, therefore, to flee. Etheldreda accordingly left Coldingham on foot, disguised in the dress of a poor woman, and accompanied by two brave nuns of the monastery. It did not occur to her to seek an asylum at Whitby, though the Abbess Hilda was her aunt. She must have known too well that that holy princess would encourage no enterprise in which Wilfrid had a share. She turned southward, through a thousand difficulties and adventures, towards the river which separated Northumbria from the rest of England, and having happily crossed that stream, she paused on the confines of her own country, East Anglia, in an estate which her first husband had given to her as her jointure.[149]

She flees to Ely.

Legends of the journey.

This long and fatiguing journey of the queen, disguised, and flying from her husband to bury herself in a cloister, touched deeply the imagination of the English people; and miraculous stories founded on it passed from mouth to mouth for ages, while they were also commemorated in the sculptured capitals and painted glass of

nis precibus, licet invitus, tamen eam dimisit invincibilem." — Thom., *Eliens.*, i. 9, 10. Let us add, finally, that Eddi, the disciple of Wilfrid, maintains a prudent and complete silence as to the intervention of his master in this delicate affair.

[148] "Accepto velamine sanctimonialis a Wilfrido." — Bede, l. c.

[149] "In veste humili . . . latitando incessit. . . . Per innumera itinerum discrimina et labores diversos . . . ut possessionem propriam, quam a Tomberto primo sponso ejus, jure dotis . . . perpetuo possidendam acceperat." — Thom., *Eliens.*, c. 15. This author continually appeals to the traditional evidences by which he was inspired: "Hoc in Beda nequaquam invenimus sed pro cunctorum usque nunc testimonio scribendum existimavimus. . . . Quicumque locum Coludi norunt, cum assertione hujus rei testes existunt. . . . Quæ ex priorum attestatione comperi, atque scriptura teste nosse contigit. . . . Res seniorum nostrorum relatione nobis tradita, quam omnis provincia in qua acciderat velut hesternum recitare solet et meminit." — C. 9, 11, 12, 13.

the great monastic churches.[150] Pious pilgrimages were made to the promontory washed by the sea, on which, in the first stage of her journey, pursued by Egfrid, she took refuge with her companions, and round which the tide rose so high as to render it inaccessible for seven consecutive days, until the king, discouraged, abandoned the pursuit.[151] And the pilgrims pointed out to each other the spot where, travelling on foot on a day of great heat, she fell asleep from fatigue on the open plain. Its position was marked by a majestic ash, the largest tree in the district, which was believed to have been the travelling staff which the royal traveller had thrust into the ground while she slept, and which she found at her waking already covered with verdure; an emblem of the great monastery in the shade of which she was destined to pass the rest of her days, and to shelter, among many others, her friend and protector Wilfrid.[152]

Establishment and monastic life at Ely.

The lands she possessed in right of her first husband were very extensive, since they supported nearly six hundred families. Their position was almost that of an island, surrounded by fens, which could only be crossed in boats. This island was called Ely, or the Isle of Eels.[153] It is a name to be found on every page of the political and religious history of England.[154] Etheldreda built a monastery there, which grew into speedy greatness, and where many Anglo-Saxon virgins joined her, among whom were a number of princesses of her family, having at their head her sister, the Queen of Kent. Mothers confided their daughters to her to educate. Even men, and among them many priests, selected her also for their guide and mistress in the spiritual life. Many of the officials of her household followed her example when she quitted the throne

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[150] For example, on the capitals of the beautiful Cathedral of Ely, in 1342.

[151] "Mare suum alveum egrediens . . . locum, in quem sacræ virgines ascenderant, circumdedit, et sicut ab incolis loci accepimus, per septem continuos dies eas occuluit . . . solitos recursus obliviscens, quamdiu rex illic aut penes locum mirabatur." — *Ibid.*, c. 11. This rocky cape is still called, as in the time of Thomas, Colbert's Head.

[152] "De somno evigilata . . . invenit baculum itineris sui . . . jam viridi amicta cortice fronduisse . . . facta est fraxinus maxima . . . quam ex nostris adhuc plures viderunt." — *Ibid.*, c. 13. This place was called, in Anglo-Saxon, *Ædeldrethestowe*, Etheldreda's Rest.

[153] "A copia anguillarum quæ in iisdem paludibus capiuntur." — BEDE, c. 1.

[154] After having been destroyed by the Danes, Ely became an abbey of monks, and was erected into a bishopric in 1108. Its cathedral, of which we shall speak later, is one of the marvels of Anglo-Norman architecture.

Her major-domo, Owin.

and the world to devote herself to God. The chief of these officials, who may be regarded as the queen's major-domo, was an East Anglian lord, named Owin, a man of faith and of amiable disposition, who had been attached to her from her cradle, had accompanied her from East Anglia to Northumbria, and had no desire to remain in the world after her and without her. He abandoned his honors and possessions, and, putting on a poor man's dress, went with a mattock and axe on his shoulder, and knocked at the door of the monastery where Abbot Ceadda lived, at Lichfield in Mercia. "I come here," he said, "to seek, not rest, as some do, but work. I am not worth much for meditation or study, but I will do as much manual labor as you like; and while the bishop reads in his cell I will take care of the work outside.[155] Others of her servants joined Etheldreda at Ely, where she soon found herself at the head of one of those double communities of men and women, or rather of brethren and sisters, which played so important a part in history at the epoch of which we are speaking.[156]

She gave them, during the seven years she passed at their head, an example of all monastic virtues, and especially of zeal in fasting and prayer. Few details exist of this period of her existence, but the holiness of that life must have left deep traces in the memory of Anglo-Saxon Christians to have enabled it to triumph over time and human forgetfulness beyond that of any other woman of the race. Among her austerities, the greatest wonder was that so great a lady should wear nothing but woollen instead of linen garments, and that she took a bath only on the four great feasts of the year, and even then, after the rest of the community.[157]

Wilfrid continues to direct her.

Wilfrid never gave up his care of Etheldreda. As soon as he knew of her arrival at Ely he hastened thither.[158] It was he who instituted her

[155] "Ovini monachus magni meriti et pura intentione . . . eratque primus ministrorum et princeps domus ejus. . . . Securim atque asciam in manu ferens. . . . Non ad otium, ut quidam, sed ad laborem." — BEDE, iv. 3. Cf. BOLLAND., *die* 4 *Martii*. This Owin is the monk who attended Bishop Ceadda in his last moments. See above, p. 349. He himself is reckoned among the saints, and the Bollandists have consecrated an article to him in their volume i. of March. Bede relates the story of another of Etheldreda's officers — her cupbearer — who, after having been made a prisoner, and sold as a slave in the market at London to a Frisian, was bought back by the King of Kent, nephew of Etheldreda.

[156] THOM., *Eliens.*, c. 15, 18, 22, and 23. [157] BEDE, iv. 19.

[158] "Beatæ virginis non immemor, nec se a vicissitudine dilectionis illius

abbess, who gave the veil to her nuns, and who regulated all that concerned the government and interests, temporal or spiritual, of the new community. He paid her frequent visits, and never ceased to give consolation and enlightenment to her for whom he must have felt more than ever responsible, since he had encouraged her to sacrifice the obligations of conjugal life to follow the path of supernatural virtue.

However touching and dramatic this history may be, it appears happily certain that no one in the Catholic Church would now authorize or approve the conduct of Wilfrid. It is not less certain that no one of his own time seems to have blamed him. Without any desire of judging him severely, it is evident that these events had no fortunate influence upon him. His life, hitherto agitated, but glorious and prosperous, became, after the consecration of Etheldreda, nothing but a tissue of trials and tempests. First of all, the intimate and fruitful union which had existed between him and the king of his country, was broken beyond remedy. Egfrid never pardoned him for his deceit, for having interfered in his domestic life, only to destroy its charm, and for having used his influence to encourage the wife whom he loved to desert him; and he long nourished his resentment in silence, waiting and preparing for the day when he might despoil him of his episcopal see.[159]

Rupture between Wilfrid and Egfrid;

But the direct instrument of the rupture between them and of the disasters of Wilfrid, was the second wife of Egfrid, she who, thanks to Wilfrid, and to him alone, had taken the place of St. Etheldreda on the throne, and in the heart of the sovereign of Northumbria. This princess, Ermenburga, was a sister-in-law of the King of the West Saxons. It was she, if we may believe the companion and biographer of Wilfrid, by whom the perfidious enemy of the Christian flock chose to work,

Provoked especially by the new queen, Ermenburga.

excludens, ut eam in Ely descendisse cognoverat, festinus advolat." — Thom., c. 16. Cf. 15 and 19. "A quo ipsa plurimum regendi consilium et vitæ solatium habuit."

[159] "Nec deinceps confessorem Domini Wilfridum a secretis seu affectis ut antea coluit, sed iram diu tacito contra illum sub pectore gessit; et expectata hora, ob istius modi causam, eum de sede sui episcopatus expulit." — Thom., *Elien.*, l. i. c. 11. Bede, the contemporary of Wilfrid, and who had questioned him with regard to the story of Etheldreda (iv. 19), simply mentions the rupture without alluding to its motives; he shows otherwise in all that regards the conflicts of Wilfrid with kings and bishops a singular reserve, very rare with him.

according to his custom of employing the weakness of women to corrupt the human race.

This wicked Jezebel, continues our ardent musician, drew from her quiver the most poisoned arrows to pierce the heart of the king, and to provoke him to a furious envy of the great bishop. With the eloquence of hatred she represented to him the shameless pomp and luxury displayed on every occasion by the Bishop of York; his immense riches, his services of gold and silver, the increasing number of his monasteries, the vast grandeur of his buildings, his innumerable army of dependants and vassals, better armed and better clothed perhaps than those of the king. She pointed out to him besides how many abbots and abbesses either gave up to him during their lives the government of their communities, or solemnly constituted him their heir; so that the moment might be foreseen when all those estates, given by the generosity of the Northumbrians to the sanctuaries of the new religion, would become the appanage of one man.[160] Such arguments could not but aggravate the resentment of a heart wounded by the desertion of a wife passionately regretted, and to whom another wife pointed out the way of vengeance.

Archbishop Theodore takes part with them.

The husband and wife thus decided upon the destruction of Wilfrid; but not daring to attack him directly, they had the art to engage the Archbishop Theodore in their plans, and to strike their enemy, the great champion of Rome, by the hand of the direct and supreme representative of Roman authority in England. Eddi distinctly accuses the primate of having been bribed by the King and Queen of Northumbria.[161] It is repugnant to our minds to admit such an accusation against a saint

[160] "Consueta arma arripiens, vasa fragilia muliebria quæsivit. . . . De pharetra sua venenatas sagittas venefica in cor regis, quasi impiissima Jezabel, per auditum verborum emisit, enumerans ei eloquenter . . . innumerumque sodalium exercitum regalibus vestimentis et armis ornatum. . . . Namque pæne omnes abbates et abbatissæ cœnobiorum, aut sub suo nomine secum substantias custodientes, aut post obitum suum hæredem illum habere optantes voto voverunt." — Eddius, c. 23, 20. "Quod aureis et argenteis vasis sibi ministrari faceret." — Guill. Malmesb., f. 148.

[161] "Ad auxilium suæ vesaniæ archiepiscopum Theodorum cum muneribus, quæ excæcant etiam sapientium oculos . . . invitaverunt. Venientes vero ad eos quid mente agerent in contemptu ejus patefacientes, et sine aliquo culpandi piaculo inique damnare cousensit." — Eddius, c. 23. William of Malmesbury, in the twelfth century, repeats this account. The Bollandists do not admit that Theodore was corrupted, but do not hesitate to accuse him of culpable connivance with the enemies of Wilfrid. — *Act. SS.*, vol. vi. Sept., p. 62.

placed in the Roman calendar side by side with St. Wilfrid. We can more easily believe that the archbishop suffered himself to be led away by an apprehension of the too great power of Wilfrid, and above all, by a perfectly legitimate desire to put in execution his project for augmenting and better dividing the English dioceses. It is also almost certain that he allowed himself to be influenced by a kind of Celtic reaction, the movers of which did not attempt to return to anti-Roman usages, but only to punish in Wilfrid the destroyer of their ancient ritual and their recent conqueror.

He deposes Wilfrid, and divides his diocese into three. 678.

Accordingly, during one of Wilfrid's numerous absences, Theodore came to York, and using, or abusing, the supremacy with which the Pope had invested him, he deposed Wilfrid, and also divided the diocese of York or Northumbria into three new dioceses. Nothing could be more significant of the spirit which animated him than his choice of bishop for these new dioceses, who were all monks taken from the ancient Celtic monasteries, who, while recognizing Roman customs, had still repelled the Roman customs, had still repelled the Roman bishop.[162] One of these new sees naturally remained at York; there the archbishop placed Bosa, since venerated as a saint, whom he found in the community of Whitby,[163] and consequently of the school of the Abbess Hilda, always so hostile to Wilfrid. By a refinement of animosity, the capital of the second diocese was placed at Hexham, precisely in that great monastery which Wilfrid had created with such magnificence. The bishop placed there was the abbot of the Celtic novitiate of Melrose, that very Eata who had been superior of the Scottish community, formerly displaced from Ripon to make room for Wilfrid.[164] The third diocese, which comprehended that part of Mercia recently conquered by the Northumbrian king, was also confided to a Celtic monk, who had been the companion of Ceadda when he replaced Wilfrid after his first deposition by Oswy.[165] Finally, as if to add a touch of derision to violence,

[162] "Tres episcopos aliunde inventos, et non de subjectis illius parochiæ . . . inordinate solus ordinavit." — Eddius, c. 23.

[163] Bede, iv. 12, 23. Bosa is honored (November 2) in the English martyrology.

[164] See above, p. 313.

[165] Bede, iii. 28; iv. 12. This monk was named Eadhæd. He was afterwards placed by Theodore at Ripon, in order to neutralize the influence of Wilfrid in his earliest foundation.

a fourth diocese was carved out, according to several authors, in the vast territories of Northumbria, having for its chief seat Lindisfarne, the sanctuary and asylum of the Celtic spirit. This miserable relic of his extinct greatness it was proposed to leave to Wilfrid, thus taking care to place him in the midst of his adversaries.[166]

All these measures bore the unmistakable mark of a Celtic reaction; but the archbishop gave as his reason that the diocese was large enough to give occupation to four bishops, and that its revenues furnished sufficient support for three instead of ministering to the luxury of one.[167]

Wilfrid appeals to Rome.

At the first report of this attempt on the rights of the Church and his own, Wilfrid hurried home, and summoned the king and the archbishop publicly to explain their motives for having thus despoiled him not only of his ecclesiastical authority, but also of the lands which he held as the gift of the reigning king, his father and brother. "It is," he said to them, "mere robbery." The two potentates simply replied, "We have no crime with which to reproach you, but we will not change any part of the judgment we have delivered." "Then," replied Wilfrid, "I appeal to the judgment of the Holy See."[168] It was the first time that an appeal to Rome had been heard of in Eng-

[166] It appears more probable, according to Bede, that this diocese of Lindisfarne was not created, or rather renewed, until 681; but, supposing it to have been in 678, it is certain that Wilfrid did not then accept the government, as he did some years later. We must not, like Fleury, confound this diocese of Lindisfarne, situated in Bernicia, north of Northumbria, with that of Lindisfari, created by Theodore, and which comprehended the province of Lindsey (now Lincolnshire), a division of Mercia. In 681, Theodore finished his work, and created — quite to the north of the country conquered by the Anglo-Saxons, on the banks of the Forth — a last diocese, which he placed in the Monastery of Abercorn, and which was to comprise all the Picts subject to Northumbrian rule. The land to the north of the Humber was thus divided into five dioceses — York, Ripon, Hexham, Lindisfarne, and Abercorn; the twelve dioceses subject to the metropolis of York, of which Gregory had prescribed the foundation to Augustin, still lay far in the future. But Theodore did not intend to create in the north a rival metropolis to his own. On the other hand, he multiplied dioceses south of the Humber; he divided the immense diocese of Mercia into six — *Lichfield*, Leicester, *Hereford*, *Worcester*, Sydnacester, and Dorchester, since transferred to *Lincoln*. Of these six, the four whose names are in italics still exist.

[167] "Prætendebat causam justitiæ ut inde tres alerentur episcopi, unde unus tumebat." — Guill. Malmesb., f. 149.

[168] "Interrogans quid causæ esset, ut . . . prædonum more defraudarent. . . . Illi responderunt famosum verbum dicentes coram omni populo: Nullam criminis culpam in aliquo nocendi tibi adscribimus sed tamen statuta de te judicia non mutabimus."

land; but Wilfrid recalled St. Paul's "I appeal until Cæsar." The step he thus took was a prelude to those great appeals and solemn struggles which, after the Norman Conquest, stirred all the West, and gave so much celebrity to the pontificates of St. Anselm and St. Thomas of Canterbury.

As he passed out of the royal assembly where he had thus signified his refusal to obey, he turned towards certain flatterers of the prince who were enjoying and laughing at his disgrace. "On this day next year," he said to them, "you who now laugh at my expense shall weep bitterly at your own." And in fact next year, on the very same day, all the people of York were tearing their hair and their garments in token of mourning, as the funeral procession of the young brother and heir of Egfrid passed through their city. This young prince, who was scarcely eighteen years of age, and already dear to the Anglo-Saxons, had been the guest of Wilfrid at the solemn dedication of Ripon: he perished in a war against the Mercians, the beginning of a series of defeats which lasted during all the remainder of the hitherto prosperous reign of Egfrid.[169]

All the saints and chief abbots of his country are hostile or indifferent to him.

The cowardly animosity of these courtiers against the haughty and intrepid prelate is, however, much less surprising than the fact that, incontestably, Wilfrid met with no aid and no sympathy among the great and holy churchmen who were his contemporaries. Not only did the illustrious Abbess Hilda, protectress of the Celtic ritual, remain always relentlessly, implacably hostile to him,[170] but not one of the abbots whom his example had imbued with the Roman and Benedictine spirit came to his succor; neither Benedict Biscop, who was as much Roman at heart, and by his numerous pilgrimages to Rome, as Wilfrid himself; nor the pious, humble, and austere Cuthbert, whose sanctity was already known in the very country and diocese of Wilfrid, and nourished through many ages the popular devotion of northern England. Except his own personal followers, very numerous indeed, and warmly attached to him, all that Northumbria in which the Celtic apostles had wrought so many wonders, re-

[169] "Adulatoribus dixit: Hoc anniversario die, qui nunc ridetis in meam pro invidia condemnationem, tunc in vestra confusione amare flebitis." — Eddius, c. 23. Cf. Bede, iv. 21.

[170] "Ut putant sit quanta miseria involvat mortales, quod illi viri quos sanctissimos celebrat antiquitas, Theodorus, Berthwaldus, Johannes, Bosa, nec non et Hilda abbatissa digladiabili odio impetierint Wilfridum." — Guill. Malmesb., f. 152. Cf. Faber, p. 88.

mained either hostile or profoundly indifferent. This indifference and hostility of the country, arising, no doubt, from an excessive susceptibility of national sentiment, is again apparent at a later date in the histories of Anselm and Thomas à Becket. It is a point of resemblance between these illustrious men and the first great bishop of the English race which must strike every observer.

The modern reader will not be less astonished at the ignorance of the Anglo-Saxon Church in the most elementary rules of canonical law as to the institution and immovability of bishops. When St. Wilfrid was superseded at York for the first time, without trial, before he had even taken possession, St. Chad accepted his see without hesitation; and other saints — Cuthbert, Bosa, and John of Beverley — afterwards followed his example, while the Metropolitan of Canterbury, himself inscribed in the Roman calendar, consecrated all these intruders. When the Holy See intervened on behalf of the law, its decrees met with but a tardy or equivocal acquiescence. But such causes of astonishment, too often awakened by the conscientious study of history, ought not to trouble sincere and serious minds. If the dogmas and morals taught by the Church have never varied, it has required many centuries to give to her discipline and government that form which now appears to us the only regular one. To expect in primitive times, and among young and restless nations, to find the monarchical concentration or uniform docility which, in our days, characterized the exercise of ecclesiastical authority, is to fall into the same error as those simple historians, lately so common among us, who mete out the royalty of Clovis or St. Louis by the measure of the monarchy of Louis XIV.

CHAPTER IV.

JUSTICE DONE TO WILFRID AT ROME: IN ENGLAND HE IS DEPOSED, IMPRISONED, EXILED, AND RESTORED.—678-686.

Wilfrid himself carries his cause to Rome. — A storm lands him in Friesland, where he evangelizes the people. — He thus becomes the first of the Anglo-Saxon apostles of Germany. — Generosity of the King of the Frisians and King of the Lombards, both of whom refuse to deliver him up to

Ebroïn. — Wilfrid in Austrasia: Dagobert II. — Wilfrid at Rome. — Theodore and Hilda denounce him to the Pope St. Agathon. His cause is tried by a council at which the Pope presides. He obtains justice; but the principle of the division of dioceses is maintained, and the authority of the primate confirmed. Wilfrid hears at Rome of the death of Etheldreda. — He is present at the Council against the Monothelites, and bears witness to the faith of all the Churches of the British Isles. — He returns to England with the Papal charter for Peterborough. — He is repulsed by the king and assembly of the Northumbrians, and then imprisoned. — Connivance of Archbishop Theodore. —Wilfrid refuses to treat with the king. — He is put in irons at Dunbar: afterwards delivered by the intervention of the Abbess Edda of Coldingham, but exiled. — Obliged to leave Mercia and Wessex, where the brothers-in-law of Egfrid reign, he takes refuge among the Saxons of the South, whom he converts to Christianity. — He teaches them to fish with nets, and frees the serfs on the domains of his new Abbey of Selsey. — His connection with the proscribed Ceadwalla, who becomes King of Wessex, and afterwards dies at Rome. — Theodore again disposes of the diocese of Wilfrid: St. Cuthbert is made Bishop of Lindisfarne. — King Egfrid ravages Ireland cruelly: in spite of the entreaties of Bishop Cuthbert he invades Caledonia, and perishes there. — Queen Ermenburga, informed by Cuthbert of the death of her husband, becomes a nun. — Consequences of the defeat of Egfrid. — The Saxon bishop of the Picts takes refuge at Whitby, where Elfleda, sister of Egfrid, had succeeded Hilda. — Archbishop Theodore acknowledges his faults towards Wilfrid: he wishes to choose him as his successor: writes in his favor to the King of the Mercians and to the Abbess Elfleda. — Connection of Elfleda with Bishop Cuthbert. — Aldfrid, long an exile at Iona, becomes King of Northumbria. — Wilfrid is recalled and re-established in his diocese. — Storms raised by him at Lindisfarne, which he abandons to another bishop. — Death of Archbishop Theodore.

Having decided that he would himself carry his appeal to Rome, Wilfrid left Northumbria, accompanied by his friend the chorister Eddi, and by a numerous train of clergy and laymen, who never left him. He left behind thousands of monks, initiated by him into the rule of St. Benedict, and now in despair at finding themselves under the authority of new bishops strange to Benedictine traditions, and animated by a spirit totally opposed to that of their beloved superior.[171] His route towards the Continent led him through the kingdoms of Mercia and East Anglia, the princes and people of which were always favorable to him; and when he stopped at the great monasteries, at Peterborough, of which he re-

[171] "Multa millia monachorum suorum sub manu episcoporum noviter ordinatorum, relinquens, mœrentes et flentes." — Eddius, c. 24.

garded himself as one of the founders, and, above all, at Ely, where he had often dwelt, and where Etheldreda always received him as her bishop, she commissioned him to obtain for her at Rome one of those acts of privilege which were earnestly sought by monastic establishments as their most efficient safeguard against the usurpations and violences which menaced them on all sides.[172]

It was supposed by his enemies, who increased every day in number and bitterness, that he would take the ordinary route of pilgrims to Rome, landing in the neighborhood of Boulogne at Etaples, and going through France. They therefore sent messages and gifts to the atrocious Ebroïn, who, stained as he was by the blood of St. Leger and many other victims, still governed, as mayor of the palace, the provinces of Neustria and Burgundy. Knowing him to be capable of any crime, they begged him to lay hands on Wilfrid on his journey, rob him of all that he carried with him, and free them from the chance of his return.[173] But whether Wilfrid was warned of his danger, or whether he was simply guided by the west wind which rose while he was at sea — this wind saved his life, carrying him, and with him the first seeds of the Christian faith, to the low and marshy shores of Friesland.[174]

Mission of Wilfrid into Friesland.

He is thus the first of the Anglo-Saxon apostles of Germany.

The Frisians then occupied all the north-east of Germany. They were a warlike, numerous, and formidable people, of whom mention will often be made in the after history of monastic missions. The Gospel was then unknown to them, and Wilfrid, who had been the beginner of so many things, had also the glory of opening the way to those Anglo-Saxon apostles of Germany whose long and glorious annals we have yet to unfold. Wilfrid, who was hospitably received by the king of the country and its inhabitants, had no sooner

[172] "Apud Ely cum beatissima Etheldretha morabatur, ubi tunc et quotiens necessitas poposcerat, quoad vixit, officii jura episcopalis administravit. . . . Monasterium per dilectum suum Wilfridum Romæ nutu apostolico corroborandum destinavit. . . . Accepit privilegium . . . ut optaverat et eum rogaverat mater insignis Etheldretha." — Thom. Eliensis, c. 15, 19.

[173] The similarity of name between Wilfrid and Winfrid, bishop of Lichfield, must have been fatal to the latter. Having been deposed by the metropolitan Theodore, "per meritum cujusdam inobedientiæ," he also was going to France, and perhaps to Rome, when the satellites of Ebroïn fell upon him, killed his companion, and left him naked, "errore bono unius syllabæ seducti," says Eddi, who judges of good and evil only as they affect the interests of his hero. — Cf. Bede, iv. 3, 6.

[174] "Flante Favonio pulsus est." — Bede, iv. 19. Cf. Eddius, p. 25.

landed on the unknown coast than he took advantage of the kindness shown him to begin a new evangelical mission. With the self-devotion and enthusiasm natural to him, he forgot the grave personal interests which were leading him to Rome in his eagerness to give himself up to this new work. He remained there a whole winter, preaching daily, with the permission of the king, Adalgisus, and with a success which repaid his toil. The year proved more than usually abundant in fish and other provisions, and this the Frisians attributed to the new God who was preached to them.[175] Nearly all their chiefs were baptized, with many thousands of the people. 678 679.

Meantime Ebroïn was on the watch, with no inclination to let the rich prey of which he had been informed escape from him. Having heard of Wilfrid's residence in Friesland, he sent messengers to the king with very friendly letters, in which he promised him by oath a bushel of gold coins if he would send him Bishop Wilfrid alive, or even his head. Adalgisus had all the repugnance to secrecy which had been noticed by Tacitus among the princes of Germanic race, who love to discuss their affairs at feasts, since at such a moment the heart is most frank and open, most prone to generous impulses, and least apt to dissimulate.[176] The King of the Frisians accordingly collected all his people at a great banquet, together with his different guests; on the one side the emissaries of Ebroïn, on the other Wilfrid and his followers, amongst whom was Eddi, who has described the scene. After the banquet, he caused the letter of the powerful minister of the Franks to be read aloud. When this was finished he took the letter, tore it up, and threw the pieces into the fire, saying to those who had brought it, "Go and tell your master what you have seen, and add that I have said, 'Thus may the Creator tear, destroy, and consume the perjurer and traitor!'"[177] It is evident that chivalry was just bursting from the bud Generosity of the King of the Frisians.

[175] "Doctrina ejus secundum paganos bene adjuvavit, erat enim in adventu eorum eo tempore solito amplius in piscatione et in omnibus frugifer annus." — Eddius, c. 25.

[176] "Plerumque in conviviis consultant: tanquam nullo magis tempore aut ad simplices cogitationes pateat animus, aut ad magnas incalescat. . . . Deliberant dum fingere nesciunt.' — *De Moribus Germaniæ*, c. 22.

[177] "Modium plenum solidorum aureorum. . . . Rex, præsentibus nobis, et nuntiis coram populo suo in palatio epulantibus, omnibusque audientibus. . . . Enuntiate domino vestro hoc modo me dicentem: Sic rerum Creator regnum et vitam in Deo suo perjurantes, factumque nullum non custodientes scindens destruat, et consumens in favillam devellat!" — Eddius, c. 26.

among these new Christians. Wilfrid, however, could only stay to reap a first and rapid harvest. He had left in his monastery at Ripon a young Northumbrian, brought to him in infancy by his mother, whom he had carefully educated for thirteen years. And it was for this child, a faithful disciple of the great exile, since venerated by the Churches of England and Germany under the name of Willebrord, that God reserved the glory of bringing permanently into the ranks of Christianity this warlike nation.[178]

679. Wilfrid in Austrasia.

Wilfrid resumed his journey towards Rome in spring, crossing Austrasia where the throne was occupied by a prince who had occasion to know the generous hospitality of the Abbot of Ripon. This was Dagobert II., grandson of the first king of that name, who, dethroned in infancy by Grimoald, mayor of the palace, was sent secretly to Ireland, where he found refuge in a monastery; but when in 673 the Austrasian nobles determined to escape the yoke of Ebroïn, who was already master of Neustria and Burgundy, they recalled the tonsured prince whose brilliant youth, according to travellers, blossomed in a Hibernian cloister. It was to Wilfrid that they addressed themselves for the restoration of the royal exile; and it was Wilfrid who, after having magnificently received and entertained him at Ripon, sent him on his way to Austrasia with large presents and a great escort.[179] Dagobert showed his gratitude not only by giving him an affectionate reception, but by his entreaties to Wilfrid to accept the bishopric of Strasbourg, then vacant, and the most important in the kingdom.

656.

Where he refuses the bishopric of Strasbourg.

Wilfrid, however, refused, and pursuing his route, arrived in Lombardy, where he was most hospitably

[178] Wilfrid always maintained his connection with Friesland. A curious story, told by Bede (iii. 13), which describes the veneration of their national saint, King Oswald, introduced by the Northumbrian missionaries, seems to indicate that Wilfrid himself visited the country a second time in one of his later voyages with Willebrord and his successor Acca. M. Albertingk Thym, in his recent and curious account of St. Willebrord, does not resolve this question. But the Bollandists (vol. vi. Sept., p. 68) decide that Wilfrid, in returning from Rome twenty years after his second voyage, passed through Friesland, and that he may then have been accompanied by Willibrord and Acca. Fourteen years after his first stay in Friesland in 692, it was to Wilfrid that they sent Bishop Swidbert, another Saxon missionary, to be consecrated. — Bede, v. 11.

[179] "Amici et propinqui ejus viventem et in perfecta ætate florentem a navigantibus audientes, misere nuntios ad B. Wilfridum, petentes ut eum de Scotia et Hibernia ad se invitasset et sibi ad regem emisisset." — Eddius, c. 27.

received by Berchtaire, king of that country.[180] There, also, he had been anticipated by the enmity of his countrymen, and once more the great bishop owed his life to the honor and good faith of a barbarian, but already Christian, prince. He said to Wilfrid, "Your enemies have sent to me from England, with promises of great presents if I will prevent you by violence from proceeding to Rome; for they treat you as a fugitive bishop. I have replied to them thus: 'I was myself exiled from my country in my youth, and lived with a king of the Avares, who was a pagan, and who swore before his idol not to deliver me up to my enemies. Some time afterwards they sent to offer this pagan king a bushel of gold if he would give me up to them. He refused, saying that his gods would break the thread of his life if he broke his oath. With better reason I, who know the true God, will not lose my soul were it to gain the whole world.'"[181] Having said this he gave Wilfrid and his people an honorable escort which guarded them all the way to Rome.

The King of the Lombards refuses the offers of his enemies.

Thus on the north and south of that mass of Germanic nations just touched by Christianity, there flashed out at Wilfrid's touch sparks of that generous loyalty which afterwards developed into Christian honor, and the lofty ideal, ever inaccessible yet ever desired and pursued, of chivalry. Wilfrid may be congratulated on having been one of the first to awaken in the history of our forefathers the premonitory signs of this magnificent dawn.

At the moment when Wilfrid arrived at Rome for the second time — returning persecuted but famous to the city which he had left twenty years before obscure and unknown — the chair of St. Peter was occupied by a Sicilian monk named Agathon: since the time of St. Gregory the Great, all the monasteries of Italy and Sicily followed the rule of St. Benedict, and, consequently, we cannot doubt that he was a Benedictine. Accordingly it was natural that he should be favorably disposed towards the Bishop of York, in whom he found at once the propagator of Benedictine rule and the champion of Ro-

Wilfrid at Rome. 679.

The Pope Agathon a monk.

[180] It is apparent from the introduction to the text of Eddi published by Mabillon, that the latter and Adrian de Valois take this to prove that the country described by Eddi as *Campania* was no other than Lombardy.

[181] "Fui aliquando in die juventutis meæ exsul de patria expulsus, sub pagano quodam rege . . . qui iniit mecum fœdus in deo suo idolo. . . . Ego quanto magis, qui Deum meum scio, animam meam pro totius mundi lucro in perditionem non dabo." — Eddius, c. 27.

man authority. But he also showed great consideration for Wilfrid's antagonist, Archbishop Theodore, whom he had just summoned to Rome by a special envoy, for the council convoked against the Monothelite heresy. Theodore did not obey the summons of the Pope, but he sent a very exemplary monk named Coënwald with letters full of violent accusations against Wilfrid.[182] Messengers charged with a similar commission arrived from the Abbess of Whitby, St. Hilda, still embittered against him who had won the day in the great struggle carried on in the very bosom of her monastery fifteen years before. This singular intervention of the great abbess, which is recorded and proved by a pontifical rescript a quarter of a century after the event,[183] shows at once the great place she held in the English Church, and the intensity of her resentment against Wilfrid.

Wilfrid's cause is judged by council at which the Pope presides.

The Pope confided the judgment of the affair to an assembly of fifty bishops and priests collected in the Basilica of the Saviour, at which he himself presided. The companion of Wilfrid has left us a kind of official account of the last session of this assembly, which shows, under the profusion of superlatives then used in all the documents of the Roman Court,[184] an indulgent sympathy for both the rivals, together with the moderation and impartiality natural to the Head of the Church.

The cardinal-bishops of Ostia and Porto made a report to this assembly, equally founded upon the memorials sent by Theodore and others, in which Wilfrid was spoken of as a fugitive bishop, and on those which Wilfrid himself produced for his defence. They concluded thus: — "All being considered, we do not find him convicted canonically of any crime which merits deposition: on the contrary, we perceive that he has preserved great moderation, and has excited no sedition by which to regain his position. He has contented himself with protesting in presence of the other bishops his brethren, and has then had recourse to the Holy See, where Christ, who purchased the Holy Church by His blood, has

[182] "Modestæ religionis monachus. . . . Accusationes scriptas deferens et amaritudine delationis verbis immitibus." — Guill. Malmesb., f. 149.

[183] See the letter of Pope John VI. quoted by Eddius (c. 51), written to the Kings of Northumbria and Mercia in 705.

[184] The Pope is always described as "sanctissimus et ter beatissimus," and Theodore as "sanctissimus;" Wilfrid is only named with the epithet "Deo amabilis." The violent Eddi himself is won by this example, and while he transcribes this document he treats Theodore as a saint, and his envoy Coënwald as "religiosus monachus."

founded the primacy of the priesthood." The pope then said, "Wilfrid, Bishop of York, is at the door of the hall of our secret deliberations with his petition — let him enter." The bishop being introduced, begged that his prayer should be again read in full assembly. It was expressed in terms equally able and touching: "I, Wilfrid, the humble and unworthy Bishop of the Saxons, have taken refuge here as in an impregnable fortress. I have climbed, by the grace of God, to this apostolic summit, from whence flows to all the Churches of Christ the rule of the holy canonical law; and I have a hope that justice will here be rendered to my humbleness. I have already explained, *viva voce* and in writing, how, without being convicted of any fault, I have been expelled from the diocese which I have governed for ten years; and how they have put in my place, not one bishop only, but three bishops, contrary to the canons. I do not dare to accuse the most holy Archbishop Theodore, because he has been sent by the Church. I submit myself here to your apostolic judgment. If you decide that I am no longer worthy to be a bishop, I humbly accept the sentence; if I am to reclaim my bishopric, I shall obey equally. I implore you only to expel, by the authority of this council, the usurpers of my diocese. If the archbishop, and the bishops my brethren, see fit to augment the number of bishops, let them choose such as I can live amicably with, and let them be elected with the consent of a council, and taken from the clergy of their future dioceses, so that the Church may not be ruled from without and by strangers. At the same time, confiding absolutely in apostolic justice, I shall obey implicitly its decrees."

He obtains justice.

After this speech, the Pope congratulated Wilfrid on his moderation and humility. Then the council decreed that Wilfrid should be restored to his see; that those who had replaced him should be expelled; but that the archbishop should ordain bishops with the title of coadjutors, bishops chosen by Wilfrid himself in a council assembled for that purpose. All this was commanded under pain of interdict, deposition, and anathema, against whosoever might oppose this decree, whether bishop, priest, deacon, monk, layman, or even king.[185]

[185] "Agatho . . . dicit: 'Wilfridus Deo amabilis episcopus . . . præ foribus nostri secretarii moratus, ad nostrum secretarium juxta suam postulationem cum petitione, quam secum adfere licitus est, ammittatur.' Wilfridus . . . dixit: 'Deprecor vestram pontificalem Beatitudinem ut meæ

This sentence was a most wise and legitimate decision; for, while giving full satisfaction to that justice which had been outraged in the person of Wilfrid, it enforced, on the terms he had himself accepted, the evidently reasonable principle of the division of his overgrown diocese.

The council of Rome confirms the authority of Theodore.

Besides this, the same assembly, probably in the same session, rendered full justice to the apostolic zeal of Archbishop Theodore, by prescribing a new arrangement of bishoprics, so that the metropolitan might have twelve suffragans, canonically elected and ordained, of whom none should interfere with the rights of his neighbor. It also sanctioned the prohibitions decreed by the archbishop, who forbade ecclesiastics to bear arms, and to mingle in secular amusements with female musicians and other profane persons. Finally, the Pope and the council charged Theodore to complete the work of St. Gregory and St. Augustin, by convoking an assembly, wherein the kings, princes, nobles, and leaders of the country might confer with the prelates, and where they could provide for the exact observance of apostolic rules. It was also recommended to him to hold assemblies of this kind as frequently as possible, in order to provide, in concert with the faithful and the wisest men of the kingdom, for those measures most advantageous to the Church and people of God.[186]

humilitatis petitionem excipi coramque relegi præcipiatis. . . . Quid acciderit ut Theodorus sanctissimus me superstite in sedem quam . . . dispensabam . . . ordinaret episcopos, omittere magis quam flagitare pro ejus Dei viri reverentia condecet; quem eo quod ab hac apostolica sede directus est, accusare non audeo.' . . . Si placuerit archiepiscopo et coepiscopis meis ut augeatur numerus episcoporum, tales eligant de ipso clero Ecclesiæ, quales in synodo placeat congregatis episcopis, ut non a foris et alienis dominetur Ecclesia. . . . Si quis proinde contra horum statutorum synodalium decreta ausu temerario obsistere tentaverit . . . ex auctoritate B. Petri . . . eum hac sanctione percellendum censemus, ut, si episcopus est . . . sed ab episcopali ordine destitutus, et æterni anathematis reus; similiter si presbyter . . . si vero clericus, monachus vel laicus cujuslibet ditionis, vel rex: extraneus efficiatur et corpore et sanguine Christi: nec terribilem ejus adventum dignus appareat conspicere." — Eddius, c. 28, 30. It will be seen that this decree of the council does not repeat, with regard to kings and other powerful lay personages, the threat of deposition, together with excommunication, contained in the celebrated diploma of St. Gregory the Great cited above, vol. i. p. 382.

[186] "Armis non utantur, nec citharedas habeant, vel quæcumque symphonia, nec quoscumque jocos vel ludos ante se permittent. . . . Ut ipse . . . cum universis præsulibus, regibus, principibus, universis fidelibus, senioribus, majoribusque natu totius Saxoniæ, publicam œcumenicamque faciant synodum. . . . Ut quidquid sanctus Theodorus cum sapientibus et fidelibus et viris religiosis in Anglorum provinciis, totis ecclesiis et universo populo Dei ibidem positis profuturum melius ac religiosius invenire potuissent . . . laborare atque transcribere." — *Concilia*, ed. Coletti, t. vii. p. 603. The

Wilfrid made no haste to quit Rome, after having obtained justice. He remained there several months, and occupied himself among other matters in obtaining pontifical charters for two English monasteries which, though situated beyond the limits of his diocese, lay very near his heart — those of Peterborough and Ely. He had just succeeded in respect to Ely, and expected to carry back a deed of privilege such as the Abbess Etheldreda had requested of him, when he received news of the death of this sainted queen, whose friend and spiritual father he had been, and whose supernatural resolution had been the first cause of his pilgrimage as an exile and accused man to Rome. Probably of all the Christian souls of his own country, hers was the one most tenderly and closely united to his. All that he had suffered through her, and in her cause, must have rendered her peculiarly dear to his generous heart. Etheldreda died young, a victim to one of the contagious diseases which were then so frequent. She had predicted her own death, as well as the number of those brothers and sisters of her community who would follow her to the grave. Three days before her death she was obliged to submit to a painful operation in the throat; she rejoiced at it. "God," she said, "has sent me this suffering to expiate the frivolity of my youth, the time when I remember to have worn with so much pleasure necklaces of pearls and gold on this neck now so swollen and burned by illness." At the last moment, surrounded by the brothers and sisters of her numerous community in tears, she spoke to them at length, imploring them never to let their hearts rest on the earth, but to taste beforehand, by their earnest desires, that joy in the love of Christ which it would not be given to them to know perfectly here below.[187] She

Wilfrid receives at Rome intelligence of the death of Etheldreda.

23d June, 679.

Bollandists (vol. vi. Sept., p. 69), contrary to the opinion of P. Pagi and the editors of the Collections of Councils, believe that the council where Pope Agathon gave the decrees relative to Archbishop Theodore was distinct from that which did justice to Wilfrid a year later. While accepting their chronology, we do not think that their arguments ought to prevail against the ancient opinion, founded on the text of the Acts themselves.

[187] "Scio certissime quia merito in collo pondus languoris porto, in quo juvenculam me memini supervacua monilium pondera portare: et credo quod ideo me suprema pietas dolore colli voluit gravari, ut sic absolvar reatu supervacuæ levitatis: dum mihi nunc, pro auro et margaritis, de collo rubor tumoris ardorque promineat." — Bede, iv. 19. "Monens eas ut animum de supernis nunquam deponerent et suavem cibum cælestis jucunditatis in Christi amore suspirando gustarent, quem adhuc in carne agentes perfecte apprehendisse non poterant." — Thom. Eliensis, c. 21.

carefully directed that they should bury her, not in a stone vault like a queen, but in a wooden coffin, and among the simple nuns.[188]

27th March, 680.

The death of Etheldreda must have saddened Wilfrid's stay at Rome, where, however, he was still treated with confidence and distinction by the Pope. He was amitted to the council of one hundred and twenty-five bishops assembled under the presidency of Agathon, to name deputies for the sixth general council which was about to be held at Constantinople for the condemnation of the Monothelite heresy, a heresy which recognized but one single will in the Son of God made man. For half a century this heresy had troubled the Church; it had been adopted by various Byzantine emperors, and had thirty years before led the holy Pope, Martin I., to the most painful of martyrdoms. In the synodical letter which these hundred and twenty bishops, chiefly Italians, wrote to the emperors, in the name of all the provinces of the West, is found this passage: "You have ordered us to send you wise and virtuous ambassadors. There is no secular eloquence among us. Our lands are desolated by the fury of contending races; there is nothing but battles, inroads, and pillage. In the midst of these barbarians, our life is full of anguish; we live by the labor of our hands, for the ancient patrimony of the Church has been, little by little, devoured by various calamities. Our faith is the only patrimony which remains to us; to live for it is our glory; to die for it our eternal advantage." After having described the catholic and apostolic faith, held by all under the terms defined by the Holy See, they add: "We are late in replying to your appeal, because many of us live far away, and even

He assists at the council against the Monothelites.

[188] In spite of these directions, sixteen years after her death, in 695, her sister, who had succeeded her as Abbess of Ely, wished to place her in a mausoleum of white marble, richly carved, which she took from the ruins of the Roman city of Grandchester, near Cambridge. On this occasion it was seen that her body had preserved all its freshness; she seemed to sleep; the surgeon who had opened the tumor in her neck, and who was present at this exhumation, recognized the wound he had made: "Pro aperto et hiante vulnere cum quo sepulta erat, tenuissima cicatricis vestigia parerent." This miraculous preservation appeared to all a decisive proof of the incorruptible virginity which she had guarded throughout her life, even to Bede, who celebrated the translation of the saint's body in an elegy which he has inserted in his History, and in which classic recollections are mingled with those of the martyrology to honor the Anglo-Saxon queen: —

"Bello Mars resonet, nos pacis dona canamus;
Carmina casta mihi, fœdæ non raptus Helenæ;
Dona superna loquar, miseræ non prælia Trojæ."

on the coasts of the great Ocean. We had hoped that our colleague and co-servitor Theodore, archbishop and philosopher of the great island of Britain, would come with the bishops of his country, as well as of yours and of other places, so that we might write to you in the name of our whole council, and that all may be informed of what takes place, for many of our brethren are in the midst of barbarous nations, Lombards, Sclavonians, Goths, and Britons, all very curious touching the faith, and who being all agreed with us as to the faith, would become our enemies if we gave them any subject of scandal." [189]

This letter, signed by the Pope and the hundred and twenty-five bishops, was signed also by Wilfrid as representative at the council of the British bishops,[190] although those bishops had given him no commission on the subject; but he felt himself authorized to bear this witness to the faith of the British Church. His confidence was the better justified, since in the same year Archbishop Theodore held a national council at Hatfield, where all the bishops of England made their solemn profession of faith, and declared that they received the four general councils and the council of Pope Martin against the Monothelites.[191] It seems even that Wilfrid undertook to guarantee not only the faith of the Anglo-Saxon bishops, but also of all the Churches scattered in the north of Great Britain and in Ireland, among the Scots and Picts. Thus the Celtic Christians, whom he had so persecuted and opposed as to peculiar rites, inspired him with no doubt as to their unity of belief on all points which related to the faith; and he did not hesitate to answer for them before the Pope and the universal church.[192]

17th Sept., 680.

He declares strongly in favor of all the Churches of the British Isles.

[189] "Sola est nostra substantia fides nostra: cum qua nobis vivere summa gloria est; pro qua mori lucrum æternum est. . . . Sperabamus de Britannia Theodorum confamulum et coepiscopum nostrum, magnæ insulæ Britanniæ archiepiscopum et philosophum . . . exinde ad nostram humilitatem conjungere." — *Concilia*, ed. Coletti, t. vii. p. 707, 714.

[190] "Ego Wilfridus, humilis episcopus sanctæ Ecclesiæ Eboracenæ insulæ Britanniæ, legatus venerabilis synodi per Britanniam constitutæ, in hanc suggestionem quam pro apostolica nostra fide unanimiter construximus, similiter subscripsi." — Cf. Guill Malmesb., f. 150. Fleury, *Hist. Ecclésiast.*, l. xl. c. 6, 7.

[191] Bede, iv. 17.

[192] This is the result of another signature of his, different from that which we have quoted, though given in the same council, appealed to by him, and admitted by Pope John VI. twenty-five years later. It is thus expressed: "Ego Wilfridus . . . cum aliis cxxv. episcopis in synodo in judicii sede constitutus, et pro omni aquilonali parte, Britanniæ et Hiberniæ insulis quæ

Wilfrid returns to England.

When Wilfrid at last made up his mind to return to England, new dangers met him on the way. He expected to meet again his friend and host, King Dagobert, in Austrasia, but that prince had just fallen a victim to a plot fomented by Ebroïn, one of whose creatures, an unhappy bishop,[193] lay in wait for the great Anglo-Saxon with a band of armed men, with the intention of robbing him, killing or selling into slavery all his companions, and delivering him to the implacable Ebroïn. This bishop reproached Wilfrid with having sent back from exile the tyrant Dagobert, from whom they had just freed themselves. "I only did," said Wilfrid, "what you yourselves would have done if an exile of our race and of royal blood had come to you to seek an asylum." "You are more just than I am," replied the bishop; "pass on your way, and may God and St. Peter be your aid!" [194]

He brings to Peterborough the charter of Pope Agathon.

When Wilfrid arrived in England, his first step before proceeding to his diocese in Mercia was to give to King Ethelred the charter he had obtained from the Pope, with the sanction of the hundred and twenty-five bishops of the council at Rome, in favor of the great abbey of that kingdom and of central England at Peterborough, the foundation of which he had approved fifteen years before, and to which he now put the final crown. The deed of Pope Agathon, addressed to the King of Mercia, to Archbishop Theodore, and to Bishop Sexwulf, who had been the first abbot of the *Bury* of St. Peter, conferred on the monastery an exemption from all ordinary charges and jurisdiction. In this document the king was recommended to be the defender of the community, but never its tyrant; the diocesan bishop to regard the abbot as his assistant in the evangelical ministry; the metropolitan to ordain in his own person the abbot elected by the community. This charter was sanctioned and signed by the King, the Queen, Archbishop Theodore, and his friend Abbot Adrian; and finally by Wilfrid himself, with this formula, "I, Wilfrid, on my way to reclaim, by apostolical favor, my

ab Anglorum et Britonum, nec non Scotorum et Pictorum gentibus incolantur, veram et catholicam fidem confessus est, et cum subscriptione sua confirmavit." — Bede, v. 19. Eddius, c. 50.

[193] Mabillon thinks this was Waimer, Duke of Champagne, made Bishop of Troyes by Ebroïn, to reward his services against St. Leger.

[194] "O rectissime episcope, quid aliud habuisti facere, si exsul de genere nostro. . . . Video te justiorem me esse." — Eddius, c. 31.

see of York, being witness and bearer of this decree, I agree to it."[195]

Wilfrid is repelled by the king and the assembly of the Northumbrians.

But the confidence which Wilfrid thus expressed was singularly misplaced. We now reach the most strange incident of all his stormy life. Having returned to Northumbria, conformably to the instructions of the Pope and the bishop, he humbly presented to King Egfrid, who had expelled him, that which he regarded as the standard of victory, namely, the decree of the Holy See and council of Rome, with the seals and signatures of all the bishops. The king convoked the assembly of nobles and clergy, and caused the pontifical letters to be read in their presence. Upon this there arose an ardent opposition. The authority of the Pope or the council was not disputed, but there were cries on all sides that the judgment had been bought. By the advice of the whole council, and with the express consent of the intruded bishops, the king condemned Wilfrid to an ignominious imprisonment of nine months. He was at once taken prisoner; nothing was left to him but the clothing he wore; his servants and adherents were dispersed, and his friends strictly forbidden to visit him. Queen Ermenburga, his old and pitiless enemy, took from his *Chrismarium* or reliquary which he wore round his neck, and took possession of it, having it always hung in her chamber or in her carriage when she travelled, either as a trophy of her victory or from that sincere but savage devotion which at times took such strange forms, and was the cause of such dishonest actions. This done, the noble Bishop was confided to one of the king's officers, Count Osfrid, who removed him so that none of his friends might know where he was, and shut him up in a cell which during the day was scarcely penetrated by a few feeble rays of light, and where at night he was not permitted to have a lamp.[196]

He is imprisoned.

[195] "Ego Wilfridus, apostolico favore repetens sedem Eboracensem, testis et relator hujus sanctionis votivæ assentior." I follow the text given by Dugdale (i. 67), which P. Pagi considers free from the interpolations and anachronisms of that found in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle (anno 680); the Bollandists, however, regard it as tainted with error.

[196] "Vexillum victoriæ ferens, hoc est, apostolicæ sedis judicium . . . cum bullis et sigillis signatis. . . . Omnibus principibus ibidem habitantibus, nec non servis Dei in locum synodalem accersitis. . . . Jussione regis et ejus consiliatorum, cum consensu episcoporum qui ejus episcopatum tenebant . . . novem menses *sine ullo honore* custodire censuerunt . . . in suo solo vestimento. . . . Regina chrismarium hominis Dei reliquiis plenum (quod me enarrantem horruit) de se abstractum, in thalamo suo manens,

Connivance of the archbishop Theodore.

It is comprehensible that a barbarous Saxon king, full of pride and cupidity, and a passionate and angry woman, should give themselves up to such excesses against a bishop whose wealth, power, moral influence, and fearless character, excited their jealousy. But what was St. Theodore doing meanwhile? He, so eager, three years before, to make himself the instrument of the King of Northumbria's violent deeds, where was he now when the repairing of his error was in question? He, the metropolitan and chief of the Anglo-Saxon bishops, how could he suffer the episcopal dignity to be outraged in the person of the most illustrious of his brethren? He, the veteran monk, so zealous for the traditions and privileges of his order, how could he yield to the violence of laymen or to the jealousy of the Celts the most ardent propagator of the Benedictine rule? He, the envoy and direct representative of the Holy See in England, how dared he contemn that pontifical decision which Wilfrid had been charged to signify to him? Above all, how dared he brave the anathemas which the decree of the council directed against all traitors, whatever their rank?[197] On these questions, history, so abundant in other details, keeps entire silence; she leaves us no other resource than to look for future repentance and expiation for so shameful a connivance at sin.[198]

After a while King Egfrid resolved to treat with his captive. He offered to restore to him a part of his bishopric, with many gifts added to it, if Wilfrid would acquiesce in his will, and acknowledge the falsity of the apostolic decree. Wilfrid replied that it would be easier to take his head than to tear such a confession from him. When he was cast back into his cell, he there gave an example of patience and courage truly episcopal. The guards heard him chanting the psalms as if he were in his monastic stall at Ripon or Hexham; at night they saw his prison illumined by a light which terrified them. The wife of Earl Osfrid having fallen dangerously ill, her husband had recourse to the holy man whom he had been appointed to guard; he took him out of prison and led him to the bedside of the invalid. The latter, at an after period and when she

Wilfrid refuses to come to terms with the king.

aut curru pergens juxta se pependit. . . . Comes . . . in latebrosis locis ubi raro sol per diem inluxit, et lampas per horrorem noctis non accenditur."

[197] "Si quidem episcopus est, qui hanc piam dispositionem temerare tentaverit, sit ab episcopali ordine destitutus, et æterni anathematis reus."

[198] Bolland., l. c., p. 62.

had herself become an abbess, often related to her new family, with tears of gratitude, that the prisoner found her in the last stupor of departing life, yet that a few drops of holy water cast on her face, with prayer, were sufficient to cure her. Osfrid, penetrated with gratitude and admiration, quickly informed the king of what had happened. "I conjure you," said the brave Saxon, "both for your own welfare and for mine, no longer to persecute this holy and innocent bishop; as for me, I would rather die than continue this jailer's trade."[199] Far from listening to him, the king took from him the guardianship of the captive, who was sent to a castle still more remote, near Dunbar, on the shore of the Scottish sea, where he was intrusted to another earl much more harsh than Osfrid, with orders to keep him strictly isolated in his prison, and to put him in irons. But they were never able, Eddi tells us, to make these of the right size; they were always either too large or too small to confine the hands and feet of the prisoner.

He is transferred to Dunbar.

While Wilfrid thus paid the price of his glory and his courage, the king and queen made a triumphant progress through the very country where he was held prisoner. In the course of this tour, they arrived at the Monastery of Coldingham, on the seashore, not far from Dunbar, and half way between the prison and the holy island of Lindisfarne. In this great establishment, where Etheldreda had first taken refuge, two communities, one of men and one of women, obeyed the Abbess Ebba, sister of Oswy, and aunt of Egfrid. Like Hilda at Whitby, Ebba exercised at Coldingham, with great wisdom and authority, that sort of rule at once spiritual and temporal which was the inheritance of more than one Anglo-Saxon princess; but far from being, like Hilda, the enemy of Wilfrid, she became his liberator. During the night which the royal couple passed at the monastery, Queen Ermenburga was seized with an attack of delirium; in the morning the abbess appeared, and as the queen, whose limbs were already contracted, seemed at the point of death, Ebba, with the double authority of a cloistered superior and of a princess of the race of Odin, said to her nephew, "I know all that you have done; you have superseded Bishop Wilfrid without having a crime to

Delivered by the intervention of the prin-

[199] "Adhuc vivens illa, nunc sanctimonialis materfamilias, nomine Æbba, cum lacrymis hoc narrare consuevit. . . . Adjuro te per vitam meam et salutem tuam . . . quia magis eligo mori, quam eum innoxium flagellare." — Eddius, c. 35, 36.

cess Ebba, Abbess of Coldingham.

accuse him of; and when he returned from his exile with an apostolic verdict in his favor, you robbed and imprisoned him, foolishly despising the power of St. Peter to bind and to loose. My son, listen to the words of her who speaks to you as a mother. Break the bishop's chains; restore to him the relics which the queen has taken from his neck, and which she carries about with her to her own injury, as the Philistines did the ark of God; and if (as would be best) you will not restore him to his bishopric, at least let him be free to leave your kingdom and go where he will. Then, upon my faith, the queen will recover; if not, I take God to witness, that He will punish you both." [200]

Egfrid understood and obeyed: he sent the reliquary to Dunbar, with orders to set the bishop at liberty immediately. Ermenburga recovered, and Wilfrid, having speedily collected some of his numerous friends and disciples, took refuge in Mercia, the king of which country he supposed would be friendly towards him, in consequence of his having brought him from Rome the deed of privilege for Peterborough. But here also his expectations were vain. He had just founded a small monastery for the use of his troop of exiles, when the hatred of his enemies discovered and pursued him. Ethelred, King of Mercia, had married a sister of Egfrid; and the queens, as we see in Saxon history, were often more powerful than the kings, for evil as well as for good. Ethelred, moved by the instigation of his wife, or by fear of displeasing his powerful brother-in-law, signified to his nephew, who had given one of his estates to the persecuted bishop, that he would endanger his head if he kept the enemy of King Egfrid another day in his territory. Wilfrid, therefore, was obliged to leave Mercia, and went into the neighboring kingdom of Wessex. But here the hatred of another queen assailed him. The wife of Centwin, King of the Western Saxons, was the sister of that Ermenburga who had been the first cause of the poor exile's troubles; she had espoused her sister's quarrel; and again he was obliged to fly from a country in which there was no hospitality for him.

He is, however, compelled to leave Mercia,

And Wessex.

[200] "Sapientissima materfamilias veniens ad reginam contractis membris stricte alligatam et sine dubio morientem videns. . . . Ego scio et vere scio. . . . Et nunc, fili mi, secundum consilium matris tuæ fac, disrumpe vincula ejus et sanctas reliquias quas regina de collo spoliati abstraxit, et in perniciem sui (sicut arcam Dei . . .), dimitte." — Eddius, c. 37.

These three brothers-in-law, kept by a common animosity in unwonted union, reigned over the three kingdoms which together occupied three-quarters at least of Saxon England.[201]

Wherever the influence of the Northumbrian king could extend, there was no longer for Wilfrid either security or peace.

He takes refuge with the Saxons of the South, and converts them to Christianity. 681-683.

Thus pursued by the influence of Ermenburga, her husband, and brothers-in-law, from almost the whole territory of the Saxon Confederation; repelled from Canterbury and its environs by the hostility or indifference of Archbishop Theodore, he took refuge in the smallest and most obscure of the seven kingdoms, and the only one which had not yet been christianized, the kingdom of the Southern Saxons. The asylum which Christian kings refused him he hoped to find among his pagan countrymen. It may perhaps be recollected that he had been in great danger fifteen years before, at the commencement of his episcopate, on his return from his consecration at Compiègne, when wrecked on this inhospitable coast.[202] The King of Sussex himself, who was still a pagan like his subjects, had been then the leader of the wreckers. Now the king was a Christian, thanks to his wife, a Mercian princess; but the country continued almost completely inaccessible to Catholic missionaries. This kingdom had furnished to the Heptarchy its first known Bretwalda, Ælla, but since that time had fallen into obscurity, being defended at once against the invasions of its powerful neighbors, and against the efforts of the Canterbury monks, by its rocks and forests, which rendered it difficult of approach,[203] a circumstance which is hardly comprehensible now in sight of that soft and fertile country. The inhabitants held sternly to their ancient faith; they reproached the other Saxons, who were already Christians, with their apostasy. At the same time, they had among them the begin-

[201] "In eo territorio pro Deo donato monasteriolum fundavit, quod adhuc usque hodie monachi ejus possident. . . . Audientes hominem Dei . . . illic manentem et modicum quiescentem, Beorthvaldo in sua salute interdicunt, ut sibi eo minus dici spatium esset pro adulatione Egfridi regis. . . . Nam illic regina . . . odio odebat eum, uti propter amicitiam regum trium dehinc fugatus abscessit. . . . Ita ut de propria provincia expulsus, nec in aliena regione, ultra vel citra mare, ubi potestas Egfridi prævaluit, requiem haberet." — Eddius, c. 38, 39.

[202] See above, p. 336.

[203] "Præ rupium multitudine et silvarum densitate . . . inexpugnabilis." — Eddius, c. 39.

nings from which, in ordinary cases, the conversion even of the most obstinate was produced — namely, a Christian princess and a monastery. This monastery, however, was occupied only by a small community of Celtic monks, of whom mention has already been made,[204] and the people of Sussex gave no heed to their teaching. It was to this new soil that Wilfrid came: he might be driven from his country and from his diocese, but nothing could prevent his being, wherever he was, the minister of the living God, and the preacher of the truth. His first exile had made him the Apostle of the Frisians; his second gave him occasion to open the doors of the Church to the last pagans who remained to be converted in the British Isles. Like Æneas at Carthage, he touched and gained the heart of the king and queen by his story of the cruel trials of his exile. He enlightened and roused their minds; he preached to them with infinite sweetness the greatness and goodness of God; and he obtained permission to address the mass of their people to whom no one had yet dared to carry the word of life.

Thus daily, for many successive months, the prescribed and fugitive bishop stood forth among those unconquered Saxons, and told them all the series of miracles worked by the Divine Power since the creation of the world; he taught them to condemn idols, to believe in a future judgment, to fear eternal punishment, and to desire eternal happiness. His persuasive eloquence triumphed over all obstacles. The chiefs of the nation, the earls and thanes, demanded baptism at his hands; four priests of his followers baptized the rest of the nation; a few, however, resisted; and the king thought himself authorized to compel them to follow the example of their countrymen.[205] This melancholy fact must be confessed with regret, and forgiven, in consideration of the age and race, to which violence was so natural and so contagious; but it must be added that this is the sole instance in which force was employed in the whole history of the conversion of the Anglo-Saxons, a work which Wilfrid

[204] Page 301.

[205] "Et si propter inimicitias regis in patria sive parochia sua recipi non potuit; non tamen ab evangelizandi potuit ministerio cohiberi . . . concedendo, imo multum gaudente rege primos provinciæ duces ac milites sacrosancto fonte abluebat." — Bede, iv. 13. "Totius exsilii sui austeritatem per ordinem narravit . . . leniter suadens. . . . Stans episcopus noster in medio gentilium . . . per plures menses longo ambitu verborum . . . suaviloqua eloquentia omnia mirabiliter per ordinem prædicavit . . . paganorum utriusque sexus, quidam voluntarie, allii vero coacti regis imperio . . . in una die multa millia baptizata sunt." — Eddius, c. 39.

had the glory of completing by the noble labors of his exile.[206]

The God whom he preached to these last pagans permitted his mission to be the channel of other blessings besides the gift of salvation. Before Wilfrid's arrival, a drought of three years' duration had desolated the country, and famine decimated the population. The poor famished creatures might be seen dragging themselves, by forty or fifty at a time, to the edge of the precipitous cliffs on the shore, and thence, holding each other by their emaciated hands, they would plunge together into the sea.[207] But on the very day when Wilfrid administered baptism to the chiefs, a soft and abundant rain watered the desolate fields, and restored to all the hope of a plentiful harvest.[208] While the cruel famine lasted the bishop had taught his future converts a new means of gaining their subsistence by fishing with nets. Until his arrival, although the waters of the sea and of their rivers abounded with fish, they had been able to catch nothing but eels.[209] Wilfrid did not disdain to teach them how to join all their little nets into one large enough to catch the biggest fish. By such services he gradually gained the hearts of those whose souls he wished to save. The King of Sussex was as grateful as his people. He proved it by giving to the apostle of his country, for a residence during his exile, the domain on which he himself lived, and which supported eighty-seven families — that is to say, was, according to Saxon calculations, capable of feeding that number of mouths, and consequently quite sufficient for the train of monks and other Northumbrians who followed the exile in his wanderings. This estate formed a peninsula, which was called Seal's Island. Here Wilfrid founded a monastery, which afterwards became the seat of the most southern diocese of

He teaches them the art of fishing with nets.

Foundation of Selsey.

[206] Bede says nothing of this use of force which contrasted too strongly with the conduct he had so much praised in the first Christian King of Kent (i. 26); but, unhappily, we must believe the testimony of Eddi, who, if not actually with Wilfrid on his mission to Sussex, as at other places, must yet have known better than any one else exactly what passed there.

[207] "Sæpe quadraginta simul aut quinquaginta . . . procederent ad præcipitium . . . et junctis misere manibus, pariter omnes aut ruina perituri aut fluctibus absorbendi decciderent."

[208] "Ipso die . . . pluvia serena sed copiosa descendit, refloruit terra, rediitque viridantibus arvis annus lætus et frugifer." — Bede, iv. 13.

[209] "Docuit eos piscando victum quærere. Piscandi peritia genti nulla nisi ad anguillas tantum inerat. . . . Collectis undecumque retibus anguillaribus." — Bede, iv. 13.

England,[210] and which he filled, half with monks who had come with him from the north, and half with novices taken from the converts of the south. These monks soon united in celebrating, among the other festivals of the Catholic liturgy, the feast of St. Oswald, the king who died fighting for the Christian faith and the independence of Northumbria, some years after the birth of Wilfrid; and this particular shows us how the unity of faith and associations consecrated by the new religion prepared the way for the social and political union of the different races of Great Britain.[211]

Wilfrid found on his new possessions two hundred and fifty slaves of both sexes, whom he not only delivered from the yoke of Satan by baptizing them, but also from that of men by setting them free.[212] It was thus that the monastic apostles sowed from a full hand, in England as elsewhere, bread for the soul and for the body, salvation and freedom.

681-686. Five years thus passed over Wilfrid, in his laborious but fruitful exile, of which the conversion of the Southern Saxons was not the only consolation. While the proscribed bishop reconstituted a centre of monastic life and Christian evangelism in his peninsula of Selsey, the forests of Sussex gave asylum to a whole band of other exiles, of whom the chief was a young prince of the Western Saxons named Ceadwalla, who had been banished from Wessex by the same king who, acting on the suggestion of his wife, expelled Wilfrid. The similarity of their fortunes united the two fugitives, though the western prince was still a pagan. Wilfrid, who seems never to have feared a danger, or refused to do a service, procured horses and money for Ceadwalla. The exiled prince, whose impetuosity and boldness were only surpassed by his cruelty, seized, one after the other, the two kingdoms of Wessex and Sussex, laid waste the kingdom of Kent, and ended by conquering the Isle of Wight. This picturesque island, so much admired by modern travellers, and which lies between the two districts

Relations of Wilfrid with Ceadwalla, an exile like himself,

And who becomes King of Wessex.

[210] "Donavit terram octoginta septem familiarum ubi suos homines qui exules vagabantur. . . . Vocabulo *Sele-seu*," afterwards called Selsey, created a bishopric in 711, and transferred to Chichester in 1070.

[211] "Ex hoc tempore non solum in eodem monasterio, sed in plerisque locis aliis, cœpit annuatim ejusdem regis ac militis Christi natalitias dies missarum celebratione venerari." — BEDE, iv. 14.

[212] "Servos et ancillas . . . quos omnes, non solum baptizando a servitute dæmoniaca salvavit, sed etiam libertatem donando humanæ jugo servitutis absolvit." — BEDE, l. c.

occupied by the Saxons of the West and South, was inhabited by twelve hundred pagan families of the tribe of the Jutes, a race which first of all the German invaders had landed upon the coast of Kent. The ferocious Ceadwalla slaughtered them all, to avenge the wounds he had received in attacking them. But his mind was pervaded by a vague instinct of religion such as he had seen in Wilfrid, although he had not been moved to adopt it. Before he invaded the island he made a vow that, if victorious, he would give a quarter of his booty to the God of Wilfrid, and he kept his word by granting to the bishop a quarter of the conquered and depopulated island. He even carried his cruel condescension so far as to permit the monks to instruct and baptize two young brothers of the chief of the island before cutting them down in the general massacre. And the two young victims marched to death with so joyous a confidence, that the popular veneration long counted them among the martyrs of the new faith. This savage, as soon as he returned to Wessex, summoned Wilfrid thither, treated him as his father and friend, and put himself definitely under instruction. But as soon as he understood, thanks to the teaching of Wilfrid, what religion and the Church meant, he found baptism by Bishop Wilfrid insufficient, and it will be hereafter seen that he went to Rome, as much to expiate his crimes by a laborious pilgrimage, as to receive baptism at the hands of the Pope.

He gives Wilfrid a fourth part of the Isle of Wight.

21st Aug., 686.

Although the report of Wilfrid's fresh apostolic conquests, and of his relations with the kings of the provinces nearest the metropolis of Canterbury, must certainly have reached the ears of Archbishop Theodore, the conduct of that prelate towards him continued inexplicable. In spite of the decrees of the Holy See, he held at Twyford, in Northumbria, a council, where, with the consent of King Egfrid, he disposed of the episcopal sees of Hexham and Lindisfarne, exactly as if these dioceses had not been parts of that of York, or as if Wilfrid had been dead or canonically deposed.[213] The first bishop thus placed by Theodore at Hexham, a see created in the very monastery built and endowed by Wilfrid, was an admirable monk, named Cuthbert, whose virtues and sanctity had long been celebrated in Northumbria; and, what is stranger still, nothing

Theodore disposes anew of the diocese of Wilfrid. 684.

[213] Bede, iv. 28; Bolland, t. vi. Sept., p. 64.

in the fully detailed life of this saint which has been preserved to us, shows that his repugnance to be made bishop had any connection with the manifest violation of the rights of him whose place he was called upon to usurp. All that he desired was to be transferred from Hexham to Lindisfarne — that is to say, to the episcopal monastery where he had been educated, and in which, or in one of its dependencies, he had always lived. He evidently believed that the metropolitan supremacy of Theodore was without limit, and dispensed him from following the canons of the Church.

King Egfrid

King Egfrid professed the most affectionate devotion to Cuthbert; but this need not astonish us. The persecutor of Wilfrid was far from being the enemy of the Church or of the monastic order. He was, on the contrary, the founder and benefactor of many of the great monasteries of the north of England, and the friend of all the saints of his time, except Wilfrid alone; and it seems to have been his wish to transfer to Cuthbert the confiding affection and respectful deference with which he had treated Wilfrid in the early part of his reign. Ermenburga, the cruel enemy of Wilfrid, was, like her husband, filled with the most ardent veneration for the holy monk, who had become one of the successors of her victim. But this devotion did not prevent Egfrid from giving himself up to ambition, and indulging in a thirst for war and conquest too much conformed to the traditions of his ancestors and pagan predecessors, "the Ravager," and "the Man of Fire."[214] In 684, without any known motive, he sent an army against Ireland, which devasted that island with pitiless cruelty. This invasion is the first of the unexpiated national crimes of the Anglo-Saxons against Ireland. It excited the indignation, not only of the victims, but also of the witnesses of its barbarity. The venerable Bede himself, though little to be suspected of partiality, or even of justice, as regards the Celts, points out the crime committed by the king of his nation against an innocent people, who, far from espousing the cause of the British Celts, had always been the friends and allies of the Anglo-Saxons. The soldiers of Egfrid did not even spare those great and holy monasteries where the Anglo-Saxon youth were in the habit of going to learn evangelical piety and knowledge, or where, as at Mayo, there lived a numerous community of Northumbrian monks who

Cruelly ravages Ireland, 684,

[214] See p. 203.

had preferred to forsake their country, and remain faithful to the teachings of their first apostles, rather than to submit to the triumph of Wilfrid and the Roman rule. The poor Irish, after defending themselves to the utmost, were everywhere vanquished, and had no other resource left but that of seeking by constant and solemn imprecations to call down the vengeance of heaven upon their unworthy assailants.[215] This time at least their too legitimate curses were realized.

Despite the entreaties of the Northumbrian monk Egbert.

In vain the Northumbrian Egbert, an illustrious and most learned monk of Lindisfarne, who had voluntarily banished himself to Ireland for the love of Christ and the benefit of his soul,[216] and who had great authority in both islands, supplicated the king of his native country to spare a people who had in no way provoked his anger. In vain the holy bishop Cuthbert, together with the best friends of the king, endeavored in the following year to dissuade him from commencing a war, not less cruel, and perhaps not less unjust, against the Picts. Egfrid would listen neither to one nor the other, but hurried to his ruin. He himself led his troops, and permitted them under his very eyes to devastate the invaded country with atrocious cruelty.[217] The Northern Celts retired before him, and thus succeeded in drawing him into a Highland pass, where he perished with his whole army, while still scarcely forty years of age, and after a reign of fifteen years. It was the counterpoise and return for the victory he had gained at the beginning of his reign in the days of his happy union with Wilfrid. This disaster was the signal for the liberation of the Celtic races whom Oswald, Oswy, and Egfrid had brought under the yoke of Northumbria, a yoke now broken forever. The Picts, the Scots, and the Britons of Strathclyde, together rushed upon the Angles, and drove them from the whole conquered territory between the Firth of Forth and the Tweed. Since then the northern frontier of Northumbria and of all England has remained fixed at the line which runs from the mouth of the Tweed to the Solway Firth. And since then,

Despite those of Bishop Cuthbert, he invades Caledonia, and perishes there.

20th May, 685.

[215] "Gentem innoxiam et nationi Anglorum semper amicissimam. . . . At insulani . . . cælitus vindicari continuis diu imprecationibus postulabant." — Bede, iv. 26.

[216] "Venerabilis et cum omni honorificentia honorandus famulus Christi et sacerdos Egbert quem in Hibernia insula peregrinans ducere vitam pro adipiscenda in cœlo patria retulimus." — Bede, v. 9.

[217] "Dum Egfridus . . . eorum regna atroci sævitia devastabat." — Bede, *Vita S. Cuthberti*, c. 27.

also, the Angles who remained north of the Tweed have been subject to the Scots and Picts, forming with them the kingdom henceforward called Scotland. From that day the splendor of Northumbria was eclipsed.[218]

Queen Ermenburga informed by Cuthbert of the fate of her husband.

Queen Ermenburga awaited the result of her husband's expedition in a monastery governed by one of her sisters at Carlisle, in the centre of the British population of Cumberland;[219] and the holy bishop Cuthbert, to whom King Egbert had given this town with its environs, came to the same place to console her in case of a misfortune which he but too clearly foresaw. On the day after his arrival, as the governor of the town accompanied him towards the ancient ramparts of the Roman city, he made a sudden pause, and, leaning on his staff, said with a sigh, "Alas! I fear that all is over, and that the judgment of God has come upon our army." When he was urged to explain what he meant, he merely replied, "See how clear the sky is, and remember that the judgments of God are inscrutable."[220] Upon this he immediately returned to the queen, and told her that he feared the king had perished, and that she ought to start not the next day, which was Sunday, a day on which it was unlawful to travel in a carriage,[221] but on the Monday, to seek refuge in the royal fortress of Bamborough, where he promised to join her.

Two days afterwards a fugitive from the battle came to tell that at the very hour indicated by the saint, King Egfrid, whose guards had all perished in his defence, had been killed by the avenging sword of a Pict.

Takes the veil.

Ermenburga bowed to the Divine hand which struck her. She took the veil from the hands of

[218] "Ex quo tempore spes cœpit et virtus regni Anglorum fluere ac retro sublapsa referri." — Bede, *Hist. Eccles.*, iv. 26.

[219] Carlisle was, as we have said, emphatically British. Even to the present day Cumberland has retained its British population. It bore the title of Kingdom in the middle ages, after it had escaped from the Northumbrian yoke. — Varin, memoir already quoted, p. 368; see also Spruner's Historic Atlas.

[220] "Stans juxta baculum sustentationis . . . suspirans, ait: O, ô, ô! existimo enim perpetratum esse bellum, judicatumque est judicium de populis nostris bellantibus adversum. . . . O filioli mei, considerate quam admirabilis sit aer, et recogitate quam inscrutabilia sint judicia Dei." — *Tertia Vita auctore Monacho coævo*, ap. Bolland., t. iii. Martii, p. 123. The version of Bede, in the *Life of S. Cuthbert*, ch. 27, says, on the contrary, "Nonne videtis quam mire mutatus et turbatus sit aer!"

[221] "Quia die dominico curru ire non licet." Even now, among the descendants of the Anglo-Saxons inhabiting Scotland, popular piety renders it difficult to travel on Sunday.

Cuthbert in her sister's monastery at Carlisle. This Jezebel, as she is called by the friend of Wilfrid, changed suddenly from a wolf into a lamb,[222] and became the model of abbesses. The body of her husband was not buried at Whitby, as those of his father and grandfather had been,[223] but carried, perhaps as a trophy of the victory, to the monastic island of Iona, which had been the asylum of his race in their exile, and which was still the national sanctuary of the victors.

Consequences of Egfrid's defeat.

Wilfrid, banished and deprived of his diocese, was thus but too well avenged. The Northumbrian kingdom, which had struck in his person at the independence and growing authority of the Church, paid the price of its fault by losing half its dominions, and by witnessing the downfall of that political and religious edifice which had been built upon the ruin of the Bishop of York.

The Saxon Bishop of the Picts flees to Whitby.

One of the new bishops substituted for Wilfrid, a Saxon monk, named Trumwine, whose see had been placed at Abercorn, on the banks of the Forth, at the extreme limit of the Northumbrian territory, escaped with difficulty from death or slavery, the only alternative which the Celtic conquerors left to their defeated enemies. With him came all his monks, whom he dispersed, as he best could, among the Northumbrian communities, as it was necessary to do afterwards with the Saxon nuns of his diocese, who fled before the irritated Celts, whom they regarded as savages. He himself sought a refuge at Whitby, where he passed the rest of his days, rendering such services as were compatible with his episcopal character to the abbess, who was invested with the difficult mission of ruling a double community of monks and nuns.[224] It was no longer Hilda the holy foundress who governed this great establishment; it was a daughter of Oswy, a sister of the three last

[222] "De lupa, post occisionem regis, agna Domini et perfecta abbatissa materque familias optima commutata est." — EDDIUS, c. 23. Cf. BEDE, *Vita S. Cuthberti*, c. 27, 28.

[223] See above, page 357.

[224] "Inter plurimos gentis Anglorum vel interemptos gladio, vel servitio addictos, vel de terra Pictorum fuga lapsos . . . recessit cum suis, eosque ubicumque poterat amicis per monasteria commendans . . . in monastica districtione non sibi solummodo, sed et multis utilem ducit . . . ipse in supradicto famulorum famularumque Dei monasterio. Adveniente illuc episcopo, maximum regendi auxilium simul et suæ vitæ solatium devota Deo doctrix invenit." — BEDE, iv. 26. He died there in 700. We find that St. Cuthbert assigned a residence in a town of his diocese to the Northern nuns, "timore barbarici exercitus a monasterio suo profugis." — *Vita S. Cuthberti*, c. 30.

Northumbrian kings, that Elfleda, whom her father had devoted to God as the price of his victory over the Mercians, and who, intrusted from infancy to Hilda, had grown up in the shadow of the great sea-side monastery. Her mother, Queen Eanfleda, the widow of Oswy, and first protectress of Wilfrid, had joined her there, to end her days in peace beside the tomb of her husband, and under the crosier of her daughter.

Archbishop Theodore acknowledges his wrongs toward Wilfrid,

The adversaries of Wilfrid thus vanished one by one. Of the three principal authors of his ruin, Egfrid was now dead, and Ermenburga a veiled nun. There still remained Archbishop Theodore. Whether the death of Egfrid had acted as a warning to him, or whether the recollection of his apostolic mission, which, in respect to Wilfrid, he had so ill fulfilled, came back to his mind, with a remorse made keener by age and illness, at least it became apparent to him that the moment for confessing and expiating his fault had come, and he did so with the complete and generous frankness which belongs to great minds.[225] He was an old man even at the moment when he was taken from his Eastern monastery to be placed at the head of the English Church, and he had now labored nearly twenty years in that fruitful but rude and thorny field. He was thus more than eighty, and the day of his death could not be far distant. The archbishop perceived that if death overtook him before he was reconciled to Wilfrid, the great works he had accomplished in regulating, purifying, and consolidating the morals and Christian institutions of England would be in some degree contradicted before God and men, by the sight of the great bishop, who had been robbed and exiled solely for having defended his rights and obeyed the Holy See. Accordingly, he summoned Wilfrid to him. Sussex, the residence of the exile, was near to Canterbury, or rather to London, where the interview took place, in presence of a holy monk, who was Bishop of London and of the East Saxons.[226] In presence of these two bishops, the countryman and successor of St. Paul[227] made his general confession. When he had ended, he said to Wilfrid, "My greatest remorse

[225] "Auctoritatem apostolicæ sedis, a qua missus fuerat, metu agitante, honorificans." — Eddius, c. 41. "De peccato in Wilfridum commisso sauciatus conscientiam." — Guill. Malmesb., f. 151.

[226] Earconwald, of whom more will be said later. — Bede, iv. 6, 11.

[227] The English have an old tradition, according to which St. Paul, born, like Theodore, at Tarsus in Cilicia, was the first to preach the Christian faith in Britain.

is for the crime I have committed against you, most holy bishop, in consenting to the will of the kings when they robbed you of your possessions and sent you into exile without any fault of yours. I confess it to God and St. Peter, and I take you both to witness that I will do what I can to make up for this sin, and to reconcile you with all the kings and nobles, among my friends, whether they wish it or not. God has revealed to me that I shall die within a year; therefore I conjure you, by the love of God and St. Peter, to consent that I establish you during my life as heir to my archiepiscopal see, for I acknowledge that of all your nation you are the best instructed in all knowledge and in the discipline of Rome." [228] Wilfrid answered, "May God and St. Peter pardon you all our controversy. I shall always pray for you as your friend. Send letters now to your friends that they may be made aware of our reconciliation, and the injustice of that robbery of which I have been the victim, and that they may restore to me at least a part of my goods, according to the command of the Holy See. After which we will examine with you in the great council of the country who is the most worthy to become your successor." [229]

And desires to secure to him the succession to the archbishopric.

The old archbishop immediately set to work to repair as far as possible the injury he had done to Wilfrid. He wrote letters to all quarters, to plead his cause and to secure for him as many friends as he had once sought to make him enemies.[230] Unfortunately only one of these letters had been preserved, but it is sufficient to do honor to his goodness of heart, and to show how the old Greek monk, transplanted into the midst of a Germanic population, could rule and train the souls under his authority, like a worthy successor and countryman of him who acknowledged himself, according to Scripture, "debtor both to the Greeks and Barbarians." It is addressed to Ethelred, King of Mercia, who by his means had become the

He writes in favor of Wilfrid to the King of Mercia

[228] "Sapienter totius vitæ suæ cursum cum confessione coram Domino pure revelavit. . . . Cunctos amicos meos regales et principes eorum ad amicitiam tuam . . . volentes nolentesque constringens adtraho . . . quia veraciter in omni sapientia et in judiciis Romanorum eruditissimum te vestræ gentis agnovi." — Eddius, c. 41.

[229] "Ero pro tua confessione orans pro te amicus in perpetuum. . . . Modo primum mitte nuntios cum litteris . . . ut me olim innoxium exspoliatum agnoscant . . . et postea . . . quis dignus sit . . . cum consensu tuo in majori consilio consulemus." — Eddius, c. 41.

[230] "Sibi ubique amicos, quasi prius inimicos, facere diligenter excogitavit." — *Ibid.*

friend and brother-in-law of Wilfrid's chief persecutor.[231] "My very dear son, — Let your holiness know that I am at peace with the venerable Bishop Wilfrid; therefore I beseech and enjoin you, by the love of Christ, to give him your protection as you formerly did, to the utmost of your power, and as long as you live; for all this time while robbed of his possessions, he has labored for God among the heathen. It is I, Theodore, the humble and infirm bishop, who in my old age address to you this exhortation, according to the apostolic will, so that this holy man may forget the injuries of which he has been so unjustly the victim, and that amends may be made to him. I would ask you besides, if you still love me, although the length of the journey may make my request importunate, let me see once more your dear countenance, that I may bless you before I die. But above all, my son, my dear son, do what I conjure you to do for the holy Wilfrid. If you obey your father who will not be much longer in this world, obedience will bring you happiness. Adieu, peace be with you, live in Christ, abide in the Lord, and may the Lord abide in you."[232] This letter had its due effect. Ethelred received Wilfrid with great honor, although six years before he would not suffer him to spend a single night in his kingdom; he restored all the monasteries and domains which had formerly been his in Mercia, and to the end of his life remained faithfully attached to him.

To the Abbess Elfleda.

But it was in Northumbria above all that it was important to obtain restitution for the robbed and humiliated bishop. For this purpose Theodore addressed himself to the new king Aldfrid and to the princess Elfleda, sister of the king, and Abbess of Whitby, who had naturally inherited a dislike for Wilfrid from St. Hilda, from whom she had received her education, before becoming her successor, and whose vast building she was about to complete.[233]

[231] See Bede, iv. 21.

[232] "Cognoscat tua miranda sanctitas, pacem me in Christo habere cum venerando episcopo Wilfrido. . . . Ego Theodorus, humilis episcopus, decrepita ætate, hoc tuæ beatitudini suggero . . . et licet tibi pro longinquitate itineris durum esse videatur, oculi mei faciem tuam jucundam videant. . . . Age ergo, fili mi, fili mi, taliter de illo supra fato viro sanctissimo, sicut te deprecatus sum. . . . Vale in pace, vive in Christo, dege in Domino, Dominus sit tecum."

[233] "Præcipuum monasterium . . . quod ab insignis religionis femina Hilda cœptum, Edelfleda ejusdem regis filia in regimine succedens, magnis fiscalium opum molibus auxit." — Guill. Malmesb., *De Gest. Reg.*, iii.

Death of Ebba of Coldingham. 25th Aug., 683.

Hilda had been quickly followed to the grave by her illustrious rival Ebba, who was, like herself, a princess of the Northumbrian royal dynasty, and abbess of a double monastery at Coldingham. The young Elfleda, niece of Ebba and heiress of Hilda, was therefore the sole representative in Northumbria of that great and salutary authority which was so willingly yielded by the Anglo-Saxon kings and people to those princesses of their sovereign races who became the brides of Christ.

Connection of the Abbess Elfleda with Bishop Cuthbert. 680.

The noble Elfleda, who was scarcely twenty-five years of age when she was called to succeed Hilda as Abbess of Whitby, is described by Bede as a most pious mistress of spiritual life. But like all the Anglo-Saxon princesses whom we meet with in the cloister at this epoch, she did not cease to take a passionate interest in the affairs of her race and country. All the more strongly, in consequence, she felt the need of spiritual help to aid her virgin motherhood in ruling the many souls gathered together under her crosier.[234] It was chiefly to Cuthbert that she had recourse. Before he had become bishop, while he lived on a desert rock near Lindisfarne, she had prevailed on him to grant her an interview in an island on the Northumbrian coast, called then, as now, Coquet Island, and which lies nearer Lindisfarne than Whitby. This was while her brother Egfrid still reigned. The hermit and the abbess went each to their meeting by sea; and when he had answered all her questions, she threw herself at his feet, and entreated him to tell her, by virtue of those prophetic powers with which he was known to be gifted, whether her brother Egfrid should have a long life and reign. "I am surprised," he answered, "that a woman well taught and versed as you are in the knowledge of Holy Scripture should speak to me of length with regard to human life, which lasts no longer than a spider's web, as the Psalmist has said, '*Quia anni nostri sicut aranea meditabuntur.*' How short then must life be for a man who has but a year to live, and who has death at his door!" At these words, she wept long; then, drying her tears, she continued, with feminine boldness, and inquired who should be the king's successor, since he had neither sons nor brothers. "Do not say," he replied,

[234] "Devota Deo doctrix . . . quæ inter gaudia virginitatis non paucis famularum Christi agminibus maternæ pietatis curam adhibebat . . . venerandissima virgo et mater virginum . . . multo virum Dei semper excolebat amore." — Bede, iv. 26, in *Vita S. Cuthberti*, c. 24. Cf. 34.

"that he is without heirs; he shall have a successor whom you will love, as you love Egfrid, as a sister." "Then tell me, I entreat you, where this successor is." "You see," returned Cuthbert, directing the eyes of his companion towards the archipelago of islets which dots the Northumbrian coast around Lindisfarne, "how many isles are in the vast ocean; it is easy for God to bring from them some one to reign over the English." Elfleda then perceived that he spoke of a young man supposed to be the son of her father Oswy, by an Irish mother, and who, since his infancy, had lived as an exile at Iona, where he gave himself up to study.[235]

Accession of King Aldfrid in Northumbria. 685-705.

And it thus happened in reality that the cruel and warlike Egfrid was succeeded on the most important throne of the Anglo-Saxon confederation by a learned prince who, during twenty years of a long and prosperous reign, sustained and restored to the utmost extent of his powers the ancient glory of the Northumbrian kingdom, within the new limits to which the victorious insurrection of the Picts had restricted it, but who specially distinguished himself by his love of letters and knowledge. Aldfrid[236] had passed his early days at Iona, in that island retreat where his father Oswy and his uncle Oswald had both found refuge in their youth, and whither the bleeding body of the brother whose crown descended to him had just been carried. During his long, and perhaps voluntary, exile in the Scottish monasteries and schools, he had been trained in theology and dialectics, cosmography, and all the studies then cultivated by the Celtic monks. He brought back from his residence at Iona, and his visits to Melrose and other places, that passionate curiosity and lavish liberality which may be traced among the Irish of the seventh century, and which seems a kind of prelude to the revival of learning in the fifteenth century.[237]

[235] "Repente in medio sermone advoluta pedibus ejus, adjuravit eum. Hæc audiens fusis lacrymis præsagia dira deflebat: extersaque facie, rursus audacia feminea adjuravit per majestatem summæ divinitatis. . . . Cernis hoc mare magnum et spatiosum, quot abundat insulis! Facile est Deo de aliqua harum sibi provideri, quem regno præficiat Anglorum. Intellexit ergo quia de Aldfrido diceret, qui tunc in insulis Scotorum ob studium litterarum exsulebat." — Bede, *Vita S. Cuthberti*, c. 24.

[236] It has already been said that he must not be confounded with Alchfrid, the eldest legitimate son of Oswy, and Wilfrid's first friend. Aldfrid was a natural son, and probably the eldest of Oswy's children.

[237] "Qui nunc regnat pacifice, qui tunc erat in insula quam Hy nominant." — *Vita brevis S. Cuthberti*, ap. Bolland., t. iii. Mart., p. 141. "Vir in

To this new king, as well as to his sister, the Abbess Elfleda, Archbishop Theodore wrote, to exhort them both to lay aside their enmity against Wilfrid, and to receive him with unreserved kindness.[238] A prince so much given to letters could not remain deaf to the prayers of an archbishop who added to his authority as legate of the Holy See and primate of the Anglo-Saxon Church the fame of greater learning and zeal for intellectual culture than had ever before been seen in Britain. Accordingly, in the second year of his reign, Aldfrid recalled Wilfrid to Northumbria, and restored to him, first, the Monastery of Hexham, with all the surrounding parishes, then the bishopric of York, and finally Ripon, which had been his chosen home, and the centre of his reforms. It is easy to understand the joy of the monks of those great communities, formed by Wilfrid, who had, no doubt, daily prayed for the restoration of their father. They went out to meet him in crowds, and led him back in triumph to the churches he had built for them.[239] The bishops formerly placed by Theodore at Hexham, Ripon, and York,[240] were dismissed; and the holy Bishop of Lindisfarne having voluntarily abdicated to return to his solitary rock of Fern, and there prepare for his approaching death, Wilfrid was charged to appoint his successor.

Wilfrid is recalled.

686.

20th March, 687.

The four dioceses formed by the division of the great diocese of York, which comprehended all the country north of the Humber, were thus once more united under the crosier of Wilfrid. But a restoration so complete lasted only a year: the administration of Wilfrid met great opposition at Lindisfarne. On this

Storms excited by Wilfrid at Lindisfarne.

Scripturis doctissimus. . . . Destructum regni statum quamvis intra fines angustiores nobiliter recuperavit." — Bede, *Hist.*, iv. 26. "Qui in regionibus Scotorum lectioni operam dabat, ibi ob amorem sapientiæ spontaneum passus exilium." — Bede, *Vita Cuthberti*, c. 14. "Ab odio germani tutus, et magno otio litteris imbutus, omni philosophia composuerat animum." — Willelm. Malmesb., *De Gest. Reg.*, c. 52.

[238] "Ut simultatibus retropositis incunctanter caritatem ejus complecterentur." — Bolland., t. ii. Febr., p. 184.

[239] "In gaudio subjectorum suorum de exsilio . . . rediens." — Eddius, c. 43. "Crebra monachorum examina patri obviam procedunt." — Eadmer, *Vita S. Wilfridi*, c. 21.

[240] This is affirmed by Eddi, a contemporary and witness of most of the facts he relates, while Bede and other authors suppose that St. John, called of Beverley, a monk of Whitby, who had been placed at Hexham in 685 by the Archbishop Theodore, was transferred to York when Wilfrid returned. Probably Bede anticipated by some years the nomination of John, who was certainly the successor of Wilfrid at York, after his second exile.

subject the venerable Bede, who was as prudent as sincere, speaks only by hints.[241] It may be divined that Wilfrid took advantage of his re-establishment in his diocese to strike a last blow at Celtic traditions, and that spirit of independence which the first Scottish apostles of Northumbria had introduced into the holy island. The changes he attempted to introduce were so unbearable to the Anglo-Saxon monks of the school of Cuthbert and his masters, that they declared themselves ready to imitate their brethren who had left Ripon at the arrival of Wilfrid. They preferred to leave the first sanctuary of Christianity, and the cradle of their order in Northumbria, rather than to yield to the tyranny of their new superior. He himself became aware that their resistance was insurmountable, and at the end of a year he gave up Lindisfarne to a new bishop who, being both wise and gentle, calmed all parties.[242]

688.

Death of the Archbishop St. Theodore. 19th Sept., 690.

About this time the prediction of Archbishop Theodore was verified; he died at the age of eighty-eight, after a pontificate of twenty-two years. His conduct towards Wilfrid is open to the widest censure, and can scarcely be explained otherwise than by the jealousy inspired in the metropolitan of England by the splendor and power of the immense bishopric of York under a ruler such as Wilfrid. But an impartial posterity owes him at least the justice rendered him by his contemporaries, and is bound to recognize in him a man who did more than any of his six predecessors to organize and consolidate the Church of England, on the double basis of Roman supremacy and of the union of the Anglo-Saxon bishoprics among themselves by their subordination to the metropolitan see of Canterbury.[243] No bishop before him had labored so much for the intellectual development of the native clergy, or for the union of the different Anglo-Saxon dynasties. The Greek monk, therefore, may well be reckoned among the founders of the English Church and nationality; and when he was

[241] "Tanta ecclesiam illam tentationis aura concussit, ut plures e fratribus loco magis cedere, quam talibus vellent interesse periculis." Then speaking of the successor of Wilfrid: "Fugatis perturbationum procellis . . . sanavit contritos corde, et alligavit contritiones eorum . . . quia post ejus (Cuthberti) obitum repellendi ac destruendi essent cives sed post ascensionem minantis iræ cælestis protinus miseratione refovendi." — *Vita S. Cuthberti*, c. 39.

[242] Bede, iv. 29. His name was Eadbert.

[243] "Tantum profectus spiritalis tempore præsulatus illius Anglorum ecclesiæ, quantum nunquam antea potuere, cœperunt." — Bede, v. 8.

buried, wrapped in his monastic habit in place of a shroud,[244] in the ecclesiastical burying-ground of Canterbury, it was but just that he should be laid on the right hand of St. Augustin, the Italian monk who a century earlier had cast the first seeds of faith and Christian civilization into the soul of the Anglo-Saxon race.[245]

CHAPTER V.

SECOND EXILE OF WILFRID, AND SECOND APPEAL TO ROME. — 686–705.

Rupture of Wilfrid with King Aldfrid. — New accusations against Wilfrid. — He is exiled the second time. — He is received by the King of Mercia, who gives him the bishopric of Lichfield. — He there lives eleven years in tranquil obscurity. — Theodore's successor hostile to Wilfrid, as also Abbot Adrian. — Assembly of Nesterfield. — Degrading proposals made to Wilfrid; he rejects them. — His speech. — He appeals to Rome. — Precocious talent of the Anglo-Saxons in diplomacy and despotism. — King Ethelred of Mercia remains faithful to Wilfrid. — The monks of Ripon are excommunicated. — Wilfrid's third voyage to Rome. — Contrast with the first. — Pope John VI. — The trial lasts four months, and occupies seventy sittings. — Wilfrid is acquitted. — Returning to England, he falls ill at Meaux. — His friend Acca. — His life is prolonged in answer to the prayers of his monks. — He is reconciled to the archbishop. — He goes to visit his faithful friend Ethelred, now become a monk at Bardency. — Aldfrid, King of Northumbria, refuses to recognize the sentence of the Holy See. — He dies. — His successor expels Wilfrid within six days, but is himself dethroned. — National assembly on the banks of the Nid. — The Abbess Elfleda and the Ealdorman Bertfrid interpose on behalf of Wilfrid. — General reconciliation. — The Monasteries of Ripon and Hexham given up to him. — Influence of Anglo-Saxon princesses on the destiny of Wilfrid.

[244] "Jacebat uti a primordio erat depositus integra forma metropolitani sacerdotii pallio et monachiti tantum obductus cuculla." — GOTSELINUS, *Translatio SS. Reliq.*, l. ii. c. 27.

[245] The following lines were written by a poet of the time on the seven monks who were the first seven Archbishops of Canterbury, and who were buried side by side: —

> "Septem primates sunt Anglis et proto-patres,
> Septem rectores, septemque per æthra triones;
> Septem sunt stellæ, nitet his hæc area cellæ;
> Septem cisternæ vitæ, septemque lucernæ."

Wilfrid was fifty-six when his great rival, thus tardily transformed into a repentant and faithful ally, died; and for more than a quarter of a century his life had been one continued conflict. He might therefore hope for a little repose, and even perhaps believe it possible. But God still had in reserve for him long years of renewed trials. The first half of his history is repeated in the second with a wearisome monotony as to the events, but with the same constancy and courage in the hero of the endless struggle.[246]

Rupture of Wilfrid with King Aldfrid. 686-691.

The truce which was granted to him in the midst of his laborious career lasted but five years. It was more than once disturbed: calm and storm alternately characterized his relations with King Aldfrid, a monarch justly dear to the Northumbrians, whom his courage and ability preserved from the disastrous consequences of Egfrid's downfall. But in 691, the king, freed from the influence which Archbishop Theodore had exercised over him, as well as over all England, cast off all pretences towards the bishop, whose moral and material power was an offence to him, as it had been to his father and brother. Predisposed, also, by his education and his long residence in Ireland to favor Celtic tendencies, it may be supposed that he easily allowed himself to be influenced by the rancor and ill-will naturally entertained towards Wilfrid by the disciples and partisans of Scotic monks and bishops. Thus war was once more declared between the court of Northumbria and that exclusively Roman and Benedictine spirit of which Wilfrid was the uncompromising champion.[247]

[246] The following are the principal dates of the life of Wilfrid: —

664. Named Bishop of York and of all Northumbria.
665. Replaced by Ceadda, during his absence in France for his consecration. He retires to Ripon.
669. Recalled to York by the intervention of Theodore.
678. Dismemberment of the diocese; he is removed from York, and transferred to Lindisfarne; he refuses, and appeals to Rome.
679. On his return from Rome, with a judgment in his favor, he is imprisoned, and afterwards exiled.
686. After the death of Egfrid, he is a second time re-established.
691. Third expulsion by King Aldfrid, and second exile.
692. He is made Bishop of Lichfield.
703. Assembly of Nesterfield. Wilfrid refuses to sign his deposition. Second appeal to the Holy See; third voyage to Rome.
705. He returns to England. Assembly on the banks of the Nid; his two monasteries of Ripon and Hexham are restored to him.
709. He dies at Oundle.

[247] "Nam antiquæ inimicitiæ suasores, quasi de sopore somni excitati . . . facem dissensionis extinctam resuscitavere, quippe inter regem sapientissi-

Charges against Wilfrid.

Three complaints in chief were brought against the great bishop, two of which dated back to the origin of the struggle begun by Wilfrid between the Celts and Romanists. The matter in question was the Monastery of Ripon, founded originally for a colony of Celtic novices from Melrose, but afterwards given to Wilfrid, to the injury of the first owners, and dedicated by him to St. Peter, as if with the intention of holding up the standard under which he intended to fight. His new adversaries at first propose to deprive the Church of Ripon, the true capital of Wilfrid's spiritual kingdom, of a portion of its vast possessions, and to erect this into a new bishopric, dividing a second time the diocese of York, for the extension of Celtic influence, but in contempt of the Pontifical verdict and of the royal grant which had irrevocably guaranteed to Wilfrid and his monks the existence of this community free and exempt from all other jurisdiction.[248] Wilfrid, with his usual firmness, refused to consent to this division; upon which his adversaries changed their tactics, and reproached him for not obeying all the decrees issued by Archbishop Theodore as legate of the Holy See. This was in evident reference to the new bishoprics erected by Theodore in Wilfrid's diocese. With address worthy of a more civilized century, the theologians of the Northumbrian king thus taught him to transform the most devoted champion of Rome into an insurgent against the authority of the Holy See, and to make of the archbishop who had just died reconciled to Wilfrid, an adversary not less dangerous after his death than during his life. Wilfrid replied that he willingly recognized the statutes made by Theodore before their rupture, and after their reconciliation — that is to say, while all the churches were canonically united — but not those which dated from the interval in which division reigned. This was a sufficient pretence for his enemies to treat him as a rebel, and consign him to a new exile.

He is exiled for the second time.

Thus Wilfrid found himself, for the third time, deprived of the see to which he had been canonically appointed by the father and brother of King

mum et sanctum virum . . . iterum in concordia, atque iterum in discordia alternatim per multos annos viventes . . . usque dum postremo maxima flamma inimicitiæ exardescescente . . . expulsus recessit. Prima causa est dissensionis eorum de antiqua origine descendens." — Eddius, c. 43.

[248] "Ut monasterium quod in privilegium nobis donabatur . . . in episcopalem sedem transmutetur; et libertatem relinquere, quam sanctus Agatho et quique reges censuerunt fixe et firmiter possidere." — Eddius, c. 43.

Aldfrid twenty years before; and sentenced to a second exile for refusing to lend himself to the schemes of the adversaries of law and of monastic and ecclesiastical freedom. He sought refuge in Mercia, the country which he had so often visited in the time of his sainted friend Etheldreda, where the great Monastery of Peter's Burg, with its hitherto unquestioned independence, reminded him of ancient efforts happily accomplished, and where King Ethelred, who had been definitively won over to his side by the touching letter of the aged Archbishop Theodore, and who saw in him the representative of Roman authority, offered him effectual protection and an affection which never wavered in its fidelity.[249] This king immediately called him to the vacant see of Lichfield, which, since the new episcopal division arranged by Theodore, no longer comprehended the whole of Mercia, but which still offered a sufficient field to the apostolic zeal of Wilfrid. It was the see which had been held by the gentle and pious Ceadda, who superseded Wilfrid at York, at the time of his first quarrel with King Oswy in 665. Wilfrid now succeeded his former supplanter, changing for the fourth time his episcopal residence.[250] In this obscure and restricted sphere, he contented himself with fulfilling his duties as bishop, and awaiting better days with patience. Here he lived eleven years, and during that long interval one single trace of his active work is all that is visible — the consecration of a missionary bishop named Swidbert. This missionary, destined to be the apostle of Westphalia, had already visited that region of Friesland whither Wilfrid himself carried the first revelation of the Gospel, and whither his example had led several Anglo-Saxon monks, the traces of whose light-giving progress will be met with further on.

Wilfrid received in Mercia by King Ethelred,

Who makes him Bishop of Lichfield. 692.

691-703.

It is evident that no one thought of doing anything to carry out the intention, so clearly expressed by Theodore, of making Wilfrid his successor. On the contrary, after an interval of two years, a priest named Berchtwald, formerly a monk at Glastonbury, and afterwards abbot of a monastery built at Reculver, on the site of the palace to which the first Christian king had retired, after giving up his capital to

A descendant of Odin succeeds the Greek Theodore at Canterbury, 1st July, 692.

[249] "Ad amicum fidelem accessit . . . qui eum cum magno honore propter reverentiam apostolicæ sedis suscepit." — Eddius, c. 43.

[250] York, Hexham, Lindisfarne, and Lichfield.

Augustin, was elected to the vacant see. Berchtwald was descended from the dynasty which reigned in Mercia, and was the first of the race of Odin who took his place among the successors of the apostles.[251] One Anglo-Saxon had already figured among the archbishops of Canterbury; but as he had changed his name into the Roman appellation of *Deusdedit*, he has been reckoned among the foreign prelates, and the national historians, chronicling the promotion of Berchtwald, write proudly, "Hitherto our bishops had been Roman; from this time they were English."[252] As there was no other metropolitan in England, he had to go to Lyons to be consecrated. He presided over the English Church for nearly forty years. He was very learned, deeply imbued with the knowledge of Holy Scripture, and of monastic discipline; but the Saxon Bede acknowledges that he was far from equalling his predecessor, Theodore the Greek.[253]

21st June, 693.

He is hostile to Wilfrid.

But from whence arose the hostility of the new archbishop to Wilfrid? Perhaps the seeds of it had been sown in the Celto-British Monastery of Glastonbury. Except at the moment of the holy Archbishop Theodore's tardy confession and restitution, Wilfrid, from the beginning of his struggle with the Anglo-Saxon princes and prelates, seems never to have met with the least sympathy at Canterbury, the natural centre of Roman traditions and authority, and it was never thither that he went to seek a refuge in his troubles. Nothing more strongly proves to what a point national feeling already prevailed, not indeed over the power of love and respect for Catholic unity, but over all that would compromise, even in appearance, the interests or the self-love of the Anglo Saxon Church. Abbot Adrian, the friend and companion of Theodore, like him charged by the Holy See to watch over the maintenance of English orthodoxy, and who survived the archbishop nearly twenty years,[254] never extended a friendly hand to the man who, not without good cause, declared himself the dauntless champion and innocent victim of Roman unity. The case was the same, as we have already seen, with the illustrious

[251] He is also called Beorchtwald, and Brithwald. — Guill. Malmesb., *Gesta Reg.*, i. 29; Hook, vol. i. p. 178.

[252] *Anglo-Saxon Chron.*, an. 690.

[253] "Ecclesiasticis simul ac monasterialibus disciplinis summe instructus, tametsi prædecessori minime comparandus." — Bede, v. 8.

[254] He died in 710, having been thirty-nine years abbot of the Monastery of St. Peter or of St. Augustin at Canterbury.

and holy abbot Benedict Biscop, the founder of several new foundations, entirely Roman in spirit and heart, in the country, and even in the very diocese of Wilfrid. Is it not necessary to conclude that Wilfrid appeared, at least to his most illustrious contemporaries, to go much too far in his zeal, and to mistake the indispensable conditions of religious peace in England?

Assembly of Nesterfield. 703.

However this may have been, the new archbishop (who, we may say in passing, holds a place among the saints of the English and Benedictine calendars),[255] soon formed an alliance with King Aldfrid. The resentment of this prince had not been disarmed, nor his resolution modified, either by the long exile of Wilfrid, or by the impunity with which Bishops Bosa[256] and John had since occupied the usurped sees of Hexham and York. Twelve years after the last expulsion of Wilfrid, the king convoked an assembly in the plain of Nesterfield, near the Monastery of Ripon, which was one of the principal causes of the struggle. Almost all the British bishops were present, the Archbishop Berchtwald himself presided, and Wilfrid was invited to take part in the proceedings, under a promise that justice would be done him, according to the canon law. He came; but the promise was so far from being kept, that his presence was only made an occasion for heaping recriminations and accusations upon him. Certain bishops, probably those who occupied the sees into which his diocese had been partitioned, distinguished themselves by their bitterness; they were supported by the king, and it must be added, by several abbots, who perhaps disliked the Benedictine rule. An attempt was made to force him into an entire acceptance of all the statutes of the deceased archbishop. Wilfrid replied that he would do all they wished, provided it was agreeable to the canon law. Then turning upon his adversaries, he reproached them vehemently for the obstinacy with which for twenty-two years they had opposed the apostolic authority; he demanded under what pretence they dared to prefer the laws made by the archbishop during the division of the Church of England to the decrees of three popes specially delivered for the salvation

681-703.

[255] Under the name of Brithwaldus or Brivaut, on 9th January.

[256] We have already said that this intruder figures among the English saints. Bede also calls him *Deo dilectus et sanctissimus*, v. 20. It must be remembered that he, as well as his colleague St. John of Beverley, had been trained in the school of the Abbess Hilda.

of souls in Britain? While his adversaries deliberated over the wording of their minutes, a young man attached to the service of the king, but passionately devoted to Wilfrid, who had educated him along with many other young Saxon nobles, secretly left the royal tent, and, stealing in disguise through the crowd, warned Wilfrid that a treacherous attempt would be made to obtain his signature in approval of all the council might decree — a sort of blank resignation, by means of which he might be deprived of everything he had a lawful right to, whether bishoprics or monasteries, in Northumbria, Mercia, and all other places. "After which," said this secret friend, "nothing would be left for you but to give yourself up, and lose even your episcopal character in virtue of your own signature."[257] The actual event to which this warning referred is made known to us by the account given later by Wilfrid himself to the Pope. "I sat," he said, "in my place, with my abbots, priests, and deacons, when one of the bishops came to ask, in the name of the king and the archbishop, if I submitted to the archbishop's judgment, and if I was ready to obey what should be decreed with the consent of all, yes or no? I replied that I preferred to know, in the first place, the nature of the judgment before making any engagement. The bishop insisted, saying that he himself knew nothing, that the archbishop would say nothing until I had declared in a document, signed by my hand, that I would submit to his judgment, without deviating to the right or left. I replied that I never had heard of such a proceeding, and that it was unheard-of to attempt to bind the conscience by an oath before it was known what the oath implied. However, I promised before all the assembly that I would obey with all my heart the sentence of the archbishop in everything that was not contrary to the statutes of the holy Fathers, to the canons, or to the council of the holy Pope Agathon and his

Proposals made to Wilfrid.

[257] "Multæ ac magnæ altercationum quæstiones ab eis exortæ . . . consensu quorumdam abbatum qui pacem ecclesiarum, avaritia instigante, nullatenus habere concupiverunt. . . . Multis et duris sermonibus eorum pertinaciam increpavit ac interrogavit eos quo fronte auderent. . . . Unus ex ministris . . . quem ille a primævo vagentis ætatulæ incunabulo enutrivit, ex tentorio regis latenter erupit. . . . Hæc fraude te moliuntur decipere, ut primitus per scriptionem propriæ manus confirmes eorum tantummodo judicium . . . ut postquam isto alligatus fueris districtionis vinculo, de cetero in posterum permutare nullatenus queas. . . . Ad postremum temetipsum donando, de tuo sanctitatis honore cum subscriptione degraderis." — Eddius, c. 44.

orthodox successors." [258] Then the excitement rose to its height; the king and archbishop took advantage of it by a proposal to deprive Wilfrid of all that he possessed on either bank of the Humber, leaving him no shelter whatsoever in England. This extreme severity provoked a reaction in his favor, notwithstanding the double force of the royal and archiepiscopal authority. At last it was agreed to leave him the monastery which he had built at Ripon, on condition that he should sign a promise to live there peaceably, not to leave it without the permission of the king, and to give up the exercise of all episcopal functions.[259]

He rejects them, and appeals to Rome.

To this insulting proposal Wilfrid replied with an indignant eloquence, which his companion has well earned our gratitude by preserving for us. "By what right do you dare to abuse my weakness, force me to turn the murderer's sword against myself, and sign my own condemnation? How shall I, whom you accuse of no fault, make myself a scandal in the sight of all who know that for nearly forty years I have borne, though unworthy, the name of bishop? Was not I the first, after the death of those great men sent by St. Gregory, to root out the poisonous seeds sown by Scottish missionaries? Was it not I who converted and brought back the whole nation of the Northumbrians to the true Easter and the Roman tonsure, according to the laws of the Holy See? Was it not I who taught them the sweet harmonies of the primitive Church, in the responses and chants of the two alternate choirs? Was it not I who constituted monastic life among them, after the order of St. Benedict, which no one had before introduced? And after all this, I am now to express with my own hand a sudden condemnation of myself, with no crime whatever upon my conscience! As for this new persecution, by which you try to violate the sacred character with which I am invested, I appeal boldly to the Holy See. I invite any of you who desire my deposition to go there with me to receive the decision. The sages of Rome must learn the causes for which you would degrade me, before I bend to your sole will." At

[258] "Eram in concilio sedens cum abbatibus meis. . . . Respondebam quæ erat illius judicii sententia, scire prius oportet, quam confiteamur, utrum pati ea valemus exsequendo, an aliter. . . . Istius tam augustam districtionis coarctationem nunquam antea a quoquam hominum coactam audivi." — Eddius, c. 50.

[259] "Ut nec in Ultra-Umbrensium regno, nec in Merciorum minimam quidem unius domunculæ portiunculam haberet. Hujus judicii inclementia ab archiepiscopo et rege diffinita." — Eddius, c. 50.

these words the king and the archbishop cried out, "He is guilty by his own acknowledgment. He is worthy to be condemned, if only because he prefers the judgment of Rome to ours — a foreign tribunal to that of his own country." And the king added, "If you desire it, my father, I will compel him to submit by force. At least for once let him accept our sentence." The archbishop said nothing against this proposal; but the other bishops reminded the king of the safe-conduct he had promised — "Let him go home quietly, as we shall all do."[260] Such clumsy violence, addressed to objects of controversy so out of date, may no doubt cause the learned and the victorious of our day to smile; but the spirit manifested in the war made upon Wilfrid by the king and bishops is one which is never out of date. It is impossible not to be struck by the singular analogy between the means thus used and those that have been employed ever since to obtain the triumph of a bad cause. It is ever astonishing to perceive the clear-sightedness with which the Anglo-Saxons, both laymen and ecclesiastics, divined and availed themselves of weapons which seemed reserved for a more advanced state of civilization. Persecution and confiscation are of all ages; but it is a striking proof of the precocious intelligence of the Anglo-Saxons of the seventh century that they thus stigmatized as a crime and anti-national preference for foreigners that instinct and natural law which induces every victim of oppression or violence to seek justice where it is free and independent; and, above all, that they had recourse to that fine invention of a blank signature, a blind assent to the will of another, wrung from those who had been skilfully reduced to the formidable alternative of a Yes or a No. And yet the men who worked by such means were neither impious nor rascally. On the contrary, King Aldfrid ranks among the most enlightened and justly popular princes of his time.

The council breaks up.

[260] "Constanter et intrepida voce elevata. . . . Qua ex causa me compellitis ut tam lugubri calamitatis miseria in memetipsum gladium diræ interfectionis . . . convertam? Nonne si aliquo reatu suspicionis offendiculum faciam? nonne et ego primus post obitum priorum procerum a sancto Gregorio directorum, curavi ut Scoticæ virulenta plantationis germina eradicarem . . . aut quomodo juxta ritum primitivæ Ecclesiæ consono vocis modulamine binis adstantibus choris persultare . . . instruerem? Et nunc contra me quomodo subitam damnationis ipse protulero, extra conscientiam alicujus facinoris, sententiam? Fiducialiter sedem appello apostolicam. . . . Modo utique culpabilis factus a nobis notatus damnetur, quod magis illorum, quam nostrum elegit judicium." — Eddius, c. 44. "Si præcipis, pater, opprimam eum per violentiam." — Guill. Malmesb., 151, b.

The archbishop, and most of the bishops who persecuted Wilfrid, have been and still are, venerated among the saints. The only conclusion to which we can come is, that the instincts of despotism exist always and everywhere in the human heart, and that unless vigorously restrained and curbed by laws and institutions, they break out even in the best, choosing the same forms, laying the same snares, producing the same baseness, inspiring the same violences, perversities, and treacheries.

It was not without difficulty that, after the dispersion of the assembly of Nesterfield, the noble old man escaped from the violence of his enemies, and returned to Mercia to his faithful friend King Ethelred. When Wilfrid had repeated all the threats and insults with which the bishops had loaded him: "And you," said he to the king, "how do you intend to act towards me with regard to the lands and goods you have given me?" "I," replied the honest Ethelred, "I shall certainly do nothing to add to so great a wrong; nor, above all, to injure the monastic life which now flourishes in our great Abbey of St. Mary;[261] I shall on the contrary maintain it as long as I live, and will change nothing of what I have been able to do by the grace of God, until I have sent to Rome ambassadors who will accompany you, and take with them my deeds of gift. I hope they will there do me the justice deserved by a man who desires no other recompense."[262]

King Ethelred of Mercia remains faithful to him.

But while the generous Ethelred thus promised and continued his protection to the persecuted bishop and to the monks of the Burg of St. Peter, who had always so deeply interested him, the King of Northumbria and his adherents redoubled their violence and their anger. Sentence of excommunication was pronounced against the monks of Ripon, because of their fidelity to the cause of their founder, who was at the same time their abbot and bishop. Poor Eddi, who was one of them, relates with indignation how the spoilers, not content with invading the patrimony of Wilfrid, showed and excited every-

Excommunication of his monks at Ripon.

[261] The king thus designated the Abbey of Peterborough, first called Medehampstede, and situated on the borders of Mercia and East Anglia, in the fenny country, where at the same period arose Ely, Croyland, Thorney, &c.

[262] "Majorem non addo perturbationem, destruendo monachorum vitam . . . usquequo prius tecum nuntios proprios vel scripta proprietatis ad Romam præmisero interrogare de his imminentibus causis, quomodo recta desiderans salvus inveniar." — Eddius, c. 45.

where, against his disciples and partisans, the horror which attached to excommunicated persons. Food or drink which had been blessed by a monk or priest of Wilfrid's party was thrown away as if it had been offered to idols; and every cup or other utensil touched by a Wilfridian had to be washed and purified before it could be used by these pretenders to orthodoxy.[263]

The unfortunate excommunicated monks of Ripon, to whom the result of the Assembly of Nesterfield was communicated by the invectives and outrages of which they were the object, consoled themselves as they best could by redoubling their prayers and austerities, and praying night and day, in sorrowful union with all the other Wilfridian monasteries, for their aged and courageous father, who was again about to undertake the long and laborious journey to Rome.[264] Thus Wilfrid again set out, as he had done three times before, to seek enlightenment and justice from the successor of St. Peter. A party of faithful monks accompanied him; but he had no longer the stately train of former days, and it was on foot that he crossed the immense space which divided him from Rome.[265] And how many other changes were there since his first journey, when the young favorite of Queen Eanfleda travelled, with all the eagerness of a youth of twenty, towards the Eternal City! He was now seventy: he was a bishop, and had been so for forty years, but a bishop robbed of his possessions, expelled from his diocese for the third time, misunderstood, persecuted, calumniated, not only by the wicked and tyrants, but by his brethren in the episcopate, by his hierarchical superior, and by his countrymen. The old saints, the old kings, the good and holy queens, who had encouraged his first steps in the apostolic life, had disappeared, and with them how many friends, how many brothers in arms, how many disciples prematurely snatched from his paternal hopes! Not only the delightful illusions of youth, but also the generous persistence of manhood, had been compelled to give place in his soul to the consciousness

Third journey of Wilfrid to Rome.

Contrast with his first.

[263] "In tantum communionem nostram exsecraverunt, ut si quispiam . . . refectionem suam . . . signo crucis Dei benediceret, foras projiciendam ac effundendam, quasi idolo-lythum judicabant: et vasa de quibus nostri vescebantur, lavari prius, quasi sorde polluta jubebant, antequam ab aliis contingerentur." — Eddius, c. 46.

[264] "Die noctuque clamantes, in jejunio et fletu cum omnibus subjectis nostris congregationibus fundentes precem." — Eddius, c. 47.

[265] "Pedestri gressu." — Eddius, c. 47.

of treason and ingratitude and failure — failure a hundred times proved of his efforts, yet a hundred times renewed in behalf of truth, justice, and honor.

Nevertheless he went on and persevered; he held high his white head in the midst of the storm; he was as ardent, eloquent, resolute, and unconquerable in his old age as in the first days of his youth. Nothing in him betrayed fatigue, discouragement, vexation, nor even sadness.

Thus he pressed on, and, after a second stay in Friesland,[266] crossed the countries of Neustria, Austrasia, and Lombardy, all agitated and eaten up, like other nations, by the struggles and passions of this world; all wasted, desolated, and ruled by the wild license of military and material force. He advanced into the midst of them, bearing in his heart and on his countenance the love of law, a law purely spiritual, which swayed souls, which addressed hearts, and which alone could overcome, regulate, and pacify all those new and different races — a law which can never perish, but which from age to age, even to the end of the world, will inspire in its champions the same courage, constancy, and fervor, which burned in the heart of the aged Wilfrid during his long and fatiguing journey. He was going to Rome, but what might be his reception there? Would any recollection still remain of the brave young pilgrim of the time of St. Martin, the last martyr pope? or of the victorious and admired bishop of the time of St. Agathon, the Benedictine pope? Five other popes had occupied the chair of St. Peter since Agathon.[267] During this long interval, no mark of sympathy, no aid had come from Rome to Wilfrid, in all his struggles and sufferings for the cause which he loved to regard as that of the Roman Church and its law, authority, and discipline. And the apostolic throne at this moment was occupied by John VI., a Greek, countryman of that Theodore who had cost Wilfrid so many contradictions and trials.

Pope John VI.

It was to this pontiff that he and his companion presented, on their knees, their memorial, declaring that they came to accuse no one, but to defend themselves

[266] It is only at this period of Wilfrid's life that I can place his residence in Friesland with his pupil Willibrord, whose successor, Acca, entertained Bede, and of whom the latter speaks in his *Ecclesiastical History*, book iii. chap. 3.

[267] Leo II., Benedict II., John IV., Conon, Sergius I. From a passage of Wilfrid's speech at Nesterfield, it appears that Popes Benedict II. and Sergius had interposed in his favor, but no trace of their acts on the subject has been preserved.

against accusations, by flying to the foot of his glorious see as to the bosom of a mother, and submitting themselves beforehand to all that his authority might prescribe. Accusers could not have been wanting, for there soon arrived envoys from the holy Archbishop Berchtwald, with a written denunciation of Wilfrid.[268] The Pope inquired into the matter in a council at which many bishops and all the Roman clergy were present. Eddi, who must have accompanied his bishop to Rome this time also, has preserved the details in full. Wilfrid perceived the necessity of being conciliatory and moderate in his pretensions, and restrained his ambition within the bounds of a humble prayer. He read before the assembly a paper, in which he recalled to its recollection the decrees given in his favor by Popes Agathon, Benedict, and Sergius, and demanded the execution of them in his own name and in that of the monks who had accompanied him to Rome. He then entreated the Pope to recommend King Ethelred to guarantee to him, against all covetousness or enmity, the monasteries and domains which he held from the Mercian kings for the redemption of their souls. Finally, in case the complete execution of the Pontifical decrees, which had ordained his reinstatement in his bishopric and in all his patrimony, should appear too hard to the King of Northumbria, the generous old man consented to give up his diocese of York, with all the monasteries depending on it, to be disposed of at the Pope's pleasure, except his two beloved foundations of Ripon and Hexham, which he asked to be allowed to retain, with all their possessions. In another sitting the messengers of Berchtwald were heard in their turn. They declared, as their chief accusation, that Bishop Wilfrid, in full council at Nesterfield, had cast contempt upon the decrees of the Archbishop of Canterbury, whom the Holy See had placed at the head of all the churches of Great Britain. Then Wilfrid rose, and, with all the authority he derived from his venerable age, related what had really occurred. His tale gained the sympathies of the whole assembly; and the bishops, while showing the most amiable aspect to the friends of Wilfrid, began to talk Greek among themselves, so as not to be understood by the English.[269] They then addressed

[268] "Neminem per invidiam accusandum advenimus. . . . Interim legati a sancto archiepiscopo Berchtvaldo cum suis scriptis accusationis directis . . . pervenerunt." — Eddius, c. 47.

[269] "Stans episcopus noster, venerabili senio confectus, cum fratribus suis venerabilibus in conspectu totius congregationis. . . . Tunc inter se græcizantes et subridentes nos . . . loqui cœperunt."

the Canterbury envoys as follows: "You know, dear brethren, that those who do not prove their chief accusation ought not to be allowed to prove the rest; however, to do honor to the archbishop-legate, and to this holy bishop Wilfrid, we will examine the matter fundamentally in all its details."

The council holds seventy sittings. 703-704.

And, in fact, they held, during four months, seventy sittings. This was certainly giving a scrupulous, and, it may be said, amazing attention to a cause which may have appeared to the Italian bishops as but of secondary and far-off interest; and nothing better proves the conscientious solicitude brought by the Church of Rome to bear on the judgment of all causes submitted to her, as well as her unquestionable authority. Wilfrid appeared before his judges almost daily, and underwent a minute examination.[270] In these debates the aged orator displayed all the vigor and energy of his youth. He overturned by a word the most unforeseen objections of his accusers; with a presence of mind, which God and the truth alone could have inspired, he swept away their arguments like spiders' webs: it was a true torrent of eloquence, as says a monastic historian who, many centuries after, was still proud of the effect produced by the words of the old Saxon bishop upon the astonished Romans.[271] Nothing contributed more to the ultimate triumph of Wilfrid than the discovery, made in studying the precedents of the case, of his presence at the council held against the Monothelites twenty-four years before.[272] In the course of reading the acts of the former council, which was done by order of the Pope, in presence not only of the clergy but also of the nobles and people of Rome, when they came to a passage which proved the presence of Wilfrid, then as now accused, but triumphantly acquitted, and admitted to bear witness to the faith of the other bishops of Great Britain, the assembly was confounded, the reader stopped short, and each man asked himself who this other Wilfrid was.[273] Then Boniface, an old

[270] "Per quatuor menses et septuaginta conciliabula sanctissimæ sedis, de fornace ignis . . . purificatus evasit. Pene quotidie in conflictu diligenter examinatus." — Eddius, c. 50, 52.

[271] "Mirantibus Romanis . . . illius eloquentiam, dum quicquid accusationum objecissent, ille nullo excogitato responso, sed Dei et veritatis fultus auxilio, quasi casses aranearum primo motu labiorum discuteret et subrueret . . . venerandum senem . . . torrentem eloquentiæ." — Guill. Malmesb., f. 152.

[272] See page 388.

[273] "Cum ergo causa exigente synodus eadem coram nobilibus et frequentia populi jubente apostolico diebus aliquot legeretur, ventum est ad locum

counsellor of the Pope, who had lived in the time of Agathon, declared that the Wilfrid who was thus again brought to their bar was assuredly the same Wilfrid whom Pope Agathon had formerly acquitted and placed by his side as a man of irreproachable faith and life. When this was understood, the Pope and all the others declared that a man who had been forty years a bishop, instead of being persecuted in this manner, ought to be sent back with honor to his own country; and the sentence of absolution was unanimously pronounced.

Wilfrid is acquitted.

The Pope summed up and terminated the entire discussion in a letter to the two Kings of Northumbria and Mercia. After having reminded them of the sentence given by Pope Agathon, and described the regularity of the new trial over which he had himself presided, he enjoined Archbishop Berchtwald to convoke a council along with Bishop Wilfrid, to summon Bishops Bosa and John (who occupied the usurped sees of York and Hexham), and after having heard them, to end the differences between them, if he could; if not, to send them to the Holy See to be tried by a more numerous council, under pain, for the recalcitrants, of being deposed and rejected by all bishops and by all the faithful. "Let your royal and Christian majesties," said the Pope in conclusion, "for the fear of God, and for love of that peace which our Lord left to His disciples, lend us your help and assistance, that those matters into which, by the inspiration of God, we have fully examined, may have their due effect; and may the recompense of so religious a work avail you in heaven, when, after a prosperous reign on earth, you enter among the happy company of the eternal kingdom." [274]

Wilfrid thus issued from what his friend calls the furnace in which God completed his purification. He and his followers thought themselves the victors; and although the sentence against his adversaries was neither severe nor definite, the sequel showed clearly that it was all the state of the English mind could endure. It was even Wilfrid's desire, instead of availing himself of the Pope's

Wilfrid returns to England. 705.

ubi scriptum erut *Wilfridus Deo amabilis*, etc. Quod ubi lectum est, stupor adprehendit audientes: et silente lectore, cœperunt alterutrum requirere quis esset ille Wilfridus episcopus." — Bede, v. 20.

[274] "Omnia quæque in scriptis, vel anterioribus, vel modernis, partes detulerunt, vel hic inveniri potuerunt, vel a partibus verbaliter dicta sunt, subtiliter inquisita, ad cognitionem nostram perducta sunt. . . . Vestra proinde Christiana et regalis Sublimitas . . . subventum faciat atque concursum."

decision, to remain in Rome and end his days in penitence. He obeyed, however, when the Pope and council constrained him to set out, forbidding him, at the same time, to continue the cold baths which he had every night imposed upon himself as a mortification; and after visiting for the last time all the sanctuaries which were so dear to him, he left Rome, carrying with him a new provision of relics and of rich sacerdotal vestments for the Saxon churches.

He made the return journey not on foot, but on horseback; which, however, was too much for his old age; and this new journey through Italy, the Alps, and France, added to his many travels, affected him so much, that he fell dangerously ill before reaching his destination. After this he had to be carried in a litter, and arrived, apparently dying, at Meaux. There he lay for four days and nights, his eyes closed, neither speaking nor eating, and in a state of apparent unconsciousness; his breathing alone showed that he still lived. On the fifth day he raised himself in his bed, and seeing round him a crowd of monks, who chanted the psalms, weeping, he said, "Where is my priest Acca?"[275] This was a monk of Lindisfarne, of great learning and fervor, and an excellent musician, who, though educated by one of the rivals of Wilfrid, the intruding bishop of York, had left his first master to follow Wilfrid for love of Roman orthodoxy, and had accompanied him to Rome on this last and laborious journey.[276] Seeing his master thus revived, Acca fell on his knees with all present to thank God. Then they talked together with holy awe of the last judgment. On which Wilfrid, having sent away all the rest of his attendants, said to Acca, "I have just had a vision which I will only confide to you, and of which I forbid you to speak until I know the will of God regarding it. A being clothed in white has appeared to me; he told me

He falls sick at Meaux.

Acca.

An addition of four years of life is granted to the prayers of his monks.

[275] "Feretro portatus . . . tantum halitus et calida membra vivum demonstrabant . . . resedit, apertisque oculis vidit circa se choros psaltentium simul et flentium fratrum. . . . Ubi est Acca presbyter?" — Eddius, c. 53; Bede, v. 29.

[276] "Doctissimus . . . castissimus . . . in ecclesiasticæ institutionis regulis . . . solertissimus, cantator peritissimus . . . deinde ad Wilfridum episcopum spe melioris propositi adveniens . . . cum quo etiam Romam veniens, multa illic quæ in patria nequiverat, Ecclesiæ sanctæ institutis utilia didicit." — Bede, v. 20. Bede dedicated his *Hexameron* to Acca, who first became Abbot and then Bishop of Hexham after Wilfrid, and died only in 740. He has a place among the saints, and his miracles are told among those of Wilfrid. — *Act. SS. O. S. B.*, vol. iii. p. 204–220.

that he was the Archangel Michael, sent to tell me that God had spared my life in answer to the prayers and tears of my brethren and my children, as well as to the intervention of the Holy Virgin His Mother.[277] He added that I should yet live several years, and should die in my own country, and in peace, after having regained the greater part of that which has been taken from me." And in fact he did recover, and pursued his journey without any further hinderance.

He is reconciled to Archbishop Berchtwald.

As soon as he landed in England, he caused his return to be announced to the Archbishop of Canterbury, who, already informed by his envoys of Wilfrid's success at Rome, yielded to apostolic authority, was sincerely reconciled to him, and promised to pronounce the revocation of the decrees of the Assembly of Nesterfield. They had a friendly interview near London, in presence of a multitude of abbots from various monasteries of Wilfrid's party.[278] From London Wilfrid went to Mercia, but not to find his friend Ethelred on the throne. The preceding year, in the very midst of Wilfrid's labors at Rome, his old friend had made up his mind to exchange the cares of royalty for the peace of the cloister, and had become a monk at Bardeney, in the monastery where his wife, Ostryda of Northumbria, assassinated seven years before by the Mercian lords, had, not without difficulty, succeeded in placing the relics of her uncle, the holy King Oswald.[279]

704.

He visits his faithful friend Ethelred, now a monk at Bardeney.

675-704.

Ethelred, who had as yet no saint in his own family, thus found a patron both powerful and popular in England, and even elsewhere,[280] in the family of his wife; and it was beside the relics of this venerated uncle that he decided to end his life after a reign of nearly thirty-one years. There Wilfrid

[277] "Visio mihi modo tremenda apparuit. . . . Adstitit mihi quidam . . . dicens se Michaelem archangelum." — Bede, v. 19. It was to commemorate this intercession of the Mother of God that Wilfrid on his return to Hexham caused the Church of St. Mary to be erected, of which some remains may be seen near the great church of the ancient priory; it was of a form quite new in England: "Ecclesiam construxerat opere rotundo, quam quatuor porticus, quatuor respicientes mundi climata, ambiebant." — Ælredus, *De Sanctis Ecclesiæ Hagulstadensis*, c. 5.

[278] "Apostolica auctoritate coactus, et per nuntios suos directis scriptis territus et tremebundus, pacifice et sine simulatione (sicut rei eventus probavit) sancto pontifici nostro reconciliatus est." — Eddius, c. 54.

[279] See above, p. 299, the resistance of the Mercian monks to the religious practices of the Northumbrian king.

[280] In Friesland and Ireland. — Bede, iii. 13.

sought him; and finding his old friend, his generous host, and faithful protector, clad in the same monastic habit as himself, and weeping for joy at his return, Wilfrid threw himself into his arms; and the two clapsed each other in this embrace in one of those moments of perfect union and sympathy which God sometimes grants to two generous hearts which have together struggled and suffered in His cause.[281]

The bishop then showed the king the Pope's letter addressed to him, which contained the apostolic judgment, with the bulls and seals all in order. Ethelred, having read it, cried, "I will neither infringe it nor allow it to be infringed in the smallest particular while I live; I will support it with all my power." He immediately sent for his nephew, who had suceeeded him on the Mercian throne, told him of the Pope's decision, and conjured him to execute it fully in everything connected with the Wilfridian monasteries in their kingdom. The new king promised willingly, with all the eagerness of a man already inclined to that monastic life which he afterwards embraced in his own person.

King Aldfrid refuses to recognize the judgment of the Holy See.

But Wilfrid was not at the end of his troubles. Mercia had always been to him a friendly and hospitable country. It was a different matter in Northumbria. Ethelred advised him to send to Aldfrid two monks whom the king favored, an abbot and the professor of theology at Ripon, to inquire whether he would receive Bishop Wilfrid with the verdict given at Rome. The king at first made an evasive auswer, but on his second interview with these ambassadors, by the advice of his counsellors, he refused. "Dear and venerable brothers," he said to them, "ask what you will for yourselves, and I will give it you willingly; but do not ask anything in behalf of your master Wilfrid; he was judged in the first place by my predecessors in concert with Archbishop Theodore and their counsellors, and afterwards by myself, with the concurrence of another archbishop sent by the Holy See, and almost all the bishops of the country; so long as I live I will change nothing out of regard to what you call a mandate of the Holy See."[282] This speech sounds

[281] "Ad Ethelredum . . . semper fidelissimum amicum, nimirum pro nimio gaudio lachrymantem. . . . Mitissime eum salutavit, osculantes et amplexantes se invicem; honorifice ab amico more suo susceptus erat." — Eddius, c. 54. Cf. Bede, v. 19.

[282] "Sicut consiliarii ejus persuaserunt. . . . O fratres, mihi ambo ven-

like an anticipation of the famous *Nolumus leges Anglicæ mutare* of the English barons in the days of the Plantagenets.

Death of King Aldfrid. 705.

"As long as I live," said King Aldfrid; but he had not long to live. He soon after fell dangerously ill, and believed himself smitten by God, and punished for his contempt of apostolic authority. He openly confessed his sin against Wilfrid, expressed his desire to receive a visit from him before his death, and vowed, if he recovered, to conform to the desires of the bishop and the sentence of the Pope. "If it be the will of God," said he, "that I should die, I command my successor, whosoever he may be, in the name of the Lord, for the repose of my soul and his own, to make peace with Wilfrid."[283] Many witnesses heard these words, and chief among them his sister, Princess Elfleda, Abbess of Whitby, who, since the death of her other brother Egfrid, twenty years before, had been completely won to the interests of Wilfrid.[284] Soon afterwards Aldfrid lost the power of speech, and died. He left none but young children, and the Northumbrian crown descended to a prince named Eadwulf. Wilfrid, who had already returned to Ripon, and who, it is not known why, counted on the new king's favor, was preparing to go to him, when Eadwulf, by the advice of his counsellors, and perhaps of the Witena-Gemot, which had misled Aldfrid, gave him to understand that if he did not leave Northumbria within six days, all his followers who could be seized should be put to death.[285]

His successor expels Wilfrid within six days.

He is himself dethroned, and replaced by Osred, son of Aldfrid.

But the prosperous days of Northumbria were over, and civil wars were about to destroy the order and prosperity which had reigned there since the establishment of national independence during the great reign of Oswy. Bernicia revolted in the name of the eldest son of Aldfrid. This was a child of eight

crabiles . . . quia quod ante prædecessores mei reges et archiepiscopus cum consiliariis suis censuerunt, et quod postea nos cum archiepiscopo ab apostolica sede emisso . . . judicavimus: hoc, inquam, quamdiu vixero, propter apostolicæ sedis (ut dicitis) scripta, nunquam volo mutare." — Eddius, c. 55.

[283] "Præcipio in nomine Domini, quicumque mihi in regnum successerit, ut cum Wilfrido episcopo pro remedio animæ meæ et suæ pacem et concordiam ineat." — Eddius, c. 56.

[284] "Ælfleda abbatissa et sapientissima virgo, quæ est vere filia regis." — *Ibid.*

[285] "Persuasus a consiliariis suis. . . . Per salutem meam juro, nisi de regno meo in spatio sex dierum discesserit, de sodalibus ejus quoscumque invenero, morte peribunt." — Eddius, c. 56.

years old, named Osred, who was already considered as the adopted son of Wilfrid.[286] By means of some mysterious influence, the nature of which is unknown, the aged exile Wilfrid, who had been expelled from the country for fourteen years, and was to all appearance forgotten, betrayed, and set aside, became all at once the master of the situation, and the arbiter of events.

He soon acquired a more powerful protector than the young sovereign in the person of an ealderman named Bertfrid, who was considered the most powerful noble in the kingdom, and who was at the head of Osred's party. King Eadwulf marched against the insurgents, and obliged them to retreat to the fortress of Bamborough, capital of the first Northumbrian kings, near the holy isle of Lindisfarne. Bertfrid and his men, shut up in the narrow enclosure of this fortified rock, were reduced to the last extremity, and not knowing what saint to invoke, they made a vow that, if God would deliver them, and give to their young prince the throne of his father, they would fulfil exactly the judgment of the Holy See regarding their aged bishop.[287] Scarcely had this vow been solemnly taken by the besieged when a change took place in the minds of their assailants. A number of Eadwulf's followers forsook him and came to an understanding with Bertfrid, who made a sally at the head of his garrison, by which Eadwulf was vanquished, dethroned, and himself exiled, after a short reign of two months over the kingdom from which he had brutally expelled the venerable bishop.

National assembly on the banks of the Nid.

As soon as the royal child was placed on the throne, the Archbishop of Canterbury made his appearance, perceiving that the time was come for executing the apostolic judgment, and definitely settling Wilfrid's affairs in a general assembly. This was held in the open air on the banks of the Nid, a river which flows a little to the south of the fertile plain in which Wilfrid's Abbey of Ripon was situated. The council was composed of the three bishops who shared among them the diocese of Wilfrid, and of all the abbots and nobles of Northum-

[286] "Regnavit puer regius . . . et sancto pontifici nostro filius adoptivus factus est."

[287] "Undique circumcincti hostili manu in angustiaque rupis lapideæ mansimus; inito consilio inter nos, si Deus nostro regali puero regnum patris cui concessisset, quæ mandavit sancta apostolica auctoritas de sancto Wilfrido episcopo adimplere, Deo spopondimus." — Eddius, c. 57.

bria; it was presided over by the archbishop, who had the king by his side. Wilfrid too was present, and met there his two powerful adherents, Bertfrid and the Abbess Elfleda. This noble and sainted princess, sister of the three last kings of Northumbria, and sister-in-law of two neighboring kings, those of East Anglia and Mercia, was yet more influential on account of her virtues than of her birth. All the Northumbrians regarded her as the consoler and best counsellor of the kingdom. The archbishop opened the sitting with these words, "Let us pray the Holy Spirit to send peace and concord into all our hearts. The blessed Wilfrid and myself have brought you the letter which the Holy See has addressed to me by his hands, and which shall now be read to you."[288] He then read the pontifical decrees delivered in the different councils at Rome. A dead silence followed; on which Bertfrid, who was universally recognized as the first personage in the kingdom after the king, said, "We do not understand Latin, and we beg that you will translate to us the apostolic message."[289] The archbishop undertook the necessary translation, and made all understand that the Pope ordered the bishops to restore to Wilfrid his churches, or that all parties should go to Rome to be judged there, under pain of excommunication and deposition to all opposers, lay or ecclesiastical, even including the king himself.[290] Nevertheless the three bishops[291] (all of whom have places among saints) did not hesitate to combat this decision, appealing to the decrees made by King Egfrid and Archbishop Theodore, and to those of the Assembly of Nesterfield, under Aldfrid. At this point the holy Abbess Elfleda interposed: in a voice which all listened to as an utterance from heaven, she described the last illness and agony of the king her brother, and how he had vowed to God and St. Peter to accomplish all the decrees he had before rejected. "This," she said, "is the last will of Aldfrid the king; I attest the truth of it before Christ."

Abbess Elfleda and Count Bertfrid intervene in favor of Wilfrid.

[288] "Rex cum totius regni sui principibus et tres episcopi ejus cum abbatibus, nec non et beata Eanfleda abbatissa semper totius provinciæ consolatrix, optimaque consiliatrix . . . sedentibus in loco synodali. . . . Habemus, enim ego et beatus Wilfridus episcopus, scripta apostolica."—Eddius, c. 57.

[289] "Nos qui interpretatione indigemus."

[290] "Si quis contemnens . . . sciat se, si rex sit aut laicus, a corpore et sanguine Christi excommunicatum: si vero episcopus aut presbyter . . . ab omni gradu ecclesiastico degradari."

[291] These three bishops were, Bosa of York, John of Hexham, and Eadfrid of Lindisfarne, bishop since 698.

Bertfrid afterwards spoke in the name of the king, commencing thus: "The desire of the king and nobles is, in all things, to obey the commandment of the Holy See and of King Aldfrid."[292] He then related the history of the siege of Bamborough, and the vow which bound the consciences of the victors.

General reconciliation.

Nevertheless the three bishops would not yield; they retired from the assembly to confer among themselves, and with Archbishop Berchtwald, but above all with the sagacious Elfleda. Thanks to her, and thanks also to the extreme moderation of Wilfrid, who required only the minimum of the conditions imposed at Rome, all ended in a general reconciliation. It was decreed that there should be perpetual peace and alliance between the Northumbrian bishops, the king, and the thanes on one side, and Bishop Wilfrid on the other; but that Wilfrid should content himself with his two best monasteries, and the large possessions attached to them — that is, with Ripon, where no new bishopric had been erected, and Hexham, into the see of which he entered; its late titular holder, John of Beverley, being, by a fresh concession made for the sake of peace, removed to York.[293]

As soon as the treaty was concluded, the five bishops embraced, and received the holy communion together. The assembly dispersed amidst general rejoicing, which soon spread all over Northumbria. The most inveterate enemies of Wilfrid were glad of a peace which gave repose to their consciences. But the cloisters and arches of the Wilfridian monasteries echoed with the voice of a more enthusiastic gladness, receiving back again multitudes of disciples and monks, some of whom had been dispersed by persecution and exile, some enslaved by detested masters, who hastened with delight to find themselves once more under the sway of a father whom all the world henceforth considered as a saint, and who had always possessed the faculty of inspiring a passionate affection in his children.[294]

[292] "Episcopi vero resistentes . . . beatissima Elfleda abbatissima benedicto suo ore dicebat: Vere in Christo dico testamentum Aldfridi regis. Præfatus regis princeps, respondens dixit: Hæc est voluntas regis et principum ejus."

[293] It is not known what the arrangement was in respect to Bosa, the intruding Bishop of York, who died most opportunely about this time. — Bede, v. 3. As to the bishopric of Lindisfarne, it remained in the hands of the new titular, Bishop Eadfrid.

[294] "Reddentes ei duo optima cænobia . . . cum omnibus redditibus suis. . . . Et hæc est maxima beatitudo ex utraque parte, tam illorum . . . quam

This was the last act of Wilfrid's public life. It began in that famous assembly where the Celtic Church was bound by his youthful and vigorous influence to the feet of Roman tradition — an assembly which partook at once of the character of a council and a parliament, presided over by King Oswy, in presence of the Abbess St. Hilda, and held at her monastery. He ended his career, after forty years of unwearied struggles, in another assembly of the same kind, held in presence of the grandson of Oswy, and influenced in the highest degree by another Abbess of Whitby, the gentle Elfleda, who was, like Hilda, a saint and a princess of that Northumbrian dynasty with the destinies of which those of Wilfrid were so intimately connected.

Influence of the Anglo-Saxon princesses over the destiny of Wilfrid.

It is impossible not to be struck by the great and singular influence exercised over the destiny of Wilfrid by women, or, to speak more correctly, by the Anglo-Saxon princesses whose contemporary he was. It is a peculiarity found in the history of no other saint, and which few historic personages manifest to the same degree. Many, such as St. Paulinus, St. Jerome, St. Augustin, St. Francis d'Assisi, St. François de Sales, St. Jean de la Croix, have owed to their wives, their mothers, their sisters, and their spiritual friends, a portion of their glory and some of their best inspirations; but we know none whose life has been so completely transformed or modified by the affection or the hatred of women. He was protected in his youth and seconded in his monastic vocation by the granddaughter of St. Clotilda, who then shared the throne of Northumbria; and it was by encouraging another queen of that country, St. Etheldreda, to change her married life for that of the cloister, that he drew upon himself his first misfortune. A third Queen of Northumbria, whom he had indirectly aided to take the place of his spiritual daughter, Etheldreda, persecuted him for two years with a bitterness which she communicated to her sister the Queen of Wessex, and her sister-in-law the Queen of Mercia; and the three together uniting their efforts, used their influence with the kings their husbands to aggravate the distresses of the proscribed bishop, until the time when the Queen of the pagan Saxons of the South, herself a Christian, secured him an asylum, and offered him a nation to convert.

nostrorum, qui per diversa exsilia dispersi, tristes sub alienis dominis servi eramus, nunc enim . . . capite charissimo . . . gaudentes et exultantes in benedictione vivimus."

Those princesses who had forsaken the life of the world to govern great monastic communities were not less mingled with his stormy career. The abbess-queen of Ely, St. Etheldreda, continued to follow his counsels in the cloister as on the throne. St. Hilda, the Abbess of Whitby, pursued him with an enmity as constant as the affection of her niece; while St. Ebba, the Abbess of Coldingham, interfered in his favor, and delivered him from a painful captivity. It has just been seen how St. Elfleda, the sister and daughter of the four Northumbrian kings under whom he had lived, after inheriting the crosier of St. Hilda, came forward as the advocate and protectress of the prelate, contributing more than any other to his last triumph. Finally, he himself, when more than seventy years old, and on his death-bed, left his vestments to her whom he called "his abbess," to Cyndreda, who owes her place in the history of the Church and the history of souls to this latest homage of the aged champion of Rome and of spiritual independence.

CHAPTER VI.

THE LAST YEARS OF WILFRID. — 705–709.

Wilfrid's illness assembles all the abbots of his monasteries about him. — He divides his treasures: his farewell to the monks of Ripon. — His last journey to Mercia. — He consecrates the Church of Evesham monastery. — Bishop Egwin of Worcester and the smiths. — Vision of the three virgins in the forest. — Simon de Montfort, creator of the House of Commons, buried at Evesham. — Wilfrid narrates all his life to his successor Tatbert. — His death. — His funeral at Ripon. — His worship and his miracles. — He appears with St. Cuthbert to relieve Hexham against the Scots: the Christian Dioscuri. — His banner appears at the battle of the Standard. — Services which he rendered to the monastic order, to the Church of England, to the universal Church, to the English nation. (Note on the Culdees of York.) — He begins that long succession of pontiff-confessors which has no rival out of the Church of England. — His character.

Wilfrid's illness gathers all his abbots

WILFRID passed the four last years of his life in peace at his Monastery of Hexham, which had, though not by his will, become a cathedral and the

seat of a diocese, the last of those of which he had been successively bishop.[295] As he travelled on one occasion from Hexham to Ripon, he was attacked by a sudden faint, even more serious than that which seized him at Meaux. He was carried into a house on the roadside, and there ensued a scene which proves the love with which he was regarded, and how it was at once a bishop, a king, and a father whom his great and powerful monastic family was about to lose. At the first report of his illness all the abbots of his numerous monasteries, and even the anchorites who had gone out from his foundations, hurried to Hexham. Distance was no obstacle to them; they travelled day and night, questioning every passer-by, and continuing their course with hastened steps or saddened hearts according as the answer they received told them that their father was yet living, or that they would arrive too late. It was the desire of all to see once again their master and beloved father, and to join their prayers and tears to those of the community, that he might be permitted to regain consciousness, and to put his succession in order by dividing his property, and naming the future superiors of all his houses;[296] for his influence was everywhere so great that the monks had given up their right to elect their own chiefs, which was, however, one of the constitutional principles of the Benedictine order. Their prayers were heard. Wilfrid recovered; but considering himself to have been thus warned that the time fixed by the archangel in his vision at Meaux would soon expire, he occupied himself in putting all his affairs in order, in preparation for his death. When he arrived at Ripon, he had the door of his treasury opened by the official who kept the keys, in presence of the two abbots of his monasteries in Mercia, and of eight of the most devout monks. It is curious to note the inexperience of the persecutors and spoilers of those remote times, which is shown by the fact that, after his two periods of exile, his condemnations, and his long absence, this treasury, left in the keeping of a few monks and often of unfriendly superiors, in the midst of a country whose government had been for

around his couch.

He proceeds to the distribution of his treasure.

[295] York in 665, Lindisfarne 678, Lichfield 681, and Hexham in 705.

[296] "Cum intimo cordis mœrore . . . indesinenter diu noctuque canentes et deprecantes . . . omnes abbates ejus de suis locis et anachoretæ concito cursu pergentes . . . secundum traditiones hominum de morte ejus hæsitantes. . . . Ne nos quasi orbatos sine abbatibus relinqueret . . . ut et omnem vitam nostram in diversis locis secundum suum desiderium sub præpositis a se electis constitueret." — Eddius, c. 58.

thirty years at constant war with Wilfrid, still contained treasure enough to make up four large portions of gold, silver, and precious stones. "My dearest brothers," said Wilfrid to the ten witnesses of his last wishes, "I have thought for some time of returning yet once more to that see of Peter from which I received justice and freedom, to end my life there. I shall take with me the chief of these four portions for an offering to the basilicas of Santa Maria Maggiore and St. Paul the Apostle. But if, as often happens to the old, I should die before accomplishing my wishes, I enjoin you, my faithful friends, to send these gifts to the churches I mention. Of the other three parts, you must divide one among the poor of my people for the salvation of my soul. Another shall be for the use of the two future abbots of Hexham and Ripon, and will enable them to conciliate the king and the bishops by gifts; and the last is for those who shared with me the long fatigues of exile, and to whom I cannot leave lands, that they may still have the means of living after my death." Here he stopped, overcome perhaps by emotion or fatigue; but after a while he resumed: "Remember that I appoint the priest Tatbert, my cousin, who up to this day has never left me, to be prior of the Monastery of Ripon, to take my place while I live, and to succeed me when I die. I do all this that the Archangel Michael may find me ready when my hour arrives; and I do not think it is far off." [297]

His farewell to the monks of Ripon.

When he had finished these arrangements, he caused the bell to be rung to summon his monastic family around him. When all the monks were assembled in the chapter-house, he entered, and sat down in the midst of them. "Your prior Celin," he said, "has for a long time labored in all the duties of monastic life; I can no longer refuse him permission to return to the life of solitude and contemplation for which he thirsts. I exhort you to preserve scrupulously the regularity of your life until I return and bring you the person I judge worthy to be your superior. But if it please God that I do not return, take him who shall be pointed out to you by these my fellow-travellers: make him your abbot, and pay him the obedience

[297] "Gazophylacium aperire clavicularío præcepit. . . . Alteram partem inter se dividant, ut cum muneribus regis et episcoporum amicitiam impetrare potuerint. Tertiam vero partem iis qui mecum longa exsilia perpessi laboraverunt. . . . Hæc statuta dico ut me Michael archangelus visitans paratum inveniat." — Eddius, c. 59.

you have promised to God and to me." At these words, in which they foreboded a last farewell, all the monks fell on their knees weeping, and, bending their heads to the earth, promised to obey him. While they thus remained prostrate, Wilfrid blessed them, recommended them from the bottom of his tender heart to God, and departed, to see them no more.[298]

His last journey in Mercia.

The new King of Mercia, Ceonred, nephew of his old friend Ethelred, had invited him to visit and confer with him at once as to the state of the Mercian monasteries and of his own soul; for, drawn by the example of his uncle towards monastic life, he wished to consult Wilfrid before joining that uncle in the cloister. The aged saint obeyed this call, and, crossing the Humber for the last time, entered Mercia, where he visited one after another all the monasteries he had founded or adopted in that great kingdom, making everywhere arrangements similar to those he had made at Ripon to further the well-being and security of his different communities.[299] He even went in this last effort of his old age to a district in which he had founded no monastic houses, into the country of the Wicciens, on the borders of the Welsh Celts and Western Saxons, to consecrate a Benedictine church just built at Evesham by the young King of the Mercians and Bishop Egwin.

Consecration of the Monastery of Evesham, founded by Egwin, Bishop of Worcester. 689.

The name of Egwin is worthy of a moment's pause in our narrative. He was a scion of the reigning dynasty of Mercia, and had been, in his youth, made bishop of one of the new bishoprics created by Theodore, at Worcester; but the post was a difficult one, and, notwithstanding his unwearied self-devotion, he did not succeed in purifying or regulating the morals of his flock. They would neither obey nor even listen to him. One day

[298] "Pulsato signo tota familia Hryporum simul in unum congregata est . . . geniculantes lacrymantesque, inclinato capite in terram . . . pronique orantes . . . et ab eo die ultra faciem ejus simul non viderunt." — Eddius, c. 50.

[299] "Abbates suos omnes in adventu suo gaudentes invenit . . . et unicuique eorum secundum suam mensuram, aut cum terris vitam monachorum suorum augmentavit, aut cum pecunia corda eorum lætificavit." — Eddius, c. 61. To the various monasteries, the foundation of which by Wilfrid we have described, and the names of which are known, such as Hexham, Ripon, Peterborough, Ely, and Selsey, we ought to add Stamford, in the part of Mercia conquered by the Northumbrians, which was given to him on his first return from Rome to England, by his friend the young King Alchfrid.

when he had preached against the habitual vices of the population, in a great forge situated in the depths of a wood, the smiths, far from ceasing their work, struck as hard as possible with their hammers on the anvils, so as to deafen him and drive him away.[300] His zeal for the strict observance of the marriage vow among these new Christians had above all irritated them against him.

To put an end to the persecutions and calumnies with which he was loaded, he determined to go, following Wilfrid's example, to justify himself before the Holy See. Though he did not admit the truth of any of the accusations brought against him, he yet remembered with confusion certain sins of his youth, and to expiate them determined to undertake this long journey with his feet loaded with iron chains, and, thus voluntarily fettered, entered Rome, where Pope Constantine did him entire justice.[301] Two years after his first pilgrimage he went again to Rome, from whence he brought back the Papal charter for the monasteries which a singular circumstance had determined him to build in a forest given him by King Ethelred. A swineherd, pushing his way through the tufted thickets of this wood, once came to a clearing where he saw three lovely girls seated, whose beauty appeared to him more brilliant than the sun; the one in the middle held a book, and all three were singing celestial harmonies. Modern learning

Vision of the three virgins in the forest.

[300] "Cum conflandi ferrum locus esset aptissimus, et fabris et ferri excussoribus maxime repleretur, gens incredula incudes malleis ferreis tanto strepitu continuo percutiebat, ut beati viri sermo non audiretur. . . . Præ concussione, immo confusione malleorum et incudum adhuc tinniebant ambæ aures ejus, ac si percutientes incudes eum suquerentur." — *Act. SS. O. S. B.*, t. iii. p. 322, and *Chronic. Abbatiæ de Evesham*, London, 1863, p. 26. The legend written in the eleventh century by a Prior of Evesham adds that the forge and its inhabitants were swallowed up by an earthquake, and that since then no one has been able to exercise the trade of a smith on the site of the *castrum* thus punished, a story which suggests the following verse of Ovid —

"Pœna potest demi, culpa perennis erit;"

changing it thus: —

Culpa potest demi, pœna perennis erit.
Epist. ex Ponto, i. 64.

[301] "Peccatorum juvenilium quondam conscium." — Guill. Malmesb., *De Pontif. Angl.*, lib. iv. p. 284. "Pedes suos vinculis ferreis astrinxit quæ clave poterant firmari ac reserari." — *Chron. Evesh.*, p. 6. The legend adds that the key of these fetters, which he had dropped into the Avon, a river of his own country, was found at Rome, in a salmon which had come up the Tiber. This miracle greatly contributed to the popular renown of St. Egwin among the English of the middle ages, who, like their descendants, were great salmon-fishers.

has supposed the locality of this vision to have been a place consecrated by Saxon superstition to the worship of the three Goddess Mothers, a worship which had struck deep root among the rural population of all the northern provinces of the Roman Empire, and which resisted the anathemas of the Councils longer than most other vestiges of idolatry.[302]

Egwin, when he was informed by the herdsman, went to pray humbly on the place of the vision. When his prayer was ended, he in turn saw the three virgins, one of whom, taller and infinitely more beautiful than the others, held, besides her book, a cross, with which she blessed him before she disappeared.[303] He recognized the Mother of the Saviour, and immediately resolved to build a monastery in her honor in that hitherto inaccessible spot. The new king of the country, godson and pupil of Egwin, seconded his master in this design, and gave him eighty-four *manses* or pieces of ground in the neighborhood of the forest.

Consecration of the Monastery of Evesham.

On the very site of the great forge where the workmen had deafened Egwin with the noise of their hammers, and quite near the new monastery at Alcester, the Mercian parliament was convoked to give validity to the donations and privileges conferred on Egwin; and Wilfrid, as the great champion of the Benedictine rule in England, was appointed to preside at this solemnity, and to place on the altar he was about to consecrate the charter of endowment and freedom which had just been voted.[304] At the moment when he was about to accomplish,

[302] Roach Smith, *Illustrations of Roman London*. The same author relates that Wolstan, a monk of Winchester, at the end of the tenth century, in his poem on the Miracles of St. Swithin, has left a singular story of three nymphs or fairies who exercised their power in the forests of his neighborhood.

[303] "Surgenti ab oratione tres virgines . . . apparuere, quarum quæ media eminebat præcelsior omnique nitore splendentior, aliis præfulgebat, liliis candentior, rosis vernantior, odore inæstimabili fragrantior. . . . Quum cogitaret hanc Domini Genitricem esse." — *Chron. Evesh.*, p. 9.

[304] "Ex mandato apostolico fuit sapientium conventus in loco qui Alneceastra vocatur . . . et Brythwaldus archiepiscopus ex ore omnium et terram loci et libertatem in carta descripsit. Tunc elegerunt sapientes ut dominus Wilfridus episcopus et ego privilegium idem ad locum eumdem afferemus. Eadem autem die . . . Wilfridus episcopus et ego . . . cartam et loci libertatem . . . super altare posuimus, et sic coram omnibus locuti fuimus." — *Chronicon Abbatiæ de Evesham*, edid. W. D. Mackay, 1863, p. 20. Cf. Pref. p. xviii. in the new collection of *Rerum Britannicarum Medii Ævi Scriptores*. It is needless to say that I do not quote the authority of the Rule of Pope Constantine in favor of Evesham, so cruelly turned into ridicule, together with so many other pretended Pontifical charters, by the formidable irony of Père Papebroch. (Bolland., vol. ii. April, pp. 30,

with his colleague Egwin, this solemn mission, in presence of all the people, he made the following prayer, which was immediately enrolled in the acts of the foundation: —

"Lord God, who dwellest in heaven, and who hast created all things, save him who shall give peace and security to this place, and shall confirm the inheritance of God in that liberty in which we offer it to Him. For this reason, in the name of Almighty God and of all heavenly virtue, we enjoin that neither king, nor prince, nor minister, nor any man of what rank soever, shall have the audacity to rob this holy place, or to appropriate any part of it whatever to his own profit; that this place may always remain as we will it, consecrated to the use of the flocks and shepherds of God, and under the sway of its own abbot, according to the rule of God and St. Benedict. But if — which God forbid! — any man, led astray by avarice, should contravene this institution, may he be judged before the tribunal of God, may he be forgotten by Christ, may his name be struck out of the book of life, and himself chained in the eternal pains of hell, unless at least in this life he does penance. As to him who shall respect and preserve this foundation, may God and all the saints have him in their holy keeping, and give joy to his soul in this life and happiness in the next." [305]

Egwin was buried in the monastery he had founded, the later annals of which are not without interest. Five hundred years afterwards it became one of the most venerated sanctuaries and most frequented places of pilgrimage in England,

31.) We may remark that the chronicler of Evesham has not dared to cite this bull at its proper date, that of the foundation, and only transcribes it in speaking of the suit decided by Pope Innocent III., Dec. 24, 1205, between the Bishop of Worcester and the Abbot of Evesham; the Pope, deceived by false documents, of which many were then fabricated, pronounced for the monastery. The monk Thomas of Marleberge, charged to plead the cause at Rome, and who has left us a very honest and animated narrative of the whole procedure, tells us that he fainted at the feet of the Pope when he heard the sentence read, partly from fatigue on account of the fast of the vigil of Christmas, partly for joy to feel that they were delivered from a *quasi-Egyptian* servitude.

[305] "Domine Deus . . . conserva illum qui locum istum pacificabit et conservabit et hanc Dei hereditatem et hanc libertatem confirmabit quam Deo obtulimus. Nos etiam præcipimus . . . ut neque rex, neque princeps, neque minister, nec ullius ordinis homo, id præsumat ut locum istum sanctum diminuat aut sibi in privatam potestatem aliquid vindicet, sed sit locus hic, ut nos optamus, gregibus et Dei pastoribus ejusdem loci in usum, et bene dispositus in potestate proprii abbatis secundum regulam Dei et beati Benedicti. Si autem aliquis (quod absit) avaritiæ spiritu arreptus vertere velit, judicetur ante tribunal Dei et nunquam in Christi veneat memoriam." — *Chron. Evesh.*

the bleeding remains of Simon de Montfort, the great Earl of Leicester, slain in the great battle fought under its walls, having been carried thither. This proud aristocrat retains a just eminence in history as having completed the establishment of the most famous political assembly of modern times — the British House of Commons — by calling together the representatives of the cities and boroughs, and seating them beside the knights of the shires. Although a victorious enemy of the throne, and condemned by the Pope, he won to his side the popular and religious sentiment of the nation. During his life, and long after his death, he was the idol of the English people, who gave expression to their passionate attachment for the champion of their rights in a mode adapted to the spirit of the time, by going to pray at his tomb, attributing to him numerous miracles, and by comparing this new St. Simon to Simon Peter and Simon Maccabeus.[306]

Simon de Montfort buried at Evesham, 1265.

The consecration of this Church of Evesham, which was reserved for such memorable destinies, was the last episcopal function exercised by Wilfrid, the last act of that long life so entirely devoted to the extension of monastic life and the defence of the Roman Church. From the banks of the Avon he returned slowly to the neighborhood of Ely and Peterborough, which had long been dear and familiar to him. During this last journey it occurred to him, as to the most illustrious monk of our own day shortly before his death, to tell the story of his life to a younger friend and faithful companion, who might be his witness to posterity. It was to his inseparable follower Tatbert, as he rode by his side, that Wilfrid thus gave, not a general confession, but a detailed narrative of his long life, with the certainty of having reached the eve of its last day.[307] Death, indeed, arrested him on his journey, at Oundle, in one of his monastic foundations near Northampton, which he had dedicated to St. Andrew the Apostle, patron of that church at Rome, from whence the first English apostles had proceeded, and where he himself, the first of Anglo-Saxon

He narrates his life to his successor Tatbert.

[306] There are seven pages of these pretended miracles in the Chronicles of the Monks of Melrose. — Cf. LINGARD, *Hist. Eng.*, vol. ii. p. 166 of the Paris edition; and FREEMAN, *Gentleman's Magazine*, Sept., 1862. Evesham has preserved nothing of the splendor of its ancient abbey, except one beautiful tower of the fourteenth century.

[307] "Omnem vitæ sua conversationem memorialiter prius enarravit Tatberto, . . . quadam die equitantibus per viam, quasi præsciens obitum suum."

pilgrims, had prayed on his first arrival.[308] His last illness was short, and his death gentle and without pain. He had only time to remind his companions of his former instructions, and to designate as his successor at Hexham that Acca who stood by him in his trial at Rome and during his mortal illness at Meaux.

Death of Wilfrid. 23d June, 709.

When he had given them a last blessing, his head fell back upon the pillow, and rested there in calm repose, without a single groan or sigh. The whole weeping community chanted prayers around his bed. As they reached Psalm CIII. and the verse *Emitte spiritum tuum et creabuntur*, his breathing ceased, and he yielded up his soul to his Creator.[309] The aged soldier of God died more gently than an infant in the cradle. He was seventy-six years of age, forty-four of which he had been a bishop.

His funeral was celebrated with a mingled pomp and grief which can readily be imagined. Tatbert, his disciple, confidant, and successor, was also his chief mourner. Before the burial, and in obedience to the last affectionate injunction of the dying, he sent the shirt of the saint, still moist with his last sweat, to an abbess named Cyndreda, who had been converted by Wilfrid, who now governed one of the monasteries of his congregation,[310] and who had, doubtless, like the Abbess of Coldingham and Whitby, distinguished herself by her fidelity to the exiled and persecuted pontiff. The body was carried to Ripon, and buried in the church which he had built and dedicated to St. Peter, the apostle whom, along with St. Andrew, he had most venerated.[311] Tatbert ordained that a special mass should be said for him; and that every year, on the day of his anniversary, the tithe of his flocks should be distributed to the poor, besides the daily

[308] See above, p. 309.

[309] "Cum quiete, non cum gemitu et murmure, caput ad cervical lectuli inclinavit et requievit."

[310] "Ad abbatissam sancti pontificis nostri, nomine Cynedryd."— Eddius, c. 62.

> "Interulamque puer sancti sudore madentem
> Corripuit, normatrici tulit atque beatæ
> Quam sibi flamineo sociaverat apte verendo
> Egregius heros, redimitim castificando."
>
> Fridegodus, *Carmen de Sancto Wilfrido*, c. 55.

The holy Bishop Cuthbert, who died in 687, also sent his last garment to an abbess who had touched him by her pious devotion.

[311] Eddius, c. 61 and 64.

alms which were given also by Tatbert's orders, for the soul of his dear master and for his own.[312]

His worship and miracles.

As soon as he was dead, Wilfrid appeared to the eyes of all in his true light, as a great saint and a great man. The popular veneration, restrained or disturbed during his life by the struggles of race, party, and opinion in which he had been engaged, found expression beside his tomb. Miraculous cures on earth, luminous apparitions in the sky; a supernatural power which protected the cell where he died from profanation and from the ravages of fire — such were the first wonders which awoke the enthusiastic confidence of the Anglo-Saxons in this saint of their own race,[313] a confidence which, having once taken root, went on increasing, and shone out with redoubled intensity four centuries later under the first Norman Kings. It was not only the blind, the infirm, the dying, and the shipwrecked who found occasion to rejoice that they had invoked the powerful intercession of the sainted Abbot of Hexham with God, but also many innocent victims of persecution, many outraged virgins, and whole populations desolated by the ravages of war or by the oppression of foreign conquerors.[314]

At Hexham, in honor of the sanctuary which he had created,

[312] The beautiful epitaph which Bede has preserved to us, and of which he was probably the author, deserves to be quoted, at least in part: —

> "Wilfridus hic magnus requiescit corpore præsul,
> Hanc Domino qui aulam ductus pietatis amore
> Fecit, et eximio sacravit nomine Petri,
> Cui claves cœli Christus dedit arbiter orbis. . . .
> Paschalis qui etiam sollemnia tempora cursus
> Catholici ad justum correxit dogma canonis,
> Quem statuere patres, dubioque errore remoto
> Certa suæ genti ostendit moderamina ritus:
> Inque locis istis monachorum examina crebra
> Colligit, ac monitis cavit quæ regula patrum
> Sedulus instituit: multisque domique, forisque
> Jactatus nimium per tempora longa periclis,
> Quindecies ternos postquam egit episcopus annos
> Transiit, et gaudens celestia regna petivit.
> Dona, Jesu, ut grex pastoris calle sequatur."

[313] Eddius, c. 62, 63.

[314] See the curious narrative of Abbot Ælred of Rievaulx, entitled *De Sanctis Ecclesiæ Hagulstadensis et eorum Miraculis*, ap. Mabillon, *Acta SS. O. S. B.*, vol. iii. pp. 204, 220, and Raine's *Priory of Hexham*. We may remark especially the incident of the young man unjustly condemned, who, at the moment of his execution, turned to the church of the saint, crying, "Adjuva nunc, Wilfride, quia si modo nolueris, paulo post non poteris." On which there arrived in hot haste two *fidejussores*, who gave security for him *more patrio*, and saved him. This story is cited by Palgrave as a proof of the utility of invoking saints and miracles against the iniquity of the law.

and for so long a time inhabited, the right of sanctuary was allowed to extend to a great circle round the monastery, the great enclosure — a sanctuary not only for ordinary criminals, but, especially in time of war, for the neighboring population, who took refuge there with their cattle, and whom the sword of the most cruel invaders dared not follow thither. The limits of this sanctuary were marked only by crosses erected at certain distances. The town which was soon after built close to the great monastery had no walls; the universal veneration for the memory of Wilfrid served it instead of ramparts. Nearly four centuries after his death, this veneration, and the confidence it inspired in the surrounding people, were expressed in a touching and truly poetic legend. King Malcolm of Scotland, in one of his numerous and cruel incursions into England, irritated by the murder of his messengers near Hexham, ordered the sack of the town and a general massacre of its inhabitants. The Galloway Picts, the most ferocious of all the Scotch, were charged with the execution of this atrocious order, which was but too much in accordance with the spirit of the time. The tears and supplications of the intended victims had been as vain as the entreaties of the clergy to move the king from his purpose. On the eve of the day fixed for the massacre, the whole population, disarmed and desperate, fled to the church of Wilfrid, which resounded with their cries. At this crisis one of the principal priests of the town fell asleep from fatigue, and had a dream, in which he saw two bishops arriving on horseback from the south. These Christian Dioscuri [315] came at a gallop to announce to the unfortunate inhabitants of Hexham that they were saved. "I am Wilfrid," said one, "and this is Cuthbert, whom I brought with me as I passed by Durham. We are come to deliver you. I have heard the weeping and cries of those who pray in my church. Fear nothing. At the dawn of day I will spread my net over the whole course of the Tyne, and no one shall be able to cross it to hurt you." Accordingly, in the morning a thick fog covered the whole valley. The messengers of the king lost their way, and when the fog dispersed the Tyne had risen so high that, there being no bridge, the Scots could not pass over. The husband of St. Margaret saw in this the finger

1060-1093.

He hastens with St. Cuthbert to the aid of his town of Hexham against the Scots.

[315] This recalls the apparition of Castor and Pollux at the battle of Lake Regillus.

of God, and gave up his cruel design, and the inhabitants of Hexham were more and more convinced that the arm of Wilfrid was ever ready to defend them.[316]

But it is specially at Ripon, where his relics reposed, that the universal faith manifested itself. Crowds came thither from all quarters, as if they expected still to find in bodily presence the aged saint who had feared neither man nor obstacles, and whose protection they invoked and even exacted with blind trust and tender familiarity, against the iniquities of conquest, the abuse of power, and the unjust severity of the law.[317]

His banner appears at the battle of the Standard. 1138.

Fifty years after the deliverance of Hexham, the Scotch, under their sainted King David, reappeared in Northumbria, and committed horrors rarely equalled even in the barbarous wars of the period.[318] The alarmed population took arms under the leadership of the Archbishop of York, and of those Anglo-Norman barons who were most celebrated for the munificence they displayed in the monastic restorations of the twelfth century — the Bruces, Mowbrays, Percies, and Estoutevilles. They marched against the cruel invaders, and met them at some distance to the north of Ripon. The English were drawn up round a cart similar to that famous *carroccio* which the Lombards of the same period led into battle against the Emperor Frederic Barbarossa: on this humble pedestal, above a pyx containing the host, they had planted the banner of Wilfrid — *Wilfridi Ripensis vexillum* — between those of St. Peter and St. John. This cart, which they called the

[316] "Rex vocat Gallowenses homines cæteris crudeliores. . . . 'Mox ut dies illuxerit, transeuntes flumen, irruite in eos. Non parcat oculus vester non ordini, non sexui, non ætati.' . . . Clamor ingens, ploratus et ululatus. . . . Et ecce apparuerunt duo viri . . . sedentes in equis. . . . Wilfridus vocor, et ecce hic mecum est sanctus Cuthbertus, quem transiens per Dunelmum adduxi. . . . Ecce, albescente aurora, extendam rete meum." — ÆLRED RIEVALLENSIS, *De SS. Ecclesiæ Hagulstad.*, c. 2, ed. Surtees. Cf. Pref., p. lx. Wilfrid is said to have come from Ripon, where his tomb was, and to have gone towards the north, passing by Durham, which is south of Hexham.

[317] "Ita ad eum in hac ecclesia quasi ad viventem confugerent, in omnibus necessitatibus quasi præsentem consulerent, in tribulationibus et angustiis ejus auxilium non tam peterent quam exigerent."

[318] See the contemporary historians quoted by Lingard, and above all the discourse of a bishop before the battle, omitted in the edition given by Twysden of the special account by Ælred, Abbot of Rievaulx, *De Bello Standardi*, but restored, after the manuscripts, by Raine, in *Priory of Hexham*, vol. i. p. 89.

Standard,[319] gave its name to the battle, in which the King of Scotland and his ferocious army were completely routed. After the victory, they brought back to Ripon in triumph the banner of the saint, who had thus protected and saved his former diocese. The banner often reappeared at the head of battalions armed for the defence of the country.[320]

Of this enduring and touching popularity there now remains nothing but a shadow, a name, a meaningless word. In the modern town of Ripon, which has grown out of the great monastery founded by Wilfrid, the people have retained the habit of calling a certain Sunday in the year *Wilfrid's Sunday;*[321] but when they are asked why, it becomes plain that they know nothing either of the saint to whom they owe their municipal existence, nor of the Church whose apostle and champion he was.

What the work of Wilfrid was.

Happily for us, his work and his glory are inscribed in ineffaceable characters in the history of that Church, as well as of his country. His work was as varied as it was successful and lasting. Let us first remark its importance in respect to the monastic order. No

Services rendered to the monastic order.

one has done more for the extension and consolidation of that order in England, in the first place, by the introduction of the Benedictine rule, then established only at Canterbury; and afterwards by charters and exemptions obtained from Rome, and from the Saxon kings and parliaments, in behalf of the great foundations of his time, such as Hexham and Peterborough; but above all, by the strongly woven links of intimate and active association between the numerous monasteries who regarded him as their head — a connection which gave them mutual security against the violence and usurpation of the princes and powers around them.[322]

In the year which followed his death, the first anniversary

[319] "Dicitur a stando Standardum, quod stetit illic militiæ probitas vincere sive mori."

[320] Ricardi Hagulstadensis, *De Gestis Regis Stephani et de Bello Standardi*, ed. Surtees, pp. 91, 93.

[321] Faber, p. 204. There are no remains of Wilfrid's church, unless it be the crypt of the present cathedral, which is attributed to that period. In the time of Leland, a little before the Reformation, there were only three crosses, *antiquissimi operis*, on the site of the ancient monastery. One of the three spires of the church, rebuilt in the fourteenth century, bore the name of St. Wilfrid. It was blown down by the wind in 1660.

[322] "In ipsis exiliis non otio deditus, sed cœnobiis et episcopatibus fundandis industrius. . . . Reliquit cœnobia quot nullus, quæ solus aggregaverat, multis dividens hæredibus." — Will. Malmesb., f. 153.

of his funeral brought together at Ripon all the abbots of the numberless monasteries which he had either founded, adopted, or received among his own communities. They came from the four corners of England, disturbed and anxious as to the situation in which the death of their venerable chief had placed them. "While he lived," they said, "we often had to suffer the violence of kings and nobles; but by his holiness, his wisdom, and the great number of his friends, he was always able to deliver us. We must now believe that he will be our protector in heaven, as are St. Peter and St. Andrew, whom he loved so much, and to whom he dedicated all his possessions, and all his followers." On the evening of this anniversary, after supper, during the twilight of the long summer day, all the abbots, followed by the whole community of Ripon, went out to sing complines in the open air. There they saw the whole heaven lighted up by a great rainbow, the pale radiance of which proceeded from the tomb of the saint, and wrapt the whole enclosure of the monastery in light. Eddi, the faithful biographer of Wilfrid, was there, and saw with wonder this luminous circle. "We all understood," he says, "that the intercession of the saint was to be, by the goodness of God, an impregnable rampart round the vine of the Lord and His family; and the event has proved it, for since that time we have lived in safety, under abbots freely chosen by ourselves, and when some have been threatened, others have come to their help, and that throughout all England, north as well as south of the Humber."[323]

Our musician thus indicates, as it seems, that Wilfrid had succeeded in making, at least for a time, a first attempt at that association of different monasteries among themselves which many great monastic saints had dreamed of as the completion of the rule of St. Benedict, and which is realized on so vast a scale in the orders of Cluny and Cîteaux.

Services rendered to the English Church;

To the Church of England Wilfrid did the immense service of securing the permanence of the episcopate. Proceeding in opposition to him, and by uncanonical methods, to partition the primitive bishoprics, Archbishop Theodore, his rival and enemy, established

[323] "Undique abbates ejus cum subjectis suis . . . ab oriente et occidente, ab aquilone et austro. . . . Quamdiu vixit optimum caput vitæ nostræ, frequenter a regibus et principibus tentationes sustinuimus, quibus . . . finem venerabilem semper imponere consuevit. . . . In crepusculo vespertino . . . candidum circulum totum cœnobium circumdans quasi per diem areus cœli absque variis caloribus. . . . Nos vero adorantes laudavimus Dominum."— Eddius, c. 64.

a new diocesan division, better adapted to the wants of the country. In addition to this, the same pontiff appointed the election of bishops to be conducted by popular assemblies presided over by the primate, at which deputies from the vacant church might be heard, and where the nominations of the king were discussed and controlled by the bishops and nobles; so that it might be truly said that, in principle, the choice of the bishops, as well as of the abbots, depended on the clergy.[324] But the power of the episcopate became rapidly so great, and its dignity so much sought after, that the elections were soon interfered with in an injurious and oppressive manner by the throne. Wilfrid opposed a far more efficacious barrier to this lay influence by resisting to the utmost the claim made by the kings to nominate, depose, or remove bishops at their pleasure, and by consecrating the principle of permanence and immovability in the episcopate as much by the support of the Holy See as by the national synods. Thanks to him, until the Norman Conquest, four centuries later, no English king dared arbitrarily depose a bishop from his see.

To the Church universal;

To the whole Catholic Church he rendered the important service of fighting, overcoming, and destroying the exclusive spirit of Celtic Christianity. Without being in any way a revolt or protest against Catholic unity, without deserving at all that imputation of heresy or schism of which Wilfrid and his followers were too prodigal, this spirit might readily have degenerated into a sort of narrow and jealous provincialism. After having long repulsed the idea of communicating the benefits of the faith to the Anglo-Saxon conquerors of Britain, the Celtic Church reconsidered the matter, and the ice having been once broken by Roman missionaries, she took measures to supplant and eclipse them everywhere. But the Celtic apostles of England, no doubt without knowing it, by a series of pedantic details, isolated their new converts from the Church of Rome, the centre of Christian action, precisely at the moment when that Church, called by Providence to evangelize the immense family of Teutonic tribes beyond the Rhine and Danube, had the most imperative need of help from that Teutonic race whose mission St. Gregory the Great had prophetically pointed out, and whom God had made the most

[324] "Electio olim præsulum et abbatum tempore Anglorum pene clericos et monachos erat." — Guill. Malmesb., *De Gestis Pontif.*, c. 3, f. 157. Cf. Lingard, *Antiquities*, pp. 91-96, 145.

active, the hardiest, and the most persevering of all barbarous races. England was about to become a mere ecclesiastical branch of Ireland, and her character in that case would have become doubly insular, to the detriment of Catholic unity and the common interest of the Christian world. Wilfrid appeared: by a fifty years' struggle, and at the cost of his peace, his safety, and even his personal freedom, he first neutralized, and finally annihilated, the Celtic spirit, without at any time being guilty of persecution, coercion, or violence towards the vanquished. He did more than check the Celtic movement; he sent it back into chaos; he extirpated all the ritual and liturgic differences which served as a veil and pretext for the prejudices of race and opinion; he extirpated them, not only in his immense diocese, the vast region of Northumbria,[325] but throughout all England; and not in England only, but, by the contagion of his example and his influence, in Ireland, in Scotland, and finally in the very sanctuary of Celtic Christianity, at Iona.[326]

To England.

Last of all, by himself converting the last of the conquering tribes which still remained pagan, that of the South Saxons, Wilfrid gloriously ended the conversion of England, which had been begun nearly a century before by missionaries from Rome. He did yet more. By his own pilgrimage, the first of his race to knock at the door of the Vatican, and to pray at the tomb of the Apostles — by thus

[325] A few faint vestiges of Celtic traditions and institutions are all that can be found in Northumbria at a later period. For instance, in 936, King Athelstane, as he marched against the Scots, solicited the prayers of the Culdees, *Colidei*, who served the Cathedral of St. Peter: "Videns in dicta ecclesia viros sanctæ vitæ et conversationis honestæ dictos ad tunc *Colideos*, qui multos sustentabant pauperes, et modicum habebant unde viverent, concessit . . . ut melius possent sustinere pauperes confluentes, hospitalitatem tenere." This evidently refers to the Celtic *Celi-Dé*; and their existence at York in the tenth century must have dated back from the institutions of the Irish missionaries anterior to Wilfrid. It is apparent also, that according to the universal custom of Celtic as well as Benedictine monks, they combined the celebration of divine service with the care of the poor. Athelstane granted them, after his victory, "unam travam bladi de qualibet caruca arante in episcopatu York, quæ usque in præsentem diem dicitur Petercorn." These *travæ* had been given up to the king on the condition of his exterminating the wolves which destroyed "fere omnes villanorum bestias." The wolves killed, the rents remained available, and the king bestowed them on the *Colidei*. This gift, *largitione fidelium*, was confirmed by William the Conqueror and William Rufus, who transferred them and their rents to a hospital founded by the same *Colidei* at York under the name of St. Leonard. — Dugdale, *Monasticon*, quoted by Reeves, *The Culdees of the British Isles*, pp. 59–144.

[326] It will be seen further on how Adhelm, Egbert, and Adamnan finished Wilfrid's work.

instituting pilgrimages and appeals to Rome — by obliging Saxon kings and bishops to acknowledge, in law and in fact, the intervention and supremacy of the Papacy, — he brought England into the orbit of that great movement of European civilization of which the Holy See became gradually the pivot and the centre. It was he who completed and crowned the work of Gregory and Augustin. He placed the seal on the conquest of England by popes and monks. England owed it to him that she was not only Christian, but Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman. No other Anglo-Saxon exercised a more decisive and more sovereign influence on the destinies of his race.

Character of Wilfrid.

In modern England, all that Wilfrid did is destroyed, all that he loved has perished. He no longer lives except in history, where he has left, for every attentive observer, an ineffaceable trace. By placing him upon her altars, the Church teaches us that by his devotion to justice, truth, and the good of souls, he has gained an eminent position among the saints. But in a purely historical point of view, his character and his career offer a study equally curious and interesting. We find in him no analogy with the great monks of the primitive Church, the solitaries of the Thebaïd, nor even with the solemn and mystic ascetics of Celtic Christianity. Though he was not insensible to the consolations and aspirations of spiritual life, the predominating features in his character are not those of an exclusively spiritual being, of a man of prayer and solitude; they are rather those of the man of action and movement, the soldier of religious life.

In Wilfrid begins that great line of prelates, by turns apostolic and political, eloquent and warlike, brave champions of Roman unity and ecclesiastical independence, magnanimous representatives of the rights of conscience, the liberties of the soul, the spiritual powers of man and the laws of God; a line to which history presents no equal out of the Catholic Church of England; a lineage of saints, heroes, confessors, and martyrs, which produced St. Dunstan, St. Lanfranc, St. Anselm, St. Thomas à Becket, Stephen Langton, St. Edmund, the exile of Pontigny, and which ended in Reginald Pole. By a strange and touching coincidence, it is beside the tomb of this last Roman Catholic Archbishop of Canterbury, in the cathedral, sprinkled with the blood of St. Thomas the Martyr, that the relics of Wilfrid now rest, having been

transferred to the church of the primacy in 959 to save them from the sacrilegious rapacity of the Danes.[327]

In addition to all this, Wilfrid was the precursor of the great prelates, the great monks, the princely abbots of the middle ages, the heads and oracles of national councils, the ministers and lieutenants, and often the equals and rivals of kings. When duty called, no suffering alarmed, no privation deterred, and no danger stopped his course; four times in his life he made the journey to Rome, then ten times more laborious and a hundred times more dangerous than the voyage to Australia is now. But, left to himself, he loved pomp, luxury, magnificence, and power. He could be humble and mild when it was necessary; but it was more congenial to him to confront kings, princes, nobles, bishops, councils, and lay assemblies, in harsh and inflexible defence of his patrimony, his power, his authority, and his cause.

He was never without adversaries, and as it has been justly remarked, he seems to have foreseen and practised that axiom of Rancé, which says, "A Christian should spend his money in buying enemies." But many of his enemies were saints; and of all the holy bishops and abbots of his time, so numerous in the Anglo-Saxon Church, not one was his ally, not one held out to him a friendly hand in his trials and combats. Many even showed a sort of inexplicable animosity against him. It must be concluded that he did not sufficiently consider the susceptibility of national sentiment, which was always so powerful among his countrymen, and which finally detached them from Catholicism. And in addition, while making the greatest possible allowance for provincial rancor and personal jealousy, it must be admitted that there was in him an unjust contempt for former generous services, a certain sickly irritability, a tiresome pertinacity in dispute, and a haughty and injurious violence of language;[328] but of language alone, for in his acts he was always tolerant and generous.

On the other hand, he had many friends. The monks who came spontaneously to range themselves under his crosier were counted by thousands; among them he found bold and faithful companions in all his travels, shipwrecks, dangers, and exiles: and these life-long followers were the same who prayed by his bedside with so many tears that his life might

[327] Faber, p. 202.

[328] This is admitted by the most enthusiastic of his modern biographers, Father Faber, p. 203. Compare Hook, p. 138.

be spared. He inspired the most illustrious and most holy women of his race, Queen Etheldreda, the Abbess Ebba, and Elfleda, his last protectress, with an affection which vanquished all obstacles. He exercised over them, and over the most delicate and generous souls of his time, as well as over the savage Frisians and the dauntless Lombards, an irresistible influence; and this power lasted all his life from the time when, arriving at the Northumbrian court in the light armor of a boy, he gained the heart of Queen Eanfleda, until the last crisis, when the heroic Bertfrid, saviour of the Bernician dynasty, declared himself in favor of the aged exile.

This influence is explained by the rare qualities which more than redeemed all his faults. His was, before all else, a great soul, manly and resolute, ardent and enthusiastic, full of unconquerable energy, able to wait or to act, but incapable of discouragement or fear, born to live upon those heights which attract at once the thunderbolt and the eyes of the crowd. His eloquence, superior to anything yet known in England, his keen and penetrating intelligence, his eager zeal for literary studies and public education, his knowledge and love of those wonders of architecture which dazzled the Christian nation, and to which his voice attracted such crowds; his constancy in trial, his ardent love of justice, — all contributed to make of him one of those personages who sway and move the spirits of their contemporaries, and who master the attention and imagination even of those whom they cannot convince.[329] Something generous, ardent, and magnanimous in his nature commended him always to the sympathy of lofty hearts; and when adverse fortune and triumphant violence and ingratitude came in, to put upon his life the seal of adversity nobly and piously borne, the rising tide of emotion and sympathy carried all before it, sweeping away all traces of those errors of conduct which might have seemed to us less attractive or comprehensible.

He was the first Anglo-Saxon who secured the attention of other nations, and the first of whom a special biography

[329] "Vir pro justitiæ merito multis jactatus periculis . . . egregie factus ad promerendam gratiam principum apud quos exularet, idemque pro rigore justitiæ compatriotis regibus odiosus." — Will. Malmesb., f. 153. Eddi, who, like all the learned monks of his time, knew his Horace by heart, does not fail, like a parliamentary orator of the nineteenth century, to apply to his hero, in the preface of his biography, the well-known lines —

"Feriuntque summos
Fulgura montes."

Odes, ii. 2.

has been preserved. In each detail, as well as in the general impression made by this biography, he appears to us a type of the qualities and singularities of his nation; of their obstinacy, courage, laborious and untiring energy, their dogged love of work and of conflict, their resolution to strive till death for their patrimony, honor, and rights. *Dieu et mon droit!* This proud English motto is written on every page of the life of Wilfrid. In the service of a cause which now, by the misfortune of the ages and the blindness of men, has become the most unpopular of all causes in the eyes of the English nation, Wilfrid displayed all the virtues which are most characteristic of his countrymen, and most fitted to attract them. All the passions and all the noble instincts of his people palpitated in him. That mind must indeed be besotted by hatred, a thousand times blinder than ignorance itself, which does not recognize in him the eldest son of an invincible race, the first of the English nation.

BOOK XIII.

CONTEMPORARIES AND SUCCESSORS OF ST. WILFRID, 650–735.

"Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day." — 1 THESSAL., v. 5.

"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind." — 2 TIM. i. 7.

CHAPTER I.

ST. CUTHBERT. — 637–687.

Contrast between Wilfrid and the saints of the Northumbrian coast. — His glory eclipsed by that of Cuthbert. — Childhood of Cuthbert, a shepherd on the Scottish borders. — He becomes a novice at Melrose. — He evangelizes the Scottish marches. (Note upon the Monastery of Dull, cradle of the University of St. Andrews.) — His austerities: his baths: legend of the otters. — He goes from Melrose to Ripon, from which he is expelled by Wilfrid, along with all the Celtic monks. — He becomes prior at Lindisfarne, where he establishes the customs of Rome and the Benedictine rule. — His life at Lindisfarne in its cloistral and in its external aspect. — His extreme modesty. — He becomes a hermit in a cave of the Isle of Farne. — Popular traditions concerning this portion of his life.—The birds of St. Cuthbert, and the beads of his chaplet. — His charity towards the crowd of penitents who sought him there. — His hospitality. — His humility. — King Egfrid takes him from his rock to make him Bishop of Lindisfarne. — He continues both monk and missionary during his short episcopate. — His compassion for the sufferings of his penitents.— The mad countess.— The mother consoled. — His affection for his foster-mother, for Queen Etheldreda, and the great abbesses Ebba of Coldingham and Elfleda of Whitby. (Note upon the exclusion of women from his monastery.) — His last visit to the Abbess Verca. — He returns to his rock to die. — The abbess's shroud. — Last exhortations of Cuthbert: his death. — His closest friend dies at the same hour on the same day. — Their annual interview upon the rock of Farne. — Great and lasting popularity of his memory. — Translation of his relics to Durham. — Magnificence and wealth of that cathedral, after Toledo the richest in the world. — Right of asylum. —

Efficacy of his protection to the oppressed. — Alfred, Canute, and William the Conqueror. — The independence, almost sovereign, of Cuthbert's successors under the Anglo-Norman monarchy. — He is invoked by the English against the Scottish invasions. — Battle of Neville's Cross. — His banner appears for the last time in the insurrection of the North against Henry VIII. — It is profaned and burned with his body. — His popularity at sea. — The sailor-monks. — Cuthbert, while a child, saw them like seabirds on the waves. — His appearance to sailors in danger. — The hermit Ethelwold prays for the shipwrecked. — Grace Darling, the Christian heroine of these islands in the nineteenth century.

Beside the great figure of Wilfrid there appears in history an entire family of monastic saints, his contemporaries and countrymen, who should have found a place in the narrative we have just concluded, had it not been already too much prolonged. But although they were all inhabitants of Northumbria during the rule of Wilfrid, they form naturally into a group apart. This separation is due partly to the reserve, sometimes approaching enmity, which they manifested towards him, and still more to the essentially peaceful nature of their character and position. If in some cases they are found in contact with the struggles and agitations of their age and country, it is evidently against their inclinations. Their desire for peace, and ascetic and studious retirement, was as great as that of Wilfrid for the fatigues and hazards of the fight; and their history and aspect, retired as they were in their monasteries upon the coast of the Northumbrian kingdom, where the conflict between Wilfrid and the descendants of the Man of Fire was continually breaking out with fresh force, afford a pleasant and refreshing contrast to the stormy career of the great abbot.

Contrast between Wilfrid and the saints of the Northumbrian coast.

In the first rank of these peaceful men stands the monk honored by the Church under the name of St. Cuthbert,[1] and whose glory soon eclipsed that of St. Wilfrid, though the place he holds in history is of much inferior importance. Yes, great as was the influence of Wilfrid — a great bishop, a great abbot, the offspring of a noble race — his popularity was surpassed among his contempora-

His glory eclipsed by that of St. Cuthbert.

[1] His Life was first written by a monk of Lindisfarne during the reign of King Aldfrid — that is, before 705, less than twenty years after the death of the saint — and afterwards, both in verse and prose, by Bede, who had attained the age of fourteen when Cuthbert died, and who takes care to state, with his usual exactness, the names and profession of all who supplied him with materials.

ries as well as with Catholic posterity by that of a shepherd boy, who also became a bishop, and whose diocese was one of those produced by the division of that of Wilfrid. The Celts have claimed Cuthbert as belonging to them, at least by birth.[2] They make him out to have been the son of an Irish princess, reduced to slavery, like Bridget the holy patroness of Ireland, but who fell, more miserably, victim to the lust of her savage master. They have also given him a place among the disciples of their great sanctuary in Iona.[3] His Celtic origin would seem to be still more conclusively proved by his attitude towards Wilfrid than by the constant tradition of the Anglo-Saxon monks of Durham. But, to tell the truth, nothing is certainly known either of his place of birth or the rank of his family.

Youth of Cuthbert.

His first appearance in history is as a shepherd in Lauderdale, a valley watered by a river which flows into the Tweed near Melrose, upon the borders, as now defined, of England and Scotland. It was then a district annexed to the kingdom of Northumbria, which had just been delivered by the holy King Oswald from the yoke of the Mercians and Britons. As he is soon afterwards to be seen travelling on horseback, lance in hand and accompanied by a squire, it is not to be supposed that he was of poor extraction. At the same time it was not the flocks of his father which he kept, as did David in the plains of Bethlehem; it is expressly noted that the flocks confided to his care belonged to a master, or to several mas-

A shepherd on the Scottish borders.

[2] The Irish origin of Cuthbert is undoubtingly asserted by Reeves, in his *Notes on Wattenbach*, p. 5. Lanigan (vol. iii. p. 88) states that Usher, Ware, and Colgan entertained the same opinion. There exists a Life of Cuthbert, translated from Irish into Latin, which was partly published, first in the collection of Capgrave, and afterwards reprinted by the Surtees Society in 1838, from a MS. much more full, but dating only from the fourteenth century. In this Life, his mother is said to have been a daughter of the King of Leinster, whom the King of Connaught outraged and kept as his slave, after having slain all her family. Her child, whom she sent into Britain, was named *Nullhoc* — that is to say, *wailing* — because of the tears of his outraged mother. (COLGAN, *Act. SS.*, ad 20 Mart.) Many other ancient authors, both Irish and English, pronounce him an Irishman. Bede makes no reference to his birthplace. The Bollandists, who reckon him among the Anglo-Saxons in the article devoted to him on the date of the 20th March, seem to count him as Irish in their Life of St. Wiro, on the 8th May. Mabillon supposes him to have been born where he kept his sheep, on the banks of the Leader, but without giving any proof. Lanigan evidently inclines to the same opinion.

[3] "Una cum matre puer ad insulam, quæ Hy dicitur, profectus est: ubi aliquandiu cum religiosis viris loci illius conversatus est." — *Libellus de Ortu S. Cuthberti*, ed. Surtees, p. 79.

ters. His family must have been in the rank of those clients or vassals to whom the great Saxon lords gave the care and superintendence of their flocks upon the vast extent of pastures which, under the name of *folc-land* or commons, was left to their use, and where the cowherds and shepherds lived day and night in the open air, as is still done by the shepherds of Hungary in the *pustas* on both sides of the Danube.[4]

Popular imagination in the north of England, of which Cuthbert was the hero before as well as after the Norman Conquest, had thus full scope in respect to the obscure childhood of its favorite saint, and delighted in weaving stories of his childish sports, representing him as walking on his hands, and turning somersaults with his little companions.[5] A more authentic testimony, that of his contemporary Bede, informs us that our shepherd boy had not his equal among the children of his age for activity, dexterity, and boldness in the race and fight. In all sports and athletic exercises he was the first to challenge his companions, with the certainty of being the victor. The description reads like that of a little Anglo-Saxon of our own day — a scholar of Eton or Harrow.[6] At the same time a precocious piety showed itself in him, even amid this exuberance of youth. One night, as he said his prayers, while keeping the sheep of his masters, he saw the sky, which had been very dark, broken by a track of light, upon which a crowd of angels descended from heaven, returning afterwards with a resplendent soul which they had gone to meet on earth.[7] Next morning he heard that Aïdan, the holy Bishop of Lindisfarne, the apostle of the district, had died during the night. This vision determined his monastic vocation.

[4] "Ac statim commendans suis pecora quæ pascebat dominis." — Bede, *De Vita et Miraculis S. Cuthberti*, c. 54. Cf. Kemble, *Saxons in England.*

[5] "Cum jocantibus satis jucundus apparuit. Quidam saltu, alii luctamine . . . nonnulli vertice capitis in terram depresso, pede utroque in sublime porrecto, se subrigere decertabant." — *Ibid.*, p. 80.

[6] "Omnes coætaneos in agilitate et petulantia superans." — Monach. Lindisfarn., ap. Bolland., t. iii. Martii, p. 118. "Agilis natura . . . acutus ingenio . . . fessis nonnunquam aliis, ille indefessus, si quis ultra secum vellet certare, quasi victor lætabundus inquireret. Sive enim saltu, sive cursu, sive luctatu, sive quolibet alio membrorum sinuamine . . . ille omnes æquævos et nonnullos etiam majores a se gloriabatur esse superatos." — Bede, *De Vita et Miraculis S. Cuthberti*, c. 1. Cf. c. 6.

[7] "Vidit subito fusum de cœlo lumen medias largæ noctis interrupisse tenebras. In quo cœlestium choros agminum terram petisse." — Bede, c. 4.

Some time afterwards we find him at the gates of the Monastery of Melrose, the great Celtic establishment for novices in Northumbria. He was then only fifteen, yet nevertheless he arrived, like Wilfrid at the court of Queen Eanfleda, on horseback, lance in hand, attended by a squire; for he had already begun his career in the battle-field, and learned in the face of the enemy the first lessons of abstinence, which he now meant to practise in the cloister.[8] He was received by two great doctors of the Celtic Church — the abbot Eata, one of the twelve Northumbrians first chosen by Aïdan, and the prior Boswell, who conceived a special affection for the new-comer, and undertook the charge of his monastic education. Five centuries later, the copy of the Gospels in which the master and pupil had read daily was still kissed with veneration in the Cathedral of Durham.

He becomes a novice at Melrose.

The robust and energetic youth very soon showed the rarest aptitude for monastic life, not only for cenobitical exercises, but, above all, for the missionary work, which was the principal occupation of monks in that country and period. He was not content merely to surpass all the other monks in his devotion to the four principal occupations of monastic life — study, prayer, vigils, and manual labor[9] — but specially applied himself to the work of casting out from the hearts of the surrounding population the last vestiges of pagan superstition. Not a village was so distant, not a mountain-side so steep, not a cottage so poor, that it escaped his zeal. He sometimes passed weeks and even months out of his monastery, preaching to and confessing the rustic population of these mountains.[10]

His missionary life.

The roads were very bad, or rather there were no roads; only now and then was it possible to travel on horseback; sometimes, when his course lay along the coast of the districts inhabited by the Picts, he would take the help of a boat.[11] But generally it was on foot

[8] "In castris contra hostem cum exercitu sedens, ibique habens stipendia parva." — Bolland., p. 118. "Cum equo desilisset et hastam quam tenuerat manu ministro dedisset." — Bede, c. 6.

[9] "Legendi videlicet, orandi, vigilandi, atque operandi solertior." — Bede, *Vita S. Cuthb.*, c. 6.

[10] "Solebat ea maxime loca peragrare, illis prædicare in viculis, qui in arduis asperisque montibus procul positi, aliis horrori erant ad visendum, et paupertate pariter ac rusticitate sua, doctorum prohibebant accessum. . . . In montanis plebem rusticam." — Bede, *Vita S. Cuthberti*, c. 9.

[11] "Cum duobus fratribus pergens et navigans ad terram Pictorum, ubi Mudpieralegis (?) prospere pervenerunt." — Boll., p. 119. "Ad terram Pictorum qui Nidwari vocantur." — Bede, c. 11. The late Mr. Joseph

that he had to penetrate into the glens and distant valleys, crossing the heaths and vast table-lands uncultivated and uninhabited, where a few shepherds' huts, like that in which he himself had passed his childhood, and which were in winter abandoned even by the rude inhabitants, were thinly scattered. But neither the intemperance of the seasons, nor hunger, nor thirst, arrested the young and valiant missionary in his apostolic travels, to seek the scattered population, half Celts and half Anglo-Saxons, who, though already Christian in name and by baptism, retained an obstinate attachment to many of their ancient superstitions, and who were quickly led back by any great calamity, such as one of the great pestilences which were then so frequent, to use of magic, amulets, and other practices of idolatry.[12]

He evangelizes the country between the Solway and the Forth.

The details which have been preserved of the wonders which often accompanied his wanderings show that his labors extended over all the hilly district between the two seas — from the Solway to the Forth.[13] They explain to us how the monks administered the consolations and the teachings of religion, before the organization of parishes, ordained by Archbishop Theodore, had been everywhere introduced or regulated. As soon as the arrival of one of these apostolic missionaries in a somewhat central locality was known, all the population of the neighborhood hastened to hear him, endeavoring with fervor and simplicity to put in practice the instruction they received from him. Cuthbert especially was received among them with affectionate confidence: his eloquence was so persuasive that it brought the most rebellious to his feet to

Robertson, one of the greatest antiquarians in Scotland, who kindly exerted himself to enlighten me upon the principal difficulties of the history of Cuthbert, supposed this place to be Newburn, near Largo, in the county of Fife.

[12] "Ecce, inquit, in itinere quo vadis, nullum viculum, nulla hominum habitacula reperies. . . . Tuguria pastorum quæ, æstate infirmiter posita, tunc jam deserta patebant. . . . Aliquoties equo sedere at sæpius pedes. . . . Ad erronea idololatriæ medicamina currebant . . . per incantationes vel alligaturas vetata quælibet dæmoniacæ artis arcana." — *Vita*, c. 5, 9. BOLLAND., pp. 119, 120.

[13] It would even appear that the sphere of his operations extended much farther north, for the *Libellus de Ortu S. Cuthberti*, written in the Irish tongue, a Latin version of which has been published by the Surtees Society, mentions a stone cross raised by him when he left the Monastery of Dull, in the district of Athole, close to Taymouth. This monastery, which is celebrated in the annals of the Celtic Church, was the cradle of the University of St. Andrews. In the eleventh century it had for Coarb or Combarba — that is, for lay and hereditary abbot — the ancestor of the royal house of the Stuarts.

hear their sins revealed to them, and to accept the penance which he imposed upon them.[14]

His austerities.

Cuthbert prepared himself for preaching and the administration of the sacraments by extraordinary penances and austerities. Stone bathing-places, in which he passed the entire night in prayer, lying in the frozen water, according to a custom common among the Celtic saints, and which Wilfrid himself, as has been seen, had borrowed from them, are still shown in several different places.[15] When he was near the sea, he went to the shore, unknown to any one, at night, and, plunging into the waves up to his neck, sang his vigils there. As soon as he came out of the water he resumed his prayers on the sand of the beach. On one occasion one of his disciples, who had followed him secretly in order to discover the aim of this nocturnal expedition, saw two otters come out of the water, which, while the saint prayed on his knees, licked his frozen feet and wiped them with their hair until life and warmth returned to the benumbed members.[16] By one of those strange caprices of human frivolity which disconcert the historian, this insignificant incident is the only recollection which now remains in the memory of the people. St. Cuthbert is known to the peasant of Northumberland and of the Scottish borders only by the legend of those compassionate otters, even as the name of Columba recalls to the mariners of the Hebrides only the history of the tired crane, which he sent back to Ireland, its native country.

The legend of the otters.

He is sent from Melrose to Ripon. 660.

He had been for some years at Melrose, when the Abbot Eata took him along with him to join the community of Celtic monks established by King Alchfrid at Ripon. Cuthbert held the office of steward: and in this office showed the same zeal as in his missions.

[14] "Erat quippe moris eo tempore populis Anglorum, ut veniente in villam clerico vel presbytero, cuncti ad ejus imperium verbum audituri confluebant. . . . Cudbercto tanta erat dicendi peritia, tantus amor persuadendi." — *Vita*, c. 9.

[15] "Vas quoddam balnearium de lapide integro sibi fabricavit . . . quod vas adhuc in montis vertice permanet." — *Libellus*, c. 25. See above, p. 272, the history of Drychthelme, the penitent of Melrose, and for Wilfrid, p. 360.

[16] "Homo Dei obstinata mente . . . in mediis fluctibus et mari aliquando usque ad ascellas tumultuante et fluctuante tinctus est. . . . Venere continuo de profundo maris quadrupedæ quæ vulgo lutræ vocantur. . . . Iæ . . . anhelitu suo pedes ejus fovere cœperunt . . . lambentes pedes, volutantes tergebant pellibus suis, et calefacientes odoribus suis." — Boll., p. 119. Bede, c. 40.

When travellers arrived through the snow, famished and nearly fainting with cold, he himself washed their feet and warmed them against his bosom,[17] then hastened to the oven to order bread to be made ready if there was not enough. It may be perhaps remembered that the sons of Melrose had to give place to Wilfrid, when he, at the commencement of his campaign in favor of the Roman ritual and paschal unity, attempted to compel the Celtic colony of Ripon to give up their national customs.[18] It was a great and sudden storm, said Bede, with the prudent reserve which he observes in all that relates to the struggle between Wilfrid and other saints. Cuthbert returned with his countrymen to Melrose, resumed his life of missionary preaching, and again met his friend and master, the prior Boswell, at whose death in the great pestilence of 664,[19] Cuthbert was elected abbot in his place. He had been himself attacked by the disease; and all the monks prayed earnestly that his life might be preserved to them. When he knew that the community had spent the night in prayer for him, though he felt no better, he cried to himself, with a double impulse of his habitual energy, "What am I doing in bed? It is impossible that God should shut His ears to such men. Give me my staff and my shoes." And getting up, he immediately began to walk, leaning upon his staff. But this sudden cure left him subject to weakness which shortened his life.[20]

He is transferred to Lindisfarne.

However, he had not long to remain at Melrose.[21] The triumph of Wilfrid and the Roman ritual at the Conference of Whitby brought about a revolution in the monastic metropolis of Northumbria, and in the mother monastery of Melrose at Lindisfarne. Bishop Colman, as has been seen, had returned to Iona, carrying with him the bones of his predecessor, the first apostle of the country, and fol-

[17] See the Legend of the Angel. — *Vita S. Cuthberti*, c. 7.

[18] See above, p. 313, "Instante subito turbine, præfatus abbas cum Cuthberto et cæteris . . . domum repulsus est." — Bede, c. 8.

[19] See above, p. 333.

[20] "Utquid jaceo? . . . Date baculum et caligas. Statimque exurgens, cœpit tentare incessum baculo innitens." — *Vita*, c. 8.

[21] It is difficult to reconcile the *per aliquot annos* of Bede (c. 9) with the precise dates assigned by Simeon of Durham, or rather Turgott, the official historian of the diocese, who recognized Cuthbert as his patron — dates which are drawn from a comparison of the most ancient records. The Bollandists, agreeing with Simeon, fix in 664, the year of Boswell's death, and consequently the first year of Cuthbert's priorate, his translation to Lindisfarne. The chronology of his life is simple enough. He was born in 637, became a monk at Melrose in 651, prior at Lindisfarne in 664, an anchorite at Farne in 676, bishop in 684. He abdicated in 686, and died in 687.

lowed by all the monks who would not consent to sacrifice their Celtic traditions to Roman unity. It was of importance to preserve the holy island, the special sanctuary of the country, for the religious family of which its foundress had been a member. Abbot Eata of Melrose undertook this difficult mission. He became Abbot of Lindisfarne, and was invested with that kind of episcopal supremacy which has been already described, and which on Wilfrid's first downfall was to change into a full episcopate. He took with him the young Cuthbert, who was not yet thirty, but whom, however, he held alone capable of filling the important office of prior in the great insular community.

The struggle into which Eata and Cuthbert, in their proper persons, had entered against Wilfrid on the subject of Roman rites — a struggle to which they had themselves been victims at Ripon — did not point them out as the best men to introduce the novelties so passionately defended and insisted upon by the new Bishop of Northumbria. Notwithstanding, everything goes to prove that the new abbot and prior of Lindisfarne adopted without reserve the decisions of the Assembly of Whitby, and took serious pains to introduce them into the great Celtic community. Cuthbert, in whom the physical energy of a robust organization was united to an unconquerable gentleness, employed in this task all the resources of his mind and heart. All the rebels had not left with Bishop Colman; some monks still remained who held obstinately by their ancient customs. Cuthbert reasoned with them daily in the meetings of the chapter; his desire was to overcome their objections by patience and moderation alone: he bore their reproaches as long as that was possible; and when his endurance was at an end, raised the sitting without changing countenance or tone, and resumed next morning the course of the debate without ever permitting himself to be moved to anger, or allowing anything to disturb the inestimable gift of kindness and lightheartedness which he had received from God.[22]

[22] "Erant in monasterio fratres qui priscæ suæ consuetudini quam regulari mallent obtemperare custodiæ, quos . . . modesta patientiæ suæ virtute superabat et quotidiano exercitio . . . paulatim convertebat. . . . Sæpius in cœtu fratrum de regula disputans, cum acerrimis contradicentium fatigaretur injuriis . . . placido vultu atque animo egrediens. . . . Erat namque vir ad perferenda fortiter omnia quæ vel animo vel corpore adversa ingerebantur invictissimus, nec minus inter tristia quæ contigissent faciem prætendens hilarem." — *Vita*, c. 46. "Omni hora hilaris et lætus." — *Monach. Lindisf.*, p. 121.

He insists upon uniformity in monastic discipline.

It was not only the orthodox Eastern and other liturgical observances which he had to make acceptable to the monks of Lindisfarne. The difficulty of establishing in his monastery that regularity and uniformity which become monastic life was not less great. Was it the Benedictine rule in all its purity, such as Augustin had brought into Canterbury, and which Wilfrid at that very moment was laboring to communicate to Northumbria, which Cuthbert desired to introduce at Lindisfarne? The opinions of the most competent authorities are divided in respect to this.[23] Everything leads us to believe that the young and holy prior was desirous of adding to the rule of St. Benedict certain special customs justified by the habits and necessities of the Northumbrian climate and people. But his great desire was the strict observance of the rule when once established; and his historian boasts as one of his most remarkable victories the obligation he imposed forever upon the monks of Lindisfarne of wearing a simple and uniform dress, in undyed wool, and thus giving up the passionate liking of the Anglo-Saxons for varied and brilliant colors.[24]

His life both in the cloister and in the world at Lindisfarne. 664-676.

During the twelve years which he passed at Lindisfarne, the life of Cuthbert was identical with that which he had led at Melrose. Within doors this life was spent in the severe practice of all the austerities of the cloister, in manual labor united to

[23] Mabillon maintains the affirmative in opposition to the Bollandists (pp. 96 and 115), which latter go so far as to believe that the troubles which ensued on Wilfrid's arrival at Lindisfarne to replace Cuthbert as bishop, and of which Bede (see above, page 410) speaks so mysteriously, were caused by his attempt to introduce the rule of St. Benedict in place of the observances followed and recommended by Cuthbert. The opinion of Mabillon is founded chiefly on these words of the Lindisfarne monk: "Nobis regularem vitam primum componens constituit, quam usque hodie cum Regula Benedicti observamus." The Bollandists recognize the trace of a modern interpolation in the narrative of this monk, where he says that Cuthbert received on his entrance at Melrose "tonsuræ Petri formam, in modum coronæ spineæ caput Christi cingentis," whereas it is known that Melrose was the citadel of the Celtic tonsure. Let us acknowledge, in passing, that whatever was the rule established by Cuthbert, the saint, himself so austere, softened its regulations greatly for his monks, since we see that he recommended, and even enjoined them to eat a fat goose, upon which Mabillon adds, "Nec mirum si monachi illi anserina carne vescebantur, qui jam tum forsitan volatilia in piscium numero habebant." Finally, we observe that the use of wine was perfectly admitted among the companions of Cuthbert, and that they seem to have been connoisseurs in this matter.

[24] "Ut neque munditiis neque sordibus esset notabilis, ne quis varii aut pretiosi coloris habeat indumentum, sed ea maxime specie quam naturalis ovium lana ministrat." — *Vita*, c. 16.

the punctual celebration of divine worship, and such fervor in prayer that he often slept only one night in the three or four, passing the others in prayer, and in singing the service alone while walking round the aisle to keep himself awake. Outside, the same zeal for preaching, the same solicitude for the salvation and well-being, temporal as well as spiritual, of the Northumbrian people, was apparent in him. He carried to them the word of life; he soothed their sufferings by curing miraculously a crowd of diseases which were beyond the power of the physicians — a class which does not seem to have been wanting among the Anglo-Saxons of this period, as they are mentioned almost at every page of their miraculous records. But the valiant missionary specially assailed the diseases of the soul, and made use of all the tenderness and all the ardor of his own spirit to reach them. When he celebrated mass before the assembled crowd, his visible emotions, his inspired looks, his trembling voice, all contributed to penetrate and overpower the multitude. The Anglo-Saxon Christians who came in crowds to open their hearts to him in the confessional, were still more profoundly impressed: though he was a bold and inflexible judge of impenitent vice, he felt and expressed the tenderest compassion for the contrite sinner. He was the first to weep over the sins which he pardoned in the name of God; and he himself fulfilled the penances which he imposed as the condition of absolution, thus gaining by his humility the hearts which he longed to convert and cure.[25]

He becomes an anchorite in the desert island of Farne. 676.

But neither the life of a cenobite nor the labors of a missionary could satisfy the aspirations of his soul after perfection. When he was not quite forty, after holding his priorship at Lindisfarne for twelve years, he resolved to leave monastic life, and to live as a hermit in a sterile and desert island, visible from Lindisfarne, which lay in the centre of the archipelago, south of the holy isle, and almost opposite the fortified capital of the Northumbrian kings at Bamborough.[26] No one dared to

[25] "Circuibat insulam, . . . pariter et longitudinem psalmodiæ ac vigiliarum incedendo alleviabat. . . . Circumquaque morantem vulgi multitudinem more suo crebra visitatione ad cœlestia quærenda et promerenda succendebat. . . . Spiritu mansuetudinis modestus ad ignoscendum pœnitentibus, ita ut nonnunquam confitentibus sibi peccata sua his qui deliquerant, prior ipse miserans infirmos, lacrymis funderet, et quid peccatori agendum esset, ipse justus suo præmonstraret exemplo." — *Vita*, c. 16.

[26] A minute description and plan of this island, now inhabited and crowned by two lighthouses, will be found in the *History of St. Cuthbert*, by Mgr. Eyre; London, 1858.

live on this island, which was called Farne, in consequence of its being supposed the haunt of demons. Cuthbert took possession of it as a soldier of Christ, victorious over the tyranny of evil, and built there a palace worthy of himself, hollowing out of the living rock a cell from which he could see nothing but the sky, that he might not be disturbed in his contemplations. The hide of an ox suspended before the entrance of his cavern, and which he turned according to the direction of the wind, afforded him a poor defence against the intemperance of that wild climate. His holy historian tells us that he exercised sway over the elements and brute creation as a true monarch of the land which he had conquered for Christ, and with that sovereign empire over nature which sin alone has taken from us.[27] He lived on the produce of a little field of barley, sowed and cultivated by his own hands, but so small that the inhabitants of the coast reported among themselves that he was fed by angels with bread made in paradise.

Popular traditions respecting his sojourn at Farne.

The legends of Northumbria linger lovingly upon the solitary sojourn of their great national and popular saint in this basaltic isle. They attribute to him the extraordinary gentleness and familiarity of a peculiar species of aquatic birds which came when called, allowed themselves to be taken, stroked, and caressed, and whose down was of remarkable softness. In ancient times they swarmed about this rock, and they are still to be found there, though much diminished in number since curious visitors have come to steal their nests and shoot the birds. These sea-fowl are found nowhere else in the British Isles, and are called the *Birds of St. Cuthbert*.[28] It was he, according to the narrative of a monk of the thirteenth century, who inspired them with a hereditary trust in man, by taking them as the companions of his solitude, and guaranteeing to them that they should never be disturbed in their homes.[29]

[27] "Miles Christi, devicta tyrannorum acie, monarchus terræ, quam adierat, factus est. . . . Condidit civitatem suo aptam imperio . . . vivam cædendo rupem. . . . Qui enim Auctori omnium creaturarum fideliter et integro corde famulatur, non est mirandum si ejus imperiis ac votis omnis creatura deserviat. At nos plerumque idcirco subjectæ nobis creaturæ dominum perdimus, quia Domino et Creatori omnium ipsi servire negligimus." — *Vita*, c. 17, 21.

[28] Eider or Cuthbert-Ducks, — the *Oie à duvet* of Buffon, the *Anas mollissima* of Linnæus.

[29] "Aves illæ B. Cuthberti specialiter nominantur. . . . Ipse, adhuc viv-

It is he, too, according to the fishers of the surrounding islands, who makes certain little shells of the genus *Entrochus*, which are only to be found on this coast, and which have received the name of St Cuthbert's Beads. They believe that he is still to be seen by night seated on a rock, and using another as an anvil for his work. This tradition, like many others, has been consecrated by Sir Walter Scott in the poetic picture which he has drawn of the Northumbrian coast, between the two great monasteries of Whitby and Lindisfarne.[30]

His tender charity towards the penitents who came to consult him.

The pious anchorite, however, in condemning himself to the trials of solitude, had no intention of withdrawing from the cares of fraternal charity. He continued to receive frequent visits, in the first place from his neighbors and brethren at Lindisfarne, and in addition from all who came to consult him upon the state of their souls, as well as to seek consolation from him in adversity. The number of these pilgrims of sorrow was countless. They came not only from the neighboring shores, but from the most distant provinces. Throughout all England the rumor spread that on a desert rock of the Northumbrian coast there lived a solitary who was the friend of God, and skilled in the healing of human suffering. In this expectation no one was deceived; no man carried back from the sea-beaten island the same burden of suffering, temptation, or remorse which he had taken there. Cuthbert had consolation for all troubles, light for all the sorrowful mysteries of life, counsel for all its perils, a helping hand to all the hopeless, a heart open to all who suffered. He could

ens, avibus illis firmam pacem et quietem in patribus suis dederat. . . . Quod patribus avium antiquitus dederat, hoc, de illarum genere pullis procreandis, et filiis hereditarie in pacis et misericordiæ custodia perpetuis temporibus conservando præstabat. . . . Dum solitarius in rupe secum commaneret, ita edomuit prædicta volatilia et natilitia. . . . Se palpantes capere, contrectare et tenere permittunt . . . in gremio tuo ludendo reticent . . . ad mensam tuam si incola fueris veniunt . . . ad manus etiam blandientis, alis palpitantibus, confugiunt." — REGINALD DUNELMENSIS, *De Admirandis Cuthberti Virtutibus*, c. 27. Cf. RAINE's *St. Cuthbert;* Edinburgh, 1828, p. 22.

[30] "But fain Saint Hilda's nuns would learn,
If on a rock by Lindisfarne,
Saint Cuthbert sits, and toils to frame
The seaborn beads that bear his name.
Such tales had Whitby's fishers told,
And said they might his shape behold,
And hear his anvil sound."

SCOTT, *Marmion*, canto ii.

draw from terrestrial anguish a proof of the joys of heaven, deduce the certainty of these joys from the terrible evanescence of both good and evil in this world, and light up again in sick souls the fire of charity — the only defence, he said, against those ambushes of the old enemy which always take our hearts captive when they are emptied of divine and brotherly love.[31]

His hospitality.

To make his solitude more accessible to these visitors, and above all to his brethren from Lindisfarne, he had built at some distance from the cave which was his dwelling-place, at a point where the boats could land their passengers, a kind of *parloir* and refectory for the use of his guests. There he himself met, conversed, and ate with them, especially when, as he has himself told, the monks came to celebrate with him such a great feast as Christmas. At such moments he went freely into all their conversations and discussions, interrupting himself from time to time to remind them of the necessity of watchfulness and prayer. The monks answered him, "Nothing is more true; but we have so many days of vigil, of fasts and prayers! Let us at least to-day rejoice in the Lord."[32] The venerable Bede, who has preserved to us the precious memory of this exchange of brotherly familiarity, has not disdained to tell us also of the reproaches addressed by Cuthbert to his brothers for not eating a fat goose which he had hung on the partition-wall of his guests' refectory, in order that they might thoroughly fortify themselves before they embarked upon that stormy sea to return to their monastery.[33]

This tender charity and courteous activity were united in him to treasures of humility. He would not allow any one to suspect him of ranking the life of an anchorite above that

[31] "Nec eos fefellit spes. Nullus ab eo sine gaudio consolationie abibat; nullum dolor animi quem illo attulerat redeuntem comitatus est. Noverat quippe mœstos pia exhortatione refovere: sciebat angustiatis gaudia vitæ cœlestis ad memoriam revocare . . . didicerat tentatis multifarias antiqui hostis pandere versutias, quibus facile carperetur animus, qui vel fraterno, vel divino amore nudatus exsisteret." — *Vita*, c. 22.

[32] "Quondam cum adhuc demorarer in mea insula solitarius. . . . Obseco, fratres, caute agamus et vigilanter. . . . Cumque post hoc aliquandiu epulis, exsultationi ac fabulis indulgeremus, rursus admonere cœpi ut solliciti exsisteremus in orationibus et vigiliis. . . . Et illi: Bene, inquiunt, et optime doces, sed tamen, quia abundant dies jejuniorum, orationis et vigiliarum, hodie gaudeamus in Domino . . . epulantibus nobis et diem lætum ducentibus." — *Vita*, c. 27.

[33] "Pendebat autem auca in pariete. . . . Citissime mittite eam in caldaria: coquite et comedite, et sic in nomen Domini ascendite navem ac domum redite." — *Vita*, c. 36.

of a member of a community. "It must not be supposed," he said, "because I prefer to live out of reach of every secular care, that my life is superior to that of others. The life of good cenobites, who obey their abbot in everything, and whose time is divided between prayer, work, and fasting, is much to be admired. I know many among them whose souls are more pure, and their graces more exalted than mine; especially, and in the first rank, my dear old Boswell, who received and trained me at Melrose in my youth."[34]

Thus passed, in that dear solitude, and among these friendly surroundings, eight pleasant years, the sweetest of his life, and precisely those during which all Northumberland was convulsed by the struggle between Wilfrid and the new king, Egfrid. All those important events, the expulsion of the great bishop from his see of York, his first appeal to Rome, his return with a verdict in his favor, his fruitless application to Egfrid, his imprisonment and exile, have left no trace upon the life which Cuthbert, tranquil and happy, lived on his island rock, until a day arrived when the reverberation of this blow struck him in his turn. 676-684.

This was the day upon which the king of the Northumbrians, accompanied by his principal nobles and almost all the community of Lindisfarne, landed upon the rock of Farne, to beg, kneeling and with tears,[35] that he would accept the episcopal dignity to which he had just been promoted in the synod of Twyford, presided over by the Archbishop Theodore. He yielded only after a long resistance, himself weeping when he did so. It was, however permitted to him to delay his consecration for six months, till Easter, which left him still a winter to pass in his dear solitude, before he went to York, where he was consecrated by the primate, Theodore, assisted by six bishops. He would not, however, accept the diocese of Hexham, to which he had been first appointed, but persuaded his friend Eata, the Bishop and Abbot of Lindisfarne, to give up to him the monastic bishopric where he had already lived so long, and to occupy in his place the diocese created to vex Wilfrid in his own monastery. There is, however, no

He is made Bishop of Lindisfarne.

26th March, 685.

[34] "Jure est cœnobitarum vita miranda . . . quorum plurimos novi parvitatem meam longe et munditia mentis et culmine gratiæ prophetalis anteire. E quibus . . . Boisilus qui me quondam senex adolescentem nutriebat." — *Vita*, c. 22.

[35] "Genuflectunt omnes, adjurant per Dominum, lacrymas fundunt, donec ipsum quoque lacrymis plenum dulcibus extrahunt latebris." — *Vita*, c. 24. Cf. *Hist. Eccles.*, iv. 28.

evidence that he was influenced in this change by any reluctance to become an accomplice, even indirectly, in the spoliation of which Wilfrid had been the victim.[36]

The diocese of Lindisfarne spread far to the west, much beyond Hexham. The Britons of Cumbria, who had come to be tributaries of the Northumbrian kings, were thus included in it. King Egfrid's deed of gift, in which he gives the district of Cartmell, *with all the Britons* who dwell in it, to Bishop Cuthbert, still exists.[37] The Roman city of Carlisle, transformed into an Anglo-Saxon fortress, was also under his sway, with all the surrounding monasteries. It has been already told how the inhabitants were exhibiting to him the fine ruins, the walls and fountains of their city, at the moment when the mysterious intimation of Egfrid's downfall was given to him.[38] It was at Carlisle that he offered the first consolation to Queen Ermenburga, whom that calamity made a widow; and it was there also he returned to give to the queen the veil of the brides of Christ.

He remains a monk and missionary during his episcopate.

The episcopate of Cuthbert attaches itself to general history only by means of this dramatic episode of Carlisle, and by his connection with the enemy of Wilfrid, from this moment struck in her turn, and converted by adversity. But the history of his life receives an additional lustre from the virtues and good works which distinguished the brief course of this apostolical

[36] See above, page 375. Let us repeat here that from the first deposition of Wilfrid in 678, his vast diocese, which comprehended all Northumberland, had been divided into two new dioceses, the boundaries of which seem to have been those of the two kingdoms of Deïra and Bernicia. The seat of the former remained at York, and that of the latter was established either at Hexham or Lindisfarne. The Abbot of Lindisfarne and of Melrose, Eata, was placed in the Bernician bishopric. In 681, Archbishop Theodore, always occupied with the thought of diminishing the size of dioceses, separated Hexham from Lindisfarne, and, leaving Eata in his monastic cathedral, nominated to Hexham Trumbert, who had just been deposed by the synod of 684 *pro culpa cujusdam inobedientiæ*. When he gave up Lindisfarne to his former prior, Cuthbert, and went to Hexham, he took up again the government of a church which he had already occupied for three years. There was also the monastic bishopric of Abercorn, quite in the north, the bishop of which, Trumwine, accompanied Egfrid when he went to Cuthbert to pray him to accept the episcopate. Eata died in 686, and was replaced by St. John of Beverley.

[37] CAMDEN'S *Britanniæ*, iii. p. 131. Melrose was in the diocese of Lindisfarne; thus the population of Cuthbert's diocese was in a great part composed of vanquished races — Picts and Britons. This diocese was produced by the reaction of the foreign population whose lands had been absorbed in the kingdom of Bernicia." — VARIN, p. 33.

[38] See above, p. 402.

mission. His new dignity made no difference in his character, nor even in his mode of life. He retained his old habits as a cenobite, and even as a hermit. In the midst of his episcopal pomp he remained always the monk and missionary of old. His whole episcopate indeed, seems to bear the character of a mission indefinitely prolonged. He went over his vast diocese, to administer confirmation to converts, traversing a crowd more attentive and respectful than ever, lavishing upon it all kinds of benefits, alms, clothing, sermons, miraculous cures — penetrating as of old into hamlets and distant corners, climbing the hills and downs, sleeping under a tent, and sometimes indeed finding no other shelter than in the huts of branches brought from the nearest wood to the desert, in which he had made the torrent of his eloquence and charity to gush forth.[39]

Tenderness and compassion of his heart.

Here also we find illustrations, as at all previous periods of his life, of the most delightful feature of his good and holy soul. In the obscure missionary of Melrose, in the already celebrated prior of Lindisfarne, and still more, if that is possible, in the powerful and venerated bishop, the same heart, overflowing with tenderness and compassion, is always to be found. The supernatural power given to him to cure the most cruel diseases was wonderful. But in his frequent and friendly intercourse with the great Anglo-Saxon earls, the *caldormen*, as well as with the mixed populations of Britons, Picts, Scots, and English, whom he gathered under his crosier, the principal feature in the numerous and detailed narratives which remain to us, and which gives to them a beauty as of youth, always attractive, is his intense and active sympathy for those human sorrows which in all ages are the same, always so keen, and capable of so little consolation. The more familiar the details of these meetings between the heart of a saint and true priest and the simple and impetuous hearts of the first English Christians, the more attractive do they become; and we cannot resist the inclination of presenting to our readers some incidents which show at once the liveliness of domestic affections among those newly-baptized barbarians, and their

[39] "Implebat episcopi dignitatem, non tamen ut propositum monachi et anachoretæ virtutem desereret." — Bolland., p. 122. "Inter frequentiam turbarum monachicæ vitæ rigorem sollicitus observare . . . dum parochiam suam circumiens omnibus ruris casis et viculis monita salutis largiretur . . . devenit in montana et agresta loca, ubi multi erant de circumpositis villulus, quibus manus erat imponenda. . . . Tetenderunt ei tentoria, et cæsis de vicina silva ramusculis." — *Vita*, c. 26, 29, 32.

The mad countess.

filial and familiar confidence in their pastor. One of the caldormen of King Egfrid arrived one day in breathless haste at Lindisfarne, overwhelmed with grief, his wife, a woman as pious and generous as himself, having been seized with a fit of violent madness. But he was ashamed to disclose the nature of the attack; it seemed to him a sort of chastisement from heaven, disgracing a creature hitherto so chaste and honored: all that he said was that she was approaching death; and he begged that a priest might be given him to carry to her the viaticum, and that when she died he might be permitted to bury her in the holy isle. Cuthbert heard his story, and said to him with much emotion, "This is my business; no one but myself can go with you." As they rode on their way together, the husband wept, and Cuthbert, looking at him, and seeing the cheeks of the rough warrior wet with tears, divined the whole, and during all the rest of the journey consoled and encouraged him, explaining to him that madness was not a punishment of crime, but a trial which God inflicted sometimes upon the innocent. "Besides," he added, "when we arrive we shall find her cured; she will come to meet us, and will help me to dismount from my horse, taking, according to her custom, the reins in her hand." And so the event proved; for, says the historian, the demon did not dare to await the coming of the Holy Ghost, of which the man of God was full. The noble lady, delivered from her bondage, rose as if from a profound sleep, and stood on the threshold to greet the holy friend of the house, seizing the reins of his horse, and joyfully announcing her sudden cure.[40]

On another occasion, a certain Count Heunna, from whom he sought hospitality during one of his pastoral journeys, received him on his knees, thanking him for his visit, but at the same time telling that his wife was at the point of death, and he himself in despair. "However," said the count, "I

[40] "Erat præfectus Egfridi regis Hildmer nomine . . . a B. Cuthberto specialiter dilectus, et . . . crebro ab eo visitatus. Cujus uxor . . . membra in diversa raptando, non minimum cunctis incutebat horrorem. . . . Adscendit vir equum et concitus venit. . . . Erubescebat eam confiteri insanam quam vir Domini sobriam semper videre consueverat . . . olim tam pudicam et castam. . . . Hoc est meum ministerium: non alium sed ipse tecum pergere debes. Cumque agerent iter, videns socium suum flentem . . . profluentibus in maxillas lacrymis . . . consolari eum mitissimis verbis cœpit. . . . Ipsa mihi occurrens in acceptione habenarum istius equi quas nunc teneo . . . ministrabit nobis." — *Vita*, c. 15. "Viro Dei gratulabunda, occurrens, jumentum quo sedebat per frenum tenuit." — Bolland., p. 120.

firmly believe that were you to give her your blessing, she would be restored to health, or at least delivered by a speedy death from her long and cruel sufferings." The saint immediately sent one of his priests, without entering into the sick-room himself, to sprinkle her with water which he had blessed. The patient was at once relieved; and herself came to act as cupbearer to the prelate, offering him, in name of all her family, that cup of wine which, under the name of the *loving cup*, has continued since the time of the Anglo-Saxons to form a part of all solemn public banquets.[41]

The mother consoled.

A contagious disease at another time broke out in one part of his diocese, to which Cuthbert immediately betook himself. After having visited and consoled all the remaining inhabitants of one village, he turned to the priest who accompanied him, and asked, "Is there still any one sick in this poor place whom I can bless before I depart?" "Then," says the priest, who has preserved this story to us, "I showed him in the distance a poor woman bathed in tears, one of whose sons was already dead, and who held the other in her arms, just about to render his last breath. The bishop rushed to her, and taking the dying child from its mother's arms, kissed it first, then blessed it, and restored it to the mother, saying to her, as the Son of God said to the widow of Nain, 'Woman, weep not; have no more fear or sorrow; your son is saved, and no more victims to this pestilence shall perish here.'"[42]

His relations with women;

No saint of his time or country had more frequent or affectionate intercourse than Cuthbert with the nuns, whose numbers and influence were daily increasing among the Anglo-Saxons, and especially in Northumberland. The greater part of them lived together in the great monasteries, such as Whitby and Coldingham; but some, especially those who were widows or of advanced age, lived in their own houses or with their relatives. Such was

[41] "Pervenit ad comitis vicum. Ille . . . rem ut erat miserabilis et lacrymabilis omni familiæ, hoc est, uxoris velut hurticæ, vitam desperabilem episcopo revelavit. . . . Jam surgens, sicut socrus Petri, sanata ministravit eis. Illa enim primum totius episcopo *poculum lætitiæ* dedit, qui sibi exspiranti calicem mortis auferebat." — Bolland., p. 122.

[42] "Presbyter Tidi . . . in quodam vico qui dicitur Medelpong. . . . Conversus ad me mitissime dixit: Est-ne aliquis in villa hac adhuc pestilentia languens? . . . Ego jam ostendens signavi ei mulierem . . . quæ lacrymis faciem rigantibus præteritam ac præsentem testabatur æruminam. . . . O mulier, noli flere . . . ne metuas, nec mœsta sis." — Bolland., p. 124. *Vita*, c. 33.

With his foster-mother;

a woman devoted to the service of God, who had watched over Cuthbert's childhood (for he seems to have been early left an orphan) while he kept his sheep on the hills near Melrose, from the eighth year of his age until his entrance into the convent at the age of fifteen. He was tenderly grateful to her for her maternal care, and, when he became a missionary, took advantage of every occasion furnished to him by his apostolic journeys to visit her whom he called his mother, in the village where she lived. On one occasion, when he was with her, a fire broke out in the village, and the flames, increased by a violent wind, threatened all the neighboring roofs. "Fear nothing, dear mother," the young missionary said to her; "this fire will do you no harm;" and he began to pray. Suddenly the wind changed; the village was saved, and with it the thatched roof which sheltered the old age of her who had protected his infancy.[43]

With Queen Ethel-dreda;

From the cottage of his foster-mother he went to the palaces of queens. The noble Queen of Northumberland, Etheldreda, the saint and virgin, *regia virgo*, says the historian, before she left her throne and conjugal life to bury herself in the cloister, loved to surround herself with the religious of both sexes most renowned for their piety, and to converse familiarly with them for the good of her soul. She often called the young prior of Lindisfarne to her as well as Wilfrid, her guide and spiritual master, and this is the only occasion on which a meeting between these two contemporaries, so venerable yet so different, can be supposed to have taken place. The holy queen had a great friendship for Cuthbert. She overwhelmed him and his monastery with gifts from her own possessions, and wishing, besides, to offer him a personal token of her close affection, she embroidered for him, with her own hands (for she embroidered beautifully), a stole and maniple covered with gold and precious stones. She chose to give him such a present that he might wear this memorial of her only in the presence of God whom they both served, and accordingly would be obliged to keep her always in mind at the holy sacrifice.[44]

[43] "A quadam muliere, nomine Kenspid, adhuc vivens, sanctimonialis vidua. . . . Namque eam matrem appellavit, sæpe visitans eam. . . . Ventus abripiebat ignitos fœnei tecti fasciculos. . . . Præfata Dei famula concita accurrit. . . . Non timeas, inquit, mater; animi æquior esto: non enim tibi tuisve hæc quamlibet ferox flamma nocebit." — Bolland., p. 120. *Vita*, c. 14.

[44] "Regia virgo . . . sanctæ religionis ministros in fœdus amicitiæ viros

With the great abbesses;

Cuthbert was on still more intimate terms with the holy princesses, who, placed at the head of great communities of nuns, and sometimes even of monks, exercised so powerful an influence upon the Anglo-Saxon race, and particularly on Northumbria. While he was still at Melrose the increasing fame of his sanctity and eloquence brought him often into the presence of the sister of King Oswy, who then reigned over the two Northumbrian kingdoms. This princess, Ebba,[45] was abbess of the double monastery of Coldingham, of which mention has already been made, the farthest north of all the religious establishments of Northumbria, and that in which Queen Etheldreda sought refuge first after leaving her husband. Cuthbert was the guest for several days of the royal abbess; but he did not intermit on this account his pious exercises, nor, above all, his austerities and long prayers by night on the sea-shore. During the day he preached to Ebba's two communities, edifying them by the wonderful harmony between his life and his doctrine.[46] Perhaps he was not himself equally edified by all he saw, if we give faith to the assertions of later historians, who trace back to that visit the severe regulations attributed to him in respect to the intercourse of monks with women of whatsoever condition.[47]

Ebba of Coldingham;

ac mulieres sibi admittebat, quorum consilio atque consortio in omnem sanctimoniam provehi . . . arbitrabatur . . . præsertim . . . in familiaritatem colligendam fore ex cœtu monastico asserebat, inter quos . . . vitæ sanctitatis decore insignitum Cuthbertum . . . in gratiam ac dilectionem exhibuit. . . . Opus eximium et præclarum . . . ex auro et lapidibus pretiosis, propriis ut fertur manibus docta auri texturæ ingenio . . . ob internæ dilectionis intuitum . . . festinavit. . . . Juste enim virgo virginem et dilecta dilectum tali decebat oppugnari obsequio. . . . Unde solum in conspectu regis Domini assistens uteretur." — Thomas Eliensis, *Vita S. Etheldr.*, c. 9. This writer of the twelfth century affirms that the stole and maniple embroidered by Etheldreda for Cuthbert were venerated till his time at the Cathedral of Durham.

[45] "Sanctimonialis femina et mater ancillarum Christi nomine Ebba, regens monasterium . . . religione pariter ac nobilitate cunctis honorabilis." — *Vita*, c. 10.

[46] "Nec negare potuit quod ab eo charitas ex ancillæ Dei corde poposcit. . . . Dies aliquot ibi permanens, viam justitiæ quam predicabatur, omnibus actu pariter ac sermone pandebat." — *Vita*, c. 10.

[47] No trace of this prohibition is to be found in Bede, or in the narrative of the monk of Lindisfarne. But an obstinate tradition, repeated by all more recent writers, declares that Cuthbert forbade the entrance of women into the church of the monastery at Lindisfarne. When his body was transferred, along with the episcopal see, at an after period to Durham, the same prohibition was maintained there. No woman could enter the great cathedral of that city. The history of this celebrated church is full of anecdotes relative to the attempts made by ladies of high rank to evade this

With Elfleda of Whitby.

But the authority of this tradition, weakened as it is by the total silence of Cuthbert's biographers, is contradicted by his example. To the end of his life he maintained a very intimate and constant friendship with another abbess of the blood-royal of Northumbria, Elfleda, niece of St. Oswald and of King Oswy, who, though still quite young,[48] exercised an influence much greater than that of Ebba upon the men and the events of her time. It has been seen,[49] that, out of consideration for her, the holy anchorite left his islet of Farne to hold a conference with her in another island nearer to Whitby, in respect to the anxieties by which she was assailed on account of her brother, King Egfrid. Cuthbert was heartily attached to all the royal family of Northumbria, the Bernician dynasty, which had been restored in his childhood under the great and saintly Oswald. He had a special devotion for that martyred king, whose head was represented on his seal. Oswald's niece, the Abbess Elfleda, before she became the generous and powerful protectress of Wilfrid, was thus the friend and client of St. Cuthbert, linking together these two illustrious personages as the holy Queen Etheldreda had done. She had the liveliest affection for the Prior of Lindisfarne, and at the same time an absolute confidence in his sanctity. When she was assailed by an alarming illness, which fell into paralysis, and

humiliation. As time went on the severity relaxed, and there is still shown in the cathedral a line in blue marble which no woman could cross, but which permitted them at least to enter the nave, and see from a distance the choir and shrine of the saint. One of his historians adds: "Non tamen sexum illum detestando persequitur, sed occasionis delinquendi materiam amputando elidere conatur." — Reginaldus Dunelmensis, *De Admirandis B. Cuthberti Virtutibus*, p. 151. The Irish version of his Life gives two reasons for this prohibition — the first, that the daughter of the Pictish king, "in domo patris adulterata a quovis juvene," had represented the young hermit as being the father of her child; and afterwards, that, when he was a bishop, and during a pontifical procession, he saw himself followed by a woman of dazzling beauty, who attracted the eyes and troubled the minds of all present. "Vidit plerosque hominium cachinno resultando ridere. . . . Circumspiciens videt quandam sub specie mulieris, et crine, et facie, cum nitente vestium varietate, miro modo fulgentem. Omnem humanum effigiem sui pulchritudine præcedebat. . . . Quicumque illius vultus inspexerant præ nimiæ cupidinis lascivia pene seipsos excesserant." It was a devilish apparition, which he put to flight by sprinkling it with holy water. From that time until the twelfth century women were forbidden to be interred in churches dedicated to him, *Libellus de Ortu*, c. 29. One of these churches gave its name to the town and county of Kirkcudbright (Cuthbrichtiskhirche), Reginaldus, c. 84.

[48] She was born in 654, and was not thirty when Cuthbert met her in Coquet Isle. See the genealogical table, Appendix VI., p. 752.

[49] Page 407.

found no remedy from physicians, she cried, "Ah, had I but something which belonged to my dear Cuthbert, I am sure I should be cured." A short time after her friend sent her a linen girdle, which she hastened to put on, and in three days she was healed.[50]

Shortly before his death, and during his last pastoral visitation, Cuthbert went to see Elfleda in the neighborhood of the great Monastery of Whitby, to consecrate a church which she had built there, and to converse with her for the last time. They dined together, and during the meal, seeing his knife drop from his trembling hand in the abstraction of supernatural thoughts, she had a last opportunity of admiring his prophetic intuition, and his constant care for the salvation of souls. The fatigue of the holy bishop, who said, laughingly, "I cannot eat all day long; you must give me a little rest" — the eagerness and pious curiosity of the young abbess, anxious to know and do everything, who rushes up breathless during the ceremony of the dedication to ask from the bishop a *memento* for a monk whose death she had just heard of — all those details form a picture complete in its simplicity, upon which the charmed mind can repose amid the savage habits and wild vicissitudes of the struggle, then more violent than ever, between the Northumbrians and Picts, the Saxons and the Celts.[51]

His last visit to the Abbess Verca.

But the last of all his visits was for another abbess, less illustrious and powerful than the two princesses of the blood of Ethelfrid, but also of high birth, and not less dear to his heart, if we may judge by the mark of affection which he gave her on his deathbed. This was Verca, abbess of one of that long line of monasteries which traced the shores of the Northern Sea, seated on the high promontories, or at the mouths of the

[50] "Sanctimonialis virgo et regalis. . . . Multo virum Dei semper excolebat amore. . . . Cum nil curationis adhibere medici. . . . Utinam haberem aliquid de rebus Cuthberti mei! Scio certe et credo et confido in Domino quia cito sanarer." — Bolland., 121. *Vita*, c. 23.

[51] "Fidelissima abbatissa Elfleda de sancto episcopo aliud scientiæ spiritualis miraculum mihi revelavit. . . . Cum in parochia quæ dicitur Osingadum, simul in convivio sederent . . . præscius vicini sui obitus . . . rogatus a nobilissima et sanctissima virgine . . . venit ad possessionem monasterii ipsius, quatenus ibidem et ipsam videre atque alloqui, et ecclesiam dedicare deberet. . . . Manus ejus tremefacta, cultellus quem tenebat decidit in mensam. Jocose respondit: Num tota die manducare valebam? jam aliquando quiescere debui. Hæc audiens illa confestim misit ad majus suum monasterium. . . . Illa statim ad episcopum cucurrit . . . anhelans in basilicam pervenit." — Monach. Lindisf., ap. Bolland., 123. Bede, *Vita*, c. 34.

Northumbrian rivers. Her convent was on the mouth of the Tyne, the river which divided the two Northumbrian kingdoms, Deïra and Bernicia, and to it the body of the holy King Oswin had been carried after his murder.[52] She gave Cuthbert a magnificent reception; but the bishop was ill, and after the mid-day meal which was usual in all the Benedictine monasteries, he became thirsty. Wine and beer were offered to him, yet he would take nothing but water; but this water, after it had touched his lips, seemed to the monks of Tynemouth, who drank the remainder, the best wine they had ever tasted. Cuthbert, who retained nothing of the robust health of his youth, already suffered from the first attacks of the disease which carried him off. His pious friend was no doubt struck by his feebleness, for she offered him, as the last pledge of spiritual union, a piece of very fine linen to be his shroud.[53]

He returns to his rock to die. Jan., 687.

Two short years of the episcopate had sufficed to consume his strength. After celebrating the feast of Christmas in 686 with the monks of Lindisfarne, the presentiment of approaching death determined him to abdicate, and to return to his isle of Farne, there to prepare for the last struggle. Here he lived but two months in the dear and pleasant solitude which was his supreme joy, tempering its sweetness by redoubled austerities. When his monks came to visit him in his isle, which storms often made

[52] See above, p. 251.

[53] "A religiosa et ad sæculum quoque nobilissima famula Christi Verca abbatissa magnifice susceptus, postquam de meridiana quiete surrexerunt. . . . Confitebantur alterutrum quod videretur sibi nunquam melius vinum bibisse, sicut unus ex ipsis postea in nostro monasterio . . . sua mihi relatione testatus est." — Bede, *Vita*, c. 35. I do not know why the Bollandists, Mabillon, and M. Varin, agree in placing the monastery of Verca, not at Tynemouth on the Northumbrian Tyne, which flows past Hexham and Newcastle, on the road from Whitby to Lindisfarne, but at Tyninghame, a little monastery founded by St. Baldred († 606), also on the seaside like Tynemouth, but more to the north, at the mouth of the Scotch Tyne, which traverses Lothian and flows through Haddington. The remains of this very ancient monastery are still to be seen in the Earl of Haddidgton's park. This district had been restored to the Pictish dominion after the defeat of Egfrid and the flight of the Bishop of Abercorn, with all the communities of the country. The last historian of our saint, Mgr. Eyre, having more complete information, and writing on the spot, proves that it was Tynemouth, where there were two monasteries, one of monks on the north, the other of nuns on the south of the stream. Mr. Joseph Robertson is of the same opinion; he attributes the error of Mabillon to the inexact information given him by a priest of the Scottish college at Paris, who, though a learned man, had the mania, so common among the Scotch, of claiming for his country both places and personages belonging to Ireland and England.

inaccessible for weeks together, they found him thin, tremulous, and almost exhausted. One of them, who has given us a narrative of the end of his life, revived him a little by giving him warm wine to drink, then seating himself by the side of the worn-out bishop upon his bed of stone to sustain him, received from his beloved lips the last confidences and last exhortations of the venerated master. The visits of his monks were very sweet to him, and he lavished upon them to the last moment proofs of his paternal tenderness, and of his minute care for their spiritual and temporal well-being. His last illness was long and painful. He fixed beforehand the place of his burial, near the oratory which he had hollowed in the rock, and at the foot of a cross which he had himself planted. "I would fain repose," said he, "in this spot, where I have fought my little battle for the Lord, where I desire to finish my course, and from whence I hope that my merciful Judge will call me to the crown of righteousness. You will bury me, wrapped in the linen which I have kept for my shroud, out of love for the Abbess Verca, the friend of God, who gave it to me."[54]

The abbess's shroud.

He ended his holy life preaching peace, humility, and the love of that unity which he thought he had succeeded in establishing in the great Anglo-Celtic sanctuary, the new abbot of which, Herefrid, begged of him a last message as a legacy to his community. "Be unanimous in your counsels," the dying bishop said to him, in his faint voice; "live in good accord with the other servants of Christ; despise none of the faithful who ask your hospitality; treat them with friendly familiarity, not esteeming yourself better than others who have the same faith and often the same life. But have no communion with those who withdraw from the unity of Catholic peace, either by the

His last exhortation.

[54] "Ad dilectum eremiticæ conversationis agonem quantocius remeare curavit, quatenus indita sibi sollicitudinis mundanæ spineta liberior priscæ compunctionis flamma consumeret. . . . Qui cum duo menses in magna repetitæ suæ quietis exsultatione transigeret, multo consuetæ districtionis rigore corpus mentemque constringeret. . . . Vinum calefaciens attuli . . . videbam namque in facie ejus quia multum inedia simul et languore erat defessus. Completa curatione resedit quietus in stratu: resedi et ego juxta eum. . . . Ilic ubi quantulumcumque pro Domino certamen certavi . . . unde ad coronam justitiæ sublevandam me a pio judice spero. . . . Nolui quidem ea vivens indui, sed pro amore dilectæ Deo feminæ, quæ hanc mihi misit, Vercæ abbatissæ, ad obvolvendum corpus meum reservare curavi."— *Vita*, c. 36, 37. This shroud, recognizable by its extreme fineness, was found when his tomb was opened in 1104, according to Reginald, *De Admirandus*, &c., c. 41.

illegal celebration of Easter or by practical ill-doing. Remember always, if you must make a choice, that I infinitely prefer that you should leave this place, carrying my bones with you, rather than that you should remain here bent under the yoke of wicked heresy. Learn and observe with diligence the Catholic decrees of the fathers, and also the rules of monastic life which God has deigned to give you by my hands. I know that many have despised me in my life, but after my death you will see that my doctrine has not been despicable." These energetic words, and the allusion to his predecessor Colman, who had left Lindisfarne, carrying with him the bones of the holy Bishop Aïdan, rather than submit to ritualistic unity with Rome, shows that this unity had in the Celt Cuthbert a champion less impetuous and less rash than Wilfrid, but not less resolute and devoted.[55]

His death. 20th March, 687.

This effort was the last. He lost the power of speech, received the last sacraments in silence, and died, raising his eyes and arms to heaven, at the hour when it was usual to sing matins, in the night of the 20th March, 687. One of his attendant simmediately mounted to the summit of the rock, where the lighthouse is now placed, and gave to the monks of Lindisfarne, by waving a lighted torch, the signal agreed upon to announce the death of the greatest saint who has given glory to that famous isle. He was but fifty, and had worn the monastic habit for thirty-five years.

His most intimate friend dies on the same day and at the same hour.

Among many friends, he had one who was at once his oldest and most beloved — a priest called Herbert, who lived as an anchorite in an island of Lake Derwentwater, one of those fine lakes which make the district of Cumberland and Westmoreland the most picturesque part of England. Every year Herbert came from his peaceful lake to visit his friend in the other island, beaten and undermined continually by the great waves of the Northern Sea; and upon that wild rock, to the accompaniment of winds and waves, they passed several days together in a tender solitude and intimacy, talking of the life

[55] "Pondus ægritudinis facilitatem loquendi minoraverat. Verum me diligentius inquirente, quem hereditarium sermonem, quod ultimum vale fratribus relinqueret, cœpit disserere pauca sed fortia. . . . Multo plus diligo ut eruentes de tumulo tollentesque vobiscum ossa mea recedatis ab his locis, et ubicumque Deus providerit incolæ maneatis, quam ut ulla ratione consentientes iniquitati schismaticorum jugo colla subdatis. . . . Scio enim quia etsi quibusdam contemptibilis vixi, post meum tamen obitum, qualis fuerim, quam mea doctrina non sit contemnenda videbitis." — *Vita*, c. 39.

to come. When Cuthbert, then a bishop, came for the last time to Carlisle, to give the veil to Queen Ermenburga, Herbert seized the opportunity, and hastened to refresh himself at that fountain of eternal benefits which flowed for him from the holy and tender heart of his friend. "My brother," the bishop said to him, "you must ask me now all that you want to know, for we shall never meet again in this world." At these words Herbert fell at his feet in tears. "I conjure you," he cried, "do not leave me on this earth behind you; remember my faithful friendship, and pray God, that, after having served Him together in this world, we may pass into His glory together." Cuthbert threw himself on his knees at his friend's side, and after praying for some minutes, said to him, "Rise, my brother, and weep no more; God has granted to us that which we have both asked from Him." And in fact, though they never saw each other again here below, they died on the same day and at the same hour, the one in his isle bathed by the peaceable waters of a solitary lake, the other upon his granite rock fringed by the foam of the ocean; and their souls, says Bede, reunited by that blessed death, were carried together by the angels into the eternal kingdom.[56] This coincidence deeply touched the Christians of Northumbria, and was long engraven in their memory. Seven centuries later, in 1374, the Bishop of Carlisle appointed that a mass should be said, on the anniversary of the two saints, in the island where the Cumbrian anchorite died, and granted an indulgence of forty days to all who crossed the water to pray there in honor of the two friends.[57]

Contrast between Cuthbert and Wilfrid.

In all the histories of the saints, where shall we find a more complete contrast than that between Wilfrid and Cuthbert, though they were contemporaries, and devoted, from the bottom of their hearts, to the same cause? The life of Cuthbert, much shorter and less afflicted than that of Wilfrid, affords rest to the observer in the midst of the disturbances of a conflict to which,

[56] "In insula stagni illius pergrandis . . . jamdudum Cuthberehto spiritualis amicitiæ fœdere copulatus. . . . Dum sese alterutrum cœlestis sapientiæ poculis debriarent. . . . Memento, frater Hereberte, ut modo quidquid habes me interroges. . . . Obsecro per Dominum ne me deseras, sed tui memor sis fidissimi sodalis. . . . Unius ejusdemque momento temporis egredientes e corpore spiritus eorum, mox beata invicem visione conjuncti sunt, atque angelico ministerio pariter ad regnum translati cœleste." — *Vita*, c. 28.

[57] EYRE, p. 59. English readers will thank us for reminding them of the beautiful lines dedicated to our two saints by Wordsworth, a poet whose style

at the same time, he was not a stranger; but his part seems always to have been that of mediator and consoler. He liked better to persuade and to heal than to fight and vanquish. Besides Wilfrid, who is the saint of active life, of polemics, of publicity, of the struggle with kings, princes, and prelates, Cuthbert appears to us as the saint of nature, of a life retired and humble, of popular preaching, of solitude, and of prayer.

Notwithstanding this, the popularity of Cuthbert was immense, infinitely more general and more lasting than that of Wilfrid, or indeed of any other saint of his country and century. The Northumbrians listened with delight to the story of the pontiff who lived their own rustic and sea-faring life, a shepherd and a sailor by turns — who understood and had shared their occupations, their feelings, their necessities — who had taught them goodness by practising it himself, and truth by serving it without remission, but with a boundless charity.

While these recollections were engraved in the faithful memory of the laboring classes, kings, lords, and prelates

of expression does not always equal the nobility and purity of his inspiration, but who deserves to be better known than he is in France: —

"If thou, in the dear love of some one friend,
Hast been so happy that thou know'st what thoughts
Will sometimes, in the happiness of love,
Make the heart sink, then wilt thou reverence
This quiet spot; and, stranger, not unmoved,
Wilt thou behold this shapeless heap of stones —
The desolate ruins of St. Herbert's cell.
Here stood his threshold; here was spread the roof
That sheltered him, a self-secluded man,
After long exercises in social care
And offices humane, intent to adore
The Deity with undistracted mind,
And meditate on everlasting things
In utter solitude. But he had left
A fellow-laborer, whom the good man loved
As his own soul; and when, with eye upraised
To heaven, he knelt before the crucifix,
While o'er the lake the cataract of Lodore
Pealed to his orisons, and when he paced
Along the beach of this small isle, and thought
Of his companion, he would pray that both,
Now that their earthly duties were fulfilled,
Might die in the same moment. Nor in vain
So prayed he, as our chronicles report.
Though here the hermit numbered his last day,
Far from St. Cuthbert, his beloved friend,
These holy men both died in the same hour."

rivalled each other in demonstrations of respect and munificence to his relics and his spiritual posterity. All these different but equally persevering kinds of admiration produced an incredible amount of offerings, and especially gifts of land, made in his honor to the churches of Lindisfarne and Durham, in which successively he found a tomb. The words of Scripture were never more completely verified — "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth."

Posthumous glory of St. Cuthbert.

It would require a volume to tell the history of the worship of St. Cuthbert and his relics, a history which, during many centuries, is mixed up with the history of the north of England, and sometimes takes the leading place in it.[58] The history of the various journeys made by the monks of Lindisfarne, in the ninth and tenth centuries, to take back from the Danes the corpse of their beloved saint, along with the skull of the martyr-king Oswald, would make of itself an *Odyssey* full of varied and curious episodes. This treasure at last found an asylum upon a steep platform formed like a horseshoe, covered with wood, and surrounded on three sides by a rapid river, where was built in 995, a chapel which took the name of Durham, and to which was afterwards transferred the episcopal and abbatial see. From this moment the name and memory of Cuthbert hovered over the magnificent Cathedral of Durham, one of the most beautiful in the world. This magnificent building, with its three stories of arched windows, its two towers, its five naves and two transepts, forms, with the ancient castle of the bishop, built by William the Conqueror, a monument at once of religion and art as admirable as it is little known. It can be compared only to Pisa, to Toledo, to Nuremberg, or Marienburg. It has even a great advantage over all these celebrated places, in the beauty of the landscape which encloses it. It is the sole existing example of a splendid cathedral situated in the midst of an old wood, and on the height of a rock, the abrupt descent of which is bathed by a narrow and rapid river.[59]

Translation to Durham.

[58] This volume actually exists; it has been compiled with great care and elegance by Mgr. Eyre, Catholic priest of Newcastle, under the title of *History of St. Cuthbert, with an Account of the Wanderings with his Body during 124 years, of the State of his Body until 1542, and of the various Monuments erected to his Memory* (London, 1862); and has very serviceable maps and plans. It contains the later history of Lindisfarne and of the Cathedral of Durham. Amongst other curious details we are told that a statue of the holy bishop, erected four centuries after his death, bore this inscription: "Sanctus Cuthbertus monachus, episcopus Lindisfarnensis, nunc patronus ecclesiæ ac libertatis Dunelmensis."

[59] I may draw attention to the view from the corner of Framwellgate Bridge

The extreme veneration with which the Saxon people surrounded the relics of St. Cuthbert made this church the best endowed in England. The humble anchorite, who had lived on his rock by the modest produce of his manual labor alone, thus created the richest benefice, after Toledo, in Christendom.

Cuthbert had vainly asked his monks to bury him upon his rock of Farne, in order to spare them the trouble caused by the criminals who would come to take refuge at his tomb.[60] The monks of Lindisfarne exposed themselves willingly to these importunate visitors, rather than deprive their church of what was to be its most precious treasure. After his translation to Durham, universal consent conferred in an ever increasing degree upon the sanctuary where his relics reposed a universally respected right of asylum. The ring of sculptured bronze attached to the door of the cathedral, which any pursued criminal or persecuted innocent had but to grasp in order to have part in the inviolability of the sanctuary, is still shown. The few who ventured to disregard this inviolability incurred celestial punishment, which increased the fame of the sanctuary. But the good saint did not wait until they had sought the shelter of his tomb to extend the hand of tutelary protection over the unhappy and the oppressed. The records of his church are rich in narratives of his miraculous interposition in behalf of the unfortunate victims of feudal tyranny, or of the too often arbitrary and pitiless justice of the middle ages.[61] The poor who

as one of the most picturesque and curious in Europe. The visitor must follow the shady avenue of oaks and beeches which skirts the left side of the horseshoe formed by the Wear opposite to that on which the cathedral stands. Those who know the little town of Semur in Auxois, with its castle and church built on a peninsula surrounded by the Armançon, may, by trebling the proportions of the landscape and its monuments, form an idea of the situation of Durham. Those who have visited Toledo, and recollect how the Tagus hollows out a bed for itself between two rocks and winds about the plateau on which is built the ancient capital of Spain, can still better imagine the site of Durham; but at Toledo the metropolitan church, buried among houses, does not equal the effect of the English cathedral; it lacks also the fine trees which surround the sanctuary of St. Cuthbert with so beautiful a girdle.

[60] "Vobis commodius esse arbitror ut hic requiescam propter incursionem profugorum vel noxiorum quos non libet: qui cum ad corpus meum forte confugerint, qui (qualiscumque sum) fama tamen exivit de me quia famulus Christi sum: necesse habetis sæpius pro talibus apud potentis sæculi intercedere idque ideo de præsentia corporis mei inultum tolerare laborem." — Bede, *Vita*, c. 37.

[61] See the curious anecdotes of the twelfth century, related by the monk Reginald in his *Libellus de Admirandis Beati Cuthberti Virtutibus quæ*

invoked him saw the saint penetrate into the hideous dungeons where they were buried alive. At his voice their chains fell off, their instruments of torture were broken, and, like the angel who delivered St. Peter, Cuthbert led them to a safe place through the midst of sleeping jailers and closed doors.

He becomes the patron saint of Northumbria against internal oppression and foreign invasion.

But in this posthumous history of the holy abbot of Lindisfarne nothing is more singular or more touching than to see a man so humble, so modest, and so pacific, transformed into the patron saint, historical, warlike, and political, of all Northumbria, and that for six centuries at least after his death. It became a matter of pride to Northumbrian patriotism to sustain and demonstrate that Cuthbert was the most powerful intercessor produced by the Anglo-Saxon race, and that neither the glorious Queen Etheldreda nor the holy King St. Edmond, martyred by the Danes, nor St. Thomas of Canterbury himself, were so much listened to by God.[62] The principal Anglo-Saxon kings emulated each other in seeking his protection. The great King Alfred, when hidden in the marsh of Glastonbury, at the most critical moment of his struggle with the Danes, saw St. Cuthbert in a vision, who encouraged him, and promised him victory and the deliverance of his country. Canute, the great king of the Danes, when he became master of England, went barefooted to the tomb of Cuthbert, to pray there for the protection of the saint most venerated by the people he had just subdued. William the Conqueror himself, when he hastened to Durham to avenge the death of those Normans whom the inhabitants, intrenched in their sacred peninsula, had repulsed and slain, experienced a sort of supernatural impression before the tomb of the Anglo-Saxon saint, and respected the immunities on which

norellis patratæ sunt temporibus, which was written after the year 1172, at the request of the holy abbot Ælred of Rievaulx, and published for the first time by the Surtees Society in 1835. This collection is one of the most curious memorials of the religious and social condition of England in the twelfth century. Among a crowd of legends more or less fabulous, it contains many details equally original and authentic of the manners and institutions of the time. Side by side with great examples of sanctity and of habitual study of the Holy Scriptures, we find, both in lay and in religious life, scandals and excesses of tyranny which nothing could now make supportable in Western Europe, and which could only be reproduced under the dominion of the Czars.

[62] "Gloriosæ reginæ Etheldrithæ . . . tribus præcipuis Anglorum sanctis." — Reginald, c. 19, 115.

the vassals of the bishopric plumed themselves in honor of their patron.[63]

In fact, the Norman Conquest did not in any way diminish the popularity of Cuthbert; Normans and Saxons were rivals for his protection. It is on record that an Anglo-Norman knight of the eleventh century returned from a pilgrimage to Rome, carrying the whole way, upon his bosom, a great piece of antique marble intended to decorate the altar of the holy bishop.[64]

Under the Anglo-Saxon monarchy Durham thus inherited at once all the veneration which attached to Lindisfarne, the cradle of faith and of the national Church of Northumbria — and to the personal memory of St. Cuthbert. Under the feudal royalty of the Plantagenets, the bishops who took special honor to themselves as his successors, succeeded in some degree in identifying themselves and their domains with him. Devotion to St. Cuthbert became so respected and so officially efficacious, that all that was given to them and all they acquired was legally invested with what was called, in the middle ages, *freedom* — that is to say, exemption from all taxes and all jurisdiction except that of the possessor. All the vast bishopric was considered the patrimony of St. Cuthbert, and bore his name. By reason of this privilege the bishops of Durham acquired by degrees all the attributes of royalty. They had a chancery, an admiralty, an exchequer, civil and criminal judges, the right of coining money, and in addition the defence and suzerainty of the English frontier against the Scotch.[65] It was in consequence of having wasted the lands of St. Cuthbert that King David of Scotland drew upon himself the terrible defeat known as the Battle of the Standard;[66] and it was upon a fief of the saint's patrimony, though enclosed by the diocese of York, that this decisive victory of the Anglo-Norman barons was gained.[67]

Two centuries after that great day, Normans and Saxons finally melted down into one nation, marched to battle against the Scots under the *vexillum Sancti Cuthberti*, which was no other than the corporal used by the prior of Lindisfarne to cover the chalice at mass, and which his pious admirers had

[63] Simeon Dunelmensis, c. 44.
[64] Reginald, c. 74.
[65] Camden's *Britannia*, Gough's ed., vol. iii. p. 109.
[66] See above, p. 446.
[67] Ricard. Hagulstad., pp. 82, 88, 93, Surtees edition.

taken the fancy of placing on the point of a lance, and carrying in place of a banner.[68] Edward III. was in France, where he had just won the battle of Crecy, and was besieging Calais. King David II. of Scotland, son of the illustrious Robert Bruce, had taken advantage of his absence to make a new invasion of Northumberland. He came as far as the walls of Durham at the head of thirty thousand Scots, whose devastations recalled only too distinctly those of their ancestors the Picts. The Queen of England, the generous Philippa of Hainault, led in her own person, to meet the enemy, an army inferior in number, but inspired by the idea of punishing the sacrilegious cruelty of the invaders. The Scots had not even respected the possessions and vassals of the abbey, which was still called the patrimony of St. Cuthbert. At the moment when the fight was about to begin, the prior of the monastery planted the standard of the saint upon a height near the field of battle, around which all the monks assembled in prayer. Victory pronounced itself for the English: their formidable archers, drawn specially from among the vassals of St. Cuthbert, made short work with the Scottish men-at-arms. The Scottish army was annihilated, and King David wounded and made prisoner along with his archbishop and the flower of his nobility. The next morning the victors, led by the chiefs of the two great chivalric houses of Norman Northumberland, the Nevilles and Percies, carried back to the monastic cathedral, along with the banners taken from the Scots, the precious relic they had borrowed. It reappeared in many battles, always assuring victory to the English, up to the reign of Henry VIII. The last time that this holy banner appeared on a field of battle was again in

Battle of Neville's Cross. 17th Oct., 1346.

[68] Reginald, *De Virtutibus*, c. 39. See also Bolland., p. 127, for another curious instance of the protection given by St. Cuthbert against the Scotch in 1297, from whence Camden derived his saying — "Anglorum reges et proceres credidisse S. Cuthbertum contra Scottos tutelarum divum fuisse." Walter Scott, always so skilful in invoking the poetical and religious traditions of the Scottish Marches, has not passed over this one: —

> "Who may his miracles declare?
> Even Scotland's dauntless king, and heir, . . .
> Before his standard fled.
> 'Twas he, to vindicate his reign,
> Edged Alfred's falchion on the Dane,
> And turned the Conqueror back again,
> When with his Norman bowyer band
> He came to waste Northumberland."
>
> — *Marmion*, canto ii. 15.

the hands of the Nevilles and Percies, in the glorious but ill-fated insurrection of the Northumbrians against the atrocious tyranny of Henry VIII. in 1536.[69] This insurrection, known under the name of the *Pilgrimage of Grace*, in favor of the religion which the saints of Lindisfarne had brought into Northumbria, and which the miserable husband of Anne Boleyn wished to destroy, ended only in the massacre of the rural population, and in the judicial murder of the principal nobles and priests of the country — among others, of the last successor of St. Wilfrid at Hexham. Under the reign of this *Defender of the Faith* the standard of St. Cuthbert had the same fate as his body, which up to that time had remained uncorrupted. These holy remains, along with the bones of the venerable Bede, were torn from the shrine in which they had been venerated by so many grateful generations; and the noble banner was also torn from the sanctuary and thrown into the fire by the wife of an apostate priest.[70]

[69] RAINE'S *Priory of Hexham*, Appendix, p. 136, notes 141, 150. The instruction of Henry VIII. to the Duke of Norfolk, as to the punishment of rebels, may be read p. 151. They direct that *a good number* of the inhabitants of every city, village, and hamlet shall be hanged and quartered, and, above all, as many priests and canons as possible are without ceremony *to be tyed uppe*. It reads like the instructions of the Committee of Public Safety to the Terrorist generals in La Vendée.

[70] The shocking details of this profanation, with an extremely curious description of the ancient usages of the great Cathedral of Durham before the Reformation, are to be found in a rare volume, entitled *The Ancient Rites and Monuments of the Monastical and Cathedral Church of Durham*. By J. D. (Davies), of Kidevelly; London, 1672, in 8vo.

James Raine, an Anglican writer whose erudition is clouded by his bigoted prejudices against the religion and the times which he has studied, affirms that at the opening of the tomb of St. Cuthbert in 1827 his body was discovered, together with his garments, comb, and other objects represented in the illustrations of a work entitled *St. Cuthbert, with an Account of the State in which his Remains were found upon the opening of his Tomb in Durham Cathedral in the year* 1827. By James Raine, rector of Meldon; Durham, 1828, in 8vo. The authenticity of this discovery is denied by Mgr. Eyre, according to whom the body of the saint is deposited in a hiding-place, the secret of which is known only to three English Benedictines!

The British Museum now contains the most ancient monument consecrated to the honor of the great Northumbrian saint — the Gospel called St. Cuthbert's. This celebrated MS. was the gift of Sir Robert Cotton, 1631. It was written between 700 and 720 by two bishops of Lindisfarne, Eadfreth and Ethelwold, and illuminated by the latter. The monk Betfreth enriched it with gilding and precious stones. It has a Northumbrian glossary of the end of the ninth century, interlined by a priest, Aldred — "bonæ mulieris filius eximius." The whole four, according to a final note, "Deo et Cuthberto construxerunt vel ornaverunt." It is a most curious monument of Irish art. According to Sir Frederick Madden, it bears all the marks of this special and extremely elegant art. It is discussed at length in an essay by Dr. Reeve, entitled *On Early Irish Calligraphy*, 1860, in 4to.

Less dazzling and less universal, but not less lasting, was the popularity of the holy Bishop of Lindisfarne with the seafaring population of the Northumbrian shores. This is apparent through all the different narratives which remain to us concerning the worship of which he was the object during so many centuries, and which throw a precious light upon the ideas, manners, and belief of the ancient English people. But let us state, in the first place, that all the monks of that district were, like Cuthbert, bold and unwearied sailors. There are no more interesting recollections of their life than those which show them to us in constant conflict with the element on which England has established her dominion. In that point, as in all else, the monks show themselves in history the pioneers of the Anglo-Saxon race. It is pleasant to see them sounding a prelude, as it were, by their courage and address, to the exploits of the most maritime nation in the world.

Popularity of St. Cuthbert on sea as on land.

Sailor monks.

"Rule, Britannia! Britannia, rule the waves!"

The narratives of the seventh century are full of the cruel tempests which reigned upon the east coast of England, still one of the shores most abounding in shipwrecks.[71] But no danger stopped the sons of those bold sailors who owed the conquest of Great Britain to their experience of the sea. The Anglo-Saxon monks, under the frock and scapular, wore hearts which did not yield either in vigor or activity to any of their ancestors or countrymen. They coasted continually between the different monasteries and their dependencies, which extended along that coast bristling with rocks and reefs. Sometimes the furious waves drove them out to sea, out of sight of land, sometimes held them shut up in some desert isle or solitary bay for whole days and weeks. Then, as soon as the wind fell, they put out again to encounter new dangers in their miserable barks, rocked on the crest of

[71] "En tellus nivibus, nebulis cœlum horrescit, aer flatibus adversis furit, fluctibus æquor . . . manente triduo tempestate prævalida. . . . Exorta subito tempestas fera, omnem eis naviganda facultatem abstulit . . . septem dies fervente unda conclusi, tristes in insula resederunt . . . quinque diebus obstitit tempestas ne redire possemus." — *Vita S. Cuthberti*, c. 11, 36, 37. "Ecce subito, positis in medio maris . . . tanta ingruit tempestatis hiems ut neque velo neque remigio quicquam proficere valeremus. . . . Cumque diu cum vento pelagoque frustra certantes tandem post terga respiceremus . . . invenimus nos undique versum par tempestate præclusos." — BEDE, *Hist. Eccles.*, v. i.

the waves like sea-gulls. They were compared to sea-birds by those who from the shore saw them struggling against the storm; and it was under this aspect that they appeared for the first time to Cuthbert, when in his youth, before he became a monk, he witnessed, in the midst of a mocking and hostile crowd, the fruitless efforts of the monks of Tynemouth to effect a landing, against wind and tide, with the wood for building, which they were carrying to their monastery in five little boats.[72] The prayer of Cuthbert saved them, and brought them happily into port, where their brethren awaited them, all kneeling in a mass upon a point of rock which projected into the raging waves, to implore from heaven the safety of their companions.

Cuthbert, when a child, sees them like sea-birds on the waves.

When Cuthbert himself became a monk, his duties as missionary and prior, and afterward his prolonged sojourn upon the isle of Farne, familiarized him with all the dangers and habits of that seafaring existence which was so closely associated with monastic life. This recollection, joined to the popular glory of his name, gave him the place of patron saint to the poor seamen condemned to gain their bread by braving daily that stormy sea. Late in the twelfth century it was still told among them how, in the midst of the hurricane, the sailors in extremity saw the holy bishop of Lindisfarne appear in the midst of them, with his mitre on his head and his crosier in his hand, which he used sometimes as a helm, sometimes as an oar, sometimes as a grappling-iron, to save them from shipwreck, and bring them to a place of safety: no one dared to ask him his name, for all recognized, by the sheen of his beautiful and gentle countenance, the tender-hearted pontiff whom they had all been taught to venerate from their infancy as the protector of the country and of the coast.[73] It occurred to no one in those days to doubt the reality of such an apparition. For all the nations of Christendom at this period there was nothing more natural than the supernatural. It was only a

His appearance to lost sailors.

[72] "Quod videntes e monasterio fratres, emissis in fluvium naviculis, eos qui in ratibus laborabant adjuvare nitebantur. . . . Sed vi fluminis et violentia ventorum superati, nequaquam valebunt. . . . Collecti in proximo obice flectebant genua . . . adeo ut quasi quinque aves parvulæ, quinque rates undis insidentes apparuerent." — *Vita S. Cuthberti*, c. 3.

[73] "Cuthbertus, quasi in specie corporali, omnibus visibilis et palpabilis apparuit, et in prora navis, gubernatoris de more, resedit. . . . Baculo pastorali de modo gubernaculi, pontem sævientem secando dividebat." — Reginaldus, *De Virtutibus S. Cuthberti*, c. 23.

more frequent and more direct intervention of the omnipotence of God, which appalled them or consoled them, but did not surprise.

In this dangerous archipelago, and on the precipitous island where Cuthbert had his favorite dwelling and where he died, he had more than one successor ambitious of following his holy footsteps in the same spot where he had best known and served his God. The first of these was a monk of Ripon called Ethelwold, who, more effectually moved by the example of Cuthbert than by the lessons of Wilfrid, lived for twelve years in the cell of his holy predecessor, the opening of which he attempted to close against the wind and rain by clay, hay, and finally by a hide, that he might not be troubled in his contemplations.[74] But when the moaning of the wind and the waves, which broke against the basaltic precipices of his isle, warned him of coming calamity, he issued from his shelter to hasten to the aid of the shipwrecked; and the sailors, driven in the midst of storm, saw him kneeling on the summit of his rock with his hands raised to heaven imploring from God the salvation of his brethren.[75]

The hermit Ethelwold prays for the shipwrecked. 687–695.

The Anglo-Saxon anchorite thus set up before God and man, on his unknown isle, and in the depths of an unknown age, a touching and glorious symbol of the everlasting part played by his fellow-monks, always ready to lavish upon Christians treasures of intercession, and to encounter public plagues and perils, as well as those temptations and tempests of the soul of which the waves in fury are but an imperfect image.

It is pleasant to connect with this old saint of the past a Christian heroine of our own days, the young and touching figure of Grace Darling, who came from the very isle of Cuthbert and Ethelwold to expose her life on behalf of the shipwrecked — as if that wild and threatening coast had been pre-

Grace Darling, the Christian heroine of the same archipelago in the nineteenth century.

[74] "Sumto fœno, vel argilla, vel quicquid hujusmodi materiæ reperisset, stipaverat rimulas, ne quotidianis imbrium sive ventorum injuriis ab orandi retardaretur instantia. . . . Pelliculam vituli in angulo, quod et ipse et prædecessor Cuthbertus sæpius orans stare vel genuflectere solebat, clavis affixam violentiis procellarum opposuit." — *Vita S. Cuthberti*, c. 46.

[75] "Ubi longius visum levavimus, vidimus in ipsa insula Farne, egressum de latibulis suis amatissimum Deo patrem iter nostrum inspicere. Audito fragore procellarum ac ferventis Oceani, exierat videre quid nobis accideret, cumque nos in labore ac desperatione positos cerneret, flectebat genua." — Bede, *Hist. Eccles.*, v. 1.

destined by God up to our own time to be at once the locality and the witness of the noblest deeds of charity. Grace was the daughter of the keeper of one of those lighthouses which modern science has raised upon the group of isles between Lindisfarne and Bamborough. One night, 5th Sept., 1838. in the midst of a terrible storm, she was awoke by the cries of the crew of a great ship which had gone ashore on a neighboring reef. She awoke her father, and alone with him, oar in hand, in a frail boat, she rushed to the help of the perishing. The sea had never been more furious, nor the difficulty and danger of managing a boat greater. After desperate efforts, she at last reached the rock to which clung the last survivors of the crew. They were but nine in number, all of whom she took into her boat. The rage of the waves and violence of the wind were such that it took almost an entire day to row them back to the lighthouse, where she harbored and cared for them for three days and nights. All England burst into a unanimous transport of enthusiasm on learning this heroic act; and from the royal palace to the smallest village all echoed her praise. She was only twenty, and was no doubt already attacked by the pulmonary disease of which she died four years after- 1842. wards. She died without any desire to leave her father and her island, leaving only a name worthy of eternal recollection, worthy to be inscribed among the heroes and saints. In Anglo-Saxon times she would have been canonized by the popular voice, as were all the saints whose history we record; and her place would have been fixed between Hilda and Ebba, the two great abbesses of her race and country, whose profaned altars and forgotten fame still hallow in the north and south the historic region which Grace Darling has lighted up with a modern and touching glory.[76]

[76] The ship wrecked upon the reefs of Longstone Island was a steamboat called the Forfarshire. Grace Darling's lighthouse is situated upon the isle called Longstone or Outer Farne. See the fine notice of this incident given by M. Alphonse Esquiros in one of his excellent articles upon England and English life (*Revue des Deux Mondes*, 1864), and for the localities Cruchley's excellent *Reduced Ordnance Map*, No. 62. Grace Darling's father died in May, 1865. He is buried beside his daughter, who rests in the cemetery at Bamborough, upon the site of the ancient capital of those Northumbrian kings of whom we have spoken so much. The monument raised by a national subscription to this young heroine of Christian charity is visible at sea a great distance off.

CHAPTER II.

ST. BENEDICT BISCOP, AND THE MONASTERIES OF WEARMOUTH AND YARROW.

Benedict Biscop represents science and art, as Wilfrid represents public, and Cuthbert spiritual, life. — His birth and conversion. — His four first expeditions to Rome. — He gains the heart of King Egfrid. — Foundation of Wearmouth. — He brings masons and glassmakers from France. — His fifth and sixth visits to Rome, from which he brings back many relics, books, and pictures. — Important works of painting in the new monasteries. — A Roman abbot teaches liturgical music to all the Northumbrian monasteries, and assures himself of the orthodoxy of the English clergy in respect to the heresy of the Monothelites. — Foundation of Yarrow. — Fraternal union of the two monasteries in imitation of their patrons Saints Peter and Paul. — Benedict takes his nephew Easterwine as his coadjutor. — The occupations of a Saxon noble transformed into a monk. — Death of Easterwine. — Severe illness of Benedict. — His last injunctions. — His touching death by the side of his dying coadjutor. — After him Ceolfrid, the son of an ealdorman, disciple of Wilfrid and Botulph, governs the two monasteries. — History of Botulph, the founder of Boston and apostle of the Benedictine order. — Ceolfrid, as abbot, takes great pains to increase the libraries. — He makes an exchange of a book for an estate with the King of Northumbria. — His desire to die at Rome. — Grief of the six hundred monks who accompanied him to the spot where he embarked. — Their letter to the Pope. — He is able to go only as far as Langres, where he dies. — How Christianity taught the barbarous Saxons to love each other.

Benedict Biscop, the representative of art and science as Wilfrid was of public, and Cuthbert of spiritual, life.

A THIRD saint, whose name has been already mentioned in this record, comes in between Wilfrid and Cuthbert, Benedict Biscop, the companion of Wilfrid in his first journey to Rome, and during the last half of his life the neighbor of Cuthbert, whom he followed closely to the tomb. In the retirement of the cloister, and, so to speak, in private life, Benedict held the position which Wilfrid held in public life, as the champion of Roman unity and propagation of the Benedictine rule. He represents, besides, in the monastic constellation of the seventh century, intelligence, art, and science, as Cuthbert represents the gift of preaching and ascetic life. His fame was less than that of Wilfrid, and, with still greater reason, less than that of Cuthbert; but he has, notwithstanding,

won a noble place in the annals of the Anglo-Saxon Church. We find various features in his life which do honor to his soul, and which are not without interest in the history of human intelligence.

Birth and conversion of Benedict Biscop. 628.

Benedict was born, like Wilfrid, but several years before him, of the highest Anglo-Saxon nobility.[77] While he was still very young, he held an office in the household of King Oswy, who, according to the customs of the new-born feudalism, invested him with a fief taken from the national property, and proportioned to the importance of his office.[78] At twenty-five he gave up secular life, marriage, and his family, restored his lands to the king, and dedicated himself to the service of God. Before he settled in any community he went to Rome, where he had been long attracted by that desire of paying his vows at the tombs of the apostles which became so general among the Anglo-Saxons. It has been seen, in the history of Wilfrid,[79] how, after beginning their journey together, the two young Northumbrian nobles separated at Lyons, and how Benedict, after his first visit to Rome, returned there a second and third time, having in the meantime assumed the monastic habit in the island of Lerins, a monastery which had just entered into the family of St. Benedict. It may also be remembered that Pope Vitalinus, struck with the piety and knowledge of so constant and zealous a pilgrim, assigned him as guide and interpreter to the Greek Theodore, who undertook, at the age of sixty-seven, to take the place of St. Augustin, and who retained his Anglo-Saxon guide with him for two years, transforming him from a monk of Lerins into the abbot of the principal monastery in Canterbury.[80]

653.

His journeys to Rome.

669.

After thus spending two years with the new archbishop, the Abbot Benedict, instead of revisiting his native district, went for the fourth time to Rome. He was then in the prime of life; but when it is considered what were the difficulties and dangers of such a journey at such a time — when we remember that a journey from London to

671.

[77] Wilfrid's historian informs us that his true name was Baduging: we have no information why he took the name of Benedict, under which he is generally known, nor whence came his surname of Biscop, since he was never a bishop.

[78] "Nobili stirpe gentis Anglorum progenitus . . . cum esset minister Oswii regis, et possessionem terræ suo gradui competentem, illo donante, perciperet." — Bede, *Vitæ Abbatum in Wiramutha et Girvum*, c. 1.

[79] See above, p. 308.

[80] St. Peter's, since called St. Augustin's.

Rome was then twice as long as and a hundred times more dangerous than a journey from London to Australia is now — we are amazed at the resolution and energy which then, as ever since, has induced so many Christians, and especially so many Anglo-Saxon monks, not once only, but many times in their life, to cross the sea and the Alps on their way to Rome. His fourth expedition was undertaken in the interests of literature. He brought back from it a rich cargo of books, partly sold, partly given to him; and in passing by Vienna, the ancient capital of the Gauls, on his return, he brought with him many more, which he had deposited there in the charge of his friends.[81] When he returned at length to his native Northumbria he sought King Egfrid, the son of his former master, then the reigning monarch, and told him all he had done during the twenty years which had passed since he left his country and the royal service. Then, endeavoring to communicate to him the religious ardor with which his own heart was filled, he explained to the king all he had learned, at Rome and elsewhere, of ecclesiastical and monastic discipline, showing him the books and relics which he had brought back. Egfrid, who had not yet begun his unfortunate struggle with Wilfrid, allowed himself to be won by the stories of the pilgrim, for whom he conceived a great affection; and in order that he might apply his experience to the government of a new community, he detached from his own possessions, and presented to Benedict, an estate large enough to feed seventy families, and give occupation to seventy ploughs, according to the mode of calculating the value of land among the Anglo-Saxons.[82]

He gains the heart of King Egfrid.

The estate was situated at the mouth of the Wear, a little stream which flows through Durham, and throws itself into the Northern Sea a little south of the Tyne. This gave the name of Wearmouth to the new monastery, which was consecrated to St. Peter, the prince of the apostles, according to the express wish of Egfrid, in

Foundation of Wearmouth. 673-675.

[81] "Libros omnis divinæ eruditionis non paucos, vel placito pretio emptos, vel amicorum dono largitos retulit. . . . Emptitios ibi quos apud amicos commendaverat, recepit." — *Vitæ Abbat.*, c. 4.

[82] "Confestim ei terram LXX. familiarum de suo largitus." — *Ibid.* Commentators suppose that Bede intended to indicate under the word *familia* the space of ground otherwise called a *hide* or *carrucata* — that is to say, the portion of land which could be cultivated by one plough in the space of a year.

agreement with that of Benedict as an evidence of his leanings towards Rome.[83]

He brings masons and glass-makers from France.

This foundation was no sooner assured than the unwearied Benedict took ship again, to seek in France *cæmentarii*, like those whom Wilfrid brought about the same time from Canterbury. As soon as they arrived he set them to work in building a stone church, in the Roman style, for everything that came from Rome was dear to him. It was in honor of St. Peter that he undertook this work, and it was carried on with so much energy that, a year after the first stone was laid, the church was roofed in and mass celebrated under one of those stone arches which excited the surprise and admiration of the English of the seventh century. He brought glassmakers also from France, for there were none in England; and these foreign workmen, after having put glass into the windows of the church and new monastery, taught their art to the Anglo-Saxons.[84] Animated by a zeal which nothing could discourage, and inspired by intelligent patriotism, and a sort of passion for beauty in art, which shrank neither from fatigue nor care,[85] he sent to seek beyond the seas all that he could not find in England — all that seemed

Renewed expeditions to Rome. 678.

[83] There are two distinct ecclesiastical sites at the mouth of the Wear — on the north, Monk-Wearmouth, where Benedict Biscop's monastery was situated; and Bishop-Wearmouth, on the south, which owes its origin to the bishops of Durham. Both are swallowed up in the town of Sunderland, situated on the east of Bishop-Wearmouth, on the sea, which is now one of the principal seaports in England.

Wearmouth has become at the present time one of the chief centres of the collieries, and also of those hideous evils which lately excited, thanks to the zeal of Lord Shaftesbury, the consternation and horror of England. See the Parliamentary discussions of 1842. There are no more *lazy monks* to feed the poor population; but there existed up to 1842 a crowd of women and girls, almost naked, who worked among the men, for fourteen hours successively, sixteen hundred feet below the surface of the earth, and at a temperature of about ninety degrees. — *Report from the Select Committee*, 1841, p. 4. Let us add with pleasure, that a humane legislation has since then applied remedies to the revolting abuses thus brought to a salutary publicity.

[84] "Cæmentarios qui lapideam sibi ecclesiam juxta Romanorum quem semper amabat morem facerent, postulavit, accepit, attulit. . . . Misit legatarios Galliam, qui vitri factores, artifices videlicet Britanniis eatenus ignotos, ad cancellandas ecclesiæ, porticuumque et cænaculorum ejus fenestras adducerent. . . . Anglorum ex eo gentem hujusmodi artificium nosse ac discere fecerunt." — *Vitæ Abbat.*, c. 5. I believe that this, and the instance before quoted of Wilfrid, are the first known examples of the use of glass windows. There is, however, no evidence that these windows were colored.

[85] "Quippe studio advehendi cognatis aliquod insolitum amor patriæ, et voluptas elegantiæ asperos fallebat labores." — Will. Malmesb., *De Gest. Reg.*, i. 54.

necessary to him for the ornamentation of his church; and not finding even in France all he wanted, he went for the fifth time to Rome. Even this was not his last visit, for some years later he made a sixth pilgrimage.[86] On both occasions he brought treasures back with him, chiefly books in countless quantities and of every kind. He was a passionate collector, as has been seen, from his youth. He desired each of his monasteries to possess a great library, which he considered indispensable to the instruction, discipline, and good organization of the community; and reckoned upon the books as the best means of retaining his monks in their cloisters; for much as he loved travelling himself, he did not approve of other monks passing their time on the highways and byways, even under pretext of pilgrimages.[87] 685.

Important paintings in his new monasteries.

Along with the books he brought relics, not alone for his own community, but for other churches in England, and a great number of pictures and colored images. By introducing these images from Rome into Northumberland, Benedict Biscop has written one of the most curious, and, at the same time, forgotten pages in the history of art. It is apparent that Rome was then the grand reservoir not only of tradition, but also of graphic or symbolic representations for the instruction and edification

[86] In speaking of these two last journeys, Bede says *quarta* and *quinta vice*, because he counts only the departures from England — *De Britannia* ad Romam accurrens." But he himself explains that during the second absence of Benedict Biscop, from 665 to 667, he made two pilgrimages to Rome — the one before, the other after his visit to Lerins. We add a chronological summary of the life of Benedict Biscop: —

628. Birth.
653. He gives up secular life, and goes to Rome for the first time.
665. His second journey to Rome: he becomes a monk at Lerins.
667. Third journey to Rome.
669. He returns with the Archbishop Theodore, and becomes Abbot of St. Peter's, at Canterbury.
671. Fourth journey to Rome.
672. Return by Vienna, where he recovers his books.
674. Foundation of Wearmouth.
676. Journey to France in search of artists.
678. Fifth journey to Rome.
682. Foundation of Yarrow. He takes Easterwine as his coadjutor.
684. Sixth journey to Rome.
686. Death of Easterwine. Return of Benedict.
690. His death.

[87] "Innumerabilem librorum omnis generis copiam. . . . Bibliothecam quam de Roma nobilissimam et copiosissimam advexerat ad instructionem ecclesiæ necessariam. . . . Bibliothecam utriusque monasterii quam magna instantia cepit." — *Vitæ*, c. 6, 9, 14. Cf. *Homil. in Natale Benedicti Abbatis*, t. vii. col. 465, and Lingard, *Antiquities*, t. ii. p. 129.

of the faithful, the first outlines of which, traced in the Catacombs by the tombs of the martyrs, began to reappear in the great mosaics which still decorate the apses of the primitive churches in Rome. The Venerable Bede, who speaks with enthusiasm of the expeditions of his master and friend, leads us to suppose that these were portable pictures, which could only have been painted on wood; but it may be supposed that the Abbot of Wearmouth brought back with him both painters and mosaic-workers, to work on the spot at the decoration of his churches. How can it be otherwise explained how pictures on wood, brought even by water from Rome to England, should have been large enough to cover the walls and arches of the two or three churches of which Bede speaks?

However this may be, the result was that the most ignorant of the Christians of Northumbria found on entering these new monastic churches, under a material form, the attractive image of the instructions which the monastic missionaries lavished on them. Learned and unlearned could contemplate and study with delight, here the sweet and attractive figure of the new-born Saviour, there the twelve apostles surrounding the Blessed Virgin; upon the northern wall all the parables of the Gospels, upon the southern the visions of the Apocalypse; elsewhere a series of pictures which marked the harmony between the Old and New Testaments; Isaac carrying the wood for his sacrifice opposite to Jesus bearing His cross; the brazen serpent opposite Jesus crucified, and so on.[88] When we discover these details in the decoration

[88] This passage, so important for decorative art, is as follows: "Picturas imaginum sanctarum quas ad ornandam ecclesiam quam construxerat, detulit; magnam videlicet B. M. V., etc., . . . quibus medium ejusdem ecclesiæ testudinem, ducto a pariete ad parietem tabulato præcingeret; imagines evangelicæ historiæ quibus australem ecclesiæ parietem decoraret; imagines . . . quibus septentrionalem æque parietem ornaret, quatenus intrantes ecclesiam omnes etiam literarum ignari, quaqua versum intenderent, vel semper amabilem Christi sanctorumque ejus . . . contemplarentur aspectum." — C. G. Further on, when speaking of the fruits of his sixth and last journey to Rome: "Nam et tunc (attulit) dominicæ historiæ picturas quibus totam B. Dei Genitricis, quam in monasterio majore fecerat, ecclesiam in gyro coronaret: imagines quoque ad ornandum monasterium ecclesiamque B. Pauli Apostoli de concordia Veteris et Novi Testamenti summa ratione compositas exhibuit, etc." These last words apply to the second monastery founded at Yarrow, of which we have yet to speak. Thus it is apparent that the abbot Benedict Biscop had undertaken to decorate these churches — that of St. Peter at Wearmouth, St. Paul at Yarrow, and a third dedicated to the Blessed Virgin, *in majore monasterio*, which may have been only the choir or apsis of the first.

of the Northumbrian monasteries twelve hundred years ago, we cannot but bethink ourselves that our own century, in two memorable instances, has reproduced this sublime thought: at Spires, in the vast cathedral which the munificence of the King of Bavaria has raised out of its ruins; and at Paris in the venerable Basilica of St. Germain des Prés, where our attention was attracted for the last time by the pencil of Flandrin, and from which a last lustre has been thrown upon talent so pure, so elevated, so serene, so naturally devoted to the service of the eternal truth. His name, though modern, like that of Ozanam, does not seem displaced amid the recollections of the saints and monuments of Christian antiquity!

He brings with him a Roman abbot, who teaches liturgical music to all the Northumbrian monasteries.

After Latin and Greek books, after what was then called literature and philosophy, after architecture and art, it was the turn of music — of the art which above all others is liturgic and monastic. On his return from his fifth voyage, Benedict brought back with him from Rome an eminent monk called John, precentor of St. Peter's, and abbot of St. Martin's at Rome, to establish at Wearmouth the music and Roman ceremonies with entire exactitude, and according to the practice of the Basilica of St. Peter at Rome. As soon as he had arrived at Wearmouth, this learned abbot set out in writing the order of the celebration of feasts for all the year, of which he soon circulated numerous copies. Then he opened classes, at which he taught, *viva voce*, the liturgy and ecclesiastical chants. The best singers of the Northumbrian monasteries came to listen to him, and invited him to visit their communities.[89]

It was thus that Benedict Biscop drew from Rome, and spread throughout the soil of his country, by many different channels, the instructions and traditions of art consecrated by religion. History, it seems to us, offers few pages better adapted to refresh and console the soul than that on which the mother and sovereign Church is thus seen to open her protecting bosom to nations scarcely yet issued from the night of paganism, and to reveal to them, by the hands of her monastic ministers and missionaries, not only the mysteries of faith and the laws of morality, but also the pleasures of the mind and the beauties of art.

[89] "Ritum canendi ac legendi viva voce præfati monasterii cantores edocendo. . . . De omnibus pene ejusdem provinciæ monasteriis ad audiendum eum, qui cantandi erant periti, confluebant." — *Hist. Eccles.*, iv. 18.

The passionate zeal of our abbot for the building and decoration of his monastic houses did not make him forget the more essential interests of his foundations. Before leaving Rome, he took care to constitute his community upon the immovable basis of the rule of St. Benedict.[90] He obtained from Pope Agathon a charter which guaranteed the liberty and security of the new Monastery of Wearmouth, as Wilfrid did for his favorite Abbey of Hexham, and perhaps at an even earlier date. But far from requiring this guarantee against the King of Northumbria, as his old friend did, Bede takes care to prove that the pontifical grant was asked and obtained with the consent, and even at the desire, of Egfrid, and was confirmed in a public assembly by the king and bishops.[91] From the time of their first separation at Lyons, Benedict seems always to have kept at a distance from Wilfrid, and no appearance of sympathy for the trials of the great persecuted bishop appears to him. Notwithstanding, they served the same cause, and inspired the Pope at least with equal confidence. Agathon gave a wonderful mark of this confidence to Benedict Biscop, by making his monastery the centre of the mission with which he had charged the precentor of St. Peter's, the object of which was to establish the orthodoxy of the English bishops and clergy in respect to the heresy of the Monothelites.[92]

[90] "Post compositum juxta regulam monasterium, profectione completa." — C. 6.

[91] "Non vile munus attulit . . . epistolam privilegii . . . cum licentia, consensu, desiderio et hortatu Egfridi regis . . . qua monasterium ab omni prorsus extrinseca irruptione tutum perpetuo redderetur ac liberum . . . quod Britannias perlatum et coram synodo patefactum." — *Vitæ Abbat.*, c. 6, 12, and *Hist. Eccles.*, iv. 18.

[92] This mission seems to indicate on the part of the Pontiff a certain distrust of Theodore. As has been already seen, Pope Vitalianus, in conferring on him the dignity of Metropolitan of England, joined to him the Abbot Adrian and Benedict Biscop himself, lest his nationality as a Greek might make him accessible to the errors of the Monothelites who then desolated the Church. At a later period, Agathon charged Abbot John, precentor of St. Peter's, to examine exactly into the faith of the Church of England, and to make his report at Rome. The pontifical envoy was present at the Council of Heathfield, called by the Archbishop Theodore (17th September, 680), where the Church of England made her confession of orthodox faith, and declared her acceptance of the five general councils, and that of St. Martin. Abbot John carried with him a copy of the acts of this council, to submit it to the Pope, and on the other hand gave the acts of the council of the Pope St. Martin to St. Benedict Biscop's monastery to be copied. He died before he could return to Rome, and his body was carried to St.-Martin-de-Tours, which he had visited on his way to England, on account of his great devotion to that saint, of whom his monastery in Rome bore the name.

King Egfrid, who was then at the height of his struggle with Wilfrid, seems to have been anxious to make up, to his own conscience and that of his Catholic people, for his violence towards the Bishop of York, by the intimacy of his relations with the two other great monks of his kingdom, the anchorite Cuthbert and the abbot Benedict. In order to give the latter a new mark of sympathy and protection, he assigned to him another estate, not so great as that of Wearmouth, for it could support only forty families, but so near to the first that it seemed possible to unite the two gifts, and make of them one vast patrimony. This was the cradle of the Monastery of Yarrow, the name of which is inseparably linked with that of the Venerable Bede. Yarrow was situated a little to the north of the Monastery of Wearmouth, in a similar position, at the mouth of a river, the Tyne, which there falls into the Northern Sea, after following a course parallel to that of the Wear, and was dedicated to the Apostle St. Paul, as Wearmouth was to the Apostle St. Peter. The thought which inspired Biscop of establishing the spirit and image of Rome upon this Northumbrian shore, already sweet with the perfume of monastic flowers is everywhere apparent.[93] He wanted a reproduction of St. Paul's outside the Walls, at a certain distance from his Saxon copy of St. Peter of the Vatican. Although he had appointed one of his most intimate friends and fellow-pilgrims, Ceolfrid, abbot of the new foundation, Benedict's intention was to make only one community of the two houses, in sign of the fraternal union which he longed to see reigning among them, and which should be suggested to them by the example of the two glorious apostles whom he had given to them as patrons.

Foundation of Yarrow. 682.

Fraternal union of the two houses after the example of their patrons St. Peter and St. Paul.

In order to be more at liberty to devote his time to travel, as well as to be more at the disposal of the king, who continually sought his presence and counsels,[94] Benedict took a coadjutor in the government of his first Monastery of Wear-

He takes his nephew, Easterwine, for his coadjutor. 682-686.

[93] "Plaga olim et suave halantibus monasteriorum floribus dulcis, et urbium a Romanis ædificatarum frequentia renidens." — Guill. Malmesb., *De Gest. Reg.*, i. 9, 54.

[94] I borrow this detail from another Life of Benedict and Ceolfrid, which, if not written by Bede, has evidently furnished him with information, which he has repeated literally; it is to be found in the *Opera Minora*, and has been reprinted by Dr. Giles in the Appendix of his excellent edition of Bede, vol. vi. pp. 416–42.

mouth. This new abbot was his nephew, and, like Ceolfrid, one of his most devoted companions.[95] His name was Easterwine. He was younger than Benedict by twenty-two years, and, like him, of high birth; for it was the descendants of the noblest races of Northumbria who filled the monasteries, giving themselves up to occupations the most unlike those of their ancestors — to manual or literary work, to prayer and penitence. He had been, like Benedict, a soldier in the warlike household of King Egfrid. At twenty-one he had given up everything, to enter into the community formed by his uncle at Wearmouth; nor did the one dream of asking, nor the other of offering, any exemption from the charges and observances of religious life, on account of relationship or nobility. The noble youth took pride only in following minutely the rule and occupations of the house, like any other monk. Thanks to his illustrious biographer, we know what the occupations of a Saxon thane turned monk were in the seventh century. His duties were — to thrash and winnow the corn, to milk the goats and cows, to take his turn in the kitchen, the bakehouse, and the garden, always humble and joyous in his obedience. When he became coadjutor, and was invested, in Benedict's absence, with all his authority, the young abbot continued the course of communal life; and when his duties as superior led him out of doors to where the monks labored in the fields, he set to work along with them, taking the plough or the fan in his own hands, or forging iron upon the anvil. He was robust as well as young and handsome; but his look was infinitely gentle, and his conversation full of amiability.[96] When he was compelled to reprove a fault, it was done with such tender sadness that the culprit felt himself incapable of any new offence which should bring a cloud over the benign brightness of that beloved face. His table was served with the same provisions as that of the monks; and he slept in the general dormitory,

[95] "Ut quem solus non poterat laborem, socia dilectissimi commilitonis virtute levius ferret." — *Vitæ Abbat.*, c. 6.

[96] "Vir nobilis, sed insigne nobilitatis non ad jactantiæ materiem, ut quidam, despectumque aliorum, sed ad majorem, ut Dei servum decet, animi nobilitatem convertens. . . . Minister Egfridi regis . . . depositis armis . . . tantum mansit humilis, fratrumque simillimus aliorum, ut ventilare cum eis et triturare, oves vitulasque mulgere, in pistrino, in horto, in cunctis monasterii operibus jocundus et obediens gauderet exerceri. . . . Nequi vellet limpidissimam vultus ejus lucem nubilo sibi suæ inquietudinis abscondere. . . . Vel aratri gressum stiva regendo, vel ferrum malleo domando, vel ventilabrum manu concutiendo." — *Vitæ Abbatum*, c. 7.

which he left only five days before his death, being then hopelessly ill, to prepare himself, in a more solitary place for the last struggle. When he felt his end approaching, he had still strength enough left to go down to the garden, and seating himself there, called to him all his brethren, who wept the anticipated loss of such a father. Then, with the tenderness which was natural to him, he gave to each of them a last kiss.[97] The following night he died, aged thirty-six, while the monks were singing matins. Such happy deaths, which are common in the history of the time, seem to have been at once the privilege and the seal of all those generous vocations which filled the numerous monasteries of converted England.

Death of Easterwine, 7th March, 686.

When Benedict returned from his last expedition to Rome, he found his benefactor and protector, King Egfrid, and his nephew and coadjutor, Easterwine, both dead, along with a great number of his monks, carried off by one of the epidemics then so frequent. The only survivors at Yarrow were the abbot, and one little scholar whom we shall find again further on, and whose fame was destined to eclipse that of all the Saxon saints and kings, who are scarcely known to posterity except by his pen.[98] Benedict did not lose courage, but promptly collected new subjects under his sway, recommencing and pursuing, with his habitual energy, the decoration of his two Churches of St. Peter and St. Paul.[99] The monks had already chosen as successor to Easterwine a deacon named Sigfried, a learned and virtuous man, but affected by pulmonary disease, and the first of the English, I

[97] "Sub divo residens, accitis ad se fratribus cunctis, more naturæ misericordis osculum pacis eis flentibus et de abscessu tanti patris et pastoris mœrentibus dedit."

[98] This pupil is generally thought to be no other than the Venerable Bede, who relates the touching incident in the following words: "Omnes qui legere, vel prædicare, vel antiphonas ac responsaria dicere possunt ablati sunt, excepto ipso abbate et uno puerulo, qui ab ipso nutritus ac eruditus, nunc usque in eo monasterio presbyterii gradum tenens, jure actus ejus laudabiles cunctis scire volentibus et scripto commandat et fatis." — *Append.*, p. 421. He describes further on how the abbot and his pupil celebrated, alone and in great sadness, the whole psalms of the monastic service, *non parvo cum labore*, until new monks arrived.

[99] A fine engraving by Hollar, republished in Mr. Jamieson's *Monastic Legends*, represents him standing, dressed in pontifical robes; in the background are the two beautiful monasteries of St. Peter and St. Paul, and the Tyne flowing between them — an arrangement not geographically exact, but which answers to the intention of reproducing on the Northumbrian coast the Basilicas of St. Peter and St. Paul on the two opposite banks of the Tiber at Rome.

think, in whom history indicates a malady so general and so fatal to their race.[100]

His last illness and exhortations.

Benedict's own turn was, however, soon to come. God preserved his life to purify him, and put his patience to a long and cruel trial, before calling him to his eternal recompense. After having devoted the first thirteen years of his abbatiate to the laborious and wandering life that was so dear to him, and to those distant expeditions that produced so many fruits for his order and his country, he was stricken by a cruel disease, which lasted for three years, and paralyzed all his members one after the other. Though kept to his bed by this infirmity, and unable to follow his brethren to the choir, he notwithstanding continued to celebrate each service, both day and night, with certain of the monks, mingling his feeble voice with theirs. At night his sleepless hours were consoled by the reading of the Gospels, which was kept up without interruption by a succession of priests. Often, too, he collected the monks and novices round his couch, addressing to them urgent and solemn counsels, and among other things begging them to preserve the great library which he had brought from Rome, and not to allow it to be spoiled or dispersed; but above all to keep faithfully the rules which, after a careful study of the seventeen principal monasteries which he had visited during his numerous journeys beyond seas, he had given to them.[101] He also dwelt much upon the injunction he had already often repeated, that they should pay no regard to high birth in their choice of an abbot, but look simply to his life and doctrine. He prayed them to elect to this office the most worthy among themselves, in conformity to the rules of St. Benedict and the charter he had obtained for them. "If

[100] "Nocivo et irremediabili pulmonum vitio laborantem." — *Vitæ Abbat.*, c. 8.

[101] "Evangelium tota nocte pro doloris levamine, quod et aliis noctibus fieri consueverat. . . . Ex decem quippe et septem monasteriis quæ inter longos meæ crebræ peregrinationis discursus optima comperi, hæc universa didici, et vobis salubriter observanda contradidi." — Bede, *Vitæ Abbat.*, c. 8. Lingard (i. 208) believes from this passage that the rule of St. Benedict was only partially followed at Wearmouth; but it evidently refers only to those special regulations and laws which have been always made use of in all abbeys or congregations of abbeys, to develop and complete the fundamental rule. That this rule was known and followed in the Northumbrian monasteries, is plain from the exhortation of Benedict Biscop to his monks regarding their choice of a successor, in which he enjoins them to proceed "juxta quod regula magni quondam abbatis Benedicti, juxta quod privilegii nostri continent decreta." — Cf. Mabillon, *Præfatio in Sæculum Benedictinum*, n. 88, 89.

I had to choose between two evils, I should prefer," he said to them, "to see the spot on which I have established our dear monastery fall back into eternal solitude, rather than to be succeeded here by my own brother, who, we all know, is not in the good way.[102] Thus Benedict shows himself to have been moved by a presentiment of one of the most cruel dangers and fatal weaknesses with which the future of the monastic order could be threatened.

Death of Benedict Biscop. 12th Jan., 690.

The strength of the holy abbot, and, at the same time, that of his poor coadjutor, was by this time so exhausted by their respective diseases, that they both perceived they were about to die, and desired to see each other for the last time before departing from this world. In order that the wish of these two tender friends should be accomplished, it was necessary to bring the dying coadjutor to the bed of the abbot. His head was placed on the same pillow; but they were both so feeble that they could not even embrace each other, and the help of brotherly hands was necessary to aid them.[103] All the monks assembled in chapter round this bed of suffering and love; and the two aged saints, having pointed out among them a successor approved by all, breathed together, with a short interval between, their last breath. Thus died, at the age of sixty-two, St. Benedict of England, a worthy rival of the great patriarch of the monks of the West, whose robe and name he bore, being, like him, a victor over sin and master of all virtue.[104]

The government of the two monasteries, Wearmouth and Yarrow, goes to Ceolfrid,

The monk proposed by the two dying saints to the choice of their brethren, to replace them as abbot of the two monasteries, was the same Ceolfrid who had accompanied Benedict to Rome and to Canterbury, and who was already Abbot of Yarrow. Like all the chiefs of the great Northumbrian com-

[102] "Vere dico vobis quod . . . tolerabilius mihi multo est totum hunc locum in quo monasterium feci . . . in solitudinem sempiternam redigi quam ut frater meus carnalis . . . in eo regendo pro me abbatis nomine succedat."

[103] "Egfridus in feretro deportaretur ad cubiculum ubi Benedictus et ipse suo jacebat in grabato . . . caput utriusque in eodem cervicali locaretur . . . vel tantum habuere virium, ut propius posita ora ad osculandum se alterutrum conjungere possent, sed et hoc fraterno compleverunt officio." — *Vitæ Abbat.*, c. 10.

[104] "Vitiorum victor Benedictus et virtutum patrator egregius victus infirmitate carnis ad extrema pervenit. . . . Anima illa sancta longis flagellorum felicium excocta atque examinata flammis luteam carnis fornacem descrit." *Ibid.*, c. 11. He died January 12, 690, at the age of sixty-two.

munities, with the exception of Cuthbert, he proceeded from the highest rank of Anglo-Saxon nobility. His father bore the dignity of *ealdorman*, the highest rank after the blood-royal, and was famed for his magnificence. On one occasion, when he expected a visit from the king, the news of the sudden incursion of some enemy obliged the prince to depart before beginning the magnificently prepared repast, upon which the earl assembled all the poor of the quarter, put them in the place of the king and his attendants, and, when they were all seated, served the men with his own hands, while his countess performed the same office for the women.

A disciple of Wilfrid.

Ceolfrid, who became a monk at eighteen, had been trained at Ripon, in the school of Wilfrid, who ordained him priest after ten years of study.[105] After this, in order to understand better the traditions and obligations of his profession, he visited the monastic metropolis of Canterbury, and on his way back spent some time with an old abbot named Botulph, whose virtues and knowledge were much renowned.[106] Botulph, too, was of a noble family of East Anglia;[107] his parents were among the oldest Christians of England, and had sent him while quite young across the sea into a monastery in Gaul, to learn, says his biographer, the glories of the faith, and to train himself to apostolical life. When he returned some years after, furnished with recommendations from two young East Anglian princesses whom he had met in his Gaulish monastery, he gained the heart of the kings of his tribe. These princes offered him lands which were already under cultivation, and were even allotted, according to feudal law,

And of Botulph, the founder of Icanhoe.

[105] The elder brother of Ceolfrid had been Abbot of Gilling, the monastery founded by Queen Eanfleda to expiate her husband's crime in murdering the holy King Oswin; afterwards preferring contemplation to an active life, he exiled himself to Ireland, and there spent the rest of his life in the study of Holy Scripture. He died, together with several other English nobles, of the plague. This is a fresh example of the frequent relations of the Anglo-Saxons with monastic Ireland. Ceolfrid commenced his career at Gilling, from whence he was summoned to Ripon with the whole community, by Wilfrid.

[106] "Ut videret instituta Botulfi abbatis quem . . . fama circumquaque vulgaverat." — *Histor. Abbatum* in *Append.* Bedæ, p. 417.

[107] *Ad Anglos Orientales*, says the Life of Ceolfrid just cited; and this designation does not contradict that of *Angli Australes*, used by the contemporary author of the Life of St. Botulph, published by Mabillon (*Act. SS. O. S. B.*, sæc. iii. pars i. p. 3). The Angles of Mercia and East Anglia were in fact southerners in the eyes of the Angles of Northumbria. Besides, two of the kings named in the biography as sovereigns of Botulph's country, Adelher and Adelwold, figure among the East Anglian kings. — *See* Lappenberg, Genealogical Table E at the end of his first volume.

to other proprietors; but Botulph refused to have any one impoverished for his advantage, and preferred an uncultivated estate, situated on a little river not far from the Northern Sea,[108] where he founded the great Monastery of Icanhoe, which has since grown into a town, and has borrowed its modern name, Boston, from that of its founder (*Botulph's town*).[109] Botulph's chief aim was to build and regulate his monastery on the model of the communities where he had lived, or which he had visited on the Continent — that is to say, in strict conformity with the rule of St. Benedict. He lived there for more than half a century, surrounded by the veneration and love of his countrymen, and working steadily to secure the complete observance of Benedictine laws in his community — a procedure which in the district where he had established himself did not fail to appear a grave innovation. The care which his biographer, a contemporary of his own, takes to set forth this distinctive feature, which ran through his whole life, makes it apparent that he had to contend with the resistance of his monks, and that he only succeeded by sometimes sacrificing his natural humility and his popularity to the austere duties of his abbatial charge. He repeated daily to his disciples the laws and lessons which he had brought from beyond sea; and even on his death-bed, during the attacks of sickness which consumed his old age, he never ceased to recall the recollections of his monastic journeys, and to boast the gentleness and beauty of the true rule.[110]

About 654.

Imbued with the teaching of this great doctor of monastic life, Ceolfrid returned to Ripon, to redouble his zeal and fervor in the practice of his profession. When he became

[108] "Ut ubi plenius addiscerent et Sanctæ Fidei gloriam, et sanctæ conversationis in apostolicis institutionibus disciplinam. . . . Petit simpliciter, non ut aliquem regia violentia de hereditario jure caussa sui depellat, sed potius ut de incultis terris . . . sibi tantum concedat." — *Vita S. Botulfi*, c. 2 and 5.

[109] Situated on the Witham, in Lincolnshire: the English town of Boston gave its name to the celebrated capital of Massachusetts, the fame and influence of which, in North America, have been always so considerable.

[110] "Imperitis vitæ regularis attulit normam, et in monasticis observationibus magnus legislator antea incognitam docuit viam. . . . Ad instar monasteriorum ubi conversatus fuerat in partibus Galliæ cæptum opus perfecit. . . . Quod transmarinis partibus didicerat de monachorum districtiori vita et regulari consuetudine, memoriter repetendo quotidianis inculcationibus subditos consuescit. . . . Appropinquante vitæ termino de observandis regulis monasteriorum quæ peregrinus petierat, loqui et sæpius repetere dulce ac delectabiliter ducebat." — *Vita S. Botulfi*, c. 4, 7, 9, 10.

master of the novices at Ripon, the son of the ealdorman distinguished himself by his energy in all those manual labors, which must have been so repugnant to the pride and habits of the Anglo-Saxon nobles. Without giving up his priestly functions he took charge of the bake-house, and was daily to be found at the furnace occupied in cleaning or heating it, and in baking bread for the use of the house.[111] His fame reached the ears of Benedict Biscop, who, as soon as he began his enterprise, asked him from Wilfrid. His request was granted; and this is the sole evidence which exists in history of any link whatever between the celebrated Bishop of York and the great monasteries founded by the friend of his youth. After his transfer to Wearmouth, Ceolfrid was soon made the deputy, as prior, of Abbot Benedict, during his journeys. But he found among the new monks certain sons of nobles like himself, who refused to be controlled by the severe discipline which he enforced upon them both by precept and example, and who pursued him with their murmurs and calumnies.[112] The effect of this upon him was such that, taking advantage of the absence of Benedict, he gave up his charge and returned to Ripon, to resume his former life there. Benedict hastened after him, and brought him back by dint of entreaties. After this he never relaxed his hold upon Ceolfrid, taking him with him in all his journeys up to the day when, as has been seen, he confided the government of the new Monastery of Yarrow to him whom he wished to make his inseparable companion and fellow-laborer.[113]

Ceolfrid took with him twenty-two monks from Wearmouth, to fill up the new foundation; but among these there were several who could not yet sing or even read aloud the service in the choir according to the requirements of the monastic ritual. Ceolfrid had to complete their musical and liturgical education, at the same time as he began that of the new-comers who soon thronged to Yarrow. By dint of entering himself into all the studies and exercises of his community, even in their minutest details, until the Benedictine observances took permanent root among them, he succeeded

[111] "Pistorii officium tenens, inter cribrandum clibanumque accendendum mundandumque, et panes in eo coquendos, presbyteratus ceremonias sedulus discere simul et exercere non omisit." — *Append.*, p. 417.

[112] "Invidias quorundam nobilium, qui regularem ejus disciplinam ferre nequibant, insecutionesque patiebatur acerrimas." — *Append.*, p. 418.

[113] "Ipse illi comes individuus, cooperator et doctor regularis et monasticæ institutionis aderat." — *Vitæ*, c. 16.

in his task. And he had to wield the trowel as well as the crosier, in order to direct and complete in less than two years the construction of the new abbey church, in which King Egfrid himself fixed the situation of the great altar.[114]

Ceolfrid, when placed by the death of his friend at the head of the two Monasteries of Wearmouth and Yarrow, which then formed one community of six hundred monks,[115] displayed for twenty-seven years an unwearying activity and superior intelligence, as well as all the virtues of ascetic life. He was in every respect a worthy successor of Benedict: he took pains to enrich the two libraries, which were so great an object of care to his predecessor; and on occasion made use of his books for other purposes than the instruction of his monks. It is true that he had to deal with a learned king, trained at Iona, the enemy of Wilfrid and his Roman predilections, but as much a lover of books as any saint or monk, either Irish like Columba, or Anglo-Saxon like Biscop. The latter had brought from Rome a curious system of cosmography, which King Aldfrid burned to possess, and which he obtained from the Abbot Ceolfrid in exchange for land supporting eight families. The abbot afterwards found means of exchanging this estate, with the addition of a sum of money, for another estate twice or three times as large, situated opposite the Monastery of Yarrow, to which belonged the precious book which was the occasion of a traffic so lucrative.[116] It must not be supposed from this that the great abbot was interested or mercenary; he had, on the contrary, retained in the cloister the generous habits of his noble race; and Bede expressly tells that he never received a present or donation from neighboring lords without giving them, as soon as possible, an equivalent.[117]

The exchange of a book for an estate.

[114] "Sed juvet amor religionis et studiosi rectoris exemplum atque instantia sollers, qui donec illum observantiæ regularis radicem fieret, horis omnibus canonicis cum fratribus ecclesiam frequentare, refici et quiescere solebat." — *Append.*, p. 420.

[115] "Utrique monasterio, vel sicut rectius dicere possumus, in duobus locis posito uni monasterio. . . . Relictis in suis monasteriis fratribus numero ferme sexcentis." — *Vitæ Abbatum*, c. 12, 13.

[116] "Bibliothecam utriusque monasterii . . . non minori germinavit industria. . . . Dato Cosmographorum codice mirandi operis . . . terram octo familiarum . . . ab Alfrido regi in Scripturis doctissimo . . . comparavit, quem comparandi ordinem ipse dum adhuc viveret, Benedictus . . . taxaverat, sed prius quam complere potuisset, obiit. . . . Verum pro hac terra postmodum, Osredo regnante, addito pretio digno, terram xx. familiarum . . . accepit." — *Vita*, c. 12.

[117] "A viris principalibus quibus cunctis erat honorabilis . . . hanc habens

Let us add, while speaking of books, that he had two complete copies made of the Bible, according to the version of St. Jerome, which he had brought from Rome, and placed them in his two churches, that they might be read and consulted by all who wished to do so[118] — a new refutation, among so many others, of the stupid calumny which represents the Church as having in former times interdicted to her children the knowledge of the Sacred Scriptures.

Ceolfrid's anxiety for the intellectual and material interests of his community did nowise diminish his zeal for the regular discipline and spiritual independence of his brethren. He took pains to have the charter of immunity obtained from Agathon renewed by the Pope St. Sergius, and confirmed in full synod by King Aldfrid. He devoted a considerable portion of each day, and his unwearying attention, to the prayers and sacred song of the choir; neither age nor sickness, nor even travel, seemed to him sufficient reasons for dispensing with this. Severe as it was his duty to be against the least irregularity, he lavished on the weak encouragements and consolations, and was hard only to himself, his living and clothing being of a temperance which seemed at that time surprising in the chief of so powerful an institution.[119]

700.

When he had passed his seventieth year, he no longer found himself strong enough to give to his monks an example of life conformed to the rule; and he was anxious, besides, to return before he died to Rome, where he had in his youth accompanied his friend and master, there to prepare himself for death in silence. In vain the monks, when informed of his design, threw themselves on their knees to keep him back. Nothing could change his purpose. As soon as he had formed his resolution he put it in practice, fearing that if it were known he might be disturbed from without by entreaties, or even

642-716.

He desires to die at Rome.

semper consuetudinem, ut si quis ei aliquid muneris offerret, hoc illi vel statim vel post intervallum competens, non minore gratia rependeret." — C. 13. It is evident that they were already, even in the most fervent and exemplary communities, far from a state of primitive poverty.

[118] "Todiem per duo sua monasteria posuit in ecclesiis, ut *cunctis*, qui aliquod capitulum de utrolibet Testamento legere voluissent, in promptu esset invenire quod cuperent." — *Vita Ceolfridi*, in *Append.* Bedæ, *Op. Min.*, a. 325.

[119] "Acutus ingenio, actis impiger . . . per incomparabilem orandi psallendique sollertiam, qua ipse quotidianus exerceri non desiit . . . post insolitam rectoribus et escæ potusque parcitatem."

by the presents[120] of the friends he had among the nobility of the neighborhood, and indeed of all Northumbria. Three days after having declared his decision to the afflicted community, he said mass in the morning very early, gave the communion to all present, and, standing on the steps of the altar with the censer in his hand, blessed all his children. They began to sing litanies, which were interrupted by tears and sobs; Ceolfrid then led them to an oratory, which he had dedicated to the martyr St. Lawrence, near the dormitory, and there addressed to them, as Benedict had done on his deathbed, a last exhortation. Its special subject was charity and mutual brotherly correction; and he entreated all those who might have found him too hard to pardon him and pray for him. From thence he descended to the bank of the river which bathes the walls of the monastery, followed by the six hundred monks of the two communities; after having received from their father a last kiss moistened with tears, they all knelt down. The old abbot then entered the ship that was to carry him away; and from the deck, on which the cross had been reared between two torches, he gave them his last benediction and disappeared from their sight. 4th June, 716.

Ceolfrid himself could not contain his grief at this parting; at the distant sound of the chants of his monks, broken by their sobs, his tears flowed. Again and again he was heard to say, "Christ, my Lord and my God, have pity on this worthy and numerous company. Protect these dear children. I am sure that better or more obedient are nowhere to be found."[121]

When they re-entered the monastery, the monks proceeded on the spot to the election of the new abbot. At the end of three days the universal suffrage of the two communities fixed upon a young man, trained at Wearmouth from his in-

[120] "Ne pecunia daretur ei a quibusdam, quibus retribuere pro tempore nequiret."

[121] "Omnibus in lacrymas singultusque genua cum obsecratione crebra flectentibus. . . . Cantata ergo primo mane missa . . . conveniunt omnes . . . pacem dat omnibus, thuribulum habens in manu: tunc fletibus universorum inter Letanias resonantibus, exeunt . . . veniunt ad littus, rursum osculo pacis inter lacrymas omnibus dato, genua flectunt . . . ascendit navem . . . transit flumen, adorat crucem, ascendit equum et abiit." — C. 13. "Audiensque sonum mixti cum luctu carminis, nullatenus valuit ipse a singultu et lacrymis temperare. Hoc autem solum crebra voce repetiit: Christe Deus, miserere illi cœtui . . . protege illam cohortem . . . scio certissime quia nullos unquam meliores illis et promptiores ad obedientiam novi." — *Append.*, p. 425.

fancy, and worthy of his illustrious predecessors, in his zeal for study, song, and teaching, as their united chief. As soon as he was elected, the new abbot rushed after Ceolfrid, and found him in the port waiting a favorable wind for crossing to the Continent. He gave him a letter to the Pope, from which we quote the following passages: —

"To the blessed Pope Gregory II., our dear lord in the Lord of lords, Huetberct, your humble servant, Abbot of the Monastery of St. Peter, prince of the apostles, among the Saxons, everlasting greeting. — In the name of all my brethren, united in this place with me to find rest for their souls and to bear the sweet yoke of Christ, we recommend to your dear and holy kindness the hoary hairs of our venerable and beloved father, the Abbot Ceolfrid, who has ruled, trained, fed, and defended us in monastic peace and freedom. He has torn himself from us in the midst of our lamentations, tears, and sorrow; but we thank the holy and invisible Trinity that it has been given him to attain to the blessed joy of rest which he has so long desired. He returns in his extreme old age to the tombs of the apostles, his visits to which in youth he has always remembered with enthusiasm. After forty years of work and care in his monastic government, he shows himself as much inspired by the love of virtue as though he were still in the first freshness of his conversion; and on the threshold of death, bent under the weight of age, he again becomes a pilgrim for Christ. We conjure your Paternity, render to this beloved father those last duties of filial piety which it will not be permitted to us to accomplish. Afterwards you will keep his body; but his soul will remain with us both — with us and with you; and after his death, as during his life, we shall find in him a friend, a protector, and intercessor with God." [122]

The wishes of the double community of Wearmouth and Yarrow, thus expressed with so much filial affection, were not fulfilled. Ceolfrid never reached Rome; the fatigues of

[122] "Eligitur Huætberctus . . . scribendi, cantandi, legendi ac docendi non parva exercitatus industria . . . electus abbas ab omnibus utriusque monasterii fratribus. . . . Una cum sanctis fratribus qui mecum in his locis ad inveniendam requiem animabus suis suavissimum Christi jugum portare desiderant. . . . Commendamus . . . venerabiles patris nostri dilectissimi canos . . . nutritoris tutorisque nostræ spiritualis in monastica quiete libertatis et pacis. . . . Ad suæ tamen diu desideratæ quietis gaudia sancta pervenit . . . dum ea quæ juvenem se adiisse atque adorasse semper recordans exultabat . . . repetiit . . . prope jam moriturus, rursus incipit peregrinari pro Christo. . . . Supplicamus ut quod nos facere non meruimus, vos erga illum ultimæ pietatis munus seduli expleatis." — *Vitæ Abbatum*, c. 14.

the journey aggravated the weakness of his old age. He took three months to travel from Northumbria to the frontiers of Burgundy. During these three months he did not cease for a single day to celebrate mass and sing the entire monastic service, even when his weakness prevented him from moving except in a litter.[123] He was able to travel only as far as Langres, where he died at the age of seventy-four — forty-three years of his age having been consecrated to the work of training or governing souls in the cloister. He was buried in a monastery, afterwards known by the name of St. Geosmes, and which took that name from the twins, who, along with their grandmother, St. Leonilla, were martyred there under the Cæsars.[124] His austere life did not prevent him from travelling with all the retinue of a great personage, as indeed the abbot of the greatest community of the Anglo-Saxons of the North already was. Of the eighty English who composed his suit some continued their pilgrimage to Rome, others returned to England, and some preferred to pass the rest of their lives in the midst of a people whose language they did not understand, rather than separate themselves from the tomb of a father to whom they clung with an unchangeable love.[125] 25th Sept., 711.

I beg my readers to make an effort to represent to themselves who these eighty companions of old Ceolfrid were, and who also were, and from whence came, the six hundred Anglo-Saxons whom we have just seen kneeling on the sandy beach, on the shore of the Northern Sea, to receive the blessing of our aged abbot, going forth to brave the danger and fatigues of a laborious journey, with the hope of dying near the tomb of St. Peter and St. Paul. I would fain see the coldest and most bitter of sceptics transported for an instant in thought to that far distant shore. I should accompany

[123] "Per dies cxiv., exceptis canonicis horis quotidie bis psalterium ex ordine decantare curavit, etiam cum ad hoc per infirmitatem deveniret, ut equitare non valens feretro caballario veheretur, quotidie missa cantata salutaris hostiæ Deo munus offerret, excepto uno, quo oceanum navigabat, et tribus ante exitum diebus."

[124] Their names were Speusippus, Eleusippus, and Meleusippus. The mention of these martyrs leads me to point out in passing the singularly instructive and conclusive examination given to this history by M. l'Abbé Bougaud in his learned *Etude sur la Mission, les Actes, et le Culte de Saint Bénigne, Apôtre de la Bourgogne.* Dijon, 1859, pp. 171, 172.

[125] "Partim ad tumbam defuncti inter eos quorum nec linguam noverant, pro inextinguibili patris affectus redere." — *Vitæ Abbatum,* c. 15.

him willingly, with no intermediary between him and me except simple good faith.

We should then find ourselves in the eighth century, in all its darkness, in all its barbarism, in an island destined to become again and again the prey of bloody and atrocious invasions. These are the sons of pirates, of incendiaries, of ravagers and murderers, who surround us. Yet see what they have become! Not all, certainly, but the first and most powerful, those in whom the abuse of strength, victory, and wealth would have produced most scandal and excess. See what the Christian religion has made of those wild hearts; look at the flowers which have blossomed by its means in that soil watered with blood and horror. Behold its fruits, its victories, its conquests, its chief spoil. Religion has established herself on that desolated land, amid these pitiless conquerors. She has shown them peace, gentleness, labor, virtue, truth, light, heaven; and after having thus lavished upon them a treasury of new thoughts, beliefs, and strength, new food for their intelligence, and unknown resources for their social order, she has taught them to love, to love one another, to love souls — and to imprint the recollection of that love upon scenes and words which cannot deceive and will not be forgotten.

CHAPTER III.

END OF THE CELTIC HERESY. — ADAMNAN, EGBERT, ST. ALDHELM.

The King of the Picts requests Ceolfrid to send him architects, and arguments in favor of Roman unity. — Answer of Ceolfrid, in which he quotes from Plato. — The Picts abandon the Celtic peculiarities. — The monks of Iona leave their monasteries rather than adopt the Roman ritual. — Their abbot, Adamnan, biographer of Columba, and the last great personage of the Celtic Church. — His relations with King Aldfrid and the Abbot Ceolfrid. — He attempts in vain to lead the monks of Iona back to Roman rule, but has more success in Ireland, where he dies. — Iona is brought back to Catholic unity by the Anglo-Saxon Egbert, the head of a colony of Saxon monks in Ireland. — His austere and holy life. — He loses his most intimate friend, who reproaches him for desiring to survive him. — He uses his influence with the Anglo-Saxons to send them as missionaries to Ger-

many. — After thirteen years' struggle, he overcomes the resistance of Iona, and dies on the very day when the feast of Easter is celebrated by both parties together. — Ireland and Caledonia having been thus brought back to Catholic unity, only the Britons of Cambria and Cornwall remain outside its pale, by reason of their national antipathy for the Saxon conquerors. — Note upon Bede's injustice to them. — Attempt of St. Aldhelm to bring them in. — His royal birth, and education — half Celtic, half Roman — at Malmesbury and Canterbury. — He becomes Abbot of Malmesbury. — His literary fame greater than his merit; his vernacular songs; intellectual development of Anglo-Saxon cloisters. — Extent and variety of his studies. — His continual solicitude for souls. — His great monastic character. — His zeal for preaching. — He interferes in favor of Wilfrid. — He goes to Rome to obtain the privilege of exemption for Malmesbury, the monks of which persist in retaining him as abbot, even after his promotion to the episcopate. — Anecdote about the importation of Bibles. — Death of Aldhelm. — His exertions for bringing back Celtic dissenters. — His letter to the King of Cornwall. — The Britons of Cambria, who had resisted all the efforts of Roman and Saxon missionaries, adopt the Roman ritual by the influence of one of their own bishops. — Their pilgrimages to Rome. — End of the struggle. — Opinion of Mabillon. — Resistance proportioned to the dangers which beset the special nationality. — Union the work of Benedictines. — In the Britannic Isles, as among the Gauls, Celtic monasticism conquered and eclipsed by the Benedictine order.

THE memory of Ceolfrid, along with that of his faithful English, has faded out of the country in which he died. But he belongs nevertheless to the general history of the Church by the direct influence which he exercised upon the conclusion of that great struggle between Celtic Christianity and Roman unity which had agitated the British Isles for more than a century, and which had caused so many holy monks, from Augustin to Wilfrid, so much anxious thought and effort. Ceolfrid, trained in the school of Wilfrid, had the glory of giving the last blow to that species of schism which Wilfrid to his cost had conquered; and this supreme victory was won at the very time when Wilfrid concluded in obscurity his long and laborious career.

A year after the death of Wilfrid, Nechtan, the king of those Picts who occupied the north of Caledonia, the successor of that Bruidh who received the great Celtic apostle Columba, wrote to Abbot Ceolfrid a memorable letter. This tributary king was not only a Christian, but greatly occupied by religious questions. He meditated much on the Holy Scriptures, and was thus led to understand, and to regret, the advantages of Catholic unity, from which his nation

was to a certain extent separate by the paschal question. He resolved to lead back his people to the Roman rule, notwithstanding the obstinate resistance of the monks of Iona, the sons of St. Columba, who continued the apostolical work of their patriarch. To overcome their opposition, he determined, in one of the singular revolutions of mortal affairs, to address himself to that Northumbria which had been evangelized by Celtic missionaries from Iona, imbued with the traditional error of their race, but which he knew to have already conformed to the rules of the Roman Church. At the same time, in seeking the aid of the Anglo-Saxon Church, he did not apply either to the bishops who had divided among themselves Wilfrid's spoil, nor even to the great Monastery of Lindisfarne, which had been so long the point of junction between the two races. Instead, he knocked at the door of the new sanctuaries on the banks of the Wear and Tyne, to which Benedict Biscop had given the highest place in public veneration; he asked the aid of Abbot Ceolfrid, who for twenty years had worthily occupied the place of the holy traveller. He sent to him a special embassy to ask of him good arguments, set forth in writing, with which to refute the partisans of Celtic ritualism in respect to Easter and the tonsure;[126] and at the same time prayed the abbot to send him architects to build him a church of stone, like the Romans, promising to dedicate the church, when built, to the honor of St. Peter, and to follow with all his people the observances of the Roman Church as much as the distance and difference of language permitted them to do.[127]

The King of the Picts requests Ceolfrid to send him architects, and arguments in favor of Roman unity. 710.

Ceolfrid sent him architects, who were, without doubt, monks of his community, and whose mission thus gives us the exact date of the introduction of Christian architecture into Scotland, where up to that moment the churches were made of wood, or osiers, in the Irish fashion. He wrote at the same time to the Pictish king a

Answer of Ceolfrid, in

[126] "Naiton . . . admonitus ecclesiasticarum frequenti meditatione scripturarum. . . . Quæsivit auxilium de gente Anglorum quos jamdudum ad exemplum S. Romanæ et Apostolicæ Ecclesiæ suam religionem instituisse cognovit. . . . Postulans ut exhortatorias sibi litteras mitteret, quibus potentius confortare posset eos qui Pascha non suo tempore observare præsumerent. . . . Sed et architectos . . . qui juxta morem Romanorum ecclesiam de lapide in gente ipsius facerent." — Bede, *Hist. Eccles.*, v. 21.

[127] "In quantum dumtaxat tam longe a Romanorum loquela et natione segregati nunc ediscere potuissent."

long letter which Bede has preserved to us, and in which he begins by quoting, not the Scriptures or the Fathers, but Plato, in that well-known passage in the *Republic* where it is said that, for the happiness of the world, it is necessary that kings should be philosophers, or philosophers kings. In the legitimate glory of the greatest thinker of antiquity there is, perhaps, no ray purer or more precious than that invocation of his name and authority, more than a thousand years after his death, by a Saxon prelate to a Celtic king, both sprung from races totally unknown to Greece and her great men. "But," adds Ceolfrid, "if a man of the world was right in thinking and speaking thus, in what concerns the philosophy of this world, how much more ought the citizens of the celestial country, exiled here below, to desire that the great ones of this earth should apply themselves to know the laws of the Supreme Judge, and, by their example and authority, to make these laws observed. Thus we take it as a mark of heavenly favor bestowed on the Church each time that the masters of the world apply themselves to know, to teach, or to keep the truth." [128] Thereupon he enters into a theological and astronomical discussion, in which, passing in review the text of the Pentateuch, and the various cycles used from the time of Eusebius to that of Denis the Little, he proves that Easter ought to be celebrated, according to the usage of the Catholic Church, in the third week of the first lunar month, and always on Sunday. As for the tonsure, he admits that it is, in itself, an indifferent matter; but he insists upon the fabulous tradition, which all the orthodox then held as an article of faith, by which the Roman tonsure, in the form of a crown, was attributed to St. Peter, and the Irish tonsure, in which the front of the head was shaven, to Simon the Magician.

which he quotes Plato.

The letter of the Northumbrian abbot, which appears to modern readers long and wearisome, was completely successful. It was read publicly to the Pictish king, in presence of all the wise men of the country, translated verbally into their language. As soon as he had heard it, he rose, and, in the midst of the nobles by whom he was surrounded, knelt down and thanked God to have been so fortunate as to have received such a present

The Picts and their king abandon the Celtic ritual.

[128] "Vere omnino dixit quidam secularium scriptorum. . . . Quod si de philosophia hujus mundi vere intelligere et de statu hujus mundi merito dicere potuit homo hujus mundi, quanto magis cœlestis patriæ civibus." — BEDE, *ibid.*

from England. "I knew well," he said, "that this was the true way of celebrating Easter. But now I see the reason so clearly that I seem to have understood nothing about it before. For this cause, I take you all to witness, all you who sit with me here, that I will henceforward keep Easter thus, with all my people, and I ordain that all the clerks in my kingdom assume this tonsure.[129] The ordinance was immediately put in operation, and the messengers of the king carried into all the provinces copies of the paschal calculation, with orders to efface the ancient tables. The monks and other ecclesiastics had also to receive the tonsure according to the Roman custom. Bede affirms that the change was received with universal joy in the Pictish nation. Nevertheless, the monks who had come from Iona — those of the *family of Columb-kill*, the *Columbites*, as Ceolfrid calls them — acted as their brethren at Ripon and Lindisfarne had acted fifty years before. They preferred to leave their establishments, colonies founded more than a century before by their patriarch and his disciples, rather than to give up their insular tradition. A single line, short but expressive, in the annals of Ireland, bears witness to their fate. It is thus summed up — "King Nechtan expels the family of Iona from the country beyond the *dorsum Britanniæ*."[130]

The monks of Iona leave their monasteries rather than adopt the Roman ritual.

The country now called Scotland was then divided, as has been seen, between the Picts in the north and east, the Scots in the west, the Britons in Strathclyde, and the Northumbrians in the south. The supremacy of the Northumbrian kings, up to the downfall of Egfrid, over all the districts south of the Clyde and Forth, had been sufficient to secure in that part of the country, the observance of the Roman ritual, represented by such men as Wilfrid and Cuthbert. The conversion of the Picts, under King Nechtan, to the Roman rule, in respect to Easter, established liturgical and theological unity throughout the northern part of Great Britain, with the exception of the isle of Iona and the

[129] "Epistola, præsente rege Naitono, multisque viris doctioribus lecta ac diligenter ab his qui intelligere potuerant in linguam ejus propriam interpretata . . . exsurgens de medio optimatum sacro in consessu. . . . In tantum modo rationem hujus temporis observandi cognosco, ut parum mihi omnino videar de his antea intellexisse." — Bede, *Hist. Eccles.*, v. 21.

[130] "Expulsio familiæ Ie trans dorsum Britanniæ a Nectano rege." — *Annales Tigernachii*, ad ann. 717. See above, p. 50, for the description of the mountain-range called *dorsum Britanniæ*.

little kingdom of the Dalriadian Scots, which probably to the last extremity remained faithful to the ritual and traditions of their national sanctuary.

Yet, notwithstanding, a very eminent Irish monk — Adamnan, himself Abbot of Iona, and the most illustrious of Columba's successors — had long attempted to lead back the mother community, mistress of all the Caledonian Church, and always influential in the Church of Ireland, to the unity of Rome. If our readers have retained in their recollection our narrative of St. Columba, they will pardon us for dwelling a little upon his biographer, of all the Irish monks the one to whom posterity is most indebted, for his revelation to us, not only of that great man, the immortal honor of the Celtic Church — but also of the spirit, general and individual, and the private and local life of that whole Church. He was the countryman and near relative of his holy predecessor, sprung, like him, from the sovereign race of the Nialls. When he was but a scholar, having been dedicated from his childhood to monastic life, he had, according to the legend, gained the favor of a powerful chief — Finnachta the Feaster or Banqueter. While begging, according to the usage of the time, for himself and his five companions, each of whom took it in turn to seek the daily nourishment, he met the cavalcade of the chief, and in running out of the way struck against a stone, fell, and broke the milk-jar which he carried on his back, and which contained all he had collected.[131] "Be not sad," said the chief, "I will protect thee." When Finnachta became monarch of all Ireland, Adamnan was his *Anmachara* or spiritual counsellor; and this fact explains the important part he played in Ireland during his whole life. After having been a monk at Iona under three abbots, he was himself elected abbot in 679. Aldfrid, the Northumbrian prince, brother and successor of Egfrid, then an exile in Ireland, had taken refuge in Iona, and had become the friend and the disciple of Adamnan: and when, after Egfrid's downfall, the exile became King of Northumberland, the abbot went to his former guest to reclaim the captives, men and women, whom the soldiers of Egfrid had carried away in the previous year, after their cruel and bloody invasion of Ireland.[132] His mission was not entirely

Adamnan, Abbot of Iona, and biographer of St. Columba. 624-703.

His relations with King Aldfrid. 685.

[131] Reeves, *Append. ad Præf.*, p. xlii.
[132] See p. 400.

without success; for he obtained from his friend the restitution of sixty prisoners, whom he himself accompanied back to Ireland. He returned on more than one occasion to visit King Aldfrid, whose literary tastes resembled his own. He dedicated to him his description of the holy places, which he compiled from the narratives of a Gallo-Frankish bishop called Arculfe, who, returning from Palestine by sea, had been shipwrecked on the coast of Ireland, from whence he had gone to visit the still celebrated sanctuary of Iona. Thanks to the liberality of the learned King Aldfrid, whose taste for geographical studies we have already remarked, a great number of copies were made of this treatise, that it might be largely distributed and read even by the lower classes.[133]

It was during these journeys to and fro that the cultivated and fervent abbot,[134] learned to understand the new customs introduced into the Anglo-Saxon Church by the efforts of Wilfrid, and although there is no trace in his life of any actual encounter between him and the great champion of Roman unity, it is certain that Adamnan, while in Northumbria, was so thoroughly moved by the spirit there diffused by Wilfrid, that he left the country with the resolution of henceforward preferring the rites of the universal Church to those of a little nation at the end of the world.[135] Ceolfrid did much to enlighten him on this point; in his letter to the King of the Picts he relates the visit of Adamnan to Wearmouth, and their conferences on the subject of the tonsure. "Holy brother," said the Northumbrian abbot to the Irish prelate, "you aspire to an immortal crown, why do you wear on your head so imperfect an image of it? and if you desire the society of St. Peter, why do you bear the tonsure of him who anathematized St. Peter?" "Beloved brother," answered Adamnan, "if I bear the tonsure of Simon the Magician, according to the custom of my country, do not think that I detest the less the Simoniacal heresy. I desire to follow with my best powers the footsteps of the Prince of Apostles."

[133] "Per ejus eis largitionem etiam minoribus ad legendum contraditus." — Bede, v. 15. Bede has inserted many extracts of this description in his History; Mabillon publishes it entire at the end of vol. iv. of his *Acta Sanctorum*.

[134] "Erat vir bonus et sapiens et scientia scripturarum nobilissime instructus . . . abbas et sacerdos Columbiensium egregius." — *Ibid.*, v. 16, 21.

[135] "Cum videret ritus ecclesiæ canonicos . . . in ecclesiis Anglorum . . . cum suis paucissimus et in extremo mundi angulo positis . . . mutatus mente est." — *Ibid.*, c. 15.

"I believe it," said Ceolfrid, "but in that case it would be best to wear openly the mark of the Apostle Peter which you have in your heart."[136] It is apparent by this that the leader of the Irish Church did not even dispute the imputed origin, at once fabulous and injurious, of his national custom.

He attempts in vain to lead back the monks of Iona to Roman usage.

But when, on his return to Iona, he attempted to lead the children of St. Columba to his new conviction and to the Roman rule, he encountered an unconquerable resistance. To be treated as barbarians and rustics[137] by the Northumbrian monks and doctors troubled them little; they were aware that their spiritual ancestors had been initiated into the Christian faith two centuries before the Anglo-Saxons, who for the most part had been drawn out of the darkness of paganism only by the apostolic self-devotion of those whom their descendants disdained. The Celts, accordingly, adhered obstinately to the traditional rites of their glorious ancestors. When they saw their chief return with the Roman tonsure, the surprise and indignation of the monks of Iona were such that they have found form in an Irish legend.[138] The difference between the superior and the community became so painful that Adamnan, who was of a humble and peaceable character, could not hold head against it. Without abdicating, he yet ceased to live in his monastery, and passed a great part of the remainder of his life in Ireland.[139] He dedicated himself with ardor to the work of reunion, meeting there with much greater success than in his own community. Southern Ireland, as has been seen, had already returned to Roman unity, even before Wilfrid undertook his great work

[136] "Scias pro certo . . . quia etsi Simonis tonsuram ex consuetudine patria habeam, simoniacam tamen perfidiam tota mente detestor ac respuo." — Bede, v. 21.

[137] *Ibid.*, iii. 4.

[138] Mac Firbis or Forbes. — *Irish Annals*, MS. quoted by Reeves, p. xli.

[139] The annals of Ireland give his presence there in 692 and 697. At the latter date he gave forth the *Law of Innocents*, or of Adamnan (see above, p. 128). His books were written in the midst of his journeys and pastoral cares, as he says in the preamble of his treatise *De Locis Sanctis:* "Quæ et ego, quamlibet inter laboriosas et prope insustentabiles tota die undique conglobatas ecclesiasticas sollicitudines constitutus, vili quamvis sermone descripens declaravi." He wrote his *Life of St. Columba* between his two journeys from Ireland, from 692 to 697. He says nothing in it of his difference with his own monks in respect to Easter, but he mentions the prophecy of Columba at Clonmacnoise upon discord: "Quæ post dies multos ob diversitatem Paschalis festi orta est inter Scotiæ ecclesias." He remained in Ireland probably from 697 to 703, a period at which, according to Bede, he was still there. It was not too much for the difficult task he had to fulfil.

in England. Adamnan was the means of bringing back central and northern Ireland to the same rule. He procured the triumph specially of the Roman Easter and the orthodox tonsure, except in the communities directly under the sway of his own monastery at Iona. This victory was not won without great difficulty, but his gentleness and modesty triumphed over all.[140] He died the same year as his friend, the wise King Aldfrid. Before his death, and after having celebrated in Ireland the canonical Easter, he made a last attempt to win over the family of Columba, which he had governed for thirty years. It was in vain; all his entreaties were repulsed; but God graciously granted, says Bede, that this man, who loved unity and peace above everything, should attain to eternal life before the return of the paschal solemnity made the discord between himself and his disobedient monks notorious.[141]

His death. 23d Sept., 704 or 705.

The victory which Adamnan, the countryman and successor of St. Columba, could not gain, was reserved for a man of another race but equal holiness — the Anglo-Saxon Egbert. The life of this monk is an example of the numerous and salutary relations which existed between the Irish Celts and the Anglo-Saxons, and which had been so odiously disturbed by the inexcusable invasion of the Northumbrian king Egfrid. It is in connection with this invasion that the name of Egbert has already appeared in this narrative.[142] He was one of the many English who crossed the sea in numbers so considerable as to fill entire fleets, and who threw themselves upon the Irish shore like flights of bees, to enjoy the hospitality, both intellectual and material, of the Irish monasteries; while, on the other hand, the Greek Theodore, Archbishop of Canterbury and Primate of England, lived, by a happy exchange of brotherly kindness, surrounded by a crowd of young Irish monks. Some of the Anglo-Saxons, who sought a superior ascetic education in the Irish monasteries, returned to England, frequently filling places of the highest dignity there, and edifying their countrymen by their knowledge and vir-

Iona is, however, brought back to unity by the Anglo-Saxon, Egbert. 716-720.

[140] "Prædicans eis modesta exhortatione . . . pene omnes qui ab Hiiensium dominio erant liberi, ab errore avito correctos ad unitatem reduxit catholicam." — Bede, v. 15.

[141] Adamnan has always been venerated as a saint. See the article upon him, Bolland., vol. vii. Sept., 24th, and the Breviary of Aberdeen. It is asserted that he ate only twice in the week — Sunday and Thursday. — *Ann. des Quatre Maîtres*, ap. Reeves, p. lvii.

[142] See p. 401.

tue;[143] while others remained, casting in their lot forever with the monastic ranks of Ireland.

Austere and holy life of Egbert in Ireland. 635-735.

Egbert stood in the first rank of those numerous scions of the Anglo-Saxon nobility who in their youth became voluntary exiles for Christ, in order to devote themselves in Ireland, far from their relations and their possessions, to a life of penitence, and, above all, to the study of the Holy Scriptures.[144] He was only twenty-five when the terrible pestilence broke out which, immediately after the first triumph of Wilfrid at the conference of Whitby, made such cruel ravages in the British Isles. He was then with several of his countrymen, in a monastery, the site of which is at present represented by the picturesque ruins of Mellifont; he saw his companions dying around him daily, and when at last he was himself affected by the contagion, he had strength enough to leave the infirmary, and withdraw to a solitary place to review his life and weep over his sins. He had even the courage to pray God to spare his life until he had expiated the faults of his youth by good works, and made a vow if his prayer was granted to remain an exile forever and return to England no more. He then went in and lay down again, beside another young man, his closest and most intimate friend, who was mortally stricken, and lay in a sleep that was almost death. All at once the young sufferer awoke. "Ah, brother Egbert, what have you done?" he said. "I hoped so that we should have entered eternal life together; and now you let me die without you: know at least that your prayer is granted." The young man died that night; but Egbert survived for sixty-five years, and became a model of all monastic virtues. Not only did he call forth the affectionate admiration of his Anglo-Saxon countrymen, but even in Ireland, so fertile in marvels of holiness, he appeared an eminent saint. He emulated the most illustrious in his zeal for knowledge, in his eagerness to distribute to

He loses his most intimate friend, who reproaches him for wishing to live without him.

[143] Among others, Ceadda, the first rival of Wilfrid at York, and Ædilwin, of whom Bede says: "Ipse Hiberniam *gratia legendi* adiit, et bene instructus patriam rediit, atque episcopus in provincia Lindissi factus, multo ecclesiam tempore nobilissime rexit." — *Hist. Eccles.*, iii. 27. See what has been already said (p. 506, note) of the elder brother of Abbot Ceolfrid of Yarrow.

[144] "In Hibernia diutius exulaverat pro Christo . . . doctissimus in scripturis et longæ vitæ perfectione eximius. . . . De nobilibus Anglorum. . . . Quem peregrinam ducere vitam pro adipiscenda in cœlis patria retulimus." — *Hist. Eccles.*, v. 9.

the poor the gifts lavished upon him by the rich, and in the austerities of his life. The great historian of the Christian glories of the Anglo-Saxon race has not disdained to inform us that during Lent, and even for forty days after Christmas, and fifty days after Whitsuntide, his entire nourishment consisted of a little bread, with milk from which the cream had been carefully removed. It was at this price that the right of speaking with authority to the nations, and of walking before them in the way of salvation, was purchased.[145]

He uses his influence over the Anglo-Saxons to send them as missionaries into Germany.

He employed his influence over the two races which rivalled each other in honoring his holiness, only for their good, their honor, and the general welfare of the Church. Though he did not succeed, notwithstanding his entreaties, in turning Egfrid, the king of his native Northumbria, from the crime of his abominable invasion of Ireland, he was more fortunate with others of his countrymen, whom he transformed into missionaries of the faith to the Germans. In his ascetic exile in Ireland he was the first of the Anglo-Saxons to conceive the generous, the divine idea of sending to the help of the mother-country, to Germany, which still belonged to Satan, the sons of her Britannic colony to show her the path of virtue and of life.[146] He knew well whence it was that his Anglo-Saxon ancestors had come, and that they had left behind them in darkness a crowd of other tribes, of the same stock and language, whose image stole upon his imagination, as did that of the little Irish children whose plaintive voices St. Patrick heard in his dreams, and whose visionary appeals decided that saint, once a slave, to become the apostle of their country.[147]

[145] "Egressus est tempore matutino de cubiculo in quo infirmi quiescebant . . . finitis lacrymis, precibus et votis. . . . Expergefactus sodalis respexit eum. . . . O frater Ecgbert, O quid fecisti? Sperabam quia pariter ad vitam æternam intraremus. . . . Unde et genti suæ et illis in quibus exulabat nationibus Scottorum sive Pictorum exemplo vivendi . . . multum profuit. . . . Quod lac pridie novum in phialia ponere solebat, et post noctem ablata superficie crassiore, ipse residuum cum modico pane bibebat." — Bede, iii. 27. Bede, who is always careful to cite his authorities, informs us that he gathered all these particulars from a priest, "veracissimus et venerandæ canitiei," to whom Egbert had narrated his life. Bede, who was born in 673, was more than fifty when Egbert died.

[146] "In Germania plurimas noverat esse nationes, a quibus Angli vel Saxones qui nunc Britanniam incolunt, genus et originem duxisse noscuntur. . . . Sunt autem Fresones, Rugini, Dani, Huni, antiqui Saxones, Boructuarii. . . . Christi miles circumnavigata Britannia disposuit si quos forte ex illis ereptos Satanæ ad Christum transferre valeret." — Bede, v. 9.

[147] See vol. i. p. 544.

Faithful to the vow which forbade him to land, even in passing, upon the soil of his native island, Egbert chartered a ship to take him direct from Ireland to Friesland, on the northern coast of Germany. But as he was about to embark, one of his travelling companions, who had been a monk at Melrose, lying down to sleep after matins, saw in a dream the prior Boswell, the tender friend of Cuthbert,[148] and beloved master of the novices at Melrose, one of the great saints of the Celtic Church in Northumbria, who charged him to warn Egbert that the will of God ordained him to give up his Germanic mission, and to devote himself, willingly or unwillingly, to the instruction and conversion of the Columbite monasteries. "Their ploughs do not go straight," said the prior to his former pupil; "they must be put back into the right furrow."[149] This dream, though twice repeated, made no impression upon Egbert; but his ship having been cast ashore, he acknowledged the will of God, and gave up his cherished project, so far as related to himself. As many, however, of the fervent and zealous monks among his own countrymen whom he could move to such a determination he sent in his place; when any returned discouraged by their want of success, he sought and found others more capable or more fortunate; and it was thus the beginning made by Egbert that gave to Germany Vicbert, Willibrord, Swidbert, the two Ewalds, and other holy bishops or abbots, whose names are justly venerated by Germany as her apostles, and whom we shall find again in the history of that country if it is permitted to us to pursue our task so far.

Egbert leads back the monks of Iona to the unity of the Roman ritual.

It was in the year of Ceolfrid's death, eleven years after the death of Adamnan, and seven years after that of Wilfrid, that the Anglo-Saxon Egbert succeeded in overcoming the most obstinate stronghold of Celtic dissidence, and procured the triumph of Roman unity in the monastic metropolis which had been founded by the most illustrious saint of the Celtic Church. A stranger of an alien and often hostile race thus accomplished the task in which Adamnan had failed. He was from the first received by the monks of Iona with the

[148] See pp. 459 and 469.

[149] "Cum expletis hymnis matutinalibus in lectulo membra posuissem . . . apparuit magister quondam meus et nutritor amantissimus. . . . Vade et dic illis quia, velit nolit, debet ad monasteria Columbæ venire, quia aratra eorum non recte incedunt." — Bede, v. 9.

greatest respect; and, employing no means but those afforded him by the delightful suavity of his disposition, the soft and persevering influence of his conversation, and, above all, the example of a life so perfectly conformed to his doctrine, he triumphed over the inveterate dislike of the sons of St. Columba for that innovation which was to reunite them to the rest of Christendom. It is not probable that he succeeded at once, since he lived for the thirteen last years of his life at Iona, in the long famous island which he hoped to crown with a new glory by bringing it back into the orbit of Catholic unity. But his victory was complete and final.

He dies there on Easter-day, 24th April, 729.

He died at the age of ninety on Easter-day, the regular celebration of which had preoccupied, excited, and agitated so many saints before him. It fell, in the year of his death, on the 24th April — that is to say, on a day when it had never been and never could be observed, according to the computation followed by the Irish. After having commenced, along with his brethren whom he had the joy to lead back to Catholic unity, to celebrate on earth the greatest solemnity of the liturgical year, he went to complete it in heaven with our Lord, the holy Apostles, and all the citizens of the celestial country, where the eternal celebration ceases no more.[150]

All the monasteries subordinate to Iona followed the example of their metropolitan community in the adoption of the Roman Easter and the orthodox tonsure. There is ground for believing that they accepted at the same time the Benedictine rule, since none of the numerous monks and missionaries sent forth by them into France, and specially into Germany, carried any other rules with them than those of the order of St. Benedict.[151]

Ireland thus found itself entirely brought under the laws of Roman discipline. It was by her action, and in her southern provinces, that the first movement of return to unity[152] — a movement carried out by Adamnan with, except in Iona and its dependencies, universal success — had been begun

[150] "Doctor suavissimus . . . libenter auditus ab universis, immutavit piis ac sedulis exhortationibus inveteratam illam traditionem parentum eorum. . . . In insula quam ipse velut nova quadam relucente gratia ecclesiasticæ societatis et pacis Christi consecraverat . . . gaudium summæ festivitatis quod cum fratribus quos ad unitatis gratiam converterat, inchoavit, cum Domino et apostolis cæterisque cœli civibus complevit, immo idipsum celebrare sine fine non desinit." — Bede, v. 22.

[151] Mabillon, in *Præfat. III. Sec. Bened.*, No. 16.

[152] See p. 316.

by the Council of 634. The country most distant and least accessible to Roman influence, withdrawn behind Wales and the sea, which made a double rampart for her, was thus the first conquest of the principle of unity.[153] Caledonia, the modern Scotland, represented by the Picts, the farthest north and most untamable of all the populations of the British Isles, soon followed. And, finally, Iona herself yielded, increasing, by all the numerous family of Columb-kill, the crowded ranks of faithful and obedient children in the Roman Church.[154]

The Britons of Cambria alone resisted; they, the nearest of all, exposed every day to the example, efforts, and persuasions of the orthodox, alone persisted in the customs which they had refused to sacrifice to Augustin. Bede, the illustrious contemporary of those last struggles, grows indignant over this insurmountable obstinacy. He contrasts it with the docility of the Irish and Scotch, and attempts to explain the causes of the difference.[155] "The Scottish nation," he says, "communicated frankly and generously to the Anglo-Saxons, by the ministrations of Aïdan and other missionaries, the truth as far as she knew it; in return, she owes to the Anglo-Saxons the perfect order and regularity which were wanting to her. But the Britons, who had never wished to reveal the Christian religion to the Anglo-Saxons, bury themselves deeper and deeper in their error, now that the English are initiated into all the verities of the Catholic faith. They hold high their tonsured heads, but not in the form of a crown; and they profess to celebrate the Christian solemnities while separating themselves from the Church of Christ."[156]

The Britons of Cambria alone remain obstinately dissident in respect to Easter.

[153] Varin, Memoir already quoted.

[154] It must be acknowledged that from this moment the influence of this celebrated sanctuary went on diminishing, though it still remained much beyond that of the rest of the Celtic Church.

[155] He admits, however, that in the time of Adamnan the example of Ireland was contagious for a certain number of Britons, v. 17: "Plurima pars Scottorum in Hibernia, *et nonnulla etiam de Britonibus in Britannia*, ecclesiasticum paschalis observantiæ tempus suscepit." The Britons of Cumberland and of Strathclyde, who were more directly under the influence and authority of Northumbrian kings and pontiffs, are probably referred to in this passage.

[156] "Ipsi adhuc inveterati et claudicantes in semitis suis, et capita sine corona prætendunt et solemnia Christi sine Ecclesiæ Christi societate venerantur." — Bede, v. 22.

Real motive for their resistance.

A little reflection ought to have been sufficient to convince the honest Bede that some other motive than prejudice or religious passion had to do with the infatuated resistance of the Britons; it was the patriotic sentiment which the Anglo-Saxons had mortally wounded, and which Bede himself, like a true Englishman, does not seem to have been able to comprehend as existing in the victims of Saxon invasion. The Anglo-Saxons had never attacked Ireland before the passing incursion of Egfrid. They fought only by intervals, or held themselves upon the defensive against the Picts and Scots of Scotland; while against the Britons war and conflict were perpetual. This war dated from the first landing of the Saxons. It had begun long before the mission of Augustin, and had lasted for three centuries when Bede wrote.[157] It was not then the doctrines or usages of Rome, it was the ecclesiastical supremacy and moral invasion of the Saxons, which the remnant of the British nation, withdrawn within its inaccessible stronghold of Cambria, repelled with the energy of desperation. For a century and a half, up to the moment of Augustin's arrival, religion and patriotism had borne an equal part in their horror for the pagan barbarians who had come first to waste, and then to take possession of their native island. They had seen, with equal distrust and repugnance, these savage invaders, whose eternal damnation seemed to them a sort of consolatory justice, gradually introduced into the fold of the Church. By maintaining their ancient customs, by celebrating Easter at a different date, by seeing on the shaven brows of their clergy the distinctive sign of their independent origin and tradition, they testified their incredulity of the Christianity of their enemies, and raised a supreme protest in favor of their own vanquished but not extirpated nationality, before God and man.[158]

[157] VARIN, Memoir already quoted.

[158] This is called by Bede, in language too like that which Muscovite writers of our own day employ in respect to the Poles, *a domestic and immoral hatred:* "Britones maxima ex parte domestico sibi odio gentem Anglorum et totius Ecclesiæ catholicæ statum Pascha, minus recte *moribusque improbis* pugnant." There is no just reason for imputing to the British Christians a lower rate of morals than those of the Saxon converts; but our venerable historian, blinded by his passions and prejudices, goes still further, and yields, as so many have done after him, to the hateful temptation of identifying the work of God with a human conquest: "Tamen et divina sibi et humana prorsus resistente virtute, in neutro cupitum possunt obtinere propositum: quippe qui quamvis ex parte sui sunt juris, nonnulla tamen ex parte Anglorum sunt servitio mancipati." — v. 23. He says elsewhere (v. 18) that

Attempts of St. Aldhelm to bring back the Britons to unity. 709.

While Wilfrid consumed his life, in the north of England, in a struggle against the enmities which probably fomented and aggravated the opposition of the Celts to his innovations, a celebrated monk named Aldhelm, about his own age, and who died in the same year, distinguished himself by his efforts to lead back the Britons who were subjects of the kingdom of Wessex, or lived on its borders, to Roman unity, as well as to extend and consolidate the Christian faith among the Western Saxons. His fame was too great in the middle ages, and he has been too often quoted in our own day among the pioneers of literature, to be passed over by us without remark.[159] He was descended from that powerful race of Cerdic which traced its genealogy up to the god Woden or Odin,[160] and which reigned over the Saxons of the West until the moment came when it united all the kingdoms of the Heptarchy under its dominion. Aldhelm, who had been devoted from his youth to religious and literary studies, was soon attracted by a school which had just risen in his native kingdom, and of which he was destined to become the principal glory. A Scottish monk named Maïdulf, moved by the same impulse which led so many Anglo-Saxons to the cloisters and hermitages of Ireland, had come to England to seek a solitude where he could pray and study in peace. He established himself in an immense forest upon the borders of Wessex and Mercia, and lived there as a hermit, sheltered by a hut which he had been allowed to build under the walls of an old castle, a place which had come into the possession of the Saxon kings after having been the dwelling of British chiefs, and was the sole

His royal birth and education, half Roman half Celtic, 645 (?)-675.

St. Aldhelm wrote: "Librum egregium adversus errorem Britonum, quo vel Pascha non suo tempore celebrant, vel alia *perplura ecclesiasticæ castitati et paci* contraria gerunt." In all Aldhelm's writings that have been preserved to us there is not the least allusion to the irregular morals of the Celtic clergy.

[159] Except certain lines in Bede (v. 18), and the biographical details which have been found in Aldhelm's works, we have no contemporary information as to his life. But William of Malmesbury, in the twelfth century, and before him another monk, Faricius, a member of the great monastery of which Aldhelm had been abbot, compiled two separate biographies of the saint, from the traditions of their community. The work of William, which is very curious, has been published by Mabillon and the Bollandists in an abridged form, which was all they themselves knew of it. The complete text is to be found only in the *Anglia Sacra* of Wharton, vol. ii. The literary position of Aldhelm has been ably examined by Lingard (*Anglo-Saxon Church*, vol. ii.) and Ozanam (*Etudes Germaniques*, vol. ii. 489).

[160] *Chron. Saxon.*, ad. ann. 552.

remnant of a British town which the Teutonic conquerors had destroyed.[161] The Celtic solitary, to provide himself with the means of living, opened a school. Any man in our day, in any country in the world except the Far West of America, who should open a school in a wood, would run great risk of dying there of hunger. But at that time such a thirst for instruction had arisen among the Anglo-Saxons, and the fountains at which they could satisfy it were so rare, that the speculation of Maïdulf succeeded perfectly. Scholars came to him in sufficient numbers to enable him shortly to form a community, and among the rest came Aldhelm, first as a pupil and afterwards as a monk.[162] He remained there for fifteen years, was elected abbot on the death of Maïdulf, and by his exertions the foundation of the Celtic anchorite became one of the principal monasteries in England, still, however, bearing the name of the old and saintly stranger whom the Celts were always proud to remember they had given as a master to the great Aldhelm.[163]

He becomes Abbot of Malmesbury.

Before, however, he was called to rule his disciples, Aldhelm desired to have the advantage of other instructions than those of his Celtic master. He went repeatedly to Canterbury,[164] where the great monastic schools had taken new life under that Abbot Adrian whom we have already so often referred to, and who had come from Africa with the Asiatic Archbishop Theodore, to preside over the Catholic education of the Anglo-Saxons. This eminent man, described by a monastic historian four centuries after his death as the master of masters, the fountain-head and centre of letters and arts, gained the heart of Aldhelm by developing the fulness of his intelligence. The young West Saxon came out of the hands of his African preceptor furnished with all which then constituted

His studies at Canterbury.

669.

[161] *Liber Antiquitatum Meldunensis Cœnobii*, ap. Dugdale, *Monasticon*. The remembrance of this catastrophe appears to survive in the modern name of *Broken-borough*, not far from Malmesbury.

[162] "Deficientibus necessariis scholares in discipulatum accepit ut eorum liberalitate victus tenuitatem corrigeret. Illi procedenti tempore magistri sequaces ex scholaribus monachi effecti, in conventum non exiguum coaluere." — Guill. Malmesb., *Vita Aldhelmi*, ap. Wharton, page 3.

[163] *Maildulf's burgh*, whence Malmesbury. "Abbas monasterii quod Mailduft urbem nuncupavit." — Bede, v. 18. "A quodam sancto viro de nostro genere nutritus es." — *Epist. Scoti Anonym.*, ap. Giles, p. 98.

[164] It is difficult to conceive how William of Malmesbury could attribute the first training of Aldhelm to the Abbot Adrian. Aldhelm, who died a septuagenarian in 709, must have been at least twenty in 669, the year in which Adrian landed in England. Besides, it is proved that Aldhelm made two distinct visits to Canterbury.

a course of literary and religious instruction.[165] During his entire life he retained a grateful recollection of his teacher, and took pleasure in dating the true birth of his mind from his residence at Canterbury. "It is you, my beloved," he wrote to Adrian, "who have been the venerable teacher of my rude infancy, it is you whom I embrace with the effusion of a pure tenderness, longing much to return to you."[166]

His great literary reputation.

It was thus at Canterbury that Aldhelm acquired that profound knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, that love of Greek, Latin and Hebrew, these literary tastes and habits, which gained him the first place in the universal admiration of his countrymen. Not only contemporaries, such as Bede,[167] but their distant descendants, offered him a homage which has attracted the unaccustomed attention of several modern writers. I am aware that he is the first Saxon whose writings have been preserved,[168] the first man of Teutonic race who cultivated the Latin muse, as he boasts in applying to himself while still very young these lines of Virgil: —

> "Primus ego in patriam mecum, modo vita supersit,
> Aonio rediens deducam vertice Musas.
> Primus Idumæas referam tibi, Mantua, palmas."

But I cannot but think that his literary importance has been singularly exaggerated. Of all the Fathers of the Church, or even of ecclesiastical writers generally, I know none whose productions are more wearisome. He has neither the fiery originality of Ceadmon nor the eloquent and elegant simplicity of Bede. He is certainly well-informed for his time, and is not without a certain warmth of feeling when his mind is not frozen by pedantic formalism. Sometimes he applies happily texts from the Bible, and in his famous essays in prose and verse upon virgins and virginity he shows himself thoroughly instructed in sacred and ecclesiastical history. His verses, rhymed and unrhymed, are a little better than his

[165] "Quem in arcem scientiæ stetisse qui Anglorum gesta perleget, intelliget. . . . Fons liberarum vivus artium." — Guill. Malmesb., p. 3.

[166] "Reverendissimo patri mœæque rudis infantiæ venerando præceptori. . . . Mi charissime, quem gratia puræ dilectionis amplector." — Aldhelmi *Opera*, p. 330, ed. Giles.

[167] "Vir undecumque doctissimus: nam et sermone nitidus, et scripturarum tam liberalium quam ecclesiasticarum erat eruditione mirandus." — Bede, v. 18.

[168] "Constat neminem nostræ stirpis prosapia genitum, et Germanicæ gentis cunabulis confotum, in hujuscemodi negocio ante nostram mediocritatem tantopere desudasse." — *Epist. ad Acircium*, ed. Giles, p. 327.

prose, but still are destitute of any special charm or brilliancy, notwithstanding the pompous affectation of his images and metaphors. But in verse and in prose, this Teuton, in whom it would be pleasant to find something wild and primitive, delights in literary sleight-of-hand, in acrostics, in enigmas, in alliterations, in a play upon words, and a childish and grotesque redundance of expression[169] — in short, in all the paltry refinements of the Greek and Latin decadence.

We should judge him no doubt more leniently if we were acquainted with his Anglo-Saxon works, which must have contributed largely to his popular reputation. But of these there remains to us only a vague recollection, associated with the most curious and touching feature of his youth. What would not one give to have the actual text of those canticles and ballads which he sang upon the bridges and at the wayside corners, lying in wait for the Saxon peasants who left church in haste as soon as mass was over to avoid the sermon? Appearing before them as a musician, one of their ordinary bards, he attempted no doubt to teach them, under that popular and fascinating form of utterance, the same truths of religion which it wearied them to hear from the pulpit.[170] These songs in the vernacular tongue retained their popularity for several centuries, and gained for Aldhelm the honor of being proclaimed prince of Anglo-Saxon poetry by the great King Alfred.

His Anglo-Saxon songs intended to take the place of sermons.

The most striking particular in the history and writings of Aldhelm is the view they afford us of the literary and intellectual life, developed as it were in a moment, in the Saxon cloisters, almost before their completion, by an inspiring breath, at once Catholic and classic, from Italy and the East. The same phenomenon had been apparent two centuries earlier in the Irish monasteries under an inspiration more original but less easy to

Literary life in the Saxon cloisters in the seventh century.

[169] I refer those who may think me too severe, and who may not have at hand the convenient volume published by Dr. Giles, to the extracts from St. Aldhelm given by Lingard and Ozanam.

[170] "Litteris ad plenum instructus, nativæ quoque linguæ non negligebat carmina, adeo ut, teste libro Ælfredi . . . nulla unquam ætate par fuerit quisquam, poesim Anglicam posse facere vel canere. . . . Carmen triviale quod adhuc vulgo cantitatur fecisse. . . . Populum eo tempore semi-barbarum, parum divinis sermonibus intentum statim cantatis missis domos cursitare solitum; ideo sanctum virum super pontem qui rura et urbem continuat, abeuntibus se opposuisse obicem, quasi artem canendi professum. . . . Hoc commento sensim inter ludicra verbis scripturarum insertis, cives ad sanitatem reduxisse." — Guill. Malmesb., p. 4.

study. This literary life had its clouds and its pettinesses, its pretentious and affected aspect. But such a blossoming of human thought, of study and knowledge, of poetry and eloquence, in the bosom of a barbarous and warlike race, still apparently absorbed by war, invasions, dynastic and domestic revolutions, and all the storms and blunders which characterize the childhood of society, is not the less a great and wonderful sight.

Extent and variety of Aldhelm's knowledge.

The good and evil sides of this development could not be better manifested than in the person of St. Aldhelm, and especially in the extent and variety of his information. He was an excellent musician, and studied eagerly all the instruments known in his day.[171] What was still more rare, he had studied Roman law,[172] happily ignored by all the other Anglo-Saxon monks and men of letters, even including the Venerable Bede, whose learning seemed universal. He was acquainted, as has been seen, with the three sacred languages, and knew enough of Hebrew to read the Bible in the original. He not only read Greek, but spoke and pronounced it like an ancient Greek, according to the two professors whom King Ina, cousin of Aldhelm, brought from Greece to aid him in his studies. As for Latin, it occupied him only too much. He makes wearisome dissertations upon the minute details of grammar, prosody, and metrical rules, and quotes to extremity Virgil and Lucan, Persius and Terence, Horace and Juvenal: he even quotes Juvencus and the Priapeia!

His constant solicitude for souls.

At the same time, his literary or classical occupations never made him lose sight of the exigencies or perils of the soul. In a letter which has been often quoted, he warns one of his countrymen who was going to study in Ireland against the dangers of pagan philosophy, and, above all, of mythology. "What fruit," he asks, "can orthodox truth derive from the studies of a man who spends his strength in examining into the incests of the impure Proserpine, the adventures of the petulant Hermione, the bacchanals of Lupercus, or the parasites of Priapus? All that

[171] "Omnia instrumenta quæ fidibus vel fistulis aut aliis varietatibus melodiæ fieri possunt . . . in quotidiano usu habuit." — Faricius, *Vita Aldhelm.*, ap. Bolland., t. vi. Maii, p. 83.

[172] He himself states this in a letter to his predecessor Hedda, ed. Giles, p. 96. Compare Lappenberg, i. 196. I do not know how Palgrave discovered the existence somewhere of a manuscript treatise of Aldhelm upon Roman law, which, in 1832, he hoped soon to publish.

has vanished; it has become as nothing before the Cross, victorious over death." [173]

This anxiety for the salvation of souls, which he gives as the motive of all his works, reveals itself especially in his correspondence. For example, here are certain expressions in a letter which might have been addressed yesterday to the youth, half clerical, half noble, of the Universities of Oxford or Cambridge — so unchanging is the Anglo-Saxon nature in its vices as in its virtues: "Dear Ethelwald, who are at once my son and my disciple, you are still very young; but, I entreat you, do not let yourself be too much in bondage to the vain pleasures of this world. Avoid carefully daily excesses in drinking, long and endless repasts, even riding-parties too much prolonged, and every other miserable sensual delight.[174] I implore you also not to let yourself be overcome by the love of money or of vain glory, or by that secular boasting which is odious to God. Consecrate rather your time, my beloved, to the study of the Scriptures and to prayer; and if you wish, in addition, to study secular literature, do it with the special intention of understanding better the sacred text, the meaning of which depends almost everywhere on the understanding of the rules of grammar. Put this letter among your other books, that you may read it over and over again."

In dedicating his voluminous treatise on Latin versification, after twenty years' absence, to the chief [175] of a Northumbrian or Scottish tribe who had been his companion in his studies, and had become his spiritual son, he insists warmly that the poor prince, whom he calls his "very reverend son," should consider it a duty to read the wearisome volume from beginning to end. He expatiates at length upon the trouble which his production had cost him in the midst of his pastoral cares, and the convulsions of the age. "It would be absurd," he says, "if you did not take the trouble to eat

[173] "Quidnam, rogitum quæso, orthodoxæ fidei sacramento commodi affert circa temeratum spurcæ Proserpinæ incestum . . . enucleate legendo scrutendoque sordescere . . . quæ . . . alma mortis morte stipite patibuli affixa, solo tenus diruta evanuere." — *Epist. ad Wilfrid.*, ed. Giles, p. 337.

[174] "Sive in quotidianis potationibus et conviviis usu frequentiore ac prolixiore inhoneste superfluis, sive in equitandi vagatione culpabili. . . . Seu in quibuslibet corporeæ delectationis voluptatibus execrandis. . . . Multo magis, mi amantissime, vel lectionibus divinis, vel orationibus sacris semper invigila." — P. 332, ed. Giles.

[175] It is not known who this Acircius was, whom he describes pompously as "Aquilonalis imperii sceptra gubernanti," but whom he reminds that they contracted in their youth "inextricabile conglutinati fœderis pignus."

what I have taken so much pains to grind and make into bread."[176] Then he invokes the example of the great Emperor Theodosius, who, while ruling the world, found time to copy the eighteen books of the grammarian Priscian. But he adds: "Let not the sound of the trumpet of the last judgment depart from your ears; let it recall to you day and night the book of the law, which ought to be meditated day and night. You will never sin if you think always of your last end. What is our prosperity here below? a dream, a vapor, the foam on the sea. God grant that the possession of present good may not hold to us the place of future recompense, and that the abundance of that which perishes may not be followed by the dearth of that which endures. I ask this for you and for myself, from Him who for us has hung upon the cross."[177]

The rare fragments of his correspondence are at the same time the only evidence by which the heart of Aldhelm can be estimated; and his heart seems to us to have been much superior to his intelligence. A tenderness and kindness are here visible, which, in the person of a monk of barbarous race, are much more touching and attractive than all his rhetoric and learning. We perceive with pleasure that his soul was neither inflated nor disturbed by his great and increasing reputation, nor by the crowd of disciples and admirers who came to him, not only from the Britannic Isles, but also from Greece and Spain. He continued always the same mild and affectionate spirit which, while passionately studying prosody, astronomy, and Roman law, at Canterbury, wrote to his bishop lamenting that he could not celebrate Christmas in the joyous company of his brethren of Malmesbury, and charging him to salute tenderly in his name all the brethren, from the first to the last.[178]

His popularity.

These features of his character explain the great popularity which he enjoyed in his own country. It was such that when he returned from his journeys, he was met not only by a long procession of monks with chants and

[176] "Absurdum nempe arbitror si . . . illud te pigeat velut insolescentem ac delicatum paulatim masticare ac ruminare, quod me non piguit, utpote pistoris pinsentis officio functum, commolere et tollere." — P. 328, ed. Giles.

[177] "Propterea cœlestis tubæ clangor. . . . Utinam caducarum copia, secutarum non sit inopia . . . quod præstare dignetur, qui pro nobis in patibulo pependit." — *Ibid.*

[178] "Fateor me decrevisse. . . . Natalis Domini solemnitatem in consortio fratrum tripudians celebrare. . . . Salutate in Christo omnem sodalium meorum catervam a minimo usque ad maximum."

incense, but also by a crowd of laymen, who formed themselves into a kind of rhythmic dance in his honor.[179]

After this prolonged discussion of the literary position held by Aldhelm, it is necessary to recall to our readers that the great point of interest for us is his monastic life, and his connection with the Celtic dissidents.

His great monastic life.

This indifferent writer was a great monk. He divided his life between study and prayer, but study was for him only a succession of conversations with God. "When I read," he said, "it is God who speaks to me; when I pray, it is to God that I speak."[180] Like his contemporaries, Wilfrid and the holy abbots of the Northumbrian coast, he professed and extended the rule of St. Benedict, whose praises he has written in his poem in honor of Virgins, and whom he does not hesitate to regard as the first author of the conversion of England, his disciples having been its earliest missionaries.[181] He thus substituted the teachings and traditions of Canterbury for the influence of his first Celtic master. This, however, was not prompted by self-indulgence, for he continued, as did Wilfrid himself, faithful to the great austerities which characterized Irish monastic life. Aldhelm imposed upon himself the same extraordinary penances as were habitual to the Celtic monks. To subdue the impulses of the flesh he would plunge during the night into a fountain near the monastery, and there re-

[179] "Venienti occursum est ubique magna pompa, longo apparatu salutantium. . . . Laicorum pars pedibus plaudunt choreas; pars diversis corporum gestibus internas pandunt lætitias." — GUILL. MALMESB., p. 19.

[180] "Lectionibus frequenter, orationibus instanter incumbebat, ut sicut ipse in quadam epistola dicebat, legens Deum alloquentem audiret, orans Deum alloqueretur." — *Ibid.*, p. 13.

[181] We quote the lines for the satisfaction of our readers. They contain the first homage ever offered by a Teutonic pen to St. Benedict and his institution: —

"Temporibus faustus Benedictus claruit isdem,
Quem Deus Ausoniæ clemens indulserat auctor. . . .
Primo qui statuit nostræ certamina vitæ,
Qualiter optatam teneant cœnobia normam,
Quoque modo properet directo tramite sanctus,
Ad supera scandens cœlorum culmina cultor;
Cujus præclaram pandens ab origine vitam
Grægorius præsul chartis descripserat olim,
Donec æthralem felix migraret in arcem.
Hujus alumnorum numero glomeramus ovantes,
Quos gerit in gremio fœcunda Britannia cives,
A quo jam nobis baptismi gratia fluxit,
Atque magistrorum veneranda caterva cucurrit."

De Laudibus Virginum, p. 159.

main immersed to the neck, till he had said the Psalter, and this in winter as in summer. The fountain long retained his name, and the memory of his wonderful austerities.[182] I suppose he is the sole poet, the sole philosopher, of whom such recollections have been preserved.

His zeal for preaching.

But he was far from concentrating his zeal within the narrow enclosure of his monastery. It was he who by his preaching, completed the conquest of Wessex, the kingdom which, a hundred years after his death, was to absorb the other seven kingdoms of the Heptarchy. This work was long and laborious. The people seem to have been Christian only in name: they neither listened to the priests nor attended the churches. Aldhelm employed all the resources of his eloquence to attract them. He even went to the fairs and market-places, mingled with the groups of buyers and sellers, and succeeded, by his persuasive addresses, in making them leave their merchandise for the moment, and follow him to the church, where he fed them with the bread of the divine Word.[183]

He interferes in favor of Wilfrid.

His anxiety for the good of souls and the honor of the Church extended even beyond his native province. He was not indifferent, as were so many other holy bishops and abbots of his time, to the noble struggles of Wilfrid. One of his letters still exists, addressed to the numerous members of Wilfrid's clergy who had abandoned their pontiff in the midst of his trials, and who, during his exile, sought the favor of his persecutors. "I entreat you on my knees," wrote Aldhelm, "not to allow yourselves to be disturbed by the hurricane which has just shaken the foundations of your Church, the sound of which has echoed even to us. If it is needful, take courage to leave the country of your fathers with your bishop, and follow him into exile. What pain, what labor should ever be allowed to separate you from him who has fed you, trained you, carried you in his arms and on his breast, with so tender a charity? . . .

[182] "Ut vim rebelli corpori conscinderet, fonti se humero tenus immergebat. Ibi nec glacialem in hyeme frigorem, nec æstate nebulas ex locis palustribus halantes, curans. . . . Fons ille . . . in valle cœnobii lenibus scatebris fluens." — Guill. Malmesb., p. 13.

[183] "Illius provinciæ populus, perversus opere, quamvis subditus fidei nostræ, ecclesiam non frequentabat, nec sacerdotum curabat imperium: quem vir blandus verbis monens suavibus. . . . Mercatorum ex diversis patribus multitudo congregabatur maxima: cui pater iste extra urbem veniebat obviando. . . . Quidam eorem . . . pro quibus venerant relinquentes ad tempus mercimonia . . . post hæc . . . repedabant ad propria, animabus suis divino prius officio saginatis." — Bolland., t. vi. Maii, p. 85.

Look at the men of the world, who are strangers to all knowledge of divine things. What would be said of laymen, who, after having loved and served their lord in his prosperity, should abandon him when he fell into misfortune and poverty? What would be said of those who should prefer the repose of their own hearths, instead of joining themselves to the misery and exile of their prince? By what a universal explosion of laughter, of contempt, and execration, would not they be overwhelmed? And you too, you priests, what will not be said of you if you allow the bishop who ordained you to go alone into banishment?"[184] We are not informed what was the effect of this letter; but it is not the less curious to behold our Anglo-Saxon abbot, worthy descendant of Odin, invoking to the aid of episcopal authority, and endeavoring to awake in the breasts of his priestly brethren, that tradition of personal devotion, that passionate sentiment of fealty to prince and lord, of which the Anglo-Saxons have left us so many touching examples.

Aldhelm was the true founder of Malmesbury, of which he was abbot for thirty years. It was to him it owed the powerful and popular existence which lasted till an advanced period in the middle ages; and he attracted to it an immense crowd of monks and students.[185] By the grandeur and variety of his buildings, he made it the most magnificent edifice which then existed in England. The sympathy which existed between him and the kings and nobles of Wessex and Mercia procured vast territorial gifts to the monastery situated on the borders of the two kingdoms. The abbatial demesne, which contained only thirty dairies,[186] when he became abbot, included more than four hundred at his death. In order to protect the liberty and property of the community as much as possible from lay or ecclesiastical cupidity, he went to Rome, with the consent of the kings of Mercia and Wessex, and obtained from Pope Sergius I. an act of privilege which placed

He goes to Rome to obtain the privilege of exemption. 687-701.

[184] "Vos viscerales contribulos, flexis genuum poplitibus, subnixa exposco prece. . . . Ecce seculares divinæ scientiæ extorres, si devotum dominum quem in prosperitate dilexerunt . . . deseruerint. . . . Nonne execrabiles cachinni ridiculo et gannaturæ strepitu ab omnibus ducuntur? Quid ergo de vobis dicetur?" etc. — *Epistola ad Clerum Wilfridi Episcopi*, p. 335.

[185] "Currebatur ad Aldhelmum totis semitis: his vitæ sanctimoniam, illis litterarum scientiam desiderantibus. . . . Tunc res monasterii in immensum augeri." — Guill. Malmesb., p. 10.

[186] I translate thus the *cassatos* of William, which I suppose to be equivalent to the more usual term *casata*.

the Monastery of Malmesbury and its dependencies under the special protection of the Holy See, and guaranteed to them an absolute independence of all secular or episcopal authority.[187] When he became a bishop, Aldhelm took pains to have this exemption confirmed, with all requisite solemnity, by his cousin, King Ina.

He becomes a bishop. 705.

For he too became a bishop towards the end of his life, and in spite of all his efforts to be delivered from this burden. On the death of the bishop of the West Saxons, Hedda, the plan of Archbishop Theodore was brought into operation to divide his vast diocese into two. A new bishopric was created at Sherburne, which still, however, was of much too vast extent, since it included almost all the south-west of England to the point of Cornwall, which the West Saxons had not yet completely conquered.[188] Aldhelm was called to this new diocese. After his promotion it was his desire that the monks of his different communities[189] — or, as he said, his families — should proceed, in all freedom, to the election of a new abbot; but they obstinately refused to give him a successor. To his reiterated requests they answered, "As long as you live, we will live with you and under you. But one thing we ask of you unanimously. It is, to guarantee to us, by the Holy Scriptures and the consent of the powerful, that after your death neither king, nor bishop, nor any man whatsoever, ecclesiastic or layman, may exercise over us an authority which we are not willing to accept[190] Aldhelm procured an

[187] The authenticity of the Act given by William has been contested, but the fact of the exemption does not seem doubtful. On this subject the Bollandists say, "Tales exemptiones (from episcopal jurisdiction), licet eo tempore rariores, non omnino inusitatas fuisse ostendit eruditissimus Mabilio, *de Re diplomatica*, l. i. c. 3, ex quibus corrigas quæ alibi forte in contrarium diximus." Our readers will not wish us to enter into the coarse fables, little to the honor of the Papacy, which the biographers of Aldhelm have mingled with the narrative of his journey to Rome, nor to the extraordinary trial which the holy author of the *Eulogy of Virginity*, like Robert d'Arbrissel at a later period, imposed upon himself to prove his victory over his senses. "Quomodo," says Henschenius, with reason, "monacho id credam fuisse permissum?" And it is well to add, as Malmesbury says on another occasion, "Non enim eget Aldhelmus ut mendaciis asseratur."

[188] The seat of the ancient diocese continued at Winchester. That of Sherburne was shortly afterwards transferred to Sarum or Salisbury. It comprehended the six existing counties of Wilts, Berks, Somerset, Dorset, Devonshire, and Cornwall. It was afterwards subdivided, and the two additional dioceses of Bath and Exeter taken from it.

[189] There were three of these — Malmesbury, Frome, and Bradford, the two latter having sprung from the former.

[190] "Abbatem quem sibi spontanea voce familiarum mearum optio, con-

But nevertheless continues Abbot of Malmesbury.

acknowledgment of the perpetual freedom of the monastery, which he continued to rule, from his consin King Ina, from his colleague the Bishop of Winchester, and from all the clergy of Wessex assembled in synod. He then went to Canterbury to be consecrated by the former companion of his studies, the Archbishop Brithwald, successor of the great Theodore.

A curious incident is associated with this journey. When Aldhelm was at Canterbury he learned that ships from France, from the land of the Morins, had touched at Dover. On receiving this news he went to Dover, hoping to find among their cargoes books or other articles of use to his church. And, in fact, he did discover among the merchandise displayed upon the shore many books, and one in particular, of which, after having carefully examined it, he asked the price. The sailors, seeing him so poorly clad, laughed at him, and pushed him roughly away. Soon after a storm broke out, endangering the anchored ship. Aldhelm threw himself into a boat (like the generous sailors in the life-boats at the present day), to aid the crew of the threatened vessel. At his prayer the waves calmed down, and their lives were saved; the sailors, confused and deeply touched, then gave him the book he desired. It was a complete Bible, the Old and New Testaments, which he carried with him as a precious treasure to Malmesbury.[191] This anecdote is not without interest in connection with the history of material and intellectual commerce in England; it shows, too, that so far from interdicting the study of the Bible, as the modern English so blindly accuse her of doing, the Church, from the most primitive times, has neglected no occasion of spreading the knowledge of it.

sona voce elegisset. . . . Ut nullus post obitum tuum nec regalis audacitas, nec pontificalis auctoritas, vel aliquid ecclesiasticæ seu secularis dignitatis vir, sine nostro voluntatis arbitrio, in nobis sibi vindicet principatum." — *Epist. Aldhelmi de Libertate Propriæ Electionis*, ap. Guill. Malmesb., Bolland., and Giles, p. 350.

[191] "Spatiabatur sanctus juxta mare, intentosque oculos mercimoniis infigebat, si quid forte commodum ecclesiastico usui attulissent nautæ qui e Gallico sinu in Angliam provecti librorum copiam apportassent. Conspicatus librum totius Testamenti Veteris et Novi seriem continentem. . . . Cum gnarus folia volveret, pretium effringeret, barbari eum nautica lascivia conviciis aggrediuntur. . . . Mox ipse in scapha ascensa virtute remigum periclitantes adisset, mutata in bonum." — Guill. Malmesb., p. 20. Cf. Bolland., *loco cit.*, p. 8. This Bible was still in existence at Malmesbury in the time of the historian — more than four centuries after the death of Aldhelm.

The episcopate of Aldhelm lasted only four years, which he passed in continual journeys through his vast diocese, preaching day and night. He died in the same year as his master, the famous African abbot, Adrian of Canterbury, and his illustrious contemporary, Wilfrid of York. Death surprised him, as it did the holy apostle of Northumberland,[192] in a village,[193] during one of his apostolic journeys. According to his own desire, he drew his last breath in the little wooden church to which he had come to preach the word of God; the stone on which he laid his dying head was shown long afterwards.

Death of Aldhelm. 25th May, 709.

Such was the man to whom all agree in attributing the principal part in putting down what has been called the schism in the west and south of Great Britain. It is interesting to search out in his writings, as in his life, all the traces of his connection with the Celts. They are, however, few in number, and seem all connected either with his first education under the Celtic Maïdulf, or his consequent literary studies. He receives pompous compliments from several Irishmen, one of whom requests from him the loan of a book, and afterwards that he would receive him as a disciple, sending him a specimen of Latin verses, and announcing that he could easily find horses and a servant for the journey, if Aldhelm's answer was favorable.[194] Another, exiled, as he describes it, in the most distant corner of the Frankish kingdom, beside the tomb of his holy countryman Fursy (at Lagny-sur-Marne), begs him, whom he calls the Archimandrite of the Saxons, to send him his Latin panegyrics.[195] At another time, it is the son

What he did to bring back the Celtic dissidents.

[192] See p. 251.

[193] At Dulting in Somersetshire. "In prædicationibus noctes perinde ac dies continuans, diœceses non segniter circumiens. . . . Lignea erat ecclesia, in qua se ultimum spirans afferre jussit." — Guill. Malmesb., p. 23. Eight centuries after his death his feast was still celebrated at Malmesbury by such a crowd of worshippers that, according to Camden, the presence of a troop of soldiers, *cohors militum*, was necessary to prevent disorder. Then came the Reformation of Henry VIII., with its usual train of devastations. The magnificent church of Malmesbury would have been razed to the ground had not a weaver bought it from the king to establish his looms there. The monastery was sacked. The precious MSS. of his library were long employed to fill up broken windows in the neighboring houses, or to light the bakers' fires. — Maitland's *Dark Ages*, p. 281.

[194] "Domino sancto, sapientissimo, Christo quidem carissimo Aldhelmo Scotus ignoti nominis in Deo æterno salutem," etc. — P. 98, ed. Giles.

[195] "Domino lectricibus ditato studiis mellifluisque ornato lucubratiuncu-lis, Aldhelmo Archimandritæ Saxonum. . . . Cellanus in Hibernensi insula natus, in extremo Francorum limitis latens angulo exul." Aldhelm answers:

of a Scottish king, learned in the literature of his time, who sends all his works to Aldhelm, in order that the file of so accomplished a genius may rub off the Scottish rust from them.[196] Then we find him, in his own person, congratulating one of his Anglo-Saxon friends on his return from foggy Ireland, after having studied there for six years. On this occasion he gives us an emphatic picture of the constant journeys of English students, who filled whole fleets going and coming to Ireland, in order to examine deeply, not only into the secrets of grammar, geometry, and physical science, but also into all the different interpretations of Scripture, "as if," he says, "there was a failure of Greek and Latin masters in green and fertile England to explain the obscurities of the celestial library to all who desire to know them." Then he instances his dear master Adrian, of ineffable urbanity, and the metropolitan Theodore, whom he represents surrounded by a troop of Irish disciples, like a wild boar surrounded by a crowd of furious dogs, holding them back, as by strokes of his tusks, by the nervous vigor of his dialectics, and the close ranks of his syllogisms.[197]

In all this there is no allusion to the religious differences which separated the Celts from the Anglo-Saxons, an omission which is of itself a new proof of the reconciliation already effected between the Irish Celts and the Anglo-Saxon clergy, while the British Celts remained obstinate in their distinct and even hostile observances. Since the great victories of the Northumbrian kings it was specially the West Saxons who carried on the struggle against the Britons who had taken refuge in the mountainous peninsulas of Cambria and Cornwall, and whose unwearied resistance was no doubt seconded in an unforeseen and often dangerous way by the other Britons scattered through the districts already con-

"Miror quod me tantillum homunculum de famoso et florigero Francorum rure vestræ fraternitatis industria interpellat Saxonicæ prolis prosapia genitum." — P. 331, ed. Giles.

[196] "Arcivillum regis Scotiæ filium. . . . Ut perfecti ingenii lima eraderetur scabredo Scotica." — Guill. Malmesb., p. 4.

[197] "Ex Hiberniæ brumosis insulæ climatibus. . . . Tam crêber meatus est (istinc illincque, istuc illucque) navigero æquoreas fretantium calle gurgites. . . . Cur Hibernia quo catervatim istinc lectores classibus advecti confluunt . . . ac si istic, fœcunde Britanniæ in cespite, didascali Argivi Romanive quirites minime reperiri queant. . . . Etiamsi Theodorus, Hibernensium globo discipulorum (seu aper truculentus Molossorum catasta ringente vallatus), stipetur; limato perniciter grammatico dente rebelles phalanges discutit," etc. — Pp. 92–94, ed. Giles; Cf. Ozanam, *op. cit.*, 492. This letter must have been written before 690, the date of Theodore's death.

quered by the Saxons. After one of these wars or insurrections, more cruel than usual, the national assembly of the West Saxons deliberated long over the measures it would be best to take by way of getting rid of one of the principal obstacles to the fusion of the two races, by leading back the vanquished Britons to unity in respect to paschal observances. The discussion lasted several days. At last, starting from the principle that no force must be employed, but solely reason and persuasion, it was resolved that Abbot Aldhelm, who was as blameless in life as in doctrine, should be charged to teach them the true laws of the Church, and to end the schism, for the honor of his country, as well as for the common salvation.[198] A national council (probably that of Becancelde), at which almost all the Anglo-Saxon clergy were represented, confirmed the mission which the Abbot of Malmesbury had received from his countrymen. He accepted the task with his usual charity. Without adventuring his person in the midst of these refractory tribes, he addressed himself to their chiefs and clergy in writing. An unexpected success attended his efforts. Of all that he wrote on this subject there remains to us only one letter, addressed to a petty British king who still maintained his independence in Cornwall, at the extreme point of southern England. He draws in it a striking picture of the religious separation, of the moral repulsion, which still at the end of the seventh century rose like a wall between the two races — between the victors and the vanquished. "Beyond the mouth of the Severn," he says, "the priests of Cambria, proud of the purity of their morals, have such a horror of communication with us that they refuse to pray with us in the churches, or to seat themselves at the same table; more than this, what is left from our meals is thrown to dogs and swine, the dishes and bottles we have used have to be rubbed with sand, or purified by fire, before they will condescend to touch them. The Britons give us neither the salutation nor the kiss of peace; and if one of us went to live in their country, the

About 690.

Letter of Abbot Aldhelm to the British king of Cornwall. 692 or 693.

[198] "Tunc rebellionem meditantes Kentuinus rex tam anxia cæde perdomuit, ut nihil ulterius sperarent. . . . Hinc frequenter West-Saxonum conventus, crebri cœtus coacti . . . sententia per plures dies multo verborum agmine volutata, nunc finem habuit: non vi cogendos schismaticos sed rationibus ducendos. . . . Ambitur precibus B. vir, ut hunc laborem impendat . . . patriæ laudi et cunctorum in commune saluti." — Guill. Malmesb., p. 14. Cf. Bolland, *l. c.*, p. 87.

natives would hold no communication with him till after he had been made to endure a penance of forty days."

Aldhelm then enlarges upon the cruel scandal of such struggles and hatreds in the Church of Christ. He discusses in succession the question of the tonsure and that of paschal observance. "We entreat you on our knees," he says, "in view of our future and common country in heaven, and of the angels, our future fellow-countrymen — we adjure you not to persevere in your arrogant contempt of the decrees of St. Peter, and the traditions of the Roman Church, by a proud and tyrannical attachment to the statutes of your ancestors. . . . Whatever may be the perfection of good works, they are unprofitable out of the Catholic Church, alike to cenobites, however faithfully they may follow their rule, and to anchorites hidden in the wildest solitudes. To sum up everything in one word, it is vain for any man to take credit to himself for belonging to the Catholic faith so long as he rejects the doctrine and rule of St. Peter. For the foundation of the Church and the consolidation of the faith, placed first in Christ and secondly in St. Peter, wavers not before the assaults of any tempest. It is on Peter that the Truth himself conferred the privilege of the Church, saying, 'Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church.'" [199]

It is generally admitted that the zeal and eloquence of Aldhelm led back to orthodox rule a great many Britons, especially those who lived under the daily extending sway of the kings of Wessex.[200] But even the narratives most

[199] "Geruntio regi, simulque cunctis Dei sacerdotibus per Domnonia conversantibus. . . . Nuper cum enim in concilio episcoporum ex tota pene Britannia innumerabilis Dei sacerdotum caterva confluxit. . . . Demetarum sacerdotes de privata propriæ conversationis munditia gloriantes nostram communionem magnopere abominantur . . . reliquias epularum lurconum canum rictibus et immundis devorandos porcis projiciunt. Vascula quoque et phialas. . . . Propter communem cœlestis patriæ sortem et angelicæ sodalitatis collegium . . . flexis poplitibus . . . suppliciter efflagitamus ut . . . traditionem Ecclesiæ Romanæ propter prisca priorum statuta vestrorum nequaquam tyrannica freti pertinacia arroganter aspernemini. . . . Petro autem veritas ita privilegium sanxit Ecclesiæ." — Pp. 83–89, ed. Giles. Two words little used in the seventh century — *barones* and *katharos* — the first applied to military chiefs, the second to heretics who thought themselves purer than their neighbors — will be remarked in this curious letter.

[200] "Scripsit, jubente synodo suæ gentis, librum egregium adversus errorem Britonum . . . multosque eorum qui occidentalibus Saxonibus subditi erant Britones, ad catholicam Dominici Paschæ celebrationem hujus lectione perduxit." — Bede, v. 18. It is difficult to believe with Mabillon that this *librum egregium* was nothing else than the letter to the King of Cornwall which has just been quoted. The monastic historians of Malmesbury attrib-

favorable to him make it apparent that all did not yield. The greater part of those who retained their independence beyond the Severn remained, according to all appearance, inaccessible to his efforts.

The Britons of Cambria, who had resisted the efforts of Saxon missionaries, adopt the orthodox Easter in obedience to the voice of one of their own bishops. 770.

When at length they yielded, it was not to the preaching or influence of a stranger. The victory which neither the learned Saxon abbot nor the great Roman missionary could win, was the work of a native prelate. Elbod, Bishop of Bangor, a Briton by birth, succeeded, not without much resistance, in introducing the Roman computation, first in North Cambria, and afterward in the southern part of the province, towards the end of the eighth century.[201] From that date there is no longer any question of dissent between the two Churches. In everything belonging to worship and faith, the Cambrian Britons, while still defending their independence with jealous pride, were henceforward at one with the Anglo-Saxons.[202] Like them, they went in crowds to Rome, their kings at their head,[203] swelling the armies of pilgrims who mingled at the foot of the chair of Peter their aspirations, their enmities, their diversities of race, but who returned with the lawful assurance that the supreme advantage of catholic unity exacted no sacrifice of truly national independence, right, or tradition.

Thus the different centres of that Celtic dissidence which has been so unjustly called schism, were successively overcome; and thus finished, upon the ground of religion, though

ute greater results to Aldhelm's work than does Bede. "Ad Dominicæ fidei regulam, et ipsos præsules et innumeram populi revocavit multitudinem." — Bolland., *l. c.*, p. 85. "Debent usque hodie correctionem suam Aldhelmo; quamvis pro insita nequitia et virum non agnoscant et volumen pessumdederint." — Guill. Malmesb., ap. Wharton, p. 15.

[201] "Anno DCCLXX. Pascha mutatur apud Britones, emendante Elbod, homine Dei." — *Ann. Eccl. Menevensis*, in *Anglia Sacra*, vol. ii. p. 648. Cf. Augustin Thierry, *Histoire de la Conquête d'Angleterre*, t. i. p. 87.

[202] This has been perfectly demonstrated by F. Walter (*Das alte Wales*, p. 232), against the childishly absurd affirmations of Roberts, Gieseler, and even of Lappenberg. All that can be admitted is, that the Cambrian bishops, who had their own metropolitan see either at *Menevia* (St. David's) or at Llandaff, did not recognize the metropolitan rights conferred by St. Gregory upon Augustin. The question was definitely settled only by Innocent III., who placed the Cambrian bishops under the authority of Canterbury.

[203] Cadwallader is noted as one of the Welsh kings who met the Anglo-Saxon kings at Rome in the year 680, but the assertion rests upon a doubtful tradition, while the pilgrimages of Howell and Cyngus in the ninth century, like that of Howell the Good in the tenth, rest upon more satisfactory authority.

only to begin over again and perpetuate itself elsewhere, the long struggle between the Celts and the Saxons. According to the common fate of human conflicts and passions, all this tumult died away into silence and forgetfulness, as the Rhine disappears obscurely in the sand and marshes of Holland after its majestic and sometimes stormy waters have swept through so many famous lands proud of, and blessed by, its presence.

In casting a last glance upon these prolonged contests, so insignificant at bottom, yet so seriously affecting national influences and interests, and animated by the passions, talents, and virtues of their principal champions,—the wisdom, I may even add, the grave beauty, of the language used by him who was the greatest monk of the greatest age, will be profoundly admired.

"This dispute regarding the date of a day," says our Mabillon, "occupied 'the Church for six centuries, and it required three of these centuries to restore union. Human nature takes back in this kind of controversy its downward inclination. The heat of warfare and the passion of success take possession of the soul under the cover of religion; and as they know no limits, it often happens that the laws of Christian charity are sacrificed to questions of purely human invention. In such cases, no one is permitted to disobey the judgment of the Church; but it is important that the pastors of the Church should use their authority with so much moderation as not imprudently to provoke feeble spirits too much attached to their own opinions into revolt, thus producing the greatest evils from an insignificant cause." [204]

At the same time, this generous son of St. Benedict congratulates himself with reason that the Benedictines had the honor of leading back to unity the Scots and Britons so long separated for so small a matter from the Roman Church.

It must be recollected at the same time that, during all the seventh century, the Celtic or British Church was much more extensive than the British nation. The nation was concentrated in Cambria and in the neighboring peninsulas;

[204] "Sic unius diei quæstio Ecclesiam detinuit per annos fere sexcentos: et tria minimum sæcula vix fuerunt satis componendæ hominum rixosorum coronæ. . . . In his vero casibus, sicut ab Ecclesiæ catholicæ sententia recedere nemini licet; ita convenit Ecclesiæ pastores sic moderari auctoritatem suam, ut nec imbecilles animos, propriis sensibus nimirum addictos, incaute provocent ad secessionem, nec in levibus causis pariant grande malum." — Mabillon, *Præfatio in III. Secul. Benedict.*, No. 14, 15.

the Church embraced, besides the western coast of England, all Ireland and Scotland, without mentioning the Irish colonies in Gaul and Belgium. Let us repeat that the opposition which rose in that Church against conformity to Roman rights and usages was exactly proportioned to the degree of patriotic resistance excited by the invasion of the Saxons, behind whom appeared the Roman missionaries. This resistance was desperate among the British Christians, who retained the memory or daily felt the weight of the terrible excesses of the conquest. It was less violent and less prolonged in Caledonia, and came to a conclusion there as soon as the struggle ceased between the Celts and the Saxons. And it was almost non-existent in Ireland, where, except in the incursion of Egfrid, which was universally blamed by the Northumbrian saints, the Saxons never penetrated by the strong hand, and where the two races lived peaceably together. Nothing could give more satisfactory proof how little the fundamental truths of Christianity and the infallible authority of the Church had to do with the matter, and how much in it was national rather than religious.[205]

Celtic monachism is vanquished in the British Isles as in Gaul by the rule of St. Benedict.

In all that concerns the special subject of these volumes, it will be remarked that the result of the struggle between the two great elements which disputed the empire of the monastic world was the same in the British Islands as in Gaul. This struggle was much longer and more serious in Great Britain, because it was complicated by national dislike, legitimate resistance, and an unappeasable resentment, which had no place in the influence exercised in France by Columbanus of Luxeuil and his Irish monks. The rule and order of St. Benedict were naturally associated, in the eyes of the vanquished and dispossessed Celts, with the ferocious foreigners who pursued them even to the mountain-glens and islands, in which they found a last asylum. Besides, the Columba of Iona, the great partriarch of the Celtic monks of Great Britain, was, it appears to us, a much more attractive personage than his illustrious namesake of Luxeuil; his sons, his heirs, Aïdan, Adamnan, and so many others, had a greater fascination, a much greater influence upon the masses and upon events than the successors of Columbanus among the Gallo-Franks. At the same time the sons of St. Benedict, the victors of the struggle, from St. Augustin to

[205] Varin, 2e *Mémoire*.

Bede, were much more remarkable men than the greater part of the Gallo-Frankish Benedictines of their day. St. Eloysius and St. Leger, whose history we shall soon relate, was scarcely equal to Wilfrid, Cuthbert, Benedict Biscop, and the Venerable Bede. The latter, besides, are more entirely monks, more completely identified with the Benedictine institution. It is, however, evident on both sides of the Channel that the Celtic element fell, died away, and disappeared before the Roman element as personified in the order of St. Benedict. The Benedictine influence everywhere carried the day, and prepared for the Church those valiant legions which, after having edified and disciplined France, and conquered and civilized England, marched on to new victories, and extended beyond the Rhine and the Elbe the frontiers of Christendom.

CHAPTER IV.

THE VENERABLE BEDE.

The entire history of this period is summed up in the Venerable Bede. — His works. — Encyclopædical character of his genius. — His theological and scientific writings; his love for the classics. — His *History of the English.* — His scrupulous care to prove its truth. — His soul. — The love of virtue and truth evident in all his writings. — He is himself the type of the noble lives he records. — His life passed entirely in the cloister of Yarrow. — He is spared in his youth by the pestilence which carries off the whole community except himself and his abbot. — His different masters; his diligence in work. — His extensive connections. — His friendship with Abbot Acca. — His works on Holy Scripture. — His celebrated letter to Bishop Egbert of York upon the abuses of ecclesiastical government and monastic life. — His bold freedom does not diminish his authority. — He is accused of heresy in popular drinking-songs. — His intimacy with the monks of Lindisfarne. — Narrative of his death by an eye-witness. — His worship and his relics. — Contrast between the country he lived in and the actual condition of Northumberland.

"O venerable Bede!
The saint, the scholar, from a circle freed
Of toil stupendous, in a hallowed seat
Of learning, where thou heardst the billows beat
On a wild coast, rough monitors to feed
Perpetual industry. Sublime Recluse!
The recreant soul, that dares to shun the debt
Imposed on human kind, must first forget
Thy diligence, thy unrelaxing use
Of a long life; and in the hour of death
The last dear service of thy passing breath."
— WORDSWORTH.

The period of history which we have just recorded is crowned by one of those great figures which stand out above the sea of ages, and triumph over the forgetfulness as well as over the systematic contempt of frivolous generations. The name of Bede, after having been one of the greatest and most popular in Christendom, still remains invested with an unchangeable fame. He is the type of that studious and learned life which, in the eyes of many, sums up the entire mission of the monk. He was the most cultivated man, the greatest intellectual personage of his country and age; but he holds a still greater position in the eyes of those to whom he has been a guide and master throughout a laborious and bewildering task. By the student who has passed several years almost entirely in his company, he is venerated as a saint and loved as a friend, and, without absolving him of his patriotic prejudices and partialities, the spirit does reverence to his character still more than to his glory.

Let us then examine his works, his spirit, and his life.

His works.

We turn to his works in the first place, which have made him the wonder and honor of his age, as well as a father and doctor of the Church. This Anglo-Saxon, born at the end of the Christian world, and of a race which half a century before his birth was still plunged in the darkness of idolatry, at once reveals himself clothed in the fulness of all enlightenment known to his time. Thanks to the unwearying activity of his mind, and the universal extension of his researches, his fame became European, and lasted through all the middle ages. It was not only the great historian whom, during his lifetime, and for long centuries after his death, men admired, as we ourselves admire him — it was, in addition to this, the master whose vast erudition embraced all that was then studied and known in the world. The universal character of his genius is that which most astonished his contemporaries, and has even excited surprise among our own.

The universal character of his genius.

He was for England what Cassiodorus was for Italy and St. Isidore for Spain. But he had, in addition, an influence and echo beyond his own country which has been surpassed by none: his influence upon Christendom was as rapid as it was extensive, and his works, which soon found a place in all the monastic libraries of the West, brought down his fame to the period of the Renaissance. He wrote at his pleasure in prose or verse, in Anglo-Saxon and in Latin; and many of his writings prove

His theological writings,

that he was acquainted with Greek.[206] The greater part of his works were devoted to theology and its cognate studies. In the list which he himself made out, three years before his death, of the forty-five works which he had written up to that time, he enumerates, in the first place, his commentaries and homilies upon Holy Scripture, specially drawn from the Fathers, so as to form a summary, for the use of his countrymen and of all Christians, of the traditional doctrines of the Church. These Biblical studies occupied him much during his whole life, and he professed a marked preference for that source of human knowledge which, to his eyes, surpassed all others, as much in its antiquity as by its divine origin and moral usefulness.[207] He plunged into this study with an ardor so intelligent and persevering, that it won him, in the eyes of the most illustrious of his countrymen, St. Boniface, the reputation of being one of the most sagacious investigators of the Holy Scriptures.[208] In his Martyrology, his historical summaries, and his biographies of the saints, he added a demonstration of the government of God by facts and the lives of men, to the theoretic exposition of the teachings of the faith.

And scientific.

But, far from confining himself to theology, he wrote with success upon astronomy and meteorology, physics and music, philosophy and geography, arithmetic and rhetoric, grammar and versification, without omitting medicine, and without disdaining to descend even to orthography and numeration. His treatises have almost always the form of abridgments or catechisms adapted to the education of his monastic disciples. He thus penetrated, with a bold and unwearying step, into all the paths then open to the human intelligence, with a clearness and extent of vision truly surprising for the age and circumstances under which he lived. He thus won the name of Father of English learning,

[206] The translation which he had made of the Gospel of St. John from Greek into Latin is unhappily lost. — Giles, *Life of Bede*, p. 51. M. Ozanam, in his *Etudes Germaniques*, quotes a paper from M. Renan, crowned by the Academy, but not published, which proves that the study of Greek was maintained among the Anglo-Saxon monks long after its introduction by the Archbishop St. Theodore.

[207] "Sancta Scriptura cæteris omnibus scripturis, non solum auctoritate, quia divina; vel utilitate, quia ad vitam ducit æternam; sed et antiquitate et ipsa præeminet." — *De Schematibus Scripturæ*, ap. *Act. SS. O. S. B.*, t. iii. p. 506.

[208] "Sagacissimi investigatoris Scripturarum monachi Bedæ." — S. Bonifacii *Epist. ad Huetbertum Abbatem.*

given to him by the greatest of modern Englishmen.[209] His scientific essays, *De Rurum Natura*, and *De Temporum Ratione*, contain a first essay towards a universal chronology, and afterwards sum up with method and precision the physical and astronomical sciences, which had, among our ancestors, survived the decay of the Roman empire. Good judges have even acknowledged that he had gathered more actual truths and fewer errors than are to be found in any Roman books upon similar subjects.[210] In this region, as elsewhere, our worthy Anglo-Saxon appeals with respectful confidence to the authority of Aristotle, Hippocrates, and Pliny. Like all the scholars and writers of Christian ages, he shows a certain satisfaction in exhibiting his familiarity with classic authors. He has left to us, or at least there have been attributed to him, collections of sentences drawn from Plato, Seneca, and, above all, Cicero, of whom he was an enthusiastic admirer. He often quotes Ovid and Lucan, Statius, Lucretius, and still oftener Virgil, whom he quotes even in the tales of the miracles of his Northumbrian saints.[211] He has also attempted to imitate him in a pretty eclogue on the return of spring.[212] He thus presents, in the eighth century, the type of that character of *scholar* — that is to say, of a man profoundly imbued with classic literature — which the English of the present day still prize so highly, and which the princes of public eloquence,[213] not less than the chiefs of the episcopate, esteem one of their highest distinctions. It does not seem, however, that his familiarity with these illustrious heathen weakened him either in Christian feeling or in the monastic spirit; and

His love for the classics.

[209] "Father of English learning" — this is the name given him by Burke, *Essay on English History*, p. 229.

[210] Sharon Turner, *History of the Anglo-Saxons*, vol. iii. p. 403. According to this author, Bede's work is sufficient of itself to prove that the irruption of the Teutonic nations into the Roman empire was in no way the substitution of barbarism for knowledge.

[211] Thus in relating the case of a demoniac at the tomb of the saint and King Oswald at Bardeney, he uses the well-known line —

"Conticuere omnes, intentique ora tenebant."

The illustrious Newman has fully established the absurdity of the supposition made by Milman, the learned Anglican Dean of St. Paul's, that Bede and other monastic doctors knew classical antiquity only at second-hand by extracts or isolated fragments. This idea is contradicted by all the monuments of the time, as well as by the very nature of the monastic spirit and studies. — *Atlantis*, 1859, n. 3, p. 31.

[212] "*Cuculus*, sive Veris et Hiemis conflictus," vol. i. p. 35, ed. Giles. Compare p. clxix.

[213] Mr. Gladstone, commentator, and Lord Derby, translator, of Homer.

nothing in his life contradicts the touching prayer with which he ends the list of his literary labors: "Oh, good Jesus, who hast deigned to refresh my soul with the sweet streams of knowledge, grant to me that I may one day mount to Thee, who art the source of all wisdom, and remain forever in Thy divine presence." [214]

History of the English.

This constant thought of God, of the soul, and of eternal salvation which is evident in all the works of his laborious life, and manly intelligence, shows itself at the beginning of the great work which still wins for him the attention and gratitude of all friends of the truth. "I entreat," he says in his Preface, "all those of our nation who read this History, or hear it read, to recommend often to the divine clemency the infirmities of my body and of my soul. Let each man in his province, seeing the care which I have taken to note down everything that is memorable or agreeable for the inhabitants of each district, pay me back by praying for me." "Dear and good father," he also writes when sending the first copy of his History to the friend who had suggested it to him, "beloved friend in Christ, remember, I beseech you, my weakness, you and all the servants of Christ who live with you; remember to intercede for me with the merciful Judge, and make all those who read my humble work do the same." [215]

This humble work — this *pamphlet*, as it is called by the great and modest writer — was nothing less than that *Ecclesiastical History of the English Nation*, which has made Bede not only the father of English history, but the true founder of history in the middle ages. The most competent authorities have recognized in him a chronicler well-informed and systematic, an able and penetrating critic, on whom the rigorous precision of his language, and the scrupulous accuracy of his narrative, bestow the full right of being heard and

[214] "Teque deprecor, bone Jesu, ut cui propitius donasti verba tuæ scientiæ dulciter haurire, dones etiam benignus, aliquando ad te fontem omnis sapientiæ pervenire et apparere semper ante faciem tuam."

[215] "Omnes . . . nostræ nationis legentes sive audientes, suppliciter precor ut pro meis infirmitatibus et mentis et corporis . . . sæpius intervenire meminerint: et in suis quique provinciis hanc mihi remunerationis vicem rependant, ut qui de singulis provinciis . . . quæ memoratu digna atque incolis grata credideram diligenter adnotare curavi." — *Hist. Eccles., Præfatio gloriosissimo Regi Ceoluulfo.* "Semper amantissime in Christo pater optime, . . . te supplex obsecro ut pro mea fragilitate cum his qui tecum sunt, apud pium judicem sedulus intercedere memineris: sed et eos quos eadem nostra opuscula pervenire feceris, hoc idem facere monueris." — *Epist. ad Albinum Abbat.*, Op. Minora, p. 229.

having his testimony weighed, even upon facts which could not come under his personal observation.[216] Besides, all his narrative which is not founded upon what he himself saw or heard, is given on the authority of contemporaries always conscientiously quoted and carefully designated or described by him. "I have consulted individually," he says, "in all that refers to Northumbria, innumerable writers in addition to all that I could answer for myself. . . . But I pray my reader humbly, if he finds that I have written anything which is not the truth, not to blame me severely for it, since, according to the true law of history, I have sincerely labored to put into writing for the instruction of posterity all that I could gather from common report."[217] The rare prudence with which he records those miracles which occupy so exaggerated a place in the annals, or, more strictly, in the habits and necessities of his time, is especially remarkable. He gives none upon his own personal authority, but always names the persons from whom they come, stating whether he has received them at first or second hand.[218]

Thus the most sceptical reader is unable to turn over the pages of Bede without being convinced at once of his sincerity and of his historical discrimination; while the Christian, eager to know and admire the works of God still more in the history of spiritual life than in the history of nations, can never feel sufficient gratitude to the unwearied worker who has endowed us with a book unrivalled among the historical works of Christianity, and who has given to England and its specially historic race the finest monument of national history which any modern people has yet received from its fathers.[219]

[216] Lappenberg, Ozanam, Varin.

[217] "Si qua in his quæ scripsimus aliter quam se veritas habet posita repererit, non hoc nobis imputet qui, quod vera lex historiæ est, simpliciter ea quæ fama vulgante collegimus ad instructionem posteritatis litteris mandare studuimus." — *Præfatio.*

[218] Not a single miracle is to be found in the biography of the five first abbots of his own monastery, all of whom he had personally known: while they abound in his narrative of the life of St. Cuthbert, which he had from the monks of Lindisfarne. This is remarked by the wise and pious Lingard. — *Anglo-Saxon Church*, ii. 102, 103.

[219] All who have had to make researches into medieval historians, and to whom it is of consequence to save their time and eyesight, know the inestimable value of a good, portable, and easily-read edition. Such persons will thank us for pointing out to them, among the numerous editions of the Venerable Bede, that published at Oxford in 1846, by Robert Hussey, bachelor in theology and professor of history. It contains in one volume all the *Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum*, with the lives of the Abbots of Wear-

His spiritual life.

This historian of souls begins by making us acquainted with his own; for who does not recognize, by the fashion in which a man tells the tale of the trials of virtue and truth here below, what he himself would have been capable of doing or suffering for them? The soul which thus betrays itself in his narrative is holy and full of grace. Not only in his beautiful narrations of ceaseless self-devotion, and of all the wonders of which man regenerated by faith is capable, but in the person of Bede himself, we find a complete type of that humility, serenity, and generous fervor which have won him throughout all Christendom the surname of Venerable. The Christian virtues were united naturally in him to that thirst for knowledge, that love of study, that vivifying thirst for work, that noble thoughtfulness of things divine and human, which make our monk-historian so interesting a personage in the history of the human mind. An esteemed writer [220] reproaches him with having been more Roman than English. I consider this reproach quite unfounded; no trace is to be found of the least sacrifice of his patriotism to his orthodoxy. He certainly preferred the Roman to the Celtic spirit; but it was his Anglo-Saxon patriotism, and not his Roman predilections, which dictated to him certain judgments inspired by national prejudice against the vanquished Britons in spiritual as well as temporal affairs. He had, like all other men, his preferences, his weaknesses, his blindness — but never has he willingly disguised, mutilated, or betrayed the truth; on the contrary, he served and loved with his best powers not only truth but justice, and, as it has been well said by an upright historian [221] of our own day, impartiality consists in being just, not in being neuter.

His life.

His life may be regarded as a faithful mirror of the laborious and holy existence of those vast clois-

mouth and Yarrow, and Bede's letter to Archbishop Egbert. It also contains all the divers readings and notes of the great edition of Smith (1722), rectified and completed with exemplary clearness and sobriety by the editor. If he had added to his volume Bede's life of St. Cuthbert, the letter of the other Cuthbert upon the death of the historian, and a map, this excellent publication would have left nothing to be desired. Justice obliges us to name here by the side of Bede a writer of our own day, M. W. B. Maccabe, who, in his *Catholic History of England* (London, 1847–49, 2 vols.), has devoted himself to a faithful reproduction of the narratives of Bede and other ancient historians, and, by giving a faithful and minute picture of the three first centuries of English history, deserves the gratitude of those who love to know the truth without being able to seek it at the fountain-head.

[220] Lappenberg.

[221] Franz de Champagny, *Correspondant*, vol. xii. p. 785.

ters which continued to rise in England under the rule of St. Benedict, and which were not less numerous in the eighth than in the seventh century. It was entirely passed in the monastery which had sheltered his childhood. He was born in 673,[222] in one of the seventy detached manors of public property (Folc-lands), which King Egfrid bestowed on Abbot Benedict Biscop on his fourth return from Rome. The little Bede, whose name in Anglo-Saxon means *prayer*, was intrusted by his relatives at the age of seven to Benedict, who had just completed his monastery of Wear- 680.
mouth. But the holy and learned abbot soon transferred the charge and education of his young pupil to his coadjutor Ceolfrid, when, with his twenty monks, old and young, the latter removed a short distance off, to 682.
found, at the mouth of the Tyne, the colony of Yarrow. They were no sooner installed in their new home than a cruel epidemic seized the colony. It carried off all the 686.
monks who could sing in the choir, except the abbot alone and the young Bede, still a child, who was his favorite pupil. These two continued to celebrate, as they best could, among their tears and regrets, the entire canonical service, with obstinate precision, until new brethren joined them.[223] There are few who will not be touched by the thought of these two representatives of Northumbrian Christianity and Anglo-Saxon monachism, the one already mature and illustrious, the other an obscure child predestined to fame, singing all alone the praises of God in their cloister depopulated by death, and awaiting the future with resigned yet unconquerable faith!

At the death of Benedict Biscop, when Ceolfrid was called to the head of the reunited monasteries, which now formed but one community,[224] the young Bede remained at Yarrow, which he never left. There he received deacon's orders at nineteen, and at the age of thirty the priesthood from the hands of St. John, called of Beverley, who then occupied

[222] According to Mabillon and Lingard; not in 674, as say Pagi and Stephenson.

[223] "Abbas . . . multum tristris, præcepit ut, intermisso ritu priori, psalmodiam totam, præter Vesperam et Matutinas, sine antiphonis transigerent: quod cum unius hebdomadis spatio inter multas ejus lacrymas et querimonias esse actitatum, diutius hoc fieri non ferens rursus statuit: ut antiphonatæ psalmodiæ juxta morem instaurarentur, cunctisque adnitentibus, per se et quem prædixi puerum, quæ statuerat, non parvo cum labore complebat." — BEDE, t. vi., App., p. 421. See note 98 in page 503.

[224] See pp. 501 and 505.

the see of Wilfrid at Hexham. And there he passed all the rest of his life, which was dedicated to study and meditation on Holy Scripture, without other amusement than the daily songs of the choir — without other pleasure, as he has himself said, than to learn, to teach, and to write.[225]

At the same time, when Bede tells us that he passed all his life in the same monastery, it must not be supposed that he denied himself the expeditions which occupied so considerable a part in the lives of the principal monks. Notwithstanding the great authority which attached to Benedict Biscop's double foundation, and the number of monks who hastened to it, it is difficult to imagine how the young monk could follow, without leaving his monastery, the lessons of all those whom at various periods he calls his masters. For whether at Yarrow or elsewhere, he received an education both valuable and varied. Among those who introduced him into the study of the Bible, he indicates a monk trained by Ceadda, the humble and earnest rival of Wilfrid, and, in consequence, imbued with all that was purest and most irreproachable in Celtic tradition;[226] while Greek was taught by monks of the school founded by Theodore in his metropolis of Canterbury,[227] and ecclesiastical music by the precentor of St. Peter's in the Vatican, whom Pope Vitalianus sent to England with Benedict Biscop.[228]

His different masters.

From pupil he soon became master, and that of the highest rank. It is evident from various passages of his works that his days and nights, of which a very moderate part was given to sleep, were divided between the studies and researches which he pursued to his last hour, the instructions which he gave to the six hundred monks of his double community, without reckoning the foreign monks whom he admitted to his lessons, and the composition of the books which have immortalized him. An existence more completely occupied it would be difficult to imagine. Except

His industry.

[225] "Cum essem annorum septem, cura propinquorum datus sum educandus . . . cunctumque ex eo tempus vitæ in ejusdem monasterii habitatione peragens, omnem meditandis Scripturis operam dedi; atque inter observantiam disciplinæ regularis et quotidianam cantandi in ecclesia curam, semper aut discere, aut docere, aut scribere dulce habui." — BEDE, *Hist. Eccles.*, v. 24.

[226] "Frater quidam de eis qui me in Scripturis erudiebant et erat in monasterio ac magisterio illius (Ceaddæ) educatus, vocabulo Trumberct." — *Hist. Eccles.*, iv. 3.

[227] See p. 354.

[228] See p. 499.

during the course of his last illness, he had no assistant in his work. "I am my own secretary," he said; "I dictate, I compose, I copy all myself." Though he was not unconscious of the obstacles which the yoke — or, as he himself says, the servitude of the rule — threw in the way of his work, he never withdrew himself from it;[229] and long after his death his scrupulous exactness in fulfilling all its obligations, especially that of singing the common service, was told in his praise.[230]

His extended connection.

The laborious severity of this life in the cloister did not, however, put any obstacle in the way of his extensive and important intercourse with the world outside. His friendships were almost all produced or occasioned by the composition of his great historical work. He was urged to undertake it by Albinus, whom we have already remarked as the principal disciple of the Archbishop Theodore and the African Abbot Adrian, the first Anglo-Saxon ever called to govern the great monastery of St. Augustin at Canterbury. Albinus furnished him with memoranda of all that had happened in Kent and the neighboring counties in the time of the missionaries sent by St. Gregory;[231] he even sent a priest of the adjoining diocese of London to Rome, to search in the archives of the Roman Church, with the permission of the reigning pope, Gregory II., for the letters of his predecessors and other documents relative to the mission to England.[232] All the bishops of England also assisted in the work by transmitting to the author what information they could collect concerning the origin of the faith in their dioceses, and the principal acts of the holy personages who had lived in them. The abbots and monks of the most important monasteries also furnished their contingent. The details given on this subject by Bede himself show that a constant communication was kept up between the principal centres of religious life, and that an amount of intellectual activity as surprising as admirable, when the difficulty of communication and the internal wars which ravaged England are taken into consideration, existed among their inhabitants.

[229] "Injuncti me operis labori supposui: in quo ut innumera monasticæ servitutis retinacula præteream ipse mihi dictator, simul notarius et librarius existerem." — *Epistola ad Accam*, Opera, i. 179.

[230] Alcuini *Opera*, i. p. 282.

[231] Bede describes him as "vir per omnia doctissimus."

[232] "Perscrutato sanctæ Ecclesiæ Romanæ scrinio." — *Prolog.*

In addition to his great historical work, his correspondence gives evidence of the number of visits he must have paid and received on the subjects of his studies and writings. There is no proof that he was ever at Rome, to which in his day so many Anglo-Saxon monks and princes crowded, though this was long believed.[233] But it is known that he was on terms of friendship with the King of the Northumbrians, to whom he dedicated his History of England, and with the King of Kent, to whom he addressed a letter upon the celebration of Easter. Among the bishops of his time his most intimate friend was Acca, the companion and successor of Wilfrid at Hexham. This learned and magnificent prelate took the warmest interest in literature and the arts. After having ornamented with many great works the abbey church built by his master at Hexham, he added a very large and noble library, according to Bede, of which the latter made great use. They were in intimate and constant communication. Bede dedicated several of his works in prose and verse to the successor of Wilfrid; and Acca, who loved, like Bede, to quote from the classics, and who, like Gregory the Great, had a fancy for playing upon words, insisted that his laborious friend, who had given him a commentary upon the Gospel by St. Mark, should add to it a commentary on Luke.[234] The correspondence between these two Anglo-Saxon monks, while doing no discredit to their ability, is specially honorable to their hearts, and shows to what a height prayer and study had developed in the Northumbrian cloisters the affectionate sentiments and tender feelings of friendship. In this correspondence Bede lavishes assurances of his regard on him, whom he calls the most loved and longed-for of all bishops.[235] He shows himself to be, as he says, ruled and inspired by that trust and mutual tenderness which believes and hopes everything from the heart it loves.[236] At the same time those pure and noble motives

[233] From a letter written by Pope Sergius, given by William of Malmesbury, but which does not refer to our Bede, according to Mabillon. — *Act. SS. O. S. B.*, t. iii. p. 509; and Lingard, *Antiquities*, vol. ii. pp. 410, 415.

[234] "Beatum Lucam luculento sermone exponc." — T. i. p. cliii., ed. Giles. See other editions, *ap.* Raine, *The Priory of Hexham*, pp. 32, 33, 34.

[235] "*Dilectissime* ac desideratissime omnium qui in terris morantur *antistitum*." And elsewhere: "Bene vale semper, amantissime antistes, nostri memor in Domino. . . . Domino beatissimo et omnium desideratissimo Accæ episcopo Beda humilis presbyter."

[236] "Non hæc certa alia quam indubitata mutui fiducia facit amoris, quæ de amico pectore omnia duntaxat quæ fieri possunt, credit, omnia sperat." — P. 179, ed. Giles.

which guided him in his studies and commentaries on Holy Scripture, which held the greatest place in his life, and have so much contributed to the increase of his influence on Christendom, are fully apparent in his letters. Both here and elsewhere the reader perceives by what a pious and patriotic anxiety he was moved to combat the ignorance and lukewarmness of the new Catholics of England, by making them capable of reading and understanding the Bible.[237] To bring to the level of all capacities the most approved explanations of obscure passages; to seek out with scrupulous care the mystic sense and spiritual use of Biblical narratives; at once to go deeply into and to simplify that study of the sacred words which is so dear and so necessary to real piety; to draw from it the lessons and especially the consolations pointed out by the apostle St. Paul,[238] and of which we have so much need in the sharp anguish of this sombre life, and during the prolonged delays of divine justice; to give thus an answer to the anxiety which filled the minds of the great monks who were the apostles of England, and of other ancient nations; such was the task of our Bede. He gave himself up to it with a fervor which never relaxed; with a perseverance which consumed his nights and days; with touching and sincere modesty; with delicate precautions against the danger of being taken for a plagiarist;[239] with a courage which sometimes failed him under the greatness of the task, and the multitude of obstacles in his way, but only to spring up again more unconquerable than ever; and, in short, with a solidity and assurance of doctrine which have kept for him, till the present time, a place among the best authorized interpreters of the Catholic faith.[240]

His celebrated letter to

Another bishop with whom Bede had much intercourse was Egbert, Bishop of York, a brother of

[237] "Nostræ, id est Anglorum gentis, inertiæ consulendum ratus." — *Epist. ad Eusebium*, p. 193, ed. Giles.

[238] See especially *Epistola ad Accam de Templo Salomonis*, p. 171, ed. Giles.

[239] "Sollicitus per omnia ne majorum dicta furari, et hæc quasi mea propria componere. . . . Qui in legis divinæ meditatione etsi non (ut ipse scripsisti) dies noctesque pervigiles ducere sufficio . . . operis immensitate perterritus et obstrepentium causarum (quas tu melius nosti) necessitate præpeditus. . . . Opusculum velocissime quantum tempus dederat, ne tua sacrosancta voluntas impediretur, emendatum membranulis indideram." — *Epist. ad Accam*, pp. 180, 184.

[240] An idea of his spirit and style may be attained by reading in the Roman Breviary the service for All Saints' Day and the two days following, in which several of the lessons are taken from his *De Sanctis*.

Bishop Egbert of York,

the King of Northumbria, and a disciple of Bede himself. Sometimes the prince-bishop would visit his former master at Yarrow; sometimes Bede, in return, went to the episcopal monastery of York, where he occupied himself in superintending the school established by Egbert, or sought out recollections of Paulinus and of Wilfrid, and all the details of that religious history of Northumbria which without him would have fallen into forgetfulness forever. The two friends studied together during these visits. A year before his death, not being able to accept an invitation from Egbert, Bede addressed to him a letter, which has been preserved, and which is a sort of treatise upon the spiritual and temporal government of Northumbria.[241] It displays, in the first place, the manly independence of Bede's judgment and language, and the great authority which this simple monk possessed even in the eyes of the princes and pontiffs of his country. It throws, at the same time, a fresh and full light upon the abuses which had glided into the Anglo-Saxon Church, and specially into the administration of monastic possessions.

He begins by recommending the bishop to study and meditate the Holy Scriptures, especially the epistles of St. Paul to Titus and Timothy, and the Pastoral of St. Gregory; and exhorts him to avoid idle and gossiping conversation and bad company — "for," he adds, "there are bishops who, instead of surrounding themselves with religious and chaste persons, are accompanied only by buffoons or drunkards, who take more thought how to fill their bellies than how to feed and sanctify their souls." [242]

Against the abuses of ecclesiastical government,

He then continues as follows: "Your diocese is too extensive to permit you to visit all the hamlets and out-of-the-way corners in it every year. You must then establish, as coadjutors in each village, priests who will preach the Word of God, celebrate the divine mysteries, and baptize. And, above all, let the priests teach

[241] "Memini te hesterno dixisse anno, cum tecum aliquot diebus legendi gratia in monasterio tuo demorarer, quod hoc etiam anno velles, cum in eundem devenires locum, me quoque, ob commune legendi studium, ad tuum accire colloquium." This letter was written in 734 or 735. Egbert took possession of the see of Wilfrid in 732.

[242] "Quod non ita loquor, quasi te aliter facere sciam, sed quia de quibusdam episcopis fama vulgatum est, quod . . . nullos secum alicujus religionis aut continentiæ viros habeant, sed potius illos qui risui, jocis, fabulis, comessationibus et ebrietatibus . . . subigantur, et magis quotidie ventrem dapibus quam mentem sacrificiis cœlestibus pascant."

all your diocesans to know the Apostles' Creed and the Lord's Prayer by heart. Those who do not understand Latin ought to be able to sing or say the *Pater* and the *Credo* in their own language; and I say this not only for the laity, but also for the clerks and monks who do not understand Latin. It is especially for the use of those uninstructed priests that I have translated the Creed and the *Pater* into English. When you thus stir up the people of God by frequent and common prayer to understand, love, hope for, and seek heavenly gifts, your paternal solicitude will receive from the Pastor of pastors a reward so much the more noble that it is seldom merited by bishops of our nation." [243] Bede entreats his friend, in continuation, to neglect no means of giving to the lay population pastors capable of teaching them the doctrines of salvation, the hatred of sins which are odious to the Lord, and the practice of good works; he insists upon frequent and even daily communion, according to the usage of the Church in Italy, Gaul, Africa, Greece, and throughout all the East. "Among us," says Bede, "thanks to the carelessness of the pastors, the most religious laymen dare not communicate except at Christmas, the Epiphany, and Easter, although there are numberless Christians, young and old, of pure life, who might without scruple approach these holy mysteries on the Sundays and feasts of the apostles and martyrs, as you have yourself seen in the holy apostolic Church of Rome." [244]

Having said this, he does not hesitate to point out to the prelate an abuse which was destined to rise throughout all the Church to a lamentable height. "Beware, dear bishop, of the crime of those who think only of drawing earthly lucre from their ministry. It is said that there are many villages in our Northumberland, situated among inaccessible hills or woods, where the arrival of a bishop to baptize, and teach

[243] "Et quia latiora sunt spatia . . . quam ut solus per omnia discurrere et in singulis viculis atque agellis verbum Dei prædicare . . . sufficias . . . necessarium est ut plures tibi sacri ordinis adjutores adsciscas. . . . Idiotas, id est, eos qui propriæ tantum linguæ notitiam habent, hæc ipsa sua lingua discere ac sedulo decantare facito. . . . Propter quod et ipse multis sæpe sacerdotibus idiotis hæc utraque . . . in linguam Anglorum translatam obtuli. Quanto enim rariora hujus sacratissimi operis in episcopis nostræ gentis exempla reperis, tanto altiora . . . præmia recipies."

[244] "Eorum quoque qui in populari adhuc vita continentur sollicitam te necesse est curam gerere, et sufficientes eis doctores vitæ salutaris adhibere memineris. . . . Cum sint innumeri innocentes et castissimæ conversationis pueri ac puellæ, juvenes et virgines, senes et anus. . . . Ipsi etiam conjugati, si quis sibi mensuram continentiæ ostendat et virtutem castitatis insinuet, idem et licenter possint et libenter facere velint."

the faith, and the distinction between good and evil, has never been witnessed, yet where no one is exempt from payment of the bishop's dues. Thus there are bishops who, far from evangelizing their flock without reward, as our Lord wills, receive, without preaching, the money which He has forbidden them, even while preaching, to accept." [245]

Bede's idea was, that with the help of the good and pious King Ceolwulf, it would be very easy for the Bishop of York, his relative and friend, to find a cure for these troubles by returning to the plan of St. Gregory the Great — re-establishing the metropolis of York, and dividing that diocese, which was still, notwithstanding the divisions which had been forced upon Wilfrid, much too large, among twelve suffragans. With his logical and practical spirit, our historian at once points out the means of arriving at this result without any fear of wounding the interests or exposing the infirmities of his order. "I know very well," he says, "that by the carelessness of the old kings, and their foolish liberality, it is difficult to find unappropriated lands to endow the new bishoprics. For this reason it appears to me that, after having deliberated on it in the great council, with the advice of the pontiff and the king, some existing monastery should be taken to be erected into a bishopric. And in order that the abbot and monks may not be tempted to opposition, they must be permitted to elect the future bishop among themselves, to be at once the head of the monastery and of the new diocese, or to choose one according to the canons outside their community, if no one suitable can be found within.[246] It

[245] "Attende quid gravissimi sceleris . . . antistes dilectissime. . . . Audivimus et fama est, quia multæ villæ ac viculi nostræ gentis in montibus sint inaccessis ac saltibus dumosis positi, ubi numquam multis transeuntibus annis sit visus antistes . . . quorum tamen nec unus quidem a tributis antistiti reddendis esse possit immunis . . . sicque fit ut episcoporum quidam non solum gratis non evangelizent." Lingard (*Anglo-Saxon Church*, vol. i. p. 183) believes that we have in this passage the first mention of tithes, of which there is no further notice elsewhere in Bede, and which do not appear to have been regularly established in England before the close of the eighth century.

[246] "Et quidem novimus quia per incuriam regum præcedentium, donationesque stultissimas factum est, ut non facile locus vacans ubi sedes episcopalis nova fieri debeat, inveniri valeat. . . . Quapropter commodum duxerim, habito majori concilio et consensu pontificali simul et regali edicto, prospiciatur locus aliquis monasteriorum ubi sedet episcopalis fiat. Et ne forte abbas et monachi resistere tentaverint, detur illis licentia, ut de suis ipsi eligant eum qui episcopus ordinetur et adjacentium locorum quotquos ad eamdem diœcesim pertineant, una cum ipso monasterio curam gerat episcopalem: aut si forte in ipso monasterio qui episcopus ordinari debeat inveniri nequeat, in ipsorum tamen juxta statuta canorum pendeat examine qui de sua diœcesi ordinetur antistes."

would be so much the more easy to increase, if there is room for it, the endowment of new dioceses, that there exist, as we all know, numberless places which bear the name of monasteries without keeping up a shadow of monastic observance. To appropriate their possessions, according to the authority of public assemblies, for the endowment of new bishoprics, would be to substitute purity for incontinence, temperance for gluttony, and piety for vanity. Yes, there are vast and numerous establishments which are of use for nothing, neither for the service of God nor man. No monastic rule is observed among them; no advantage is drawn from them by the earls and knights who have the burden of defending our nation from the barbarians. He, then, who should make them into new bishoprics would be neither a usurper nor a prevaricator: he would do a work of salvation and an act of virtue." [247]

Against disorderly monasteries.

The abuse of territorial gifts.

He then proceeds to forestall the objection which might be drawn from the sanction given by kings and national assemblies to the gifts which had endowed these pseudo-monasteries. "Would it, then, be a sin to correct the unjust decisions of old chiefs by the revision of more enlightened men, and to abrogate the lying formulas of certain scribes by the authority of priests and sages, in imitation of these good kings of Judah of whom Scripture speaks, who repaired the evil done by their impious predecessors? Let their example encourage you, in concert with our religious king, to destroy the unjust and irreligious decrees made by the former chiefs of our nation. You will thus provide at once for the spiritual and temporal necessities of our country. Otherwise we shall see at the same time the love and fear of Him who reads the heart disappear from among us, and the number of warriors diminish who are charged with the defence of our frontiers against the incursions of the barbarians; for you know better than I do, there are so many lands occupied by false monks that nothing remains to be given to the sons of nobles and old warriors; by which they are reduced either to cross the sea — deserting the country which they ought to

[247] "Sunt loca innumera . . . in monasteriorum ascripta vocabulum, sed nihil prorsus monasticæ conversationis habentia; e quibus velim aliqua de luxuria ad castitatem . . . synodica auctoritate transferantur. . . . Maxima et plurima sunt quæ . . . neque Deo neque hominibus utilia sunt, quia neque regularis secundum Deum ibi vita servatur, neque illa milites siva comites secularium potestatum qui gentem nostram a barbaris defendant possident."

have defended with their swords — or to consume their manhood in debauchery and idleness, for want of a suitable establishment on which to found a family." [248]

To these considerations of political and general interest, which throw so much light upon the military and territorial constitution of the Anglo-Saxon countries, Bede adds others which reveal not less pernicious abuses in the spiritual order.

"A still more serious crime," he says, "is committed when laymen, without either experience of or love for monastic life, give money to the kings as the price of certain lands, under pretence of building monasteries there — and then claim to themselves a hereditary right over these lands by royal edicts which are afterwards confirmed by the signatures of bishops, abbots, and the great people of this world. In the estates and villages thus usurped they live according to their own pleasure, exempt from all subjection either to God or man; sometimes, though laymen, ruling over monks, or rather gathering together under the guise of monks men who have been driven out of true monasteries for disobedience, or whom they can seduce out of such, or whom they have found wandering about the country; or even taking some of their vassals, whose heads they shave, and whom they bind to a kind of monastic obedience. What a monstrous spectacle is that of these pretended cells, filled with men having wives and children, who come from the conjugal bed to manage the internal affairs of a monastery! There are even some who have the effrontery to procure similar convents for their wives, where these secular women dare to undertake the government of the servants of Christ.[249] Is there not room to say in this case, as says our proverb, that when the

[248] "Injusta principum judicia recto meliorum principum examine corrigantur, ac mendax stilus scribarum iniquorum discreta prudentium et sacerdotum sententia deleatur. . . . Ea quæ provinciæ nostræ sive secundum Deum sive secundum seculum sint utilia, prospicere: ne . . . rarescente copia militiæ secularis, absint qui fines nostros a barbarica incursione tueantur. . . . Omnino deest locus ubi filii nobilium vel emeritorum militum possessionem accipere possunt . . . ideoque vacantes ac sine conjugio, exacto tempore pubertatis, vel patriam pro qua militare debuerunt, trans mare abeuntes, relinquunt; vel . . . luxuriæ ac fornicationi deserviant."

[249] "Usurpatis sibi agellulis sive vicis, liberi exinde a divino simul et humano servitio . . . laici monachis imperantes . . . quoscumque ob culpam inobedientiæ veris expulsos monasteriis alicubi forte oberrantes invenerint . . . vel quos ipsi de suis satellitibus ad suscipiendam tonsuram promissa sibi obedientia monachica invitare quieverint. . . . Modo conjugis ac liberorum procurandarum curam gerunt: modo exurgentes de cubilibus quid intra septa monasteriorum geri debeat . . . pertractant. . . . Quæ pari stultitia cum sint laicæ, famularum se Christi permittunt esse rectrices."

wasps makes honeycombs it is to put poison inside instead of honey?"

He then proceeds to expose the disastrous consequences of these abuses, which, however, had begun only about thirty years before. Since the death of Aldfrid and the end of Wildfrid's pontificate, he continues, there was scarcely a great noble or *ealdorman* who had not taken advantage of his position to acquire such a monastery for himself, or even for his wife, and by degrees the officials and domestics of the kings had learned to do the same. They all professed to be abbots, while at the same time governors of provinces, or officers of the royal household, submitting to a kind of tonsure, in order, by their own authority, to raise themselves, though simple laymen, not only into monks but into abbots.[250] "All these scandals," says the venerable historian, "might have been avoided or repressed had not the bishops themselves been the principal offenders or accomplices, confirming by their signatures the concessions and grants of monasteries, and selling their base indulgence for money to the false abbots.[251] . . . I entreat you by the Lord, dearest bishop, preserve your flock from the irruption of these dishonest wolves. Remember, that if you are a true and not a mercenary pastor, your duty is to examine carefully into all that is ill or well in every monastery of your diocese, in order that abbots and abbesses instructed in and subject to the holy rules may be found everywhere, worthy of presiding over a family of Christ's servants, and not an insolent and undisciplined crowd, disdainful of all spiritual rule. They must be taught resolutely that kings and great men, unless in cases of crimes against the princes themselves, have nothing to do with the monasteries, which remain under the sole authority of the bishops. It is your duty to prevent the devil from usurping those places consecrated to God, and substituting discord for peace, drunkenness for abstinence, debauchery and murder for chastity and charity. . . . I know well that my exhortations will

[250] "Nullus pene exinde præfectorum exstiteret qui non hujusmodi sibi monasterium in diebus suæ præfecturæ, suamque simul conjugem pari reatu nocivi mercatus astrinxerit. . . . Se abbates pariter et præfectos sive ministros aut famulos regis appellant . . . etsi a professione illa . . . sunt funditus extorres."

[251] "Si non ipsi pontifices magis hujusmodis sceleribus opem ferre atque adstipulari probarentur: qui . . . hujusmodi decreta injusta . . . suis subscriptionibus confirmare satagunt, eadem ipsis phylargyria dictante, ad confirmandum male scripta, qua emptores comparandum hujusmodi monasteria coacti."

meet many gainsayers, especially among those who are the authors or accomplices of the excesses I complain of. But you must treat with apostolic vigor those miserable successors of Ananias and Sapphira, who were cut off by sudden death from the society of the first monks, not even for usurping the possessions of others, but for having dishonestly retained what was their own.[252] When he describes avarice and cupidity as idolatry, the Apostle Paul manifestly justifies those who refuse their signature, even when exacted by the king, to these shameful bargains, and even those who strike through and erase all such fatal documents.[253] Do not then allow yourself to be stopped by those who, to protect the work of their covetousness, present before you charters furnished with the signatures of great men and nobles.[254] Answer them in the words of our Lord, 'All that my Father in heaven has not planted shall be rooted out.' In short, do not permit those who never attempt to struggle, even in the smallest particular, against bodily or spiritual carnality, to lull themselves to sleep by a vain confidence in their salvation; dissipate the senseless illusion of those who believe that others will redeem them after their death by the celebration of holy mysteries of which their lives have made them unworthy, or that they will be absolved from their sins for the sake of some alms thrown to the poor in the midst of their daily indulgences and passions. The hand which gives to God must be, like the conscience, pure from all crime and soil.[255] This is my judgment against the venom of avarice. I should never come to an end had I to speak at equal length of other vices, from which God give you grace, my dearest bishop, to deliver your flock."

The whole of this admirable letter is thus occupied with the indignant protest of a true monk against the false monks, who already began to infect the life of the cloister, and against the greedy and feeble bishops who sanctioned or tolerated these unworthy abuses.' If the example of the Venerable Bede had always and everywhere found imitators; if

[252] "Ananiam et Saphiram monachorum collegio indignos etiam corporis morte mulctavit . . . et quidem illi non aliena colligere, sed sua incongrue retinere maluerunt."

[253] "Qui vel subscriptione avari mercatus, rege licet imperante, manum substraxerunt."

[254] "Qui si chartas protulerunt in defensionem concupiscentiarum suarum ascriptas, ac nobilium personarum subscriptione confirmatas."

[255] "Quum manus ipse et conscientia quæ munus offerat Deo, munda a peccatis debeat esse et absoluta."

pure and courageous voices like his had risen in the bosom of the Church, especially in recent ages, to warn her against the incoming of corruption, hypocrisy, and secular covetousness, it may well be believed that the homicidal hand of Protestant or revolutionary vandalism would never have succeeded in sweeping away from the entire surface of the Christian world the glorious establishments founded by the munificence and piety of our fathers.

One thing must be gladly admitted, which is, that the bold freedom and noble independence of Bede did him no harm, and lessened in no way the great and just reputation which he enjoyed throughout England, a fame which soon spread into all Europe, and went on increasing after his death to such a point, that the council of Aix-la-Chapelle, held a hundred years afterwards, described him as an "admirable doctor."[256]

He is accused of heresy in popular songs.

This pleasant and glorious life was not, however, without a cloud. He excited the criticism of violent and narrow spirits, like all other superior men. They even went so far as to treat him as a heretic, because he had in his Chronology combated the then general opinion that the world was to last only six thousand years, and because, in his division of the six ages of the world, he had appeared a little uncertain about the date ordinarily fixed as that of the Incarnation. This accusation of heresy made so much noise, that it was discussed even among the peasants, who scoffed at it in their drinking songs; a fact which proves that if the great were then, as always, exposed to calumny, the popular masses of the day took a singular interest in their good fame. Bede, who took credit to himself for having always kept with scrupulous care within the limits of the strictest orthodoxy, was at once troubled and rendered indignant by this imputation. He grew pale with surprise and horror, as he says to one of his friends, a monk, in an apologetic letter — a letter full of pride and energy, which he charges his correspondent to read to Wilfrid, Bishop of York, who seems to have given a certain encouragement to the slander by suffering it to be uttered at table in his presence.[257]

[256] "Quid venerabilis et modernis temporibus doctor admirabilis, Beda presbyter sentiat, videamus." — *Concil. Aquisgran.*, ii. præf., l. iii., ann. 836, ed. Coletti, ix. 875.

[257] "Hæc tristi mox admistione confudit, addendo videlicet, quod me audires a lascivientibus rusticis inter hæreticos per pocula decantari. . . . Ex-

His intimacy with the monks of Lindisfarne.

If, however, he had some enemies, he had more friends. Among these, in the first rank, it is pleasant to find the monks of Lindisfarne. Their friendship with Bede maintains and proves the link which, notwithstanding certain differences of origin and opinion, attaches the island-cradle of the Christian faith in Northumbria to the last of the great monastic foundations, and the last of the great monks who illustrated that glorious coast. Bede asked that his name should be inscribed on the roll of monks in the monastery founded by St. Aïdan. He specially desired this favor in order that his soul after death might have a share in the masses and prayers of that numerous community as if he had been one of themselves.[258]

His last moments.

This pious anxiety to assure himself of the help of prayer for his soul after his death is apparent at every step in his letters. It imprints the last seal of humble and true Christianity on the character of the great philosopher, whose life was so full of interest, and whose last days have been revealed to us in minute detail by an eye-witness. Although the narrative has been often republished,[259] the reader does not tire of returning to it, and it must find a place here, for no historic document brings more clearly before our eyes the life, at once spiritual and literary, of the Anglo-Saxon cloisters. "You desire and expect of me," writes a monk of Yarrow to one of his absent brethren, "to tell you how Bede, our father and master, the beloved of

17th April, 734.

God, departed from this world. . . . Nearly a fortnight before Easter he was seized by an extreme

horrui, fateor, et pallens percunctabar, cujus hæreseos arguerer. . . . Quoniam illo præsente atque audiente insipientius sum prius appetitus conviciis, ipso etiam nunc audiente et dijudicante, . . . quam immeritus eadem convicia sum perpessus appareat. . . . Quod utique in cœna illa in qua poculo debrius culpare studuit." — *Epist. ad Plegwinum monachum*, t. i. pp. 144–154. This Wilfrid is not the great St. Wilfrid, but Wilfrid II., who was Bishop of York from 717 to 732, after St. John of Beverley, and before Egbert.

[258] "Me defuncto, pro redemptione animæ meæ, quasi familiaris et vernaculi vestri, orare et missas facere, et nomen meum inter vestra scribere dignemini . . . ut in albo vestræ sanctæ congregationis meum nunc quoque nomen appareret." — *Præfatio ad Vit. S. Cuthberti*.

[259] In the last place by Ozanam, who has made a perfect picture of the life of Bede and the Anglo-Saxon Church of the eighth century. The name of the author of the narrative is Cuthbert; he was a disciple of Bede, and wrote from Yarrow to one of his fellow-pupils, named Cuthwine, who was established in a distant monastery, probably one belonging to the Celtic ritualists, according to a passage quoted by Lingard, *Anglo-Saxon Church*, vol. ii. p. 197.

weakness, in consequence of his difficulty of breathing, but without great pain. He continued thus until Ascension, always joyous and happy, giving thanks to God day and night, and even every hour of the night and day. He gave us our lessons daily, and employed the rest of his time in chanting psalms; and passed every night, after a short sleep, in joy and thanksgiving, but without closing his eyes. From the moment of awaking he resumed his prayers and praises to God, with his arms in the form of a cross. O happy man! He sang sometimes texts from St. Paul and other scriptures, sometimes lines in our own language, for he was very able in English poetry."[260] Here the narrator interrupts himself to quote ten lines in Anglo-Saxon received from the lips of the dying Bede, and expressed in that short, sharp, and striking rhythm which characterizes the verses of the shepherd Ceadmon, with which Bede has made us acquainted. "Before our forced departure," thus runs the song, "no man is more wise than he needs be; no man knows how much he ought to search, before leaving this world, what shall be the judgment of the soul for good or evil, after the day of death."[261] "He also sang," continues the witness, "anthems according to his liturgy and ours — among others, the following: 'O King of Glory, who now hast mounted in triumph above the skies, leave us not like orphans, but send us the spirit of truth promised to our fathers.' At these words, *like orphans*, he burst into tears. An hour after, he repeated the same anthem, and we mingled our tears with his. Sometimes we wept, and sometimes we read, but we never read without weeping. Thus passed the forty days from Easter to Ascension. He was always at the height of joy, thanking God for his sickness.[262] He said with St. Paul, 'The Lord scourgeth every one that he receiveth;' and with St. Ambrose, 'I have not lived so

26th May.

[260] "Lætus et gaudens . . . immo horis omnibus . . . totam noctem in lætitia et gratiarum actione pervigil ducebat, nisi quantum modicus somnus impediret. . . . In nostra quoque lingua, quæ est Anglica, ut erat doctus in nostris carminibus, nonnulla dixit."

[261] These lines, omitted by Mabillon in his edition of Cuthbert's story, which is taken from Simeon of Durham, are found in a manuscript of St. Gall, almost a contemporary of Bede, and there is no doubt of their authenticity. Cf. LINGARD, p. 409.

[262] "Prorupit in lacrymas . . . luximus cum illo . . . altera vice legimus, altera ploravimus. Immo semper cum fletu legimus, ut tali lætitia dies usque ad diem deduximus, et ille multum gaudebat."

as to blush at the thought of living with you; but I do not fear to die, because we have a good master.'[263]

"During all these days, in addition to the lessons he gave us and the psalms he sang with us, he undertook two pieces of work; a translation of the Gospel according to John into our English tongue for the use of the Church of God, and some extracts from Isidore, Bishop of Seville. 'For,' said he, 'I would not have my children read lies, nor that after my death they should give themselves up to fruitless work.' On the Tuesday before Ascension he found himself much worse; his breathing became difficult, and his feet were swollen. He continued, nevertheless, to dictate in good spirits, and sometimes added, 'Make haste to learn, for I know not how long I may remain with you, or if my Creator may call me shortly.' On the eve of the feast, at the first dawn of morning, he desired that what had been commenced should be quickly finished, and we worked till the hour of tierce. Then we went to the procession with the relics of the saints, as the solemn occasion required. But one of us remained by him and said to him, 'There is still a chapter wanting, beloved father; would it fatigue you to speak any more?' Bede answered, 'I am still able to speak; take your pen, make it, and write rapidly.' The other obeyed. At the hour of nones he sent for the priests of the monastery, and distributed to them incense, spices, and fine linen, which he had kept as precious things; then bade them farewell, praying each of them to say masses for him. Thus passed his last day till the evening. Then the disciple of whom I have spoken said to him, 'Beloved master, there remains only one verse which is not written.' 'Write it then quickly,' he answered. And the young man having completed it in a few minutes, cried, 'Now it is finished.' 'You say truly, it is finished,' he said. 'Take my head in your arms and turn me, for I have great consolation in turning towards the holy place where I have prayed so much.' Thus, lying on the floor of his cell, he sang for the last time, 'Glory be to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,' and gave up the ghost as he pronounced the last of these divine names."[264]

[263] S. Paulinus, in *Vit. S. Ambrosii*.

[264] "Nolo ut discipuli mei mendacium legant. . . . Totum illum diem hilariter dictabat. . . . Diserte cum festinatione. . . . Adhuc magister dilectissime, capitulum unum deest; videtur ne tibi difficile plus te interrogari? Facile est, accipe tuum calamum et tempera, et festinanter scribe. . . . Curre velociter et presbyteros adhuc ad me. . . . Quædam pretiosa in mea

The monastic sanctuary towards which the dying look of Bede was turned still remains in part, if we may believe the best archæologists, and his memory has survived the changes of time. An old oaken chair is still shown which he is supposed to have used. It is the only existing relic of this great saint. For he was a saint by the same title and in the same rank as the most illustrious in the Anglo-Saxon calendar. The title of Venerable, which was given to him only in the ninth century by a kind of universal consent, did not then as now imply an inferior position to that of saint or blessed in the celestial hierarchy. Like all the other saints of the period, without exception, he was canonized by popular veneration, tacitly approved by the Church. Various miracles established or confirmed the fame of his sanctity: altars were consecrated to his memory; many pilgrims came to Yarrow to visit his tomb; his relics were stolen in the eleventh century, as so often happened, by a priest inspired by too ardent devotion, and carried to Durham, where they were placed with those of St. Cuthbert. They were an object of worship to the faithful up to the general profanation under Henry VIII., who pulled down the shrine and threw the bones on a dunghill along with those of all the other holy apostles and martyrs of Northumberland.[265]

It must, however, be admitted that his place in the worship of the faithful has not lasted so long as the glory attached to his name and the great fame which, rising in his native country, spread so rapidly over all Christendom.[266]

capsella habes, id est piperem, oraria et incensa. . . . Accipe caput meum in manus tuas, quia multum me delectat sedere ex adverso loco sancto meo, in quo orare solebam. . . . In pavimento casulæ suæ decantans."

[265] If we may believe a competent judge, Mr. Jewitt (*Gentleman's Magazine*, Dec., 1864), the choir of the little church now standing at Yarrow is as old as the church built by Benedict Biscop, and *inhabited*, as we may say, by Venerable Bede. This is the remnant which was discovered roofless by the three monks who, according to Simeon of Durham, visited the ruins in 1075. The learned archæologist thinks that he recognizes, in the ornaments and in the primitive bays of this choir, the characteristics of Saxon architecture. We confess that it is difficult to conceive how this low and petty construction can represent any portion whatever of the edifice built and ornamented with so much magnificence by the founder of Yarrow, and described with such enthusiasm by the most illustrious of his guests. The tower, indeed, which is of fine Norman or Roman architecture, may very well date from the partial restoration in 1075. An inscription, evidently more modern than its date, fixes the dedication of the church on April 24, 681, in the 15th year of King Egfrid, and *Ceolfridi abbatis ejusdem ecclesiæ Deo auctore conditoris, anno IV.*

[266] "Anglia te celebrat: te totus personat orbis."

— Ancient epitaph quoted by Leland, *Collectanea*, vol. iii. book iv. c. 23.

His fame did honor to monastic institutions in general. Bede appeared to the Catholic world a model of that virtue and knowledge which the cloister was to make the peculiar property of Christian society. In him the great Roman monachism which he had seen triumph over Celtic influences found its personification. The sword of his words, said his epitaph, was the safeguard of the fortresses occupied by his religious brethren.[267]

But it was especially the English nation, the last newcomer among Catholic nations, which had occasion to take pride in the great man given by her to Christendom. All the kingdoms of the Heptarchy claimed a share in the glory which could not be allowed to remain the exclusive possession of the Northumbrians — and the Anglo-Saxon missionaries, scattered through Germany, rivalled the monks who remained in their native island in the faithfulness of their devotion to his noble memory.[268]

The nations of Catholic Europe envied England the possession of so great a doctor, the first among the offspring of barbarous races who had won a place among the doctors of the Church. His illustrious successors, Boniface and Alcuin, emulated each other in celebrating his merits and services in the interest of souls, and in order to set him up as a permanent model to future generations.[269] Alcuin insists specially upon this with a precision of details which gives us one proof the more how entirely the likings and manners of the Anglo-Saxon conquerors of England are reflected in the

[267] "Crystallus patriæ, gregis astrum, lumen avorum,
Laus juris, bajulus legis, honorque jacet.
Beda datus sacris, gravitate senex, puer annis,
Devotæ mentis æthera thure replet. . . .
Ense pio verbi confratrum castra tuetur
Ne Christi miles, hoste ruente, ruat."

— Epitaph quoted by Mabillon from a MS. belonging to De Thou.

"Beda, Dei famulus, monachorum nobile sidus,
Finibus e terræ profuit Ecclesiæ."

— Another epitaph quoted by Arnold Wion.

[268] "Et rectum quidem mihi videtur ut tota gens Anglorum in omnibus provinciis, ubicumque reperti sunt, gratias Deo referant, quia tam mirabilem virum illis in sua natione donavit." — S. Bonifacii et Lulli *Epist.*, ed. Jaffé, number 134. See the letter written by an abbot of Wearmouth to Lul, Archbishop of Mayence, thanking him for having sent from Germany a silken stuff intended to wrap the relics of Bede.

[269] "Roganus ut aliqua de opusculis sagacissimi investigatorius Scripturarum Bedan (*sic*) monachi, quem nuper in domo Dei apud vos, vice candelæ ecclesiasticæ, scientia, scripturarum fulsisse audivimus, conscripta nobis transmittere dignemini." — Bonifacii *Epist.*, 672, ed. Jaffé.

tastes of the modern English. "Remember," he writes to the monks of the community of Yarrow which Bede had made famous — "remember the nobility of your fathers, and be not the unworthy sons of such great ancestors; look at your many books, at the beauty of your churches and monastic buildings. Let your young men learn to persevere in the praises of God, and not in driving foxes out of their holes, or wearing out their strength running after hares. What folly to leave the footsteps of Christ, and run after the trail of a fox! Look at the noblest doctor of our country, Bede; see what zeal he showed for knowledge from his youth, and the glory which he has received among men, though that is much less important and less dazzling than his reward before God. Stir up, then, the minds of your sleepers, by his example; study his works, and you will be able to draw from them, both for yourselves and others, the secret of eternal beauty.[270]

The fame of Bede has derived a special and increasing lustre from the fact that he was not only the first and most remarkable of Anglo-Saxons, but that, were he set aside, everything else concerning them would fall into obscurity;[271] thus it is not without reason that he has been compared to Homer, who rose like a resplendent meteor amid the night which precedes and the night which follows his appearance upon the horizon of Greek history.

The dark night of idolatry which covered Northumbria before the holy predecessors and contemporaries of Bede, has been replaced by the dark night of industry. The working of the coal-mines has transformed the face of the country. The light of day is positively darkened by thick volumes and heavy clouds of smoke belched out without intermission by the manufactories and workshops which are fed by the inexhaustible mineral wealth of the country. Newcastle, North and South Shields, Sunderland, Stockton, Darlington, Hull, all the centres of the coal-trade, have replaced in the atten-

[270] "Assuescant pueri laudibus astare superni Regis, non vulpium fodere cavernas, non leporum fugaces sequi cursus. Quam impium est Christi amittere obsequia et vulpium sequi vestigia! Discant pueri Scripturas sacras. . . . Recogitate nobilissimum hujus temporis magistrum Bedam presbyterum . . . qualem nunc habet inter homines laudem." — Alcuini, *Epist.* 13, ed. Froben, vol. i. p. 22.

[271] Certain contemporary chronicles find nothing to describe in the history of England during the seventh and eighth centuries except the existence of Bede. "Beda presbyter et monachus claret in Anglia." — *Chron. Hollandi Vetustiss.*, ad. an. 696, quoted by Mackintosh, vol. i. p. 83.

tion and regard of men the old monastic cradles of Christian faith and civilization, Lindisfarne and Yarrow, Tynningham and Coldingham, Tynemouth and Wearmouth, Hartlepool and Whitby. But what a contrast, even if we go no further than the surface, between the aspect of the country of old and that of to-day! The much-prized coal has covered this fine country with a veil of mourning. The verdure of the woods and fields is discolored by it, the limpid waters soiled, the purity of the air infected, the light of the sun intercepted. Everything disposes us to believe that these are but material tokens of the internal and moral darkness, in the midst of which struggles the vast and formidable population which swarms in those craters of British commerce. The frightful density of these unknown and impenetrable masses conceals abysses of ignorance, vice, wretchedness, and resentment. There Paganism is restored. Notwithstanding many generous efforts, partial remedies, and honorable exceptions — notwithstanding the observance, still compulsory and respected, of the Sunday rest, — the love of lucre has created armies of slaves, tools without souls, but already longing, and with good reason, for a better fate, for a condition less painful than that, the duration and aggravation of which ought to fill with trembling every Christian and patriotic heart.

The light of faith and the moral law is still more wanting to them than daylight. Buried alive in their mines and manufactories, without pontiffs, without spiritual guides, a prey to all the disorders, excesses, and forgetfulnesses which ever accompany the labor of a crowd, strangers to the thought of God, to any hope in a future life, to habits of modesty,[272] victims and instruments of the worship of mammon, they stand there like a perpetual menace to the blind egotism and formalism of the materialists of our age.

No man can admire more than I do the marvels of human intelligence and activity realized by the free genius of the English race; no man does more sincere homage to its natural and unconquerable instincts of religion. But who could behold without fear, in that district, once so fruitful in sanctuaries of prayer, virtue, and moral and intellectual life, the religious indifference and fierce thirst for gain which replace almost everywhere the tender and vigilant solicitude of the Church for souls? Who could be other than alarmed at sight

[272] See p. 496, note 83, what has been said of the facts revealed by the Parliamentary Commission in the coal districts.

of the deserted condition, the spiritual nullity, in which so many millions of our fellow-creatures are living? How can we cease to regret the days when the obedient fervor of the people answered so well to the zeal, knowledge, and disinterestedness of the clergy? and when, like the lighthouses which we now see everywhere, on the headlands, at the river's mouth, at the edge of rocky reefs, and along all the course of that dangerous and much frequented coast, offering their tutelary light to the sailor, there rose upon those shores, then desert, unknown, and inhabited only by a few savages, the sparkling lights, increasing from year to year, of Lindisfarne, Yarrow, Whitby, Coldingham, Wearmouth, and Tynemouth — centres of intellectual and moral life, as laborious as it was pure!

Perhaps the day may yet come — and may it not be far distant! — when, as of old, amid the wonders and perils of modern activity, new centres of charity, enlightenment, and peace may light up one after the other, like so many celestial beacons to guide and warn souls in their pilgrimage towards eternal life.

CHAPTER V.

THE ROYAL MONKS.

The star of Northumbria pales, notwithstanding the erection of the see of York into an archbishopric. — Sad end of the lineage of Oswy. — King Ceolfrid, to whom Bede dedicates his History, becomes a monk at Lindisfarne. — His successor Eadbert follows his example. — Other monk-kings. — Almost each dynasty of the Heptarchy furnishes its share: in East Anglia, Sigebert, who dies on the field of battle; in Essex, Sebbi, who leads back his people to the faith — his desire to die in solitude; and Offa, who dies at Rome; in Mercia, which inherited the preponderating power of Northumbria, Coenred, the travelling companion and fellow-novice of Offa; Ethelred, founder, monk, and abbot of Bardeney. — Another Mercian king, Ceolred, dies in a debauch. — Ethelbald, pursued by Ceolred, takes refuge in the marsh of Croyland with the hermit Guthlac, who predicts to him that he will be King of Mercia. — What Guthlac had been before he became an anchorite. — His solitary life resembles those of some of the most illustrious saints in the monastic order. — Death of Guthlac. — Foundation of the celebrated Abbey of Croyland upon the site of his cell. — Continuation and end of the reign of Ethelbald. — Re-

monstrances of the Anglo-Saxon missionaries in Germany. — The supremacy passes from Mercia to Wessex. — Three West Saxon kings abdicate to become monks or pilgrims to Rome: Centwin; Ceadwalla, the friend of Wilfrid, who lives just long enough to be baptized by the Pope; and Ina the friend of St. Aldhelm. — Reign of Ina, the legislator, victor, and pacificator of the Britons; restorer of the Celtic sanctuary of Glastonbury, the first protector of St. Boniface. — In consequence of a surprise prepared for him by his wife, he goes to Rome as a penitent to die, and founds the *Schola Saxonum* there. — Crowd of Anglo-Saxon pilgrims of both sexes to Rome. — Abuses and disorders. — False monks and false pilgrims. — The age of gold a chimera in the Church as elsewhere.

> "Must lose
> The name of king? O' God's name, let it go.
> I'll give my jewels for a set of beads,
> My gorgeous palace for a hermitage;
> My gay apparel for an almsman's gown;
> My figured goblets for a dish of wood;
> My sceptre for a palmer's walking staff;
> My subjects for a pair of carved saints;
> And my large kingdom for a little grave,
> A little, little grave, an obscure grave."
> — SHAKESPEARE, *Richard II.*

BEDE dedicated his *History of the English* to the king of his dear Northumbria, Ceolwulf, whose tender solicitude for monastic interests made him hope for an approaching reform of the abuses of ecclesiastical government in the north of England.[273] But two years after the death of the great monastic historian, Ceolwulf himself became a monk. He was of the race of Ida the Burner, sprung, however, from another branch than that from which came all those descendants of Ethelfrid the Ravager, whose connection with Aïdan and Wilfrid, Hilda and Ebba, Lindisfarne and Melrose, has already occupied us so long.

Sad end of the line of Oswy. 705-716.

The line of Ethelfrid had come to a sad conclusion in that young Osred, who came to the throne during the last struggles of Wilfrid, and whom the people had taken pleasure in regarding as the adopted son of the great bishop.[274] Far from walking in the footsteps of his father Aldfrid and his grandfather Oswy, he has left no trace of sympathy with the institutions and ideas represented among the Anglo-Saxons by the monks. From an early age he manifested all the inclinations of a tyrant, abandoning himself to frequent explosions of wild passion, which show only

[273] "Pro insita sibi dilectione pietatis, quicquid ad regulam pietatis pertinet, firma protinus intentione adjuvare curabit." — *Epist. ad Ecgbertum*, c. 5.

[274] See p. 430.

too clearly how hard was the task of the doctors and ministers of Christian purity among the Teutonic races. It was the delight of his precocious and impetuous libertinism to outrage virgins consecrated to the Lord, and he went from monastery to monastery to seek his sacrilegious prey.[275] On the other hand, he obliged the nobles whom he oppressed, when he deigned to spare their lives in his massacres, to be shaven, and to bury themselves against their will in the cloisters.[276] A violent death put a stop to his evil ways.

Licentiousness of the young king Osred. 716.

But already the star of Northumbria had paled beyond remedy. The final erection of the great northern bishopric of York into a metropolis, to which all the bishoprics north of the Humber were to be subject, was not sufficient to restore to Northumbria the power which she had exercised under kings like Oswald and Oswy and bishops like Aïdan and Wilfrid. Egbert, the Bishop of York, the correspondent of Bede, and a prince of the reigning dynasty, obtained from Pope Gregory II., after repeated requests, the re-establishment of the metropolitan dignity, which had been at first bestowed upon the see of York by St. Gregory the Great, but which, since the flight of Paulinus, had fallen into disuse, and which the later decrees of Popes Vitalianus and Agathon had seemed to sacrifice to the supremacy of Canterbury. This restoration, however, was of advantage only to the splendor of the new metropolis, and in no way to the kingdom of which it was the capital, as indeed the authority of Canterbury, so long universal and always undisputed, had not given the slightest

The fortunes of Northumbria begin to fail.

[275] "Osredum spiritus luxuriæ fornicantem et per monasteria nonnarum sacratas virgines stuprantem et furentem agitavit, usquequo ipse gloriosum regnum et juvenilem vitam et ipsam luxuriosam animam contemptibili et despecta morte perdidit." — S. Bonifacii *Epist.* 59 *ad Ethelbaldum.* "Turpem vitam sanctimonialium stupris exagitans." — Guill. Malmesb., i. 53.

[276] "Non proceres veneratus erat: non denique Christum.
Hic igitur multos miseranda morte peremit.
Ast alios cogit summo servire parenti,
Inque monasterii attonsos consistere septis. . . .
Anglorum proceres nimium trucidante tyranno
Servitium Domini miles præfatus inibat."

— Ethelwolfi *Carmen de Abbatibus et Viris Piis Lindisfarnens.*, c. 2 and 4. Mabillon (*Act. SS. O. S. B.*, t. iv. p. 317), in publishing this poem, proved that, notwithstanding its title, this was not the great Monastery of Lindisfarne of which we have so largely spoken, but another monastery of the same name, founded by Duke Eadmund, "dux nobilis natu et moribus," one of those whom King Osred forced to become monks.

supremacy over the rest of the Heptarchy to the kings of Kent.

King Ceolwulf becomes a monk at Lindisfarne.

After two obscure reigns, Ceolwulf attempted in vain to struggle against the disorder and decadence of his country. He was vanquished, and made captive by enemies whose names are not recorded, and had to submit, as happened to more than one Merovingian prince, to receive the tonsure by compulsion, and was shut up in a convent. He escaped, however, regained the crown, and reigned for some time in a manner which gained the applause of Bede, and weighed with the Pope in his decision in respect to the metropolis of York. But, after a reign of eight years, a regret, or an unconquerable desire, for that monastic life which had been formerly forced upon him against his will, seized him. He made the best provisions possible for the security of his country, and for a good understanding between the spiritual and temporal authorities, nominating as his successor a worthy prince of his race, the brother of Archbishop Egbert. Then giving up the cares of power, and showing himself truly the master of the wealth he resigned, he cut his long beard, had his head shaved in the form of a crown, and retired to bury himself anew at Lindisfarne, in the chief monastic sanctuary of his country.

737-767.

He there passed the last thirty years of his life in study and happiness.[277] He had, while king, enriched this monastery with many great gifts, and obtained permission for the use of wine and beer for monks who, up to that time, according to the rigid rule of ancient Catholic discipline, had been allowed no beverage but water and milk.

His successor, Eadbert, follows his example.

His successor, Eadbert, followed his example. After having, during a reign of twenty-one years, victoriously contended against the Picts, Scots Mercians and Welsh — after having received presents and offers of alliance from the first of the Carlovingians, Pepin the Short, — he became a monk at York, where he had already founded what was then called a very noble library, and where he enrolled himself among the monks who constituted the clergy of his brother the archbishop's metropolis. He lived there for two years, preferring, says an annalist, the

[277] "Vere beatus et litterarum scientia sufficienter constitutus." — Guill. Malmesb., i. 64. "Sponte divitiarum non servus, sed dominus, quasi magnus viles abjecit." — Henri Huntingd., *Hist.*, l. iv. p. 340. "Barbam deposuit, coronam accepit." — Simeon Dunelm., *De Gest. Reg.*, p. 69, and 139, ap. Twysden, vol. i.

service of God to all the kingdoms of the earth, and rapt by his violent love for the celestial country.[278] Care has been taken to prove that he received the Roman tonsure, that of St. Peter, and not that of the Celts, which is the last mention in history of a difference which, a century earlier, had stirred up so many tempests.[279]

Other monk-kings

These two kings of Northumbria were not the first or only ones who embraced monastic life. Eadbert, indeed, is the eighth pointed out by English chroniclers as having preferred the eight beatitudes of voluntary poverty to the grandeurs of this world.[280] Certain annalists even go so far as to count more than thirty kings or queens of the different Anglo-Saxon kingdoms who entered the new cloisters during the seventh and eighth centuries.[281]

What transformation had thus passed upon those heathens, savage descendants of Odin, impetuous and bloody chieftains of a race which breathed only war and pillage, and knew no greater shame than to die a peaceful death! We see them penetrated by the spirit of gentleness and concord, seeking union, fraternity, even equality, and that sometimes with the humblest of their subjects, under the Benedictine habit, in the nightly chant of psalms, in the peaceful labors of agriculture or of the monastic library. They sought, they aspired to that retreat, as the crown of their warlike exploits and their political and military career. But it was little to the satisfaction of the Anglo-Saxons to see themselves thus abandoned by their kings. The spirit of proud independence which made them, like all the other Teutonic nations, so often rebellious and intractable, did not expel from their minds a passionate affection, or rather a mysterious worship, for the old blood of the first chiefs of the conquest. They made vain efforts to keep their kings back from the cloister, and reserved to themselves the right of reclaiming them by their own will or against it, in order to put them at the head of the army, and march against the enemy under their orders. Such was the fate, as has been seen,[282] of King Sigebert of East

[278] Sim. Dunelm., *Hist. Dunelm. Eccles.*, l. ii. c. 3, *ibid.*

[279] "Dei amoris causa et cœlestis patriæ violentia, accepta S. Petri tonsura." — *App. ad Bedam*, ann. 758.

[280] "Qui pro regno temporali commutaverunt æternum, ut octo beatitudinum jucunditatem, quæ voluntariæ paupertati debetur, pro futuro haberent in cœlis." — Rich. Cirenc., p. 242. Mabillon counts eight before Eadbert, who is the ninth on his list. — *Act. SS. O. S. B.*, vol. iii. p. 463.

[281] Stevens, continuation of Dugdale, vol. i. p. 19.

[282] See p. 280.

Anglia, the first of the Anglo-Saxons who entered the cloister, and who, torn from his cell by his desperate subjects to lead them against the pitiless Penda, ended his life, like so many of his heathen ancestors, on the field of battle.

Each dynasty furnished its contingent to the monastic order.

Each of the dynasties of the Heptarchy furnished in succession its contingent to the new army. Like the Uffings of East Anglia, and the descendants of the Man of Fire in Northumberland, the children of the god Saxnote, whom the baptized Saxons[283] were made to abjure along with the gods Thor and Woden,

Sebbi, King of Essex.

had also their tonsured king. This race reigned over the Saxons of the East, whom King Sebbi had the happiness of bringing back to the faith, after their first defection.[284] The same king, who had reigned for

665-695.

thirty years as a faithful soldier of the King of kings, obtained, not without difficulty, the consent of his wife to enable him to assume before he died the monastic dress for which he had long sighed. But though he thus believed himself to have become a monk indeed, this descendant of Scandinavian gods and heroes, with the heart of a king under his monastic robe, feared, according to Bede, that, dying in his bed, he might seem to be overcome by suffering.[285] In the anguish of his last illness he trembled lest, while struggling against the terrors of death, pain might tear from him cries or gestures unworthy of him. For this reason he would have no spectator of his last moments except the Bishop of London. This prelate, who had invested him with the monk's black robe, had the consolation of seeing him give up his last sigh in perfect peace, and buried him in his own monastic cathedral of St. Paul, where for a thousand

1666.

years, until the time of the great fire which consumed that famous edifice under Charles II., was to be seen the immense stone coffin which contained the body of the monk-king, whose frame must have been as gigantic as his heart was manful.[286]

[283] Lappenberg, p. 114.

[284] See p. 291.

[285] "Vitam privatam et monachicam cunctis regni divitiis et honoribus præferens, quam et olim jam, si non obstinatus conjugis animus divortium negaret, subiisset. . . . Cumque annos triginta in regno miles regni cœlestis exegisset . . . habitum religionis, quem diu desiderabat, accepit. . . . Correptus infirmitate maxima, timere cœpit homo animi regalis, ne ad mortem veniens, tanto affectus dolore, aliquid indignum suæ personæ vel ore proferret vel aliorum motu gereret membrorum." — Bede, iv. 11.

[286] Note by Smith in his edition of Bede. "This is the first example I know of the devout idea so general, in later ages, of dying in the dress of a monk." — Fleury, l. xi. c. 3.

Fifteen years after the death of Sebbi, his successor and grandnephew, King Offa, imitated his example while still in the fulness of youth and all delights. Though a man beloved and sought after by all, he gave up his betrothed bride, his family, country, and crown, and, resisting the passionate remonstrances of his subjects, went away to embrace monastic life, not even in an English cloister, but at Rome. The young Offa was accompanied in his pilgrimage and sacrifice by Coenred, the King of the Mercians, detached on his side from the world by witnessing the last moments of one of his best knights,[287] who died in despair from having voluntarily kept back from confession.[288] Before leaving England they were both present at the last act of the great Wilfrid's apostolic life — the dedication of the new Monastery of Evesham, which they had endowed and freed from all temporal jurisdiction.[289] When they arrived at Rome, both these kings received the tonsure and cowl from the hands of Pope Constantinus, before the Confession of St. Peter, and, after some years of penitent life, they passed from the tomb of the apostles to celestial blessedness, to enjoy the society of the saints forever.[290]

Offa, King of Essex. 709.

Coenred, King of Mercia.

Since the death of the last Northumbrian Bretwalda, Oswy, and especially since the overthrow of his son Egfrid in his struggle with the Picts, Mercia had acquired the ascendency which was departing from Northumbria. The Mercians, under the warlike descendants of the terrible Penda, and thanks to the military spirit which inspired its people and race, swayed the Anglo-Saxon Heptarchy for nearly a century.

Mercia becomes the most important nation of the Heptarchy. 670-685.

[287] "Vir in laico habitu atque officio militari positus." — Bede, v. 13. William of Malmesbury calls him "miles." — *Gest. Reg. Angl.*, l. i. c. 78. Turner proves that the order of knighthood existed among the Anglo-Saxons long before the Norman conquest. — *Hist. of Anglo-Saxons*, book viii. c. 12.

[288] The vision of this knight may be read in Bede, *l. c.* Two other passages in Bede (iii. 22 and v. 10) seem to prove that in his time the word "miles" was applied not only to all fighting men, but to nobles or patricians.

[289] See p. 439.

[290] "Coinred qui regno Merciorum nobilissime tempore aliquanto præfuit, nobilius multo sceptra regni reliquit . . . monachus factus ad limina Apostolorum, in precibus, jejuniis, et eleemosynis, usque ad diem permansit ultimum. . . . Offa juvenis amantissimæ ætatis et venustatis, totæque suæ genti ad tenenda servandaque regni sceptra exoptatissimus . . . reliquit uxorem, agros, cognatos et patriam, attonsus et in monachico vitam habitu complens, ad visonem beatorum apostolorum in cœlis diu desideratam pervenit." — Beda, *Hist. Eccles.*, v. 19.

Coenred, who died a monk at Rome after having fought valiantly against the Britons, was Penda's grandson; and he was far from being the only recruit which the family of the dauntless champion of old Paganism was to furnish to the monastic order.[291] His own son, and second successor, Ethelred, the predecessor of Coenred upon the throne of Mercia, touched by divine grace, after a long and warlike reign, entered as a simple monk into the Monastery of Bardeney which he had founded, and ruled it for ten years as abbot before he died the death of a saint.[292] This is the Ethelred with whom we have already made acquaintance, first as the enemy and then as the devoted friend of Wilfrid,[293] whose cause he sustained with all the authority conferred on him by his double rank as monk and monarch.

Ethelred, King of Mercia, becomes a monk at Bardeney. 704-716.

These two kings, however, who were so entirely devoted to the Benedictine institution as to enroll themselves in it till the end of their worthy existence, were succeeded on the throne of Mercia by a prince of a very different stamp. Ceolred, like the young Northumbrian king of whom we recently spoke, did not content himself with despising the rights and liberties guaranteed to the monasteries by the charters of his predecessors; he took from them the young and beautiful virgins there consecrated to the Lord, for the gratification of his own passions. He died in one of his orgies among his earls, not only unrepentant, but calling upon the devil, and cursing the Christian priests with their Gospel.[294] It was perhaps the last out-

Excesses of King Ceolred. 709-771.

[291] See in the Appendix the table of his monastic descendants. The line of Mercian kings after Penda is as follows: —

626–655. Penda.
656–675. Wulphere, son of Penda.
675–704. Ethelred, brother of Wulphere.
704–709. Coenred, son of Wulphere.
709–716. Coelred, son of Ethelred.
716–757. Ethelbald, called *Clito*, grandson of a brother of Penda.
757–797. Offa, great-grandson of the same.

It is well known that among the Merovingians it was often the eldest or most popular prince of the reigning dynasty who succeeded to the crown to the injury of the direct heir, who might regain his rights at a later period if he lived long enough to see the question of his succession once more opened.

[292] "Omnipotentis benignitate visitatus fit monachus." — Henric. Huntingd., *Hist.*, l. iv. p. 337.

[293] See p. 430.

[294] "In stupratione et adulterio nonnarum commorans . . . nam Ceolredum prædecessorem tuum stupratorem sanctimonialium et ecclesiasticorum privilegiorum fractorum splendide cum suis comitibus epulantem spiritus

break of conquered heathenism: not certainly that heathen morals and lusts were forever extirpated from the bosom of these wild races, but since that time their ascendency has never been so great as to lead an Anglo-Saxon prince to the point of making a public denial of the Gospel.

The *Clito* Ethelbald, pursued by Ceolred.

After this worthy grandson of the savage Penda, the Mercian throne fell to a collateral scion of the race, Ethelbald, known under the name of *Clito* or *Childe*, which was then used among the Anglo-Saxons, as that of *Infanto* in Spain at a later period, to designate the princes of the reigning dynasty. Ethelbald, who was savagely pursued by Ceolred, had a stormy and hard youth. He was not himself a monk, but his history is connected with that of one of the most holy and popular monks of the eighth century.[295] In the course of his wanderings from province to province and from stronghold to stronghold, while flying with some devoted companions from the persecution of his pitiless enemy, he learned that a young and warlike chief called Guthlac, sprung, like himself, from the royal race of Mercia, had retired from the world to consecrate himself to study and prayer, in an island surrounded by the marshes which then covered a great district on the borders of Mercia and East Anglia. Ethelbald put himself under the guidance of a neighboring abbot, who knew the country sufficiently to find his way through the black and stagnant waters and muddy soil of these inaccessible marshes, and the two reached Croyland in a fisher's boat. In this watery retreat abode the good and pious Guthlac, and there the fugitive found a hospitable welcome and a safe shelter. He did not continue long there: when rest had given him renewed confidence, he left the refuge in which Ceolred neither could nor dared reach him, to resume his life of adventure. But new dangers led

Takes refuge with the solitary, Guthlac.

malignus invasit . . . sine pœnitentia et confessione, furibundus et cum diabolo sermocinans, et sacerdotes Dei abominans . . . ad tormenta inferni migravit." — S. Bonifacii *Epist. ad Ethelbaldum Regem Mercionum*, n. 62, ed. Giles; 17, ed. Serrar.

[295] The learned and accurate Philippe Jaffé, the last editor of the *Epistles of St. Boniface*, believes King Ethelbald to have been in his youth a pupil of St. Aldhelm. He attributes to him the letter addressed to that holy abbot, which is published with those of St. Boniface (ed. Jaffé, No. 5) and those of Aldhelm (ed. Giles, p. 100). But the letter itself seems to prove that it is the work of a young ecclesiastic, and not of a prince unacquainted, as Ethelbald must have been, with the life of the cloister. It was very probably the same student to whom Aldhelm addressed the answer, a fragment of which we have quoted above at page 534 of this volume.

him again and again to Croyland, where Guthlac always received him with the same affection, and lavished upon him, in their long and frequent conversations, the spiritual consolations and varied instruction which he needed. He had a cell beside that of Guthlac, his sole friend and consoler.[296] One day, returning from one of his dangerous journeys, during which he had found himself separated from all his followers, closely surrounded by enemies, and at the end of his strength and resources, he arrived exhausted and desperate, and threw himself into the arms of his protector and friend. "Dear child," said Guthlac, "I know all your troubles and misfortunes; I have followed your laborious career from its beginning; for this reason I have prayed God much for you, and he has granted my prayer. I announce to you in His name that you shall one day reign over your native country. You shall see the defeat of your enemies; you shall overcome them sword in hand; you shall trample them under your feet, and become the master of all their possessions. Learn only to wait: the kingdom will come to you, not by rapine and violence, but from the hand of God, when that hand shall have demolished the wicked man who now reigns, and who shall pass away like a shadow."[297] From that moment Ethelbald placed his hope in God alone, and waited with trust and patience. The prophecy was accomplished two years after: Ceolred perished in his orgies,[298] and the *Childe* was immediately recognized as king by all the Mercians.

Who predicts that he will be King of Mercia.

The hermit who with so much confidence prophesied to the future King of Mercia, sprang himself from the dynasty which reigned over the

Guthlac; his life as an adventurer and

[296] "In quadam casula . . . Guthlaci qui solus refugium et consolatio laborum ipsius erat." — *Vita S. Guthl.*, c. 39.

[297] "Est in mediterraneorum Anglorum partibus immensæ magnitudinis sacerrima palus, nunc stagnis, nunc flactris, interdum nigris vaporibus et laticibus, necnon crebris insularum nemoribus intervenientibus, et flexuosis rivigarum anfractibus . . . protenditur. . . . Arrepta piscatoria scaphula. . . . Cum huc illucque . . . in diversis nationibus jactaretur . . . usque ad præfatam insulam pervenit. . . . Alio die, deficiente virium ipsius valitudine, suorumque inter dubia pericula, postquam inanitiæ vires defecere, tandem ad colloquium sancti viri Guthlaci, ut assolcbat, pervenit. . . . O mi puer, laborum tuorum non sum expers, miseriarum tuarum ab exordio vitæ non sum inscius . . . misertus calamitatis tuæ rogavi Dominum ut subveniret tibi. . . . Tribuet tibi denominationem gentis tuæ. . . . Terga eorum videbis et gladius tuus vincet adversarios tuos." — *Vita S. Guthlaci, auctore* Felice *monacho ejus æquali*, ap. *Acta SS. O. S. B.*, sæc. iii. pars. 1, ad. ann. 714.

[298] See above, p. 583.

greater part of the Heptarchy.[299] His youth had been spent in fight and pillage, like that of all the princes and lords of his time. Excited by the recollection of the exploits of his ancestors, he dreamed only of battles and devastation, and at the head of a numerous band of friends and dependants he vanquished his enemies, sacked many towns and castles, and collected immense booty. But his companions observed with surprise that he had so much pity left as to restore to those whom he robbed a third part of their goods. He led this bandit life, which was supposed among his countrymen to be heroic, from the age of fifteen to that of twenty-four. But one night, while he camped with all his followers in a forest, his imagination suddenly presented before him the crimes, excesses, and miserable end of the kings of his race, then his own inevitable and perhaps approaching death, and the nothingness of the wealth and fame which he had sought. He felt himself as if burnt up by an internal flame — the flame of celestial desires. His decision was made on the spot. As soon as the first song of the birds announced the dawn he awoke his comrades, and told them to choose another chief, as he had just devoted himself, for his own part, to the service of Jesus Christ. Then, in spite of their remonstrances, cries, and lamentations, he instantly set out, carrying with him only a broad and short sword, such as was worn by laborers.[300] Doubtless this was to defend himself during the long and solitary journey which he had before him, for he went alone, and far from his native district and his friends, to knock at the door of one of those double monasteries, governed by abbesses, several of which already existed in England, and where the humility of the monk was so much the more tried that he was subject to a woman as superior.[301] He there assumed

as a hermit. 673-714.

[299] "Hujus viri progenies, per nobilissima illustrium regum nomina, antiqua ab origine Icles digesto ordine cucurrit." — *Vita*, c. 4. This Icles was the fifth ancestor of the terrible Penda.

[300] "Cum juvenili in pectore egregius dominandi amor fevesceret, valida priscorum heroum facta reminiscens. . . . Cum adversantium sibi urbes et villas, vicos et castella igne ferroque vastaret . . . tertiam partem agregatæ gazæ possidentibus remittebat. . . . Post tot prædas, cædes, rapinas . . . lassi quieverunt. . . . Quadam nocte . . . extemplo spiritualis flamma omnia præcordia viri incendere cœpit. . . . Antiquorum regum stirpis suæ per transacta sæcula miserabiles exitus et flagitiosum vitæ terminum contemplans . . . ecce subito . . . cum sol demoverat ortum, in quo matutinæ volucres avido forcipe pipant." — *Vita*, c. 10, 11.

[301] At Ripadun, or Repton, situated on the Trent. The name of the abbess was Elfrida. This abbey, where the kings of Mercia were buried, was

the monastic habit, having his long hair cut, according to the form of the Roman, not the Celtic, tonsure, as his biographer takes pains to tell us. There he passed two years, dedicated to the study of the Holy Scriptures, of cenobitic customs, and of liturgical music.[302] At twenty-six his soul was illuminated by a new light while reading the life of the Fathers in the desert; he determined to plunge into a deeper and more austere solitude, and it was then that he betook himself to the marshy forests of Croyland. He found there an ancient *tumulus*, already excavated by the greed of the neighboring population, who expected to find treasure there. They had dug it into a sort of pit. The fierce young Mercian prince fitted it with a penthouse of straw, made it his home, and there ended his life.

697-69.

There are various features in this life which are to be found in those of the most illustrious saints of the monastic order. Like St. Benedict, Guthlac excited by his austerities the ill-will of his brethren. With true Anglo-Saxon spirit, they reproached him specially for his unalterable resolution never to drink either beer or hydromel, nor wine, except in the communion.[303] Like St. Columba, his solitude was continually disturbed by crowds of the faithful attracted by the increasing fame of his holiness, and who surmounted all the obstacles which Nature had heaped around his island retreat to seek light, consolation, and the healing of their infirmities; he was sought by all conditions of men from all quarters, abbots and earls, rich and poor, monks and laymen; and these not only from all parts of Mercia, but from the most distant corners of England.[304]

Like the Fathers of the desert, he was exposed to a thousand temptations, a thousand diabolical visions, the most curious of which, in a historical point of view, is that which makes it apparent that the Cambrian or British marauders

destroyed by the Danes, and replaced under the Normans by a priory of regular canons.

[302] "Mysticam S. Petri apostolorum principis tonsuram accepit. . . . Sacris litteris et monasticis disciplinis erudiebatur . . . psalmis, canticis, orationibus precibusque ecclesiasticis per biennium imbutus." — *Vita*, c. 13.

[303] "Non ullius inebriantis liquoris aut alicujus libaminis haustum. . . . Hac ex causa omnibus fratribus illic cohabitantibus aspero odio habebatur." — *Vita*, c. 12.

[304] "Inter densas arundinum compages . . . abbates, fratres, comites, divites, vexati, pauperes . . . confluebant. . . . Loca spinosa sine calle agresti rura gradiendo, inruit (quidam comes exsulis Ethelbaldi) in spinulam sub incultæ telluris herbis latentem." — *Vita*, c. 24, 31.

were not afraid of crossing the whole breadth of the island to disturb their conquerors even in East Anglia. It is told that Guthlac was much comforted by discovering that the enemies by whom he had felt his cell to be surrounded and threatened all the night through, were demons and not Welsh, as he had supposed them to be by their hoarse voices and guttural accents.[305]

Like many holy monks of Celtic countries and of Merovingian Gaul, he lived in a close and touching familiarity with all living creatures, and especially with the birds who inhabited the trees and great reeds of his island. The crows served him with docility as messengers, the swallows came twittering to seat themselves on his shoulders or knees, on his head or breast; and he, on his side, built them nests with his own hands, little baskets made of rushes and bits of straw, which he placed under the thatch of his cell, and to which his gentle guests returned yearly, seeking their accustomed dwelling-places. "My father," said an astonished visitor, "how have you managed to give those daughters of solitude so much trust in you?" "Know you not," answered Guthlac, "that he who is united to God in purity of heart, sees in his turn all created things unite themselves to him? The birds of heaven, like the angels, seek those who do not seek the society of men." [306]

Like St. Romuald, he inspired the surrounding population with so much reverence for him, that speculations began to be made during his life on the price of his relics; the monk who came to him every twenty days to renew his tonsure thought seriously of using his razor to cut his throat, with the conviction that the place in which so great a saint perished would be enriched by the veneration of kings and princes.[307]

[305] "Cum Britones, infesti hostes Saxonici generis, bellis, prædis publicisque vastationibus Anglorum gentem deturbarent. . . . Quadam nocte . . . extra cellulam egressus, et erectis auribus adstans verba loquentis vulgi Britannicaque agmina tectis succedere agnoscit: nam ille . . . inter illos exsulabat, quoadusque eorum stridulentas loquelas intelligere valuit." — *Vita*, c. 20.

[306] "Velut magna lætitia avino forcipe flexuosi gutturis carmen canentes, veluti ad assuetas sedes . . . sese humeris viri Dei imposuerunt, ac deinde cantulis vocibus garrulentes. . . . Utquid inculte solitudinis volueres. . . . Nonne legisti quia qui Deo puro spiritu copulabitur, omnia sibi in Deo conjunguntur, et qui ab hominibus cognosci denegat, agnosci a feris et frequentari ab angelis quærit?" — *Vita*, c. 25.

[307] "Quidam clericus, nomine Beccelinus. . . . Cum, ut adsolebat, post bis denos dierum cursus tonderare devenisset . . . proponens ut si ipsum

And finally, like St. Cuthbert, he had a friend, a noble and pious abbess, daughter of the King of the East Anglians, who offered to him, in testimony of their mutual affection, a leaden coffin and a shroud.[308] He accepted these presents; and although he had vowed to wear neither woollen nor linen, but to dress himself entirely in the skins of beasts, he consented, for the love of Edburga, that his body should be buried in the linen which she had woven for him.[309] He died after a week of severe suffering, but having still strength enough to rise and say mass on the day of his death, and afterwards to take the holy viaticum himself from the altar. He was still young; and during the fifteen years which he had passed in these marshes, had yet retained, in the midst of his austere solitude, that grave kindness and light-heartedness which are the inalienable inheritance of true monks and saints.[310]

His death. 11th April, 714.

On receiving news of the death of his friend, Ethelbald hastened to the body of him who so long protected his misfortune and consoled his misery. He threw himself, bathed in tears, on his knees before the coffin. "My father," he cried, "thou who hast known all my sufferings, and who hast sustained me in all dangers, as long as thou livedst I could never despair. Thanks to thee, I know how to call upon the Lord, who has saved me up to this day. But if thou forsakest me, to whom can I have recourse? who will help, who will comfort me?"

The following night, in the midst of his tears and prayers, Guthlac appeared to him, resplendent with light, to confirm his ancient prediction, and to announce the end of his trials.[311]

interimere potuisset, locum ipsius postea cum magna regum principumque venerantia habiturus foret." — *Ibid.*, c. 21.

[308] See p. 479.

[309] "Reverentissima virgo virginum Christi et sponsarum Egburga abbatissa, Aldulfi regis filia. . . . Nolui quidem juvenis ullo lineo tegmine corpus meum tegere, sed pro amore dilectæ Christi virginis, quæ hæc munera mihi mittebat." — *Ibid.*, c. 33, 35. Egburga or Edburga then governed the same Monastery of Repton from which Guthlac had issued to shut himself up in Croyland.

[310] "Ut adsolebat hilari vultu secessit; nam semper gratia eximiæ charitatis in ore ipsius et vultu fulgebat." — *Vita*, c. 25.

[311] "Pater mi, tu scis miserias meas, tu semper adjutor mei fuisti, te vivente non desperabam in angustiis. . . . Hæc proloquens, se solo sternebat, et supplex orans crebris lacrymarum fluentis totum vultum rigavit. . . . Totam cellulam immensi luminis splendore circumfulgescere vidit. . . . Noli tristari, dies enim miseriæ tuæ præterierunt. . . . Nec illum fides fefellit: ex illo enim tempore usque in hodiernum diem infulata regni ipsius felicitas per tempora consequentia de die in diem crescebat." — *Ibid.*, c. 39.

And in fact, two years after, Ethelbald succeeded to the throne of Mercia, which he occupied for forty years. The first use which he made of his power was to found a monastery at Croyland, in honor of him whom he continued to call his friend and consoler. Notwithstanding the difficulties involved in such a building, an immense abbey, richly endowed, and inhabited by a colony of monks brought from the new Abbey of Evesham,[312] rose upon the site of his cell. Ethelbald built in the midst of these stagnant waters, upon piles driven into a little heap of earth which was brought from a distance in boats, to solidify the marsh which the industry of the monks was soon to render wholesome, and transform into fertile meadows. Croyland was specially distinguished for the knowledge of its monks, and occupied for several centuries the first rank among English monasteries. The coffin of Guthlac, taken from the earth in which it was to have been buried, by the tenderness of Ethelbald, and richly decorated, formed the principal ornament of the great church, built in stone, which replaced the modest wooden oratory where Ethelbald and Guthlac had prayed together. This church, often destroyed, was always rebuilt with increased magnificence; and its great bell, known as the largest and most harmonious in England, retained to its last day the name and recollection of the hermit whom its royal founder had so much loved.[313]

Continuation and end of the reign of Ethelbald in Mercia.

It would be pleasant to believe that Ethelbald showed himself always worthy of the tender sympathy with which his holy friend had honored him in his youth. But this confidence is scarcely possible in presence of the famous and eloquent letter addressed to him by six English bishops, who were occupied during his whole reign in the work of evangelizing Germany,

[312] See, p. 439, the foundation of this abbey by Bishop Egwin, and its consecration by Wilfrid.

[313] "Sarcophagum non humo terræ condidit, immo in memoriale quod nunc ab Ethelbaldo rege miris ornamentorum structuris . . . ædificatum conspicimus. . . . Quia palustris humus lapideam molem sustinere non poterat, ingentes ex quercis palos innumeræ multitudinis homo infigi fecit, duramque terram . . . scaphis deferri et paludibus commisceri . . . ad honorem Dei et sancti anchoretæ quem valde dilexerat, pro dulci consolatione quam eo dum exsulabat multoties perceperat." — *Vita*, c. 37, 41. Some remains of the abbey church of Croyland still exist, but these are of the church built in the twelfth or fourteenth century. In the tympanum of the portal, in the western front, five medallions in bas-relief represent the principal incidents in the life of Guthlac — his arrival in the marsh of Croyland in a boat, his first interview with Ethelbald, his death, &c.

and who had at their head the great Boniface. The holy apostle of the Germans went from England to the Continent the same year in which Ethelbald became king, and two years before the end of his reign he died the death of a martyr. The letter of the bishops informs us that the private conduct of the king awakened a religious and patriotic sorrow in those noble missionaries of Anglo-Saxon faith and glory. They accuse him, according to public report, of having sought in celibacy, not Christian mortification, but the satisfaction of his sensual instincts, and in the effervescence of his passions of respecting neither the domestic hearths of his fellow-citizens, nor even the sanctuaries of virgins consecrated to God.[314] They remind him in this respect of the honor paid to chastity by their heathen ancestors, the Saxons of Germany, and the cruel penalties which were exacted for adultery. They entreat him not to dishonor his old age, not to encourage the English nation by his example to descend by debauchery to the level of the degenerate nations of Spain and the south of Europe, of whom the Saxons had already made a prey. They reproach him besides with having violated the charters and stolen the possessions of several monasteries, and with authorizing the Mercian lords, by his example, to subject the monks and priests to violence and servitude, till then unknown in Christian England.[315]

716-755.

On the other hand, these witnesses of imposing authority congratulate him highly on his charity to the poor, as well as on his zeal for the administration of justice, the protection of the weak, and the repression of local quarrels and disorders.

Other testimony informs us that he was a just, generous, and brave king; that, by his frequent and fortunate wars, the friend of Guthlac raised Mercia to a degree of power which it had never before reached, and that he was regarded as the supreme monarch of England up to the day on which, after a long and prosperous reign, he fell fighting against the

[314] "Quando aliqua injuria de statu regni vestri, vel eventu bellorum facta, aut quod majus est, de salute animæ periculosum damnum perpetratum per auditum usque ad nos pervenerit, mœrore et tristitia cruciamur. . . . Qui nobis narrant, adjiciunt quod hoc scelus maxime cum sanctimonialibus et sacratis Deo virginibus per monasteria commissum sit. Audivimus præterea quod optimates pæne omnis gentis Merciorum tuo exemplo legitimas uxores deserant, et adulteras et sanctimoniales constuprent." — S. Bonifacii *Epistolæ*, 59, ed. Jaffé.

[315] "Et dicitur quod præfecti et comites tui majorem violentiam et servitutem monachis et sacerdotibus irrogent, quam cæteri ante Christiani reges fecissent." — *Ibid.*

West Saxons, in a struggle, the picturesque and impassioned narrative of which has been enshrined by popular poetry amid the historic annals of the period.[316]

Three kings of the West Saxons abdicate to become monks or pilgrims to Rome.

The kingdom of the West Saxons, which was to inherit the power of the Mercians, as the latter had inherited that of the Northumbrians, was destined to absorb all the kingdoms of the Heptarchy, and thus to create that English unity which no dismemberment has ever broken up. The dynasty of the sons of Cerdic, reputed by tradition to be himself the ninth in descent from the god Odin, was to produce Egbert and the great Alfred. It prefaced these generous lives by giving three kings, one after another, to the monastic order, which already owed to it the holy and learned Abbot Aldhelm. He who opened the march in a career which was so novel to the sons of Odin, was Centwin, son of the first Christian King of Wessex,[317] who, after a brilliant and warlike reign of nine years, interspersed with battles between the Mercians and Britons, determined to end his days in one of the monasteries which he had founded and endowed.[318] After him it was the turn of Ceadwalla, the ferocious devastator of the Isle of Wight, and the kingdoms of Kent and Sussex, who remained obstinately heathen, notwithstanding the conversion of his neighbors and his country, but who, all at once, at the age of thirty, recalling to his memory the instructions which he had received when himself in exile from the great exile Wilfrid,[319] abdicated his

Centwin. 676-685.

Ceadwalla. 685-689.

[316] Henricus Huntingdon, *Historia Anglorum*, l. iv. p. 341. The friend of Guthlac describes himself in a charter of 736, "Rex non solum Merciorum sed et omnium provinciarum quæ generali nomine Sut-Angli dicuntur;" and elsewhere, "Rex Britanniæ."

[317] Cynegils, converted and presented for baptism by his son-in-law, Oswald of Northumbria. See above, p. 284.

[318] His history is scarcely known to us, except through the verses of Aldhelm addressed to his daughter Bugga, who is perhaps the same as the abbess of that name to whom Boniface addressed several of his epistles: —

"Hoc templum Bugge pulchro molimine structum,
Nobilis erexit Centwini filia regis,
Qui prius imperium Saxonum rite regebat,
Donec præsentis contemnens culmina regni,
Divitias mundi rerumque reliquit habenas;
Plurima basilicis impendens rura novellis
Quæ nunc christicolæ servant monastica jura. . . .
Exin sacratam perrexit quærere vitam,
Dum proprium linquit Christi pro nomine regnum. . . .
Donec conversus cellam migravit in almam."

— Ed. Giles, p. 117.

[319] See above, p. 398.

crown, crossed the sea, the Alps, and Lombardy, and appeared at Rome, the first of the Anglo-Saxon kings, as Wilfrid, thirty years before, had been the first monastic pilgrim of the same race who had visited the Eternal City. He asked baptism from Pope Sergius, who conferred upon him the name of Peter, in memory of the great devotion which had brought him from so great a distance to the tomb of the prince of the apostles. Ten days later, before he had even laid aside the white robe of the catechumens, he died. The Pope gave orders that he should be buried in St. Peter's, and inscribed upon his tomb an epitaph in tolerable verse, intended to stir up the zeal of future generations by the example of the young and formidable victor, who had given up everything that he and his father had conquered or hoarded up, and abjured his barbarous religion to become the humble godson of St. Peter, and who had gone clothed with the whiteness of baptism to increase in heaven the flock of Christ.[320]

20th April, 689.

Ina, King of Wessex, 688-725,

The crown of the West Saxons passed after him to Ina, the friend of St. Aldhelm, as Ceadwalla had been the friend of Wilfrid. His long and prosperous reign laid the foundations of the future ascendency of his race over all England. Though very warlike and very fortunate in war, the conqueror of the Southern and Eastern Saxons, he owes his fame specially to the code of laws which he gave to his people, and which has been preserved in its integrity, like the laws given a century before by Ethelbert of Kent, with the help of the Roman missionaries.[321] Ina drew out his under the inspiration, and with the aid, of the two monk-bishops of Winchester and of

Legislator,

[320] "Culmen, opes, sobolem, pollentia regna, triumphos,
Exuvias, proceres, mœnia, castra, lares:
Quæque patrum virtus, et quæ congesserat ipse,
Cædival armipotens, liquit amore Dei,
Ut Petrum sedemque Petri rex cerneret hospes. . . .
Barbaricam rabiem, nomen et inde suum
Conversus convertit ovans. . . .

Urbem Romuleam vidit, templumque verendum
Aspexit, Petri mystica dona gerens.
Candidus inter oves Christi sociabilis ibit:
Corpore nam tumulum, mente superna tenet:
Commutasse magis sceptrorum insignia credas,
Quem regnum Christi promeruisse vides."
— Apud Bede, v. 7.

[321] *Dooms of Ina*, ap. Thorpe, *Ancient Laws and Institutes of England*, p. 45.

London,[322] of his earls, and all the wise men (*witan*) who composed the parliament of his three kingdoms, and besides, according to his own declaration, with the help of many monks or servants of God, in order to provide for the salvation of souls and the prosperity of his people. Among these laws may be remarked some which guarantee the inviolability of marriage, and the sanctity of betrothal; consecrate the right of asylum in churches; improve the condition of the peasants, while maintaining their feudal thraldom to the soil of their lords; provide for the support of their widows and orphans; forbid the exportation of slaves, and declare free of all bondage the slave who should be compelled by his master to work on Sunday.[323]

Victor, and pacificator of the Britons.

He pursued with energy the struggle with the Britons of Wales, and finally succeeded in incorporating into his kingdom those of Cornwall, dethroning the king of that province, to whom Aldhelm had addressed his famous letter upon the Celtic Easter.[324] But Ina, who was himself born of a Celtic mother, consulting at once the precepts of Christian morality and the well-understood interests of his nation, completed the pacification of the conquered population by guaranteeing the validity of marriages contracted between Saxons and Britons, and entered into relations with the Celts of Armorica.[325] He rebuilt and endowed magnificently the national sanctuary of the Britons at Glastonbury,[326] consecrating to this work of conciliation the thirty thousand pounds of silver which he had torn, sword in hand, from the Jutes of Kent, on account of *were*, or compensation for the life of a West Saxon prince whom they had burned

[322] Hedda, the friend and predecessor of Aldhelm and Erconwald.

[323] "Ego Ine Dei gratia West-Saxonum rex, exhortatione et doctrina. . . . Heddæ episcopi mei . . . et omnium Aldermannorum meorum et seniorum et sapientum regni mei, multaque congregatione servorem Dei, sollicitus de salute animarum nostrarum et de statu regni mei, constituti rectum conjugium et justa judicia pro stabilitate et confirmatione populi mei benigna sedulitate celebrari. . . . Si servus operetur dominica die per præceptum domini sui, sit liber: si liber operetur illa die sine jussu domini sui, perdat libertatem suam." — Latin text in the Chronicle of John of Brompton, ap. Twysden, *Script. Ang.*, i. 761.

[324] See above, p. 543.

[325] Judicial tradition noticed by Lappenberg, p. 258.

[326] See vol. i. p. 657. Henschen, the learned and conscientious Bollandist, after having quoted two apocryphal charters of Ina in favor of Glastonbury, in vol. i. of February, pp. 907, 908, has acknowledged and proclaimed the falsehood of the articles in vol. ii. of April, p. 31. He adds modestly: "Si eadem, quæ nunc Aprilem absolventibus, adfuisset scientia Februarium tractantibus, explodi ista potuissent."

alive.[327] He thus testified the veneration of the Saxon conquerors for the celebrated monastery which, after having been the cradle of Celtic Christianity,[328] and the tomb of King Arthur, was about to become one of the principal centres of Anglo-Saxon monachism, and one of the burying-places of English royalty. It is the sole example in Great Britain of a religious foundation which has become equally dear and sacred to the two races — to the victors as to the vanquished.

With the help of the princes and patricians of his own country, Ina founded or enriched many other monasteries,[329] being specially guided in his good works by the most illustrious abbot in Wessex, his friend and cousin Aldhelm, whom he had drawn from the cloister of Malmesbury to make him a bishop, and whose counsels he followed with affectionate docility.[330]

The first protector of Boniface.

And, finally, thanks to Ina, at the moment when Aldhelm disappeared from the scene, one of the most illustrious of the saints whom England has given to the Church rises on our sight, the great Winefred, whose youth was spent in a monastery in Wessex, from which Ina took him to intrust him with certain delicate negotiations with the Archbishop of Canterbury.[331] This is the first appearance in history of him who was to be the victor over Teutonic heathenism, the true Christian conqueror of Germany, and whose name, Latinized into Boniface, is inscribed in ineffaceable characters in history along with those of Charles Martel and of Charlemagne.

While Ina was still in full possession of his power and popularity,[332] after thirty-seven years of a prosperous and glorious reign, his wife, Ethelburga, in whose veins, as in his own, ran the warlike blood of Cerdic, and who had shared all the cares of his life even to the point of victoriously leading his people to battle in his absence, persuaded him to give

[327] *Chron. Anglo-Sax.*, ad. ann. 687 and 694. LINGARD, *History*, p. 161.

[328] See vol. i. pp. 658 and 674.

[329] See details on the part he took in the foundation of Abingdon, given in the *Chronicon Monasterii de Abingdon*, c. 12, 13, newly published by J. Stevens in the *Rerum Britannic Scriptores*. In an assembly held in 704, he confirmed the monasteries of Wessex in their charters and possessions, by a deed signed by all the *principes, senatores, judices, et patricii*. — KEMBLE, *Cod. Diplomat.*, n. 50 and 51.

[330] "Adfuit pater Aldhelmus cujus ille præcepta audiebat humiliter suscipiebat granditer, adimplebat hilariter." — *De Regib.*, lib. i. c. 2.

[331] S. WILLEBALDI *Vita S. Bonifacii*, c. 4.

[332] "Sine alto insidiarum metu securus incanuit, sanctissimus amoris publici lenocinatur." — GUILL. MALMESB., *l. c.*

up his throne and the world. According to narratives which unfortunately are not given us by contemporaries, but which are in conformity with the characteristic conditions of Anglo-Saxon nature, the queen's device for deciding Ina to the sacrifice which she meant to make along with him, was after the following fashion: — A great banquet, accompanied by all the refinements of lordly luxury in these days, had been given in one of the royal *villas*. Next morning the princely pair set out on their journey, but after riding for an hour or two, the queen begged her husband to return whence they came. He consented, and on returning to the castle, he was struck with consternation to find the scene of the recent rejoicings not only silent and desert, but destroyed and desecrated. It was covered with ruins and filth, and the very bed on which they had slept was occupied by a sow with her litter. The astonished king looked at the queen, who had given secret orders to this effect to the steward of the villa, for an explanation. "Yes, my lord husband," said Ethelburga, "where are now our yesterday's pleasures? where are our purple hangings, our gay parasites, our heavy silver dishes and delicate meats? All has passed away like smoke, and those who prize such pleasures shall pass away like them. Behold, then, I pray you, into what misery falls this flesh which we feed so delicately; and we who are fed still more daintily than other men, shall not we fall into a still more miserable corruption?" [333]

Ina abdicates, and dies in obscurity at Rome. 726-728.

This was enough, according to the legend, to determine the king to think only for the future of his soul. Authentic history proves his abdication, which was given in the midst of a Parliament of Witan, to whom he announced his resolution to pass the rest of his days in penitence.[334] Then, accompanied by Ethelburga, he went to Rome. He arrived there after a long and painful journey, to end his life in penitence and obscurity. According to some accounts, he embraced monastic life according to the rule of St. Benedict; [335] according to others,

[333] "Villicus ex reginæ conscientia . . . in lecto ubi cubuerant porcam noviter enixam collocat. . . . Regis oculi ad mulierem rediere. Et ubi sunt, ait, domine conjux, hesterni strepitus! . . . Nonne nos qui ingurgitamur uberius, putrescemus miserius? . . . Maritum compulit in sententiam exemplo, quam multis annis frustra insusurraverat verbo." — GUILL. MALMESB., *l. c.*

[334] LINGARD, i. 162.

[335] *Act. SS. Bolland.*, t. i. Febr., p. 913. MABILLON, *Act. SS. O. S. B.*, t. iii. p. 465.

he preferred, for humility's sake, to remain lost in the crowds of poor pilgrims, with neither tonsure nor cowl, gaining his livelihood by the work of his hands.[336]

Upon the left bank of the Tiber, then almost desert, and not far from the Vatican, the lawgiver and king founded under the name of *Schola Saxonum*, an establishment for the orthodox education of young princes, and for the priests and clerks of his country who desired to complete their religious and literary education in the shadow of the basilica of St. Peter.[337] He added to this a church and burying-ground specially intended for his countrymen, and in which he was himself buried, for he died in Rome in the obscurity he had voluntarily sought. His faithful Ethelburga remained with him till his death, and then returning, became a nun in England.

The great Benedictine Wilfrid had set the example of these pilgrimages to Rome, which nobody had thought of before his time.[338] Some years after his death it became a kind of epidemic. During the seventh and eighth centuries Rome was the meeting-place of innumerable pilgrims, who came from all quarters of the West to see the holy city, and pray by the tombs of the saints and martyrs. By no nation was this pious duty accomplished with greater zeal and fervor than by the Anglo-Saxons. Their kings set them the example,[339] differing in that point from the Merovingians, not a single individual of whom ever crossed the Alps to go to Rome.

Crowd of Anglo-Saxon pilgrims to Rome.

An irresistible attraction to the Eternal City soon became apparent among Saxons of all ranks; princes and bishops, rich and poor, priests and laity, men and women, undertook the pilgrimage with eagerness, often going so far as to repeat

[336] Guill. Malmesb., *l. c.* "Dux fœmina facti," adds the monastic historian, steeped, like all his fellows, in the recollections of classical antiquity.

[337] It was transformed by Innocent III. into a hospital, which has become, under the title of *S. Spirito in vico de Sassia*, the most celebrated in Rome. Other traditions attribute this important foundation to young Offa of Essex, who also died a monk at Rome (Richard de Cirencester, p. 229, ed. Mayor), or, again, to the powerful Offa, King of Mercia, who died in 796, and will be referred to further on. In any case, the latter was a great benefactor of the national foundation in Rome, the doors of which he opened to students of all countries. "Ut ibidem peregrini . . . ex diversis mundi partibus barbari . . . linguas quas non noverint, addiscerent." — Math. Paris, *in Vitis Abbatum S. Albani*, c. 1.

[338] See p. 306.

[339] Lingard counts as many as eight kings, including, however, Ethelwulf and Canute, who belong to a later period. — *Antiquities*, i. 116.

the journey notwithstanding its difficulties and dangers.[340] They were so numerous that, collecting round the foundation of King Ina, they gave their name to an entire quarter of the city, the *Vicus Saxonum*,[341] situated in the immediate neighborhood of St. Peter's, and inhabited exclusively by them. They came, says their historian, to make acquaintance in their lifetime with the saints, by whom they hoped to be well received in heaven.

But as there were false monks who introduced even into the cloister the indolence and vices of worldly life, so there were also false pilgrims whom frivolous or guilty motives carried abroad; and the monastic writers have remarked the one as well as the other. The wandering inclination of the Teutonic races may well have contributed, after the first impulse of fervent and sincere piety, to increase the number of those undevout pilgrims who often scandalized by their conduct the Christian countries through which they travelled. Women especially, and even virgins consecrated to God, excited the just indignation of the priests and the faithful in France and Italy, by their license and lamentable downfalls, during their journeys to Rome. The melancholy revelations transmitted by the great apostle of Germany on this point to his colleague and countryman, Bishop Cuthbert of Canterbury, which led the latter to request the English assemblies and princes to forbid absolutely the pilgrimages of women and nuns to Rome, will not bear repetition.[342]

Their disorderly behavior.

I shall have succeeded poorly in expounding the history of these times, and ill served the truth, if the reader has not been struck by the singular mixture of good and evil, peace and war, freedom and slavery, which, from the beginning of Anglo-Saxon Christianity, shows itself in all the relations between society and the Church. It is evident that goodness

[340] "Cupiens in vicinia sanctorum locorum ad tempus peregrinari in erris, quo familiarius a sanctis recipi mereretur in cœlis; quod his temporibus plures de gente Anglorum, nobiles, ignobiles, laici, clerici, viri ac feminæ certatim facere consuerunt." — Bede, v. 7.

[341] From whence comes the name *Sassia*, still preserved in this part of Rome.

[342] "Aliquod levamentum turpitudinis esset, si prohiberent synodus et principes vestri mulieribus et velatis feminis illud iter et frequentiam, quam ad Romanum civitatem veniendo et redeundo faciunt; quia magna ex parte pereunt, paucis remanentibus integris. Perpaucæ enim sunt civitates in Longobardia, vel in Francia, vel in Gallia, in qua non sit adultera vel meretrix generis Anglorum: quod scandalum est et turpitudo totius Ecclesiæ." — S. Bonifacii *Epist. ad Cuthbertum archiepiscopum.*

had the advantage over evil, but that the evil was formidable, the dangers continual and flagrant, the deceivers and ill-doers more numerous than the saints. This, notwithstanding, has been called the *Golden Age* of religion in England; not without reason, if the name has been given by comparison with later periods, but wrongly if attributed solely to its real merits. The fact is, that in true history there is no golden age. All ages, without exception, are infected by the evil which proceeds from man's natural corruption. All bear witness to his incurable weakness, but at the same time all proclaim his greatness and freedom, as well as the justice and mercy of God, his Maker and Redeemer.

BOOK XIV.

SOCIAL AND POLITICAL INFLUENCE OF THE MONKS AMONG THE ANGLO-SAXONS.

" Record we too, with just and faithful pen,
That many hooded cenobites there are,
Who in their private cells have yet a care
Of public quiet; unambitious Men,
Counsellors for the world, of piercing ken;
Whose fervent exhortations from afar
Move Princes to their duty, peace or war;
And oft-times in the most forbidding den
Of solitude, with love of science strong,
How patiently the yoke of thought they bear. . . .
By such examples moved to unbought pains
The people work like congregated bees;
Eager to build the quiet fortresses,
Where piety, as they believe, obtains
From heaven a general blessing; timely rains
And sunshine; prosperous enterprise, and peace and equity."
WORDSWORTH.

The conversion and religious organization of England entirely the work of monks. — Their patience and perseverance; letter of Bishop Daniel to the missionary Boniface; no violence; mildness and toleration. — Their influence over the nature they had converted; evil survives, but the good outweighs it. — Alliance between the Church and secular society, without the exclusive preponderance of either. — These apostolic monks were no longer fathers of the desert, but the creators of a Church and nation. — Towns grow up around the great communities. — The monasteries give rise to cathedrals and parishes. — Propagation of the Benedictine order. — Protection assured to the monastic order by the Councils of Beccancelde and Cloveshove. — Religious instruction in the national tongue. — Musical liturgy. — Crosses in the open air. — Services rendered to education by monasteries and monastic bishops. — St. John of Beverley.— Fondness of the Anglo-Saxon students for horsemanship. — Services rendered to agriculture. — Position of the monks as landlords. — Close alliance between the monastic order and the Anglo-Saxon aristocracy. — Intervention in political matters. — Their place in the national councils. — Authority, composition, and powers of these councils. — The distinction between the temporal and spiritual is not forgotten. — Influence of monks in these assemblies, and through them on laws and manners. — They contribute to

the formation of that national unity which, since the ninth century, has never been disturbed. — Their devotion to the cause of the poor: expiation for the sins of the rich gives rise to public almsgiving. — Their zeal for the liberation of slaves; contest between an archbishop and an abbot for a young captive. — The rights of man as well as those of God vindicated by the monks throughout the history of their conquest of England. — Religion is too often left defenceless, but her ministers respect honor and the freedom of thought in regard to the things of God. — The monastic missionaries perfect the national character without changing it; the spirit of the Saxons still lives in modern England; modern liberty, self-government, and parliamentary rule are rooted in the Saxon times. — Conformity of monastic rules with the tone of Anglo-Saxon institutions. — Splendor and prodigality of the aristocracy. — Motives of their gifts. — Abuse of their grants of land. — *Folc-land and boc-land.* — Monastic possessions exempt from military service and from taxes. — Public danger remarked by Bede. — Repression of many abuses by the Council of Cloveshove; it decrees against monastic luxury and wealth, and against the false ideas prevalent as to almsgiving. — The monastic riches arising from the munificence of kings and nobles soon excite envy; fluctuations and oppressions noticed by St. Boniface; necessity of a limit which might be imposed by the Church herself on the increase of monastic possessions. — Their value forms a pretext for spoliation and heresy. — Lacordaire and Mabillon. — A Spanish Benedictine martyred in 1608. — Before reaching this point England becomes the home of Christian propagandism and the instructress of the Teutonic races. — At the death of Bede, Boniface is already the apostle of Germany.

I.

597. 735. 747. A CENTURY and a half passed between the establishment of St. Augustin at Canterbury and the final erection of a second metropolitan see at York — between the first written laws of the first Christian king of Kent, and those decrees of the Council of Cloveshove which established a sort of confederation among the Anglo-Saxon bishops, and at the same time sanctioned and made general[1] the parochial system, which is still the foundation of temporal and spiritual life in the country districts of England.[2]

[1] "Ut una fit omnium concordia . . . in sermone, in opere, in judicio, sine cujusquam adulatione personæ. . . . Ut licet sedibus sint divisi per diversa loca, tamen mentibus conjuncti in uno spiritu Deo deserviant." — Cap. 2. For all the details of this famous council, which was held in the presence of the Mercian King Ethelbald, the friend of the holy monk Guthlac, see the excellent narrative of Lingard, *Antiquities*, vol. i. p. 124, and Note G.

[2] Cap. 9, 10, 14. Cf. LE PLAY, *La Réforme Sociale déduite de l'Observation Comparée des Peuples Européens*, t. ii. ch. 7, § 55.

During this interval all the inhabitants of Great Britain had become Christian; and all Britons and Saxons had acknowledged the supremacy of the Holy See, substituting everywhere the observances of Rome in place of the ancient customs of Celtic Christianity.

The conversion and religious organization of England accomplished solely by monks.

This great victory was the exclusive work of the monks.

With no human aid — with at the most the protecting sympathy of a woman[3] to help them — they entered all the kingdoms of the Heptarchy, one by one, as missionaries, and remained there as bishops, as pastors, as permanent preachers. Little by little they thus conquered the British soil, and covered it with their establishments. Their work had been slow and difficult. Stormy incidents and melancholy changes had not been wanting in it. Sons did not always allow themselves to be led by the example of their fathers, nor nations by that of their neighbors. Let us recall the first defection of the Jutes in Kent immediately after the death of Ethelbert, the double apostasy of the Saxons of the East, the rage of the old British Christians against the Teutonic converts, the destruction by fire and sword of the new-born Christianity in Northumbria, the horrible ravages of the heathen Penda among all his Christian neighbors!

All these difficulties and trials they met only with an unconquerable perseverance and gentleness. A hundred and fifty years after the arrival of Augustin, a holy abbot, friend of St. Aldhelm, and, like him, trained at Malmesbury, revealed the secret of their power to his illustrious countryman St. Boniface, who was then occupied in carrying the light of the Gospel from England to Germany. "To overcome," he said, "the obstinacy of heathen savages — to fertilize the stony and barren soil of their hearts — pains must be taken not to insult or irritate them, but to set our doctrines before them with unfailing moderation and gentleness, so as to make them blush at their foolish superstitions without exasperating them."[4]

To effect this conquest they

Thus armed the monks finally triumphed everywhere; and everywhere, with the free consent of

[3] Bertha the Merovingian in Kent; her daughter Ethelburga in Northumbria; the heathen bride of the holy King Oswald in Wessex; and the Christian bride of the son of Penda in Mercia.

[4] "Non quasi insultando vel irritando eos, sed placide ac magna objicere moderatione debes." — *Epist.* 15 *inter Bonifacianas*, ed. Jaffé.

used only the arms of patience and toleration.

the people, proved by the public deliberations of the national assemblies of each kingdom, where each had the freedom of giving an answer in his turn.[5] Let us repeat, to the immortal glory of the monastic conquerors of England, that neither they, their disciples, nor their protectors, used violence or persecution for the aid of evangelical truth.[6] The faith as preached by the monks was nowhere enforced by a master; nowhere was it admitted without examination and discussion; nowhere was it propagated or defended among our insular Saxons by the sanguinary means used by Charlemagne among the Saxons on the other side of the Rhine.

At a later period, it is true, in conformity with the general spirit of Christian nations, and in proportion as the ties between religion and society became closer, penal legislation often transformed itself into a helper of Christian morality and ecclesiastical discipline. The assemblies in which bishops and abbots had a place beside kings and landowners, often decreed severe or shameful penalties for apostasy,[7] for the violation of Sunday rest or the fasts of Lent,[8] and especially for drunkenness and incontinence, which were the most common vices among the Anglo-Saxons. But these penalties never went the length of torture or bloodshed, as often happened where the Byzantine laws had infected Catholic nations with its poison. Up to the present moment, thanks to God, in these distant centuries, in the midst of gross immorality, beside scandals which we have not attempted to conceal or deny, we have not met with one single bloody or cruel act which can be attributed to any Anglo-Saxon bishop, priest, or monk. Faithful to the precepts and example of their first and glorious master St. Gregory the Great, they gained hearts and governed souls by the irresistible might of kindness; and though not above the reach of human infirmity, remained long strangers and superior to the bitterness, covetousness, and violence which are too often to be met with in the his-

[5] "Habito cum sapientibus consilio, sciscitabatur singillatim ab omnibus, qualis sibi doctrina hæc . . . videretur. . . . Cæteri majores natu ac regis consiliarii." — Bede, ii. 13.

[6] We have quoted the only exception to this rule in Sussex, p. 396.

[7] The most severe penalty pronounced against apostasy was that of *healsfang*, which interpreters translate as stocks or pillory — a penalty, however, which might be evaded by the contributions of friends. — Thorpe, i. 45; Lingard, i. 112.

[8] Bede, iii. 8.

tory of the Church, and which she has always had to pay for by a loss of souls.

Such apostles found neophytes worthy of them. "No nation," says with justice Edmund Burke, the most illustrious of their descendants, "has embraced Christianity with more fervor and simplicity than the Anglo-Saxons."[9] The permanent and generous struggle, which shows itself everywhere from the moment of their conversion, between their new principles and their old instincts, their savage traditions of murder, vengeance, and debauchery, demonstrate at once the sincerity of their faith and the merit of their submission. For a long time they alternate between atrocious crimes and unbounded penances, between audacious rapine and a giving up of all earthly goods, between odious outrages upon modesty and vows of perpetual chastity. They were capable of every sin to satisfy their passions, and were not less capable of every sacrifice to expiate their excesses. But in the long run, and sometimes very speedily, goodness carried the day, and, except for some terrible backslidings which were inevitable, remained master of the field, thanks to the generous and unwearied efforts of the monastic apostles. Wherever the hand, the words, the spirit of the monk, bishop, or missionary can reach, a uniform tendency is evident, both in morals and laws, in word and deed, towards justice, humanity, the love of goodness, and neighborly charity; subduing the native fierceness of their countrymen; struggling against the most popular vices and excesses; introducing intellectual culture; creating and maintaining social peace from religious motives. The great mission which devolved upon the Church after the ruin of the Empire, that of restraining and ennobling the barbarians, of purifying and transforming their souls, was never more completely fulfilled.

And perhaps also the alliance between the two societies temporal and spiritual, between Church and State, was never more completely and happily realized. It was the climax of this union, at least in England, a moment which had its stains and miseries like everything here below, but which was free on both sides from permanent and systematic excesses. No king of the period attempted to govern or use the Church for his own advantage; no pontiff, in these exclusively monastic times, claimed that deceitful ascendency which precedes or produces decadence and rebellion.

[9] Burke, *Essay towards an Abridgment of English History*, c. iii.

Certainly the Anglo-Saxon monks, instruments of a revolution so fruitful, and creators of an organization so brilliant and lasting, had nothing, except their name, their celibate condition, their faith in Jesus Christ and His Church, in common with the Fathers of the desert, or even with the rare and austere companions of St. Benedict. Far from flying the company of other Christians, they impersonated or created Christian society around them. Far from thinking of their own salvation alone, they labored without intermission, first for the salvation of infidels, and afterwards for the maintenance of faith and morality in the new Christian communities formed by their instructions. Far from confining themselves to prayer or manual labor, they cultivated and extended with enthusiasm all the knowledge and literature possessed by the world in their days. The distant places to which they had been first led by a love of solitude changed rapidly, and as if by force of circumstances, into cathedrals, cities, towns, or rural colonies, and served as centres, schools, libraries, workshops, and citadels to the scarcely converted families, parties, and tribes. Around the monastic cathedrals and the principal communities, towns which are still in existence formed rapidly, and municipal liberties soon dawned into life among them, the vital guarantees of which still exist along with the very names of the magistrates charged with their defence and maintenance.[10]

They were not Fathers of the desert, but makers of a church and nation.

All the bishops of the Heptarchy, as our narrative must have proved, issued from monasteries; the clergy of the cathedrals were exclusively monks who lived in community with their diocesan prelate at their head. For a century at least they held the place of the secular or parochial clergy. The monasteries were centres from which missionaries went forth to the rural stations to baptize, preach, and celebrate all the ceremonies of worship, and into which they returned to revive themselves by study and prayer. Rural parishes were formed but slowly under the influence of Archbishop Theodore in the south, and of archbishop Egbert and Bede in the north. The monasteries thus long supplied in Christian England the place not only of cathedrals but of parish churches. Most of the cathedrals preserved their monastic character until long after the Norman Con-

The monasteries answer the purpose of cathedrals or parishes.

670.

730.

[10] Kemble, vol. ii. pp. 330, 338.

quest. The decrees of the council of Cloveshove, in 747, are the first authentic documents which treat as a general fact the distribution of lay lands into districts administered by priests under the control of bishops, in distinction from churches situated in the lands belonging to the monasteries and served by priests under the control of their abbots. The latter churches, in which the priest was always assisted by a deacon and several clerks, were sometimes called *monasteriuncula.*

When parishes were thus organized, most of the priests placed at the head of the new divisions of the country were naturally brought from the monasteries.[11] All was to make or to make anew in that great work, for it must be repeated that every trace of ancient British Christianity had disappeared before the Saxons. Except at Glastonbury, which had been at all times one of the great centres of Celtic devotion,[12] in the little Roman church at Canterbury, where Queen Bertha was wont to pray,[13] and at Evesham where the ruins of a little British church were found in the thicket which had to be cleared away for the foundation of the new abbey,[14] no vestige of the Christianity of the Britons or Romans is to be found in the history of the conquest of England by the monks.

This extension of their office and influence had not been attained in any other Christian nation; but it did not banish from the mind of the Anglo-Saxon monks the necessity of maintaining and guaranteeing the fundamental conditions of their institution. The rule of St. Benedict, which had been brought into England along with the Gospel by the first envoys of the Benedictine pope, St. Gregory the Great, had followed step by step the progress of evangelization and Roman supremacy, and finally supplanted all the monastic regulations of Celtic countries or times. From Wilfrid to Bede, all the popular saints, Cuthbert, Egwin, Benedict Biscop, Botulph, and Aldhelm, distinguished themselves by their zeal for the Benedictine rule, although giving to it slight modifications and additions such as suited the country and age. There existed, however, no hierarchical connection among the different monasteries, no

Extension of the Benedictine order.

[11] Lingard (*Antiquities of the Anglo-Saxon Church*, vol. i. p. 457) perfectly explains all that concerns the organization of the parochial clergy. See what has been said above, p. 351.

[12] See p. 657.

[13] See p. 155.

[14] See p. 439.

chapter general, and, except the tie formed by Wilfrid between the nine or ten houses founded by himself,[15] no general congregation of different communities, such as has been so general since. The only link between the continually increasing monasteries which covered the British soil was in the code, already a thing of antiquity, which had come from Rome with the Christian faith, and which the second council of Cloveshove names simply *the Rule*, as if it had become the sole rule recognized and put in practice.[16]

The monastic order guaranteed by the councils

Most of the councils held in England from the end of the seventh century gave a place to monastic interests in their decrees which was in keeping with the preponderance of monastic prelates in the assemblies where these decrees were discussed or promulgated. Let us note the council of Beccancelde,[17] called, in 694, by Withred, King of Kent, the fifth descendant of Ethelbert, which was presided over by Archbishop Brithwald, and at which the learned Grecian, Tobie, Bishop of Rochester, many abbots, priests, lords, and *five abbesses*, were present.[18]

Of Beccancelde, 694;

The king summed up the deliberations of the assembly. "I desire," said he, "that the monasteries and churches which have been given or bequeathed for the glory of God, in the time of the faithful kings, my relatives and predecessors, may remain dedicated to Him forever. I, Withred, earthly king, moved by the celestial King, and inspired by the love of justice, have learned from our ancestors that no layman has a right to take possession of any church whatsoever, nor of anything that belongs to that church. For this reason we interdict all kings, our successors, all eorls, or other laymen, from exercising authority over churches or their possessions which I and my predecessors have given as a perpetual inheritance to Christ, to the Holy Virgin, and to the apostles. When an abbot or abbess dies, let notice be given to the archbishop, and let his successor be chosen only after the purity of his life has been acknowledged by the bishop. It

[15] See p. 447.

[16] Cap. 24. Cf. Mabillon, præf. in 1 sæcul., § 87.

[17] This is supposed to be Beckenham, or, according to Hook, Bapchild, near Sittingbourne.

[18] "Cæteris abbatibus, abbatissis, presbyteris, diaconibus, ducibus, satrapis, in unum glomeratis; pariter tractantes, anxie examinantes de statu ecclesiarum Dei vel monasteriorum intra Cantiam."— *Proœm. ms. Cantuar.*, ap. Coletti *Concil.*, vol. viii. p. 77. We will speak of these abbesses further on.

is the king's duty to choose the eorls and ealdormen, the sheriffs and judges: but it is the office of the archbishop to rule the church of God, to elect and constitute bishops, abbots, abbesses, priests and deacons, and to confirm them by his good example." [19]

Another decree of the same council exempts the monasteries of Kent from all secular bondage, and notably from maintaining the king and lords during their journeys, which is an evidence that monastic hospitality, always so generous and spontaneous, had been cruelly abused by the greed and rapacity of powerful laymen.[20] Three years after, in a new assembly held at Berkhampstead, presided over by the same king and archbishop, and entitled a council, though many warriors occupied seats in it along with the clergy, the freedom of the Church was again guaranteed along with that of its jurisdiction, its property, and its prayers.[21] The decrees of these councils held in the kingdom of Kent, under the presidency of the metropolitan, were soon adopted over all England. They were solemnly confirmed at the first council of Cloveshove in 742 by Ethelbald, King of the Mercians, who was then the most powerful prince of the Heptarchy, and who, from his youthful friendship with the hermit Guthlac, had always been well disposed towards the monks.[22] It

Of Berkhampstead. 697;

And of Cloveshove 742.

[19] "Volo ut omnes monasteria et ecclesiæ quæ fuerint datæ et legatæ Dei in gloriam, regum fidelium meorum prædecessorum diebus . . . ita supersint Dei in honorem et firmiter remaneant in sæcula sæculorum. Cum ego Wihtredus, terrestris rex, a cœlesti Rege incitatus et spiritu justitiæ accensus, a nostris avis illud didicerim quod nullus laicus jure debet seipsum immitere in quamvis ecclesiam." — *Chron. Saxon.*, ed. Gibson, p. 48. Neither Bede nor Malmesbury mentions this council. Spelman, however, has found its decrees in five different MSS. The double report of these decrees given after his account in Coletti, vol. viii. p. 77, is much longer than that of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, but contains no essential addition.

[20] "Ex hac die donamus ecclesiis regni nostri liberas esse perpetua libertate ab omnibus difficultatibus secularis servitutis a pastu regis, principum, comitum . . . ab omni debito vel pulsione regalium tributorum, ut possint, pro nobis Deo omnipotenti hostias dignas offerre, nostraque peccata abluere immaculatis numeribus . . . nisi sua spontanea voluntate, ex largitate beneficiorum quid facere velint." — *Concilia*, vol. viii. pp. 78, 80.

[21] "Libera sit ecclesia, fruaturque suis judiciis, et redditibus seu pensionibus. Pro rege preces fiant, mandatisque ejus, non cogente necessitate, sed ex sponte obediunto." — *Concil.*, vol. viii. p. 99. This Latin is a much more recent translation of the Saxon text of the twenty-eight articles intituled *Judicia* (Dooms) of Withred.

[22] "Studiose requirentes qualiter in primordio nascentis ecclesiæ hic in Anglia jubebatur haberi honor cœnobiorum secundum normam æquitatis . . . tandem pervenit ad manus libertas ecclesiarum et institutio Withredi regis de electione et auctoritate cœnobiorum in regno Cantiæ." — *Concil.*,

was at the same time decided that the exemption from all contributions to the public treasury granted to the monks did not extend to the taxes levied for the three principal necessities of the time (*trinoda necessitas*), the preservation of roads and bridges (*brycgbote*), of national fortresses (*burghbote*), and of military expeditions (*fyrd*).

The second council of Cloveshove — which was the most important of the Anglo-Saxon assemblies of the eighth century,[23] and was called in consequence of a celebrated letter from St. Boniface to the Archbishop of Canterbury, and specially because of the severe orders of Pope Zacharius — added new guarantees and also new obligations to the already important mission of the monks, taking effectual measures against the abuses and oppressions which had been pointed out almost at the same moment by Boniface in his letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury, and by Bede to the Archbishop of York.

II.

Religious instruction in the national language.

It is then to the monks scattered as missionaries and preachers over the country, or united in the numerous communities of episcopal cities and other great monastic centres, that must be in justice attributed the initiation of the Anglo-Saxons into the truths of religion as well as into the consoling and readily-adopted observances of Catholic worship. They were expressly commanded to teach and explain to their flocks, in the vernacular tongue, the Decalogue, the Lord's Prayer, the Apostles' Creed, and the sacred words which were used in the celebration of mass and the administration of baptism; to expound to them every Sunday, in English, the epistle and gospel of the day, and to preach, or, instead of preaching, to read them something useful to their souls.[24]

The zeal of the Anglo-Saxon kings[25] and people for reli-

vol. viii. p. 267. Cloveshove or *Cliffshoo*, where these famous councils were held, is placed by the best authorities at Cliff, near Rochester, in the part of Kent between the Thames and Medway. Others suppose that these councils were held at Abingdon or Tewkesbury, which was then one of the great abbeys of Gloucestershire.

[23] See above, p. 600, note 1.

[24] "Ut symbolum fidei ac dominicam orationem, sed et sacrosancta quoque verba quæ in missæ celebratione et officio baptismi solemniter dicuntur, interpretari atque exponere posse propria lingua qui nesciant, discant." — *Concil. Clovesh.*, can. 16. Cf. THORPE, *op. cit.*, p. 159, and LINGARD, *Antiquities*, vol. i. p. 167.

[25] See p. 285.

gious instruction in their own language has been already pointed out. From this spring those homilies in Anglo-Saxon which are so often to be met with among the manuscripts in our libraries, and which are by several centuries of an earlier date than the earliest religious documents of any other modern language. Thence also came those translations of Holy Scripture which abounded in the cloisters from the seventh century, and which probably were circulated outside their boundaries, — translations ascribed by certain historians to the pens of the most illustrious monks — to Aldhelm and the Venerable Bede, who are said to have completely translated, the one the Psalter, and the other the Old and New Testaments.[26]

The Sunday rest, still more scrupulously observed in England than in any other Christian country, was, from the beginning of the monastic mission, the object of special precautions. The Penitentiary of Theodore records the most minute regulations for preserving laborers, vine-dressers, and gardeners, as well as needle-women, spinners, and washer-women, from any infringement of that essential guarantee of freedom for both body and soul.[27]

The solemn beauty of the worship celebrated in the monastic churches was increased by the liturgical uniformity in accordance with Roman rites which had been everywhere substituted for the Celtic, and were formally decreed by the council of Cloveshove.[28] And it must have had a still greater effect upon the people, from the gradual introduction of organs, the powerful melody of which our Aldhelm had already celebrated.[29] The first mention of them in England is connected with the abbey of Malmesbury, which, being situated

[26] Lappenberg, vol. i. p. 197.

[27] "Nec viri ruralia opera exerceant, nec in vinea colenda, nec in campos arando, metundo, vel fœnum secando, vel sæpem ponendo. . . . Nec in horto laborent, nec ad placita conveniant, nec venationes exerceant. Item feminæ opera textilia non faciant, nec abluant vestimenta, nec consuant nec lanam carpere, nec linum batere (*sic*), nec vestimenta lavare, nec verveces tondere. . . . Et ad missarum solemnia ad ecclesias undique conveniant, et laudent Deum pro omnibus bonis, quæ nobis in illa die fecit." — C. 38, § 8.

[28] "Ut eamdem monasterialis psalmodiæ puritatem ubique sectentur, nihilque quod communis usus non admittit, præsumant cantare aut legere, sed tantum quod ex sacrarum scripturarum auctoritate descendit, et quod Romanæ Ecclesiæ consuetudo permittit." — *Can.* 15.

[29] "Maxima millenis auscultans organa flabris,
Mulceat auditum ventosis follibus iste,
Quamlibet auratis fulgescant cætera capsis."
— *De Laudibus Virginum*, ed. Giles, p. 138.

not far from Cambria, and founded by a Celt, might offer a new attraction by means of that touching and majestic harmony to the essentially musical Welsh.[30]

The cross planted throughout the country.

In addition to the ceremonies celebrated within the churches, which were still too distant from each other to provide for all spiritual necessities, the solicitude of the monastic missionaries had extended the worship of the cross, for the instruction and consolation of the uncultured country people. The mysterious symbol of the redemption of the human race by the sufferings of the Son of God was raised from point to point on the hillsides and in the valleys of England now ransomed from the heathen yoke. The crucifix which St. Augustin had presented for the first time to Ethelbert, on the morning after he landed on the banks of the Thames, and which the holy and pious Oswald had planted for the first time as a sign of hope and deliverance upon the soil of Northumbria on the eve of his first battle, stood in the place of an oratory and sanctuary in many districts scarcely yet cleared from the forest. A cross raised in the middle of a field was enough to satisfy the devotions of the thane, his ploughmen, and shepherds. They gathered around it for public and daily prayer,[31] and were inspired by it with a veneration not less affectionate than that which attached to the sanctuaries, daily increasing in number, which were almost all dedicated to the mother of Christ or St. Peter; for the prince of the apostles was then the saint most universally and frequently invoked by the Christians of England.[32]

Services rendered to public instruction by the monasteries.

The unrivalled benefit of the faith was not the only service which the Benedictines lavished on converted England. It is at the risk of falling into repetition and commonplace that we dwell upon the immense services they rendered, there as everywhere, if not more there than anywhere else, to public instruction and to agriculture. We flatter ourselves that we have furnished, almost at every page of these volumes, evidence of what they have done for the intellectual nourishment of England. It has been seen, that among the Anglo-

[30] Cf. LAPPENBERG, i. 198.

[31] "Sic mos est Saxonicæ gentis, quod in nonnullis nobilium bonorumque hominum prædiis, non ecclesiam sed Sancta Crucis signum Deo dicatum, cum magno honore almum, in alto erectum, ad commodam diurnæ orationis sedulitatem solent habere." — *Vita S. Willibaldi*, ap. MABILLON, *Act. SS. O. S. B.*, t. iv.

[32] LINGARD, *op. cit.*, ii. 87-107.

Saxons, as well as among the Celts of Ireland, Caledonia, and Cambria, monasteries were the sole centres of a religious and liberal education, and that knowledge was there at once much sought, very varied, and very literary. This was not the case solely in the isolated cloisters which were devoted to monastic education. The bishops, all of whom came out of monasteries, changed the cloisters of their cathedrals into schools, and collected around them a numerous band of youths eager for work and for study.

And by the monk-bishops.

One of those public benefactors who distinguished himself the most in this respect, was John, whose name we have already met as one of the intruders who repeatedly divided between them the diocese of Wilfrid.[33] We may justly be blamed for not dwelling longer on him, so great was his popularity among the English of his own day, and until the end of the middle ages.[34] Though he was best known under the name of St. John of Beverley, from the place where he passed the last four years of his life in solitude, and which afterwards became one of the greatest monastic establishments of the north of England,[35] he was in the first place a monk at Whitby under the great Abbess Hilda, and afterwards bishop, in succession, of Hexham and York. He was a disciple of Archbishop Theodore, and it was he who had the honor of conferring the orders of deacon and priest upon the Venerable Bede. Between these two great luminaries of the Anglo-Saxon Church, he himself shone during his thirty-two years' episcopate with a pure and gentle light, thanks to his tender anxiety for all the spiritual and temporal necessities of his flock, and the supernatural help which he

John of Beverley, monk, bishop, and one of the most popular saints in England.

686-718.

[33] See p. 409, note 240, and p. 432.

[34] The banner of St. John of Beverley was placed with those of St. Wilfrid and St. Cuthbert on the sacred cart at the battle of the Standard in 1138 (see p. 445). The same banner was the oriflamme of Edward I. in one of his great expeditions. Two centuries later the popularity of the holy abbot of Beverley was renewed by the coincidence of the feast of *his translation*, celebrated in 1037 on the 25th October, falling on the day of the victory of Agincourt. Shakespeare (as also the Roman Breviary) speaks only of St. Crispin and Crispianus as patrons of that day. But in August, 1421, Henry V. gave thanks for his victory before the shrine of the Anglo-Saxon saint at Beverley.

[35] It included a monastery of Benedictines, a college of canons, and a nunnery. The church, built at first by St. John, was destroyed by the Danes, re-established by Athelstane, respected by William the Conqueror, and rebuilt magnificently in the thirteenth century. It is one of the finest monuments of English architecture.

brought to them in their sicknesses and troubles. Bede has devoted several chapters full of interest to his history. He exhibits him to us employing the most minute and affectionate pains to heal a poor young cripple, who was dumb and afflicted with scurvy, of all his infirmities, but especially of his dumbness, teaching him by the aid of heaven to speak and read, and beginning with the alphabet like the humblest of teachers.[36]

But another scene, which touches our subject more immediately, is that in which we behold him surrounded by a group of youths, some ecclesiastics, but the greater part laymen, whom the monk-bishop trained to the study of letters and music, without extinguishing in them the taste for athletic exercises, which was then, as now, inherent in the English race. These students followed their master on horseback through his pastoral visitations, and when they found themselves on level ground took advantage of the occasion to ride races with each other at the risk of breaking their heads, as happened to a young monk, afterwards Abbot of Tynemouth, who related all these details to the Venerable Bede. The joyous impetuosity of the young horsemen, their entreaties to the bishop for permission to ride their races under his eyes, the consent which was finally wrested from him under the condition that his favorite among them should remain by his side, the impossibility which this favorite experienced of resisting the impulse and example of his comrades, his wild gallop to rejoin the others, his accident, his swoon, the tender anxiety of the good prelate, the cares which he lavished on the imprudent youth, passing the entire night in prayer by his side, until the dying young man opened his eyes, and said, "I know you; you are my bishop, whom I love;" all this makes up one of the most complete and attractive pictures in the abundant stores of the great monastic historian.[37]

Monastic students and horse-racing.

[36] "Jussit ad se intrare pauperem, ingresso eo, linguam proferre ex ore ac sibi ostendere jussit. . . . *Dicito*, inquiens, *aliquod verbum, dicito Gæ.* . . . Addidit episcopus nomina litterarum: *Dicito A:* dixit ille A. *Dicito B:* dixit ille et hoc. . . . Neque ultra cessavit tota die ac nocte sequente, quantum viligare potuit . . . loqui aliquid, et arcana, suæ cogitationis ac voluntatis, quod nunquam antea potuit, aliis ostendere." — *Hist. Eccles.*, v. 2.

[37] "Cum in primævo adolescentiæ tempore in clero illius degerem legendi canendique studiis traditus . . . contigit nos iter agentes cum illo devenisse in viam planam et amplam aptamque cursui equorum: cœperuntque juvenes, maxime laici, postulare episcopum ut cursu majore equos suos invicem probare liceret. At ille primo negavit . . . sed ad ultimum multorum unanima

We must stop short here in order not to begin over again, as we should be too often tempted to do, the edifying but monotonous tale which proves the studious fervor of both masters and pupils in the monastic schools.

Services to agriculture.

But it is impossible to avoid a brief notice of what has been done by the monks in England for the improvement of agriculture. It is impossible to forget the use they made of so many vast districts, uncultivated and uninhabited, covered with forests or surrounded with marshes. Such was, it must not be forgotten, the true nature of the vast estates given to the monks, and which had thus the double advantage of offering to communities the most inaccessible retreat that could be found, and of imposing the least possible sacrifice upon the munificence of the givers. They surmounted all the difficulties which stared them in the face, of beginning the cultivation of a new country; the forests were cleared, the marshes made wholesome or dried up, the soil irrigated or drained according to the requirements of each locality; and bridges, roads, dikes, havens, and light-houses were erected wherever their possessions or influence extended, in evidence of their unwearied and watchful fervor. The half at least of broad Northumberland was lost in sandy plains and barren heaths; the half of East Anglia and a considerable part of Mercia were covered with marshes difficult of access, in the midst of which the future king, Ethelbald, found refuge with the hermit Guthlac: yet in both regions the monks substituted for these uninhabited deserts fat pasturage and abundant harvests.[38]

The latter district, the present name of which (*the Fens*) alone recalls the marshy and unwholesome nature of the original soil, became the principal theatre of the triumphs of agricultural industry performed by the monks. Medehamstede,[39] Ely, Croyland, Thorney, Ramsey, were the first battle-fields of these conquerors of nature, these monks who

intentione devictus: *Facite*, inquit, *ut vultis*. . . . Ipse diligentius obsecrans, ut et mihi certandi cum illis copia daretur. . . . Cum sæpius, spectante me et episcopo, concitatis in cursum equis reverterentur, ipse lascivio animo non me potui cohibere, sed, prohibente licet illo, ludentibus me miscui. . . . Audivi illum post tergum mihi cum gemitu dicentem: *O quam magnam væ facis mihi sic equitando*. . . . Dum fervens equus quoddam itineris concavum valentiore impetu transiliret, lapsus decidi, sensum perdidi. . . . Evenit ut . . . infracto pollice capitis quoque junctura solveretur. . . . Vomebam saguinem. . . . At ego aperiens oculos aio: *Etiam; tu es antistes amatus.*" — Bede, v. 6.

[38] Cf. Lingard, i. 267.

[39] The original name of Peterborough; see p. 331.

made of themselves ploughmen, breeders and keepers of stock, and who were the true fathers of English agriculture, which, thanks to their traditions and example, has become the first agriculture in the world.

The English word *improvement*, so frequently used, and so expressive in relation to everything that concerns bodily and mental labor, seems to have been invented expressly for their use. As much might be said for another word, more ancient still but not less used — the word *landlord*, which expresses not only the sentiment of dominion and territorial possession, but also that kind of tutelary and almost paternal solicitude which so happily combines the obligations and the rights of property. They were the best of *landlords;* such is the testimony given, by all attentive and conscientious observers of the past history of England, to the monks who were the originators of ecclesiastical property in that country, and who long remained its sole guardians. It was not only by their gifts, by their able and generous indulgence towards their direct dependants, that they exercised upon the inferior classes an influence always benevolent, and always gratefully acknowledged. It was by the effectual, enlightened, and unwearied protection which they extended to the poor and weak, who were under other laws and served other masters. "They were," according to one of the great masters of modern learning, "permanent mediators between the rich and poor, between the strong and the weak; and it must be said to their eternal honor that they understood and fulfilled in a marvellous way the duties of this noble mission. They alone had the right and the means of arresting the rough hand of power, of mitigating the just severity of the law, of showing a gleam of hope to the eye of the slave, and of finding, even in this world, a place and means of existence for all those forsaken ones whose existence was ignored by the State."[40]

Thus, then, thanks to the Anglo-Saxon Benedictines, the maternal authority of the Church began to extend over all weakness and suffering. It grew visibly, interposing whenever it was necessary against all violence and tyranny.

[40] KEMBLE, *Saxons in England*, vol. ii. p. 375.

III.

Intimate connection of the monastic order with the Anglo-Saxon aristocracy.

How, then, was this office, so godlike and glorious, given, from the very beginning of Christianity in England, to the abbots, the great monks, and the bishops, who were produced by the monastic order? The influence of Christian faith and morality, of which they were the interpreters and guardians, contributed to it more than any other reason. But it would be unjust to pass over another cause, almost as effectual — the close and lasting union between the monastic order and the Anglo-Saxon aristocracy. This aristocracy, converted by the monks, promptly and cordially opened its ranks to them. History has not preserved the memory of any race which adopted, not only the belief, but the precepts and counsels of the Gospel with more enthusiasm than did the high nobility, which was composed of the dynasties and ruling families of the Heptarchy. Never and nowhere have so many men of royal or patrician race devoted themselves to the hard discipline of the cloister, to the penitential life of anchorites, to the dangers inseparable from pilgrimages and missions in countries still pagan. This aristocracy, fond of fighting, of good cheer, of all sensual pleasures, and of pomp and magnificence which, both in their own persons and in those of their descendants, became proverbial,[41] found itself all at once ripe for the noblest exploits of self-mortification, of Gospel humility, and chastity. After the first foreign masters, new apostles, issued from its own bosom, continued to show it the path of Christian virtue, marching resolutely at its head.

From thence sprang an alliance between the aristocracy and the clergy, between religion and the State, more characteristic, intimate, and cordial, as has been already said, than existed anywhere else in the Teutonic and Christian world. Anglo-Saxon princes and nobles became in rapid succession monks, abbots, and bishops; but these prelates and clergy, belonging to the sovereign races, retained, in their own country and among their neighbors, a place equal or superior to that which they occupied as laymen. They were instantly recognized or elevated to the most important rank in English society. On the other hand, this rank and those functions were often coveted by men inspired with passions

[41] "Ex pompa Anglum intelliges." — Guill. Malmesb., *Vita Aldhelm.*, p. 7.

very different from the sacred fire which burned in the heart of Wilfrid, Benedict Biscop, Guthlac, and the other saints who belonged to the highest ranks of Anglo-Saxon nobility.

In England, as elsewhere, and perhaps more than elsewhere, this intimate alliance between the heads of the two forms of society, spiritual and temporal, and the constant mutual action of the one on the other, produced results dear and salutary to the Church as well as to the State. The advantage, however, was almost always greater for the State than for the Church, and indeed sometimes became dangerous and compromised the latter. Abuses there, as everywhere, inevitably followed benefits. These will be evident but too soon. At the same time, before going on to consideration of the shadows which it is impossible to deny or suppress in a sincere historic picture, let us first contemplate the light which preceded them.

Their intervention in social government and organization.

It was not certainly by any encroachment either open or concealed on the rights of others, nor by any secret or violent means, that the heads of the monastic order rose to the highest rank in the Anglo-Saxon nation. They were called to it by the natural course of things and the unanimous voice of men. Representatives of the most elevated social offices, initiated into all the necessities of elective government, of communal life, and voluntary subordination, they took their place naturally in a government based, in the first place, upon a social hierarchy consecrated by mutual service and hereditary or freely offered devotion; and in the second, upon the sovereign and permanent action of public assemblies. These envoys of Christianity brought an essentially important and much desired sanction to the usages and institutions which substituted among those noble scions of the Teutonic race the proud independence of an often heroic, but sometimes exacting and troublesome, devotion, for the abject submission of the degraded serfs of the Roman Empire.

Their place in the national assemblies.

Not only the bishops, who all belonged to the monastic order, but abbots, and often abbesses, occupied the first place in those national or provincial assemblies which have been so often referred to in this narrative, and which, under the name of Witenagemot, or assembly of wise men, were the cradle of the English Parliament; guaranteeing to the Anglo-Saxon people the benefit of a government sustained and controlled by the lay and ecclesiastical nobility, and making decisions which could not be violated or despised with impunity by any monarch.

At the period which we have now arrived at, each kingdom of the Heptarchy, and even each of the tribes comprised in or absorbed by the greatest of those kingdoms,[42] had its special assembly, an institution retained at a later period, when England was united under the sceptre of one monarch, by each *shire* or province. But there also existed assemblies more or less general, the authority of which was recognized in differing degrees by all the divisions of the conquering race. To these conferences especially, which ecclesiastical historians have honored with the name of councils, the presence of several monk-bishops, presided over by their metropolitan, a monk like themselves, had the power of giving a more august character. The council of Hertford, presided over by the Greek Theodore,[43] decreed 673. that a general synod should be held twice a year at Cloveshove. But, besides that this assembly appears to have been exclusively ecclesiastical, there is no evidence that its decree was obeyed. A century passed before England possessed one sole, permanent, and regular assembly. At the same time, from the introduction of Christianity, local or national assemblies became visible, constituting a great council of the whole country, and meeting periodically at Christmas and at Easter.

The monastic prelates held their seats in these assemblies, at once as the doctors and spiritual guides of the nation and as great landed proprietors, whose importance was daily increased by the extent of the new gifts which were lavished upon them, and by the increasing agricultural value of their old possessions. They sat in the first rank with the principal lords, the great chiefs of the nobility, the governors of provinces, called earls or ealdormen;[44] and above the other proprietors who, under the name of thanes, composed the greater part of the assembly. According to the theory most generally received by modern learning,[45] each thane or proprietor might reach the rank of Their composition.

[42] Such as the Hwiccas, the Middle Angles in Mercia, and the Gyrwas in East Anglia.

[43] See p. 353.

[44] Whom Bede entitles *duces* or *comites*, proving their rank to be equal to that of the bishop. *Ealdor* or *elder* answers to the Latin *senior*, from whence comes *seigneur*. This ancient title, once the first in the Saxon hierarchy, the bearers of which, either hereditary or for their lifetime, were almost the equals of the king, may be recognized to-day in the name of *alderman*, which has fallen exclusively, as we have already remarked, to elective municipal officials in London and the other great cities.

[45] See Turner, *History of the Anglo-Saxons*, vol. iii. pp. 48, 115, 123,

earl,[46] by the choice of the king or nomination of the assembly. Every *ceorl*, or free man, whatever his origin might be, could be advanced to the rank of thane if he possessed lands of a certain extent. Every merchant who had made three journeys beyond seas rose into the same class. But no nobleman by birth could sit in the Witenagemot unless he were a landed proprietor.[47]

Whatever uncertainty may exist as to the distinctive qualifications of the two principal elements of these assemblies, it is proved that, far from forming different castes, the *eorls* and *thanes*[48] were only the first among the free men, the

130, 135, 137 (Paris edition, 1840); PALGRAVE, *Rise and Progress of the English Commonwealth*, vol. ii. pp. 376, 385; and KEMBLE, *The Saxons in England*, vol. i. c. v.

[46] Kemble, however, believes that, like the kings, they could be taken only from certain principal families.

[47] It was necessary to possess five *hydes*, or *mansi*, for three generations, in order to be a thane, and forty to be an *eorl* or *ealdorman*. This distinction is principally founded on the evidence of a monastic historian of Ely (*Liber Eliensis*, ap. GALE, *scriptores*, vol. ii. c. 40), speaking of the brother-in-law of his abbot, who could not, for want of those forty hydes, obtain the hand of the daughter *præpotentis viri*. He adds, "Licet nobilis esset, inter proceres tunc nominari non potuit." Let us state, at the same time, that Kemble disputes the necessity of a territorial qualification for admission to the *Witan*. And let us also remember that Abbot Benedict Biscop received eight of these *mansi* or lands for an illuminated volume. The real amount of the *hyde* (in German *hof*) remains to be discovered; the opinions of the learned are cruelly diverse on this respect, varying between a minimum of 30 acres and a maximum of 120. The acre, or day's measure, meant here, as everywhere, as much land as a pair of oxen could plough in a day. Cf. ELLIS, *Introduction to Domesday Book*, and KEMBLE, *op. cit.*

[48] The meaning of the word *thane*, or *thegn*, has evidently varied like that of *fidelis*, or *leude* among the Franks, but it answers most generally to the *milites* or *barones* of later times. — PALGRAVE, vol. ii. pp. 33, 376. The members of the Anglo-Saxon parliaments (*conventus*, *synodus*, *concilium*) received thus in public acts and in contemporary authors all sorts of different designations, of which the following are the principal: Proceres, sapientes, principes, senatores, primates, optimates, magnates, majores natu, procuratores patriæ (of this last title there are five examples in Kemble, vol. ii. 199). Many of the acts of these assemblies quoted in the *Codex Diplomaticus Ævi Saxonici*, are furnished with signatures which aid us in proving their composition. The most considerable number of signatures received in one assembly (that of Cloveshove in 825) is 121, of whom 95 were monks or clerks. A charter of 934 proves the presence at the *gemot* of the king, of—

4 Welsh princes.
2 archbishops.
17 bishops.
4 abbots.
12 dukes or ealdormen.
52 thanes.

91; described as "tota populi generalitate."

heads and representatives of a territorial aristocracy the ranks of which were open to all, like that which has constituted the strength, greatness, and freedom of England for so many centuries, and which, from the beginning, was a national force representing the vital strength of the people, and its interests, will, and immemorial liberties.[49] The popular element also appears and increases slowly as we advance in history. All the inhabitants of the neighborhood had a right to be present at the assemblies, which, for the most part, were held in the open air; they exercised at least the right of *conclamation*, which consisted in giving their public adherence to the decisions; they could also, according to Palgrave, make complaints and disclose their injuries.[50] Everything leads us to suppose that the crowd was swelled by a great number of monks, while their elective chiefs, bishops and abbots of the principal monasteries, took decisive part in the votes and deliberations.

Sovereignty of these assemblies.

In the temporal and spiritual government of the Anglo-Saxon nations, nothing escaped the action of these assemblies. They not only gave forth laws, they shared the actual government with the kings, and took part in all their acts, at least so far as to sanction them. No royal charter or document of state exists which does not prove at once the intervention of the assembly of wise men, and the presence of the monastic clergy in that assembly. The king could do nothing without their help or sanction.[51]

Their attributes.

No important affair was treated, no sovereign decision taken, without this help or sanction, from the nomination of a bishop to the foundation or exemption from national burdens of a new monastery.[52] The spirit of

[49] The people, says Kemble, were the true aristocracy; the nobles were only its chiefs, as the English peers are at present the born chiefs of the aristocracy of freeholders and ten-pound householders. Vol. i. p. 258.

[50] Thus, in the gift given by Duke Ethelstane to the Monastery of Abingdon, the fixing of boundaries, and the excommunication pronounced against transgressors, is confirmed in this fashion: — "Et dixit omnis populus qui ibi aderat: *Fiat, fiat. Amen.*" In Saxon, "Sy hit swa." — *Codex Diplom.*, n. 1129. A charter of Ethelred in 931 declares that the act is confirmed, "Tota plebis generalitate ovante."

[51] Palgrave, vol. i. pp. 634 to 643; Lappenberg, vol. i. p. 577. Beside the great scholars who have in our time renewed the study of English origin, ought to be named a French writer, M. Albert du Boys, who, in his *Histoire du Droit Criminel des Peuples Modernes*, has conscientiously studied and estimated English institutions and legislation, not only in his third volume, which is exclusively devoted to Anglo-Norman feudal law, but also in the previous volumes, in which he has set forth the part taken by the Anglo-Saxon clergy in the social and judicial organization of society.

[52] This is proved by the expressions of Bede: "Hæc in jus sibi heredi-

association and the habits of independence which were the foundation of Teutonic liberties, absolutely excluded all idea of social or political abdication into the hands of a master, charged, along with his principal domestics, to think, speak, and act for the nation. Every Anglo-Saxon tribe, great or small, considered itself equal to the management of its own affairs, like the powerful and unconquerable England of our own day. We have seen these assemblies possessed not only of the consultive voice, but deciding with supreme authority as to the introduction of Christianity in the different kingdoms. No public act was valid, no new law could be established, except after discussion by them. Laws were issued by their authority, conjoined to that of the king, never by the crown alone. They decided alliances and treaties of peace, as well as the election and deposition of kings; for among the Anglo-Saxons, as among the Franks, the hereditary character of royalty was by no means absolute. The national assembly chose among the members of the national dynasty the candidate who suited them best. At each election the contract between the king and the people was renewed, often with new clauses, as has been seen in modern history in the capitulations of the Emperors of Germany and the Kings of Hungary. As for the deposition of kings, the assemblies made little difficulty about it, when their government was unjust or unfortunate; and the monastic clergy, like all the other members of the body political, acquiesced without scruple.[53] With still better reason they regulated everything that concerned the imposition of taxes for the public service, the levy of troops, the use to be made of fines or confiscations suffered by those who broke the penal law, the grants of territory made from the public lands either to monasteries[54] or great captains. In short, they exercised

tarium edictis regalibus faciunt ascribi, ipsasque quoque litteras privilegiorum suorum . . . pontificum, abbatum et potestatum sæculi obtinent subscriptione confirmari." — *Epist. ad Ecgberthum.* Cf. LINGARD, vol. i. pp. 412, 413.

[53] See the deposition of Sigebert, King of Wessex, in 755 by the princes and the people of his kingdom ("Provida deliberatione et unanimo omnium consensu." — HENRI DE HUNTINGDON); and that of Beornred, King of Mercia in 757, to make room for Offa: "Convenerunt in unum omnes, tam nobiles quam ignobiles, et Offa duce . . . ipsum a regno expulerunt. . . . Quo facto unanimo omnium consensu Offam in regem, tam clerus quam populus coronarunt." — *Flores Histor.*, ap. PALGRAVE, ii. 279.

[54] All the acts of this description bear the mention: "Cum licentia et consensu procerum" or "sapientium," &c.

the functions of a supreme court, both in cases civil and criminal.[55]

Danger of encroachment in spiritual matters.

No trace is to be found in the Anglo-Saxon historians of any distinction between the assemblies which treated ecclesiastical affairs and those which regulated secular life. Both were managed by the same body, and at the same sitting. It is, however, very probable that the clergy deliberated apart, at least in the first place, with the aid of the king alone,[56] reserving only a power of ratification to the general assembly. The distinction between temporal and spiritual matters was not the less clearly maintained, decrees touching doctrine or discipline made out by the bishops alone being published at the head of the acts of the national assemblies, and apart from the other decisions submitted for the sanction of public authority.[57]

Salutary and powerful influence of the monks upon the assemblies, and consequently upon laws and morals.

There is, however, in the history of the first centuries of the Church in England, no trace of the conflict between the two powers which afterwards became so frequent, so bitter, and prolonged. As for the encroachments of spiritual authority in temporal matters in the sphere of national life of which these assemblies were the centre, nobody was tempted to complain of, or even to perceive its existence. Yet the public of these days was much less able to appreciate the salutary and wonderful results of the influence of monastic prelates and missionaries upon the institutions and character of the Anglo-Saxons than we are. At present the most prejudiced critics are compelled to avow that the influence of the monastic clergy in the public and social life of the English was of the most benevolent and effectual character. To them must be attributed, from the time of the first laws made by the parliament of Ethelbert, under the influence of the Roman missionaries,[58] the gradual progress of humanity and justice in the national legislation, which up to that period had been too feeble to struggle against the ferocious and covetous instincts of the barbarous conquerors.

They contributed to create

To them belongs also the honor of that transformation of morals and souls which, notwithstanding

[55] Bede, *passim*; *Chron. Angl.-Saxon.*, and Kemble, vol. ii.

[56] This is the opinion of Kemble, who believes that there were two houses, as among the Franks, one composed of laymen and the other of ecclesiastics, but both under the presidency of the king.

[57] Lingard, *Antiquities*, vol. ii. p. 33.

[58] "Juxta exemplum Romanorum." — Bede, ii. 5. See p. 183.

national unity in England.

a thousand backslidings and a thousand melancholy fallings back into ancient barbarism, showed itself in the generosity and piety of the laymen, in the obedience and fervor of a clergy drawn daily in greater numbers from the bosom of the native population. To them the credit of having introduced into the laws and customs a respect for property, and, above all, for human life, no trace of which had previously existed among the savage invaders of Great Britain. To them the honor of having contributed more than any other, by the uniformity of their wise counsels and good examples, by the unity of their doctrine and discipline to introduce into the Anglo-Saxon nations a unity of legislation and of government which gradually led to national unity. They strengthened the throne by teaching and enforcing the practice of Christian virtues; they sanctioned and regulated the ancient Teutonic principles of the responsibility of kings, of their subordination to law, to their sworn faith and social contracts; they placed those principles under the safeguard of religion by the solemnity of consecration; they thus imprinted an august and sacred, and at the same time a limited and conditional, character upon the throne. In addition to this, while forearming it against the excesses and usurpations of princes and lords, they labored energetically to give to it the force and authority necessary to triumph over the dismemberment of the Heptarchy, and to create that unity, not absolute and absorbing like that which has wasted or enervated other illustrious nations, but sufficient, and in conformity with the genius and necessities of the English race, and which, when once fully established in the ninth century, has never more run the risk of attack or alteration.[59]

Their zeal for the poor. Public charity a work of expiation.

To them above all belongs the honor of having introduced into morals and the laws that solicitude for the inferior classes which is too often absent from the hearts of the powerful. The discoveries of modern erudition have established without doubt the unexpected result that the material condition of the inferior and serf population was not universally a state of hardship. Their labors were not more severe nor their wages less than those of our own days.[60] At the same time it is

[59] Palgrave, pp. 655, 656; Lappenberg, i. 203. Since the union of the Heptarchy under Egbert of Wessex in 800, England has never been dismembered as France was repeatedly under the Carlovingians and Capets.

[60] Each serf received for himself and his family 720 loaves yearly, without counting the midday and evening meal. — Kemble, vol. i. p. 213.

impossible to doubt that the weak were often made victims of the violence and wickedness of the strong in the ancient English world, as everywhere else. How many oppressed innocents, how many violated rights, how many unknown or unpunished crimes existed in the midst of silence and isolation, in the vast regions still so sparsely inhabited? But in proportion as religion penetrated by the influence of the monks, light arose, and justice appeared. Little by little, voices which could not be stifled arose, powerful hands were elevated to protect and avenge the victims. The oppressor stopped trembling; he had to bow, to repent, to make restitution, to expiate; and expiation almost always took the form of an act of fraternal charity, a service rendered to the community. As religious and monastic influence increased in the nation, the habit and duty of soothing suffering and remedying injustice became general. In every powerful family frequent acts of voluntary renunciation took the place of the brigandage, the robberies, and violence which had been up to that time their daily bread.

Every crime that was expiated, every penance that was accomplished by the efforts of the monks, thus contributed to public utility and happiness.[61] The long-unpunished culprits from whom the new faith wrested a tardy confession, an act of contrition or restitution, were often exempted from bodily penances, but were always constrained to pay the ransom of that exemption by acts of charity, which not only eased actual misery, but provided for the necessities of the future.

The penances imposed by the monks upon these great sinners and penitents, were not pious works and ecclesiastical foundations alone, but oftener still the deliverance of captives, the mending of a road, the rebuilding of a bridge or of cottages, the food and maintenance of peasants brought to want by intestine wars;[62] they had a thousand devices, a thousand resources, all consecrated to the same charitable and sacred end.

The abundant gifts showered upon the churches and monasteries by the fervor of new Christians, and at the same time by the remorse of opulent sinners, were thus transformed into great and permanent benefits for the suffering members of society, for the poor and homeless, the sick, the

[61] Burke, *Essay on English History*, p. 223.
[62] Lingard, *Antiquities*, vol. i. p. 258.

widows, orphans, and poor travellers who were exposed to so many dangers and trials by the rudeness of the time. By this means an unfailing channel was established by which the munificence of the rich, the strong, and the happy of this world flowed forth upon the weak, the poor, and the unfortunate. It was a great public office which, without being regulated or imposed by law, took the place of all the complications with which modern legislation has invested public charity.[63] In short, it was the realization and application of that great law of mercy and brotherly compassion which is one of the most solid and necessary foundations of human society.

Their zeal for the liberation of slaves.

Among the services rendered by the Anglo-Saxon monks to suffering humanity, none is more touching or more continual than their solicitude for those who stood on the lowest step of the social hierarchy — the slaves. The famous incident of the English captives bought in the Roman market by St. Gregory, shows us, at the beginning of this narrative, that even the sons of the conquering race were not safe from this climax of misery. But under the progressive power of the faith preached by the missionaries of Pope Gregory and their successors, the number of slaves gradually diminished.[64] Notwithstanding that the trade was forbidden by decrees and councils, a hundred times repeated, and too often evaded, it continued to be carried on as a matter of commerce,[65] but very few slaves were kept in the country itself. They did not, however, form a separate race, sprung either from the conquering Saxons or the vanquished Britons; they were recruited from the descendants of Roman slaves, from unransomed prisoners of war, and delinquents condemned to penal servitude. The monks devoted their most strenuous exertions to the still further reduction of the number. The example of the noble Wilfrid, whose first act was to free the 250 serfs who were given him by the King of the South Saxons, along with the lands intended for his episcopal monastery, proves that they were capable of seeking the freedom of their fellow-creatures at their own expense.

[63] Kemble, vol. ii. pp. 514–516.

[64] Kemble, i. 220; Lappenberg, i. 575; Palgrave, i. 29. At the end of the Anglo-Saxon period there were only 25,000 in England according to the census in *Domesday Book*, which reckons 275,000 proprietors.

[65] It was, however, forbidden to sell them to heathens; the laws of Ethelred and Canute contain formal prohibitions in this respect.

Stern truth compels us to confess that this was not the case everywhere. The honest pen of monastic annalists has preserved the letter of a monk of royal Mercian blood, Brithwald, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury, in which he insists upon the deliverance of a young slave who was held in bondage by the Abbot of Glastonbury. "Since I have failed," he writes to the Bishop of Sherborne, "in the first entreaty I addressed to him by word of mouth in your presence, I think it my duty to send you this letter from the girl's brother, and beseech you to make the abbot accept the three hundred sols which the bearer will give you for her ransom, that she may be sent back to us, to pass the rest of her life among her own people, not in the sadness of slavery, but in the joy of freedom. He will thus lose nothing of the right he has over her." [66]

This is the only example of monastic slave-holding which I have been able to discover, and fortunately the prompt and generous amendment of the evil is to be found by the side of the evil itself. If it had been otherwise, with what authority could the monks have labored for the extinction of this plague? They neglected no means besides of diminishing the number of cases in which slavery could be legalized or tolerated. The emancipation or redemption of slaves was the work of charity which they most recommended and insisted on. Thanks to their presence in the political assemblies, provisions were introduced into the laws freeing the slaves who had been overworked by their masters, or who had been obliged to work on Sunday.[67] And by their presence at the deathbed of so many penitent sinners, they were able to introduce clauses into wills which provided for the salvation

[66] "Quomodo petitio mea, qua precatus sum coram te venerabilem Beornvaldum abbatem de concedenda unius captivæ puellæ . . . redemptione, in irritum, contra quod credidi, cessit . . . obsecro ut ipse omnino obtineas a prædicto abbate, quatenus . . . tradas illam huc usque perducendam, quod possit reliquum vitæ suæ spatium cum consanguineis suis, non in servitutis tristitia, sed in libertatis transigere letitia. . . . Frater noster Beornwaldus nihil, ut æstimo, de eo quod in ea juste possedit, amittit." — *Inter Epist. S. Bonifacii*, n. 7, ed. Jaffé. It has been already seen that Archbishop Brithwald had been educated at Glastonbury before he was elected abbot of the royal monastery of Reculver. Cf. Bede, v. 8, and Hook, *Lives of the Archbishops*, vol. i. pp. 178 and 188.

[67] See specially the law made by Ina by the advice of the two archbishops, Hedda and Erconwald: "Si servus operetur dominica die per præceptum domini sui, sit liber." The council of Berkhampstead condemned to a fine of eighty pence the master who compelled his serf to work on Sunday. From thence comes the name of *Freolsday*, or day of freedom, given to Sunday. — Lingard, i. 310.

of the soul of the dying, by giving freedom to the survivors. Nothing was more frequent in the *Codex Diplomaticus* of the Anglo-Saxon period than acts of manumission, and all, or almost all, stated the religious motives which produced these acts, and the religious guarantees which sanctioned them. The freed slave was offered to God before the altar of the nearest church, and then declared free in presence of the monks and the congregation of the faithful. It was upon the fly-leaf of the book of the Gospels, or some other church-book, that the charter of affranchisement was registered.[68] The first vindications of individual freedom have thus come down to us inscribed on the margin of monastic missals, as the first indications of parliamentary government appear in the gifts given to monasteries with the sanction of assembled Witans.

These glorious and persevering apostles of the laws of God neither despised nor neglected any of the rights of men. Honor and justice, humanity and pity, knowledge and reason, were placed along with the new faith and Christian morality under the safeguard of their precepts and their unwearied watchfulness. All things fair and lovely and of good report which man has a right to love and desire, after as well as before his conversion, and more warmly still, being a Christian, than when he was not so — all the natural virtues, all the legitimate aspirations of the sons of Adam — were appreciated, claimed, and defended under the forms accessible or possible in these far-distant days, with an energy, watchfulness, and courage of which there are few examples in history, by the monastic apostles of Great Britain.

I have sought out with laborious care, and related with scrupulous truthfulness, everything that could throw light on the influence of Christianity, as preached by the monks, upon the early history of the English people. I have acknowledged that here, as everywhere else, this divine religion has been too often powerless and ineffectual amid the coarse and perverse inclinations of fallen nature. But I have met at every step the brilliant victories of self-devotion and faith, of disinterestedness and purity, of true greatness, true courage, and the most magnanimous charity. And what is still more wonderful and more consoling is the total absence, not to be met with in the same degree in the most boasted ages and circumstances, of everything which degrades or com-

[68] KEMBLE, *Saxons in England*, vol i. p. 225.

promises religion in those who teach and represent it. I assert joyfully that in the lives of so many apostles and ministers of celestial verity, I have not come upon a single evidence of fanaticism, of egotism, of baseness, severity, or stupid indifference to human sufferings. The student will search in vain in the records of those forgotten lives for traces of anything narrow, sombre, or pitiless; he will find there nothing that could enslave or enervate the human heart — nothing which could wound good sense, reason, or justice — nothing which savors of that arrogant and cruel Pharisaism with which all priesthoods are attacked or threatened — nothing, in short, which does not breathe respect for the freedom of souls, and the most exquisite sense of honor in all the things of God.

IV.

They perfected the national character without changing it.

But there is yet another result for which we owe them everlasting gratitude. The monastic missionaries, while they transformed the morals and faith of the Anglo-Saxon conquerors, did nothing to change the native genius of the Teutonic race.

They made of it a nation of Christians more fervent, more liberal, more docile, and attached to the Church, more magnificent in its gifts to monasteries, more fruitful in saintly men and women,[69] than any other contemporary nation; but they deprived it of none of its public virtues, none of its bold and energetic instincts; they did not withdraw from it an atom of its manful nature, they diminished in nothing the boldness and independence which have remained up to our own day the distinguishing characteristics of the English people.

The influence of a new faith never respected more scrupulously the unity, independence, and powerful originality of the converted race, of its language, manners, institutions, its ancient laws, and its national spirit.[70]

[69] Without speaking of holy bishops, abbots, hermits, &c., twenty-three kings and sixty queens, princes, or princesses, sprung from the different Anglo-Saxon dynasties, are reckoned from the seventh to the eleventh century among the saints recognized by the Church. No other nation has ever furnished such a contingent.

[70] This is loyally acknowledged by the German Protestant Lappenberg (vol. i. 132, 144, 629), in contradiction to the superannuated tirades of Hume, Henry, Soames, and the *servum pecus* of their copyists in England and France.

Augustin and Paulinus, Wilfrid and Theodore, *emissaries of Rome*, as they have been called by certain historians, and who were in reality the most direct agents, the most immediate envoys from the Holy See which had been yet seen in Christendom, neither introduced nor attempted to introduce any essential change in the political and social institutions, so different from those of the Roman world, which the Anglo-Saxon nation had brought from the shores of Germany, or found in the smoking ruins of Great Britain. Satisfied with having deposited in these brave hearts the secrets of eternity, the rules of moral life, and strength to struggle against the corruption natural to every man born of woman, they left intact the spirit of the race, so that underneath his Christian vestment the old Teuton still stood perfect and complete.

Many times already in this narrative, following the example of many other writers, we have remarked upon the singular unchangeableness of the Anglo-Saxon character. Manners, vices, virtues, laws, customs, rights, names, titles, tastes, language, spirit, even down to its sports and violent exercises, everything that the modern world admires or fears, is attracted or repelled by, in the England of to-day;[71] all is to be found in germ or flower in the England of twelve centuries ago. No nation has been less changed by time or conquest.

All the towns and almost all the villages of modern England seem to have existed from the time of the Saxons; the names and actual boundaries of parishes, counties or *shires*, with their sub-divisions, their judicial and political machinery, their religious and civil life, all date back into the period between the seventh and tenth centuries.

But the names and external forms are far from being all that have endured — it is the soul, the glorious and manful soul, of the converted Saxon which reveals itself in the modern Englishman. Civil virtues altogether unknown to the enslaved Christians of Rome and Byzantium, and above all, that lofty sentiment of self-respect in certain men and

[71] "The modern Englishman is already to be found in the Saxon. Each man in his own house, master of himself, erect and complete, with nothing to control or encroach upon him." — TAINE, *Histoire de la Littérature Anglaise*. Any who read the most faithful and complete picture I know of the political and social organization of England — that given by M. Le Play in his admirable work, *La Réforme Sociale* — will be struck with the persistence of the distinctive features of British character and institutions as they appear among the Saxons.

certain classes which is the cradle of all liberty, developed themselves in the shadow of those wonders of humility, self-abnegation, charity, and piety, of which we have spoken at such length — and formed the foundation of that public spirit and those public rights which have never ceased to grow amid all the storms and eclipses. *Self-government*, that is to say, the proud independence of the free man among his fellows in the general commonwealth — and *parliamentary government*, that is, the unequal division of supreme power between the crown and the national assemblies — already existed in their essential elements. When it was needful, by a natural, though too often momentary, outburst, public freedom stepped forth, armed and invincible in the collective force of individual and local freedom. The *common law* of England, that traditional and unwritten code, "the sources of which are as unknown as those of the Nile,"[72] plunges its roots into old Saxon customs, recognized, sanctioned, and published in those assemblies which were inspired and filled up by our monks; and all charters, as well as all ulterior revolutions, have served only to define and confirm that ancient and immovable foundation of English freedom.[73]

Agreement between the monastic order and the spirit of Anglo-Saxon institutions.

To hearts thus tempered, and a race thus ruled, the monastic institution, under the form which it had adopted in England, must have been in sympathy and accord, even independently of the religion of which it was the fruit and ornament. The monasteries were types of those great existences, at once individual and collective, founded on a great moral idea, but supported by great landed property, which are still distinctive features of the social machinery of England; which have everywhere been one of the essential conditions of public freedom; and which seem as natural to the masculine and active genius of the ancient Teutonic races as they are alien to modern civilization and incompatible with Cæsarism. For this reason it was to be expected that a natural liking for monasteries, whose founders had brought from the heart of Roman slavery a system of common security, spontaneous freedom, and elective functions entirely in conformity with the instincts and habits of the Teutonic races, should have arisen among the Anglo-Saxons.

Munificence and prodigality

Hence no doubt sprang that inexhaustible munificence, that prodigality, so long displayed by the

[72] Expression used by the celebrated Lord Chief-Justice Hales.
[73] Cf. Fischel, *Die Verfassung Englands*, p. 25.

of the aristocracy. Anglo-Saxon royalty and nobility in its relations with the monastic orders. The possessions of the Church, which then meant, almost exclusively, the possessions of monasteries, were increased daily by new foundations, or by fresh gifts added to previously existing establishments. We have already more than once pointed out the motives of these gifts, as they are expressed in the acts of the times, or as they are made evident by study of the circumstances and arrangements which accompanied them.

Motives of donations. A profound feeling of the instability and decay of everything human, and, above all, of material wealth;[74] humble gratitude towards God, from whom every good gift is held, and to whom a portion of His own blessings are believed to be restored by improving the condition of His ministers;[75] the desire and hope of expiating the faults of a troubled life, of redeeming the backslidings of human weakness, and of making restitution of ill-gotten wealth, either by guaranteeing the livelihood of a class of men exclusively devoted to the service of God and the practice of virtue,[76] or by securing permanent help and supply for the poor, the sick, and the forsaken; in the lack of natural heirs, the hope of creating a kind of spiritual posterity, bound to pray always for the soul of their benefactor; sometimes, as in the case of the Childe Ethelbald,[77] who was an exile before he was a king, the recollection of and gratitude for benefits received, and shelter given in the monastic sanctuary; oftener still the desire of securing for themselves and their friends a burial-place protected by holy places and holy men, and which should itself protect a religious community against the ingratitude and rapacity of the future;[78] and, in short, and always, the certainty of disposing of their lands for the advantage of the most industrious, useful, and charitable of men.

[74] "Nihil intulimus in hunc mundum, veram nec auferre quid possumus: iccirco torrenis ac caducis æterna cœlestis patriæ præmia mercanda sunt. Quapropter," &c. — Charter of Aldraed, prince of the Hwiccas, in 759, ap. *Codex Diplomat. Ævi Saxonici*, vol. i. "Universa quippe quæ hic in præsentia nisibus humanis corporaliter contemplantur, nihil esse nisi vana, caduca, transitoriaque, ex sacrorum voluminum testimoniis certissime verum patet; et tamen cum istis, æternaliter sine fine mansura alta polorum regna et vigiter florentis paradisi amœnitas mercari a fidelibus queunt. Quapropter," &c. — Charter of Offa, King of Mercia, in 779, *ibid.*

[75] "Quotiens sanctis ac venerabilibus locis vestris aliquid offere videmur, vestra nobis reddimus, non nostra largimur. Quapropter," &c. — Charter of Ethelred, King of Essex, 692, 693, *ibid.*

[76] Lingard, vol. i. p. 251.

[77] See the preceding chapter.

[78] Burke, *op. cit.*, p. 225.

Such were the motives, legitimate and frankly confessed, which led so many Anglo-Saxon princes, lords, and rich men, to despoil themselves for the benefit of monasteries. They may be all summed up in that fine text which the Church still offers yearly to our meditation: "*Concludemus eleemosynam in sinu pauperis et ipsa exorabit pro nobis.*"[79]

Abuse of the territorial gifts.

But, as has happened everywhere and at all times, in the history of the Church as well as in that of the world, evil rose by the side of the good, and abuses came in with a strong hand under the shelter of the most salutary customs. It is undeniable that these territorial grants made to monasteries exceeded the limits of justice and reason. "*Donationes stultissimæ*," says Bede, speaking of the gifts of the kings of Northumbria.[80] Although made and sanctioned by royal authority, in concert with that of the parliaments or Witenagemot, they at last went so far as seriously to threaten the public peace.

This will be easily understood by recollecting the nature of landed property among the Anglo-Saxons. From the Conquest, or first establishment of laws of property, besides the *hlot* or *allods*,[81] given to the first occupants, vast territories were reserved for the public service, or for future division, the life-rent of which alone could be given to free men under certain conditions. This was called *folc-land*, the land of the people, and has been justly compared to the *ager publicus* of the Romans.[82] New *allods* were taken from this, on occasion, to reward or encourage new services. Thus Benedict Biscop, the young lord who afterwards became the founder of Wearmouth and Yarrow, received from the king lands suitable to his rank, which he did not hesitate to restore to the king when he became a monk.[83] These territorial grants, whether given to laymen by hereditary right, or to religious communities, could only be granted by the king with the consent of his *witan*, and in virtue of a charter or deed resembling a book — from whence came the name of *boc-land*, or land given by book. Everything which did not continue part of the folc-land was thus designated. All donations of land made to the Church —

Folc-land and *boc-land*.

[79] Prayer *Attende*, taken from Eccli. xxix. 15.

[80] See above, p. 562.

[81] *Lots*.

[82] Kemble, vol. i. ch. ix. p. 289.

[83] "Cum esset Oswii regis minister, et possessionem terræ suo gradui competentem, illo donante perciperet, despexit militiam cum corruptibili donativo terrestrem." — Bede, *Vita S. Bened.*, § 1, ap. Op. Min., ii. 140.

that is to say, to monasteries — were made under this name and form. Subjects could make no other gifts, as the boc-land was the only thing in their power. Kings might detach a bit of their own boc-land to make a gift of it, as Egfrid did to Benedict Biscop;[84] but the consent of the *witan* was necessary in order to transform any portion of folc-land into a hereditary and perpetual patrimony.[85]

Lands thus given to the monasteries were naturally withdrawn from those obligations relative to military service which weighed upon all landed proprietors, as is apparent from the expressions used by Bede in recording the donation made by King Oswy when he consecrated his daughter Elfleda to religious life. Besides his daughter, says the historian, he gave to the Church twelve estates of six families each, which were freed from earthly military service to furnish to the monks the means of devoting themselves to the celestial army, and praying for the eternal peace of the nation.[86]

This substitution of the spiritual combats of the celestial army for the military obligations of other Anglo-Saxon landowners was followed or accompanied by a still more important privilege conferred on the new monastic proprietors. The folc-land or public domain, when transformed into *allods* or boc-lands — that is to say, into individual property — remained subject to all the public or private burdens which weighed upon the domain, and at the same time became subject to ordinary imposts when the grant was given to laymen. But it was exempt from those burdens when given to monasteries; and when this exemption had not been duly stipulated for in the original donations, deeds were afterwards drawn out, establishing them in the possession of privileges which the pious munificence of after generations made it a duty and pleasure to confer upon the monastic churches.[87]

[84] "Ut confestim ei terram septuaginta familiarum *de suo* largitus, monasterium inibi præciperet facere." — Bede, *Hist. Abbat.*, c. 4.

[85] Lingard, vol. i. p. 250, and Note K, pp. 407–411.

[86] "Donatis insuper duodecim possessiunculis terrarum, in quibus ablato studio militiæ terrestris ad exercendam militiam cœlestem, supplicandumque pro pace gentis ejus æterna, devotioni sedulæ monachorum locus facultasque suppeteret." — Bede, iii. 24. Kemble and Lingard do not hesitate to suppose that these twelve domains were taken from the folc-land and changed into boc-land for the advantage of the new monasteries. In the Anglo-Saxon translation, attributed to King Alfred, the word *possessiuncula* is translated boc-land.

[87] The *Codex Diplomaticus* contains numberless deeds which secure the land "liberam ab omnibus terrenis difficultatibus, sive a pastu regis, princi-

It has been seen above that from the end of the seventh century a council had recognized this assumed exemption of monasteries from burdens and taxes — excepting only the three tributes or obligations from which no one was excused,[88] and which regarded the expenses of military expeditions, and the keeping up of bridges and of fortresses — as a general law.

The increasing number of monastic foundations, and the vast extent of territorial gifts lavished upon them, produced, at the end of about a century, an alarming result — the diminution of the military resources of the country. It was not, as has been said, that the nation became less warlike, or that a too exclusive regard for religious things had turned the kings and people of the Heptarchy from their public duties. But the number of proprietors bound to personal military service went on diminishing, — on one side, because of the change of lay lands into privileged monastic possessions; and on the other hand, by the many religious vocations which arose among the warlike nobility. The prince of the Anglo-Saxon monks, the illustrious Bede, was the first to point out this danger, with the frankness which was habitual to him. "In the midst of the peace and security which we enjoy," he wrote in 731, "many Northumbrians, some noble, some humble, put aside their arms, cut their hair, and hasten to enroll themselves in the monastic ranks, instead of exercising themselves in their military duties. The future will tell what good will result from this." [89]

Four years afterwards, in his famous letter to the Archbishop of York, which we have quoted at length,[90] he expresses a much more energetic disapproval. He unveils at the same time the true character of the evil; he declares without hesitation that the defence of the country is endangered by the want of soldiers, and also by the want of public lands disposable as fiefs to the nobles or veterans. Seduced by the exemption from taxes, and advantages of every kind

pis, exactoris . . . a pastu et refectione omnium accipitrum et falconum in terra Mercensium," &c.

[88] This is called in the charters "trinoda necessitas, generalis incommoditas, communis labor." See above, p. 607.

[89] "Qua arridente pace et serenitate temporum, plures in gente Northanhumbrorum, tam nobiles quam privati, se suosque liberos, depositis armis, satagunt magis, accepta tonsura, monasterialibus ascribere votis, quam bellicis exercere studiis. Quæ res quem sit habitura finem, posterior ætas videbit." — *Hist.*, v. 23.

[90] See above, pp. 559–566.

with which monastic property was privileged, many of the nobles had obtained from the kings and *witan* vast grants of land in order to found monasteries upon them. Sometimes foundations were actually made, but without any monastic or even Christian charter; the donors collected around them a handful of their own vassals, or of irregular monks who had been expelled from true cloisters; they then called themselves abbots, and lived, together with their wives and children, on the land extorted from the nation, with no care but that of their household and material interest. Sometimes when the grant was obtained it was made use of without any further thought of its pretended purpose, and no pretence of a monastery, even under the ludicrous conditions just described, was made. For this reason the Venerable Bede implored the king and bishops to proceed, with the aid of the national assemblies, to the complete abolition of all these fraudulent and scandalous grants.[91]

Ten years after the death of Bede the second Council of Cloveshove[92] acknowledged the justice of the great monk's complaint, but without proposing any effectual remedy for the unfortunate state of affairs which he had pointed out.

Repression of abuses by the Council of Cloveshove.

This council enjoined the bishops to visit the monasteries, "if indeed such a name can be given to houses which the tyranny of avarice, to the scandal of the Christian religion, retains in the hands of worldly persons, invested with them not by divine ordinance, but by an invention of human presumption."[93] The object of these pastoral visits was to warn the inmates of the pretended communities of the risks run by their souls, and to provide for the presence of priests in case of any deadly sickness. But nothing indicates that vigorous measures were taken against the odious abuses which produced those so-called monasteries. Ill-considered grants of public lands, to false monks, or, as was much more frequent, to powerful laymen, continued with impunity to the end of the Anglo-Saxon period, causing serious disturbances in the development of

[91] The *Codex Diplomaticus* (No. 46) shows us how King Ina of Wessex took back the lands granted by Cissa to Abbot Hean and his sister the Abbess Cille — "Terram . . . reipublicæ restituit, nondum constructo monasterio in eo, nec ullo admodum oratorio erecto."

[92] See above, p. 607.

[93] "Monasteria, si tamen est fas ea ita nominare, quæ temporibus istis propter vim tyrannicæ quædam avaritiæ ad religionis Christianæ statum mullatenus immutari possent, id est a sæcularibus non divinæ legis ordinatione, sed humanæ adinventionis presumptione, utcumque tenentur." — Cap. 5.

the population and the condition of free men, by which the Danish and Norman invasions were facilitated.[94]

But the Council of Cloveshove had other abuses to repress besides those of secular usurpation. The illustrious Boniface, then nearly at the end of his glorious career, and whose vehement remonstrances with King Ethelbald and the primate of England had specially procured the convocation of the Council, did not content himself with stigmatizing as sacrilegious persons and homicides, the laymen, were they kings or earls, who called themselves abbots of these usurped monasteries.[95] He pointed out to the bishops their own failings, amongst others the national vice of drunkenness, from which even their episcopal dignity did not always protect the Anglo-Saxon bishops;[96] he also pointed out in the very cloisters themselves a culpable luxury and ridiculous abundance of ornament in the vestments of the monks; and represented to them that such childish trifles might be an introduction to excesses much more grave, to bad company, to the abandonment of reading and prayer, and even to debauchery, and the loss of their souls.[97]

In accordance with the advice of their illustrious countryman, the twelve bishops assembled at Cloveshove, in council with the King of Mercia and his nobles, forbade monks, and

[94] At this period there scarcely remained perhaps an acre of folc-land that had not been changed into boc-land, under various pretexts. — KEMBLE, *l. c.*

[95] "Ille autem qui laicus homo vel imperator, vel rex, vel aliquis, præfectorum vel comitum sæculari potestate fultus, sibi per violentiam rapiat monasterium de potestate episcopi, vel abbatis, vel abbatissæ, et incipiat ipsi vice abbatis regere et habere sub se monachos et pecuniam possidere, quæ fuit Christi sanguine comparata, talem hominem nominant antiqui patres raptorem et sacrilegum et homicidam pauperum et lupum diabolum intrantem in ovile Christi et maximo anathematis vinculo damnandum ante tribunal Christi." — *Epistola ad Cuthbertum*, p. 351, ed. Hussey. No. 70, ed. Jaffé.

[96] "Fertur quoque in parochiis vestris ebrietatis malum nimis adsuetum esse, ut non solum episcopi quidam non prohibeant, sed etiam ipsi nimis bibentes inebrientur, et alios porrectis poculis majoribus cogant ut inebrientur." — *Ibid.*, p. 353.

[97] "Supervacuam et Deo odibilem vestimentorum superstitionem prohibere; quia illa ornamenta vestium . . . latissimis clavis, vermium imaginibus clavata adventum Antichristi . . . præcurrunt; illius calliditate, per ministros suos introducere intra claustra monasteriorum fornicationem et luxuriam clavatorum juvenum, et fœda consortia, et tædium lectionis et orationis, et perditionem animarum." I give in these two latter notes the complete text as given by Spelman in his *Concilia*, p. 259, for the end of this letter, from the word *luxuriam*, is omitted in the editions of Serrarius and Giles. No editor has yet satisfactorily explained what were the *clavi* and *vermes*, the presence of which in the costume of the monks so scandalized Boniface.

especially nuns, to make any change in their dress, shoes, or headdress, which would assimilate their costume to that of the lay members of society.[98] The same Council forbade them to frequent the houses of secular persons, or to dwell in them;[99] it commanded the abbots and abbesses to neglect no means of preserving in their communities, and the schools attached to them, the love of study and reading, as the best preservative against the vanities and lusts of the world,[100] and to make of their monasteries an asylum for silence, study, prayer, and work.[101] It reproved and forbade the introduction of poets, minstrels, musicians, and clowns into the religious houses: the prolonged visits of secular persons, who were allowed to penetrate into and wander about the interior of the cloister; the prolonged and luxurious meals, mingled with buffooneries;[102] and especially that fatal leaning towards drunkenness, which led them not only themselves to drink to excess, but to force their lay companions to drink with them.[103]

The Council concludes this humbling enumeration of the evils which luxury and wealth had introduced into the cloister by a sort of treatise, equally marked by its eloquence and its good sense, against the false ideas which began to be general on the subject of alms, or, in other words, on the moral value of those gifts which constituted the daily increasing wealth of the monasteries. An echo of the generous protest of Bede in his letter to the Archbishop of York is to be found in it.[104] Alms, say the Fathers of the council, when joined to the appointed penance, help in obtaining from God a more prompt remission of sin, and bestowal of grace to prevent backsliding; to those who are not great sinners, it

[98] "Ut vestibus consuetis, juxta formam priorum . . . deinceps utantur; nec imitentur sæculares in vestitu crurum per fasciolas, nec per coculas in circumdatione capitis modo pallii laïcorum contra morem Ecclesiæ." — Cap. 28.

[99] Cap. 29.

[100] "Ut per familias suas lectionis studium indesinenter in plurimorum pectoribus versetur . . . coerceantur et exerceantur in scholis pueri dilectionem sacræ scientiæ." — Cap. 7.

[101] "Ut sint juxta vocabulum nominis sui, honesta silentium, quietorum atque pro Deo laborantium habitacula . . . orantium, legentium, Deumque laudantium." — Cap. 20.

[102] "Non sint ludicrarum artium receptacula . . . poetarum, citharistarum, musicorum, scurrarum. . . . Non habeant sæculares quique vagandi licentiam . . . per interiora monasterii domuncula." — Cap. 20.

[103] "Ut monasteriales sive ecclesiastici ebrietatis malum non sectentur. . . . Neque alios cogant intemperanter bibere. . . . Sint convivia neque deliciis vel scurrilitatibus mixta . . . et ut . . . potationibus ebriosorum more non serviant." — Cap. 21.

[104] See above, p. 565.

answers the purpose of insuring in heaven the reward due to their innocence and charity. But alms are not given in order that those who receive them may give themselves up to excess in eating and drinking.[105] Nor can any alms which are given with the intention of purchasing greater license in the future be of any efficacy to redeem even the smallest of sins. Alms are a work of pity. He who has pity in his soul must do his alms at his own expense, and not by robbing his neighbor. To offer to God gifts stained with violence and cruelty, is to irritate instead of appeasing divine justice. For the wise man has said, "To give alms at the expense of the poor, is like killing the son in presence of his father."[106] Even to suppose that Divine justice is venal, is a means of provoking it to strike severely and promptly. The common saying, that certain persons give daily offerings to God in order that they may give themselves up to sin with impunity, is therefore a great mistake. Those who foolishly imagine that the celestial Judge will balance their gifts against their continued crimes are blind indeed. It will be of no use to them to give their goods to God, so long as they give themselves to the devil.[107]

The Council insists at length upon the necessity of incessant preaching to all, that alms can never take the place of contrition, nor of the canonical penalties imposed for the expiation of sins. It energetically condemns those who hope to acquit themselves of their penances by the intervention of others who shall fast or sing psalms on their account — that is to say, the monks supported by their gifts. It is the flesh which has sinned which ought to be punished. To allow sinners to believe the contrary would be to ruin them by corrupt adulation. For if a man could redeem his faults by money, and satisfy the justice of God by the deeds of another, then justice would indeed be venal, and the rich would be saved more easily than the poor, in defiance of the

[105] "Non sit quoque eleemosyna illius ad hoc esurienti data, ut se ipsum comessationibus ebrietatibusque illicitis supra modum ingurgitet." — Cap. 26.

[106] "Eleemosyna quæ fit ex substantia pauperum, quasi qui mactat filium in conspectu patris sui." — Eccl. xxxiv. 24.

[107] "Non ad hoc sine dubio dandæ, ut quælibet vel minima saltem peccata eo licentius cuiquam agere liceat, quo vel ipse vel alius quilibet pro eo eleemosynas faciat. . . . Ne per hoc quod venalem Dei justitiam ponat, ab eadem non solum acrius, sed citius juxta merita istius judicetur. Non sint, ut generaliter dicatur, eleemosynæ ad hoc datæ. . . . Frustra suas tantum eleemosynas et non intermixta flagitia supernum pensare judicem cæco suo libitu volunt et optant . . . sua Deo dare videntur, sed se ipsos diabolo per flagitia dare non dubitantur." — Cap. 26.

express words of Scripture. Let no man deceive himself thus, for God deceives no man; and, as has been said by His Apostle, we shall all appear on the same level before the tribunal of Christ.[108]

It is thus evident that the chiefs of the Anglo-Saxon Church, who all came from the monastic order, were the first to protest against false interpretations and evil applications of the doctrine of alms. They protested at the same moment, and before the event, against the calumnies and exaggerations heaped by an unjust and ungrateful posterity upon the avarice and greed of ecclesiastical corporations and the hypocrisies and evil influence of the cloister.

But the abuses which their watchful and paternal authority thus endeavored to assail and repress, were without one single exception to be attributed to the relaxation of rule which too much and too sudden wealth had introduced into the monasteries.

And all was not yet said. For this wealth brought with it other dangers besides that of internal laxity. It awakened universal covetousness. Sometimes the natural heirs of the lawful abbot of a monastery came after his death and violently seized the monastic lands, under pretence that the abbey had been the property of the deceased, and that they had a right to its inheritance, on the sole condition of supporting the monks.[109] Sometimes kings and princes installed themselves in a great monastery as in a place of rest and recreation, with all their surroundings, their train of officials, huntsmen, footmen, and grooms, who, along with horses, hawks, and dogs, had to be lodged, fed, and provided with vehicles, as is proved by the charters, which, while exempting certain monasteries from this charge, prove how habitual and burdensome it had become.[110] Again there were other kings still more exacting and formidable, who revoked the

[108] "Ipsa illius caro quæ illicita ac nefanda contraxit desideria, ipsam hic in præsenti punire juxta modum reatus sui debet. . . . De hoc prolixius ideo disputandum est, quia nuper quidam dives, petens reconciliationem pro magno suo facinore . . . quod superni judicis quotidie justitiam inter se quasi venalem statuere. . . . Antequam plures vestra errabunda adulatione implicantur et deducantur ad perniciem." — Cap. 27.

[109] Something of a similar character has been seen in the Irish monasteries of the family of St. Columbkill, where there were two lines of abbots, the one secular and hereditary, the other ecclesiastical and according to the rule. See p. 119.

[110] "Pastus regum et principum, ducum et præfectorum, exactorum, equorum et falconum, accipitrum et canum . . . et omnes difficultates regalis vel sæcularis servitii." — *Codex Diplom.*, n. 288.

gifts made by their predecessors, and reclaimed the lands given by them; setting forth their pretensions and the counter-plea of the monks before the Witenagemot, the decisions of which were not always in conformity with the rights of the weak. The nobles and great personages, too, often followed the example of the kings — they reclaimed the lands given to the monasteries by their fathers, or seized upon others which lay at hand, leaving traces of their depredations in the many acts which enforce restitution more or less tardy, but at the same time proving that violence and rapacity had too often the advantage over the pious munificence of former benefactors.

Sometimes the prelates themselves abused their authority by making over to their relatives a portion of the conventual patrimony. In short, the local and intestinal wars which were so frequent at this period were waged specially at the expense of the monastic lands,[111] which were always the best cultivated and the most populous, and consequently offered a richer and more attractive prey to the spoiler. This fact explains the singular fluctuations of prosperity to which the monasteries were subject, though their perseverance, their laborious and economical system, their paternal care of the agricultural population, were almost always sufficient to restore their impaired fortunes. The twice-repeated accusation of St. Boniface, when, in his letters to King Ethelbald and the Archbishop of Canterbury, he distinguishes England as the country in which the monks were subjected to the harshest bondage, on account of the exactions and forced labor required from them by the royal officials for public buildings, is much less comprehensible. He speaks of these oppressions as of a novelty unknown under the ancient kings, and in the other countries of Christendom; no trace of them is to be found in contemporary documents; but the evidence of the great Boniface, so attentive an observer of everything that concerned the Church in his native country, is too grave to be set altogether aside.[112]

[111] All these causes of the ruin or deterioration of monastic property are well explained by Lingard, *Antiquities*, vol. i. pp. 226 and 253–256.

[112] "Dicitur quod præfecti et comites tui majorem violentiam et servitutem monachis et sacerdotibus irrogent, quam cæteri ante Christiani reges fecissent." — *Epist. ad Ethelbaldum*, No. 59. "De violenta quoque monachorum servitute, operibus et ædificiis regalibus, quæ in toto mundo Christianorum non auditur facta, nisi tantum in genere Anglorum: quod sacerdotibus Dei non tacendum nec consentiendum est, quod inauditum malum est præteritis seculis." — *Epist. ad Cuthbertum*, No. 70, ed. Jaffé.

Property has been in England, as elsewhere, the condition and guarantee of freedom for the Church as well as for corporations and individuals. But the burdens, the abuses, the excesses, the privileges which property brings with it, have been in England more than anywhere else, and at all periods, the great danger of the Church, and it is upon this rock that the monastic ark has perished, drawing with it in its shipwreck the whole Catholic Church of England. In this lies a terrible mystery, a problem of which our fathers did not sufficiently understand the gravity and difficulty. To solve it would have demanded from the heads of the Church, and especially of the religious orders, an amount of discernment, moderation, and prudence, easier to dream of than to find. But the reaction which raised up the holy founders of mendicant orders, and which always burns in some souls, enamoured of the primitive but transitory simplicity of the great cenobitical foundations, is but too easily imaginable. "My brethren," said the greatest monk of our century, preaching at the inauguration of one of his new establishments — "my brethren, if I knew that our house would grow rich, even by your savings, I should rise to-night and set fire to it, at its four corners."

V.

Fatal wealth! let us repeat with this great man — fatal wealth, the daughter of charity, of faith, of a generous and spontaneous virtue, but the mother of covetousness, envy, robbery, and ruin! Scarcely a century had run since the modest and sober beginning of the Church and monastic order in England — and already the honorable and undisputed voices of saints, such as Boniface and Bede, are raised to indicate the danger, though without perceiving its cause. The leprosy was already there. In the fulness of youth, at the height of health, the germ of mortality appeared. The day was to come when the poisonous fruit should be gathered by greedy and bloody hands. The day was to come when a monster, who resembled at once Caligula and Heliogabalus, a Henry VIII., with his cowardly courtiers and debased people, should arm himself with the pretext of the exorbitant wealth of religious corporations in order to annihilate, and drown in blood and slavery, the work of Augustin, Wilfrid, and Bede.

I think I have a right to despise the insinuations of those

who have dared to accuse me of desiring to absolve or mitigate the crime of those sacrilegious bandits — those cowardly spoilers who, in England as in all the rest of Europe, have made a prey of the patrimony of the Church. But who will not regret with me that the Church, which alone had the necessary discernment and authority, should not herself have set limits, at a suitable moment, to the unlimited increase of wealth in the monastic corporations? The increase was lawful, natural, often even involuntary, but dangerous and exorbitant. The Church could and ought to have understood this. The Church, with her supernatural insight, her divine authority, her maternal omnipotence, could and ought to have forestalled the danger by warning prohibitions, by a just division of the superfluities of great orders and rich communities, either to the advantage of the poor, of public beneficence, of the inferior and neglected clergy, or any other social service or necessity.

No man can say from what evils and crimes the world might have been spared if the Church, which was destined to be the chief victim, had been beforehand with the spoilers; had baffled their hatred and disarmed their treachery by taking from them this specious pretext; arresting with a prudent and steady hand the rising tide of ecclesiastical wealth, and saying, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no farther; and here shall thy proud waves be stayed." [113]

Disinterestedness is, above all others, the virtue of a priest; voluntary poverty has always been the unfailing source of the influence and power of monks. In this they have always been able — they will always be able — to renew and revive their strength. It was this thought that comforted the great soul of Mabillon, the most illustrious of modern Benedictines, in those generous lamentations which dropped from his pen after the narrative of the conquest of England by the monks, and which may still be applied to so many other Catholic countries which the scythe of Vandalism had not yet assailed in his day: —

"Ah! if Gregory or Augustin could but live again, and see these lands to-day! What a sad glance would they throw upon the fruits of their wasted labors, the scattered stones of the sanctuary, the house of prayer changed into the abode of desolation! It is not that we weep the lost wealth of the Church; it is not our sacked and overthrown

[113] Jon xxxviii. 11.

monasteries that the Benedictines regret. No; but we groan over the fate of our brethren, rent from the bosom of the Catholic Church and rooted in heresy. God grant that we might buy their return by the price of all that might once have been ours. What would not the Church give, what would not our order sacrifice, to gain the souls of our brethren, and enrich ourselves in the poverty of Christ!" [114]

It was from the Benedictine ranks, purified by toil and a frugal life, or from the bosom of other orders given by God to the Church to defend and console her, that the new missionaries came who, in the age of Mabillon, returned upon English soil, a thousand years after the companions of Augustin and the disciples of Columba. Far from being received, as their predecessors had been by the Anglo-Saxon pagans, with magnanimous and intelligent tolerance, they had nothing to expect of the Protestant English but martyrdom, often preceded by the horrors of a lengthened captivity, and by tortures unknown to savages. Nevertheless, daily some monk crossed the sea, and landed disguised and by night upon the soil where Augustin and the monks of Mont Cœlius had planted in broad day the cross of Jesus Christ, now banished and denied by Christian England. Not far from the old wasted and confiscated monasteries, he began, at the risk of his life, the clandestine practice of that worship which the envoys of Gregory the Great had openly celebrated; he distributed the bread of life and truth to some sheep of the little flock which had survived persecutions more atrocious and prolonged than those of Decius or Diocletian, to keep and transmit to our free and happier days the yet warm ashes of the truth. They came from France, they came from Belgium, Italy, and even from Spain, to gather these bloody laurels, striving for them with exiles of the English race. They were discovered, questioned, tortured, and then murdered, with all the refinements of infernal cruelty. Among many others, let us name a Spaniard, George

A Spanish Benedictine martyred by

[114] "Ah! si modo in illas terras redivivi venirent Gregorius et Augustinus! quibus oculis intuerentur laborum suorum fructus dissipatos, dispersos lapides sanctuarii, et domos orationis factas domos desolationis! Neque vero lugemus amissas illic Ecclesiæ amplissimas opes . . . neque nos Benedictini jam dolemus monasteria nostra direpta et eversa; sed ingemiscimus, quod fratres nostros a gremio Ecclesiæ Catholicæ avulsos et in schismate obfirmatos videamus. Utinam cessione omnium rerum, olim nostrarum, eos ad nos redituros comparare nobis liceret! Quidni Ecclesia, quidni ordo noster ultro cederet bonis, olim suis, ad lucrandos fratres, cum Christus propter nos egenus factus sit, ut nos ejus inopia ditaremur!" — *Ann. Bened.*, l. ix. c. 44.

Gervaise, who, captured and questioned by the judges of Mary Stuart's miserable son upon his profession, answered, "I am a Benedictine monk, of that order which of old converted England to the Christian faith." He renewed this profession at the foot of the gibbet on which he was hung, and from which he was taken down before he had yielded his last breath that his side might be opened, his heart torn out, and his feet cut off, in order to teach foreign monks who should venture to intrude on English soil, what sufferings should prevent their return to their native country.[115] "But," says the Spanish Benedictine who has added this tale to the glorious annals of his order, "what heart among us does not feel itself inspired by this example to suffer for Christ, and to repeat the sacred text, 'How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of those who carry good tidings, who publish peace.' Besides," continues the Castilian annalist, "if there is any undertaking which belongs above others to the order of St. Benedict, it is the mission to England, for our fathers conquered that island to Christ by their preaching and by their blood. They possessed there a crowd of monasteries, illustrious among the most illustrious in Europe. When generals and captains in arms desire to animate their soldiers for the battle, they remind them of their past exploits, of their victories, of the glory of their nation, the safety and honor of their wives and children. It seems to me that our father Benedict, from the height of heaven, speaks thus to his monks. He reminds them that England was brought within the pale of the Church by St. Gregory and the monk-apostles of that island. He commands the monks of all his congregations to return there for the honor of religion, that the faith planted by the hands of his sons may not be brought to nothing; not to forget how many souls sigh after religious life; and to carry help to our mother, the holy Church, so cruelly persecuted by heresy."[116] the English in 1608.

But let us turn our saddened eyes away from that terrible future, so different, and still so distant, from the time of which we have just spoken. Notwithstanding the dangers

[115] "Como amenaçando a los monges de España que no passen a aquella isla; por que ellos padeceran los mismos tormentos y no tendran pies para bolver a su tierra." — YEPES, *Coronica General de S. Benito*, 1609, vol. i. p. 448.

[116] YEPES, *l. c.*

and abuses which, in the interests of truth, must be acknowledged to have existed from the beginning of monastic missions, long centuries of faith and fervor, of union with the Roman Church and Catholic Christendom, succeeded the beautiful beginning of converted England. Abundant harvests were produced during these centuries in the furrows ploughed by the disciples of Augustin and Bede. Before it settled into the great nation which the world admires and envies, furnished with the noblest and wisest institutions that men have ever known, with a literature rich in unrivalled genius, and power greater than that of ancient Rome, England had to become the great base of operation for the spiritual conquests of the Papacy, the great centre of Christian missions. By her the Roman Church moved, enlightened, and subdued the centre and north of Europe; and it was by her means that the German and Scandinavian peoples, still plunged in the darkness of heathenism, were brought into the Christian faith.

The first-fruits of the monastic seed sown by the hand of the great monk Gregory in the bosom of the Anglo-Saxon race, was the great apostle and martyr Winifred, whose Latin name, *Bonifacius*, the benefactor, so exactly expressed his glorious career. It was he who was chosen by God to carry the light of truth, the flame of love, the spirit of martyrdom, into the cradle of his ancestors, the depths of those German forests, happily impenetrable by the enslaved Romans, from whence came the freedom, thought, and life of Catholic nations, and with these the Christian civilization of two worlds.

BOOK XV.

THE ANGLO-SAXON NUNS.

" Quali colombe dal disio chiamate
Con l'ali aperte e ferme al dolce nido
Volan, per l'aer dal voler portate."
DANTE, *Inferno*, c. 5.

" Indi, como orologio che ne chiami
Nell' ora che la sposa di Dio surge
A mattinar lo sposo, perchè l'ami,
Che l'una parte e l'altra tira ed urge
Tin tin sonando con sì dolce nota
Che 'l ben disposto spirto d'amor turge;
Così vid' io la gloriosa ruota
Moversi e render voce a voce in tempra
Ed in dolezza ch' esser non può nota
Se non colà dove 'l gioir s'insempra."
Paradiso, c. 10.

" Come, pensive nun, devout and pure,
Sober, steadfast, and demure."
MILTON, *Penseroso*.

I.

Convents of women as numerous and important as the monasteries of men. — Important position of women among the Teutonic races. — Contrast with the Romans of the Empire. — Among the Anglo-Saxons, descendants of the Cimbri, the influence of women even greater and happier than in other nations. — Importance of dynastic alliances. — Anglo-Saxon queens. The Teutonic barbarians, though less corrupt than the Romans, nevertheless required an immense effort of the Christian apostles to conquer their sensual excesses. — The debt owed by women to Christianity. — The Church could only emancipate women by the ideal of Christian virginity. — This virginity nowhere more honored than among the Anglo-Saxons. — Influence and authority of abbesses. They appear in the national councils. — Ceremonial of the solemn benediction of a nun.

II.

Anglo-Saxon queens and princesses in the cloister. — The first nuns trained in France, at Faremoutier, Jouarre, and Chelles. — Saint Botulph and the two East Anglian princesses at Chelles.

Each dynasty of the Heptarchy supplies its share of virgins, wives, and widows.

The Northumbrian nuns already well known, except Bega. — Legend of this princess, an Irishwoman by birth. — Perpetual confusion of history and tradition.

The *Ascings*, or princesses of the Kentish dynasty. — Ethelburga, Queen of Northumbria, afterwards foundress of Lyminge. — Her sister Eadburga, and her niece Eanswida, foundress of Folkestone. — The legend of Domneva and her brothers. — The hind's run in the Isle of Thanet. — Great popularity of St. Mildred. — Legend of the box on the ear. — Mildred's sisters. — Milburga and the dead child.

The Mercian princesses. — The race of the cruel Penda furnished the greatest number of saints and nuns. — Three of his daughters nuns, and four of his granddaughters saints.

The *Uffings* of East Anglia. — The three daughters of King Anna who fell in battle. — Withburga and her community fed on hind's milk. — Three generations of saints of the race of Odin at Ely, which had for its three first abbesses a Queen of Northumbria, a Queen of Kent, and a Queen of Mercia. — Wereburga, the fourth sainted Abbess of Ely, and the shepherd of Weedon.

Nuns of the race of Cerdic in Wessex; the wife and sisters of King Ina. — St. Cuthburga, foundress of Winbourne. — The monastery of Frideswida, a West Saxon princess, is the cradle of the University of Oxford: the kiss of the leper.

III.

Literary, biblical, and classical studies among the Anglo-Saxon nuns — chiefly at Barking, under Abbess Hildelida. St. Aldhelm addresses to them his *Eulogy of Virginity;* his letters to other nuns. — Winbourne, another centre of intellectual activity. — Abbess Tetta and her five hundred nuns; the novices dance on the tomb of their mistress.

IV.

Winbourne, a double monastery. — Origin of these singular institutions. — They flourished chiefly in the Irish colonies in Gaul: from thence introduced into England. — A monastery of men joined to every great abbey of women, and always governed by the abbess. — Interdicted by Archbishop Theodore. — The double monasteries disappeared after the Danish invasion; resemblance to the boys' schools managed by young girls in the United States. — In the seventh and eighth centuries no disorders are remarked in them except at Coldingham. — What were the abuses of the Anglo-Saxon cloisters. — Splendor of dress; attempts upon the modesty of the nuns foreseen and punished by Anglo-Saxon legislation. — Decrees of Archbishop Theodore and Egbert against the criminal relations of the clergy with nuns; their importance should not be exaggerated.

V.

The letters of St. Boniface contain the surest accounts of the state of souls in the Anglo-Saxon cloisters. — All there was not calm and happiness. — Tender and impassioned character of the letters addressed by the nuns to Boniface and his companions. — The not less affectionate answers of the missionaries. — The three Buggas and the two Eadburgas. — Earnest desire to make pilgrimages to Rome. — Grievances of the Abbess Eangytha and her daughter. — How St. Lioba became connected with St. Boniface. — Other letters written to the saint by his friends: Cena, Egburga. — Lamentation of a nun for the absence of her brother.

VI.

Excesses of feeling vanish before death, but death itself does not put an end to the sweet friendships of the cloister. — St. Galla. — Hilda and her friend; Ethelburga and her friend; the daughters of Earl Puch. — Visions of light. — The daughter of the King of Kent and the lay sister at Faremoutier. — The shining shroud at Barking; the extinguished lamp.

VII.

History has preserved only these names, but many others have disappeared after glorifying the Church and their country. — Masculine character of these Anglo-Saxon nuns: their monastic ideal unites the types of man, woman, and child.

Conclusion. — The whole ancient Catholic world has perished except the army of sacrifice. — Number and endurance of contemporary vocations.

I.

"Hark how I'll bribe you: . . .
Ay, with such gifts that heaven shall share with you;
. . . With true prayers
That shall be up at heaven and enter there
Ere sunrise — prayers from preserved souls,
From fasting maids, whose minds are dedicate
To nothing temporal."

SHAKESPEARE, *Measure for Measure.*

I HAD supposed my task at an end; but I hear the sound as of a choir of sweet and pure voices which seem to reproach me for having left in the shade one side of the great edifice which I have undertaken to reconstruct in thought. These voices have no plaintive sound. But they are full of a soft and overpowering harmony which has not been sufficiently celebrated before men. The souls whose sentiments they utter do not complain of being forgotten; it is their chosen condition and desire. They have made greater sacrifices than that of a place in the memory of men. Strength, veiled

by gentleness, is in their very breath. Their appearance in history is characterized by something clear and firm, sober yet animated, as well as by that sacrifice of life in its flower, which is of all things in the world the most touching. These are the daughters of the Anglo-Saxon kings and lords, and with them, a true nation of virgins, voluntary prisoners of the love of God,[1] and consecrated to monastic life in cloisters which rival in number and influence the monasteries of men, the most important centres of Christian life.

We have already seen how, outside their communities, and mingled in the current of the historical events of their time, several of those vigorous women, those wise virgins and spiritual warriors, have left their trace in the history of their country. But such isolated figures do not suffice for an attentive study of the state of souls and things in times so distant. Account must be made of other personages of the same order, and above all as much as is possible of the feminine army which is arrayed by the side of those queens and princesses. The crowd must be penetrated in any attempt to trace this fruitful and powerful branch of the monastic family, and in default of exact and precise details, which are rarely to be found, an effort, at least, must be made to seize the salient points, and to bring out such features of their life as may touch or enlighten posterity.

And, in the first place, to give any exact representation of the Anglo-Saxon nuns as they appeared in their own consciousness and to the eyes of their countrymen, the important part played by women among the Teutonic races must be borne in mind. Nothing had more astonished the Romans than the austere chastity of the German women;[2] the religious respect of the men for the partners of their labors and dangers, in peace as well as in war; and the almost divine honors with which they surrounded the priestesses or prophetesses, who sometimes presided at their religious rites, and sometimes led them to combat against the violators of the national soil.[3] When the

Great part played by women among the Teutonic races.

[1] "That voluntary prison into which they threw themselves for the love of God." — Bossuet, *Exorde du Sermon sur Jesus Christ comme Sujet de Scandale.*

[2] "Severa illic matrimonia: nec ullam morum partem magis laudaveris. . . . Ne se mulier extra virtutum cogitationes, extraque bellorum casus putet, ipsis incipientis matrimonii auspiciis admonetur, venire se laborum periculorumque sociam, idem in pace, idem in prælio passuram ausuramque. . . . Paucissima in tam numerosa gente adulteria." — Tacit., *De Mor. German.*, c. 18, 19.

[3] *Ibid.*, c. 8. Cf. Cæsar, *De Bell. Gall.*, i. 50, 51.

Roman world, undermined by corruption and imperial despotism, fell to pieces like the arch of a *cloaca*, there is no better indication of the difference between the debased subjects of the empire and their conquerors, than that sanctity of conjugal and domestic ties, that energetic family feeling, that worship of pure blood, which are founded upon the dignity of woman, and respect for her modesty, no less than upon the proud independence of man and the consciousness of personal dignity. It is by this special quality that the barbarians showed themselves worthy of instilling a new life into the West, and becoming the forerunners of the new and Christian nations to which we all owe our birth.

Especially among the Anglo-Saxon descendants of the Cimbri.

Who does not recall those Cimbri whom Marius had so much trouble in conquering, and whose women rivalled the men in boldness and heroism? Those women, who had followed their husbands to the war, gave to the Romans a lesson in modesty and greatness of soul of which the future tools of the tyrants and the Cæsars were not worthy. They would surrender only on the promise of the consul that their honor should be protected, and that they should be given as slaves to the vestals, thus putting themselves under the protection of those whom they believed virgins and priestesses. The great beginner of democratic Dictatorship refused: upon which they killed themselves and their children, generously preferring death to shame.[4] The Anglo-Saxons came from the same districts bathed by the waters of the Northern Sea, which had been inhabited by the Cimbri,[5] and showed themselves worthy of descent from them, as much by the irresistible onslaught of their warriors, as by the indisputable power of their women. No trace of the old Roman spirit which put a wife *in manu*, in the hand of her husband, that is to say, under his feet, is to be found among them. Woman is a person and not a thing. She lives, she speaks, she acts for herself, guaranteed against the least outrage by severe penalties, and protected by universal respect. She inherits, she disposes of her possessions — sometimes even she deliberates, she fights, she governs, like the most proud and powerful of

[4] Florus, l. iii. c. 3.

[5] "Proximi Oceano Cimbri tenent, parva nunc civitas, sed gloria ingens." — *De Moribus German.*, c. 37. Jutland, Schleswig, and Holstein, from whence came the Jutes, Angles, and Saxons, bore the name of the Cimbric Chersonese.

men.[6] The influence of women has been nowhere more effectual, more fully recognized, or more enduring than among the Anglo-Saxons, and nowhere was it more legitimate or more happy.

From the beginning of Christianity, women everywhere became, as has been seen at every page of this narrative, the active and persevering, as well as daring and unwearied assistants of the Christian apostles; and when the conversion of the race was complete, no Fredigond appeared, as among the Gallo-Franks, to renew the evil behavior of the Roman empresses. If there existed among these queens and princesses certain violent and cruel souls, there was not one who could be accused of loose morals or immodest inclinations. The national legend is here in perfect accord with the monastic, and popular tradition with history. From the beautiful Rowena, sister of the first conqueror Hengist, to the famous Countess Godiva — from the daughter of Ethelbert, who carried the faith into Northumbria, to the wife of Ina, who procured the conversion of her husband — we encounter, with few exceptions, only attractive and generous figures, in whom beauty and modesty meet together, and the gentleness natural to woman is allied with an energy which reaches heroism.

From this fact arises the extreme importance attached by the Anglo-Saxons to matrimonial alliances which united among themselves the various sovereign dynasties, and the nations or tribes whose local independence and glorious recollections were personified by them. These unions, by renewing periodically the ties of a common nationality, gave to the princesses of the race of Odin the office of mediatrix and peacemaker to a degree which justifies the touching surname given to woman in the primitive poetry of the Anglo-Saxons, where she is described as *freodowebbe*, she who weaves the links of peace.[7]

Thence, too, arose the great position held by the queens in all the states of the Anglo-Saxon confederation. Possessing a court, legal jurisdiction, and territorial revenue on her

[6] In this respect there was no difference between the victors and the vanquished. Women had always occupied an important place among the Britons, and often reigned and fought at their head; witness Boadicea immortalized by Tacitus. Free women, married and possessing five acres of land, voted in the public assemblies of the *clans* or tribes of Britain. — *Ancient Laws of Cambria* — ap. PALGRAVE and LAPPENBERG.

[7] *Beowulf*, verse 3880.

own account,[8] surrounded with the same homage, sometimes invested with the same rights and authority as the sovereign, his wife took her place by his side in the political and religious assemblies, and her signature appeared in acts of foundation, in the decrees of the councils and in the charters, sometimes followed by those of the king's sisters, or other princesses of the royal house. Sometimes these royal ladies, associated, as they were among the Teutons of whom Tacitus speaks, in all their husbands' cares, labors, and dangers, gave all their efforts, like Ermenilda of Mercia, to the conversion of a still heathen kingdom;[9] sometimes, like Sexburga in Wessex, they exercised the regency with full royal authority, and almost manly vigor.[10] There is no instance of a woman reigning alone by hereditary right or by election. But the mysterious act which ended the days of the Northumbrian Osthryda,[11] Queen of the Mercians, reminds us that we are in the country where Mary Stuart, the first who ever lost a crowned head on a scaffold, was to prove that women were there destined to all the greatness and all the calamities of supreme power.

At the same time it would be a strange delusion to suppose that the traditional respect shown by the Teutonic races to woman, or to certain women, was sufficiently strong or universal to restrain all the excesses of the most formidable passion and most imperious instinct of fallen humanity, among the Anglo-Saxons. Of all the victories of Christianity there is none more salutary and more necessary, and at the same time none more hardly and painfully won, than that which it has gained, gained alone and everywhere, though with a daily renewed struggle, over the unregulated inclinations which stain and poison the fountains of life. Its divinity here shows itself by a triumph which no rival philosophy,

[8] Lappenberg, vol. i. p. 564.

[9] See above, p. 340.

[10] Sexburga, widow of the King of Wessex, Kinewalk, was made Queen-Regent by her husband at his death in 673. "Nec decrat mulieri spiritus ad obeunda regni munia. Ipsa novos exercitus moliri, veteres tenere in officio, ipsa subjectos clementer moderari, hostibus minaciter infremere, prorsus omnia facere, ut nihil præter sexum discerneres. Verumtamen plus quam femineos animos anhelantem vita destituit, vix annua potestate perfunctam." — Guill. Malmesb., i. 32; Ric. Cirenc., ii. 40.

[11] "A suis, id est Merciorum primatibus, interempta." — Bede, v. 24. "Crudeliter necaverunt." — Matth. Westmonast., ad. ann. 696. See in pp. 299, 414, 420, what we have said of her, and her devotion to her uncle, St. Oswald, and her husband Ethelred, the friend of Wilfrid, who abdicated to become a monk at Bardeney.

no adverse doctrine, has ever equalled, or will ever aspire to equal. No doubt the barbarians, according to the testimony of the Fathers, were more chaste than the Romans of the Empire. To succeed in introducing a respect for modesty and priestly celibacy in the midst of the corruptions of imperial Rome — to raise in the midst of the universal debasement the type of virginity consecrated to God — religion needed an amount of strength, majesty, and constancy, which the terrible wrestle maintained for three centuries could alone have given to it.

Neither was it a brief or easy enterprise to offer and place the yoke of continence upon the shoulders of a barbarous race, in proportion as they seized their prey, and established themselves as masters of the future. It was a glorious and painful task to struggle day by day in that terrible confusion, in the desperate obscurity of the tempest, against an innumerable band of victors, inflamed by all the lusts of strength and conquest, and poisoned even by contact with their victims. The struggle was long, glorious, difficult, and triumphant. It was no longer the unnatural debauchery and monstrous orgies of the Roman empire which had to be denounced; but there remained the vile and gross inclinations, the brutally disordered appetites of human and savage nature. There are excesses and crimes which, though not set forth in the pages of Petronius and Suetonius, though seen only in glimpses through the articles of a penitentiary, the canons of a council, the mutilated text of a legend or chronicle, reveal no less gulfs of shame and sorrow. The Teutons were more respectful than the Orientals or Romans to those women whom they considered their own equals or superiors; but who shall say what was the fate of those of inferior condition, and especially of the unfortunates hidden in the dreary darkness of slavery or serfdom? Who shall say what were the sublime and forever unknown efforts which were made by the priests of a God of purity to wrest so many young captives, so many slave or serf girls, from the harems of princes, from the pitiless passion of victorious warriors, and the tyrannical caprices of their masters? God alone knows these efforts, God alone has rewarded them. Attentive and sincere history can but note the general result, which was immense and glorious.

Christian civilization has triumphed, and its triumph rests, above all, upon respect for the wife, virgin, and mother —

that transfigured woman of whom the mother of God has become the type and guardian in Christian nations.[12]

It is Christianity which has armed woman with her own weakness, and made of it her strength — a strength more august and respected than any other: "when I am weak, then am I strong." The Christian religion has been the true country of woman; the only one in which she has found her true freedom, her true destiny, coming out of Egyptian bondage, escaping from paganism, from savage life, or from the still more shameful debasement of civilized depravity. This also, and this alone, could give a free field to all the virtues which are characteristically her own, those which make her not only equal, but often superior to man — generosity, the heroism of patience and self-devotion, suffering accepted for the help of others, victory over selfishness, and the sacrifice of pride to love. This work of atonement and salvation, which is the only true emancipation of woman, and, by her, of virtue and the soul, has been the work of the Church with the aid of the Teutonic race.

And the Church has done this work only by elevating above and beyond the level of virtue, which women in general can reach, that ideal of moral virtue and beauty which can be realized only by virginity consecrated to God. She has raised this ideal above the virtues most admired and most worthy to be admired among the ancient nations, even among the Jews, where fruitfulness was a woman's supreme glory. She has given embodiment, discipline, law, a soul, an inextinguishable light, to the confused notions spread throughout antiquity; she has transformed into a splendid and immortal army those little groups of vestals, sibyls, and Druidesses, which were scattered through the heathen world. Respect for modesty, which among the most generous nations was the privilege of a small and chosen number, she has brought to be the inviolable inheritance of every human creature: at the same time she has made the privileged state of virginity consecrated to God to be the common dowry of Christendom, the lawful and supreme ambition of the poorest child of the people, as well as of the daughter of kings; and for eighteen centuries she has drawn from all countries and conditions, myriads of chaste and radiant creatures, who have rushed to her altars, bringing their heart and life to God who became man in order to redeem them.

[12] See *L'Histoire de Sainte Elisabeth*, Introduction, pp. 76, 134.

No people honors virginity more than the Anglo-Saxons.

Our Anglo-Saxons were neither the last nor the least instruments of this glorious transformation. Amid all the overflowings of their natural intemperance, they had preserved the instinct and a sense of the necessity of veneration for things above: they could, at least, honor the virtues which they would not or could not practise. The spectator stands amazed at the crowd of neophytes of both sexes who came from all the races of the Heptarchy, to vow themselves to perpetual continence. None of the new Christian nations seem to have furnished so great a number; and among none does Christian virginity seem to have exercised so prompt and so supreme an influence. The young Anglo-Saxon women who gave themselves to God, though they were initiated into the life of the cloister in the Gallo-Frankish monasteries, which had the advantage of being sooner established than those of England, had to return to their own island to realize their own value in the eyes of their countrymen.

The Anglo-Saxon conquerors regarded with tender and astonished respect the noble daughters of their race, who appeared to them surrounded by an unknown, a supernatural grandeur, and power at once human and divine — victorious over all the passions, all the weaknesses and lusts, of which victory had but developed the germs. This respect soon became apparent in the national laws, which agreed in placing under the safeguard of severe penalties the honor and freedom of those upon whom Anglo-Saxon legislation bestowed the title of *brides of the Lord* and *spouses of God*.[13]

Influence and authority of the abbesses.

When one of these holy maidens found herself invested, by the choice of her companions, or the nomination of a bishop, with the right of governing and representing a numerous community of her companions, the chiefs and people of the Heptarchy accorded her, without hesitation, all the liberties and attributes of the most elevated rank. The abbesses, as we have seen by the example of Hilda, Ebba, and Elfleda, had soon an influence and authority which rivalled that of the most venerated bishops and abbots. They had often the retinue and state of princesses, especially when they came of royal blood. They treated with kings, bishops, and the greatest lords on terms of perfect equality; and as the rule of the cloister does not seem to have existed for them, they are to be seen going

[13] "*Godes bryde.*" — THORPE'S *Ancient Laws of England*, vol. ii. pp. 188, 206, 207.

where they please,[14] present at all great religious and national solemnities, at the dedication of churches, and even, like the queens, taking part in the deliberations of the national assemblies, and affixing their signatures to the charters therein granted. The twenty-third article of the famous law or *dooms* of Ina sets, in certain points, not only abbots, but abbesses, on the same level with kings and the greatest personages of the country.[15] In the Council of Beccancelde, held in 694 by the bishop and king of Kent, the signatures of five abbesses appear in the midst of those of the bishops, affixed to decrees intended to guarantee the inviolability of the property and freedom of the Church.[16]

How were the monasteries filled whose superiors occupied so elevated a rank in the spiritual and temporal hierarchy of the Anglo-Saxons, and what was their life? This question it will be both important and difficult to answer.

No contemporary writer has left us a complete authentic picture of the interior of the great Anglo-Saxon communities. No indisputable document is in existence which brings before us the system of rules and customs followed by thousands of nuns who wore the black robe and veil of the spouses of the Lord. We are reduced to the scanty incidents which are to

[14] The reader may remember the meeting appointed by the Abbess Elfleda of Whitby with St. Cuthbert at Coquet Island, and also the festival to which she invited the same bishop on the dedication of a church built on one of her estates. See pp. 407, 477.

[15] "Si homo alienigena occidatur, habeat rex duas partes *were* suæ et terciam partem habeant filii vel parentes sui. Si parentes non habeat, dimidiam habeat rex, dimidiam consocii. Si autem abbas *vel abbatissa* intersit, dividant eodem modo cum rege." — THORPE'S *Ancient Laws and Institutes of England*, pp. 471–500, fol. ed.

[16] This is the council mentioned above, p. 314, and which is also known under the names of Bapchild and Beckenham: the king who presided at it, Withred, reigned thirty-three years. The decrees were given by the votes of the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishop of Rochester, "cum abbatibus, *abbatissis*, presbyteris, diaconibus, ducibus, et satrapis." — WILKINS, *Concilia*, i. p. 47. In Coletti, vol. viii. p. 79, there are five signatures of abbesses: —

Signum manus: Mildredæ, abbatissæ.
" " Etheldridæ, abbatissæ.
" " Aetæ, abbatissæ.
" " Wilnodæ, abbatissæ.
" " Hereswidæ, abbatissæ.

The other signatures are those of the king and queen Werburga for their infant son, afterwards of two princes or lay lords, of the archbishop, the two bishops, and seven priests; there are no abbots. Kemble, vol. ii. p. 198, maintains that all signatures of women, other than queens, which are found attached to certain rare charters, must be those of abbesses summoned to attend assemblies where there might be question of the interests of their communities. Lingard (vol. i. p. 239) is more sceptical on this subject.

be found in the history of the time, in that of the reigning families from which came most of the principal abbesses, and specially from the biographies of the most holy or most celebrated among these illustrious women. But by contrasting these incidents with those which reveal to us the origin and result of similar vocations among all the other Christian nations, by lighting them up with the light which shines in history, from the commencement of Christianity, we arrive at a point of comprehension perhaps satisfactory enough, but with which at least we must content ourselves.

In the absence of any existing record of their special rules and customs, the liturgical remains of the Anglo-Saxon Church reveal to us the spirit which animated both the pontiffs, and the novices by whom these great and frequent sacrifices were made. There, as everywhere else, under the ancient discipline, it was the bishop, and he alone, who had the right of receiving the final vows of the virgin and of consecrating her solemnly to God. Although the Irish, with their habitual rashness, permitted girls to take the veil at the age of twelve,[17] the Anglo-Saxon Church forbade the taking of the irrevocable vows until after the twenty-fifth year had been accomplished, in accordance with a custom which began to prevail in the whole Church, and which was a modification of the decrees of the Pope St. Leo and the Emperor Majorian, who had deferred to the age of forty the reception of the solemn benediction. On the day fixed for that ceremony, which took place only at the principal festivals of the year, and in presence of a numerous assemblage, the bishop began by blessing the black robe which was henceforward to be the sole adornment of the bride of God. The novice put it on in a private room,[18] from which she came forth, thus clothed, and was led to the foot of the altar, after the reading of the Gospel; the officiating bishop having already begun to say mass. There she listened to his exhortation; after which he asked for two public engagements which were indispensable to the validity of the act: in the first place, the consent of the parents and other guardians of the novice; and in the second place, her own promise of obedience to himself and his successors. When this had been done he laid his hands upon her to bless her and consecrate her to the God whom she had chosen. The Pontifical

Ceremony used at the solemn benediction of an Anglo-Saxon nun.

[17] Martene, *De Antiquis Ecclesiæ Ritibus*, lib. ii. c. 6, vol. iii. p. 109.

[18] "De papilione aut loco ubi benedictas vestes inducrant, accersebantur per archipresbyterum virgines consecrandæ."

of Egbert, Archbishop of York, and an Anglo-Saxon manuscript found in the Norman abbey of Jumiéges, have preserved to us the prayers used by the bishop at this supreme moment. The maternal tenderness of the Church overflows in them with a fulness and majesty which recalls the *Menées* of the Greek Church to such a degree, that it might be supposed old Archbishop Theodore, the contemporary of Egbert's most illustrious predecessor, had brought from the depth of Asia Minor into the Northumbrian capital this ardent breath of Oriental inspiration.

"May God bless thee, God the creator of heaven and earth, the Father all-powerful, who has chosen thee as He chose St. Mary, the mother of our Lord Jesus Christ, to preserve thy virginity entire and spotless, as thou hast promised before God and the angels. Persevere then in thy resolutions and keep thy chastity with patience, that thou mayest be worthy of the virgin's crown.

"May God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit bless thee with all blessings, that thou mayest remain immaculate and perfect under the robe of St. Mary, the mother of Christ. May the Spirit of God, the Spirit of wisdom and strength, of knowledge and piety, rest upon thee and fill thee with the fear of God. May He deign to establish thy frailty, fortify thy weakness, confirm thy strength, govern thy soul, direct thy steps, inspire thy thoughts, approve thy acts, complete thy works; may He edify thee by His charity, illuminate thee by His knowledge, keep thee by His mercy, exalt thee by His holiness, strengthen thee by patience, bring thee to obedience, prostrate thee in humility, encourage thee in continence, teach thee frugality, visit thee in infirmity, relieve thee in sadness, reanimate thee in temptation, moderate thee in prosperity, soften thee in anger, protect thy modesty, correct thy sins, pardon thy backslidings, and teach the discipline which shall lead thee, strong in all virtue and resplendent in good works, to do everything in view of the eternal reward! Mayest thou always have for thy witness Him whom thou shalt one day have for thy judge, that when thou enterest into the bridal chamber with thy lamp lighted in thy hand, thy divine Spouse may find in thee nothing impure and sordid, a soul white as snow, and a body shining with purity; so that at the terrible day of judgment the avenging flame may find nothing to consume in thee, and divine mercy find everything to crown! Mayest thou, purified in this world by monastic life, rise to the tribunal of the eternal King to

dwell in his celestial presence with the hundred and forty-four thousand innocents who follow the Lamb wherever He goes, singing the new song, and receiving the reward of thy labors here below in the dwelling-place of those who live forever.[19] Blessed be thou from the highest heaven by Him who came to die upon the cross to redeem the human race, Jesus Christ our Saviour, who lives and reigns forever with the Father and the Holy Spirit."

The bishop then placed the veil[20] on her head, saying, "Maiden, receive this veil,[21] and mayest thou bear it stainless to the tribunal of Jesus Christ, before whom bends every knee that is in heaven and earth and hell."

Then he continued: "O God, who deignest to inhabit

[19] "Fragilem solidet, invalidam roboret, validamque confirmet, pietate allevet, miseratione conservet, mentem regat, vias dirigat, cogitationes sanctas instituat, actus probet, opera perficiat, caritate ædificet, sapientia illuminet, castitate muniat, scientia instruat, fide confirmet, in virtute multiplicet, in sanctitate sublimet, ad patientiam præparet, ad obedientiam subdat, in humilitate prosternat, ad continentiam det fortitudinem, reddat sobriam, protegat pudicam, in infirmitate visitet, in dolore relevet, in tentatione erigat, in conversatione custodiat, in prosperitate temperet, in iracundia mitiget, iniquitatem emendet, infundat gratiam, remittat offensa, tribuat disciplinam, ut his et his similibus virtutibus fulta et sanctis operibus illustrata, illa semper studeas agere, quæ digna fiant in remuneratione. Illum habeas testem quem habitura es judicem; et aptare, ut præfulgentem gestans in manu lampadem, intratura sponsi thalamum occurras venienti cum gaudio, et nihil in te reperiat fœtidum, nihil sordidum, nihil incultum, nihil corruptum, nihil inhonestum, sed niveam et candidam animam corpusque lucidum atque splendidum; ut cum dies ille tremendus, remuneratio justorum retributioque malorum advenerit, non inveniat in te ultrix flamma quod uret sed divina pietas quod coronet, quæ jam in hoc sæculo conversatio religiosa mundavit, ut tribunal æterni regis ascensura celsa palatia cum eisdem merearis portionem qui sequuntur Agnum, et cantant canticum novum sine cessatione, illic preceptura præmium post laborem, semperque maneas in viventium regione atque ipse benedicat te de cœlis, qui per crucis passionem humanum genus est dignatus venire in terris redimere Jesus Christus, Dominus noster, qui," &c. — MARTENE, *op. cit.*, p. 116.

[20] The veil was sometimes white, as is apparent from the following service, *De Virgine Vestienda*, taken from an Irish manuscript, in the Library of Zurich, and quoted in the *Missal of Arbuthnott* of Dr. Forbes, p. xiv. (Burntisland, 1864): —

"Oremus, fratres carissimi, misericordiam ut cunctum bonum tribuere dignetur huic puellæ N. quæ Deo votum candidam vestem perferre cum integritate coronæ in resurrectione vitæ æternæ quam facturus est, orantibus nobis, prestet Deus.

"Conserva, Domine, istius devotæ pudorem castitatis, dilectionem continentiæ in factis, in dictis, in cogitationibus. Per te, Christe Jesu, qui, etc.

"Accipe, puellam, pallium candidum, quod perferas ante tribunal Domini."

[21] "Accipe, puella, vel vidua, pallium." — MARTENE, *op. cit.*, p. 117. It is evident that these formulas were used at the consecration of widows as well as of virgins.

chaste forms, and lovest the virgin soul; God who hast renewed humanity corrupted by the fraud of the devil, and re-established it by the creating Word, so as not only to restore it to primitive innocence, but to procure it everlasting possessions, and to raise it from the bosom of creatures still bound with the chains of this life, to a level with the angels:

"Look upon Thy servant here present, who, placing in Thy hand the resolution to live forever in chastity, offers to Thee the devotion with which this vow has inspired her. Give to her, Lord, by thy Holy Spirit, a prudent modesty, a benevolent wisdom, a sweet gravity, a chaste freedom.[22] How could a soul imprisoned in this mortal flesh have vanquished the law of nature, the liberty of license, the strength of habit, the pricks of youth, hadst Thou not lighted in her the flame of virginity, didst Thou not Thyself nourish the flame by the courage which Thou deignest to inspire her with? Thy grace is spread throughout all nations under the sun, which are as many as the stars in number; and among all the virtues which Thou hast taught to the heirs of Thy New Testament, one gift flows from the inexhaustible fountain of Thy generosity upon certain persons which, without diminishing in anything the honor of marriage, and the blessing which Thou hast promised on the conjugal tie, enables those higher souls to disdain all mortal union, to aspire to the sacrament which unites Jesus Christ to His Church, to prefer the supernatural union of which marriage is the emblem to the natural reality of marriage. This blessed virgin has known her Creator, and, emulating the purity of the angels, desires to belong only to Him who is the Spouse and the Son of perpetual virginity. Protect then, Lord, her who implores Thy help, and who comes here to be consecrated by Thy blessing. Let not the ancient enemy who is so skilful to turn aside the most excellent desires by the most insidious assaults, ever succeed in withering in her the palm of perfect maidenhood.

"Grant, Lord, by the gift of Thy Spirit, that she may keep the faith which she has sworn to Thee, that at the unknown day of Thy coming, far from being troubled, she may go forth to meet Thee in all security, and enter freely with

[22] "Sit in ea . . . prudens modestia, sapiens benignitas, gravis lenitas, casta libertas." — *Ibid.*, p. 119.

the choir of wise virgins by the royal gates of Thy eternal dwelling-place."[23]

At the conclusion of the mass, the pontiff pronounced upon the new nun a new benediction, which was turned by the acclamations of the people into a kind of dialogue.

"Send, Lord, Thy heavenly blessing upon Thy servant here present, upon our sister, who humbles herself under Thy hand, and cover her with Thy divine protection."

And all the people answered, Amen.

The Bishop. — May she ever flee from sin, know and desire what is good, and win the sacred treasures of heaven.

People. — Amen.

Bishop. — May she always obey the divine precepts, escape with their aid from the violent rebellions of the flesh, vanquish depraved voluptuousness by the love of chastity, keep always in her lamp the oil of holiness, and delight herself in the radiance of eternal light.

People. — Amen.

Bishop. — May she ever carry in her hand the sacred fire, and thus enter at the royal gate of heaven, in the footsteps of Christ, to live forever with wise and spotless souls.

People. — Amen.

Bishop. — May He whose empire is without end grant our prayers.

People. — Amen.

[23] "Deus castorum corporum benignus habitator. . . . Respice super hanc famulam tuam N. quæ in manu tua continentiæ suæ propositum collocans, tibi devotionem suam offert, a quo et ipsa idem votum assumpsit. Quando enim animus mortali carne circumdatus, legem naturæ, libertatem licentiæ, vim consuetudinis, et stimulos ætatis evinceret, nisi tu hanc flammam virginitatis, vehementer accenderes tu hanc cupiditatem in ejus corde benignus aleres, ut fortitudinem ministrares? Effusa namque in omnes gentes gratia tua, ex omni natione, quæ est sub cœlo, in stellarum innumerabilem numerum, novi Testamenti hæredibus adoptatis, inter cæteras virtutes, quas filiis tuis non ex sanguinibus, neque ex voluntate carnis, sed de tuo spiritu genitis indidisti, etiam hoc donum in quasdam mentes de largitatis tuæ fonte defluxit, ut cum honorem nuptiarum nulla interdicta minuissent, et super conjugalem copulam tua benedictione permaneret; existerent tamen sublimiores animæ, quæ non concupiscerent quod habet mortale connubium; sed hoc eligerent quod promisit divinum Christi Ecclesiæ sacramentum: nec imitarentur quod nuptiis agitur, sed diligerent quod nuptiis prænotatur. Agnovit auctorem suum beata virginitas, et æmula integritatis angelicæ, illius thalamo illius cubiculo se devovit, qui sic perpetuæ integritatis est sponsus, quemadmodum perpetuæ virginitatis est filius. Imploranti ergo auxilium tuum, Domine, et confirmari se benedictionis tuæ consecratione cupienti, da protectionis tuæ muniumen et regimen, ne hostis antiquus qui excellentiora studia, subtilioribus infestat insidiis, ad obscurandam perfectæ continentiæ palmam per aliquam mentis serpat incuriam, et rapiat de proposito virginum quod etiam moribus decet inesse nuptarum." — *Ibid.*, p. 118.

Bishop. — The blessing of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, rest upon thee, my sister, hereafter and forever.

People. — Amen.[24]

II.

The number of bishops being so small, and the ever-increasing multitude of nuns so great, it is doubtful whether these touching and solemn services could be used in the case of all the virgins consecrated to the Lord in the Anglo-Saxon cloisters.[25] But it may be believed that they were never omitted when a maiden or widow of one of the reigning dynasties of the blood and race of Odin sought the veil of the spouses of the Lord.

Anglo-Saxon queens and princesses in the cloister.

For in England as elsewhere, and perhaps more than elsewhere, the nuns were at the same time of the highest and of the humblest classes. Some were born of those conquering and sovereign races whose exploits have been reviewed, in which the blood of the Merovingians sometimes mingled with that of the offspring of the Norse Olympus, and which, by intermarrying always among themselves, maintained in all its native purity the character of the descendants of Odin, —

"Du sang de Jupiter *issues* des deux côtés," —

they summed up in themselves all that their countrymen held in highest esteem as greatness and majesty.

But beside them, and sometimes above, when placed there by the election of communities, appears the daughter of

[24] "Effunde, Domine, benedictionem cœlestem super hanc famulam, sororem nostram N. . . . quæ se humiliavit sub dextera tua.

"Protege eam protectione tua divina. Amen.

"Fugiat universa delicta, sciat sibi bona desideria præparata, ut regni cœlestis sancta conquirat lucra. Amen.

"Pareat semper divinis præceptis, ut te adjuvante vitet incendia carnis, omnemque libidinem pravæ voluptatis superet amore castitatis, habeat in se oleum sanctitatis, et lætetur cum lampadibus sempiternis. Amen.

"Gestet in manibus faces sanctas, et apud sapientes et castissimas animas, duce Christo, introire mereatur januam regni cœlestis. Amen.

"Quod ipse præstare dignetur, cujus regnum et imperium sine fine permanet in sæcula sæculorum." — Martene, *op. cit.*, p. 121. Cf. Lingard, *Antiquities*, vol. ii. p. 14.

[25] No. 92 of the *Excerptiones* of Archbishop Egbert renews the prohibition of Pope Gelasius to give the veil to nuns at any other time than the feasts of Epiphany, Easter, or the feasts of the Apostles, unless the novice was dying.

the obscure Saxon, of the *ceorl*, perhaps even of the conquered Briton; and others from a still greater distance and lower level, redeemed from slavery and withdrawn from outrage, from the stains which were the too frequent consequence of captivity. All marched under the same banner, that of sacrifice; all bore its glorious mark. Some gave up a crown, wealth, and greatness; others their family, their love, their freedom; all had to give up themselves. The meanest in birth were certainly not those to whom the sacrifice was the most costly. It is too probable that these Anglo-Saxon princesses and great ladies were naturally haughty and insolent, hard and unkindly to the rest of mankind — in some cases bloodthirsty and pitiless, like the heroines of the Teutonic epic, Criemhild and Brunehild; and of all the miracles wrought by Christianity in England, there is scarcely any more wonderful than the transformation of so great a number of such women, in the new communities, into docile daughters, cordial sisters, mothers truly tender and devoted to their inferiors in age and blood.

It must be acknowledged that the observation of the chroniclers of those distant centuries rarely goes beyond the queens and princesses, whose religious vocation must have specially edified and touched the souls of their contemporaries; and who, beautiful, young, and sought in marriage by princes of rank equal to their own, gave up the world to keep their love entire for God, and to consecrate so many places of refuge at once peaceful and magnificent for future generations of God's servants.

In respect to the maidens of humbler origin, but of life as pure and self-devotion as dauntless, who surround the greater personages of our tale, we can but follow the ancient authors, taking advantage of every indication which throws light upon the life and soul of so great a multitude.

The queens and princesses range themselves into three principal classes. They were, in the first place, virgins devoted to God, sometimes from the cradle, like the abbesses Ebba of Coldingham and Elfleda of Whitby, who were the devoted friends and protectresses of Wilfrid. Then followed wives who separated themselves from their husbands, during their lifetime, and often much against their will, to embrace a religious life: of this class St. Etheldreda is the most celebrated example. And, finally, widows who ended in the cloister a life mostly devoted on the throne to the active extension as well as the self-sacrificing practice of the new

religion. We have seen more than one touching example of the last-named class — such as that of Queen Eanfleda, the first benefactress of Wilfrid, who, after the death of her husband King Oswy, found shelter for her widowhood at Whitby, and there ended her days under the crosier of her daughter.

The first nuns trained in France.

By a privilege which does honor to France, it was among us, in the country of Queen Bertha, the first Christian queen of the Anglo-Saxons, that the first English nuns were trained. France was thus the cradle of the Anglo-Saxon communities. In the time of the first missionaries, when monasteries were few, many of the new Christians of England learned the rules of monastic life among the Gallo-Franks, to whom they had been taught, more than a century before, by the glorious St. Martin, and after him by St. Maur, the cherished disciple of St. Benedict, and by St. Columbanus, the illustrious propagator of Celtic monachism. The Anglo-Saxons sent or took their daughters into Gaul, and the first beginning, in particular, of the great Christianity which was about to burst the bud in Great Britain, seems to have been specially prepared and formed in the communities on the banks of the Marne and the Seine, at Jouarre, Faremoutier, les Andelys, and later at Chelles.[26]

Especially at Faremoutier.

Jouarre, Faremoutier, and the neighboring monasteries formed a sort of monastic province, dependent on Luxeuil, and occupied by the disciples of St. Columbanus.[27] The pious and courageous Burgundofara, *la noble baronne de Bourgogne*, blessed from her infancy by the holy patriarch of Luxeuil, ruled at Faremoutier the great foundation which has made her name illustrious for twelve centuries. She had with her an entire colony of young Anglo-Saxons. It had been the intention of Hilda, the great Abbess of Whitby, from the time when she made up her mind to leave the world,[28] to lead a conventual life in one

[26] "Multi de Britannia monachicæ conversationis gratia, Francorum vel Gallicorum monasteria adire solebant; sed et filias suas eisdem erudiendas ac sponso cœlesti copulandas mittebant." — Bede, l. iii. c. 8.

[27] See vol. i. pp. 608, 613.

[28] See p. 259. Bede says that it was at Chelles that Hereswida became a nun. Pagi, in his criticism on Baronius (ad ann. 680, c. 14 to 20), maintains by arguments too long to be quoted that Bede and Mabillon were both mistaken, one in supposing Hereswida to have been a nun at Chelles, and the other in thinking that Hilda joined her there. He proves that there was no trace of the two sisters either in the archives or calendars of Chelles before

of the cloisters on the banks of the Marne, where her sister, Hereswida, the Queen of East Anglia, even before she became a widow, had sought an asylum, and where she ended her life in the practice of the monastic rule.[29]

However, it was not the Northumbrians alone — as might have been expected from the connection which linked to the great Catholic apostles of converted France a country itself converted to Christianity by Celtic missionaries — who thus sought the spiritual daughters of St. Columbanus. The young princesses and daughters of the great lords belonging to the kingdom of Kent, which was exclusively converted by Roman missionaries, showed as much, or even greater eagerness. The great-granddaughter of the first Christian king of the Anglo-Saxons, Earcongotha, added a new lustre to the community of Faremoutier by the holiness of her life and death. She was, says Bede, a virgin of great virtue, worthy in everything of her illustrious origin.[30] East Anglia paid also its contribution to the powerful foundation of the noble Burgundofara. Two sisters of Etheldreda, whose strange story has been already recorded, governed in succession, notwithstanding their character of foreigners, the Gallo-Frankish Abbey of Faremoutier, while their sister founded the greatest convent of nuns which had yet been seen in England.[31] Ten centuries later another foreign princess, who had been received at Faremoutier, and whose memory has been made immortal by the genius of Bossuet, gave him an occasion to sound the praises of this famous house in a language which was perhaps more applicable to the community of the seventh century than to that of the seventeenth. "In the solitude of Sainte-Fare — as much separated from all worldly ways as its blessed position now separates it from all traffic with the world; in that holy mountain where the spouses of Jesus

1672, the epoch when the community obtained from Harlay, Archbishop of Paris, by means of the famous casuist St. Beuve, authority to celebrate the feast of St. Hilda on the 27th of November, and to inscribe the name of St. Hereswida on the calendar of the sacristy at the date of December 9.

[29] "In eodem monasterio soror ipsius Hereswid, mater Aldulfii regis orientalium Anglorum, regularibus subdita disciplinis, ipso tempore coronam expectabat æternam." — Bede, iv. 23. Pagi thinks she became a nun seven years before the death of her husband, but with his consent.

[30] "Ut condigna parenti soboles, magnarum fuit virgo virtutum, serviens Domino in monasterio quod . . . constructum est ab abbatissa nobilissima, vocabulo Fara." — Bede, iii. 8.

[31] "Sæthryd, filia uxoris Annæ regis . . . et filia naturalis ejusdem regis Ædilberg, quæ utraque, cum esset peregrina, præ merito virtutum . . . est abbatissa constituta." — *Ibid.* Cf. Bolland, vol. ii. July, p. 481.

Christ revive the beauty of ancient days, where the joys of earth are unknown, where the traces of worldly men, of the curious and wandering, appear not — under the guidance of the holy abbess, who gave milk to babes as well as bread to the strong, the beginning of the Princess Anne was very happy."[32]

The illustrious abbess whom Queen Bathilde, herself an Anglo-Saxon by birth, placed in the celebrated Monastery of Chelles when she re-established it, saw her community increased by a crowd of nuns whom the fame of her great qualities and tender kindness attracted from the other side of the Channel. Christians of both sexes felt the power of this attraction, for there were at Chelles as many Anglo-Saxon monks as nuns. Everything prospered so well, everything breathed a piety so active, fervent, and charitable, that the kings of the Heptarchy, moved by the perfume of virtue and good fame that rose from the double monastery peopled by their country-folks, emulated each other in praying the Abbess Bertile to send them colonies from her great bee-hive to occupy new foundations in England.[33]

Botulph and the two East Anglian princesses.

In this way probably came Botulph, whom we have already mentioned, and who was the one of Wilfrid's contemporaries most actively engaged in the extension of monastic institutions.[34] Before he was restored to his native soil, he had inspired with a lively and deep affection for himself two young Anglo-Saxon princesses who had been sent to France, when scarcely more than infants, to learn monastic life. They loved in him, we are told, not only a great master in holy and chaste living, but still more their countryman, a teacher of their own country and race. When they knew that he was about to return to England, they were overwhelmed with sadness, their only consolation in which was to recommend him with all their might to their young brother, who was king, it is not known where, under the regency of his mother; after

[32] *Oraison Funèbre de la Princesse Palatine, Anne de Gonzague.*

[33] "Cujus conversatio sobria et benignissima advocavit plurimas fidelium animas feminarum immoque et virorum. Nec solummodo ex vicina provincia, sed etiam ex transmarinis partibus, sanctæ hujus feminæ felici fama percurrente, ad eam relictis parentibus et patria cum summo amoris desiderio . . . festinabant. . . . Etiam a transmarinis partibus Saxoniæ reges illi fideles ab ea permissos postulabant . . . qui virorum et sanctimonialum cœnobia in illa regione construerent."—*Vita S. Bertilæ*, c. 5, 6, ap. MABILLON, *Act. SS. O. S. B.*, see vol. iii. p. 20.

[34] See p. 507.

which there is no mention of them in history.[35] The touching image of these two young creatures appears in history only to bear witness to the faithfulness of their patriotism in the pious exile which was imposed upon them. It is a sentiment of which we shall find many traces among the Anglo-Saxon nuns.

Were there Celtic nuns among the Anglo-Saxons?

But among the first nuns of the Heptarchy were there not, in the first place, virgins of Celtic origin, from Scotland or Ireland, like the monk-missionaries whose labors have been set forth? Nothing is more probable, though there is no positive proof of their existence. It would be impossible from this point of view to pass in silence a holy princess whose name is still popular in the north of England, and who has been long concluded by the annalists to be of Irish origin, while, at the same time, they recognize in her the instructress of the women and maidens of Northumbria in monastic life. To the west of this district, in the county which we now call Cumberland, upon a promontory bathed by the waves of the Irish Sea, and from which in clear weather the southern shore of Scotland and the distant peaks of the Isle of Man may be seen, a religious edifice still bears the name and preserves the recollection of St. Bega.[36] She was, according to the legend, the daughter of an Irish king, the most beautiful woman in the country, and already asked in marriage by the son of the King of Norway. But she had vowed herself, from her tenderest infancy, to the Spouse of virgins, and had received from an angel, as a seal of her celestial betrothal, a bracelet marked with the sign of the cross.[37] On the night

Legend of St. Bega.

[35] "Erant in eodem monasterio . . . sorores duæ Edelmundi regis . . . diligebantque præcipuum patrem Botulfum sicut doctorem sanctitatis et castimoniæ, et plurimum ob studium gentis suæ. Adhuc siquidem tenellulæ missæ fuerant ultra mare ad discendam in monasteriali gymnasio disciplinam cœlestis sophiæ. Videntes beatum ad dilectum Doctorem velle repatriare, mœrentes mandata imponunt præferenda regi et fratri."— *Vita S. Botulfi*, ap. *Acta SS. O. S. B.*, sæc. iii. vol. iii. p. 3.

[36] In English, St. Bees. This is the name still borne by the promontory surmounted by a lighthouse, and situated a little south of Whitehaven. Below the southern slope of the promontory, and sheltered by its height from the sea breezes, in the midst of a group of fine trees, stands the Priory, built by Raoul de Meschines in 1120, and restored in 1817, to be used as an English Church college. There remain still some precious relics of the buildings of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and even, according to some antiquaries, of the Saxon edifice destroyed by the Danes, which preceded the Norman foundation.

[37] "Accipe, inquit, eulogium istud a Domino tibi missum, quo te illi

before her wedding day, while the guards of the king her father, instead of keeping watch, as usual, with sabres at their side and axes on their shoulders, were, like their guests, deep in the revel, she escaped alone, with nothing but the bracelet which the angel had given her, threw herself into a skiff, and landed on the opposite shore, in Northumbria, where she lived long in a cell in the midst of the wood, uniting the care of the sick poor around with her prayers.[38] Fear of the pirates who infested these coasts led her, after a while, farther inland. What then became of her? Here the confusion, which is so general in the debatable ground between legend and history, becomes nearly inextricable. Was it she who, under the name of Heïu, is pointed out to us by Bede as the woman to whom Bishop Aïdan, the apostle of Northumbria, gave the veil, and whom he placed at the head of the first nunnery which had been seen in the north of England?[39] Or was it she who, under the name of Begu, after having abdicated the dignity of abbess, lived for thirty years a humble and simple nun in one of the monasteries under the rule of the great Abbess of Whitby, Hilda, whose intimate friend she became, as well as her daughter in religion?[40] These are questions which have been long disputed by the learned, and which it seems impossible to bring to any satisfactory conclusion.[41] What is certain, however, is, that a virgin of

subaratam (*sic*) agnoscas. Pone ergo illud sicut signum super cor tuum et super brachium tuum, ut nullum admittas præter ipsum." — Cf. Cantic. viii. 6.

[38] "Erat speciosa forma præ cunctis filiabus regionis illius. . . . Virgo armillam super se fere indesinenter portavit. . . . Indulgebant calicibus epotandis potentes ad potandum et viri fortes ad miscendam ebrietatem. . . . Plures ex fortissimis Hyberniæ ambiebant totum palatium et uniuscujusque sica super femur suum et bipennis super humerum et lancea in manu ejus. . . . Pater ejus . . . inventam reduceret, et reductam plagis vapularet multis. . . . Omnia claustra ad tactum armillæ clavis David virgini egregiæ egredienti aperuit. . . . In loco tunc temporis satis nemoroso secus litus maris posito cellam virgineam sibi construxit." — *Vita S. Begæ et de Miraculis ejusdem*, ed. Tomlinson (Carlisle, 1842), pp. 46–53.

[39] See p. 259.

[40] Bede, *Hist. Eccles.*, iv. 23.

[41] Most ancient authors believed this. The Bollandists themselves (vol. ii. Sept., p. 694) seem to admit it, though they seem to have had no knowledge of the *Life* of the saint, written by the monks of St. Bees, and which is founded entirely on this belief. The *Vita S. Begæ et de Miraculis ejusdem*, which was published for the first time in 1842, from a MS. in the British Museum, by Mr. Tomlinson, in the collection called *Carlisle Historical Tracts*, should not, however, in our opinion, counterbalance the contemporary testimony of Bede. The latter, always so careful to notice the Scottish origin of the personages of his narrative, whenever there is occasion, remains silent as to that of the first Northumbrian nun; and the two passages

the name of Bega figures among the most well known and long venerated saints of the north-west of England. She was celebrated during her lifetime for her austerity, her fervor, and an anxiety for the poor, which led her, during the building of her monastery, to prepare with her own hands the food of the masons, and to wait upon them in their workshops, hastening from place to place like a bee laden with honey.[42] She remained down to the middle ages, the patroness of the laborious and often oppressed population of the district, in which tradition presents her to us as arriving alone and fearless on a foreign shore, flying from her royal bridegroom. In the twelfth century the famous bracelet which the angel had given her was regarded with tender veneration: the pious confidence of the faithful turned it into a relic upon which usurpers. prevaricators, and oppressors against whom there existed no other defence, were made to swear, with the certainty that a perjury committed on so dear and sacred a pledge would not pass unpunished. It was also to Bega and her bracelet that the cultivators of the soil had recourse against the new and unjust taxes with which their lords burdened them. In vain the Scottish rievers, or the *prepotents* of the country, treading down under their horses' feet the harvests of the Cumbrians, made light of the complaints and threats of the votaries of St. Bega. "What is the good old woman to me, and what harm can she do me?" said one. "Let your Bega come!" said another — "let her come and do whatever she likes! She cannot make one of our horses cast their shoes."[43] Sooner or later

of the same chapter (iv. 23), where he speaks of Heiu, foundress of Hartlepool, and of Begu, contemporary with the death of Hilda, seem in no way to point to the same person. The Rev. Father Faber, in his *Life of St. Bega*, published while he was still an Anglican, in 1844, seems to hold that there were at least two saints whose acts are confounded together, and takes care to declare that his narrative does not pretend to historical accuracy. Wordsworth dedicated, in 1833, some of his finest verses to the still popular memory of the Irish saint, and of the places which bear her name.

[42] "In officinis monasterii construendis . . . manu sua cibos coquens parabat, artificibus apparebat, velut apis mellificans, currens et discurrens ministrabat." — *Vita S. Begh.*, p. 55.

[43] "Protulerunt in medium S. Begæ virginis armillam, quia confidebant inultum non præterire perjurium super illam perpetratum. . . . Versabatur illo tempore controversia inter eos qui dominabantur terræ de Coupelandia, et homines subditos sibi, super quadam consuetudine qua boves solebant dominis pensari. . . . Impetebantur homines et cogebantur plus reddere quam arbitrabantur se solvere debere. . . .

"'Quid mihi facere poterit vetula illa?' et manum ad secretiores partes natium admovens: 'Hic, hic, inquit, sagittabit me.' . . . Quidam autem

divine vengeance struck these culprits; and the fame of the chastisements sent upon them confirmed the faith of the people in the powerful intercession of her who, six hundred years after her death, still gave a protection so effectual and energetic against feudal rudeness, to the captive and to the oppressed, to the chastity of women, and the rights of the lowly, upon the western shore of Northumbria, as did St. Cuthbert throughout the rest of that privileged district.[44]

Confusion between legend and history.

In proportion, however, as the details of the lives of holy nuns in England are investigated, the difficulty of tracing the line of demarcation between history and legend becomes more and more evident. But after all let us not lament too much over this confusion. True history — "that which modifies souls, and forms opinions and manners"[45] — is not produced solely from dates and facts, but from the ideas and impressions which fill and sway the souls of contemporaries; translating into facts, anecdotes and scenes, the sentiments of admiration, gratitude, and love which inspire them for beings whom they believe to be of a superior nature to themselves, and whose benefits and example survive the ravages of time and human inconstancy.

We must then make up our minds to meet with this confusion through the entire series of our narratives, which are intended to give a picture of the faith and passions, the virtues and vices, of the new Christians of England, rather than to trace in methodical and chronological succession the course of uncertain or insignificant events. Let our readers be contented with our assurance that we will never permit ourselves to present to them, under the guise of truth, acts or words which are not of undisputed certainty.

adolescentulus sagittam . . . jaciens . . . percussit illum in fonticulo fondamenti, quem ipse manu sua designaverat. . . . 'Veniat Bega, veniat, et quod potest faciat.'" — *De Miraculis*, pp. 68, 69, 62, 66. There is a curious passage in this work, p. 63, as to the terror with which, in the twelfth century, the Scottish marauders were inspired by those English arrows which were afterwards so fatal to the French nobles in the great battles of the fourteenth century.

[44] See above, p. 486. The narrative of St. Bega's miracles is clearly of the same period and conceived in the same spirit as the *Libellus de Admirandis Beati Cuthberti Virtutibus*. The most popular of these miracles, and that best remembered in the country, reminds us of the one commemorated at Rome on the festival of St. Mary of the Snow, the 15th of August. A fall of snow, in the midst of summer, marked exactly the disputed possessions of the monastery, the same which had been the original domain of the saint. Compare the text published by Tomlinson, p. 64, and the tradition preserved in the MSS. of the Chapter of Carlisle, ap. *Notes on St. Bega*, p. 15.

[45] Littre, *Journal des Savants*, November, 1862.

Division of the nuns, whose biographies have been preserved, according to the dynasties from which they sprang.

To put some sort of order into the notes which we have gleaned on the subject of the Anglo-Saxon nuns, it will be well to arrange them according to the principal dynasties, or families and countries from which had issued all those noble women so devoted to God, St. Peter, and St. Benedict, who have gained a place on the altars of Catholic England.

The Northumbrians.

I do not think I have anything to add to what has already been said in respect to the Northumbrian princesses, descendants of Ella and Ida, the *Man of Fire* and the *Ravager*. The holy and powerful abbesses, Hilda of Whitby, Ebba of Coldingham, Elfleda, the daughter of Oswy, who was dedicated to God from her birth as a ransom for the liberation of her country, her mother Eanfleda, who on becoming a widow entered the abbey of her daughter — these often-repeated names cannot have escaped the memory of our readers. Let us add only, according to a tradition, ancient and widely spread,[46] though disputed by modern learning, that the three sons of Oswy who reigned over Northumberland in succession, and who have been so often mentioned in the life of Wilfrid, were all three forsaken by their wives, who determined to consecrate themselves to God; though doubtless the two princesses married to the elder and younger of these princes neither occasioned the same struggle nor won the same fame as their sister-in-law St. Etheldreda, the wife of King Egfrid.

Let us then pass to the princesses of the most ancient Anglo-Saxon dynasty, the first converted to Christianity, that of the Ascings who reigned over the Jutes in the kingdom of Kent.

The Ascings or dynasty of Kent.

The first and most historical figure which we meet in the cloister among the descendants of Hengist is that of the gentle and devoted Ethelburga, whose life is linked so closely with the history of the beginning of Northumbrian Christianity.[47] She was the daughter of the first Christian king of South Anglia, and married the first Christian king of the North, Edwin, whose conversion was so difficult, whose reign was so prosperous, and his end so glorious. After the rapid ruin of that first

[46] This tradition, accepted by Pagi (*ubi supra*) from William of Malmesbury, Alford, and many others, is disputed by the Bollandists as regards the two princesses married to the two brothers, Alchfrid the friend, and Aldfrid the enemy, of Wilfrid.

[47] See pp. 209, 221.

Northumbrian Christianity which she, along with Bishop Paulinus, had begun, Queen Ethelburga, received with tender sympathy by her brother, the King of Kent, cared for no other crown but that of holy poverty. She obtained from her brother the gift of an ancient Roman villa, situated between Canterbury and the sea, on the coast opposite France, and there founded a monastery, where she herself took the veil. She was thus the first widow of Saxon race who consecrated herself to monastic life. The old church of her monastery, called Lyminge, still exists. The burying-place of the foundress, who passed there the fourteen last years of her life, and who, daughter of the founder of Canterbury and widow of the founder of York, was thus the first link between the two great centres of Catholic life among the Anglo-Saxons, is still shown.[48] Ethelburga, founder of Lyminge.

We shall add nothing to what has been already said in respect to the daughter of Ethelburga, first Queen of Northumberland, and then a nun like her mother,[49] nor of her granddaughter, the Abbess Elfleda, the amiable friend of St. Cuthbert, and generous protectress of St. Wilfrid.[50] But she had a sister, named Eadburga, who was a nun with her at Lyminge, and who, buried by her side in the monastery, was venerated along with her among the saints of England.[51] Her brother, who, like his father, married a Frankish princess,[52] the great-granddaughter of Clovis and St. Clothilde, peopled with his descendants the Anglo-Saxon, and even foreign monasteries. Without speaking of his grand-daughters, Earcongotha, who became, as has been formerly said, Abbess of Faremoutier in France, and Ermenilda, Queen of Mercia, whom we have already seen, and shall meet again further on among the abbesses of Ely,[53] this second Christian king of the most ancient kingdom of the Heptarchy had a daughter called Eanswida, who, educated by the Roman

[48] It is believed that remains of the Roman buildings have been discovered in certain portions of the present church of Lyminge. The tomb of St. Ethelburga was situated under a buttress at the south-east of the choir. — Rev. R. C. Jenkins, *Account of the Church of St. Mary and St. Eadburgh in Lyminge;* London and Folkestone, 1859. Cf. *Gentleman's Magazine,* August, 1862.

[49] See pp. 253, 305, and genealogical tables, App., VI. and VII., pp. 752, 754.

[50] See pp. 406, 476.

[51] Bolland., *Act. SS.*, Feb., vol. ii. p. 383, and vol. iii. p. 690.

[52] Emma, daughter of Clotaire II. — Boll., vol. viii. Oct., p. 90.

[53] They were both daughters of King Ercombert and St. Sexburga, she who was Abbess of Ely after her sister Etheldreda. See genealogical table IX., p. 756.

Eanswida, founder of Folkestone.

missionaries at Canterbury, received from them the veil of the brides of God. She distinguished herself by the foundation of a monastery, which, with true Roman spirit, she dedicated to St. Peter, and of which she was the superior, at Folkestone, on the heights of those white cliffs crowned by green pasturage, which attract the first glance of the numberless travellers whom the rapid prows of our day deposit at that spot upon the English shore.

Legends of all kinds have accumulated round the name of this young and holy descendant of Hengist and Clovis; the gaps in her authentic history are filled by incidents which show the idea formed by the Anglo-Saxons of the supernatural power with which a monastic vocation invested a daughter of the sovereign race. Her father, it was told, proposed to marry her, like her aunt, to a Northumbrian prince, who was still a heathen. She obstinately refused. King Eadbald did not attempt to force her; but her suitor came with his train to urge his suit in person at a time when she was herself superintending the building of her future cloister. She sent him away without pity, defying him to lengthen, by the aid of his false gods, a rafter which was too short, which she herself succeeded in doing by praying with all her might to the true Saviour of the world. As soon as she was installed in her monastery she made it, after the fashion of all the religious foundations of the time, a great agricultural establishment as well as an ascetic sanctuary and a literary school. There, according to the popular tale, she tamed flocks of wild geese which spoiled her harvests, and which her servants stole from her poultry-yard and ate to her great displeasure; with the tip of her crosier she dug a canal to bring to the monastery a stream of fresh water which was wanting. She died young in 640: her abbey, which was built too near the sea on an overhanging rock, was swallowed up by the waves;[54] but the memory of this daughter of the conquering race, herself conquered by the love of God and her neighbor, long survived in the prayers of the faithful.[55] More than six hundred years after her death, a powerful Anglo-Norman baron renewed the Benedictine foundation of the Anglo-

[54] "A Romanis monachis velatam esse, nullum dubium est, et monasticum institutum ab eisdem edoctam. . . . Oratorium suum rupibus suspensum, mari supereminens." — Boll., vol iv. August, pp. 685, 686.

[55] The Bollandists have published a fragment of her office.

Saxon princess, dedicating the church to St. Peter and St. Eanswida.[56]

Another branch of the posterity of Hengist, issued from a young brother of Eanswida, who died before his father,[57] has also been taken possession of by legendary lore. This prince left two sons and four daughters; the latter were all nuns, and reckoned among the saints.[58] His two sons[59] were venerated as martyrs, according to the general idea of the time, which regarded as martyrdom every kind of violent death endured by the innocent. They were assassinated by a thane named Thunnor, who thus attempted to do a pleasure to King Egbert, the fourth successor of St. Ethelbert, by freeing him of young cousins who might become dangerous competitors.[60] The legend here rises to the rank of true poetry, and at the same time embodies true morality, as is almost always the case. In a vain attempt to hide, it says, the bones of his victims, the assassin buried them in the palace of the king, and even under the throne on which he sat on festive occasions;[61] but a supernatural light came to denounce the crime, shining upon the unknown tomb, and revealing it to the devotion of the faithful. The king, amazed and abashed, had to expiate the crime which was committed, if not by his orders at least to his advantage. Supported by the popular clamor, the two illustrious foreign monks, who were then the chief-justices and peace-makers of the country, Theodore, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the African Adrian, abbot of St. Augustin,[62] intimated to him that he must pay the *price of blood* — that is to say, the compensation ordained by all Teutonic laws — to a sister of the victims, and that all the more that this sister, called Domneva, was married to a Mercian prince, son of

Legend of Domneva and her brothers.

[56] This baron's name was John de Segrave, and his wife's Juliana de Sandwich. — Stevens, i. 399, ex. Weever, p. 270.

[57] He was called Ermenifred, and his death left the throne of Kent to his brother Ercombert, the third Christian king, father of King Egfrid, and of the saints Ermenilda and Earcongotha. See genealogical table B.

[58] Ermenberga or Domneva, Ermenburga, Etheldreda, and Ermengytha.

[59] Ethelbert and Ethelred.

[60] Bede says nothing of all this; but it has been related with more or less of detail by all the more recent authorities, William of Malmesbury, Simeon of Durham, Matthew of Westminster, and above all Thorne, in his Chronicle of the Abbey of St. Augustin at Canterbury. Cf. Lappenberg, i. 239, and Thomas of Elmham, who gives a very detailed version, pp. 209 to 239 of the new edition issued by Hardwicke.

[61] "In aula regia, sub regia cathedra." — Matth. Westmonast., p. 14.

[62] See their part in the history of Wilfrid, p. 344.

the savage and unconquerable Penda.[63] This ransom of blood was to take the form of a territorial gift for the foundation of a monastery in which virgins consecrated to God should forever supplicate divine pardon. Domneva asked for as much land as a tame doe which belonged to her, could run round in one course. The spot was the island of Thanet, at the mouth of the Thames, where their ancestor Hengis, and, two centuries later, St. Augustin had landed; and which was doubly dear to the nation as the place at which the Saxon occupation began and Christianity first appeared among them. It was, besides, a very fertile spot, the flower and jewel of the country, a sort of terrestrial paradise.[64] King Egbert consented to this arrangement, and the parties met on the ground. The doe was let loose, and the king and his court followed it with their eyes, when the villain Thunnor arrived, crying out that Domneva was a witch, who had bewitched the king to make him give up his fair lands to the instinct of a brute. Then, being on horseback, he pursued the doe to stop her; but in his wild career he came to a well, in which he was drowned, and which has ever since been called *Thunnor's leap*.[65] The doe's course included forty-two plough-lands: she crossed the island in two different directions before returning to her mistress. The land thus marked out was given over to Domneva and her spiritual posterity. Archbishop Theodore immediately consecrated the new foundation, which took the name of *Minster*, as who should say *The* Monastery.[66]

The course of the doe in the island of Thanet.

Domneva became a widow, and taking then the name of

[63] See genealogical tables, Appendix, VII. and VIII., pp. 754, 755.

[64] "Post sororem eorum Dompnenam misit, ut ipsa interfectionis pretium reciperet. . . . Venit rex tristis, veniam petiit. . . . Respondit Dompnena: Quantum cerva mea domestica uno impetu percurrere poterit. . . . Emissa cerva currit velociter, aspiciente rege cum suis hilari vultu cursum cervæ. . . . Insula arridens bona rerum copia, regni flos et thalamus . . . in qua tanquam quodam Elysio. . . . Clamavit Dompnenam incantatricem, et insipientem regem qui terram fertilem et nobilem bruti animalis indicio tradidit."

[65] The situation of the well and the whole direction of the doe's course may be found in the old and curious map of the Isle of Thanet, which has been republished in miniature in Dugdale's *Monasticon* (i. 84), and by the Bollandists (vol. iv. of July, p. 513), but the exact fac-simile of which is found in the new edition of Elmham.

[66] This monastery, like all the English ones, was destroyed by the Danes, and rebuilt under the Normans. There still remains a large and beautiful church, newly restored. It is supposed that some remains of Domneva's original building can be traced in a portion of the tower of this church, built of large stones and Roman tiles. — *Gentleman's Magazine*, July, 1862.

Ermenberga,[67] was the first abbess of the new community, which was soon occupied by seventy nuns. But she soon gave up the government to her daughter Mildred, whom she had sent into France, to Chelles, to receive a literary and religious education. The Abbess of Chelles, far from encouraging the young princess to embrace monastic life, employed every kind of threat and ill-usage to compel her to marry one of her relatives: thus at least says the legend, which is too singular, and too different in this point from all similar narratives, not to have a certain authenticity. But Mildred resisted the temptation victoriously. She returned to England to govern the abbey founded by her mother, and to give an example of all the monastic virtues to her seventy companions. Very few details of her life have been preserved: which makes the extraordinary and prolonged popularity which has attached to her name, her relics, and everything belonging to her, all the more wonderful. Her popularity eclipsed that of St. Augustin even in the district which he first won to the faith, and to such a point that the rock which had received the mark of his first footstep,[68] and which lies a little to the east of Minster, took and retained up to the eighteenth century the name of St. Mildred's Rock.

Great popularity of Mildred.

An entire chapter would be necessary to narrate the violent struggles, the visions, and other incidents which are connected with the history of her relics, and what hagiographers call her posthumous fame. Her name, like that of many other Anglo-Saxon nuns, has once more become fashionable in our days, but it recalls to our ungrateful contemporaries nothing but the vague poetry of the past. It was mixed up with the real history of the Danes and Normans, of Canute the Great, of Edward the Confessor, of Lanfranc, of Edward I., the terrible victor of the Scots and Welsh.[69] The worship of Mildred appears interspersed in the midst of all these personages with every kind of edifying and amusing anecdote, such as touch the most delicate and the most diverse chords of the human heart. By the side of the touching scene in which the persecuted wife of

[67] According to another version she was called Ermenberga before she became abbess, and only then assumed the name of *Domna Ebba*, or Domneva. — Bolland., vol. viii. Oct., p. 91.

[68] See above, p. 152. Cf. Stanley, *Historical Memorials of Canterbury*.

[69] Bolland., *loc. cit.* Cf. Oakley, *Life of St. Augustin*, p. 134.

Edward the Confessor, forsaken by all, is consoled by the apparition of Mildred — and the story of the solemn translation of her relics by Archbishop Lanfranc — are found grotesque incidents, such as that of the bell-ringer who, while asleep before her shrine, was woke by a box on the ear administered by the holy princess, who said to him, "This is the oratory and not the dormitory."[70] In that wonderful efflorescence of imagination quickened by faith which for several centuries was interwoven with all Christian society, the legend had something for all — for crowned heads and common people, and could at the same time move its audience to laugh or to weep. Let us return to history by adding that William the Conqueror, when he became master of England, formally respected the right of asylum claimed by criminals at the place where the relics of Mildred lay; for, while destroying the Anglo-Saxon crown, he took great care to aim no blow at the persevering devotion shown by his new subjects for the saints of both sexes who had proceeded from their national dynasties.

The sisters of Mildred.

Mildred had two sisters, whose names are connected with hers by that eccentric taste for alliteration which characterizes the Anglo-Saxons. Their names were Milburga and Milgytha; they were both nuns like their sister, their mother, their three aunts, their grandaunt Eanswida, and their great-grandaunts Ethelburga and Eadburga.[71] We are now at the fourth generation of the descendants of the first Christian king, and we may well say with Mabillon: *Puellarum regiarum, quibus idem animus fuit, numerus iniri vix potest.*[72] The three daughters of the foundress of Minster were compared to Faith, Hope, and Charity.[73] Nothing is known of Milgytha except that she was a nun at Canterbury.[74] As for Milburga, she was consecrated by the Archbishop Theodore abbess of a monastery founded beyond the Severn, upon the borders of Anglo-Saxon territory and the land still held by the Celts of Cambria. Like Mildred, she has furnished

Milburga.

[70] "Inæstimabili decore fulgida . . . elata palma, alapam ei dedit, docens oratorium, non dormitorium, ibi esse." — Bolland., vol. iv. July, p. 518.

[71] See genealogical table, Appendix, VII., p. 755.

[72] *Act. SS. O. S. B.*, sæc. iii. 1, p. 40.

[73] "Nomina simillima, par formarum gloria . . . mens at amor et sanctitas trium erat unica. Hinc Milburga, ut fides, inde Milgytha, ut spes, media coruscat Mildretha, ut caritas." — Bolland., *loc. cit.*, p. 516.

[74] Bolland., vol. ii. January, p. 176.

more than one expressive incident to monastic legends. The young abbess was exposed, like so many of her fellows, to the pursuit of a neighboring prince, who, being determined to marry her, attempted to seize her person by force. As she fled before the sacrilegious band, a river which she had just crossed rose all at once into flood, so as to place an insurmountable barrier in the way of the too eager suitor, who thereupon gave up the pursuit. Another miracle, attributed to her, recalls the most touching of those which are mentioned in the life of Wilfrid. A poor widow came to her one day when she was alone in her oratory, and, throwing herself on her knees, besought her with tears to raise up her dead child, whose poor little body she had brought with her. Milburga asked if she were mad. "Go," she said, "bury your son, and prepare to die, in your turn, like him; for we are all born but to die." "No, no," said the widow, "I will not leave you till you have restored to me my son alive." The abbess then prayed by the little corpse, and all at once she appeared to the poor mother surrounded by a flame which descended from heaven, the living emblem of the fervor of her prayer. An instant after, life came back to the child. When Milburga had reached the end of her own days, which were fragrant with charity and purity, she gathered all her community around her deathbed. "Beloved sisters," she said, "I have always loved you as my own soul, and I have watched over you like a mother. I have now come to the end of my pilgrimage; I leave you to God and to the blessed Virgin Mary." With which words she died. Four hundred years after her death her monastery, which had been destroyed by the Danes, was re-established by a colony of monks from Cluny. While they were building the church, a heavenly fragrance betrayed the place of Milburga's burial. Her relics were exposed to public veneration, and an innumerable crowd hastened to visit them — old and young, rich and poor, rivalling each other in the pilgrimage. All the surrounding country was covered by a tide of pilgrims: so great, notwithstanding the double invasion of Danes and Normans and the passage of centuries, was the fidelity of the English people to the memory of the first saints of their race.[75]

And the dead child.

23d Feb., 722.

[75] "Non a te recedam, nisi prolem meam restituas vivam. . . . Vos hactenus, dilectissimæ sorores, sicut animæ meæ viscera dilexi." — Capgrave, ap. Bolland., vol. iii. February, p. 390. "Vix patuli campi capiebant ag-

These three sisters were grandchildren of the savage Penda.

In order not to separate the three sisters from their mother, we have introduced them after the holy nuns of the dynasty of Hengist and Ethelbert, from whom they were descended by the mother's side. But by their father, who belonged to the reigning family of Mercia, they were the granddaughters of Penda, the most terrible enemy of the Christian name.[76]

The Mercian dynasty, descended from Penda, furnishes most of the saints.

In fact, a transformation far more sudden and not less complete than that which turned the granddaughters of the *Ravager* and *Man of Fire* into abbesses and saints, was wrought upon the posterity of the ferocious Penda of Mercia, the warlike octogenarian, who had been the last and most formidable hero of Anglo-Saxon paganism.[77] Of all the races descended from Odin who shared among them the sway of England, no one has furnished a larger list of nuns and saints to be inscribed in the national calendar than the descendants of Penda, as if they thus meant to pay a generous ransom for the calamities inflicted upon the new Christians of England by their most cruel enemy.[78] We will not return again to speak of his firstborn son, whose love for the daughter of Oswy made him the firstborn son of the Church in Mercia, the first Christian baptized in that country;[79] nor of his first successor Wulphere, the generous founder of Peterborough; nor of his other successor Ethelred, the devoted friend of Wilfrid, who ended his thirty years' reign by ten years of life in a monastery. We treat only at this moment of the daughters and granddaughters of the sanguinary victor who had cut off so many Christian kings among the neighboring nations.

An obstinate tradition found in the ancient English chronicles asserts that two of his daughters, Kyneburga and Kyneswitha, both gave up the thought of marriage to consecrate themselves to God. The eldest, who was married to the intimate friend of her brother Peada, the eldest son of King Oswy of Northumbria, the friend and first protector of Wilfrid,[80] is said to have left him with his consent to end her life in the cloister. The youngest, sought in marriage by

mina viatorum . . . cunctos in commune præcipitante fide." — Guill. Malmesb., *De Gest. Reg.*, lib. ii. c. 13.

[76] See genealogical table, Appendix VIII., p. 753.

[77] See pp. 225–514.

[78] "Ita parens perpetuo in Deum rebellis sanctissimos cœlo fructus effudit." — Thomas de Elmham, p. 189.

[79] See p. 294.

[80] See p. 293.

Offa, King of the East Saxons, used her connection with him only to persuade the young prince to embrace monastic life as she herself wished to do.[81] A more profound study, however, of the period has made the authenticity of this legend doubtful.[82] But it has proved that the two daughters of the bloody Penda contributed, with their brothers, to the establishment of the great Abbey of Medehampstede or Peterborough; that their names appear in the lists of the national assembly which sanctioned this foundation, and that they spent their retired and virginal lives in some retreat near the new sanctuary. After their death, they were buried at Peterborough; their relics, happily found after the burning of the monastery and the massacre of all the monks by the Danes, were carried back there on its restoration, and continued to be venerated there down to the twelfth century.

A third daughter of the terrible Penda, Eadburga, was also a nun, and became abbess at Dormuncester, according to the English martyrology. Her son Merwald, who did not reign, like his brothers, and never attained a higher rank than that of *subregulus* or ealdorman, married her who was afterwards Abbess of Minster, a union from which sprang the three holy sisters Milburga, Mildred, and Milgytha, whom we have just spoken of. Another son, Wulphere, who succeeded Penda on the throne of Mercia, had a saint for his wife, and of this marriage proceeded another holy saint, Wereburga, who was the fourth of the granddaughters of Penda whom grateful England placed upon her altars.

The wife of Wulphere, the son and successor of Penda, was Ermenilda, daughter of the King of Kent, and granddaughter, by her mother, of Anna, the King of East Anglia, who perished upon the battle-field defending his country and religion against the attacks of Penda.[83] This religion, henceforward triumphant, reconciled and united the posterity of the murderer and that of the victim. We thus come, through the essentially Christian and monastic dynasty of the Ascings of Kent to that of the Uffings of East Anglia, which was equally remarkable

The Uffings or dynasty of East Anglia.

[81] Guill. Malmesb., Ricard. Cirencester, Alford, Harpsfeld, Capgrave, &c. Pagi accepts this tradition: *Crit. in Baronium*, ad ann. 680.

[82] *Act. SS. Bolland.*, vol. i. March, p. 441. It is not known by what authority the author of the continuation of Dugdale makes Kyneburga the first abbess of the great monastery at Gloucester, the church of which, now a cathedral, is one of the most curious buildings in England. — Stevens, i. 266.

[83] See above, p. 282.

for the crowd of saints which it produced. King Anna, who married the sister of Hilda, the celebrated Abbess of Whitby, had a natural daughter, who was a nun in France, along with the daughter, by a former marriage, of her father's wife; both, as has been already said, were Abbesses of Faremoutier,[84] and both are reckoned among the saints.

The three daughters of King Anna, who died on the battle-field.

By his union with the sister of Hilda, King Anna had three daughters and a son. The son became in his turn the father of three daughters, two of whom were in succession Abbesses of the Monastery of Hackness, in Northumbria, founded by their grand-aunt St. Hilda, and the last, Eadburga, was that Abbess of Repton whom we have already encountered as the friend of the illustrious and generous hermit Guthlac.[85]

The three daughters of Anna — Etheldreda, Sexburga, and Withburga — are all counted among the saints. Let us speak, in the first place, of the latter, though she was the youngest of the three. She was sent to the country to be nursed, and remained there until she heard, while still quite young, the news of her father's death on the battle-field. She resolved immediately to seek a refuge for the rest of her life in cloistral virginity. She chose for her asylum a modest remnant of her father's lands at Dereham in Norfolk, and there built a little monastery. But she was so poor that she, her companions, and the masons who built her future dwelling, had to live on dry bread alone. One day, after she had prayed long to the blessed Virgin, she saw two does come out of the neighboring forest to drink at a stream whose pure current watered the secluded spot. Their udders were heavy with milk, and they permitted themselves to be milked by the virginal hands of Withburga's companions, returning every day to the same place, and thus furnishing a sufficient supply for the nourishment of the little community and its workmen.[86] This lasted until the ranger of the royal domain,

[84] See above, p. 663, and the genealogical table, Appendix IX., p. 756.

[85] See above, p. 588.

[86] "Juxta mare cum sua nutrice in quodam vico paterni juris. Ad sanctimonialem confugit professionem, ubi in umbra alarum Dei sperans suaviter requievit. . . . In humilem locum paterni juris devenit. . . . Mittit ad fontem quo silva grato irrigatur fluvio. . . . Duæ assiliunt cervæ. . . . Has mulgebant manus virgineæ. . . . Præpositus ipsius villæ . . . adductis canibus nitebatur insontes feras captare." — Bolland., vol. ii. March, p. 606.

There still exists at East Dereham, a small parish in Norfolk, a well bearing the name of St. Withburga. It is fed by a spring rising in the very place where the saint's body was laid before its translation to Ely. — *Notes and Queries*, third series, vol. iii. p. 247.

a savage and wicked man, who regarded with an evil eye the rising house of God, undertook to hunt down the two helpful animals. He pursued them with his dogs across the country, but, in attempting to leap a high hedge, with that bold impetuosity which still characterizes English horsemen, his horse was impaled on a post, and the hunter broke his neck.[87]

Withburga ended her life in this poor and humble solitude; but the fragrance of her gentle virtues spread far and wide. The fame of her holiness went through all the surrounding country. The worship given to her by the people of Norfolk was maintained with the pertinacity common to the Anglo-Saxon race, and went so far that, two centuries after her death, they armed themselves to defend her relics from the monks of Ely, who came, by the king's command, to unite them to those of her sisters at Ely.

Three generations of saints of the blood of Odin Abbesses at Ely.

To Ely, also, the monastic metropolis of East Anglia, and queen of English abbeys, we must transport ourselves to contemplate three generations of princesses issued from the blood of the Uffings and Ascings, and crowned by the nimbus of saints. There were, in the first place, the two Queens of Mercia and Kent, Etheldreda, whom our readers already know,[88] and her elder sister, Sexburga. This accomplished princess had married one of the Kings of Kent, the one who, after Ethelbert, had showed himself most zealous for the extension of the Gospel. It was she especially who moved him to destroy the last idols which still remained in his kingdom. After twenty-four years of conjugal life she became a widow, and was regent for four years of the kingdom of her son. As soon as he was old enough to reign, she abdicated, not only the crown, but secular life, took the veil from the hands of Archbishop Theodore, and founded a monastery in the Isle of Sheppey, situated at the mouth of the Thames, and separated from the mainland by that arm of the sea in which Augustin, on Christmas-day 579, baptized at once ten thousand Saxons. This monastery took and kept the name of *Minster*, like that which was founded at the same time by her niece Domneva

Sexburga, Queen of Kent.

640-664.

[87] The monastic chronicler describes the accident with all the spirit of a steeplechaser: "Equus in obstantem sepem urgentibus calcaribus incurrit, secusque acuta sude transfixus ilia, dum resiliendo tergiversaretur, sessor superbus supino capite excutitur, fractaque cervice exanimatur."

[88] See above, in the life of Wilfrid, p. 366.

in the neighboring Isle of Thanet. The church is still visible not far from the great roads of Sheerness, which has become one of the principal stations of the British navy. She there ruled a community of seventy-seven nuns, until she learned that her sister Etheldreda, having fled from the king her husband, according to the advice of Wilfrid, had taken refuge in the marshes of their native country, and had there formed a new asylum for souls resolute to serve God in solitude and virginity. Sexburga then resolved to return to her own country and become a simple nun under the crosier of her sister. "Farewell, my daughters," she said to her companions who were gathered round her. "I leave you Jesus for your protector, His holy angels for companions, and one of my daughters for your superior. . . . I go to East Anglia where I was born, in order to have my glorious sister Etheldreda for my mistress, and to take part immediately in her labors here below, that I may share her recompense above."

Abbess at Ely after her sister.

She was received with enthusiasm at Ely: the entire community came out to welcome her: and the two sister-queens wept with joy when they met. They lived together afterwards in the most sweet and tender union, rivalling each other in zeal for the service of God and the salvation of souls, Sexburga compelling herself always to take lessons of humility and fervor from her sister. When Etheldreda died, Sexburga replaced her as abbess, and ruled the great East Anglian monastery for twenty years before she too found her rest near the tomb which she had erected to her sister.[89]

679.

6th July, 699.

Besides her two sons, who reigned over Kent in succession, Sexburga had two daughters, one of whom, Earcongotha, lived and died, as has been already seen, in a French monastery; the other, Ermenilda, married to the son and successor of Penda, became, along with the illustrious exile Wilfrid, the principal instrument of the final conversion of Mercia, the greatest kingdom of the Heptarchy. Like her mother, she used all the

Ermenilda, Queen of Mercia, Abbess of Ely after her mother.

[89] "Vobis, O filiæ, Jesum derelinquo tutorem, sanctosque angelos paranymphos. . . . Ego gloriosæ sororis meæ magisterio informanda. . . . Regina reginam excepit, soror sororem cum tripudio introducit, fundunt ubertim præ gaudio lacrymas, et ex vera caritate inter eas lætitia germinatur. Cœlesti namque dulcedine delectatæ alterna invicem consolatione proficiunt. Venit dives illa de prælatione ad subjectionem. . . . Federatæ invicem beatæ sorores in unitate fidei." — *Historia Eliensis*, l. i. c. 18, 35.

influence which the love of her husband gave her to extirpate the last vestiges of idolatry in the country which had been the centre and last bulwark of Anglo-Saxon heathenism.[90] The example of her virtues was the most effectual of sermons; and it was, above all, by her incomparable sweetness, her pity for all misfortune, her unwearied kindness, that she touched the hearts of her subjects most.[91] Like her mother, too, it was her desire to offer herself entirely to God, to whom she had finally led back her people: as soon as she became a widow, she took the veil like her mother, and under her mother — for it was to Ely that she went to live in humility and chastity, under a doubly maternal rule. The mother and daughter contended which should give the finest examples of humility and charity.[92] At last, and still following in her mother's steps, Ermenilda, on the death of Sexburga, became abbess, and was thus the third princess of the blood of the Uffings who ruled the flourishing community of Ely. The local chronicle affirms that it was not her birth but her virtues, and even her love of holy poverty, which made her preferred to all others by the unanimous suffrages of her numerous companions.[93] She showed herself worthy of their choice: she was less a superior than a mother. After a life full of holiness and justice, her soul went to receive its eternal reward in heaven, and her body was buried beside those of her mother and aunt in the church of the great abbey which had thus the singular privilege of having for its three first abbesses a Queen of Northumbria, a Queen of Kent, and a Queen of Mercia.

Wereburga, daughter of Ermenilda, fourth Ab-

But this celebrated community was to be in addition the spiritual home of a fourth abbess and saint, in whom the blood of Penda and of Anna,[94] the victor

[90] "Nec quievit invicta, donec idola et ritus dæmoniacos extirparet. . . . Rex . . . sanctis uxoris desideriis, petitionibus ac monitis ultro se inclinans." — JOANN. BROMPTON, ap. BOLLAND., vol. ii. February, p. 687. See above, p. 631.

[91] "Ad omnem pietatem, compassionem et omnium necessitudinum subventionem materna viscera ante omnia induebat. Eadem in omnibus benignitas, in Christo caritas erat." — *Ibid.*, p. 691.

[92] "Contendebant alterutra pietate mater et filia, quæ humilior, quæ possit esse subjectior: mater sibi præferebat ejus, quam genuerat, virginitatem; virgo matris auctoritatem: utrinque et vincere et vinci gaudebant." — GOTSELINUS, *Vita S. Wereburgæ*, ap. BOLLAND., vol. i. February, p. 388.

[93] "Voto unanimi et consensu totius congregationis . . . successit: quæ totius dominationis ambitione neglecta . . . ad Christi paupertatem, quam optaverat, pauper ipsa devenit. . . . A cunctis digne suscepta, totius mater congregationis effecta est. Transivit autem plena sanctitate et justitia ad regna cœlestia."

[94] See genealogical tables, Appendix VII., VIII., and IX., pp. 751, 755, 756.

bess of Ely, of the same stock.

and the vanquished, was blended. This was Wereburga, the only daughter of Ermenilda, who had not followed, but preceded, her mother in the cloister.

These crowned Christians had learned in their palaces to despise wealth, luxury, and worldly pomp. They considered themselves prisoners of vanity.[95] Notwithstanding her beauty, which, like that of Etheldreda, is boasted by the annalists, Wereburga repulsed all her suitors. A monastery seemed to her the most noble of palaces. Following this impulse she went to her grandaunt Etheldreda at Ely, with the consent of her father, who himself took her there in state, accompanied by his royal suite. When her grandmother, Queen Sexburga, and her mother, Queen Ermenilda, followed her, three generations of princesses of the blood of Hengist and Odin were thus seen together, the grandmother, mother, and daughter, wearing the same monastic dress, and bound by the same rule for the service of God and man. Wereburga lived long as a humble and simple nun, fulfilling in her turn all the offices in the monastery, until the time when, after the death of her mother, she was called to take the place of abbess.

699.

Her uncle Ethelred, who, after a reign of thirty years, was to end his days in the cloister, was so struck with the prudence and capacity that were apparent, combined with holiness, in the character of Wereburga, that he intrusted her with a sort of supremacy, or rather a general right of inspection over the various nunneries in his kingdom.[96] It was in exercise of this office that, before entering on the government of Ely, she had been at the head of the communities of Weedon, Trentham, and Hanbury in turn, leaving everywhere a fragrance of virtue and kindness, and recollections of her constant solicitude for the benefit of all, which made her memory dear to the people, and of which as usual legendary lore has taken possession. Of all the incidents that adorn her biography we will quote one only, which explains better

[95] "Viluerant divitiæ tam matri quam filiæ: palatium habebant pro monasterio: aurum, gemmæ, vestes auro textæ, et quicquid fert pompatica mundi jactantia onerosa sibi magis erant quam gloriosa: et si forte his uti ad tempus regia compelleret dignitas, dolebant se potius vanitatis subjectas tanquam captivas." — *Act. SS. Bolland.*, Febr., vol. i. p. 387.

[96] "Cum formæ pulchritudo insigniter responderet, generositati suæ, cœpit speciosa facie cum speciosissima mente ad eum . . . contendere. . . . Procos et amatores regificos angelica pudicitia repulit. . . . Virginalis B. Wereburgæ pudicitia, mox ut valuit, hæc vincula exuit. . . . Tradidit ei monasteriorum sanctimonalium quæ in suo regno pollebant principatum." — Bolland., vol. i. February, pp. 387, 388.

than any other the popularity of her memory. It happened one day that a shepherd on the monastic lands of Weedon, a man distinguished by his holy life, was treated by the steward with that savage brutality which the modern English too often borrow from their Anglo-Saxon ancestors. At this sight the niece of the sovereign of Mercia, the granddaughter of the terrible Penda, threw herself at the feet of the cruel steward. "For the love of God," she said, "spare this innocent man; he is more pleasing in the eyes of God, who from the heights of heaven regards all our actions, than either you or I." The wretch paid no attention to her, and she began to pray, continuing until the steward, paralyzed and distorted by miraculous strength, had in his turn to appeal to the intervention of the saint that he might be restored to his natural condition.[97]

At the death of Wereburga the population in the neighborhood of the monastery where she died and where she was to be buried, fought for the possession of her body, an event which began to be customary at the death of our holy nuns. Two centuries later, in order to save her dear remains from the Danes, the *Ealdorman* of Mercia had them carried to Chester, a city already celebrated in the times of the Britons and Romans, and where a great abbey, with a church which is now admired among the fine cathedrals of England, rose over her tomb.

Nuns of the race of Cerdic in Wessex.

To complete this list of Anglo-Saxon princesses whose cloistral education and vocation have been revealed to us by the worship of which they were the object, it now remains to say a few words of the nuns who proceeded from the race which a century later was to absorb all the kingdoms of the Heptarchy, and form the political unity of England. This race of Cerdic, the founder of the kingdom of Wessex, has already given us an essentially monastic figure in the person of the legislator King Ina,[98] who, in the midst of a prosperous and glorious reign, gave up his crown and went to Rome to become a monk. It was his wife Ethelburga, as may be remembered, who, by a scene cleverly arranged, prepared him to leave his kingdom, his

[97] "Amentarius, vir piæ conversationis et quantum licuit sub humana servitute sanctæ vitæ. . . . Nunc villicus dominæ cum forte laniaret cruentissimo verbere . . . prorui ad pedes indignos lanistæ. . . . Parce, pro Dei amore, quare excarnificas hominem innocentem. . . . Continuo dura cervix et torva facies in terga illi reflectitur." — *Ibid.*, p. 389.

[98] See above, p. 592, and the genealogical table, Appendix X., p. 757.

country, and the world. She alone never left him; she accompanied him in his voluntary exile, and at his death returned to become a nun at Barking, in England.

St. Cuthburga, sister of King Ina.

Beside the wife of Ina, and, like her, of the blood of Cerdic,[99] the two sisters of the king, Coenburga[100] and Cuthburga, take their place in monastic annals, both devoted to religious life, and reckoned among the English saints. The latter is much the most celebrated of the two. She was married young to the learned and peaceful Aldfrid, King of Northumbria, whose important influence on the life of Wilfrid has been already seen, and was, like her sister-in-law Etheldreda, struck upon the throne by the thunderbolt of divine love, and in the lifetime of her husband desired to give up conjugal life and her royal state to consecrate herself to the service of God in the cloister. Less tender or less violent than his brother Egfrid, King Aldfrid consented to the separation,[101] and Cuthburga took the veil in the Monastery of Barking, on the Thames, in the kingdom of East Anglia. This house, which had been founded some time before by a holy bishop of London for his sister, in whom he had recognized a soul destined to govern those who gave themselves to God,[102] was already celebrated, not only for the fervor of its nuns, but by the zeal they displayed for the study of the Holy Scriptures, the Fathers of the Church, and even the classic tongues. The sister of Ina remained there only a few years. Her brother desired her to become the superior of a great foundation belonging to their race and country. He established her at Winbourne, in a very fertile country,[103]

700-705.

Foundress of Winbourne. 705.

[99] "Regii generis femina de Cerdici prosapia regis oriunda." — Guill. Malmesb.

[100] Placed by the Bollandists (vol. iv. Sept., die 12) among the *prætermissi*, because her adoration does not appear to them certain, though she is named in a crowd of martyrologies. Cf. Pagi, *Crit. in Annal.* Baronii, ad ann. 705.

[101] "Ante finem vitæ suæ connubio carnalis copulæ ambo pro Dei amore renunciavere." — Florent. Wigornensis. Cf. Bolland., vol. vi. August, p. 696.

[102] "In quo ipsa Deo devotarum mater ac nutrix posset existere feminarum, quæ suscepto monasterii regimine, condignam se in omnibus episcopo fratre, et ipsa recte vivendo et subjectis regulariter et pie consulendo præbuit." — Bede, iv. 6. This bishop was called Earconwald, and his sister Edilberga or Ethelburga. She must not be confounded with the widow of King Ina, who afterwards was a nun, and even abbess at Barking. The bishop himself became a monk at Chertsey, another monastery also founded by him on the banks of the Thames.

[103] "Quod Latine interpretatur *vini fons* dici potest, quia propter nimiam

near the royal residence of the kings of Wessex, and not far from the sea which washes the shores of the district now called Dorsetshire. The Queen of Northumbria, when she became abbess of the new community, carried with her the spirit and habits of her first monastic dwelling-place, and Winbourne soon became still more celebrated than Barking for the great development of its literary studies.

Frideswida, a West Saxon princess, becomes a nun in spite of the opposition of her friends; and her monastery is the cradle of the University of Oxford.

But before we discuss briefly the singular birth of ecclesiastical and classical literature among the Anglo-Saxon nuns, and before we leave the country of Wessex, which gave to the English their first monarch, Egbert, and to the Teutonic world its most illustrious apostle, Boniface, a place must be reserved for the touching and popular story of Frideswida, foundress and patron of Oxford — that is to say, of one of the most celebrated literary and intellectual centres of the universe. She was the daughter of one of the great chiefs of the country, to whom the legend gives the title of king, or at least of *subregulus*, and was, like all the heroines of Anglo-Saxon legend, sought in marriage by another king or chief called Algar, more powerful than her father, whose alliance she obstinately refused in order to consecrate herself to religious life. The prince, carried away by his passion, resolved to seize on her by force. To escape from his pursuit she threw herself, like Bega, into a boat, not to cross the sea, like the Irish princess, but to put the Thames between herself and her lover. After proceeding for ten miles on the river, she landed on the borders of a forest, where she hid herself in a sort of hut covered with ivy, but intended in the first place for the swine which, then as later, went to eat the acorns in the woods, and were one of the principal riches of the Anglo-Saxon proprietors.[104] It was not a secure refuge for her. Algar, growing more and more in earnest, tracked her everywhere, with the intention of sacrificing her to the brutality of his companions as well as to his own. But at the moment when, exhausted with weariness, she was about to fall into his hands, she bethought herself of the great saints who, from the earliest days of the Church, had defended and saved their virginity at the price of their life. She invoked Catherine,

claritatem et saporem eximium quo cæteris terræ illius aquis præstare videbatur, hoc nomen accepit." — Rodolphi, *Vita S. Liobæ*, ap. *Acta SS. O. S. B.*, sæc. iii. p. 2.

[104] See the first chapter of *Ivanhoe*.

the most illustrious martyr of the Eastern Church, and Cecilia, the sweet and heroic Roman whose name, inserted in the canon of the mass, was already familiar to all the new Christians. Her prayer was granted. God struck the savage Anglo-Saxon with sudden blindness, which put an end to his furious pursuit.

From this incident sprang a wild but obstinate tradition, according to which the kings of England for several centuries carefully avoided living or even passing by Oxford, for fear of losing their eyesight.[105] Frideswida, thus miraculously saved, obtained by her prayers the restoration of sight to her persecutor; then, with her father's consent, and after some years passed in solitude, she founded near Oxford, at the spot of her deliverance, a monastery where a crowd of Saxon virgins ranged themselves under her authority, and where she ended her life, dying in the same year 735. as the Venerable Bede, and consoled during her last sufferings by the apparition of the two virgin martyrs, St. Catherine and St. Cecilia, to whom she had once so successfully appealed.

The tomb of Frideswida, the chapel she erected in the depth of the wood where she had hidden herself, the fountain which sprang at her prayer, attracted up to the thirteenth century a crowd of pilgrims, who were led thither by the fame of the miraculous cures there performed. But of all the miracles collected after her death, none is so touching as that which, told during her lifetime, contributed above everything else to increase the fame of sanctity with which she was soon surrounded. It happened one day that an unfortunate young man, struck with leprosy, met her on the road: from the moment that he perceived her he cried, "I conjure you, virgin Frideswida, by the Almighty God, to kiss me in the name of Jesus Christ, His only Son." The maiden, overcoming the horror felt by all of this fearful disease, approached him, and after having made the sign of the cross, she touched his lips with a sisterly kiss.

She kisses a young leper.

[105] "In derelicto porcorum mapali hædera obducto delituit. . . . Nec latibulum latere potuit amantem, nec cordis desidia obfuit, quin persequeretur fugitantem. . . . Ille vi agere intendit. . . . Lenonum ludibrio polluenda. . . . Puella jam de fuga desperans simulque pro lassitudine nusquam progredi potens. . . . Hinc innatus est horror regibus Angliæ, ut nec unus profecto successorum ejus Oxenfordiam præsumatur intrare." — LELAND, *Collectanea*, ap. DUGDALE, vol. i. p. 173. Cf. BOLLAND., vol. viii. Oct., pp. 533–568. Henry III. was the first English king who disregarded this prejudice, and the misfortunes of his reign have been attributed to this presumption.

Soon after the scales of his leprosy fell off, and his body became fresh and wholesome like that of a little child.[106]

The church in which the body of Frideswida rests, and the monastery which she had founded, were the objects of public veneration and the gifts of many kings during the middle ages. It would occupy too much of our space to tell how this monastery passed into the hands of regular canons, and became one of the cradles of the celebrated University of Oxford. Unquestionably the first school which is proved to have existed on this spot, destined to so much literary fame, was attached to the sanctuary of our Anglo-Saxon princess.[107] Oxford and Westminster,[108] the two greatest names in the intellectual and social history of England, thus both date from the monastic origin in which is rooted everything which was dear and sacred to old England.

The monastery of St. Frideswida, transformed into a college by Cardinal Wolsey, is still, under the name of *Christ-Church*, the most considerable college in the University of Oxford. Her church, rebuilt in the twelfth century, is the cathedral of that city.[109] Her body, according to the common opinion, still rests there, and her shrine is shown ; but it must be added that, under Elizabeth, and after the final triumph of Anglican reform, a commissioner of the Queen, who has himself related the fact in an official report, believed himself entitled to place beside the relics of Frideswida the body of a disveiled nun married to an apostate priest called Pietro Vermigli, who had been called to Oxford as a reformer and professor of the new doctrine. The commissioner mixed the bones of the saint and those of the concubine in such a manner that it was impossible to distinguish the one from the other, and placed them in a stone coffin, on which he engraved the words, now happily effaced, *Hic requiescit religio cum superstitione*.[110]

[106] " Ecce inter turbam . . . adest juvenis immanissima lepra et postulis toto deforatus (*sic*) corpore. . . . Adjuro te, virgo Frideswida, per Deum omnipotentem, ut des mihi osculum. . . . At illa caritatis igne succensa illico accessit. . . . Ore virginis os leprosi tangitur, et . . . statim caro ejus sicut caro parvuli efficitur." — Bolland., vol. viii. Oct., p. 565.

[107] Ozanam, *Notes Inédites sur l'Angleterre.*

[108] See above, p. 193.

[109] The choir, with its superimposed arches, is specially admirable, as well as the tomb of Guitmond, first prior of the restored monastery in 1549, that of Sir Henry de Bath, Chief-Justice of England in 1251, and the graceful chapter-house of the thirteenth century. At Christ-Church resides the celebrated Dr. Pusey, canon of the cathedral.

[110] See the learned and copious article of P. Bossue on St. Frideswida, ap. Bolland., vol. viii. Oct., p. 553–556.

III.

It may be a matter of surprise that there is nothing in the legend of St. Frideswida, nor in the recollections of the early days of her foundation, to connect them with the incontestable traditions which prove the intellectual and literary development of the great nunneries in England, of which something has already been said. We return to the subject, were it only in passing, reserving to ourselves the power of going back upon it when it becomes time to discuss the colonies of learned nuns who, issuing from their insular beehives, lent effectual aid to St. Boniface and the other Anglo-Saxon missionaries of Germany.

It is proved by numerous and undoubted witnesses that literary studies were cultivated during the seventh and eighth centuries in the female monasteries with no less care and perseverance than in the communities of men, and even perhaps with more enthusiasm. Was this, as has been supposed, a consequence of the new spirit which Archbishop Theodore had brought from Greece and Italy, and with which he had inspired all the monastic Church of England? or was it rather a tradition of Frankish Gaul, where the first Anglo-Saxon nuns had been educated, and where the example of Radegund and her companions shows us to what a degree classical habits and recollections found an echo in cloisters inhabited by women alone? [111]

At all events it is apparent that the Anglo-Saxon nuns interpreted the obligation to work which was imposed on them by their rule, to occupy the time which remained after the performance of their liturgical duties, as applying specially to study. They did not neglect the occupations proper to their sex, as is apparent by the example of the priestly vestments embroidered for Cuthbert by the abbess-queen Etheldreda. They even improved the art of embroidery in gold and silver stuffs, ornamented with pearls and jewels, for the use of the clergy and the church, so much, that the term "English work" (*opus Anglicum*) was long consecrated to this kind of labor. But the work of the hand was far from satisfying them. They left the distaff and the needle, not only to copy manuscripts and ornament them with miniatures, according to the taste of their time, but above all to read and

[111] See above, vol. i. p. 488.

study the holy books, the Fathers of the Church, and even classic authors. All, or almost all, knew Latin. Convent corresponded with convent in that language. Some of them became acquainted with Greek. Some were enthusiastic for poetry and grammar, and all that was then adorned with the name of science. Others devoted themselves more readily to the study of the Pentateuch, the Prophets, and the New Testament, taking for guides the commentaries of the ancient doctors, and seeking out historical, allegorical, or mystic interpretations for the most obscure texts.[112] It has been made apparent by what was said in respect to the cowherd Ceadmon, transformed into a poet and translator of Holy Scripture, to what extent the study of the Bible had been cultivated at Whitby under the reign of the great Abbess Hilda.[113]

Each community of women was thus at once a school and workshop, and no monastic foundation is to be met with which was not, for nuns as well as for monks, a house of education, in the first place for the adults, who formed its first nucleus, and afterwards for the young people who crowded around them.[114] Thus were trained the cultivated nuns who quoted Virgil in writing to St. Boniface, and too often added Latin verses, of their own fashion, to their prose;[115] who copied for him the works he had need of, now the Epistles of St. Peter in gilded letters, now the Prophets writ large to suit weak sight;[116] who consoled and nourished him in his exile by the abundance and beauty of the books they sent him; and among whom he found those illustrious fellow-workers, whom one of his biographers declares to have been deeply versed in all liberal studies,[117] and who lent so stout a hand in the conversion of the Germans.

Intellectual life at Barking under Abbess Hildelida.

But the example most frequently quoted is that of Barking, where we have seen the wife and sister of Ina, the Queen of Northumbria and the Queen of Wessex, take the veil in succession, the one during the lifetime, the other after the death of her

[112] Mabillon, *Annal. Bened.*, vol. ii. p. 143; Lingard, *Antiquities*, vol. ii. p. 193; and especially Karl Zell, who, in a recent work, *Lioba und die frommen Angelsächsischen Frauen* (Fribourg, 1860), has most conscientiously treated of all that regards the studies and the whole life of the Anglo-Saxon nuns.

[113] See above, p. 264.

[114] The following is said of St. Cuthbert's foundation at Carlisle (see above, p. 402): "Ubi sanctimonalium congregatione stabilita . . . in profectum divinæ servitutis scholas instituit." — Simeon Dunelmensis, i. 9.

[115] S. Bonifacii et Lulli *Epistolæ*, No. 13, 23, 148, 149; ed. Jaffé.

[116] *Ibid.*, No. 13, 32, 55.

[117] Othlo, *De Vita et Virtutibus S. Bonifacii*, p. 490.

husband. The abbess of this convent was Hildelida, whose wise administration and holy life, prolonged to a very advanced age,[118] have been celebrated by Bede, and to whom her friendship with St. Aldhelm and St. Boniface gave additional fame. It was to her and her community that the famous Abbot of Malmesbury dedicated his *Praise of Virginity*, composed at first in prose, and which was rewritten in verse at a later period. In this dedication, he names, besides the Abbess and Queen Cuthburga, eight other nuns, who were bound to him by ties of blood or of intimate friendship, whose holy fame seemed to him an honor to the Church, and whose many and affectionate letters filled him with joy.[119]

This treatise, like all the other important writings of Aldhelm, is very uninviting to the reader, being full of pedantry and emphasis. But it is very interesting to all who desire to realize the ideas and images which one of the most holy and learned pontiffs of the Anglo-Saxon Church naturally appealed to, in addressing himself to the nuns of his own country and time. He quotes to them all the great examples of virginity which the Old and New Testaments could supply, or which were to be found in the lives of the Fathers and Doctors, and especially in the history of the martyrs of both sexes. But he also quotes to them Virgil and Ovid, and among others the well-known line —

> "Quadrupedante putrem sonitu quatit ungula campum;"

and that from the *Epithalamium* —

> "Mellea tunc roseis hærescunt labia labris."[120]

He does not confine himself to a commonplace image, by describing them as bees who seek their honey from the most different flowers. He compares them now to athletes in the circus, taking advantage of the metaphor to make an enumeration of all the Olympian games; now to warlike cohorts engaged in a desperate struggle against what he calls the

[118] "Devota deo famula . . . usque ad ultimam senectutem eidem monasterio strenuissime, in observantia disciplinæ regularis et in earum quæ ad communes usus pertinent rerum providentia præfuit." — *Hist. Eccles.*, iv. 10. Cf. S. Bonifacii *Epist.*, 10, ed. Jaffé.

[119] "Nec non Osburgæ contribulibus necessitudinem nexibus conglutinatis, Aldgidæ ac Scholasticæ, Hildburgæ et Burngidæ, Eulaliæ ac Teclæ, rumore sanctitatis concorditer Ecclesiam ornantibus." — *De Laudibus Virginitatis*, p. 1, ed. Giles.

[120] *Ibid.*, c. 35.

eight great vices; and anon he borrows his images and exhortations from military life, always mixing, in his singular Latin, modes and turns of expression which are essentially Greek, and which presuppose, among several at least of his correspondents, a certain acquaintance with the Greek language. The last lines of his treatise breathe a touching humility and tenderness. He compares himself, a poor sinner who, still plunged in the waves of corruption, shows to others the perfect shore of the perfect land, to a deformed painter who has undertaken to represent the features of beauty. "Help me, then, dear scholars of Christ," he says; "let your prayers be the reward of my work, and, as you have so often promised me, may your community be my advocates before the Almighty. Farewell, you who are the flowers of the Church, the pearls of Christ, the jewels of Paradise, the heirs of the celestial country, but who are also my sisters according to monastic rule, and my pupils by the lessons I have given you." [121]

His letters to other nuns.

Nor were the nuns of Barking the only ones to whom Aldhelm addressed the effusions of his unwearied pen, and his laboriously classic muse; and we are expressly told that the works he dedicated to them were very popular among all who followed the same career.[122] Many of his letters and poems are addressed to nuns whose names are not given, but of whom he begs not only intercession with God, but protection against criticism here below.[123] The communities who were honored by his visits or by his correspondence took pleasure, no doubt, in his play on words, and in the Greco-Latin acrostics and verbal refinements with which the celebrated prelate adorned his prose and verse; and insignificant as this kind of production appears to us now, it implies nevertheless a certain degree of literary culture generally diffused throughout the Anglo-Saxon cloisters.

But the interest which attaches to this revelation of an intellectual movement among the Anglo-Saxon nuns is in-

[121] "Pulchrum depinxi hominem pictor fœdus, aliosque ad perfectionis litus dirigo, qui adhuc in delictorum fluctibus versor. . . . Valete, o flores Ecclesiæ, sorores monasticæ, alumnæ scholasticæ, Christi margaritæ, paradisi gemmæ, et cœlestis patriæ participes." — *De Laudibus Virginitatis*, c. 60.

[122] "Berkingensium quidem nomini dedicata; sed omnibus eamdem professionem anhelantibus valitura." — Guillelm. Malmesb., i. 35.

[123] "Sed vos virgineis comit quas infula sertis,
Hoc opus adversus querulos defendite scurras," &c.
— S. Aldhelmi *Opera*, p. 213, ed. Giles.

creased, when it is remarked that intellectual pursuits, though intensely appreciated, were far from holding the first place in the heart and spirit of these new aspirants to literary glory. The salvation of souls and the tender union of hearts carried the day over all the rest. In a letter written to an abbess distinguished by birth as well as by knowledge and piety, enclosing to her a series of leonine verses he had made on a journey he had taken into Cornwall, Aldhelm takes pains to demonstrate that he is specially inspired by a tender gratitude towards her who of all women has shown him the most faithful affection.[124] And another called Osgitha, whom he exhorts to a careful study of the Holy Scriptures, he addresses as his beloved sister, ten times, and even a hundred, a thousand times beloved.[125]

Let us here take leave of Aldhelm and his learned correspondents, reminding our readers that one of his most important acts, that by which he consented to remain abbot of his three monasteries after his elevation to the episcopate, is dated from Winbourne,[126] which was the great feminine community of Wessex, founded by King Ina, and ruled by his sister Cuthburga. It was at the same time the monastery most famed for literary activity. The education of the young novices was the object of the most active and scrupulous care. Intellectual labor alternated with the works of the needle; but it is expressly said of Lioba, the nun whose name has thrown most lustre upon that community, the holy companion of Boniface in his German apostleship, that she devoted much more time to reading and studying the Holy Scriptures than to manual labor.[127] Let us also not forget that the development of spiritual fervor by prayer and the continual celebration of the monastic liturgy, occupied much the greatest place in the employment of the time and strength of all these young and generous souls.

[124] "Nullam reperisse me istic habitantium feminini sexus personam fideliorem." — S. Aldhelmi *Opera*, p. 104.

[125] "Dilectissimæ atque amantissimæ sorori. . . . Saluto te diligenter, Osgitha, ex intimo cordis cubiculo. . . . Vale! decies dilectissima, imo, centies et millies." — *Ibid.*, p. 90.

[126] Ap. Giles, p. 351. — Cf. above, p. 539.

[127] "Crevit ergo puella et tanta abbatissæ omniumque sororum cura erudiebatur, ut nihil aliud præter monasterium et cœlestis disciplinæ studia cognosceret. . . . Quando non legebat, operabatur manibus ea quæ sibi injuncta erant. . . . Lectioni tamen atque auditioni sanctarum Scripturarum magis quam labori manuum operam impendit." — *Vita S. Liobæ*, auct. Rudolpho, c. 7, ap. *Acta SS. O. S. B.*, vol. iv.

There were five hundred nuns at Winbourne, who were all present at the nightly service.[128] It is easy to imagine how much authority, intelligence, and watchfulness, were necessary to rule such a crowd of young souls, all, no doubt, inspired with the love of heaven, but all, at the same time, sprung from races too newly converted to have freed themselves from the characteristic features of Saxon pride and rudeness. This necessity explains why princesses of those ancient dynasties, whom the Anglo-Saxons were accustomed to follow even without always respecting them, were everywhere sought for as superiors of the great communities; and why, after the sister of King Ina, another sister of the king, Tetta,[129] was called to the government of Winbourne, at the time when Lioba was being educated there. Among the crowd of minor authorities who lent their aid to this zealous and pious abbess, was the provost (*præpositа*), the deaconess (*decana*), the portress, whose business it was to close the church after complines, and to ring the bell for matins, and who was furnished with an immense collection of keys, some of silver, others of copper or iron, according to their different destinations.[130] But neither the rank nor moral influence of the princess-abbess was always successful in restraining the barbarous impetuosity of that monastic youth. The nun who held the first rank among them after the abbess, and who was principally occupied with the care of the novices, made herself odious by her extreme severity: when she died, the hate which she inspired burst forth without pity: she was no sooner buried than the novices and young nuns rushed to the churchyard, and began to jump and dance upon her tomb, as if to tread under foot her detested corpse. This went so far that the soil, freshly filled in, which covered the remains of their enemy, sank half a foot below the level of the surrounding ground. The abbess had great trouble to make them feel what she called the hardness and cruelty of their hearts, and which she punished by imposing upon them three days of fasting and prayers for the deceased.[131]

The five hundred nuns of Winbourne.

The novices tread the tomb of their mistress under foot.

[128] *Vita S. Liobæ*, c. 5.

[129] "Huic ergo loco post nonnullas abbatissas et spiritales matres prælata est virgo religiosa nomine *Tetta*, genere quidem secundum sæculi dignitatem nobilis (soror quippe regis erat), morum autem probitate et sanctarum spectamine virtutum multo nobilior." — *Ibid.*, c. 2.

[130] *Ibid.*, c. 5.

[131] "Nec tamen conquievit animus juvenum odientium eam, quin statim ut

IV.

Double monastery.

All that remains to be said of the strange but general institution of double monasteries — that is, two distinct communities of monks and nuns living together in the same place and under the same government — may be attached to the name of Winbourne. It is of all the establishments of this kind the one whose organization is best known to us. We have already met with the institution in Frankish Gaul, with St. Radegund and St. Columbanus, at Poitiers, at Remiremont, and elsewhere. We shall find them again in Belgium and Germany as soon as the monastic missionaries shall have carried the light of the Gospel there. Their origin has been largely discussed,[132] and we do not pretend to give any decision on the subject. Examples may be found among the Fathers of the desert in Egypt and as far back as the times of St. Pacome,[133] who, however, placed the Nile between the two communities under his government. We have already pointed out a remarkable attempt at the same institution in Spain caused by the prodigious crowd of monastic neophytes of both sexes who gathered round St. Fructuosus.[134] Notwithstanding the assertion of Muratori to the contrary, the unassailable testimony of Bede proves that there was at least one community of the same kind in Rome in the middle of the seventh century.[135]

These establishments, however, were more popular in Ireland than anywhere else, where they sprang spontaneously

aspicerent locum in quo sepulta est, maledicerent crudelitati ejus; immo ascendentes tumulum, et quasi funestum cadaver conculcantes, in solatium doloris sui amarissimis insultationibus mortuæ exprobrarent. Quod cum mater congregationis venerabilis Tetta comperisset, temerariam juvenculārum præsumptionem correptionis vigore compescens, perrexit ad tumulum et mirum in modum conspexit terram quæ desuper congesta erat subsedisse et usque ad semi pedis spatium infra summitatem sepulcri descendisse." — *Vita S. Liobæ*, c. 3.

[132] Mabillon, *Ann. Bened.*, vol. i. p. 125; Lanigan, *Eccles. Hist. of Ireland*, vol. ii. pp. 19, 20; Lingard, *Antiquities*, vol. i. 212; and above all, Varin, 2d *Memoir*, already frequently quoted.

[133] See vol. i. p. 179. Cf. Palladius, *Hist. Lausiaca*, 30–42; Bolland., vol. iii. May, p. 304.

[134] See above, vol. i. p. 435.

[135] "Cum monachum quemdam de vicino *Virginum* monasterio, nomine Andream, pontifici offerret, hic ab omnibus qui novere, dignus episcopatu judicatus est." — *Hist. Eccl.*, vol. iv. p. 1. Muratori maintains that double monasteries have always been unknown in Italy. — *Antiquit. Medii Ævi*, vol. v. p. 527.

from the beginning of the conversion of the island, to such a point that the apostle of the country, St. Patrick, saw himself obliged to forestall by wise precautions the disorders and scandals which might have arisen from the too close and frequent intercourse of the monks and nuns.[136] At the same time, the first pontiffs and missionaries of Hibernia, strong in the exceptional purity of the Irish temperament, which has continued to our own day the glorious privilege of the race, and strong above all in their own fervor and exclusive passion for the salvation of souls, feared neither the society of the women they had converted, nor the charge of governing them when they wished to devote themselves to God.[137] Less assured of themselves, if not more humble, their successors, those who are described as *saints of the second order* in the hagiographical annals of Ireland, declined the responsibility of administering the more or less numerous communities of virgins who grouped themselves around the older saints.[138] They carried this restriction so far as to refuse access to their retreat even to recluses who came to seek the viaticum from them.[139] However, the custom of combining the foun-

[136] "Sanxivit ut a mulieribus viri sequestrarentur, et utrique sua ædificia et oratoria distincta construerentur." — Jocelinus, *Vit. S. Patr.*, ap. Bolland., p. 592. The ninth canon of the 2d council, which is attributed to him, is thus expressed: "Monachus et virgo, unus ab hinc et alia ab aliunde, in uno hospitio non commeant, nec in uno curru a villa in villam discurrant, nec assidue invicem confabulationem exerceant." — Ap. Coletti, vol. iv. p. 754.

[137] "Mulierum administrationem et consortia non respuebant: quia super petram Christi fundati, ventum tentationis non timebant." Original text quoted by Ussher. To this category of the saints there may be added Bishop Dega Maccaryl (already spoken of above, vol. i. p. 695), who died in 589, and of whom it is said: "Confluxerunt undique ad eum sanctæ virgines, ut *sub ejus regula* degerent. . . . Moniales illas versus septentrionem ducens, in diversis locis diversa monasteria, in quibus cum aliis virginibus seorsum Deo servirent, eis, prout, decuit, construxit." — Bolland., vol. iii. August, p. 660. It appears also that a neighboring abbot reproached the holy bishop, "ut cum de susceptione virginum objurgaret."

There is also the case of the thirty girls enamoured of St. Mochuda, who ended by becoming nuns under his authority, already mentioned, vol. i. p. 697. And also that of St. Monynna, the contemporary of St. Patrick, who, with eight other virgins and a widow, went to the holy bishop Ibar, and "longo tempore sub ipsius disciplina cum multis aliis virginibus permansit." — Bolland., vol. ii. July, p. 291.

[138] "Pauci episcopi et multi presbyteri, diversas missas celebrabant, et diversas regulas; unum Pascha XIV. luna; unam tonsuram ab aure ad aurem; *abnegabant mulierum administrationem*, separantes eas a monasteriis." — Text quoted by Ussher.

[139] This is related of St. Senanus, who, about 530, founded a monastery in an island at the mouth of the Shannon, where no woman was permitted to disembark: —

dation, or at least the administration, of nunneries, along with that of similar communities of men, continued to prevail. But as the holy abbots declined to undertake the charge of nuns, the conditions had to be reversed. From this fact, no doubt, arose the singular custom universally established from the seventh century, not in Ireland, where I can find no example of it, but in all the Irish colonies, of two united communities, placed, not the nuns under the rule of an ecclesiastic, but the monks under that of the abbess of their neighboring nuns.

Such was the state of things in the foundations which we have seen develop under the influence of St. Columbanus, the Irish apostle of the Gauls, in the Vosges, in the valley of the Marne and of the Seine; and such too are the conditions which we shall find in Belgium when we consider the monastic influence of the Irish and Britons there. The Anglo-Saxon princesses devoted to the cloister found this custom established in the houses where they received their monastic education in Gaul, at Faremoutier, les Andelys, Chelles, and Jouarre,[140] and brought it into England, where it was immediately adopted; for of all the great nunneries of which we have spoken, not one was without a monastery of clerks or priests placed at the gates of the community of nuns, and ruled by their abbess.[141] Let us recall only Whitby, where the Princess Hilda directed the monastery school, the nursery of so many bishops and missionaries, but of which the cowherd-poet Ceadmon, so often quoted, remains the principal celebrity;[142] and Ely, where Queen Etheldreda attracted by her example, and arrayed under her authority, not only holy priests, but even men of elevated rank in secular life.[143] No doubt the necessity of providing for the spiritual wants, in the first place, of the numerous nuns who filled these monasteries, and of the lay population spread over the vast lands

> "Cui præsul: quid feminis
> Commune est cum monachis?
> Nec te nec ullam aliam
> Admittemus in insulam."
> *Vita Rhythmica*, ap. LANIGAN, ii. 7.

[140] BEDE, iii. 8. MABILLON, *Acta SS. O. S. B.*, i. 420, iii. 20.

[141] "Erat eo tempore monasteriis feminarum, amplis præsertim ac numerosis, conjuncta virorum, qui iis sacra administrarent, et familiam reliquam erudirent: eidem tamen abbatissæ omnes obediebant." — BOLLAND., *De S. Cedmono*, vol. ii. February, p. 552.

[142] See p. 264.

[143] See p. 372. Another instance is that of Repton, where St. Guthlac became a monk under the Abbess Elfrida. See p. 586 of this volume.

which the foundress, generally a princess of the reigning dynasty, conferred upon her community, contributed more than anything else to the extension of so singular a custom. The priests and clerks charged with this double mission found themselves naturally collected in a sort of community under the authority of her who was at once the spiritual superior and the lady — the seigneuress, if such a word may be used — of the monastic lands.[144] The whole together formed a sort of vast family, governed by a mother instead of a father, maternity being the natural form of authority — all the more so as the neophytes were often admitted with all their dependants, as was Ceadmon, who entered Whitby with all belonging to him, including a child of three years old, whom Bede describes as being nursed and cared for in the cell of the learned nuns of Barking.[145]

The Greco-Asiatic Archbishop Theodore, when he came from Rome to complete the organization of the Anglo-Saxon Church,[146] does not appear to have relished this institution, which was not unknown to the Christian East, but which had probably left equivocal recollections behind it. In one of his charges he forbids all new foundations of this description, though respecting those which already existed.[147] But like so many other canons and decrees, his prohibition was disregarded; communities founded after his death, like Winbourne, were in full flower in the eighth century, and nothing indicates that double monasteries had ceased to flourish up to the general destruction of monasteries by the Danes at the end of the ninth century. They were swept away by that calamity, and no trace of them is to be found in the monastic revival of which King Alfred and the great Abbot Dunstan were the authors. It was a peculiarity belonging to the youth of the Church, which, like youth in all circumstances, went through all the difficulties, dangers, storms, and disorders of nature proper to that age, which disappear in maturer times.

[144] Lingard, *Antiquities*, vol. i. p. 212.

[145] "Cædmon . . . susceptum in monasterium cum omnibus suis fratrum cohorti associavit." — *Hist. Eccl.*, iv. 24. "Puer trium circiter annorum . . . qui propter infantilem adhuc ætatem in virginum Deo dedicatarum solebat cella nutriri, ibique medicari." — *Ibid.*, iv. 8. We meet with many examples of a mother and daughter or two sisters being dedicated to God in the same convent. — Cf. Bede, v. 3.

[146] See p. 346.

[147] "Non licet viris feminas habere monachas, neque feminis viros, tamen non destruamus illud quod consuetudo est in hac terra." — *Capitula et Fragmenta*, ap. Thorpe, *Ancient Laws and Institutes*, p. 307.

This institution, however, is a new and very striking proof of the power of woman in the social order, a fact which we have already pointed out, following the example of Tacitus, both among the Germans and Britons.[148] Maintained, consolidated, and, in certain respects, sanctified by the Christian spirit among the Anglo-Saxons, it has remained very powerful in the race. It has produced that deference at once official and popular for the weaker sex, and, I willingly add, that public modesty of which the Anglo-Saxons of the present day in the United States give us so brilliant and honorable an example in their primary schools for boys, directed often in the midst of great cities, by young girls, who are protected against all outrage, and even all sarcasm, by the universal respect of both fathers and sons.[149]

Let us hasten to add that even at this primitive period no trace of the abuses or disorders which the suspicious spirit of modern criticism might summon into being, are to be found. This is explained by the precautions everywhere to be met with when double monasteries existed, and which seem never to have been discontinued. The double family lived separately, in two buildings entirely distinct,[150] though near. As a general rule the nuns did not leave their cloister, and the monks were strictly forbidden to enter the enclosure reserved to the nuns, without the permission of the abbess, and the presence of several witnesses. At Winbourne, which must always be quoted as the type of establishments of this description, the two monasteries rose side by side, like two fortresses, each surrounded by battlemented walls. The austerity of primitive discipline existed in full vigor at the time when Lioba, who was destined, under the auspices of St. Boniface, to introduce conventual life among the women of Germany, resided there. The priests were bound to leave the church immediately after the celebration of mass, bishops themselves were not admitted into the nunnery, and the abbess communicated with the external world, to give her orders to her

720-748.

[148] "Neque enim sexum in imperio discernunt." — *Agric.*, c. 16. "Solitum Britannis feminarum ductu bellare." — *Annal.*, xiv. 35.

[149] Emile de Laveleye, *De l'Instruction Publique en Amérique*, confirmed by the accounts of all impartial travellers.

[150] "Multi de fratribus ejusdem monasterii qui aliis erant in ædibus" (Bede, iii. 8), regarding Faremoutier. "Eam monasterii partem, qua ancillarum Dei caterva a virorum erat secreta contubernio" (*Ibid.*, iv. 7), as to Barking.

spiritual and temporal subjects, only through a barred window.[151]

Coldingham is the only great community of this kind mentioned in history, the memory of which is not irreproachable, a fact which has been already mentioned in treating of the historical position of the Northumbrian princess, Ebba, foundress of that house.[152] It must, however, be fully granted that the scandals pointed out by the severe and sincere Bede are not such as we might be tempted to expect; they are rather failures in obedience to the cloistral rule, than any infringements of Christian morality. These scandals, besides, whether small or great, were gloriously atoned for in the following century, when, under another Ebba, the nuns of Coldingham, to escape from the brutality of the Danish conquerors, cut off their noses and lips, and by their heroic self-mutilation added the palm of martyrdom to that of virginity.[153]

With this single exception, the unanimous testimony of contemporary authors, as well as of more recent annalists, does full homage to the obedience to rule, the fervor, and even austerity of the double monasteries among the Anglo-Saxons. A great number of the most illustrious female saints, and prelates most distinguished by their virtues and knowledge, were educated in these communities, which were surrounded by universal veneration, and whose pure fame was never tarnished by the breath of calumny.[154]

The abuses of the Anglo-Saxon monasteries.

Is this to say that all was perfect in the monastic institutions of the country and time which I have undertaken to bring to the knowledge of the world? God forbid that I should thus attempt to deceive my readers. The more I advance in my laborious and thankless task — that is to say, the nearer I approach to my grave — the more do I feel mastered and overpowered

[151] "Porro ipsa congregationis mater, quando aliquid exteriorum pro utilitate monasterii ordinare vel mandare necesse erat, per fenestram loquebatur, et inde decernebat quæcumque ordinanda aut mandanda utilitatis ratio exigebat. . . . Virgines vero cum quibus ipsa indesinenter manebat, adeo immunes a virorum voluit esse consortio, ut non tantum laicis aut clericis, verum etiam ipsis quoque episcopis in congregationem earum negaret ingressum." — *Vita S. Liobæ*, auct. Rudolpho, c. 2, ap. *Acta SS. O. S. B.*, sæc. iii. p. 2.

[152] See p. 270.

[153] "Exemplum . . . non solum sanctimonialibus illis proficuum, verum etiam omnibus successuris virginibus æternaliter amplectendum." — Matth. West., Rog. Wendov., Ric. Cirenc., ii. 70.

[154] Lingard, *l. c.*

by an ardent and respectful love of truth, the more do I feel myself incapable of betraying truth, even for the benefit of what I most love here below. The mere idea of adding a shadow to those which already shroud it, fills me with horror. To veil the truth, to hide it, to forsake it under the pretence of serving the cause of religion, which is nothing but supreme truth, would be, in my opinion, to aggravate a lie by a kind of sacrilege. Forgive me, all timid and scrupulous souls! But I hold that in history everything should be sacrificed to truth — that it must be always spoken, on every subject, and in its full integrity. The lying panegyric, where truth is sacrificed merely by leaving out what is true, is quite as repugnant to me as the invectives of calumny.

I have therefore sought with conscientious care for evidences of all the abuses and disorders which could exist in English monasteries, and especially in nunneries. If I have found almost nothing, it is not for want of having thoroughly searched through the historians and other writers of the time. I may then venture to conclude that evil, which is inseparable from everything human, has left fewer traces in the Anglo-Saxon cloisters than elsewhere.

I hesitate to insist with the same severity which was shown by the pontiffs and doctors of the time on the first of their complaints against the Anglo-Saxon communities, the excessive liking for rich and fine stuffs, in which certain nuns loved to dress themselves after having made them. These wonders of the distaff and broidery-needle, as they were used in the English cloisters, excited not only the anxiety but the indignation of the masters of spiritual life. Bede found nothing more serious to note in the transgressions which were to draw down the wrath of heaven upon Coldingham.[155] Boniface, when he became archbishop and pontifical legate in Germany, did not hesitate to indicate this as one of the greatest dangers of monastic life.[156] Aldhelm exerts all his rhetoric to preserve his friends at Barking from the revolting luxury displayed by the clergy of both sexes in their vestments, and especially

Luxury in dress.

[155] "Texendis subtilioribus indumentis operam dant, quibus at seipsas ad vicem sponsarum in periculum sui status adornent, aut externorum sibi virorum amicitiam comparent. Unde merito . . . de cœlo vindicta flammis sævientibus præparata est." — *Hist. Eccl.*, iv. 25.

[156] "Ut clericos et sanctimoniales de tenuitate et pompa vestium argueret." — Guill. Malmesb., c. 82, p. 115. See above the text of the letter.

by the abbesses and nuns, who wore scarlet and violet tunics, hoods and cuffs trimmed with furs and silk; who curled their hair with a hot iron all round their foreheads; who changed their veil into an ornament, arranging it in such a way as to make it fall to their feet; and who, finally, sharpened and bent their nails so as to make them like the claws of falcons and other birds of prey, destined by nature to chase the vermin upon which they feed.[157]

The Council of Cloveshove, however, justified these accusations by ordaining the monks and nuns to keep to the costume of their predecessors, and in particular to recall to their minds the simple and pure dress which they put on in the day of their profession, that they might no longer resemble by a too gay exterior the women of the world.[158] 747.

Let us pass on to facts of a graver nature. Do we not meet on our path some of those disorders which, in modern times, the religious orders have been accused of as unpardonable crimes? Has compulsion never been employed to impose monastic life upon the young Anglo-Saxons? I am led to suppose that such a thing must sometimes have occurred when I read in the *Penitentiary* of Archbishop Theodore that daughters whom their parents had compelled to become nuns should be exempted from all punishment, even spiritual, if they married afterwards.[159]

Attempts on the modesty of nuns.

Was the virginal modesty of these *brides of the Lord*, which the Anglo-Saxons surrounded by so much national and popular veneration, always respected by those who occupied the first rank in the newly-converted nations, and for that reason ought to have shown them an example?

I am obliged to admit that this was not the case. Con-

[157] "Subucula bissina, sive hyacinthea, tunica coccinea capitium et manicæ sericis clavate calliculæ rubricatis pellibus ambiuntur, anticæ frontis et temporum cicini calamistro crispantur, pulla capitis velamina candidis et coloratis mafortibus cedunt, quæ vittarum nexibus assutæ talo tenus prolixius dependunt, ungues ritu falconum et accipitrum, seu certe cavannarum (*sic*) quos naturaliter ingenita edendi necessitas instigat, obunca pedum fuscinula et rapaci ungularum arpȝgine alites et sorices crudeliter insectando grassari." — *De Laudibus Virginit.*, c. 58. Cf. c. 17 and 56.

[158] "Non debent iterum habere indumenta sæcularia, et ornatis et nitidis vestibus incedere, quibus laicæ puellæ uti solent." — Can. 28, ap. Coletti, vol. viii. p. 331.

[159] "Puellæ quæ *non parentum coactæ imperio*, sed spontaneo judicio, virginitatis propositum atque habitum susceperunt, si postea nuptias diligunt, prævaricantur, etiamsi consecratio non accesserit." — *Liber Pœnitentialis*, c. xvi. § 24, ap. Thorpe, p. 282.

temporary documents of unquestionable authority prove that more than one Anglo-Saxon king seems to have taken special pleasure in seeking his prey among the virgins consecrated to God.[160] It is probable that the princes and nobles followed but too often the example of the kings. Besides divers incidents which have retained a place in history, the many provisions of the penal laws under the Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Norman kings, from Alfred to Henry I., against the rape of nuns — even when followed by subsequent marriage — and other outrages to their modesty, prove that such crimes were sufficiently well known to exact habitual and energetic repression.[161] It is but too easy to imagine the fascination with which men still half barbarians must have been attracted towards the crowds of young girls, often beautiful and of high lineage, always pure, well educated, and trained in the utmost delicacy to which civilization then reached, who were gathered together in the spiritual fortresses which might guard them against the temptations of secular life, but were ineffectual to protect them from the assaults of the great ones of this earth, traditionally accustomed to sacrifice everything to the gratification of their passions.

Still more surprising and afflicting are the decrees given by the principal spiritual legislators of the country, the great archbishops, Theodore of Canterbury and Egbert of York, which foresee and punish transgressions of cloistral continence in which violence could have no part, and which lead us to suppose that such crimes might be committed even by those whose duty it was to watch over the purity of the

[160] See what is said above, quoting the epistles of St. Boniface, as to Osred, King of Northumbria, and Ceolred and Ethelbald, Kings of Mercia.

[161] The laws of Alfred foresaw and punished offences against the purity of nuns by the following regulations: —

"§ 8. *De concubitu nunne.* Qui duxerit sanctimonialem ab ecclesia, sine licentia regis aut episcopi, amende de 120 sols;" half to the king, half to the bishop, "et ipsius ecclesiæ domino cujus monacha fuit." If she survives him "qui eam abduxit, nihil de pecunia ejus habeat." If she has a child "nihil inde habeat infans, sicut nec mater ejus."

"§ 18. Si quis nunnam, causa fornicationis, in vestes aut in sinum, sine licentia comprehendat, sit hoc duplo amendabile, sicut antea de laica decrevimus." — Ap. Thorpe, pp. 32, 34, fol. ed.

The same offence is punished by section 4 of King Edmond's ecclesiastical laws (940–946) by deprivation of Christian burial, "unless he make bot, no more than a man-slayer."

Art. 39 of the laws of the Council of Enham under Ethelred says, "If any one defile a nun, let him make bot deeply before God and the world." The law of Henry I., art. 73, *de nunne concubitu*, orders the culprit to go to Rome: "adeat Papam et consilium ejus scire faciat."

sanctuary — those whose sacred character ought to have imposed upon them the strongest of all restraints — by priests and even bishops.[162] Let us state, however, that, at least during the period of which we have spoken, history reports no known incident which gives support to the humiliating provisions of the law; and we may add that Archbishop Theodore might have brought from his Eastern home the fear or recollection of certain excesses and corruptions which were strange to the character and habits of the northern nations, and have given them a place in his laws under the form of useful warnings. We should run the risk of falling into injustice and absurdity did we draw from such and such a provision of the penal code the conclusion that crimes thus stigmatized and punished were habitually committed by the nation which by its laws protested against them.[163]

Impartiality, besides, requires us to remind our readers of all that has been already said in respect to the abuses that had crept into the monastic order from the time of Bede; upon the false monasteries which were nothing but lands worked to the profit of lay donors, ridiculously tricked out in the title of abbot; and upon the false monks and nuns who inhabited these contraband monasteries, and lived there in every kind of disorder.[164] To these pretenders, who, notwithstanding their known character, bore nevertheless the

[162] The *Liber Pœnitentialis* of Theodore (chap. xvi.) provides for the case where a layman "fornicationem iniretur cum multis . . . sanctimonialibus, *ita ut etiam numerum nesciat*," and condemns the culprit to ten years' fasting, three on bread and water. Chap. xviii., *De fornicatione clericorum*, gives twelve years of penance to a guilty bishop, ten to a priest, eight to a monk or deacon, five to a clerk. The nun is equally punished. If there are children, the penance is prolonged to fifteen, twelve, ten, eight, and six years.

The married layman "maculans se cum ancilla Dei:" six years, two with bread and water; seven years if he has a child; five if he is not married. His companion in guilt the same.

"§ 20. Si quis monacham quam ancillam Dei appellant, in conjugio duxerit, anathema sit." — Ap. Thorpe, pp. 282, 283.

"Monachus vel puella consecrata, si fornicati fuerint, septem annos jejunent." — Ecgberti, Arch. Ebor., *Confessionale*, art. 13. Cf. Ecgberti, *Excerptiones*, No. 134 and 136.

[163] What, for example, would be thought of an historian who from the text of art. 310 of our Penal Code concluded that the offence it punishes was common in France?

[164] We may here recall the passage already partially quoted: "Quod enim turpe est dicere, tot sub nomine monasteriorum loca (*sic*) hi qui monachicæ vitæ prorsus sunt expertes in suam ditionem acceperunt. . . . Vel majore scelere atque impudentia, qui propositum castitatis non habent, luxuriæ ac fornicationi deserviant, neque ab ipsis sacratis Deo virginibus abstineant." — Bedæ *Epist. ad Ecgbert.*, c. 6.

title of *monachi* or *sanctimoniales*, are no doubt to be most generally imputed the excesses assailed in the ordinances of the English metropolitans and by the letters of St. Boniface; and let us hope that the accusation conveyed in the terrible and untranslatable words of his letter to the king of Mercia, "*Illæ meretrices, sive monasteriales sive sæculares*," [165] may be referred to the same class. Finally, it may be added that the great apostle, who was inspired at once by love of religion and desire for the honor of his country, spoke only by hearsay; that his most violent accusations are tempered by expressions of doubt; and that he never himself complained on his own authority of anything he had personally known or seen before his departure for Germany, but only what had been carried to him by report, more or less well founded, during the course of his mission in Germany.

V.

The letters of St. Boniface and his correspondents contain the most authentic information upon the state of souls in the Anglo-Saxon cloisters.

The correspondence of St. Boniface, which is a precious and unique mine [166] of information as to the ideas and institutions of the Teutonic races at their entrance into Christianity, reveals to us besides, in many aspects, the spirit which reigned in the cloisters inhabited by Anglo-Saxon nuns. Before as well as after his apostolic career in Germany, Winefred, the most illustrious monk in Essex, kept up frequent and intimate intercourse with the most distinguished nuns of his country. The letters which he wrote to them, and those which he received from them, acquired a double interest after his departure for the yet unexplored regions in which martyrdom awaited him. Only a very small number of them remains to us; but the

[165] *Epistolæ* S. Bonifacii, No. 59, ed. Jaffé, p. 175. He says also, in a letter to Archbishop Egbert of York: "Inauditum enim malum est præteritis sæculis et in triplo vel quadruplo sodomitanam luxuriam vincens, ut gens Christiana . . . despiciat legitima matrimonia . . . et nefanda stupra consecratarum et velatarum feminarum sequatur." — *Ibid.*, No. 61.

[166] It may be remarked that the usefulness of this collection is greatly lessened by the mania of each of its editors (Würdwein in 1789, Giles in 1844, and Migne in 1863), subsequent to the first publication by Serrarius in 1605, for changing the order and numbering of the Epistles. We have adopted the numbers given in the last and extremely correct edition by Jaffé (*Monumenta Moguntina*, in *Bibliotheca Rerum Germanicarum*, vol. iii., Berolini, 1866), who thinks he has succeeded in introducing a certain chronological order entirely wanting in the older editions.

few which have been preserved suffice to afford us a glimpse of what was passing in the souls of these generous, intelligent, and impassioned women, whose life was passed in the shadow of monasteries, and among whom the great missionary found not only devoted sympathy, but the most active and useful assistants.

It is evident, in the first place, from this picture, that all was not happiness and gentleness in the cloister. We are all apt to exaggerate both in the past and present the peace and serenity of religious life amid the storms either of the ancient world, so violent, warlike, and unsettled, or of modern society, so frivolous in its emotions, so servile, and so changeable in its servility. We are right to look upon the cloister as a nest suspended amid the branches of a great tree shaken by the winds, or like the inner chamber of a vessel beaten by the waves. It is in the midst of the storm, yet in it there is shelter; a refuge always threatened, always fragile, always perishable, but still a refuge. Outside is the noise of the waves, the rain, and the thunder; at every moment destruction is possible, or even near. But in the mean time the soul is safe; it is calm, protected, preserved, and sails on with humble confidence towards the port. Such a joy is sufficiently tempered by the sense of insecurity to be safe from becoming in itself a danger, a temptation to laxity or to pride.

But in this nest and in this bark, preserved from external tempests, how many storms and perils and sunken rocks are within! Even in the midst of the most peaceful and best regulated community, what a trial is there in the daily death of individual will! in the long hours of obscurity and silence which succeed to the effort and impulse of sacrifice! and in the perpetual sacrifice, continually borne, continually renewed! A modern master of spiritual life has said, with severe clear-sightedness, "The continuity alone of the exercises, which, although varied, have always something in them that goes against human inclinations, *from the moment that they are done by rule and for the service of God*, becomes very fatiguing."[167] What a ray of pitiless light is thus thrown upon the weakness of the human heart! It accustoms itself to the rules, habits, and even to the most onerous obligations which have a purely earthly aim. But from the

[167] Notice of the Société de la Sainte-Retraite, commenced at Fontenelles, in the diocese of Besançon, 1787, by M. Receveur, p. 19 of the text corrected in 1791.

moment that it is a work for God, dislike appears. The difficulty must be met and surmounted day by day. This is the great exertion, and also the infinite merit, of cloistral life.

If this is the case even among our contemporaries, who have been so long fashioned by Christian education and discipline, what must have been the effect upon the Saxon maidens of the seventh and eighth centuries, sprung from a race still new and young in the ways of the Lord, and which was still so impetuous, so turbulent, so enamoured of its own strength, freedom, and untamed independence? To the material restraint, which, though voluntarily accepted, might well lie heavy upon them, were added other privations of which they had not perhaps calculated beforehand all the extent. Hence those restrained but incurable agitations, those cries of distress, those vague but ardent and impetuous desires, which break forth in the pages on which they poured out their hearts to the greatest and holiest of their countrymen.

Impassioned letters written by the nuns.

It is to be regretted that these candid and eager souls had recourse to Latin to express their emotions and confidences. If they had employed their native idiom instead of a language which, though not dead, since it is the language of spiritual life, must have cost them many efforts ere they became familiar with it, we should no doubt have seen their thoughts flow forth more freely, precipitating themselves in tumultuous waves, in abrupt movements, bearing the characteristic mark of a powerful and impassioned originality, like the verse of Ceadmon or the poem of Beowulf. Even under the artificial constraint imposed upon them by the use of Latin, the reader feels the swelling life and force of an original, sincere, and vehement nature.

The most striking peculiarity of these letters, in which unpractised hands reveal, in Latin more or less classical, and in superlatives more or less elegant, the agitations of their hearts, is the necessity they feel to express the tenderness, we might even say the passion, which animates them. The intensity of the affection which united some of them to each other, may be imagined from the tender enthusiasm of language with which they address the monk who has gained their confidence. Here is an example taken from a letter written to Winefred, after the first success of his mission in Germany, by the Abbess Bugga, who is supposed to have been the daughter of a king of Wessex, and who was con-

sequently of the same race as her illustrious correspondent.[168]

"I do not cease to thank God for all that I have learned by your blessed letter; that He has led you mercifully through so many unknown countries; that He has favorably inclined towards you the heart of the Pontiff of glorious Rome; that He has cast down before you the enemy of the Catholic Church, Radbod the Frisian. But I declare to you that no revolution of time, no human vicissitude, can change the state of my mind towards you, nor turn it from loving you as I am resolved. The fervor of love so inspires me, that I am profoundly convinced of arriving at certain repose by your prayers. I renew, then, my entreaties to you to intercede in favor of my lowliness with the Lord. I have not yet been able to obtain the *Passions of the Martyrs*, which you ask me for. I will get them as soon as I can. But you, dearest, send me, for my consolation, that collection of *Extracts* from the Holy Scriptures which you have promised me in your sweet letter. I beseech you to offer the oblation of the holy mass for one of my relations, called N., whom I loved above all. I send you by the bearer of these lines fifty sols and an altar-cloth; I have not been able to procure anything better. It is a little gift, but is offered you with great love." [169]

Answers not less affectionate of Boniface and his companions.

Boniface and the companions of his mission were not less affectionate and unreserved in their epistolary communications with their sisters in religion. He wrote to those whom he hoped to draw to his aid, and associate with himself in his apostolic work, as follows: "To my venerable, estimable, and dearest sisters, Leobgitha, Thekla, and Cynegilda, and to all the other sisters who dwell with you, and ought to be loved like you, in Jesus Christ, the salutations of an eternal affection. I conjure and enjoin you to continue to do what you

[168] There are two, if not three, nuns of the name of Bugga, among Boniface's correspondents. We agree with the editor of *Notes* on the monastic tombs discovered at Hackness, p. 35, that the one here alluded to is the same whose ecclesiastical buildings are celebrated in the poem by St. Aldhelm (Migne, *Patrology*, vol. lxxxix. p. 289), and to whom St. Boniface wrote his letter 86, ed. Jaffé, commencing, "O soror carissima."

[169] "Venerando Dei famulo . . . Bonifacio sive Wynfritho dignissimo Dei presbytero Bugga vilis vernacula, perpetuæ caritatis salutem. . . . Eo magis confiteor, quod nulla varietas temporalium vicissitudinum statum mentis meæ inclinare queat. . . . Sed ardentius vis amoris in me calescit, dum pro certo cognosco. . . . Et tu, mi carissimus (*sic*), dirige meæ parvitati ad consolationem, quod per dulcissimas litteras tuas promisisti." — *Epist.* 16.

have done in the past, and must do always, that is, pray God, who is the refuge of the poor and the hope of the humble, to deliver me from my necessities and temptations, I who am the last and least of all to whom the Church of Rome has intrusted the preaching of the Gospel. Implore for me the mercy of God that, at the day when the wolf comes, I may not fly like an hireling, but that I may follow the example of the good Shepherd, and bravely defend the sheep and the lambs, that is to say, the Catholic Church with its sons and daughters, against heretics, schismatics, and hypocrites. On your side, in these evil days, be not imprudent. Seek with intelligence to know the will of God. Act manfully with the strength given you by faith, but do all with charity and patience. Remember the Apostles and Prophets who have suffered so much, and received an eternal recompense." [170]

A still more tender confidence seems to inspire him when he writes to the abbesses of the great English communities, and especially to Eadburga, who was to succeed St. Mildred in the government of the monastery founded by her mother upon the shore where St. Augustin landed.[171] He calls her "blessed virgin and beloved lady, accomplished mistress of the monastic rule." [172] He entreats her to pray for him while he is beaten about by all the storms which he must brave in the midst of heathens, false Christians, false priests, and licentious clerks.[173] "Do not be displeased that I always ask the same thing. I must ask often for that which I desire incessantly. My troubles are daily, and each day thus warns me to seek the spiritual consolations of my brethren and sisters." [174]

As his task becomes more laborious his heart has more and more occasion to pour itself forth to his old friend. "To

[170] "Venerandis et amandis carissimis sororibus . . . æterne caritatis salutem obsecro et præcipio quasi filiabus carissimis. . . . Quia ultimus et pessimus sum omnium legatorum." — *Ep.* 91.

[171] See above, p. 383. The Abbess Eadburga only died in 751, four years before St. Boniface. He corresponded with her as well as with the Abbess of Barking before his departure for Germany.

[172] "Beatissimæ virgini immo dilectissimæ dominæ Eadburge, monasticæ normulæ conversationis emeritæ." — *Ep.* 10.

[173] Epist. 87, ed. Jaffé; 27, ed. Serrarius. The latter concludes, from certain passages, that this letter must have been addressed to Eadburga, although it bears no name, and says simply: "Reverendissimæ ac dilectissimæ ancillæ Christi N."

[174] "Rogo ut non indignemini . . . quia cotidiana tribulatio divina solamina fratrum ac sororum me quærere admonet." — *Ep.* 87, ed. Jaffé.

my beloved sister, the Abbess Eadburga, long interwoven with my soul by the ties of spiritual relationship. To my sister Eadburga, whom I clasp with the golden links of spiritual love, and whom I embrace with the divine and virgin kiss of charity, Boniface, bishop, legate of the Roman Church, servant of the servants of God. . . . Know that for my sins' sake the course of my pilgrimage is through storms; suffering and sadness are everywhere around me; and the saddest of all is the snare laid by false brethren, which is worse than the malice of the unbelievers. Pray, then, to the Lamb of God, the only defender of my life, to protect me amidst all these wolves. . . . Pray also for these heathens who have been intrusted to us by the Apostolic See, that God, who desires all men to be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth, may deign to wrest them from idolatry and add them to our mother the Catholic Church. May the eternal rewarder of every good action make thee to triumph for ever in the glorious company of angels, my beloved sister, who by sending a copy of the Holy Scriptures hast consoled the poor exile in Germany. The man who has to penetrate into the darkest corners of these nations, cannot but fall into the snares of death, if he has not the word of God to light his steps. Pray, pray always, that He who from the highest heaven looks upon all that is humblest here below, may pardon me my sins, and grant to me when I open my mouth the eloquence that is needed to make the Gospel of the glory of Christ run and shine like a flame among the heathen nations." [175]

He wrote with not less effusion and tenderness to the Abbess Bugga,[176] who, overwhelmed with trials in the gov-

[175] "Dilectissimæ sorori et jamdudum spiritalis clientelæ propinquitate connexæ. . . . Aureo spiritalis amoris vinculo amplectendæ et divino ac virgineo caritatis osculo stringendo sorori Eadburgæ abbatissæ. . . . Undique labor, undique mœror. . . . Carissimam sororem remunerator æternus . . . lætificet . . . quæ, sanctorum librorum munera transmittendo, exulem Germanicum . . . consolata est. . . . Qui tenebrosos angulos Germanicarum gentium lustrare debet." — *Epist.* 73, 75, ed. Jaffé. "Ut præstet mihi verbum in apertione oris mei" (*Ephes.* vi. 19); "ut currat et clarificetur inter gentes Evangelium gloriæ Christi" (2 *Thessal.* iii. 1).

[176] This Bugga was also called Eadburga. Could she be, as has been often supposed, the *Heaburg cognomento Bugga* who figures in the title of Epistle 14 ed. Jaffé, 38 ed. Serrarius, 30 ed. Giles? Nothing, it appears to us, can be more doubtful, but we have neither time nor power to discuss a question in itself so unimportant. The Anglo-Saxon custom of having two names, which we have already met with in the cases of Domneva or Ermenberga, foundress of Minster, and Wincfrid or Boniface, &c., adds to the diffi-

ernment of her double monastery, had sought comfort from him, and who was anxious to complete her life by a pilgrimage to Rome. "To my beloved lady, the sister whom I love in the love of Christ, more than all other women, the humble Boniface, unworthy bishop. . . . Ah, dearest sister, since the fear of God and the love of travel have put between us so many lands and seas, I have learned from many, what storms of trouble have assailed your old age. I am deeply grieved to hear it, and lament that, after having put aside the chief cares of the government of your monasteries, out of love for a life of contemplation, you should have met with crosses still more frequent and more painful. I write thus, venerable sister, full of compassion for your griefs, and full also of the recollections of your kindness and of our ancient friendship, to exhort and console you as a brother. . . . I would that you were always joyful and happy in that hope of which the Apostle speaks, which is born of trial and never deceives. I would that you should despise with all your strength these worldly troubles as the soldiers of Christ of both sexes have always despised them. . . . In the springtime of your youth, the father and lover of your chaste virginity called you to Him with the irresistible accent of fatherly love; and it is He who, now that you are old, would increase the beauty of your soul by so many labors and trials. Meet, then, dearest friend, the sufferings of heart and body with the buckler of faith and patience, that you may complete in your beautiful old age the work commenced in the flower of your youth. At the same time, I entreat you, remember your ancient promise, and do not cease to pray the Lord that He may deliver my soul from all peril. . . . Farewell, and be sure that the faith which we have sworn to each other will never fail."[177]

culty and confusion, sometimes completely inextricable, of all researches into the history of the early Anglo-Saxon Church.

[177] "O soror carissima, postquam nos timor Christi et amor peregrinationis longa et lata terrarum ac maris intercapedine separavit. . . . Nunc autem . . . beneficiorum tuorum et antiquarum amicitiarum memor." — *Epist.* 86, ed. Jaffé. "Quia omnes milites Christi utriusque sexus tempestates et tribulationes infirmitatesque hujus sæculi despexerunt. . . . Qui pater et amator castæ virginitatis tuæ, qui te primevo tempore juventutis tuæ. . . . Ut quod in bona juventute cœpisti, in senectute bella ad gloriam Dei perficias. . . . Dominæ dilectissimæ et in amore Christi omnibus cæteris feminini sexus præferendæ sorori. . . . Bonifacius exiguus. . . . Fidem antiquam inter nos nunquam deficere scias." — *Epist.* 86, 88, ed. Jaffé.

This Abbess Bugga, who must not be confounded with the one quoted

As to the project of the pilgrimage to Rome, he will not pronounce either for or against it, but he begs her to wait the advice sent to her from Rome by their common friend, an abbess named Wethburga, who had gone there to seek that peace of contemplative life for which Bugga sighed, but had found only storms, rebellions, and the threat of a Saracenic invasion.[178]

The Anglo-Saxon monks who had accompanied the future martyr in his apostolic mission, rivalled their chief in the warmth of their expressions in their letters to their cloistered sisters. Lullius, who was to replace Boniface in the archiepiscopal see of Mayence, wrote along with two of his companions to the Abbess Cuneburga, a daughter of one of the Anglo-Saxon dynasties, telling her that she occupied the first place above all other women in the innermost sanctuary of their hearts.[179] The same Lullius wrote to the Abbess Eadburga, who was so dear to his master, begging her not to refuse him the sweetness of receiving letters from her, and to assure her that the spiritual brotherhood which united them made him capable of doing anything to please her.[180] There still remains to be quoted a letter from an anonymous monk to a nun equally unknown, which has had the honor of being preserved through all these ages, along with the letters of St. Boniface; a fact at which we rejoice, for it throws a pleasing light upon the tender and simple emotions which filled those honest, humble, and fervent hearts by whom Germany was won to the faith of Jesus Christ: — "N., unworthy of a truly close affection, to N., greeting and happiness in the Lord: Beloved sister, though the vast extent of the seas separate us a little, I am daily your neighbor in my memory. I entreat you not to forget the words that we have exchanged, and what we promised each other the day of my departure. I salute you, dearest;

above, survived Boniface; she is mentioned as *honorabilis abbatissa* in a letter of the Archbishop of Canterbury to the successor of Boniface (*Ep.* 113, ed. Jaffé). She is probably the same who made a pilgrimage to Rome, and who will be spoken of farther on.

[178] *Epist.* 88, ed. Jaffé.

[179] "Dominæ dilectissimæ Christique religiosissimæ abbatissæ, regalis prosapiæ generositate præditæ. . . . Agnoscere cupimus almitatis tuæ clementiam, quia te præ cæteris cunctis feminini sexus in cordis cubiculo cingimus amore." — *Epist.* 41, ed. Jaffé.

[180] "Et si quid mihi . . . imperare volueris, scit caritas ille quæ inter nos est copulata spiritali germanitate, id meam parvitatem totis nisibus implere velle. Interea rogo ut mihi litteras tuæ dulcedinis destinare non deneges." — *Epist.* 75, ed. Jaffé.

live long, live happy, praying for me. I write you these lines not to impose my wishes arrogantly upon you, but humbly to ask for yours, as if you were my own sister, did I possess one." [181]

Tender and confidential as was the tone of the letters which arrived from Germany in the Anglo-Saxon cloisters, there seems to be something still more warm and intimate in the fragments which remain to us of those which were written in the cells of Winbourne, Minster, and many other monasteries, and which were sent from thence whenever a sure messenger presented himself, along with presents of books, vestments, spices, sacred linen, &c., to the monks engaged beyond the sea in the great work of the Teutonic missions.

One continually apparent feature in them, which we have already remarked, is an eager and unconquerable desire to travel, to go to Rome, notwithstanding the numerous and formidable obstacles which stood in the way of the pilgrimage, and the dangers of every kind to which women were exposed in undertaking it — dangers which Boniface and his companions had energetically pointed out. The last trace which remains to us of the exemplary activity of the illustrious Elfleda, Abbess of Whitby, who died in 714, after sixty years of monastic life, is a letter of recommendation addressed to the daughter of the king of Austrasia, who was abbess of a monastery near Treves, in favor of an English nun, whom she calls her daughter, as she had educated her from her youth; she had detained her as long as she could for the good of souls, but at last had permitted her to satisfy her ardent desire of visiting the tombs of St. Peter and St. Paul.[182] One of the chief friends of St. Boniface, the Ab-

[181] "Intimæ dilectionis amore quamvis indignus. . . . Amantissima soror, licet longuscula alta marium æqualitate distam. . . . Sis memor, carissima, verborum nostrorum, quæ pariter pepigimus, quando profectus fueram. . . . Vale, vivens ævo longiore et vita feliciore, interpellans pro me. Hæc pauca ad te scripsi, non arroganter mea commendans, sed humiliter tua deposcens seu . . . propriæ germanæ nuper nanctæ. Vale." — *Epist.* 139, ed. Jaffé. This interesting production is unfortunately followed by an effusion in Latin verse much less admirable: —

> "Vale, Christi virguncula, Christi nempe tiruncula,
> Mihi cara magnopere atque gnara in opere," &c.

Cf. 96 and 97 of the same collection. Let us add that the same simple and tender familiarity between monks and nuns is found, five centuries after our Anglo-Saxons, in the interesting collection of letters from B. Jourdain de Saxe, second general of the Dominicans, to the nuns of St. Agnes of Bologne and to the B. Diana, their foundress, recently published by Père Bayonne, Paris and Lyons, Bauchu, 1865.

[182] *Epist.* 8, ed. Jaffé.

bess Bugga, who must not be confounded with her whom we have just mentioned, had not only the strength and privilege of accomplishing that journey, but also the happiness of meeting him at Rome, from whence she returned safe to resume the government of her community.[183] The three Buggas and the two Eadburgas.

A third Bugga, who is also called Eadburga, eagerly entertained the same desire, and expressed it in a long letter written to Boniface, jointly with her mother Eangytha, who was abbess of the monastery in which both lived. What was this monastery? Its situation is not ascertained, but it is probable that it was either Whitby or Hartlepool, or some other house situated on the rocks which overlook the Northern Sea: so entirely do the images employed both by the mother and daughter reveal a life accustomed to the emotions of a sea-shore. Both of them, while consulting him on their project, open their heart to him, and tell him of their trials; and through their abrupt and incoherent style and faulty Latin thus afford us a glimpse of the agitations and miseries which too often trouble the peace and light of the cloister. "Loving brother," they write, "brother in the spirit rather than in the flesh, and enriched by the gifts of the spirit, in these pages, which you see bathed by our tears, we come to confide to you alone, and with God alone for a witness, that we are overwhelmed by the troubles accumulated upon us, and by the tumult of secular affairs. When the foaming and stormy waves of the sea break against the rocks on the shore, when the breath of the furious winds has roused the breadth of ocean, as the keel of the boats is seen in the air, and the masts under water, so the boat of our souls is driven about by a whirlwind of griefs and calamities. We are in the house which is spoken of in the Gospel: 'The rain descended, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house.' (Matth. vii. 25, 27). What afflicts us above all is the recollection of our innumerable sins, and the absence of any really complete good work. And besides the care of our own souls, we must bear, which is harder still, that of all the souls of every age and of both sexes which have been confided to us, and of which we must render an account before the judgment-seat of Christ, not only of their actions, but also of their

[183] See the curious and interesting letter of Ethelbert II., King of Kent, to Boniface, to which we shall return later (*Epist.* 103, ed. Jaffé; 73 ed. Giles). It will there be seen that this Bugga was of the race of the Ascings: "Utpote consanguinitate propinquitatis nostræ admonita."

thoughts, which are known to God alone! To which must be added the daily toil of our domestic affairs, the discussion of all the quarrels which the enemy of every good takes pleasure in sowing among men in general, and especially among monks and in monasteries. And besides, we are tormented by our poverty, by the small size of our cultivated lands, and more still by the enmity of the king, who listens to all the accusations made against us by the envious; by the taxes laid on us for the service of the king, his queen, the bishop, the earl, and their satellites and servants, — things which would take too much space to enumerate, and are more easily imagined than described. To all these distresses must be added the loss of our friends and relations, who formed almost a tribe, and of whom none remain. We have neither son, brother, father, nor uncle: we have no more than an only daughter, deprived of everything she loved in the world except her mother, who is very old, and a son of her brother, who is also unfortunate, though without any fault of his, because the king hates our family. There remains, therefore, not one person in whom we can put our trust. God has taken all from us by different means. Some are dead in their country, and wait in their dark graves the day of the resurrection and the last judgment, the day when envy shall be overcome and consumed, and all mourning and pain shall disappear from the presence of the elect. Others have left their native shore to confide themselves to the plains of ocean, and to visit the tombs of the apostles and martyrs. For all these reasons, and for others which could not be told in a day, not even one of the long days of July or August, our life is a burden to us.

"Every being that is unhappy, and has lost confidence in himself, seeks a faithful friend to whom he can open his heart and pour forth all its secrets. Ah! how true is what they say, that nothing can be sweeter than to have some one to whom we can speak of everything as to ourselves. Now, we have sought for that faithful friend in whom we could have more confidence than in ourselves; who should regard our pains and distresses as his own; who should pity all our evils, and console them by his salutary counsels. Yes, we have sought him long. And at last we hope to have found in you this friend whom we have so long desired and eagerly hoped for.

"Oh that God would deign to carry us in the arms of His angel, as He did of old the prophet Habakkuk and the dea-

con Philip, into the far countries where you travel, and make us to hear the living word from your mouth, which would be sweeter to us than honey! But, since we do not deserve this, and that we are separated by land and sea, we will nevertheless use our confidence in you, brother Boniface, to tell you that for a long time we have desired, like so many of our kinsmen and friends, to visit that Rome which was once mistress of the world, to obtain the pardon of our sins. I above all, Eangytha, who am old, and consequently have more sins than others, I have this desire. I confided my plan formerly to Wala, who was then my abbess and spiritual mother, and to my daughter, who was then very young. But we know that there are many who disapprove our intention, because the canons enjoin that each should remain where she has made her vow, and give account of that vow to God. Troubled by this doubt, we pray you, both of us, to be our Aaron, and to present our prayers to God, that by your mediation He may show us what will be most useful for us, to remain at home, or to go on this holy pilgrimage. We entreat you to answer what we have written to you in a style so rustic and unpolished. We have no trust in those who glorify themselves in the sight of man, but we have much trust in your faith and charity to God and your neighbors. . . . Farewell, spiritual brother, faithful, amiable, and beloved with a pure and sincere love. . . . A friend is long sought, rarely found, and still more rarely preserved. Farewell; pray that our sins may not bring us misfortune." [184]

[184] "Amantissime frater, spiritalis magis quam carnalis, et spiritalium gratiarum munificentia magnificatus, tibi soli indicare voluimus et Deus solus testis est nobis, quas cernis interlitas lacrymis. . . . Tanquam spumosi maris vortices verrunt et vellunt undarum cumulos, conlisos saxis, quando ventorum violentia et procellarum tempestates sævissime enormum euripum impellunt et cymbarum cariuæ sursum immutate et malus navis deorsum duratur, haut secus animarum nostrarum naviculæ. . . . Quas seminat omnium bonorum invisor; qui . . . inter omnes homines spargit, maxime per monasticos et monachorum contubernia. . . . Angit præterea paupertas et penuria rerum temporalium et angustia cespitis ruris nostris; et infestatio regalis. . . . Et ut dicitur, quid dulcius est quam habeas illum cum quo omnia possis loqui ut tecum? . . . Diu quæsivimus. Et confidimus quia invenimus in te illum amicum, quem cupivimus, et optavimus et speravimus. . . . Vale, frater spiritalis fidelissime atque amantissime et sincera et pura dilectione dilecte; . . . Amicus diu quæritur, vix invenitur, difficile servatur." — *Epist.* 14, ed. Jaffé. We have already quoted a letter in which Boniface replies to an Abbess Bugga on the subject of a pilgrimage to Rome (*Epist.* 88, ed. Jaffé). I do not think that this reply belongs to the letter I am about to quote, because it says nothing of the mother Eangytha, and because it is filled with various subjects of which there is no question in the letter of the mother and daughter.

The beginning of the friendship between Lioba and Boniface.

Let us now turn to the beautiful and learned Lioba (*die Liebe*, the beloved), and observe the means she took while still very young, from her convent at Winbourne, to make herself known to the great man who afterwards called her to his aid to introduce the light of the Gospel and monastic life among the German nations: —

"To the very reverend lord and bishop Boniface, beloved in Christ, his kinswoman Leobgytha,[185] the last of the servants of God, health and eternal salvation. I pray your clemency to deign to recollect the friendship which united you to my father Tinne, an inhabitant of Wessex, who departed from this world eight years ago, that you may pray for the repose of his soul. I also recommend to you my mother Ebba, your kinswoman, as you know better than me, who still lives in great suffering, and has been for long overwhelmed with her infirmities. I am their only daughter; and God grant, unworthy as I am, that I might have the honor of having you for my brother, for no man of our kindred inspires me with the same confidence as you do. I have taken care to send you this little present, not that I think it worthy your attention, but that you may remember my humbleness, and that, notwithstanding the distance of our dwellings, the tie of true love may unite us for the rest of our days. Excellent brother, what I ask you with earnestness is, that the buckler of your prayers may defend me from the poisoned arrows of the enemy. I beg of you also to excuse the rusticity of this letter, and that your courtesy will not refuse the few words of answer which I so much desire. You will find below some lines which I have attempted to compose according to the rules of poetic art, not from self-confidence, but to exercise the mind which God has given me, and to ask your counsel. I have learned all that I know from Eadburga,[186] my mistress, who gives herself to profound study of the divine law. Farewell: live a long and happy life; intercede for me.

"May the Almighty Judge, who made the earth,
And glorious in His Father's kingdom reigns,

[185] She had also two names in Anglo-Saxon, Truthgeba and Leobgytha; but she received the surname of Lioba or Lieba, under which she is generally known, because, according to her biographer, she was beloved by every one. — Zell, *op. cit.*, p. 262.

[186] This, then, is a third Eadburga, who was mistress of of the novices at Winbourne, and must not be confounded either with Eadburga, Abbess of Thanet, or with Eadburga, surnamed Bugga, both of whom appear in St. Boniface's correspondence.

Preserve your chaste fire warm as at its birth,
Till time for you shall lose its rights and pains." [187]

Cena the Unworthy.

Beside the celebreted Lioba, let us quote an unknown nun, who calls herself Cena the Unworthy — *Pontifici Bonifacio Christi amatori Cene indigna* — but who writes to the great apostle with a proud and original simplicity which goes to my heart, and which I thank the ancient compilers for having preserved along with the letters of the great apostle. "I confess, my dearest," she says, "that, seeing you too seldom with the eyes of my body, I cease not to look at you with the eyes of my heart. . . . And this I declare, that to the end of my life I shall always recollect you in my prayers. I entreat you, by our affection and our mutual faith, to be faithful to my littleness, as I shall be faithful to your greatness, and to help me by your prayers, that the Almighty may dispose of my life according to His will. If one of your people ever comes to this land, let him not disdain to have recourse to my poverty; and if I can render any service, either spiritual or temporal, to you or to others, I will do it with all my might to the great profit of my soul." [188]

This letter was addressed to Boniface, then a bishop, very probably by one of those whom he had transplanted from England into Germany.

Egburga the Desolate.

Let us now listen to another Anglo-Saxon maid, a contemporary of his youth, Egburga, whom some suppose to have been that daughter of an East Anglian king who was the abbess and friend of St. Guthlac.[189] She wrote to Boniface while he was still abbot of an English monastery, to confide to him her private griefs — "To the holy abbot and true friend, Winifred, full of knowledge and religion, Egburga, the last of his pupils, eternal greeting in the Lord. Since I have known the blessing of your affection, it has remained in my soul like an odor of incomparable sweetness. And though I may be henceforward deprived of your temporal presence, I do not cease

718-722.

[187] I reprint the translation from the excellent work of Ozanam, *La Civilisation Chrétienne chez les Francs*, p. 226, from which I shall have many other quotations to make if I am enabled to continue my work, and to relate the conquest of Germany by the Anglo-Saxon monks.

[188] "Jam fateor tibi, carissime . . . et hoc tibi notum facio, quod usque ad finem vitæ meæ te semper in meis orationibus recordor, et te rogo per creditam amicitiam ut meæ parvitati fidelis sis, sicut in te credo." — *Epist.* 94, ed. Jaffé.

[189] See p. 588 of this volume.

to embrace you as a sister. You were already my kind brother; you are now my father. Since death, bitter and cruel, has snatched from me my brother Oshere whom I loved more than anybody in the world, I prefer you to all other men. Neither night nor day passes that I do not recall your lessons. Believe me, for God is my witness, I love you with a supreme love. I am sure that you will never forget the friendship which united you to my brother. I am good for very little, and much inferior to him in worth and in knowledge; but I yield nothing to him in my affection for you. Time has passed since then; but the heavy cloud of sorrow has never left me. On the contrary, the longer I live the more I suffer. I have proved the truth of what is written, that the love of man brings grief, but the love of Christ lights the heart. My heart has received a new wound by the loss of my dearest sister Wethburga. She has suddenly disappeared from my side — she with whom I grew up, who has sucked the same milk, as I call Jesus to witness."

Here the poor nun, no doubt desiring to show to her ancient master that she was not unworthy of his lessons, proceeds to quote Virgil: —

"Crudelis ubique
Luctus, ubique pavor, et plurima mortis imago." [190]

But she quotes wrongly without perceiving it, as has been the case with two or three terrible solecisms which occur in the preceding part of her letter.[191] After which she continues: —

"I should have wished to die had God permitted it. But it is not cruel death, it is a separation still more cruel which has withdrawn us from each other; she to happiness, as I believe, but I to misfortune, since she has left me as a sort of pledge to the service of the world, while she whom I love so much is now shut up, according to what I hear, in I know not what prison in Rome.[192] But the love of Christ which

[190] *Æneid*, ii. 369, 370.

[191] "Ego autem licet scentia *tardiora* et meritis *viliora* illo sim, tamen erga tuæ caritatis obsequium dispar non sum." I shall perhaps be reproached for lingering over these minutiæ. Let it be so; all that relates to the history of the soul, especially in the cradle of the faith, attracts me irresistibly. What is more touching than these imperfections of style in a classic tongue from the pen of a half-civilized woman, who at all risks must express to the heart of a friend the emotions which fill her own?

[192] "Me vero infelicem, quasi quoddam depositum, huic sæculo servire permisit, sciens enim quantum illam dilexi, quantum amavi, quam nunc, ut audio, Romana carcer includit." — *Epist.* 13. The anonymous author of

blossoms in her heart is stronger than all bonds. She will ascend the strait and narrow way, but I am left lying in the depths, enchained by the law of the flesh. In the day of judgment she will sing joyously with the Lord, 'I was in prison, and thou visitedst me.' You too, in that day, will sit where the twelve apostles sit, and will be proud, like a glorious chief, of having led before the tribunal of the eternal King so many souls won by your labors. But I in this valley of tears weep for my sins which have made me unworthy of such company.

"For this reason the seaman, beaten by the tempest, does not long to enter the port, nor do the parched fields thirst for rain, nor the mother wandering along the winding shore in the agonies of suspense await her son, with more anxiety than that I feel in my desire once more to enjoy your presence. My sins prevent it, and I am in despair. But, sinner as I am, prostrated at your feet, I implore you from the bottom of my heart — I cry to you from the ends of the earth — O blessed lord, that you will carry me to the height of the rock of your prayers, for you are my hope and my citadel against the enemy visible and invisible. To console my great grief, to calm the waves of my trouble, to give some support to my weakness, send me help, either in the form of holy relics or at least by words from your hand, however short, that I may always look at them as at yourself." [193]

Thus we see how warm still were the natural affections in these impetuous hearts, without wronging the new bonds of friendship and fraternity which religious life, with its active and extended connections in the spiritual order, developed in

Notes on St. Hilda and St. Bega concludes from this passage that Egburga had succeeded her sister Wethburga as abbess, and that it is the latter who is alluded to in the letter to St. Boniface as being already fixed at Rome. This conjecture appears probable enough. The two sisters, with an elder one, all three daughters of a king of East Anglia, would thus have been successively abbesses of Hackness. See genealogical table ix., p. 576.

[193] "Abbate (*sic*) sancto veroque amico . . . Wynfrido Egberg ultima discipulorum seu discipularum tuarum. . . . Caritatis tuæ copulam fateor; ast dum per interiorum hominem gustavi, quasi quiddam mellitæ suavitatis meis visceribus hic sapor insidet. Et licet interim . . . ab aspectu corporali visualiter defraudata sim, sororis tamen semper amplexibus collum tuum constrinxero. . . . Crede mihi, Deo teste, quia summo te complector amore. . . . Sed . . . ut scriptum est: *Amor hominis deducit dolorem, amor autem Christi illuminat cor.* . . . Non sic tempestate jactatus nauta portum desiderat, non sic sitientia imbres arva desiderant, non sic curvo litore anxia filium mater expectat, quam ut ego visibus vestris fruere cupio. . . . Vel paucula saltim per scripta beatitudinis tuæ verba, ut in illis tuam presentiam semper habeam." — *Epist.* 13.

them. The invaluable collection of the Epistles of St. Boniface encloses several letters from Anglo-Saxon nuns to their brothers, always in Latin, and in very unclassical Latin, but all bearing the marks of tender and sincere affection. "To my only and beloved brother," writes one of these, who describes herself as the least of the servants of Christ. "How, dearest brother, can you make me wait for your coming so long? Do you never think that I am alone in the world? that no other brother, no other relation, comes to see me? You do this, perhaps, because I have not been able to do all I wished for your service; but how can you so forget the rights of charity and kindred? Oh, my brother, my dear brother, why do you thus by your absence fill with sadness my days and nights? Do you not know that no other living soul is more dear to me than you are? I cannot say in writing all that I would; and, besides, I feel that you have ceased to care for your poor little sister." [194]

Lament of a nun over her brother's absence.

The name of the writer of these words is unknown; and the name, but nothing more, is known of another nun whose only brother was among the companions of Boniface. She would not be comforted for his absence, and poured out her sadness in writing to her brother with a poetic and pathetic voice which recalls the wail of St. Radegund, two centuries earlier, in her convent at Poitiers, when thinking of the troubles of her youth.[195] Our Anglo-Saxon nun also attempted to interpret in Latin verse the sorrows of her heart. But her verses are far from having the merit of those which Fortunatus placed at the service of the abbess-queen of St. Croix. Her prose is at once more correct and more touching. "To Balthard, my

[194] "Fratri unico atque amantissimo . . . N. H., ultima ancillarum Dei. . . . Quare non vis cogitare quod ego sola in hac terra? . . . O frater, o frater mi, cur potes mentem parvitatis meæ assidue mœrore, fletu atque tristitia die noctuque caritatis tuæ absentia affligere? . . . Jam certum teneo, quod tibi cura non est de mea parvitate." — *Epist.* 144, ed. Jaffé.

[195] See vol. i. p. 489. M. Zell believes this Bertgytha to be the same as the nun of that name who accompanied Lioba to Germany, and that it is from thence she writes to her brother; but this supposition is irreconcilable with the text of the letters, where it is said that the sister had been abandoned very young by her parents, while the only historian who speaks of the companions of Lioba says that Berchtgyd went to Germany with her mother, and that both became abbesses in Thuringia. — Othlo, *Vita S. Bonifacii*, ed. Jaffé, p. 490. The messenger who bore the correspondence between the brother and sister was Aldred or Aldraed, who carried from Germany to England the messages of the deacon Lullius, the chief assistant of Boniface (*Epist.* 78), from which it has been supposed that the brother of Berchtgyd might have been employed on the same mission.

only brother, loved in the Lord, and more loved than any one in the world. . . . I have received with tender gratitude the message and gifts which you have sent me by your faithful messenger Aldred. I will do, with the help of God, everything you tell me, but on the condition that you will come back and see me. I cannot exhaust the fountain of my tears when I see or hear that others meet their friends again. Then I recall that I was forsaken in my youth by my parents, and left alone here. Nevertheless I have not been forsaken by God, and I bless His almighty mercy that He has preserved your life as well as mine. And now, dearest brother, I implore and beseech you, deliver my soul from this sadness, which is very hurtful to me. I declare to you that even if you only staid with me one day and left me the next, grief would vanish from my heart. But if it is disagreeable to you to grant my request, I take God to witness that never at least shall our tenderness be betrayed by me. Perhaps you would prefer that I should go to you instead of awaiting you here. For myself, I should willingly go where the bodies of our parents rest, to end my life, and to rise from that spot to the country of those beings whose peace and joy are eternal. . . . Farewell, dear servant of the cross, beloved of your sister; keep your good fame forever."

On other occasions she writes again: "My soul is weary of life, because of my love for you. I am here alone, forsaken, deprived of all kindred. My father and my mother have forsaken me, but the Lord hath taken me up. Between you and me there is that gulf of great waters of which Scripture speaks; but we are united by love, for true love is never overcome, neither by space nor time. At the same time I acknowledge that I am always sad. My soul is troubled even in sleep, for love is strong as death. Now I beseech you, my beloved brother, come to me, or let me go to you, that I may see you again before I die, for the love of you will never leave my heart. My brother, your only sister greets you in Christ. I pray for you as for myself, day and night — every hour and every minute. . . . I pray, weeping and stretched on the earth, that you may live happy here below, and that you may become a saint." [196]

[196] "Dilectissimo fratri in Domino et in carne carissimo Balthardo Berthgyth. . . . Et nunc, frater mi, adjuro te atque deprecor, ut auferas tristitiam ab anima mea: quia valde nocet mihi. . . . Sin autem displicet tibi implere petitionem meam, tunc Deum testem invoco, quod in me nunquam fit derelicta dilectio nostra. . . .: —

I pity those who, either from sceptical contempt for all religious tradition, or modern rigorism, can listen with indifference or contempt to the cries of love and grief which sprang more than a thousand years ago from the depth of those Anglo-Saxon cloisters, and which attest, before and after so many other witnesses, the immortal vitality of the affections and wants of the human heart, in all climates and all forms of society. What can be more touching than these outbursts of human tenderness amid the rude kindred of the Anglo-Saxons, and under the rugged bark of their wild nature? What more interesting than the effort of these souls to interpret, in a language which they supposed more cultivated than their own, the emotions which moved them, and, above all, to renew themselves continually in the truths and precepts of the Christian faith, which had for so short a time taken the place of the worship of their fathers among them! For my own part, I listen, across past centuries, to these yearnings of the heart, to these voices of the soul, with interest a thousand times greater than to the victories and conquests which have absorbed the attention of historians; and I offer up my heartfelt thanksgivings to the biographers of the saints and the editors of their works for having infolded in their volumes, like flowers in an herbal, these early traces of human love and the storms that assail it.

"It would be singular," says the austere and tender Lacordaire, "if Christianity, founded on the love of God and men, should end in withering up the soul in respect to everything which was not God. . . . Self-denial, far from diminishing love, nourishes and increases it. The ruin of love is self-love, not the love of God; and no one ever met on earth with affections stronger and purer, more ardent, more tender, and more lasting, than those to which the saints gave up their hearts, at once emptied of themselves and filled with God." [197]

"Have, crucicola care, salutate a sorore;
Fine tenus feliciter famam serva simpliciter. . . .

"Tædet animam meam vitæ meæ propter amorem fraternitatis nostræ. . . . Multæ sunt aquarum congregationes inter me et te. . . . Tamen caritate jungamur; quia vera caritas nunquam locorum limite frangitur. . . . Neque per somnium mente quiesco.

"Vale vivens feliciter ut sis sanctus simpliciter. . . . Precibus peto profusis fletibus; solo tenus sæpissima." — *Epist.* 148, 149, ed. Jaffé.

[197] LACORDAIRE, *Lettres à des Jeunes Gens.* Toulouse, Nov. 9, 1852.

VI.

But the storms of the heart, like the storms of life, have an end which is death — that death which delivers from everything — which crowns and sometimes explains everything. How did our Anglo-Saxon nuns die? As far as we can make out, they died happy and even joyous, without contradicting or giving up the tender affections which had agitated their hearts and animated their life. It would be a mistake to suppose that they only, or that even they the first, among the monastic classes of old, kept up those beautiful and holy friendships to their last days. St. Gregory the Great has preserved to us the recollection of the noble Roman, Galla, daughter of the patrician Symmachus, who became a nun in a monastery near the Basilica of St. Peter, and being attacked by a fatal illness had a vision three days before her death. The prince of the apostles appeared to her in a dream and announced to her that her sins were pardoned. She would not content herself with that supreme grace, but ventured to ask from her holy protector that another nun, sister Benedicta, whom she loved most in the community, might die with her. The apostle answered that her friend should not die at the same time, but should follow her in thirty days. The next morning Galla told the superior what she had seen and heard, and everything happened as she said. The two friends at the end of a month were united by death.[198]

Death does not end the friendship of the cloister.

St. Galla.

The great Abbess Hilda, of whom we have spoken so much, and who was for thirty years the light and oracle of Northumberland, had also in her community a favorite nun, or one, at least, who loved her, says Bede, with a great love. This nun had not the happiness of dying at the same time as her friend. But when the holy abbess, who had been consumed for seven years by a cruel fever, which did not for a single day interrupt the exercise of her spiritual maternity, came at last to the end of her trials — when she had given up her last breath in the midst of her daughters

Hilda and her friend.

[198] "Gothorum temporibus, hujus urbis nobilissima puella. . . . Ex amore sumens audaciam . . . quia quamdam sanctimonialem feminam in eodem monasterio præ cæteris diligebat . . . subjunxit: Rogo ut soror Benedicta mecum veniat. Cui ille respondit: Non, sed illa talis veniat tecum: hæc vero, quam petis, die erit trigesimo secutura." — S. Gregor., *Dial.*, l. IV., ap. *Brev. Roman. Off Propr. Cler. Rom.* die 5 Oct.

collected round her bed to hear the last exhortation, in which she besought them to keep the peace of the Gospel between them and all men,— her friend, who was at that moment detained in the novitiate, in a distant corner of the monastic lands, had the consolation of seeing in a dream the soul of Hilda led to heaven by a shining train of angels.[199]

Ethelburga and her friend.

Læta mortem vidit: she saw death with joy. These words, spoken by Bede of St. Hilda, seem to have been applicable to all the female saints, and even to all the nuns, whose recollection he has preserved to us. There was one at Barking, who, after having been for long the humble and zealous assistant of the first abbess, Ethelburga, was warned of the death of that abbess, her friend, by a vision, in which she saw her dear Ethelburga wrapt in a shroud which shone like the sun, and raised to heaven by golden chains which represented her good works. Deprived of her spiritual mother, she lived for nine years in the most cruel sufferings, in order, says Bede, that the furnace of this daily tribulation might consume all the imperfection that remained among so many virtues. At last paralysis assailed all her members, and even her tongue. Three days before her death she recovered sight and speech: she was heard to exchange some words with an invisible visitor. It was her dearest Ethelburga, who came to announce to her her deliverance. "I can scarcely bear this joy," said the sick woman; and the following night, freed at once from sickness and from the bondage of the flesh, she entered into everlasting joy.[200]

[199] "In quo toto tempore nunquam . . . commissum sibi gregem et publice et privatim docere prætermittebat. . . . Septimo infirmitatis anno . . . circa galli cantum, percepto viatico sacrosanctæ communionis, cum accersitis ancillis Christi . . . de servanda eas invicem, immo cum omnibus pace evangelica admoneret: inter verba exhortationis læta mortem vidit. . . . Nunciavit matrem illarum omnium Hild abbatissam . . . se aspectante cum luce immensa ducibus angelis ad æternæ lumina lucis . . . ascendisse. . . . Ferunt quod eadem nocte . . . cuidam virginum Deo devotarum quæ illam immenso amore diligebat, obitus illius in visione apparuerit."— Bede, iv. 23.

[200] "Christi famula Torchtgyd . . . adjutrix disciplinæ regularis eidem matri, minores docendo vel castigando curabat. . . . Vidit quasi corpus hominis, quod esset sole clarius, sindone involutum in sublime ferri . . . quasi funibus auro clarioribus. . . . Per annos novem pia Redemptoris nostri provisione fatigata, ut quicquid in ea vitii sordidantis inter virtutes per ignorantium vel incuriam resedisset, totum hoc cominus diutine tribulationis excoqueret. . . . *Nequaquam hæc læta ferre queo.* . . . Interrogata cum quo loqueretur: *Cum carissima,* inquit, *matre mea Ædilberge.* . . . Soluta carnis simul et infirmitatis vinculis, ad æternæ gaudia salutis intravit."— Bede, iv. 9.

A monument which is called the Maidens' Tomb is still shown in the fine church of Beverley[201]; it is the grave of two daughters of an earl, a benefactor of the great Abbey of St. John, who had taken the veil there. On Christmas night, according to the legend, they were the last to leave the midnight mass, and did not reappear in their stalls. After the service of the following night, the abbess, made anxious by their absence, went to look for them, and found them asleep in each other's arms. When they woke it was found that they supposed themselves to have slept only an hour, and had dreamt of paradise. They went down to the choir, and there, kneeling before the abbess, after having asked and received her benediction, died, still embracing each other.[201]

The daughters of the Earl at Beverley.

One of the most celebrated heathens of our century, Goethe, died asking for light. "More light!" these were, it is said, his last words. They recur to the mind involuntarily, when we read of the happy and joyful death of these virgins, sweet and full of light, who prepared, in the depths of their cloisters now despised or forgotten, the conversion of the country of Goethe. Light above all, a heavenly and supernatural light, floods over their deathbeds and their tombs.

Deathbeds full of light.

These visions full of light, and these happy deaths, seem to have been specially accorded to our Anglo-Saxons, and not only to those who died upon their native soil, but also to those who had passed their lives in foreign cloisters. At Faremoutier, in France, the daughter of a king of Kent, Earcongotha, of whom we have already spoken,[202] had edified all the inhabitants by the miracles of her virtue. Being warned of her approaching end, she went from cell to cell in the infirmary of the monastery asking for the prayers of the sick nuns. She died during the following night at the first glimpse of dawn. At the same hour the monks who occupied another part of the double monastery heard a sound like the noise of a multitude, who to the sound of heavenly music invaded the monastery.

The daughter of the King of Kent at Faremoutier.

[201] Earl Puch, the father of these two sisters, is mentioned by Bede (v. 4), who describes the miraculous cure of his wife by St. John of Beverley. One of their daughters was named Yolfrida; the narrative states that she became a nun at Beverley, and died there in 742. "Puch dedit cum filia manerium de Walkington." Puch held the manor of South Burton, two miles from Beverley. — DUGDALE, *Monasticon*, i. 170; MABILLON, *Act. SS. O. S. B.*, vol. iii. p. 413.

[202] See above, pp. 664 and 671.

When they went out to see what it was, they found themselves in a flood of miraculous light, in the midst of which the soul of the foreign princess ascended to heaven.[203]

And the lay-sister Willesinda.

In the same cloister at Faremoutier, where the daughter of the kings of Kent, the grandchild of Clovis and Ethelbert, thus lived and died, a humble lay-sister, also an Anglo-Saxon, had, like her royal companion, a joyous presentiment of her death, and a shining train of angels to escort her to heaven. One day when Willesinda (as she was called) worked in the garden of the monastery with the other lay-sisters, she said to them, "One of those who cultivate this spot is about to die; let us then be ready, that our tardiness may not injure us in eternity." They asked her in vain which one of them it should be. Soon after, she fell ill, and during all her sickness she looked up to heaven with eyes shining with happiness, repeating long passages from holy Scripture, though she had never learned them by heart. Like the cowherd-poet whom the Abbess Hilda brought into monastic life and to a knowledge of the Bible, she astonished all present by repeating to them the Old and New Testament in their order.

After this she began to sing with wonderful sweetness the services as she had heard them sung by the priests. Then all at once she said to her amazed companions, "Room, room, for those who are coming!" No one was seen to enter, but conversation was heard, which the sick woman kept up, bowing her head with an expression of respect and joy. "Welcome, my dear ladies, welcome," she said. "To whom are you speaking?" they asked her. "What!" she answered, "do you not recognize your sisters who have left this community for heaven? Look, Anstrude, there is Ansilda, your own sister, who has been long dead. She is clothed with the white robe of the elect." After this she breathed her last, and the choir of angels was immediately heard coming forth to meet the saved soul.[204]

[203] "Magnarum fuit virgo virtutum. . . . Hujus multa ab incolis loci illius solent opera virtutum et signa miraculorum usque hodie narrari. . . . Cœpit circuire in monasterio casulas infirmarum Christi famularum. . . . Ipsa autem nocte . . . incipiente aurora . . . multi de fratribus . . . sonitum quasi plurimæ multitudinis monasterium ingredientis; mox egressi dignoscere quid esset, viderunt lucem cœlitus emissam fuisse permaximam, quæ sanctam illam animam . . . ad æterna gaudia ducebat. . . . Tantæ fragrantia suavitatis ab imis ebullivit, ut cunctis qui adstabant fratribus ac sororibus, quasi opobalsami cellaria esse viderentur aperta." — Bede, iii. 8.

[204] "Quædam ex genere Saxonum Willesinda nomine, . . . quadam die dum in hortum intra monasterii septa laboraret, cum sodalibus locuta est:

Vision of the shining shroud at Barking.

But it was especially among the learned ladies of Barking, in the monastery which had made so warm a response to the classical teachings of Aldhelm and Boniface, that death was sweet and radiant. During the great pestilence of 664, which so cruelly desolated the new-born Church of England, the nuns went out one night from their church, at the end of matins, to pray at the grave of the monks who had preceded them into the other world, when all at once they saw the entire sky lighted up and cover them all as with a radiant shroud. They were so terrified that the hymn they were singing died on their lips. This light, which was more brilliant than that of the sun, guided them to the burying-place in which they were themselves to rest, and then disappeared; and they understood that it showed them at once the heaven which awaited their souls, and the spot of earth in which their bodies were to await the day of resurrection.[205]

The virgin called by the child.

Among those who died in so great a number during this fatal year, there are two whose humble memory the Anglo-Saxon historian has not scorned to mingle with his narrative of the political and military events of Essex and East Anglia. One of them was still in perfect health, when she was told that a little child, who had been received and taken care of by the sisters, had just died, and with its last breath had called her thrice, "Edith! Edith! Edith!" Immediately she lay down on her bed, and died the same day, to follow her innocent forerunner to heaven.[206]

Cito a nobis quæ in hac area excolimus una itura est. . . . Cœpit læta ad cœlum vultus referre, et ignotas sibi dudum scripturarum paginas enarrare, exorsaque a principio libros Moysis per ordinem recitare, Evangeliique vitalia sacramenta ac Apostolica post veterum documenta narrare. Omnesque deinceps scripturas ex ordine memorare. . . . Hilari vultu, capiteque inclinato dixit: Benedicite dominæ meæ, benedicite dominæ meæ. Inquirentesque quæ adstabant quibus salutem præmitteret, respondit: Non cernitis sorores vestras quæ de vestro collegio migraverunt ad cœlos? Quærentesque illæ si agnosceret, increpanti voce ad unam earum Ansitrudem nomine loquitur: Vel tu, inquit, non agnoscis sororem tuam Ansildem, quæ dudum ad cœlos migravit candidatarum choris insertam." — *Vita S. Burgundofaræ*, c. vii., ap. Mabillon, *Act. SS. O. S. B.*, vol. ii. p. 425.

[205] "Egressæ de oratorio famulæ Christi . . . ecce subito lux emissa cœlitus, veluti linteum magnum . . . tanto eas stupore perculit, ut etiam canticum quod canebant tremefactæ intermitterent. Ipse splendor emissæ lucis, in cujus comparatione sol meridianus videri possit obscurus. . . . Ut nulli esset dubium, quin ipsa lux quæ animas famularum Christi esset ductura vel susceptura in cœlis, etiam corporibus earum," &c. — Bede, iv. 7.

[206] "Puer trium circiter annorum . . . qui propter infantilem adhuc ætatem in virginum Deo dedicatarum solebat cella nutriri ibique medicari. . . . Clamavit . . . proprio eam nomine quasi præsentem alloquens, Eadgyd,

The extinguished lamp.

Another, who was very young, but had been long ill, and was now in extremity, commanded those who watched her to carry away the lamp. "Put it out — put it out," she said, without ceasing, though she was not obeyed. "You suppose me mad, but I am not mad, and I tell you that I see this house full of such a light that your lamp troubles me with its obscure glimmer." Afterwards, when nobody would listen to her, she resumed: "Light your lamps then, and keep them as long as you please. But as for me, I have no need of your light; mine is elsewhere, and at dawn it will come for me." At dawn she was dead.[207]

VII.

History has retained but these few names, and it is not without difficulty that even these can be gleaned from chronicles and legends. The veil of forgetfulness and indifference has fallen between us and the distant centuries. That great fire, lighted by faith and charity in the souls of so many new and fervent Christians, is now extinguished: a few feeble rays scarcely reach us through the night of ages. That great garden of fragrant flowers, of blessed and glorious fruit, is now seen and enjoyed only by God; scarcely does a passing breath waft to us the faint lingerings of its perfume. Myriads of souls, candid and worthy, simple and delicate, sweet and fervent, which must have peopled these immense and numberless monasteries of old, will never be known to us! How many young and touching lives are thus buried in the darkness of forgetfulness, until the day when before the assembled universe they shall shine with the brightness of everlasting glory!

But in those distant ages they formed, for the honor and consolation of their country and the Church, a great army, numerous, hardy, and dauntless, bearing the glorious ensigns of sacrifice with magnanimous serenity and humble fervor.

Eadgyd, Eadgyd. . . . Ipso quo vocata est die . . . illum qui se vocavit ad regnum cœleste secuta est." — BEDE, iv. 8.

[207] "Cœpit subito circa mediam noctem clamare petens ut lucernam . . . extinguerent; quod cum frequenti voce repeteret. . . . Scio quod me hæc insana mente loqui arbitramini. . . . Vere dico vobis quod domum hanc tanta luce impletam esse perspicio, ut vestra illa lucerna mihi omnimodis esse videatur obscura. . . . Accendite ergo lucernam illam quamdiu vultis; attamen scitote quia non est mea; nam mea lux, incipiente aurora, mihi adventura est." — *Ibid.*

They confessed victoriously before the new-born Christianity and the beaten-back barbarism of their age, as their sisters in the present time confess, in the face of our over-proud civilization, the divinity of Jesus Christ, the atonements of suffering, and the immortal empire of the soul over inferior nature.

In all these noble maids, betrothed to God, there appears a sort of courage and strength which is above their sex. It is the special attribute of monastic life to transfigure human nature, by giving to the soul that which is almost always wanting to it in ordinary existence. It inspires the young virgin with an element of manfulness which withdraws her from the weaknesses of nature, and makes her at the necessary moment a heroine; but a soft and tender heroine, rising from the depths of humility, obedience, and love, to reach the height of the most generous flights, and to attain everything that is most powerful and light-giving in human courage. It fills the heart of the true monk and true priest with treasures of intelligent compassion, of unlimited tenderness, of gentleness unmixed with laxness, and of an unremitting patience such as the heart of woman alone seems capable of containing. And sometimes to both, to the bride of God and to His minister, to the heroine of charity and to the master of doctrine and preaching, it adds by a supernatural gift the incomparable charm of childhood, with its artless and endearing candor; then may be seen upon a living countenance that simplicity in beauty, and that serenity in strength, which are the most lovely array of genius and virtue. Thus it happens by times that all that is most grand and pure in the three different types of humanity, the man, the woman, and the child, is found combined in one single being, which accomplishes all that a soul can do here below to rise from its fall, and to render itself worthy of the God who has created and saved it.[208]

Vigorous character of the most part of the Saxon nuns.

I speak in the present tense, for all this exists still, and is found and repeated every day in the bosom of our modern civilization.

Every trace of the ancient world of which we have been endeavoring to seize an impression, has

All the ancient world has

[208] Aubrey de Vere, *Thoughts on St. Gertrude.* Cf. T. W. Allies, *The Formation of Christendom,* 1865, Part I., Lect. 6, *Creation of Virginal Life.*

perished except the army of sacrifice.

disappeared — everything has perished or changed, except the army of sacrifice. The vast and magnificent edifice of the ancient Catholic world has crumbled hopelessly to pieces. There will rise, and already, indeed, there does rise, a new world, which, like the ancient, will have its own greatness and its own littleness. But that of which we have just told the history has lasted, still lasts, and will endure forever.

Twelve centuries after the Anglo-Saxon maids whose devotion we have related, the same hand falls upon our homes, upon our desolate hearts, and tears away from us our daughters and sisters. Never since Christianity existed have such sacrifices been more numerous, more magnanimous, more spontaneous, than now. Every day since the commencement of this century, hundreds of beloved creatures have come forth from castles and cottages, from palaces and workshops, to offer unto God their heart, their soul, their virgin innocence, their love and their life. Every day among ourselves, maidens of high descent and high heart, and others with a soul higher than their fortune, have vowed themselves, in the morning of life, to an immortal husband.

They are the flower of the human race — a flower still sweet with the morning dew, which has reflected nothing but the rays of the rising sun, and which no earthly dust has tarnished — an exquisite blossom which, scented from far, fascinates with its pure fragrance, at least for a time, even the most vulgar souls. They are the flower, but they are also the fruit; the purest sap, the most generous blood of the stock of Adam; for daily these heroines win the most wonderful of victories, by the manliest effort which can raise a human creature above all earthly instincts and mortal ties.

Have you seen in March or April a child breathing in the first fresh breath of nature, the first gleam of admiration lightening in his bright eyes as they meet the gleam of awakening life in the woods and fields? There does the spring-time of life meet with the spring-time of nature, and to witness this meeting is a delight and a charm. But still more enchanting and more enrapturing by far, a rapture by which the soul is borne away to the utmost height of human emotion, is the sight of a virgin creature already budding into womanhood, radiant with youth and beauty, who turns away from all the fragrance of life to breathe only the breath, and look only towards the glories, of heaven.

What a scene is this! and where can one be found which manifests more clearly the divine nature of the Church, or which throws more entirely into the shade the miseries and stains with which its heavenly splendor is sometimes veiled?

Number and persevering character of vocations in the present time.

But, let us again repeat, this sight is afforded to us everywhere, not only in our old and unhealthy Europe, but in that America[209] which all generous spirits regard with hope and confidence. Wherever the Gospel is preached, wherever a crucifix is raised, everywhere does Christ, with His irresistible arm, pluck and uproot these earthly flowers to transplant them nearer to heaven.

Spoilers and oppressors may in vain resume their persecutions, which are daily predicted and provoked by the writers of revolutionary Cæsarism. Devoted and outlawed chastity will resume its task. In the garrets or cellars of the palaces inhabited by the triumphant masters of the future, over their heads or under their feet, virgins will be found who shall swear to Jesus Christ to belong only to Him, and who will keep their vow, if necessary, at the cost of their life.

In this age of laxity and universal languidness, these gentle victors have kept the secret of strength, and in the weakness of their sex, let it once again be repeated, they exhibit the masculine and persevering energy which is wanting in us, to attack in front and to subdue the egotism, cowardice, and sensuality of our time and of all times. They accomplish this task with a chaste and triumphant hardihood. All that is noble and pure in human nature is led to the fight against all our baseness, and to the help of all our miseries. Speak not of the charms of a contemplative life, of the peaceful joys of meditation and solitude. These are but the lot of few. Nowadays the great self-devoted crowd throws itself into quite another path. They rush forth to the rescue of the most repulsive and tedious infirmities of poor human nature, lavishing upon them unwearied cares; they swarm wherever they are wanted to cultivate the deserts of igno-

[209] "We are penetrated with the most profound respect for those holy virgins who fill our religious communities. We fulfil one of the pleasantest of duties in giving public witness to the virtue and heroism of those Christian maidens, whose lives exhale the sacred odor of Jesus Christ, and who, by their devotion and their spirit of sacrifice, have contributed more perhaps than any other cause to produce a happy change in the minds of those estranged from our faith." — *Pastoral Letter of the Archbishops and Bishops of the United States, assembled in full Council at Baltimore*, Oct. 21, 1866.

rance and of childish stupidity, often so intractable and restive. Braving all disgusts, all repugnance, all denunciations and ingratitudes, they come by thousands, with dauntless courage and patience, to win, caress, and soothe every form of suffering and of poverty.

And, along with their strength, they have light, prudence, and true insight. They understand life without having experienced it. Who has taught them all these sad secrets? Who has taught these beings, at once so pure and so impassioned, at an age when the heart begins to be consumed by an insatiable thirst for human sympathy and human love, that such a thirst will never be satisfied in this world? Who has revealed to them the disgraceful frailty of earthly affections, even of the noblest and sweetest, the fondest and most deeply rooted, even of those which believed themselves everlasting, and held the greatest place in the hearts out of which they have miserably perished? Nothing but a divine instinct which frees them by withdrawing them from us. They are delivered from that withering amazement of the soul which meets disappointment, betrayal, and scorn, instead of love, and sometimes, after so many struggles and so many delusions, the silence of death in the fulness of life. They have forestalled their enemy, unmasked, baffled, and discomfited him. They have escaped forever: "Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the net of the fowlers: the snare is broken, and we are escaped."

Thus they go bearing off to God, in the bloom of youth, their hearts, full of those treasures of deep love and complete self-renunciation which they refuse to man. They bury and consume their whole life in the hidden depths of voluntary renunciation, of unknown immolations.

When this is done, they assure us that they have found peace and joy, and in the sacrifice of themselves the perfection of love. They have kept their hearts for Him who never changes and never deceives; and in His service they find consolations which are worth all the price they have paid for them — joys which are not certainly unclouded, for then they would be without merit, but whose savor and fragrance will last to the grave.

It is not that they would forget or betray us whom they have loved, and who love them. No; the arrow which has pierced our hearts and remains there has first struck through theirs. They share with us the weight and bitterness of the sacrifice. Isolation from the world is not insensibility. It

is only a false spirituality which makes the soul hard, arrogant, and pitiless. When religion dries up or hardens the heart it is but a lying tyranny. Here, in true sacrifice, in supreme self-mortification, human affection loses none of its rights. They are all respected, but all purified, all transformed into an offering to God, who has promised to comfort us more than a mother — "So shalt thou be son of the Most High, and He shall love thee more than thy mother doeth." The warmth of tenderness, afflicted yet so pure, so straightforward, and so sure of itself, glows forth in every word, in every look. The blessedness of belonging to God will never close a noble heart to the griefs of others, or deprive it of any generous emotion. That heart becomes, on the contrary, more tender and more closely entwined to those it loves in proportion as it is entwined into a closer bond with the heart of Jesus.[210]

Is this a dream? — the page of a romance? Is it only history — the history of a past forever ended? No; once more, it is what we behold and what happens amongst us every day.

This daily spectacle we who speak have seen and undergone. What we had perceived only across past centuries and through old books, suddenly rose one day before our eyes, full of the tears of paternal anguish. Who will not pardon us for having, under the spell of that everlasting recollection, lengthened, perhaps unreasonably, this page of a long uncompleted work? How many others have also, like ourselves, gone through this anguish, and beheld with feelings unspeakable the last worldly apparition of a beloved sister or child?

One morning she rises, she comes to her father and mother — "Farewell! all is over," she says; "I am going to die — to die to you and to all. I shall never be either a wife or a

[210] "However firm might be the resolution of Theresa to leave her father, the tender affection she bore him rendered the separation heartbreaking to her. 'I believe,' she says, 'that at the point of death I could not suffer more than I did then. It seemed as if my very bones were dislocated, because my love of God was not strong enough to triumph wholly over the natural tenderness I had for my parents. I was obliged to do myself extreme violence in leaving them, and if the Lord had not helped me, my good resolutions would never have enabled me to follow out my plans to the end; but His goodness gave me courage against myself. At the moment when I took the habit, God made me conscious how he blesses those who deny themselves for His sake. This internal struggle was known to Him only; on the surface nothing appeared in my conduct but courage and firmness.'" — *Histoire de sa Vie*, c. iii. ap. Le Boucher.

mother; I am no more even your child — I am God's alone." Nothing can withhold her. "They immediately left the ship and their father, and followed Him."[211] Lo! she comes already arrayed for the sacrifice, brilliant and lovely, with an angelic smile, fervent and serene, blooming and beaming, the crowning work of creation! Proud of her last beautiful attire, bright and brave, she ascends to the altar, or rather she rushes — she flies like a soldier to the breach, and, hardly able to keep down the impassioned ardor which consumes her, she bows her head under the veil which is to be a yoke upon her for the rest of her life, but which will also be her eternal crown.

It is done. She has crossed the gulf with that impetuous bound, that soaring impulse, that magnanimous self-forgetfulness, which is the glory of youth, with that pure and unconquerable enthusiasm which nothing here below will ever equal or extinguish.

Who then is this invisible Lover, dead upon a cross eighteen hundred years ago, who thus attracts to Him youth, beauty, and love? who appears to their souls clothed with a glory and a charm which they cannot withstand? who darts upon them at a stroke and carries them captive? who seizes on the living flesh of our flesh, and drains the purest blood of our blood? Is it a man? No: it is God. There lies the great secret, there the key of this sublime and sad mystery. God alone could win such victories, and deserve such sacrifices. Jesus, whose godhead is amongst us daily insulted or denied, proves it daily, with a thousand other proofs, by those miracles of self-denial and self-devotion which are called vocations. Young and innocent hearts give themselves to Him, to reward Him for the gift He has given us of Himself; and this sacrifice by which we are crucified is but the answer of human love to the love of that God who was crucified for us.

[211] Matth. iv. 22.

APPENDIX.

I.

IONA.

NOTES OF A VISIT MADE IN AUGUST 1862.

(See pages 29 and 120.)

"To each voyager
Some ragged child holds up for sale a store
Of wave-worn pebbles. . . .
How sad a welcome!
Where once came monk and nun with gentle stir
Blessings to give, news ask, or suit prefer. . . .
Think, proud philosopher!
Fallen though she be, this Glory of the West,
Still on her sons the beams of mercy shine;
And hopes, perhaps, more heavenly bright than thine,
A grace by thee unsought, and unpossest,
A faith more fixed, a rapture more divine,
Shall gild their passage to eternal rest."

WORDSWORTH.

The traveller who visits Iona in the hope of finding imposing ruins or picturesque sites is singularly disappointed in his expectation. Nothing, as has been already stated, can be less attractive than this island, at first sight at least. At view of its flat and naked surface a sense of that painful desolation which is so well expressed by the word *bleak*, untranslatable in French, strikes the traveller, and he involuntarily turns his eyes from that low and sandy shore to the lofty mountains of the neighboring isles and coasts. After a time, however, a sweet and salutary impression is evolved from the grave, calm, and lonely aspect of a place so celebrated in spiritual history. The spirit is a little reassured, and the visitor takes his way through the poor hamlet, which is the only inhabited place on the island, towards the ruins, of which so many learned and splendid descriptions have been written. Here again there is a fresh disappointment. These ruins have nothing about them that is imposing — nothing, above all, absolutely nothing, that recalls St. Columba, unless it be two or three inscriptions in the Irish tongue (*Eirsch* or *Erse*), which was his language. But they are not the less of great interest to the Catholic archæologist,

since they are all connected with the cloistral and ecclesiastical foundations which succeeded to the monastery of Columba. Turning to the north, after passing through the village, you come first to the remains of a convent of canonesses, the last foundation of the twelfth century, but which, for a little, survived the Reformation. Transformed into a stable, then into a quarry, the roofless church still exists; and in it is to be seen the tomb of the last prioress, Anna Macdonald, of the race of the *Lords of the Isles*, who died in 1543. Thence you pass to the famous cemetery, which was for so many centuries the last asylum of kings and princes, nobles and prelates, and of the chiefs of the clans and communities of all the neighboring districts, and — as a report made in 1594 says — "of the best people of all the isles, and consequently the holiest and most honorable place in Scotland." At that epoch were still to be seen three great mausoleums with the following inscriptions: —

TUMULUS REGUM SCOTIÆ.
TUMULUS REGUM HIBERNIÆ.
TUMULUS REGUM NORWEGIÆ.

There was even the tomb of a king of France, whose name is not given, but who must have abdicated before his death.

Nothing is now shown of these mausoleums except the site. A tradition, more or less authentic, decides that eight Norwegian kings or princes were interred at Iona, four kings of Ireland, and forty eight Scottish kings. But all historians agree in stating that, from the fabulous times of Fergus until Macbeth, Iona was the ordinary burying-place of the kings and nobles of the Scottish race, and even of some Saxon princes, such as Egfrid, king of the Northumbrians, who died in 685.[1] Shakespeare, with his customary fidelity to national tradition, has not failed to send the body of Macbeth's victim to be buried at Iona.[2]

The burial-place of the kings was not transferred to the Abbey of Dunfermline until the time of Malcolm Canmore, the conqueror and successor of Macbeth, and the husband of St. Margaret.

At present this cemetery contains eight or nine rows of flat tombs very close to each other. Most of these are of blue stone, and covered with figures sculptured in relief, with inscriptions and coats of arms. On many of them may be distinguished the galley which was the heraldic ensign of the Macdonalds, *Lords of the Isles* — the greatest house of the north of Scotland. Among them is shown the tomb of the contemporary of the great king Robert

[1] "Ejus corpus in Hii insula Columbæ sepultum." — Simeon Dunelm, ap. Twyden, *Scriptor.*, p. 3.

[2] See the passage quoted, p. 114, note.

Bruce and the hero of the poem of Walter Scott, who died in 1387. And there are still to be seen tombs bearing the arms of the Macdougalls, Lords of Lorn, the Macleods, Mackinnons, Macquaries, and especially Macleans — that is to say, of all the chiefs of the clans of the adjacent districts, along with several tombs of bishops, priors, and other ecclesiastics of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

In the centre of the burying-ground stands a ruined chapel, called St. Oran's, from the name of the first of the Irish monks who died after their landing on the island. It is thirty feet long by fifteen broad, with a fine semicircular western door. It is the most interesting, and perhaps the oldest monument of the island, for it is held to have been built by the sainted Queen Margaret, wife of Malcolm Canmore († 1093), mother of the king St. David, one of the most touching figures in the history of Scotland and of Christendom. She was the regeneratrix of faith and piety in Scotland, and was animated by a great devotion to St. Columba, by whose intervention she obtained her only son, after having long been without children.[3]

Before reaching the burying-ground, and on leaving it, two large stone crosses are seen, each of a single block, and from twelve to fourteen feet high — the one called Maclean's, and the other St. Martin's — the only two which remain of three hundred and sixty, which are said to have formerly existed on the island. Both, fixed on a pedestal of red granite, are long and slender in form, covered over with sculptured ornaments, in a style at once graceful and quaint, partially hidden by the moss. One of them, Maclean's cross, is said to be that of which Adamnan speaks in his *Life of Columba*. It is difficult to understand how, with the scanty means at their disposal in an age so remote, it was possible to quarry, sculpture, transport, and erect blocks of granite of such a size.

At last we reach the Cathedral, or rather the Abbey Church, a large, oblong edifice, in red and gray granite, one hundred and sixty-six feet in length, seventy in breadth at the transept, ruined and roofless, like all the others, but still retaining all its walls, and also several large cylindrical columns, rudely sculptured, with the tombs of an abbot of the clan Mackinnon, date 1500, and different chiefs of the Macleans. Over the cross of the transept rises a square tower, which is seen far off at sea, and is lighted by windows pierced in the stone, in unglazed lozenges and circles, such as are still found at Villers, in Brabant, and at St. Vincent and Anastasius, near Rome.[4] The end of the choir is square, and can-

[3] Fordun, *Scoti-chronicon*, v. 37. Reeve's *Adamnan*, pp. xxx., cdx.

[4] See upon these stone windows the curious works of M. Albert Lenoir, in his *Architecture Monastique*, 1st part, pp. 133, 301, and of M. Ed. Didron, *Annales Archéologiques*, vol. xxiii. pp. 45, 201.

not be older than the fourteenth century; but other portions of the church are of the twelfth and thirteenth. It has, like the beautiful Abbey Church of Kelso, in the south of Scotland, this peculiarity, that the choir is twice as long as the nave.

The sombre and sad aspect of all these ruins is owing in part to the absence of all verdure, and of that ivy which, especially in the British Isles, adorns elsewhere the ruins of the past.

This church became, in the fourteenth century, the cathedral of the bishopric of the Isles, the titular bishop of which afterwards resided at *Man*, one of the *Sudereys* — that is, the isles lying south of the point of Ardnamurchan, and distinct from the *Norderneys*, to the north of that cape, a division which dates from the times of the Norwegians. Hence the title of *Episcopus Sodorensis*, Bishop of *Sodor and Man*. Iona became the cathedral of the bishopric of the Scottish Isles after the union of Man to England under Edward I.

After the Reformation, and the suppression of all the bishoprics and monasteries, decreed in 1561 by the Convention of Estates, the Calvinistic Synod of Argyll gave over all the sacred edifices of Iona to a horde of pillagers, who reduced them to the condition in which they are now seen. During the whole of the eighteenth century the ruins and the cemetery lay desert: the cathedral was made into a stable; and thus was accomplished the prophecy in Irish verse ascribed to Columba, according to which a time was to come when the chants of the monks should give place to the lowing of oxen. The three hundred and sixty crosses which covered the soil of the holy island disappeared during this period, most of them being thrown into the sea. Some were conveyed to Mull and to the adjacent islands, and one is shown at Campbelton — a monolith of blue granite, incrusted with sculptures. In this same island of Mull is to be observed a line of isolated columns leading to the point of embarkation for Iona, and destined, according to local tradition, to guide the pilgrims of old to the sacred isle. (Note of the Rev. T. Maclauchlan, read before the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, February, 1863.)

Since 1693 the island has belonged to the Dukes of Argyll, chiefs of the great clan Campbell, who watch over the preservation of the ruins. It brings them an annual revenue of about £300. It contains a population of three hundred and fifty souls, all Presbyterians. This small population — which lives on the produce of the fisheries and of a few wretched fields manured with seaweed, where potatoes, barley, and rye are grown, but where even oats refused to thrive — offers, notwithstanding, the curious spectacle which is found in many of even the prettiest villages in Scotland: it has two churches, and forms two congregations; the one connected with the *official* or *Established* worship, whose ministers are nominated by the lay patrons, and supported by the

ancient property of the Church; and the other attached to the "*Free Kirk*" — that is, a body whose ministers are elected by the people and maintained by their voluntary offerings.

The most interesting works to be consulted upon this celebrated island are, first of all, the Report of Archdeacon Munro in 1594; then Johnson's *Journey to the Hebrides;* Pennant's *Tour in the Hebrides;* N. D. Graham's *Antiquities of Iona*, London, 1850, in quarto, with plates; and finally, a good article in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, for November, 1861.

We cannot quit Iona without adding a word on the neighboring isle of Staffa, which contains the famous grotto of Fingal. It was not really known to the world till the visit of Sir Joseph Banks in August, 1772. There is no previous mention of it, not even in the journey of the great Johnson, although it lies within sight of Iona, which closes the horizon on the south, as seen from the cave — a juxtaposition which has inspired Walter Scott with these beautiful lines: —

> "Where, as to shame the temples decked
> By skill of earthly architect,
> Nature herself, it seems, would raise
> A Minster to her Maker's praise. . . .
> Nor doth its entrance front in vain
> To old Iona's holy fane,
> That nature's voice might seem to say,
> 'Well hast thou done, frail child of clay!
> Thy humble powers that stately shrine
> Tasked high and hard — but witness mine!'"

The English, and travellers in general, profess a great enthusiasm for this cave, which, as every one knows, forms an immense vault, into which the sea penetrates, and which rests on rows of polygonal basaltic columns, ranged like the cells of a beehive. Sir Robert Peel, in a speech in 1837, compared the pulsations of the Atlantic which roll into this sanctuary to the majestic tones of the organ; but he adds, "The solemn harmony of the waves chants the praises of the Lord in a note far more sublime than that of any human instrument." This sound is, in fact, the grandest thing about this famous cave. The rest is a wonder of nature far inferior, it seems to us, to the wonders of art, and especially of Christian art. The grotto of Fingal is but sixty-six feet high by forty-two broad, and two hundred and twenty-seven long. What is that beside our grand cathedrals and monastic churches, such as Cluny or Vezelay?

II.

CONCLUSIONS OF THE TWO PAPERS OF M. VARIN

ON THE CAUSES OF THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE BRITISH CHURCH AND THE CHURCH OF ROME.

(*Recueil des Mémoires présentés par divers Savants à l'Académie des Inscriptions.* — 1st series, 1858.)

(See page 174.)

FIRST ARTICLE.

The struggle maintained by the three Celtic nations (Britons, Picts, and Scots) against the Roman apostles of the Saxon colony resulted, according to the opinion of the learned Anglicans of the last three centuries, from the fact that Britain had received the faith from Asia, and would thus have communicated anti-Roman doctrines to the Picts and Scots. The three populations, instructed by Asiatics, would naturally reject the religious yoke which Rome tried to lay on them (under the pretext of evangelizing the Anglo-Saxons) no less than the political yoke of the new conquerors. But,

1. There *never* was anything in common in the usages of Asia and those in which the three insular nations differed from the Roman Church.

2. The origin of these secondary differences, in as far as the Picts and Scots are concerned, is found in the subsequent substitution of British usages for those which, in the beginning, these same people received direct from Rome.

3. These usages, even among the Britons, did not extend back to the origin of Christianity in the British Isles. They had their sources in circumstances purely accidental, and completely opposed to any sentiment hostile to the Roman Church.

4. The Picts and Scots received the light of the gospel originally from Rome, and not from Britain. They already occupied at that period the ground which a school of learned men believe them only to have attained at a later date.

SECOND ARTICLE.

1. The differences between Rome and Britain were less *numerous*, less *important*, and, above all, of *later date* than the recent writers represent.

2. They indicate no relation between Britain and Asia.

3. They prove nothing against Rome: of the three nations which composed the British Church, *two* had from the first adopted the Roman usages.

4. As to the *six* controverted customs,

Three had their origin in a national, and not at all in an Asiatic feeling — to wit,

A. The *tonsure* — a national and even Druidic way of dressing the hair — that of the wise men, who are discussed in the lives of the Irish saints as opposing great obstacles to any modifications of the faith;

B. The national liturgy for the mass, such as existed in *all* the Churches evangelized by Rome, Gaul, Spain, &c.;

C. Aversion for the Roman clergy, repelled by patriotic sentiment, as apostles of the Saxon race;

And *three* in mistaken adhesion to the very doctrines of Rome:

D. The ceremonies supplementary to *baptism*, of which Bede speaks, ii. 2; but which the islanders would not recognize because their first apostles, who had come from Rome, had told them nothing about them;

E. The pascal *computation* (Easter), which the Britons maintained as they had received it at first from Rome without wishing to adopt the reform subsequently introduced by the Popes;

F. The celibacy of the clergy, as severely observed by the Britons as by the Roman clergy — only they accepted the double monasteries known in the East: and this is the only way in which any of the traditions of the East got a footing in the extreme West.

On the three principal points — 1, The supremacy of Rome; 2, The celebration of Easter; 3, The marriage of the priests — the British Church in no way differs from other Western Churches, — at least, during the first five centuries. On the three secondary points — 1, The tonsure; 2, The administration of baptism; 3, The liturgy — there were differences; but they were as great between Britain and the East as between Britain and Italy.

III.

LINDISFARNE.

(See page 235.)

Lindisfarne at present bears the name of *Holy Island*, which was given it in 1093 by the monks, then transferred to Durham, in memory of the number of monks who were massacred at the Danish invasion, and venerated as martyrs.

Except the dark and scarcely visible island, situated on the southwest, fifty fathoms from the shore, which is still called St. Cuthbert's Isle, and where it is said some remains of his cell are to be seen, the Holy Island of Lindisfarne retains no material trace either of the dwelling-place of the great and popular saint, or of the ancient monastic cathedral of Northumberland. But it possesses the important and very picturesque ruins of the church, rebuilt in 1093 by Bishop Carilef. This bishop immortalized himself by the construction of the magnificent Cathedral of Durham, of which the church of Lindisfarne, built of fine red stone like the churches on the Rhine, is a dependence. It is in the Roman or purest Norman style, except the choir and its rectangular heading, which were added in the thirteenth century. Its architect was the monk Eadward, so much praised by Reginald in his *Libellus de Miraculis Cuthberti*, and who brought from the neighboring city, with the eager aid of the inhabitants, the good stone which was wanting at Lindisfarne, that of the island being too friable, and apt to be destroyed by the sea-spray. A double diagonal arch, ornamented with rich toothed mouldings, is the only remaining relic of the central vault of the transept, between the nave and choir. This arch, thrown from the north-western to the south-eastern corner, with the appearance of being suspended in the air, traces its outline upon the sky with boldness and majesty. It is four-and-twenty English feet in diameter, and rises to a height of forty-four feet above the ground, which is itself heightened by ruins. The lower side of the north is still entire, as well as two bays of the same side of the nave, which was composed of six. The ancient choir ended in a circular apse; the half of it remains, disfigured and mutilated by a square heading in materials different from the rest. The transept has two circular apses, in the same style as the choir. The reverse of the western front, in the interior of the church, has a fine effect. The entire ruin is very well rendered in the *Architectural Antiquities of Durham*, by Billings.

Some remains of the ancient monastery are still to be seen round the church. A fine fortress of the sixteenth century, built

under Queen Elizabeth, occupies a conical mole at the southern extremity of the island.

A very minute description of Lindisfarne is to be found in the work of the learned James Raine, entitled *The History and Antiquities of North Durham*, or the shires of Norham, Island, and Bedlington, now united in the county of Northumberland: London, 1852. The article *Holy Island* is very long: it goes into minute details of the priory founded there in 1095, and is accompanied by an engraving made in 1728 by Buck, and which shows the state of the ruins at that period: they do not seem to have been more considerable then than at present.

Bamborough, the ancient residence of the kings of Northumbria, situated on the shore in sight of Lindisfarne, is placed on an immense rock, which commands the sea and all the surrounding country; the castle, much modernized, has been made by Lord Crewe into a charitable school and various establishments devoted to the work of salvage, which is so necessary and so energetically directed upon that dangerous coast.

I cannot resist the temptation of quoting here Walter Scott's fine lines, which will console the reader for the dryness of the preceding details, and which exactly depict the site of Lindisfarne except in respect to the grandeur of the ruins: the English are disposed to exaggerate the effect of the size of their historical monuments, which are almost always less than our own.

"And now the vessel skirts the strand
Of mountainous Northumberland.
. . . . .
Thy tower, proud Bamborough, marked they there,
King Ida's castle, huge and square,
From its tall rock look grimly down,
And on the swelling ocean frown;
Then from the coast they bore away,
And reached the Holy Island's bay.
The tide did now its flood-mark gain,
And girdled in the Saint's domain:
For, with the flow and ebb, its style
Varies from continent to isle;
Dry-shod, o'er sands, twice every day,
The pilgrims to the shrine find way:
Twice every day the waves efface
Of staves and sandalled feet the trace.
As to the port the galley flew,
Higher and higher rose to view
The castle with its battled walls,
The ancient monastery's halls,
A solemn, huge, and dark-red pile,
Placed on the margin of the isle.
In Saxon strength that Abbey frowned,
With massive arches broad and round,

That rose alternate, row and row,
On ponderous columns, short and low,
Built ere the art was known,
By pointed aisle, and shafted stalk,
The arcades of an alley walk
To emulate in stone.
On the deep walls, the heathen Dane
Had poured his impious rage in vain;
And needful was such strength to these,
Exposed to the tempestuous seas,
Scourged by the winds' eternal sway,
Open to rovers fierce as they,
Which could twelve hundred years withstand
Wind, waves, and northern pirates' hand.
Not but that portions of the pile,
Rebuilded in a later style,
Showed where the spoiler's hand had been;
Not but the wasting sea-breeze keen
Had worn the pillar's carving quaint,
And mouldered in his niche the saint,
And rounded, with consuming power,
The pointed angles of each tower;
Yet still entire the Abbey stood,
Like veteran, worn but unsubdued."

— *Marmion*, cant. ii.

IV.

PETERBOROUGH.

(See page 333.)

This celebrated monastery has been the origin of an important town in Northamptonshire, which sends two members to the House of Commons, and was made into a bishopric of the Anglican Church by Henry VIII. The last abbot became bishop in 1541, and the abbey church was transformed into the cathedral of the new bishopric — an arrangement which still continues.

Peterborough was built on an isle in the marshy district which, at the time of the Saxon occupation, included a considerable portion of the existing counties of Northampton, Cambridge, Lincoln, and Norfolk, and which is still known as *the Fens*. There existed in these marshes some spots more solid, which could even be made into pasturage, and the industry of the monks soon brought them under cultivation. From this is derived the primitive name of Peterborough, *Medehamstede*, or, in modern English, *the Home in the Meadows*. Such was also the origin of the still celebrated abbeys of Ely and Croyland, and of several others, Ramsey, Thorney, Kirkstead, &c. This district is now one of the most fertile parts of England.

There are no remains existing of the church of the monastery built in the seventh century by the kings of the Mercians. The Danes destroyed it at their great invasion in 870, after having slaughtered all the monks. It was rebuilt a century later, and again dedicated to St. Peter by the famous Ethelwold, Bishop of Winchester, but afterwards destroyed by accidental fires in 1067 and in 1116. It was in 1118, after the last of these fires, that the present building was commenced by the abbot John of Seez: the choir was consecrated in 1143, and the chapels, to the east of the transept, from 1133 to 1145, under a very distinguished abbot, Martin du Bec. The existing nave, begun in 1155, was not finished till towards 1190. The aisles of the nave date from 1117 and 1143.

Like all English cathedrals, Peterborough has preserved its vast dependencies, and stands in the midst of gardens, flowery lawns, and groves, which heighten its grandeur and beauty. The tranquil majesty of the close which surrounds it naturally recalls to mind its monastic origin; the silence and serenity which reign there are scarcely disturbed, except by the flight or the song of birds, whose nests are built in the towers and buttresses of the immense church. The great and numerous buildings which shut in this close seem to reproduce, in part at least, the cloi-

ters of the great abbey before its secularization. The entrance from the town into the sacred enclosure is by a gateway, in the form of a square tower, pierced by an arched passage, and surmounted by a chapel dedicated to St. Nicholas, but used at present as a music school. To the left is another chapel, dedicated to St. Thomas-à-Becket, which serves for the use of the choristers. Beyond this gateway is the spacious enclosure surrounding the church; to the right and to the south is the old abbatial palace — now the bishop's — built in 1319, its grand entrance flanked by two statues, larger than life, of an abbot and a monk. To the left and north is the deanery, a fine building of the date of 1518. But the eyes of visitors are at once attracted and enchanted by the magnificent western façade of the abbey church. This façade, built between 1200 and 1227, in the early ogival style, called in England *Early English*, is equally original and splendid; it is said, not without reason, to have no equal among the specimens of Christian architecture. It is composed of three porches or ogival doorways, equal in height, which occupy the whole elevation of the façade; they are surrounded by three triangular gables or frontals, and flanked north and south by two square towers of great elegance, with spires. The depth of these doorways is as astonishing as their height; the sides of the inner walls and the whole of the façade are lavishly enriched with sculpture, and decorated wherever it is possible with bays and roses in the finest style. The whole effect is truly wonderful, thanks to the immense dimensions of this triple porch and the masses of light and shade caused by the depths of the arches.

The two façades of the grand transept, to the north and south, flanked by polygonal turrets, and of Roman or Norman architecture, are also extremely beautiful. Nothing can be finer than the north façade with its seven tiers of arches and vaulted bays. This façade is, externally, the best preserved and most interesting part of the ancient Norman church, which is there seen without the disfigurement of those additions in the perpendicular or flamboyant style which have been made to the aisles of the nave, the mullions of the triforium, the circumference of the choir, and even in certain parts of the great western façade.

The circular apse of the primitive church may also be seen rising above the quadrilateral oblong which was added in the sixteenth century, and in spite of the disparity caused by the flamboyant architecture of the great windows of this apse, its effect is still remarkable. Besides the great transept, situated between the choir and the nave, there is another of smaller dimensions, situated between the nave and the western façade, and flanked by four turrets, two with battlemented terraces, and two with spires, already mentioned in reference to the principal façade. It has also a central tower, which is low and ungraceful, and which,

moreover, is decorated at the four corners with those hideous bell towers which disfigure a large proportion of English steeples.

Peterborough Cathedral thus possesses a great number of towers and turrets, but their want of height diminishes their effect; and this is the case also with the whole of the roof, which, as in most English cathedrals, is so low as to wound the eye by the absence of that perfect proportion between the height and length of the building to which we are accustomed in those of France and Germany.

But whatever may be wanting to the exterior of Peterborough is fully compensated by the majestic and solemn beauty of the interior. I remember no church in the world whose whole aspect is, at the first glance, more striking. Every detail appears to be of the purest Roman or Norman art. And it is so especially in the central nave, which is of extraordinary length,[5] with eleven bays (Notre Dame in Paris has only seven) divided by huge columns alternately round and octangular. The roof, instead of being vaulted, has a ceiling of wood, believed to be of the same date as the edifice, and covered with old paintings, recalling those lately restored with such success in the Church of St. Godehard at Hildesheim. The triforium, of which each bay is composed only of a pointed arch, is of a grand simplicity, and neutralizes the unfortunate effect of the flamboyant windows of the clerestory, the pointed bays of which are besides even lower than those of the triforium.

The aisles of the nave are in the same style, but with vaulted roofs in stone; their inner walls are entirely covered with vaulted and interlaced arches: unfortunately the windows of these aisles have been modernized in the sixteenth or seventeenth century.

The grand transept is also in the finest Norman style, and rivals the nave in size and magnificence; it has four bays in each arm, and six of these bays open on six chapels arranged parallel to the choir, in the manner of the Cistercian churches. The two façades of this transept, to the north and south, are pierced with three rows of vaulted bays, with mullions and trefoils.

The choir has four bays, and ends in an apse in four parts. But this apse itself is imbedded in a vast oblong construction much lower than the rest of the church. Here we find again the unpleasing fashion of finishing the finest churches with a parallelogram, to which English architects have always had a leaning, and which gives to their buildings a character so inferior to ours. This addition, called the Lady Chapel, was built in 1496. It has a richly sculptured vault of the special form of the English build

[5] It is 266 English feet in length, 35 wide, and 85 high. The total length of the church is 479 feet; the western façade is 156. The lantern of the central tower is only 135 feet high.

ings of that period, such as may be seen at King's College, Cambridge, and at Henry VII.'s Chapel at Westminster.

Within the choir is the oldest monument in the church, that of Abbot Hedda, massacred by the Danes in 870. It is in the form of a shrine, with statues of our Lord and the twelve apostles in bas-relief. It is attributed to Goodric, who was abbot from 1099 to 1103.

A little further on may be seen the gravestone, scarcely visible, of Catherine of Arragon, the first wife of Henry VIII., and opposite the place where the body of Mary Stuart was buried after her execution at the neighboring Castle of Fotheringay, and where it remained until her son James I. removed it to Westminster. These two great victims to the Reformation thus slept together in the old abbatial church of Peterborough, while the wicked and sanguinary Elizabeth finished her triumphal reign in peace.

This beautiful church cannot give us an idea of the buildings of Anglo-Saxon times; but it represents in all their majesty the great constructions of one of the greatest epochs of monastic history, that of the twelfth century, the era of St. Bernard and Peter the Venerable.[6]

I reserve for another volume my notes on the present state of two other monasteries, Croyland and Ely, which, from their commencement, were reckoned among the most celebrated in England, but the great splendor of which was later than the epoch of which I have hitherto spoken.

July, 1862.

[6] An abridged history of this great monastery may be found in the biographical notes on its abbots, published by Stevens, *Continuation of Dugdale;* London, 1722, vol. i. p. 496. I take this occasion of recommending to all lovers of Christian antiquities this excellent work, full of curious information and of zeal against the sacrilegious profaners of the Catholic monuments and institutions of England.

V.

HEXHAM.

(See page 365.)

DESCRIPTION OF THE CHURCH BUILT AT THE MONASTERY OF HEXHAM BY ST. WILFRID FROM 674 TO 680.

"Igitur profunditatem ipsius ecclesiæ criptis et oratoriis subterraneis, et viarum anfractibus inferius cum magna industria fundavit.

"Parietes autem quadratis et bene politis columpnis suffultos et tribus tabulatis distinctos, immensæ longitudinis et altitudinis, erexit. Ipsos etiam et capitella columpnarum quibus sustentantur et arcum sanctuarii, historiis et ymaginibus et variis cœlaturarum figuris ex lapide prominentibus et picturarum et colorum grata varietate mirabilique decore decoravit. Ipsum quoque corpus ecclesiæ appentitiis et porticibus nardique circumdixit quæ, miro atque inexplicabili artificio, per parietes et coelcas inferius et superius distinxit. In ipsis vero cocleis,[7] et super ipsas, ascensoria ex lapide, et deambulatoria, et varios viarum amfractus, modo sursum, modo deorsum, artificiosissime ita machinari fecit, et innumera hominum multitudo ibi existere et ipsum corpus ecclesiæ circumdare possit, cum a nemine tamen infra in eo existentium videri queat. Oratoriaque quam plurima, superius et inferius, secretissima et pulcherrima, in ipsis porticibus cum maxima diligentia et cautela constituit, in quibus altaria in honore Beatæ Dei genetricis semperque Virginis Mariæ, et sancti Michaelis Archangeli, sanctique Johanis Baptistæ et sanctorum Apostolorum, Martyrum, Confessorum, atque Virginum, cum eorum apparatibus, honestissime præparari fecit. Unde etiam, usque hodie, quædam illorum ut turres et propugnacula, supereminent. Atrium quoque templi magnæ spissitudinis et fortitudinis muro circumvallavit. Præter quem in alveo lapideo aquæductus, ad usus officinorum, per mediam villam decurrebat."[8]

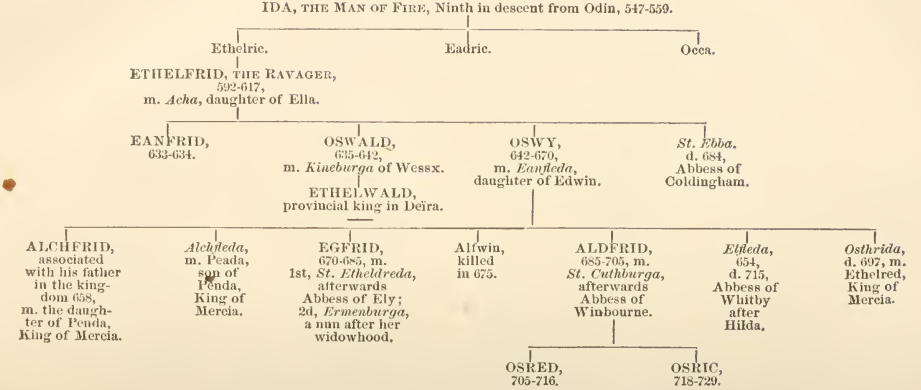
[7] Ducange, at the word *Cochlea*, says: "Cochleæ sunt altæ et rotundæ turres, et dictæ cochleæ quasi cyclæ, quod in eis, tanquam per circulum orbemque, conscendatur."

[8] Richardi Prioris *Historia Hagulstadensis Ecclesiæ*, c. iii., ap. Twysden, *Historiæ Anglicanæ Scriptores Decem*, and Raine's *Priory of Hexham*, p. 11.

VI.

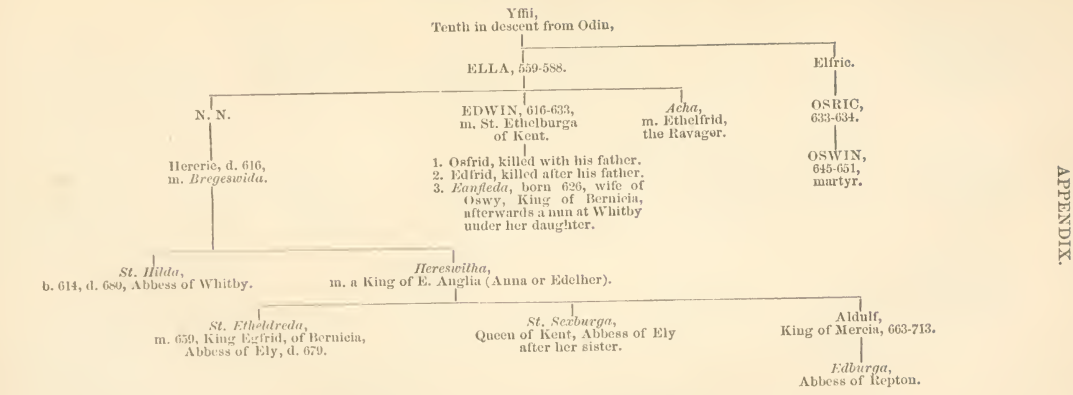
GENEALOGICAL TABLE OF THE KINGS OF NORTHUMBRIA.

BERNICIAN DYNASTY.



The names in capitals are the names of kings who reigned over Northumbria.
The dates placed after these names show the beginning and close of their reign.
The names in italics are those of queens and princesses.

DEIRIAN DYNASTY.



CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF THE KINGS OF NORTHUMBRIA AT THIS PERIOD.

547. Ida.
559. Ella.
592. Ethelfrid.
616. Edwin.

633. Osric and Emfrid.
635. Oswald.
642. Oswy and Oswin.
651. Oswy alone.

670. Egfrid.
685. Aldfrid.
705. Osred.

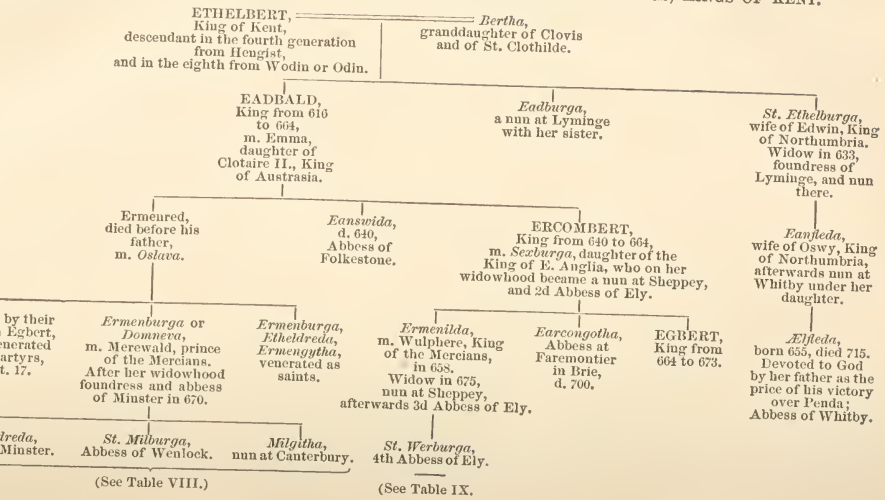
716. Ceonred, son of Oeca, son of Ida the Burner.
718. Osric, brother of Osred.
729. Ceolwulf, brother of Ceonred.

737. Eadbert, descended from Eadric, another son of Ida, and brother of Archbishop Egbert, the correspondent of Bede.

VII.

GENEALOGICAL TABLE

OF NUNS DESCENDED FROM THE RACE OF HENGIST AND DYNASTY OF THE ÆSCINGS, KINGS OF KENT.



VIII.

GENEALOGICAL TABLE

OF NUNS DESCENDED FROM THE DYNASTY OF THE KINGS OF MERCIA.

CRIDDA,
tenth in descent from Odin, founder of the kingdom of the Angles in Mercia, 585.

PYBBA or WIBBA, King from 593 to 596.

PENDA, King from 626 to 655.

- PEADA, first Christian of Mercia, King of the Middle Angles, d. 657.
  - *St. Werburga*, nun at Ely, afterwards Abbess of Weedon, of Trentham, of Hanbury, and of Ely; patroness of Chester, whither she was removed in 875.
- WULPHERE, King from 656 to 675, m. *Ermenilda*, d. of the King of Kent, Abbess of Ely after her widowhood.
  - CEONRED, King in 704, monk in 709 at Rome, with King Offa of Essex.
- MERWALD, Prince of Ealdormau of the Mercians, m. *Domneva* or *Ermenberga* of Kent.
  - *St. Milburga*, Abbess of Wenlock.
  - *St. Mildreda*, or *Mildritha*, Abbess of Minster.
  - *Milgitha*, nun at Canterbury.
- *St. Kyneburga*, m. Alchfrid, King of Northumbria, but remains a virgin and becomes a nun. 1st Abbess of Gloucester.
- *St. Kyneswitha*, sought by Offa, King of Essex, but persuaded him to become a monk.
- *Wilburga*, m. the *subregulus* of Surrey, and with him founds the Monastery of Chertsey.
- ETHELRED, King in 675, m. Ostryda of Northumbria. Monk and Abbot of Bardeney in 704, d. 715.
  - CEOLRED, King in 709, becomes a monk at Rome in 716.
- *Eadburga*, Abbess of Dortmuncester, d. 680 according to the English Martyrology.

The dates and references on which these tables are founded, are drawn chiefly from Lappenberg, who has with reason given great importance to the origin of the Saxon dynasties, founding them on the lists given by the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, Florent of Worcester, Nennius, &c. We have revised and completed these from Bede and the Bollandists. The latter have disputed many traditions received by earlier writers.

IX.

GENEALOGICAL TABLE

OF PRINCESSES OF THE RACE OF THE UFFINGS, KINGS OF EAST ANGLIA, WHO TOOK THE VEIL.

ANNA,
King of E. Anglia from 635 to 654,
m. *Hereswitha*,[1] a Northumbrian princess,
sister of St. Hilda, and, by a former marriage, mother of

- *Edilberga*, natural daughter of King Anna, Abbess of Faremoutier, in France.
- *St. Sexburga*, widow of Ercombert, King of Kent, foundress of Sheppey, 2d Abbess of Ely, after her sister, from 679 to 699.
  - *St. Ermenilda*, Queen of Mercia, 3d Abbess of Ely, after her mother.
    - *St. Werburga*, 4th Abbess of Ely.

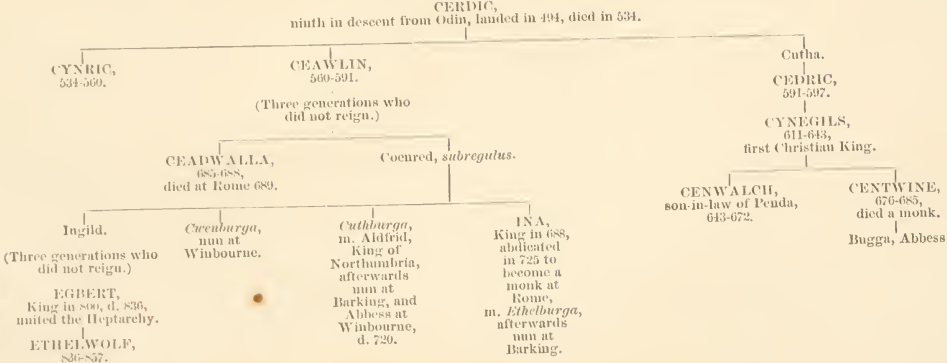
    (See Table VIII.)
- *St. Etheldreda*, m. 1st, Tombert, prince of the Girwiens; 2d, Egbert, King of Northumbria, 1st Abbess of Ely, d. 679.
- *St. Wilburga*, nun at Ely, afterwards foundress and Abbess of Dereham, Norfolk.
- Aldulphe, King of E. Anglia from 663 to 713.
  - *Edelburga* and *Welburga*, successively Abbesses of Hackness, founded by St. Hilda, their great-aunt.
  - *Ecburga* or *Edburga*, Abbess of Repton, afterwards of Hackness, friend of St. Guthlac.
- *Sæthryd*, Abbess of Faremoutier in France.

[1] According to some authors, Hereswitha married, not Anna, but his brother Edelher, who was the father of King Aldulphe. (Cf. BEDE, iv. 23; *Liber Eliensis*, p. 15; LAPPENBERG, p. 237.)

X.

GENEALOGICAL TABLE OF THE KINGS OF WESSEX.

(DIRECT LINE, OMITTING KINGS DESCENDED FROM COLLATERAL BRANCHES.)



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TRANSLATED AND INTRODUCED BY

FRANK TOBIN

PREFACE BY

MARGOT SCHMIDT

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Cover art: MOTHER PLACID DEMPSEY, a Benedictine nun of the Abbey of Regina Laudis in Bethlehem, Connecticut, is a sculptress and painter. Of the cover illustration for this Classics volume, Mother Placid says, "It takes its inspiration from Christ's words to Mechthild that she was to be a witness to the 'light of my divinity flowing into all hearts that live without guile.' Mechthild was eminent among these witnesses in the fullness with which her heart knew and lived this experience and from which she wrote of it. Yet, it seemed good to create an image that would 'witness' in its way to all hearts who have lived and continue to live this same reality. The cover image then portrays these hidden lights who fill our world with the unseen radiance of God's light."

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Author of the Preface

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Joseph P Fisher, S.J.
and
Bob Reardon
in memoriam

FOREWORD

In completing this translation of Mechthild of Magdeburg's Flowing Light of the Godhead, I have incurred a debt of gratitude to many. First, I would like to thank the publishers Max Niemeyer Verlag for their kind permission to use as the basis of my translation their excellent recent critical text and notes, the lifelong work of the Germanist Hans Neumann. Also, my debt to Margot Schmidt is manifold. The profound knowledge she has transmitted in her scholarship has affected my understanding of Mechthild in ways both palpable and impalpable. More particularly, she generously sent me her excellent translation into modern German of The Flowing Light of the Godhead and the accompanying notes even before publication. The opportunity to compare her renderings with mine saved me from many a misstep. Finally, I wish to thank her for contributing the preface to this volume. My thanks are also due to GertrudJaron Lewis for her support and encouragement, to Bernard McGinn for his thoughtful suggestions, and to Patricia Beckman for her willingness to engage in a lively E-mail dialogue that resulted in several improvements. Lastly, as in the case of several of my previous academic endeavors, Bob Reardon's meticulous scrutiny of the entire manuscript has been invaluable. I can only wish that the finished product does some justice to the help I have receivedand to Mechthild.

PREFACE

It is with great pleasure that I respond to Frank Tobin's request that I provide a preface for his fine English translation. In his introduction to the text he offers an initial orientation to this rich but difficult book and addresses important themes. To complement his remarks on Mechthild's book as an expression of mysticism, I would like to examine a theme-certainly of central importancenot touched upon there: the human and divine heart.

Mechthild's book is a phenomenon that should not be viewed in isolation-as one mystical document among all the documents of mysticism. Rather, it is the expression of a basic human drive that comes to the surface, sometimes more, sometimes less. To these basic human drives we can reckon hunger, love, sex, and a yearning for God. This last-mentioned drive appears to have been so smothered by the others that today we scarcely still perceive it as a basic drive. And yet, the testimony of the mystics teaches us that the human person in its capacity for God (capax Dei) soars above all other recognized drives and surpasses them in a marvelous and terrifying way, once we have been awakened by the spark of God's spirit or God's love. In the face of this bursting forth of a passion for God, everything else suddenly retreats. An important characteristic of this passion for God is that it irrevocably prevents us from falling back into an all too vapid and tame existence. The passion for God powerfully pushes aside all merely worldly concerns in order to appropriate our entire vitality and our life, in all its aspects, for itself. What thereby occurs is that we become separated and detached from all that is familiar, so that we might give ourself over with total commitment to the demands of what is eternal.

Out of this interplay of personal experience of God, and an interior command to proclaim and teach, arose the driving forces and goals of mystical literature which took form in confessional, didactic, and admonitory writings. These texts, which articulated the most intimate relationships between God and the human person, or inspired elucidations of salvation history, were fashioned by a consciousness of self that is unique. What Mechthild has preserved in writing The Flowing Light of the Godhead eloquently bears witness to this passion for God.

In essence Mechthild of Magdeburg's book, The Flowing Light of the Godhead, is nothing other than the moving story of God's heart and the human heart, and of Lucifer's cunning attempts to interfere with the ties that join them. Understandably these levels, completely unequal in their power, unleash a highly dramatic life or death struggle. Reeling between exhilarating raptures and collisions with unyielding earthly reality, Mechthild is wrenched this way and that between her incomprehensible experiences of God on the one hand and, on the other, the uncertainty and terror of entering into a state of defenselessness and peril because of her writing. In this state of uncertainty she receives support from her confessor. Through him she received the legitimacy of her mission "to write this book out of God's heart and mouth" (IV 2). In another passage, in response to the astonishment of some people at her unusual disclosures, she claims legitimation from God: "If seven years ago, God had not offered support to my heart with special favor, I would still be silent and would never have written this" (111 1). Similarly, the close of Book Six, probably the work of an editor, formulates it thus: "The writing in this book flowed out of the living Godhead into Sister Mechthild's heart and has been as faithfully set down here as it was given by God out of her heart" (VI 43).

Her mystical understanding under the spell of immediate experiences takes on the intermediary function of supporting the human person and strengthening the church. Regarding her mission of proclamation she perceives the words of Christ: "Truly, I say to you, in this book my heart's blood is written" (V 34). This way of speaking alludes to her own existential giving of herself in her writing to the last drop of blood.

The heart is the principle and center of one's life as a person. It is also the place "where the human being in its own source borders on the mystery of God.'" According to Karl Rahner heart is a primal word in the sense that it does not derive from some other word. It does not denote the physiological heart muscle as such but rather the original center of the physical-spiritual person before any differentiation into body and soul. This center of the person is in its essence open to other persons and to God. These meanings should be noted when Mechthild speaks of the human heart, but also when she speaks of the heart of God and Lucifer's heart.

1. The Heart of God

Experiencing God becomes in the case of Mechthild a vital mutual interaction between the heart of God and the human heart in which, surprisingly, longing lies in God's heart:

(Soul:) "Lord, you are constantly lovesick for me.
That you have clearly shown personally.
You have written me into your book of the Godhead;
You have painted me in your humanity;
You have buried me in your heart...
Ah, allow me, my dear One, to pour balsam upon you."
(God:) "O One dear to my heart, where shall you find the balm?"
(Soul:) "O Lord, I was going to tear the heart of my soul in two and intended to put you in it." (III 2)

What is new in Mechthild is that the old motif of Christ as Physician is not limited to its traditional meaning of redemption and salvation of the soul, but rather becomes an expression of the unio mystica, in which the lovesick soul receives her fulfillment through Christ, the Physician (as in VII 58). And in the passage quoted just above we see the motif completely reversed. The Lord is lovesick for the soul and she, with complete emotional commitment, wants to be his physician! Eros forces not only the soul under its yoke, but God himself, because he created man out of love and had his Son become man to redeem him. From this Mechthild draws the conclusion: "This same nature forces God to greet us...with holy intimacy" (IV 14). This statement finds its place in the tradition of those who speak of God's indwelling in the heart,' of his nearness in speaking to us, of elevation to the point of ecstasy, and declare categorically that God by his grace can do this at any time. This intimacy with God is only a foretaste of the everlasting union of God and humanity which Mechthild vividly portrays as a personal happening:

There eye reflects eye,
There spirit flows in spirit,
There hand touches hand,
There mouth speaks to mouth,
And there heart greets heart. (IV 14)

So intense at times is the assimilation of the human heart to the divine heart, as it leaves all earthly things behind, that the soul proclaims: "Lord, because I have no earthly treasure, I do not have an earthly heart either. For you, Lord, are my treasure, just as you are also my heart; and you alone are my good" (IV 7).

In spite of the sublimity of the union of God and humanity in the assimilation of heart by heart, the overwhelming power of God encounters only weakness in the human heart: "Whoever were to give himself over to the ecstasy that comes from God... would enter into such great delight and such holy knowledge that no heart would be able to bear it" (V 29).

Advanced in age, Mechthild, looking back in Book Six, reflects on the attraction and tension existing between human and divine hearts in order to clarify that, though the first step is always God attracting and the divine heart enticing, there can be no progress without a reaction of the human heart. Mechthild portrays as a love game how the divine heart goes about wooing.

> When God sees fit to let his divine heart shine forth in love toward the very blessed soul so intensely that a small spark alights on the cold soul and she receives so much that the heart of this person begins to glow, his soul to melt, and his eyes to flow, then our Lord would like to make an earthly person so heavenly that one actually wants to follow, love, and see God in him. And the person's senses say: "No, I can be of much use in external matters." And it is especially cloistered people who say this when they are being especially clever. (VI 13)

Mechthild is here criticizing the neglect of interior religious training, which begins with the perceptivity and formation of the heart. In an allegory about the divine fire that is supposed to express something about the greatness and power of God to act, she suddenly breaks off and stammers:

Whoever wishes to speak more about this,
Let him prostrate himself in this fire
And see and taste how the Godhead flows,
How humanity pours,
How the Holy Spirit wrestles,
And vanquishes many a heart,
Forcing it to love God intensely. (VI 29)

The central focal point is always the heart which conquers and binds together what is divine and what is human. Indeed, on the basis of her experience of God she lays claim to kinship with God. She herself originates spiritually from the heart of the Father, corporeally from the heart of the Son, and has been purified by the Spirit of both. Thus elevated through divine grace Mechthild considers herself to be vitally subsumed into the life of the Trinity and she calls out to the Trinity:

Lord, heavenly Father, you are my heart.
Lord Jesus Christ, you are my body.
Lord Holy Spirit, you are my breath. (V 6)

It is as if the pulse of the three divine Persons, expanding mysteriously from heart to heart, was beating in her.

Theologically speaking, this image of physical oneness links characteristics specific to each Person of the Trinity with the fact that the human person to its very core is directed essentially to God. The creative energy of the human heart reacts to the unfathomable power of the Father Creator. The incarnation of the Son becomes the formative, molding power of earthly life, even of the body itself. From the power of the Holy Spirit as the Giver of Life the whole human person breathes and itself acts as inspired. Among the many and often difficult images for the Trinity in Mechthild's writings this one, in its compactness and profundity with respect to our close kinship with God, is the one that expresses most powerfully the evidence for the Trinity in the human person and for its transference into the human person. A life based on this excludes in its very nature a feeling of emptiness and homelessness. On the contrary, it makes the human heart secure. For God has placed it "in his glowing heart," where he, eternally craving for love, "neither increases nor decreases," but remains "as he always was" (14). This is yet another confirmation that eros lies within God himself.

2. The Goal of the Human Heart

Mechthild's basic assertion about the human heart is its insatiable longing for God. It comes to the fore as the infinite relationship reveals itself. Humans as finite beings reach out toward the infinite being of God. And the goal, for Mechthild, is attained in a vital infinite relationship of heights and depths which is stirred by intense emotions. It is only to pure longing that God reveals himself and says:

When I shine, you shall glow.
When I flow, you shall become wet.

When you sigh, you draw my divine heart into you....
...a blissful abiding prevails between us. (II 6)

The state existing between the divine and the human heart is described as a "blissful abiding," a blessed waiting for the other whose fulfillment presupposes leaving everything of this earth behind. Driven by its intense desire to live fully, the soul responds in strong, emotionally-charged words that nevertheless in their refinement show reserve:

Lord, then I shall persevere in hunger and thirst
In pursuing and in pleasure
Till that playful hour
When from your divine mouth
The chosen words shall flow
That are heard by no one
But the soul alone
That has stripped itself of the earth
And puts her ear next to your mouth.
She, indeed, grasps the treasure of love!

The soul that has experienced many raptures and blissful ecstasies suffers all the more when God withdraws his presence, and longing increases.4 Longing rises to the paradox that in spite of all the levels of rapture and union with God-and beyond them-the goal is far from attained; and that the highest stage in this life ultimately remains that of hungering and thirsting for God. This blessed longing is the final attitude to be assumed by the human heart. The end of a love dialogue blurts this out like a cry for help:

> I have such a hunger for the heavenly Father that I forget all cares. And I so thirst for his Son that it removes from me all earthly desires. And I have such a passionate need for the Spirit of them both that it goes beyond the wisdom of the Father, which I cannot grasp; and beyond the Son's suffering, which I cannot bear; and beyond the consolation of the Holy Spirit, which I cannot receive.
>
> Whoever becomes entangled in longing such as this must forever hang blessedly fettered in God. (111 3)

This antithetical paradox is the linguistic equivalent of an inscrutable, lofty stage of experiencing God. Thus she says: "Yearning love causes a pure heart much sweet anguish" (111 24). For the soul's wish to attain the vision of and union with God remains unfulfilled on this earth in spite of any foretaste and all the heart-rending laments:

> O Lord, if it could ever happen to me that I might gaze upon you as my heart desires and hold you in my arms, then the divine pleasures of your love would needs permeate my soul to the degree possible for people on earth. What I would be willing to suffer thereafter has never been seen by human eyes. Indeed, a thousand deaths were too little.... If you, Lord, can bear it, let me long pursue you in yearning. (111 23)

At the end of her life in Helfta, in the context of a meditation on the seven penitential psalms in which she reflects on death, she writes:

> If we were to think of this hour often, all our pride would sink to the ground, as he [God] shall then reveal his glorious countenance to us. Then my soul shall have its favorite pastime. What I now painfully long for can never happen on earth as my heart would wish it. (VII 35)

What remains in the heart to the end is the strength to yearn longingly. Hence she begs her Lord in the same passage to "cover me with the mantle of your long-cherished desire."

3. The Power and Impotence of the Heart

Up to now we have seen that it is only by accepting God's love that the soul is empowered because in opening itself to the unfathomable ground of God, the imperilment of one's own heart is exposed. It is primarily the superior power of God's love which causes inexpressible suffering: "Bright love of playful flood ...causes [the heart] to die without death" (111 13). The agonies of this love are compared in detail with the passion of Christ, with the result that devotion to the passion turns into a mysticism of suffering in which pain loses its bitter quality as one concentrates on following Christ and on his suffering as redemption and reparation-all the more so when the heart itself is affected:

She is pierced in the side by a blind man
With a sweet spear of innocent love.
From her heart flows forth many a holy teaching. (III 10)[5]

5 Cf. also my detailed study of this theme: "`Frau Pein, ihr seid mein nachstes Kleid.' Zur Leidensmystik im Fliefenden Licht der Gottheit der Mechthild von Magdeburg," Die dunkle Nacht der Sinne, ed. Gotthart Fuchs (Dusseldorf, 1989), 63-107.

The power and authority of this teaching here does not derive from book-learning. Rather, her "teaching" flows forth from the capacity of her heart for suffering, which God has totally consigned to himself. This remains a mystery to the speculative intellect. For this reason she later distances herself from her theologically-schooled fellow nuns in Helfta.6 Earthly wisdom is contrasted with supernatural, heavenly wisdom. Its preeminence is stressed further by a vision of Christ in VI 24. In a vision Mechthild sees the bloody wound in the heart of Jesus and is instructed that divine blood had to be shed if we were to be saved.

> All suffering and humiliation are just a knocking at the gate of heaven up to the time when my heart's blood poured onto this earth. Only then was heaven opened. (VI 24)'

This vision explains that the blood from the heart of Christ, taken as his whole suffering during the passion, calls out for all times on behalf of humankind, because of its own weakness, to the mercy of the Father. In this redemptive suffering all human suffering is subsumed. Christ does not free Mechthild from her suffering, but rather strengthens her in her imitation of him as a kind of overflowing of love, as suffering in reparation with the promise of final glory, of which she experiences a foretaste as the assurance of future glory. From the tension caused by this yearning hope, strength of heart increases and can thus say: "Lovely love with guileless gift blots out the surly heart's complaint" (III 13).

According to Mechthild's words, an unsuspectedly strong power grows in the heart so that "a person retains a heart alien to all earthly things, so alien that, if a person loses earthly things, his heart becomes buoyant and his soul unfettered" (VI 4).

Expanding on such a high degree of detachment-one is reminded of the teaching of Meister Eckhart-she continues:

> No one possesses the whole of heaven in his heart but he alone who has removed himself from all consolation and all favors in this world....And yet God cannot restrain himself-and we cannot do without it-from giving us his abundance and his favor. (VI 20)

Despite all her joy in suffering, and in view of human frailty, her trust in God's mercy carries the day. It is so great that even human weakness, when it is the only possibility, is brought before God's countenance and serves even in this form as a song of praise:

The impotence of the heart rings in song so beautifully
before God
That God loves the notes
That sing deep in the heart....
Then God's sweet gift shall flow into their hearts. (VII 36)

There are, however, opposing powers constantly at work that can distract the human heart from its destiny, and can pull it down and entangle it in purely finite goals. Suggestions whispered by the devil (under the seductive guise of total surrender as a sign of holiness), where it is a question of keeping within bounds and of being chaste, cannot shake a heart that has been steeled in suffering and thus possesses the power of discernment. In a dialogue with the devil, in response to his suggestions, she says:

> If I were to tell everyone the secrets of my heart, things would be quite nice for me in the short term. But then you would intently strive to make the fun end badly. You would do this so that I might fall into doubt, sadness, unbelief, impurity, and thereafter into everlasting anguish. Another reason you are doing this is so that I might imagine that you come to me thus because I am so holy. (IV 2)

Out of the same certainty of her heart she responds:

In every movement of my heart,
In every bit of knowledge of my senses,
And in the whole nobility of my soul,
I could never find anything else
But that it is diabolical that one commit a sin. (V 16)

For out of Lucifer flows "ceaselessly from his fiery heart.. .all sin and shame." She likewise recognizes that suffering "is born of Lucifer's heart" (IV 12). And the deepest pit of hell, duplicity, "is begotten in Lucifer's heart" (11 26). She fights on against all these destructive powers. Her chief concern is peace of heart, but not at any price. The "holiest peace of heart... comes from keeping one's integrity in all that one does" (V 22). Truth comes before any fraudulent peace. Because Mechthild takes no pride in her being divinely favored and admits that she displays self-effacement again and again in spite of her experiences of God, she says:

I dare not, alas, claim credit
For everything that I say about love.
It is God, rather, who is thereby reaching out
To all those chosen in his heart. (IV 19)

When Mechthild speaks here of chosen hearts as a parallel or allusion to the chosen "noble hearts" of courtly poetry, which foster courtly love in a special way in a culture of the heart, then the nobility which she claims for the soul derives, for her, from a divine origin. This is perceived in the depths of the heart when all of one's own activity there ceases. She only speaks of it with great reserve: "Divine sweetness is enjoyed in the solitude of the heart" (VI 2).

The solitude or desert wilderness of the heart points, by way of an image, to the inaccessible, secluded location of a doublefaceted experience of God. Terrifying in his infinite remoteness, emptiness, and immensity, God outdoes himself by bringing joy through his nearness. Thus she says: "Mary Magdalene, I live with you in the desert wilderness, because all things are foreign to me except God alone" (11 24).' Nearness of God surpasses all human consolation, leaving it far behind. God alone suffices. And yet words fail her in her blessed state:

The voice of love and the melody of the heart must be left
unrendered,
For they can be captured by no merely human hand! (II 25)

Ultimately Mechthild forswears happiness with God for the sake of more genuine praise, wishing nothing more for herself. And thus, beset by the terrors of the dark night of God's remoteness and bereft of all consolation amid attacks of disbelief, she experiences how suddenly, as though through a miracle, bitter "gall has become honey for the palate of my soul" (IV 12) .9 In this highly dramatized dialogue of declaration and response Mechthild anticipates succinctly the central themes of the Spanish mysticism of Teresa of Avila and John of the Cross. Repeatedly she speaks of the various degrees of purification as a precondition for grasping God more profoundly, as the fruit of a higher level of love, in the same way as does Richard of St. Victor: "God bestows vision in proportion to love."

The final purification in the night of the senses and the intellect is described tersely and penetratingly in VI 12, asJohn of the Cross will develop it later in detail in the night canticles of his poetic theology. Thus Mechthild is an early classic witness for the human heart struggling with the love of God that consumes everything and demands all human energies. She experiences this struggle and all its consequences, be it the increase in her own capacity for suffering as the noblest form of praise and gratitude, or in courageously speaking prophetically to her times.

Because of the demanding nature of its language and content, it is consequently a great service Frank Tobin has performed in making this profound book accessible in its totality to the English-speaking world, for the first time with a solid edition of the original as the textual base. A commanding and fascinating female figure of the thirteenth century is thereby given the opportunity to speak. Alongside the manifestly intimate character of her writing, and going beyond what has relevance for her personal life, she assigns to her book a public function. Everything was done solely "for God's honor" and "for the book's teaching."

KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS

1. The abbreviations used for the books of the Bible follow the practice of the New American Bible.

II. Other frequently cited works are abbreviated as follows:

FL: Mechthild of Magdeburg's Flowing Light of the Godhead.

Lux div.: The Lux divinitatis, the Latin version of the FL. This can be found in Revelationes Gertrudianae ac Mechtildianae. 1875-77. Ed. Solesmes Monks (Louis Paquelin). 2 Vols. Poitiers and Paris: Oudin, 1875, 1877. Vol. 2: Sororis Mechtildis Lux divinitatis. 423-643.

Morel: Offenbarungen der Schwester Mechthild von Magdeburg oder Das flief3ende Licht der Gottheit. Aus der einzigen Handschrift des Stiftes Einsiedeln. Ed. Gall Morel. Regensburg, 1869. Reprinted, Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1963, 1976, 1980. (This was the only edition of the FL available until 1990.)

N I and N IL Das flief3ende Licht der Gottheit. Nach der Eindsiedler Handschrift in kritischem Vergleich mit der gesamten Uberlieferung. Ed. Hans Neumann. Munich: Artemis. Vol. 1 (1990): Text. The book, chapter, and line (s) in the FL being referred to are given, followed by N I plus the page number in Vol. 1; e.g., V 34, 41-43; N 1 68. Vol. 2 (1993): Untersuchungen (Investigations). References to Neumann's notes given by the text they refer to, followed by N II plus the page number in Vol. 2; e.g., note to I 28, 5; N 11 19.

Neumann 1964: "Beitrage zur Textgeschichte des `FlieBenden Lichts der Gottheit' and zur Lebensgeschichte Mechthilds von Magdeburg." In Altdeutsche and altniederlandiche Mystik. Ed. Kurt Ruh. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1964. 175-239.

Schmidt: Mechthild von Magdeburg. Das flief3ende Licht der Gottheit. Zweite, neubearbeitete Ubersetzung mit Einfuhrung and Kommentar von Margot Schmidt. Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt: Frommann-Holzboog, 1995. References are to the page preceded, where appropriate, by the note number; e.g., note 292, p. 397.

INTRODUCTION

1. The Beguines

Mechthild of Magdeburg (c. 1208-c. 1282/94), the author of The Flowing Light of the Godhead offered here in translation, lived most of her life as a beguine; and even though it would be taking matters to extremes to claim a type of spirituality specific to beguines,' a brief examination of their way of life, ideals, and the social situation in which the movement arose, flourished, and declined can contribute much to our understanding and appreciation of her book.z Beguines were women who led lives of voluntary poverty, chastity, and religious devotion withoutjoining an approved religious order. The movement began in the larger towns of the Low Countries during the twelfth century and spread south as far as Cologne and Strassburg, and also to the German-speaking East. It flourished from about 1220 to 1318 and gradually died out because of widespread ecclesiastical opposition. In Mechthild's time in Germany beguines usually lived in a communal house, sustaining themselves through support from their families, gifts, and work. Typical forms of work were nursing, weaving, spinning, embroidery, preparing the dead for burial, and housework for others.

The reasons motivating women to undertake this way of life seem to be the same as those contributing to the founding of the Franciscan and Dominican orders about the same time: the wish to return to the ideals of early Christianity and imitate more closely the lives of the apostles. Beguines strove to be unworldly while living in the world. Spending much time in prayer, both communal and private, attending mass and other church services, frequenting the sacraments, practicing moderate asceticism, and performing menial work, with nothing to call their own-not even themselves-they desired only to find favor with their divine Bridegroom and sought to elevate those around them more by leading exemplary apostolic Christian lives than by teaching.

Beguine houses usually fell under the jurisdiction of the local parish priest, but because of the similarities in mode of life and ideals beguines were often drawn into close contact with nearby Franciscan or Dominican communities. In contrast to earlier religious orders, they, like the beguines, settled in towns in order to carry out their apostolic work. From the beginning the beguines met with criticism from some quarters because they belonged to no ecclesiastically approved order and, hence, supervision over them was minimal. Also, because many beguine communities were developing into centers of mysticism and were providing northern Europe with its first mystical writings in the vernacular, questions of religious orthodoxy among them soon arose. This opposition to the beguines and the reasons for it are worth noting because the atmosphere thus created provides an essential part of the context in which Mechthild was writing. In composing her book Mechthild was faced with addressing the following two questions: What gave her, a woman with no formal education or special training in theology and belonging to no approved order, the right to speak out on theological matters and to criticize sharply the clergy, even its most prominent members? And by whose authority did she write, or why should she have expected her words to be taken seriously?

Though opposition to the beguines was in evidence from the beginning among those who viewed all change with suspicion, early papal pronouncements encouraged the movement. Pope Honorius III expressed approval of communities of pious women of northern continental Europe, and Pope Gregory IX's bull Gloriam virginalem extended papal protection to the "chaste virgins of Teutonia," which probably meant both those in Germany and those in the German-speaking parts of the Low Coun tries. Soon, however, those voicing criticism gained strength. Besides the misgivings arising from beguines not being members of an approved order, they were often accused of hypocrisy and laziness because, it was said, they lived on alms and refused to work. There were also charges that false piety cloaked lives of gross sensuality.

In the course of the thirteenth century several synods in Germany dealt with matters relating to beguines and passed decrees that forbade their wandering about and required them to live in communal houses, to work to support themselves, and to obey their parish priests; at two synods held late in Mechthild's life or shortly afterward (Trier, 1277, and Eichstatt, 1284) beguines were warned against the preaching of false doctrine. Of special interest for our purposes is a synod held in Magdeburg in 1261, when Mechthild was well along in her writing and parts of her book were no doubt already in circulation.' The synod, presided over by Archbishop Rupert, declared that beguines should, like other parishioners, obey their parish priests or be excommunicated.'

Not until well after Mechthild's death, however, did the forces opposed to beguines carry the day and deal serious blows to the vitality of the movement. In 1312 the Council of Vienne called for an inquisitional investigation of beguines and beghards-

their male counterparts-in Germany. It also decreed that beguine communities were to be dissolved and that such organizations should be permanently forbidden, but it left open the possibility for truly faithful women to live lives of penance and humility in common. Because of the decrees of the Council of Vienne and the inconsistent policies of the popes toward beguines, the movement declined, though some communities continued in the Low Countries and the Rhineland until quite recently. During the early decades of the fourteenth century most beguine communities in Germany resolved their precarious position by embracing the rule of an established order (Franciscan, Dominican, or Cistercian) and lived much as they had before, but under the guidance and supervision that these orders provided.

2. Mechthild's Life

The few facts we have about Mechthild's life come from her own writings, from the Latin translation of the FL (the Lux divinitatis), and from the forewords to them written anonymously. Scholars have generally accepted this information as trustworthy, and from it the following picture emerges.' Mechthild was born about 1208 into a noble family. Just what level of nobility, however, is a matter of conjecture and dispute. Schmidt places the family home within the archdiocese of Magdeburg.' Neumann describes her birthplace as the western Middlemarch.' The most convincing evidence for her being well born is the obvious familiarity her book shows with life in the castle and with courtly culture, especially courtly literature. Mechthild makes the point more than once that she is unlearned; that is, that she knows little Latin and has had no formal training in theology, which might invest her words with religious authority; but much of her writing shows a detailed knowledge of both the forms and content of the literature of the German high courtly period drawing to a close during her youth.

At the age of twelve, she tells us, she was "greeted" by the Holy Spirit-her expression for a special outpouring of divine favorand this continued daily for over three decades, well into the time when she was writing the FL. About 1230, as a young woman in her early twenties, she left the comforts of home to take up the life of a beguine in the not-too-distant town of Magdeburg, where she knew but one person; and even this one friendship she considered a spiritual liability, since she feared that, because of it, God might withdraw the spiritual divine love and contempt of the world that she sought (IV 2).

About 1250, in her forties, she revealed the extraordinary spiritual favors she has been experiencing to her confessor, probably the Dominican Heinrich of Halle. He urged her to continue her present way of life in cheerful confidence, and he commanded her to write the book "out of God's heart and mouth" (IV2).$ During the next ten years Mechthild completed the first five books of the FL, after which she may have originally considered her task com pleted. However, sometime during the following ten years (1260-70) she wrote Book VI, and still later composed Book VII.

Concerning the external details of Mechthild's life as a beguine in Magdeburg we know very little. We assume she lived in a house of beguines, and there is some evidence that she was, for a time, the superior of the community. She suffered through periods of sickness and reacted strongly to criticism of and threats against her book. She may have left Magdeburg occasionally because of sickness or hostility and returned to her relatives. But it is clear that she could count many supporters as well as detractors. The Lux divinitatis, the Latin translation of the first six books of the FL, reports that Baldwin, Mechthild's brother, was accepted into the Dominican order because of the merits of his sister.' Indeed, it was from the Order of Preachers, which she frequently singles out for special praise, that she seems to have derived much of her support.

It was in the Cistercian community at Helfta, however, that Mechthild spent her final years and wrote the seventh and final book of the FL. Under the guidance of its second abbess, Gertrud of Hackeborn (1250-91), Helfta was becoming known for its piety and learning. Here Mechthild retreated about 1270. There are signs that she felt ill at ease in this new environment, surrounded by women of whom many had enjoyed an education far superior to hers and could read and write Latin. This gave them direct access to the spiritual and theological traditions that Mechthild could only learn of secondhand. And yet these same nuns esteemed her and sought out her advice in spiritual matters (VII 21).

Two of these nuns themselves produced mystical texts that show clearly the influence of the FL. The first of these, The Book of Special Grace (Liber specialis gratiae), written down by two nuns after 1291, contains the revelations of Mechthild of Hackeborn (+1298 or 1299), sister of the aforementioned abbess. In the second book, known as The Herald of Divine Love (Legatus divinae pietatis), Gertrud of Helfta, "the Great" (+1301 or 1302), wrote an account of her interior life. Because these writings were in Latin, they enjoyed a wider readership than the FL and continued to be influential long after Mechthild of Magdeburg's vernacular work had disappeared, aside from anonymous bits that were here and there subsumed into manuals of piety. Here at Helfta, feeble and blind, which necessitated that she dictate the final chapters of Book VII, Mechthild finished out her life. The year of her death is uncertain-either about 1282 or about 1294.

3. The Flowing Light of the Godhead: a History of the Text

Since a manuscript of the FL was discovered in 1861 and became an object of scholarly investigation, the relationship of the text, as we have it, to the original document that Mechthild actually authored has been the object of much serious scholarship and debate. Understanding the problems and the degree to which they have been resolved is important for an intelligent reading of the text. The matter is perhaps best approached chronologically.

Mechthild originally wrote her book in Middle Low German, whereby Middle refers to the period in which the language was spoken and written-roughly 1050-1450-and Low refers to its geographical range-northern Germany.10 This original version has been lost, and there seems to be little hope of its recovery. Concerning this lost version, scholars have raised the question of how great a part Heinrich of Halle, Mechthild's confessor and spiritual advisor, played in its genesis. Heinrich, identified as lector" at the Dominican house in Ruppin after 1261 and member of the new Dominican community in Halle after about 1270, edited the first six books of the FL. He preceded Mechthild in death and seems to have had no influence on Book VII. Early scholarship gave him an important role in the genesis of Mechthild's book, claiming that he had altered greatly the content, style, and order of the text. More recently, Neumann has produced convincing evidence to show that Heinrich's influence on Mechthild's writing was minimal: that he confined himself to dividing the text into chapters while respecting Mechthild both as a person chosen by God to receive and impart special spiritual favors and as a talented writer. Some have suggested that Hein rich may have occasionally influenced the wording of sections dealing with difficult theological matters, where an orthodox formulation was a primary concern.' In general, however, there is now prevailing agreement that Heinrich let Mechthild's text speak for itself. And Neumann thinks there is good reason to believe that Mechthild herself participated in the editing process." just who is responsible for the chapter headings (which in the version we have are, with some inconsistencies, listed both at the beginning of each book and placed at the beginning of each chapter) is difficult to say. Because they differ in style from the rest of the text, they are probably not the work of Mechthild herself. Because they are at times misleading or less than apt, it is unlikely that they are Heinrich's doing. The headings of Book VII, because they differ markedly in style from those of the earlier books, must be attributed to sources other than the writer of the chapter headings of the first six books. Possibly they are the work of nuns at Helfta.

Books I through VI of the FL were translated into Latin, probably by two or more Dominicans in Halle shortly after Mechthild's death but, in any case, before 1298. The translators were apparently unaware of Book VII, composed at Helfta. This Latin version, the Lux divinitatis, changes the original order of the text, grouping material according to subject matter. The translators have toned down Mechthild's criticism of the clergy and some of her erotic imagery, and they occasionally offer an interpretation rather than a translation of a phrase or a sentence in the original. Otherwise, they demonstrate a solid understanding of the text and competence in translating it. The Latin translation is helpful in determining the meaning of Mechthild's occasionally obscure phrasing and serves as a welcome aid in correcting obvious corruptions in the vernacular version we possess.

What, then, in the absence of the original, is the nature of this surviving vernacular version, and what is its relationship to Mechthild's text? Somehow, a copy of Mechthild's work in the original Middle Low German14 fell into the hands of a secular priest in Basel named Heinrich of Nordlingen, confessor and spiritual advisor in many convents nearby. He supported mystical spirituality, was in contact with the Dominican John Tattler and possibly with Henry Suso as well, and corresponded with several mystically favored nuns. As we learn from a letter he wrote to the Dominican nun Margaret Ebner, to whom he is sending a copy of the FL, he was greatly moved by Mechthild's writing but, coming as he did from Bavaria and having worked first in Franconia and then in Swiss Basel, he found the German so strange that he realized it would have to be recast in Middle High German, the language of the German-speaking South, if it were to be read in that region with profit. Whether Heinrich did much of the translating himself or whether he delegated it to others in his circle in Basel, the task took two years. It is upon this version, existing in only one complete manuscript (ms E), discovered in 1861 in the library of the Benedictine monastery in Einsiedeln, Switzerland, that we must rely for access to Mechthild's lost original.

How close is this Middle High German version to the FL as it left Mechthild's hands? And is it possible to reconstruct the original from this version? To begin with the second question: Because the language of the area around Magdeburg was unstable at the time-admitting influences from several German dialects and forming no consistent internal linguistic unity-and hence, from the point of view of the present, unpredictable, scholars have never seriously considered attempting a full-scale reconstruction. This being said and despite Heinrich of Nordlingen's bafflement, one should not exaggerate the dissimilarities between these forms of medieval German. They are not different languages but rather different dialects of the same basic language and share to a large extent the same vocabulary. Most of the differences are in spelling and sound, the consequences

of the second consonant shift. This and Mechthild's frequent use of rhyme enables philologists to ascertain the probable original forms of many words. Thus, though ms E must remain the basis for constructing a critical text-and one that must remain Middle High German-this is no cause for despair. As Neumann in his early study of ms E reassures us, the version originating in Basel shows that great pains were taken to render its source accurately." The translators were aided, he maintains, by the nature of Mechthild's language and thought, which transcends dialect and geography. Mechthild's modes of expression are often taken from the knightly-courtly world. The ideals and concepts of this world, drawn from a class culture spread throughout Europe, changed very little when transferred from a north German to a south German dialect. Neumann considers it an overstatement to call the Basel version a translation of its source. It is, rather, merely a "transplanting" or "transferring.""

Until quite recently all work on Mechthild and all translations of the FL were based on an edition of ms E done by Gall Morel, the Benedictine librarian at Einsiedeln, and completed in 1869. This edition was reprinted three times (1963, 1976, and 1980) despite its many shortcomings. The desperate lack of a critical edition was finally ended with the publication of Hans Neumann's edition in 1990 (Vol. 1: Text) and 1993 (Vol. 2: Investigations), brought to completion by Gisela Vollmann-Profe. Neumann corrected the many misreadings of Morel's edition and made other emendations based on manuscripts containing fragments of the FL found since the publication of the Morel edition, on comparisons with the Lux divinitatis, and on the wealth of scholarship on Mechthild that has appeared during the past 130 years, to which Neumann himself is, perhaps, the foremost contributor." The translation presented here is the first in English based on the new critical edition.

4. The Flowing Light of the Godhead as literature

The FL has often been described as a unique document with no obvious antecedents or descendants whose singularity defeats all attempts to categorize it. The frequent medieval term for similar texts is revelationes (revelations) ; but if we take the term seriously, or a related description sometimes applied to it in German: Visionsbuch or Visionenbuch (visionary book or book of visions), we seem to be excluding much of the content of the FL from our definition. Many chapters deal with revelatory material only by the widest stretch of the imagination." Mechthild's first direct description of something she says she experienced in a vision (as opposed to ecstasy) does not occur until 11 3. Thus, categorization of her book remains a problem.

Compared to other mystical and religious writings in the vernacular, Mechthild's efforts are remarkable for how literary they are. Mechthild is not alone in turning her experiences into literature. One might well have to admit, for example, that Hadewijch writes more consistently at a high poetic level. What distinguishes Mechthild's book from the others is the variety of genres-literary as well as those less literary in nature-that she employs in formulating her thoughts. Most visionary writers of her time and in the generations after her seem to be passive in formulating their experiences. They wish simply and unadornedly to report what they have seen and heard, risking no changes that might contaminate the experience. Mechthild, on the contrary, seems to consider the experience as raw material that needs to be reflected upon, formed, and fashioned before it can become part of her book.

In her search for suitable forms she ranges far and wide, employing most genres available to an author of her time. Their number and variety are remarkable. Among the studies devoted to this, that of Wolfgang Mohr has been the best received.' His list spans the spectrum, from the genres and sub-genres of courtly literature to forms originating in folk culture and, of course, many forms drawn from religious sources. Simplifying Mohr's list, one can note the following major forms in the FL: 1. Religious genres: the vision," hymn, sermon, spiritual instruction and tract, prayer, liturgy, litany, and prophetic literature. 2. Courtly genres: courtly-love poetry, allegorical dialogue, dialogue between the lovers, the messenger's song (Botenlied), and the exchange (Wechsel). 3. Other genres: autobiography, drama, epigrammatic poetry and wisdom literature, anecdote, letter, parody, nursery rhyme, and polemics.

While it would be rash to assume on the part of Mechthild in the case of each chapter a conscious effort to exploit a well-established genre, the presence of a wealth of traditional forms, which is the distinguishing characteristic of the FL, can hardly be accidental. Intentionally or not, Mechthild, through her extensive absorption of the many kinds of writing to which she was exposed, wrote a book whose paradoxical nature is that its unity consists, in part, in its diversity of forms.

Mechthild's imagery is rich and varied. As reflected in the book's divinely received title, images of flowing and light abound. Flowing is often an outpouring from God, and dazzling light radiates forth from God and the angels, surrounding the souls of the blessed. Other images point ahead to Meister Eckhart; for example, her play with iht (something) and niht (nothing), or her mention of the wiiestenunge (the desert). She takes her metaphors from simple things, such as wine, a sphere, the dew, or a mountain.

In her visions Mechthild is able to create a vivid chart of supernatural geography: heaven (111 1), hell (111 21), purgatory (11 8), and paradise (VII 57). She puts upon a stage before us the drama of the end of time, as the forces of good and evil enter their final struggle (IV 27). Through lively dialogue she makes the devils come alive (IV 2 and VII 39). It is this cosmic dimension of many of her visions that distinguishes Mechthild from the women visionaries to follow, who confine themselves to reporting visionary experiences of a personal and private world. Mechthild, too, describes many visions private and intimate in nature. She is, however, also able to put before our eyes scenes of great significance for the history of salvation; and she paints such scenes from a privileged point of view.

Besides allegorical dialogues, such as ones between Love and the soul (I 2 and 11 24) and between the soul and the senses (I 44), Mechthild, in the tradition of the bestiary, creates an allegorical animal that represents the truly spiritual person (IV 18). She also creates an allegorical house in which she dwells (VII 48), an allegorical convent (VII 36), and the allegorical crown Christ shall wear in heaven after the LastJudgment (VII 1). Especially striking in her depictions, whether meant literally or metaphorically, is the strong sense of order she evokes and how she expresses the worth of someone-whether angel, saint, or damned soul-by the place she assigns each in the space she creates.

5. The Flowing Light of the Godhead as an Expression of Mysticism

One could argue that the above heading is misleading if the following remarks are intended to address the religious content of the FL in its totality, and not just certain parts that are by general consensus mystical. Certainly there are sections of the book in which the subject matter and its treatment are so lacking in mystical dimensions that the term cannot be appropriately applied to the book as a whole. Consider, for example, the chapters in which Mechthild offers practical advice to religious superiors (VI 1) and canons (VI 2), or the chapter, enlightened perhaps at the time but an embarrassment to a present-day admirer of Mechthild, in which she counsels how one should conduct oneself in dealing with Jews (IV 11). In spite of this justifiable objection, I would like to retain the term because, once the term is understood as it is intended, I think it well describes the spirit in which the FL was composed.

If one thinks, as I do, that a most unfortunate aspect of many studies on mysticism has been the focus on it as an experience, and if one then chooses, with Bernard McGinn, the working definition of mysticism as a direct or immediate consciousness or awareness of the presence of God, then the term mystical seems apt to describe the whole FL.21 It is Mechthild's conviction that she has been favored with a special consciousness of God's presence that permeates the book and authorizes her. Without it she could not be its author. Without it she would have no authority to write about spiritual matters, whether the longing the divine Lover and the beloved soul feel for each other or a vision depicting the torments of the damned. As her description of God's greeting makes clear (1 2), this heightened awareness of God's presence is not and cannot be a lasting or constant state. Its impact, however, creates in Mechthild the ever-present conviction that she is divinely empowered to teach and to criticize; and this conviction informs not only the lyrical descriptions of her moments of special favor and the writing down of her visions, but every last bit of the book, even, or especially, when Mechthild finds writing a burden from which she would gladly be released.

Mechthild develops no system of theology or spiritual teaching of her own that one can easily summarize, though she does express a few thoughts that have a ring of originality. Her strengths lie elsewhere-in her ability to describe lyrically the relationship of God and the soul, or to depict vividly the heavenly heights or the infernal depths. Because, however, the FL is divided into so many discrete books and chapters with no immediately recognizable principle of organization, a brief presentation of some of her characteristic thoughts or themes is offered here to provide initial orientation.

Love is the force that compels Mechthild to write, and love is what determines the hierarchy of values in her world. Especially in the early books Mechthild's way of describing love is strongly lyrical. Chapters 1 and 2 of Book I are two of her poetically best compositions. They both set the lyrical tone and introduce us to the dominant theme of divine love-both God's love for the soul and the soul's for God. While God's favor cannot be earned or effected by human actions, one can remove the obstacles to God's action in the soul by getting beyond oneself (iuberkommen) and by having become nothing (ze nihte worden, I 2).

In I 1 Mechthild creates a dialogue between Love and the soul to illustrate how the soul is to empty herself. The soul complains that Love has taken everything from her: childhood, youth, wealth, friends, relatives, honor, and even health, consuming her flesh and blood. Love counters by listing what the soul has received in return: heavenly freedom, virtue, spiritual riches, knowledge; and she has been purified and drawn into God. When the soul continues to complain, Love offers

itself to her and the soul feels abundantly recompensed.

In Chapter 2 Mechthild presents us with a poetically charged description of the divine "greeting," which she first experienced in her twelfth year and which, at the time of her writing IV 2, had continued for more than thirty-one years. So overwhelming has this experience been that it has made even major venial sins impossible. Here, at the outset of her book, she tries to recreate this defining experience of God's favor in words and to describe the heights to which this greeting lets her soar. These first two chapters set the tone for the lyricism of love that continues intermittently throughout.

Mechthild conceives of God, the object of her love, in various ways. God is the Emperor of the universe and is vitally present in creation, being "all things in all things" (11 19). God is three persons in one nature, with a rich interior life whose intimate conversations Mechthild is allowed to overhear (111 9). Most frequently, however, God appears as the human Lover and divine Bridegroom, passionately seeking spiritual union with the soul. To express the mutual love binding God and the soul, Mechthild often relies on two traditions: the lyric poetry of courtly love and the Song of Solomon. (Bernard of Clairvaux's treatment of this biblical text in his masterpiece on mystical love, the Sermons on the Song of Songs, reached Mechthild at least secondhand and unmistakably influenced her.) If mysticism implies union of the soul with God, then we must recognize that for Mechthild, as for her two principal sources, love's union consists as much or more in the yearning the lovers feel and express for each other as in fulfillment and oneness achieved. For the mystical beloved on earth, separation is as essential to love as union.

For Mechthild, two important qualities of the soul's love for God are that it should be bound and knowing love. Unbound love dwells in the senses and has not climbed to the soul. Unbound love is changeable and can lead to false love, as with David and Solomon. They did not sink beneath all creatures, nor were they wounded by love's power. Bound love transcends the senses and denies the body its will. In it the soul listens for the divine voice, sees the divine light, and seeks the divine will. Whoever is touched by bound love cannot fall into serious sin (11 24).

The soul's love for God must also be based on knowledge, but this seems to be personal knowledge of the divine Lover rather than the knowledge of the schools. Through the divine greeting Mechthild has this knowledge, and upon it her love rests secure. It cannot be taken from her by the "blind holy ones who love and do not know" (I 2). In I 21 Mechthild elaborates on the nature of the love she has sought and found:

Love without knowledge is as darkness to the wise soul.
Knowledge without its fruition she likens to the pains of hell.
Fruition short of death she cannot lament enough.

Love, knowledge, fruition, and death. We grasp the first three terms easily, but how are we to understand death? Mechthild's medieval audience would have had no difficulty understanding her. Love and death are linked both in religious and courtly traditions, and Mechthild several times exploits the interplay between these concepts already bound together in her cultural and spiritual environment. In a tradition going back to Paul, Christians are exhorted to die to themselves and to the world in order to rise again with and in Christ.22 Certainly such Pauline thoughts would occur to Mechthild's audience when she says: "Nothing tastes good to me but God alone; I am wondrously dead" (IV 12). Later Christian writers, for example Richard of St. Victor, with whose thought Mechthild was familiar, also speak of love of God causing a kind of death in the soul.23

In courtly literature the closeness of love and death is a frequent theme. It is in the guise of a minnesinger that Mechthild presents herself when she writes:

I would willingly die of love
If it could happen to me. (II 2)

And again, this time drawing both on spiritual and courtly traditions: "I long to love him to the death, boundlessly and without ceasing. Be happy, my soul, for your Life has died for love of you. Love him so fiercely that you could die for him" (I 28).

Nowhere in medieval literature, however, is the bond between love and death so pivotal as in the story of Tristan and Isolde. In Gottfried of Strassburg's unsurpassed version, the prologue announces it as an underlying motif, using an oxymoron to express the paradox at the center of the lovers' all-enveloping love: "its dear life, its sorrowful death, its dear death, its sorrowful life."24And when Tristan is told that the love potion that is causing his all-consuming love for Isolde will be the

death of him, he replies that "it has poisoned me most sweetly.... If my adorable Isolde were to go on being the death of me in this fashion I would woo death everlasting!"25 In their ecstasy of love they die, losing all sense of self, so lost are they in their union. It is this paradoxical meaning of death that Mechthild conjures up when she exclaims: "In this greeting I want to die living" (I 2). And it is again a Liebestod she has in mind when she says: "Love's death, a sweet distress" (1 30). Toward her life's end, longing for physical death and union with her Lover in heaven, she begs that she "might die of love in love" (VII 21).

The vehemence of her passion is often expressed in erotic images. In the dance with her Lover the soul hopes to "leap with abandon" before she comes "into the bed of love" where she shall "refresh" herself with her Lover. She wants to drink "undiluted wine" and go to her Lover as a "full-grown bride." When she enters the secret chamber, our Lord bids her: "Take off your clothes." For

Nothing shall come between them:
Then a blessed stillness
That both desire comes over them.
He surrenders himself to her,
And she surrenders herself to him. (I 44)

We should be well aware, however, that Mechthild is far from confusing or commingling spiritual love with physical love. Such a thought readily occurs to us, steeped as we are in popular psychology. Mechthild makes it quite clear, however, that only the soul that has left everything and gone "beyond the influences of the flesh" is ready for the dance and the bridal bed. And the clothes she is commanded to strip from her are the virtues with which she has adorned herself (I 44). Mechthild's passion is a spiritual passion. The searing images of physical passion are just that: images.

Despite Mechthild's resolute commitment to spiritual love, her attitude toward her body is not simply one of grim opposition. True, she has her soul call her body a murderer (I 2), but one must note carefully the context of her remark. Having left the confines of her physical body to spend an idyllic hour in spiritual bliss within the Trinity, the soul returns, as well she must, to the harsh reality of her uneasy partnership with the body. Mechthild laces her description of their reunion with humor. Both are out of sorts, grumbling and reproaching each other. Humor is possible for Mechthild precisely because body and soul are not pitted against each other as equals in deadly combat. The soul that truly desires to soar in spiritual realms cannot be held captive by the body but is free to go to her Lover.

Ultimately, body and soul will be partners forever, completely reconciled. Later in life, when thoughts of death become more frequent, Mechthild imagines how she will speak to her body on the last day. Addressing it as her beloved, healed of all its woes, she invites it to rise up and receive its reward. In the past the soul depended on the body. In heaven the roles shall be reversed (VI 35).

As the book continues, we notice changes in tone and emphasis. Lyrical effusions of love's yearning and its fulfillment in rapturous greeting grow less frequent. More consideration is given to practical rules of a holy life, to criticism of the clergy, and to visions both cosmic and private. But her perception of her relationship to her divine Lover changes as well. The importanceand perhaps the frequency-of the greeting diminishes. In its place we find Mechthild speaking of "sinking humility" and "estrangement," ideas that she now views as essential to this relationship. In two chapters especially (IV 12 and V 4), she articulates the change in her situation and attitude.

If Mechthild had in the past concentrated her lyricism on celebrating the blissful heights of love, sinking humility allows her to explore and value another dimension of divine love. It "chases" the soul "up into heaven and drags her down again into the abyss." Only in experiencing all aspects of God's love can the soul attain maturity: "When she has thus ascended to those heights possible for her while she is still attached to the body and has sunk to the deepest point that she can find, then she is fully grown in virtue and holiness." Not only does the soul accept this "deepest point" as an integral part of her life, but she actively seeks it and "retreats from what God does to her out of love." Sinking humility compels her to compare herself to all other creatures and to conclude that every one of them is better than she. Finally, it brings her to the lowest spot "where she can go no further: under Lucifer's tail." Here she would ever remain to God's honor and be "adorned with the suffering of long waiting" as her only reward (V 4).

Paired with sinking humility is estrangement, which Mechthild describes for us in detail (IV 12). After the soul has rejected all earthly joys and comforts, God answers her wish to forgo spiritual elevation and leaves her among those in purgatory and

among the damned. Asked by our Lord how long she wishes to remain there, the soul begs to be allowed to sink further. Soul and body, bereft of God's palpable presence, enter total darkness. Here the soul is assailed by doubts about the divine origin of all the favors previously experienced: If they had been from God, why would he now forsake her? The soul remains steadfast, relying on the memory of these favors. There follows "constant estrangement from God" that completely envelops the soul. Earlier the soul regarded God's absence as "anguish beyond human dying / And beyond the torments of hell" (II 2). Now she accepts and embraces it eagerly: "Welcome, very blessed Estrangement." In a transvaluation of values incomprehensible to reason and categorized as an abnormality by human science, the soul rejoices in its desolation, finding that "gall has become honey for the palate of my soul." When God wishes to cool the ardor of his love in her, the soul consents, but only "in such a way that it is good for you and not for me." To estrangement is added pain, but this only increases the soul's joy: "the deeper I sink, / The sweeter I drink" (IV 12).

This enigmatic disposition of the soul does not, however, seem to be the end of Mechthild's spiritual odyssey. As she continues to write, thoughts of union with God while on earth-even the paradoxical union through estrangement-recede and are replaced by a longing for death with its uninterrupted and everlasting union; and estrangement from God is not the last "divine favor" she is asked to accept. Since she has already renounced the world and God's affection, what, one might ask, remains for her to accomplish?

The last book of the FL, coupled with the circumstances in which its author wrote it, furnishes insights into what might be seen as Mechthild's final accomplishment. Her renunciation of God's favor and acceptance of estrangement from him were heroic; and that is, perhaps, precisely why this cannot be seen as the ideal and final disposition intended for the soul. In welcoming estrangement Mechthild is still the great soul whose interior life holds center stage in her own mind. At Helfta she is then required to give up much of what had been special about her and accept being ordinary. She must submit to the usual problems of advanced age and the blows to her basic human dignity this involves. Though she was willing throughout her life to seek and accept advice from those she respected, one can only conclude from her writings that she was fiercely and proudly independent. Yet she seeks admittance to the convent at Helfta and submits to its discipline. Though she feels some uneasiness there, both at being less educated than many of the sisters and at their tendency to regard her as a holy relic," she does her best to fit in and fulfill the community's expectations of her.27 Infirm and close to the death she so longs for, she sees in a vision how the saints and devils gather for her final struggle and triumph. But it is not to be. She recovers and must accept living onweak, blind, and with nothing to look forward to but ordinary banal human suffering (VII 63).

Renouncing God's favors and rejoicing at estrangement from him had been a noble gesture because it was done freely and with full human vigor. Now she has no choice but to accept her demeaning dependence on others. She must renounce herself and "let go," as the mystics urge, but not in some special sense limited to God's special friends. Rather, she, the visionary, the ecstatic, God's special messenger to Holy Christianity, must relinquish control over herself, as those must do who are feeble and helpless.

To the extent that one dare judge in such matters, it seems that she was equal to the challenge of accepting her very ordinary human lot. In the next-to-last chapter she composes a prayer, poignant in its directness and simplicity, which expresses her acknowledgment of her helplessness and her reaction to it. She thanks God that he has taken everything from her-her ability to provide food and clothing for herself, her eyesight, the use of her hands, her strength-thus forcing her to rely on others to take care of her basic needs. She has nothing left to give but her gratitude, as she humbly accepts the help of others. God has even stripped from her the "strength of my heart," and she thanks him for serving her "with the hearts of others" (VII 64). Love, knowledge, fruition, death she had written years before (1 21). It is perhaps a changed and deepened understanding of all that this entails which informs the concluding parts of The Flowing Light of the Godhead.

6. A Note on the Translation

Translations are by nature inferior to the originals. This is especially true concerning texts with such literary richness as the FL possesses. It is incumbent upon the translator both to set priorities and to explain, when possible, what the translation fails to accomplish. In a text such as the FL, which exploits the devices and conventions of literature but which, in fact, is trying to achieve a supra-literary goal, I have felt compelled to make content-the sense of what Mechthild is saying-the primary concern, even when this involves failing to reproduce adequately the form into which Mechthild casts her meaning. I have occasionally added some explanatory notes regarding literary forms and devices to help the reader become aware of what the translation has failed to accomplish. One pervasive aspect of Mechthild's style, however, which I have not been able to approximate in the

translation, needs a more elaborate explanation than can be achieved in notes to individual passages. This is her peculiar conception and use of a literary region between prose and verse.

As the critical edition points out, Morel's edition, by how it made the text appear on the page, divided Mechthild's writing sharply into prose and verse, as though she were following the tra dition of prosimetrum, as found, say, in Boethius's Consolations of Philosophy.28 Actually, Mechthild's style is much more differentiated, and she delights especially in transitional forms between prose and verse. The device she employs to create this diversity is colon rhyme; that is, units shorter than a sentence that are bound together by rhyme. Sometimes this device is used loosely and spread out over a section of text in such a way that it is scarcely noticeable. Frequently then, at the close of a chapter, Mechthild will intensify its use, so that it occurs almost without interruption over several lines of text. Before illustrating this through examples, we must also examine Mechthild's concept of rhyme, because it is quite foreign to modern sensibilities. More frequent than rhyme as it is normally understood-as the correspondence of vowel and consonant sounds at the end of a word (can-man; token-broken) - are occurrences of assonance or vowel rhyme, where only the vowels correspond (can-fat; token-over) .29The following examples with their translations are offered to clarify:

II 15:

Swelch mensche wirt zu einer *stunt*	Whoever at some point
von warer minne reht *wunt*,	Is seriously wounded by true love
der wirt niemer me wol *gesunt*,	Will never become healthy again,
er enkússe noch den selben *munt*,	Unless he kisses the same mouth
von dem sin sel ist worden *wunt*.	By which his soul was wounded.

I 10:

Swelch moensch die welt *úbersiget*	Whoever conquers the world
und sime lichamen allen unnútzen willen *benimet*	And takes from his body all useless desires,
und den túvel *úberwindet*	And overcomes the devil,
das ist die sele, die got *minnet*.	This is the soul that loves God.
Tuot ir die welt einen *stos*,	If the world gives her a shove,
da von lidet si kleine *not;*	She does not suffer much.
tuot ir das fleisch einen *wank*,	If the flesh gives her a jolt,
da von wirt der geist nút *krank*;	The spirit will not get sick from it.
tuot ir der túvel einen *bik*,	If the devil gives her a push,
des ahtet die sele aber *niht*.	The soul pays no heed.
Si *minnet*	She loves
und si *minnet*	And she loves (keep on loving),
und si kan anders nit *beginnen*.	and she does not know how to do otherwise.

IV 26:

Ein bruoder in der predier orden der was so sere beswert mit einem guoten ambachte in der gehorsami, als vil maniger ist, das im entgieng sein jugentlichú *maht* und *verlor* sine menlichen *kraft; doch* tet er es mit guotem willen. Do bat ich únsern *herren*, das er sine gnade da zuo woelte *keren*. Únser herre wisete mir und *sprach:* "Ich horte und *sach* alsus alle die arbeit, die er *lidet* und das er *liset* und *schribet*, das sol alles von minnen *singen* min lop vor minem ewigen *gesinde* alsus: grosser got, ewig, kreftig wunderlich, alleluia; und ich wil sin hovbet *ufhaben* und alle sine maht sterken als ich dir *habe* getan, nit alleine von nature, mere ovch sere von *gnaden*."

A brother in the Order of Preachers was so weighed down by an important office accepted under obedience—as happens to many—that his youthful vigor was drained from him and he lost his natural strength; yet he still carried on with good intentions. So I begged our Lord that he might turn his favor in that direction. Our Lord instructed me and said: "I have heard and seen all the distress he is suffering, and what he reads and writes. All this shall become the following song of love praising me before my eternal court: Great God, eternal, mighty, marvelous, alleluia. And I shall lift up his head and increase all his might, just as I have done for you—not just by nature, but rather even more by grace."

These three examples give the reader some idea of the diverse ways in which Mechthild employs different kinds of rhyme. The first example approximates closely a modern conception of rhyming verse, and the content is appropriate to the lyric form as well. The second example shows a predominance of assonance or vowel rhyme with an occurrence of conventional rhyme and an example of identical rhyme (minnet-minnet) thrown in for good measure. Again the linguistic structure and the content seem closer to verse than prose. In such cases I have, as here, usually cast the passage into verse-like lines without attempting to recreate the rhyme or assonance of the original. In like manner, I have not been overly concerned to reproduce the rhythms of the original, which are, in any case, most often irregular.

The third example contains a type of writing quite frequent in the FL. The passage begins as straight prose with no adornment of rhyme or assonance. The content, too, seems best suited to be expressed in prose. Then assonance sets in, punctuating the text at irregular intervals but in no way providing a verse-like structure for the whole. I have generally translated such passages into English prose. Also, following the practice of the critical edition and Schmidt in her translation, I have rendered several passages arguably more verse-like than prose-like in the original as prose. Hence, in such cases, there is no indication in the translation of this aspect of the original.

A few other matters regarding the translation need mentioning. Though generally of high quality, Mechthild's writing is uneven, and there are passages in the FL that could be improved upon. I have courageously resisted the temptation to improve her phrasing; neither have I altered anything aside from adding notes for the sake of clarity, unless the lack of clarity was rooted in syntactical differences in the languages themselves.

At times Mechthild's striving for rhyme or assonance seems to affect content negatively. So be it. I mention it here only because the reader has no way of knowing, especially in those passages rendered as prose, that rhyme or assonance may be affecting content. Sometimes, though rarely, an image will sound strange to the modern ear. The word nostrils is indeed uncommon in lyric poetry, but Mechthild uses it (IV 3). And when the divine Lover invites his beloved to sing to him, Mechthild has her reply: "Alas, my dear Lover, I am hoarse in the throat of my chastity" (11 25). But most of her images are appealing across the ages.

Another troubling area is the wide disparity in the amount of vocabulary-especially in the case of descriptive adjectives-available to Mechthild and to her translator into modern English. Mechthild had a relatively poor language at her disposal compared to the rich diversity and capacity for differentiating available in English. Should one always use the same English word to translate a Middle High German word? The answer is obviously that one should not, and I have not done so because it makes Mechthild's language seem primitive, which it certainly is not, though there is often an attractive naive simplicity about it, as there often is in the language of the best lyric poets. There are no rules that guarantee the right choice of words in translating. One can only try, as best one can, to get inside the world of the author and, from that perspective, choose what

seems to be the nearest equivalent.

A few specific matters: 1. I have almost always used she and her as pronouns when they refer to the soul. I have not done so because soul is feminine in German and thus requires feminine pronouns in that language. Consistency would then demand that one treat similarly all feminine nouns, such as snake, keg, or sickness. My justification is, rather, that for Mechthild the soul is the bride of Christ, so that even in instances in which it or its might seem equally appropriate-or even more so than feminine pronouns, I have stuck with she and her. Only when pronouns refer to Christ's soul have I used the neuter pronoun. 2. Geistlich (spiritual) is frequently used by Mechthild to refer to persons who are religious in the sense that they are members of the clergy, of a religious order, or beguines. When this is not clear from the text, I have added an explanatory note. 3. Mechthild uses heilige/helige cristanheit (Holy Christianity) to refer to the whole Christian community on earth, and it could justifiably be translated simply as the church, as conceived of by a loyal and enthusiastic daughter thereof. I have decided to translate it literally because of the freshness of Mechthild's term for the modern reader and because of the additional baggage the term church has acquired since Mechthild's time. 4. Finally, in the chapter headings that are phrases and not sentences, retreating from literalness, I have not translated the Von (concerning, about, of) with which they almost all begin.

I have found translating Mechthild more difficult than other authors I have tried my hand at (Eckhart, Suso, Hartmann of Aue), but it has also been more rewarding. The act of translating forces one to ponder Mechthild's words meditatively. One approaches more closely that frame of mind in which the author intended that her words be read than when one is dissecting the text with purely scholarly intentions. Though I have not yet read Mechthild's book nine times, as its Foreword admonishes us to do, I am close. Each prolonged encounter with Mechthild's text has resulted in my esteeming her more. Her book has much to offer if one reads it in a contemplative and receptive spirit.

NOTES TO THE INTRODUCTION

1. This is the convincing conclusion reached by Ursula Peters, Religiose Erfahrung als literarisches Faktum, Zur Vorgeschichte and Genese frauenmystischer Texte des 13. and 14.Jahrhunderts (Tubingen: Niemeyer, 1988), 41-100.

2. For more on beguines, see E.W.McDonnell, The Beguines and Beghards in Medieval Culture, with Special Emphasis on the Belgian Scene (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1954) ; Herbert Grundmann, Religiose Bewegungen im Mittelalter, 2d ed. (Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1961), also now in English: Religious Movements in the Middle Ages (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1995) ; and Robert E. Lerner, The Heresy of the Free Spirit in the Later Middle Ages (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972). The material presented here is taken from these sources.

3. It would seem safe to conclude that Mechthild's writings were already being read by some outside her immediate circle from what she writes in 11 26.

4. McDonnell, 508.

5. The most important section of the FL for biographical information is IV 2. I have also relied heavily on Neumann 1964; and Neumann, "Mechthild von Magdeburg," Die deutsche Literatur des Mittelalters: Verfasserlexikon, 2d ed. Kurt Ruh (Berlin: de Gruyter), Vol. 6 (1987) 260-70. Ursula Peters, Religiose Erfahrung, 53-67 and 1 16-29, is deeply skeptical about the factuality of almost anything presented as fact in the FL and in all other similar religious texts. Though her views have not won general acceptance, they bear consideration.

6. Schmidt, X.

7. Neumann, Verfasserlexikon, 260.

8. Peters, Religiose Erfahrung, 116-29, doubts that the confessor played a central role in the book's inception and considers the meeting with the confessor and his command to write to be a literary topos Mechthild employs to rid herself of the charge of arrogance in undertaking to write such a book as the FL. Because of the evident joy with which Mechthild often writes, one is certainly justified in questioning whether her confessor's command was crucial to her decision to write. Securing her confessor's approval, however, would certainly be a prudent thing to do if she was to claim that the book "comes from God and does not have its origins in human thought" (IV 2).

9. The Lux divinitatis also speaks of Baldwin's fine upbringing, which strengthens the general assumption that the family was of the aristocracy; and it reports that Baldwin became a subprior and enjoyed a reputation for virtue and knowledge. See Book IV, note 44 below.

10. Especially in the lyrical passages there are words coming from a less northern dialect called Middle German, a bit removed from Low German.

11. A lector was a Dominican, who, after finishing the basic course of studies required of all Dominican priests, had been chosen to complete additional studies in theology and was engaged in the instruction of younger Dominicans.

12. Schmidt in a few of the explanatory notes accompanying her translation states her conviction that this or that phrase or sentence was probably formulated by Heinrich. Hans Urs von Balthasar, in notes he contributed to Schmidt's earlier translation of the FL (Einsiedeln, Zurich, Cologne: Benziger, 1955) also points out several formulations he thinks might well have been the work of Heinrich.

13. Neumann 1964, 218-19.

14. Not, Neumann (1964, 176) says, the original text, but a Middle Low German version that had already undergone some changes.

15. Neumann, "Problemata Mechtildiana," Zeitschrift fur deutsches Altertum and deutsche Literatur 82 (1948-50), 160.

16. Neumann, "Problemata," 172. The two words Neumann contrasts are ubersetzen (translating) and umsetzen (transferring

or transplanting).

17. For a survey of this scholarship, see Frank Tobin, Mechthild von Magdeburg: A Medieval Mystic in Modern Eyes (Columbia, South Carolina: Camden House, 1995).

18. We are speaking from the point of view of the literary scholar, of course. Mechthild might well have countered that the entire content of the book was a special revelation by God.

19. Wolfgang Mohr, "Darbietungsformen der Mystik bei Mechthild von Magdeburg," Marchen, Mythos, Dichtung: Festschrift zum 90. Geburtstag Friedrich von der Leyens, ed. Hugo Kuhn and Kurt Schier (Munich: Beck, 1963), 375-99.

20. It seems legitimate to consider the vision, as it occurs in the FL, more as a form drawn from tradition than as the reporting of raw experience because, first, Mechthild's visions have been reflected upon and crafted, and, second, she draws upon the traditions of the vision coming from, among other sources, the Book of Daniel, Paul, and the Book of Revelation, as is pointed out in the notes.

21. Bernard McGinn, The Foundations of Mysticism (NewYork: Crossroad, 1992), xiii-xx. The most troubling term in this definition, for McGinn as well, is direct or immediate. For our present purposes we can avoid difficulties by weakening it to something like heightened or intensified.

22. See, for example, Romans 6:1-11 and Colossians 3:20.

23. Schmidt, note 44, p. 356, and note 90, pp. 363-64.

24. Gottfried of Strassburg, Tristan, trans. A.T.Hatto (NewYork: Penguin, 1967), 42.

25. Tristan, 206.

26. At least this can be reasonably concluded from the first paragraph of VII 21.

27. The increase in imagery from and references to convent life in Book VII is quite evident.

28. N I, XXII-XXIII.

29. Mechthild also employs other kinds of rhyme that offend against modern taste, such as impure rhyme, identical rhyme, and cases where a rhyme occurs in an accented syllable of one word and in an unaccented syllable of the other word.

THE FLOWING LIGHT OF THE GODHEAD

PROLOGUE TO THE LUX DIVINITATIS[1]

Prologue of Brother Heinrich, Lector, of the Order of Preaching Brothers'

We read in the Book of Judges (4:4-5) that the holy woman Deborah, the wife of Lappidoth, full of the spirit of prophecy, was accustomed to set up her tent under a palm tree in the hills of Ephraim, residing there as a solitary to devote herself to God alone. Israel, God's people, would go up to her seeking judgment in all matters. Likewise, the Fourth Book of Kings (2 Kgs 22: 14-20) relates that Huldah, a prophetess living in Jerusalem, enlightened by the Holy Spirit as to the hidden judgment of God, informed the holy king Josiah about the coming scourges threatening the people. This just and pious king had sent priests and levites to her so that the holy woman might seek the Lord's guidance and pray on his behalf regarding the imminent misfortunes. Certainly there were at the time high priests of the seed of Aaron and other kinds of priests and levites learned in the law and of high moral integrity; yet, in spite of this, the Holy Spirit did not divulge his secret counsels to them. Rather, for these times he revealed them to these holy women of the weak sex, as he saw fit.

Quite often, in fact, almighty God has chosen what is weak in the world to confound what is stronger for its good. Therefore, let no one wonder or, lacking trust, fall into disbelief if God in the time of grace renews his marvels. He, who in the time of the law of Moses mercifully saw fit to perform similar works, now reveals his mysteries to the fragile sex. Because the people of Israel believed Deborah's prophecy, they won freedom from oppression and victory over their enemies. Also, a king, a religious man, was found worthy to gain solace and mercy through the prayer and advice of the prophetess Huldah. So, too, shall all who write or read this book, if they approach it with pious intent, attain an increase in solace and spiritual grace, as the Lord promises them in the book itself.

This writing must be read in a pious spirit, however. It must be understood, as is the case with other holy writings, in a wholesome manner and in good faith. In this way the reader will find nothing scandalous or offensive in it, and the writing itself will not be subjected to any perverse claim of falsehood. Its author is the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; it treats Christ and the church, as well as Satan and his body.' Its manner of proceeding is both historical and mystical; its purpose is the ordering of the present life, the useful calling to mind of things past, and the prophetic disclosure of things to come. The sincere devotion and dove-like simplicity of the woman through whom this writing was made public should completely suffice to guarantee the truth of what the pious faithful are asked to believe. From childhood she led a pure and innocent life. In her youth, at the urging of the Lord, she left everything she stood to gain and became an exile in a foreign land, leading a life of voluntary poverty. Finally, after many tribulations and at an advanced age, she was received into the community of holy sisters at Helfta. She lived there for twelve years and, as is confirmed by their testimony,' she flourished in the perfection of all virtues. She especially practiced charity, humility, long-suffering, and meekness. Raised up above all things by contemplation and made a sharer of divine illuminations and revelations, she was worthy to perceive from the Lord through her prophetic spirit numerous intimate divine mysteries concerning things past, present, and to come. Now, having been received by the Bridegroom of virgins, this holy virgin enjoys fully him whom she loved and whose wondrous love adorned his beloved with many marvels.

The revelations and visions that almighty God has deigned to disclose to his elect are founded upon and have their origin in the directness of their faith. Their purity of mind demands and expects them. The holiness of their life authenticates and corroborates them. For celestial secrets lie open to such people, and their testimony is greeted with belief by the hearts of those who hear them.

For this reason, before beginning this book, which is written in a primitive tongue and contains certain marvelous and previously unknown mysteries, I thought it worthwhile to point out beforehand a bit about the holiness of the person to whom these things have been revealed by heaven, so that the marvels mentioned in word might have the support of deeds more marvelous. For who shall describe for us more vividly the perfection of the elect than those very ones in whom and through whom God carries out his works? And who could have made known to the church more beneficially or better the perfection of Paul than Paul himself? In like manner, this holy one made public what the divine Spirit had wrought in her and with her, and proclaims his praise and glory.'

LATIN FOREWORD WITH TABLE OF CONTENTS AND MIDDLE HIGH GERMAN TRANSLATION[1]

In the year of our Lord 1250 and for almost fifteen years thereafter this book was revealed2 in German by the Lord through grace to a certain beguine who was a holy virgin in body and spirit. In humble simplicity, in the poverty of exile, weighed down by scorn, and in heavenly contemplation, as is made clear in this writing, she served the Lord with great devotion for more than forty years, following perfectly the footsteps of the brothers of the Order of Preachers. Always progressing day by day, she continually became better. It was compiled' by a brother of the aforementioned order and contains many good things, as is noted in these titles:

On the Trinity: 11 3; 111 9; IV 12 and 14; V 26

On Christ: 11 3; IV 14; V 23 and 27

On Our Lady: 1 22; 11 3; V 23

On the Nine Orders of Angels: 1 6; 111 1; V 1

On the Special Excellence of Certain Saints: IV 20, 22, and 23

On the Evilness of Demons: 11 24; IV 2 and 17; V 1; V 29

On the Dignity of a Human Being: I 44; IV 14

On Rapture and the Separation of the Soul from the Flesh: I 5

On the Description of Heaven: III 1

On the Description of Hell: 111 21

On the Many Kinds of Purgatory: 11 8; 111 15 and 17; V 14 and 15

On Many Virtues and Vices: I 22 and 25; 111 7 and 14; IV 4; and on Charity Especially: 111 13

On the Order of Preachers at the End of the World at the Time of the Antichrist: IV 27

And on many things unheard of that you shall understand if you read this book nine times in faith, humility, and devotion.' Here is prophecy about the past, present, and future. Here also is the Song of the Three Persons: V 26.

[Middle High German translation:]

In the year 1250 after God's birth and for the fifteen years thereafter this book was revealed in German by God to a sister. She was a holy virgin both in body and in spirit. She served God devotedly in humble simplicity, in the poverty of exile, in heavenly contemplation, and weighed down by scorn, for more than forty years, and followed steadfastly and completely the light and the teaching of the Order of Preachers, and went forward from day to day and improved herself daily. But a brother of the same order gathered together and wrote this book; and much good is contained in this book on many subjects, as is noted in this list. You should read it through nine times in faith, humility, and devotion.

Book I

One Should Receive This Book Eagerly, For It Is God Himself Who Speaks the Words'

This book I hereby send as a messenger to all religious people both the bad and the good; for if the pillars fall,' the building cannot remain standing; and it signifies me alone and proclaims in praiseworthy fashion my intimacy. All who wish to understand this book should read it nine times.

This Book Is Called a Flowing Light of the Godhead

"Ah, Lord God, who made this book?"

"I made it in my powerlessness, for I cannot restrain myself as to my gifts."4

"Well then, Lord, what shall the title of the book be, which is to your glory alone?"

"It shall be called a flowing light of my Godhead into all hearts that live free of hypocrisy."

1. How Love and the Queen Spoke to Each Other'

The soul came to Love, greeted her with great deference, and said:

"God greet you, Lady Love."

"May God reward you, Mistress and Queen."

"Lady Love, you are indeed perfect."

"Mistress and Queen, that is why I am above all things."

"Lady Love, you struggled many a year before you forced the exalted Trinity to pour itself utterly into the humble virginal womb of Mary."

"Mistress and Queen, that was to your honor and benefit."

"Lady Love, you have now come here to me and have taken from me everything I ever gained on earth."

"Mistress and Queen, you have made a happy exchange."

"Lady Love, you have taken from me my childhood."

"Mistress and Queen, in its place I have given you heavenly freedom."

"Lady Love, you have taken from me all my youth."

"Mistress and Queen, in its place I have given you many a holy virtue."

"Lady Love, you have taken from me possessions, friends, and relatives."

"Come now, Mistress and Queen, that is a petty complaint."

"Lady Love, you have taken from me the world, worldly honor, and all earthly riches."

"Mistress and Queen, I shall make that up to you in one hour with the Holy Spirit on earth, just as you wish it."

"Lady Love, you have brought me to such a pass that my body is racked by a strange weakness."

"Mistress and Queen, in exchange I have given you much sublime knowledge."

"Lady Love, you have devoured my flesh and my blood."

"Mistress and Queen, you have thereby been purified and drawn into God."

"Lady Love, you are a robber; for this as well shall you make reparation."

"Mistress and Queen, then take me."

"Lady Love, now you have recompensed me a hundredfold on earth."

"Mistress and Queen, in addition you may demand God and all his kingdom.

2. Concerning Three Persons and Three Gifts'

God's true greeting, coming from the heavenly flood out of the spring of the flowing Trinity, has such force that it takes away all the body's strength and reveals the soul to herself, so that she sees herself resembling the saints, and she takes on a divine radiance. Then the soul leaves the body, taking all her power, wisdom, love, and longing. Just the tiniest bit of her life force remains with the body as in a sweet sleep.' Then she sees one complete God in three Persons and knows the three Persons in one God undivided.

He greets her in courtly language that one does not hear in this kitchen, clothes her in the garments that one fittingly wears in a palace, and surrenders himself into her power. Then she can wish for and ask whatever she wants. It is granted her and she is enlightened. What she is not enlightened about is the first cause of the Three Persons.' Then he draws her further to a secret place. There she is not permitted to beg on anyone's behalf or ask, because all alone with her he wants to play a game that the body does not know, nor the peasants at their plows, nor knights at their tournaments, nor his lovely mother, Mary-not even she may play it there. Then she soars further to a blissful place of which I neither will nor can speak. It is too difficult; I do not dare, for I am a very sinful person. Yet when infinite God brings the unfathomable soul to the heights, she loses sight of the earth in her astonishment and is not aware of ever having been on earth. Just when the game is at its best, one has to leave it.

Then God in full vigor speaks: "Young Miss, you must go down." She shudders and laments" her banishment. She says: "Lord, you have raised me up" so high here that I shall not be able to praise you in any fitting degree when in my body. Rather, I shall suffer as an outcast and shall struggle against the body." And he says:

“Oh, dear dove,[12]
Your voice is string music to my ears.
Your words are spices for my mouth.
Your longings are the lavishness of my gift.”

She says: "Dear Lord, it has to be as the master of the house13 commands." And she sighs with all her might, which awakens the body.14

Then the body speaks: "Well, woman, just where have you been? You come back so love-struck, lovely, and vibrant, free and witty. Your carrying on has cost me my appetite, sense of smell, color, and all my strength."

She says: "Shut up, murderer! Quit your bellyaching. I'll always be on my guard with you around. That my enemy has been wounded-what do we care about that? It makes me glad."

This is a greeting that has many streams. It pours forth from the flowing God into the poor, parched soul unceasingly with new knowledge, in new contemplation, and in the special enjoyment of the new presence. 0 sweet God, inwardly on fire, outwardly blossoming, now that you have given this to the least," I would like to experience the life that you have given to your

greatest. For that I would be willing to endure suffering even longer.

No one is able or is permitted to receive this greeting unless one has gone beyond oneself and has become nothing. In this greeting I want to die living." This the blind saints cannot ruin for me. They are the ones who love and do not know."

3. The Handmaids of the Soul and the Blow of Love18

All holy Christian virtues are the handmaids of the soul. The sweet listlessness of the soul complains to Love of her troubles:

"Well then, dearest Maiden, for a long time now you have been my chambermaid. Now tell me, where is all this leading? You have hunted me, trapped me, bound me, and wounded me so deeply that I shall never be healthy again. You have meted out to me many a cudgel blow. Tell me, am I ever going to recover from you? If I were not going to be killed by your hand, it would be better for me never to have known you."19

Love: "That I hunted you was my fancy.
That I captured you was my desire.
That I bound you made me happy.
When I wounded you, you were joined to me.
When I cudgel you, I take you into my power.
I drove God the almighty from heaven,
Took his human life,
And returned him to his Father in honor.
How do you, vile worm, expect to survive before me?"

The Soul: "Speak, my Empress, I fear a small secret medicine
God has often given to me that I might thrive even in your presence."

Love: "If one does not want the prisoners dead,
One gives them water and bread.
The medicine that God has often given you

Is nothing other than a brief return to human life.
But when your Easter Day comes
And your body receives the death blow,
Then I'll embrace you tightly
And permeate you utterly,
And I'll steal you from your body
And give you to your Lover."

The Soul: "O Love, this letter I have written out of your mouth.
Now give me, Lady, your seal."

Love: "Whoever has succeeded in loving God more than self
Knows well where to get the seal.
It lies between the two of us."

The Soul speaks:
"Be silent, dear one, and speak no more.
Dearest of all maidens, let all creatures, myself included,
Bow down before you.
Tell my Lover that his bed is made ready.
And that I am weak with longing for him."

If this letter is too long, this is the reason: I was on the meadow where I found flowers of all kinds. This is a sweet lament: Who dies of love shall be buried in God.

4. The Soul's, journey to Court During Which God Reveals Himself

When the needy soul comes to the court, she is judicious and refined. She gazes at her God in high spirits. Oh, how tenderly is she welcomed there! She remains silent, longing boundlessly for his praise. With great longing he reveals to her his divine heart. It resembles red gold burning in a great fire of coals. He places her into his glowing heart. When the exalted Sovereign and the little waif thus embrace and are united as water and wine, she turns to nothing and is transported out of herself.20 When she has no strength left, he is as lovesick for her as he always was; for he neither increases nor decreases. Then she says:

"Lord, you are my lover,
My desire,
My flowing fount,
My sun;
And I am your reflection."

This is the journey to court of a loving soul that cannot exist without God.

5. The Torment and the Praise of the Soul21

My body is in great torment, my soul is in sublime bliss; for she has both gazed upon and embraced her Lover in her arms. He causes her, poor wretch, torment. When he draws her up, she flows. She cannot hold herself in check until he brings her within himself. She would like to speak but cannot, so utterly has she been enmeshed in sublime union with the awe-inspiring Trinity. Then he leaves her for a short while, that she might feel longing. She desires his praise but does not know how to find it as she would like. She would even want him to send her into hell that he might be praised beyond measure by all creatures.22 She looks at him and says to him, "Lord, give me your blessing." He looks at her, draws her up again, and gives her a greeting23 that the body cannot express.

Then the body speaks to the soul:

"Where have you been?
I can't take it anymore."

And the soul says:

"Quiet, you are a fool.
I want to be with my Lover,
Even if it means you would perish.
I am his joy, he is my torment."

This is her torment. May she never recover!
May you take this torment upon yourself as well,
And may you never escape it!

6. The Nine Choirs: How They Sing24

Now hear,25 my Beloved; listen with spiritual ears. Thus do the nine choirs sing:

We praise you, Lord, that you sought us in your humility.
We praise you, Lord, that you have kept us in your mercy.
We praise you, Lord, that you have glorified us in your humiliation.
We praise you, Lord, that you have provided for us in your generosity.
We praise you, Lord, that you have arranged us in rank in your wisdom.
We praise you, Lord, that you have shielded us with your might.
We praise you, Lord, that you have sanctified us with your nobility.
We praise you, Lord, that you have instructed us in your intimacy.
We praise you, Lord, that you have elevated us in your love.

7. God's Curse in Eight Things

I curse you:
May your body die.
May your words perish.
May your eyes close.
May your heart dissolve.
May your soul rise up.
May your body remain.
May your human faculties perish.
May your spirit stand in the presence of the Holy Trinity!

8. The Most Lowly Praises God in Ten Things

O you burning Mountain.
O you chosen Sun.
O you full Moon.
O you bottomless Well.
O you unscalable Height.

O you Brightness without measure.
O Wisdom without ground.
O Mercy without restraint.
O Might without opposition.
O Crown of all honors!
The most lowly person you ever created praises you.

9. With Three Things You Dwell on the Heights

Those who are on fire in true love and build on the firm ground of truth and bear abundant fruit for a blessed end-they dwell on the heights.

Explanation: This is about the Seraphim.

10. Who Loves God Triumphs over Three Things

Whoever conquers the world,
And takes from his body all useless desires,
And overcomes the devil,
This is the soul that loves God.
If the world gives her a shove,
She does not suffer much.
If the flesh gives her a jolt,
The spirit will not get sick from it.
If the devil gives her a push,
The soul pays no heed.
She loves
And keeps on loving,
And she does not know how to do otherwise.

11. Four Battle for God

O dove free of gall.[26]
O maiden free of blemish.
O knight free of wounds.
O liegeman free of hesitation.
These are the four whom God can count on in battle.

12. The Soul Praises GodforFive Things"

O Emperor of all honors.
O Crown of all sovereigns.
O Wisdom of all the learned.
O Giver of all gifts.
O Deliverer of all imprisonments.

13. How God Comes to the Soul

I come to my beloved as the dew upon the flower.[28]

14. How the Soul Receives and Praises God

Ah, joyous sight!
Ah, lovely greeting!
Ah, dear embrace!
Lord, the wonder of you has overwhelmed me.
Your grace has crushed me.
O you lofty Crag.
You are so nicely honeycombed.
In you no one can rest but doves and nightingales.

15. How God Receives the Soul

Welcome, my precious dove.
You have flown so keenly over the earth
That your feathers reach to heaven.

16. God Likens the Soul to Four Things

You taste like a grape.
Your fragrance is like balsam.[29]
Your radiance is like the sun.
You are an enhancement of my most sublime love.

17. The Soul Praises God About Five Things

O you pouring God in your gift!
O you flowing God in your love!
O you burning God in your desire!
O you melting God in the union with your beloved!
O you resting God on my breasts![30]
Without you I cannot exist.

18. God Likens the Soul to Five Things

O you beautiful rose among the thorns!
O you fluttering bee in the honey!
O you unblemished dove in your being!
O you beautiful sun in your radiance!
O you full moon in the firmament!
I cannot turn away from you.

19. God Caresses the Soul in Six Ways

You are my softest pillow,
My most lovely bed,
My most intimate repose,
My deepest longing,
My most sublime glory.
You are an allurement to my Godhead,
A thirst for my humanity,
A stream for my burning.

20. The Soul Praises God in Return in Six Ways

You are my resplendent mountain,
A feast for my eyes,
A loss of myself,
A tempest in my heart,
A defeat and retreat of my power,
My surest protection.[31]

21. Of Knowledge and Enjoyment

Love without knowledge is as darkness to the wise soul.[32]
Knowledge without its fruition she likens to the pains of hell.
Fruition short of death she cannot lament enough.

22. St. Mary's Message and How One Virtue Follows Another. How the Soul Was Made in theJubilus33 of the Trinity, and How St. Mary Nursed All the Saints and Nurses Them Still

The sweet dew of the eternal Trinity gushed forth from the fountain of the everlasting Godhead into the flower of the chosen maid; and the fruit of this flower is an immortal God and a mortal man and a living hope of eternal life. And our Redeemer

became a Bridegroom. The bride became exhilarated at the sight of his noble countenance:

Under this immense force she loses herself.
In this most dazzling light she becomes blind in herself.
And in this utter blindness she sees most clearly.
In this pure clarity she is both dead and living.

The longer she is dead, the more blissfully she lives.[34]
The more blissfully she lives, the more she experiences.[35]
The less she becomes, the more flows to her.
The more she fears,…[36]
The richer she becomes, the poorer she is.
The deeper she dwells,[37] the more she expands.
…, the more forbearing she is.
The deeper her wounds become, the more violently she struggles.

The more loving God is to her, the higher she soars.
The more radiantly she shines in the reflected effulgence of the Godhead, the closer she approaches him.
The more she labors, the more contentedly she rests.
…, the more she grasps.
The more quiet her silence, the louder she calls.
…, the greater the marvels she works with his strength in proportion to her power.

The more his desire grows, the more extravagant their wedding celebration becomes.
The narrower the bed of love becomes, the more intense are the embraces.
The sweeter the kisses on the mouth become, the more lovingly they gaze at each other.
The greater the distress in which they part, the more he bestows upon her.

The more she consumes, the more she has.
The more humbly she takes her leave, the sooner she returns.
The more ardent she remains, the sooner she bursts into flame.
The more she burns, the more beautifully she glows.
The more God's praise is spread abroad, the greater her desire becomes.

Tell me, where did our Redeemer become the Bridegroom?

In the jubilus of the Holy Trinity. When God could no longer contain himself, he created the soul and, in his immense love, gave himself to her as her own.3S

"What are you made of, Soul, that you ascend so high above all creatures, mingle with the Holy Trinity, and yet remain whole in yourself?"

"You have brought up the question of my origin. I shall tell you honestly: I was made by love in that very place." For that reason no creature is able to give comfort to my noble nature or to open it up except love alone."

"Holy Mary, dear Lady, you are the mother of this wonder. When did this happen to you?"

"When our Father's jubilus was saddened by Adam's fall, so that he had to become angry, the Eternal Wisdom of the

almighty Godhead intercepted the anger together with me. The Father chose me for his bride-that he might have something to love; for his darling bride, the noble soul, was dead. The Son chose me to be his mother, and the Holy Spirit received me as his beloved. Then I alone was the bride of the Holy Trinity and mother of orphans, and I brought them before God's eyes so that they might not all sink down, though some did. When I was thus the mother of many a banished child, my breasts became so full of the pure, spotless milk of true, generous mercy that I suckled the prophets and sages, even before I was born. Afterward, in my childhood, I suckled Jesus; later, in my youth, I suckled God's bride, Holy Christianity, under the cross when I was so desolate and wretched, as the sword of the physical suffering of Jesus cut spiritually into my soul."

Both his wounds and her breasts were open.
The wounds poured forth.
The breasts flowed.
The soul was invigorated and completely restored
As he poured the sparkling red wine
Into her red mouth.[40]

As she was thus born and made healthy out of the open wounds, she was like a child, and very young. If she was going to recover completely after her death and birth, God's mother was going to have to be her mother and her nurse. This was and is as it should be, since God is her rightful father and she is his rightful bride. She resembles him in all parts.

"Lady, in your old age you suckled the holy apostles with your motherly instruction and with your powerful prayer, that God might reveal his honor and your will through them. Lady, thus did you suckle then and suckle still the hearts of martyrs with strong faith, the ears of confessors with holy protection, the virgins with your chastity, widows with constancy, married people with kindness, and sinners with patient hope."

"Lady, us, too, you must suckle, for your breasts are still so full that they are not likely to dry up. If you no longer wanted to suckle, the milk would cause you much pain. For truly, I have seen your breasts so full that seven streams pour out at one time from one breast over my body and over my soul. In that hour you relieve me of a labor that no friend of God can bear without inner suffering. In this same manner, you shall go on suckling until the last day. Then you shall become dry, for then God's children-and your children-will be weaned and fully grown for eternal life. Ah, then we shall know and see with inexpressible joy the milk and even the breasts themselves41 thatJesus so often kissed."42

23. You Should Ask That God Love You Passionately, Often, and Long; Then You Shall Become Pure, Beautiful, and Holy43

Ah, Lord, love me passionately, love me often, and love me long. For the more passionately you love me, the purer I shall become. The more often you love me, the more beautiful I shall become. The longer you love me, the holier I shall become here on earth.

24. How God Responds to the Soul

That I love you passionately comes from my nature, for I am love itself. That I love you often comes from my desire, for I desire to be loved passionately. That I love you long comes from my being eternal, for I am without an end and without a beginning.

25. The Way to Suffer Pain Willingly for God's Sake

God guides his chosen children along strange paths. This is a strange path and a noble path and a holy path that God himself trod: that a human being, though free of sin and guilt, suffer pain. Upon this path the soul that aches for God is joyful, for by nature she is joyful to her Lord, who suffered much pain because of his good deeds. Our dear Lord, the heavenly Father, delivered up his most beloved Son to be tormented by the heathens and martyred by the Jews despite his innocence. Now the time has come when some people, who have the appearance of being religious, torment the bodies of God's children and martyr their spirits. For he wants them to resemble his beloved Son who was tormented in body and soul.

26. The Path upon Which the Soul Draws the Senses and Is Free of Suffering of the Heart

It is a rarely traveled and lofty path upon which the devoted soul makes its way and guides the senses as one with sight guides a blind person. On this path the soul is free and lives without inner suffering, for she wants nothing but what her Lord wants, who arranges everything for the best.

27. How You Become Worthy of This Path and Keep to It and Become Perfect

Three things make a person worthy of this path-that one recognize it and enter upon it: first, that one submit to God relinquishing all human control, and that one piously hold on to God's grace and willingly keep it by being forgiving in all things as far as is possible for a human will. The second thing keeping a person on this path is that one welcome all things except for sin alone. The third thing keeping a person on this path is that one do all things equally for God's honor. Thus I think relieving my most basic need counts as much in God's sight as if I were in the highest state of contemplation that a human being can attain. Why? If I do it out of love in order to give honor to God, it is all one and the same. But when I sin, I am not on this path.

28. Love Shall Be Deadly, Boundless, and Unceasing; This Is the Folly ofFools

I delight in loving him who loves me, and I long to love him to the death, boundlessly, and without ceasing. Be happy, my soul, for your Life has died for love of you." Love him so fiercely that you could die for him. Thus you burn ever more without ever being extinguished as a living flame in the vast fire of high majesty.

Thus you become full of the fire of love.
This makes you here utterly happy.

You can no longer teach me anything.
I cannot turn away from love.
I must be its captive.
Otherwise, I cannot go on living.
Where it dwells, there I must remain,
Both in death and in life.[45]
This is the folly of fools
Who live free of anguish.

29. The Beauty of the Bridegroom and How the Bride Should Follow Him in Twenty-Three Steps of the Cross` 6

Look at me, my bride.' See how beautiful are my eyes, how comely is my mouth, how on fire is my heart, how agile are my hands, and how swift are my feet. So, follow me! You shall be martyred with me, betrayed in jealousy, hunted in ambush, taken prisoner in hate, bound in obedience, your eyes covered so that one will not tell you the truth, slapped by the rage of the world, brought to trial in confession, struck blows by penance, sent to Herod in derision, stripped naked by abandonment, scourged by poverty, crowned with trials, spat upon by disgrace, bearing your cross in the hatred of sin, crucified in voluntary withdrawal from all things, nailed to the cross by the holy virtues, wounded by love, dying on the cross in holy constancy, pierced in your heart by constant union, taken down from the cross in true victory over all your enemies, buried in oblivion, arisen from the dead in a holy end, and drawn up into heaven in God's breath.

30. The Seven Hours`

Matins:	Love in abundance, a sweet delight.[49]
Prime:	Love’s longing, a sweet burden.
Terce:	Love’s pleasure, a sweet thirst.
Sext:	Love’s feeling, a sweet cooling.
Nones:	Love’s death, a sweet distress.
Vespers:	Love’s flowing, a sweet pouring.
Compline:	Love’s rest, a sweet joy.[50]

31. You Should Ignore Scorn

I was deeply scorned, and our Lord said: "Do not be much surprised. Since the precious unguent jar was utterly rejected and spat upon, what is going to happen to the vinegar jar, which has nothing of value about it?"

32. You Should Ignore Honors, Suffering, and Possessions. Be Sad After Sinning

If someone offers you honor, you should be ashamed.
If someone makes you suffer, you should be glad.
If someone does you a favor, you should be afraid.
If you commit a sin against me, you should be sad in your heart.
If you cannot feel sadness, then consider how greatly and how long
I was saddened for your sake.

33. Concerning Food, Consolation, and Love

My soul spoke thus to her Lover:

"Lord, your generosity is food for my body wonderfully.
Your mercy is consolation for my soul especially.
Your love is repose for my being eternally."

34. In Suffering You Should Be a Lamb, a Turtledove, and a Bride

You are my lamb in your suffering;
You are my turtledove in your sighing;
You are my bride in your waiting.

35. The Desert Has Twelve Things

You should love nothingness.
You should flee somethingness.[51]
You should stand alone

And should go to no one.
You should not be excessively busy[52]
And be free of all things.
You should release captives
And subdue the free.
You should restore the sick
And yet should have nothing yourself.
You should drink the water of suffering
And ignite the fire of love with the kindling of virtue:
Then you are living in the true desert.

36. Concerning Malice, Good Works, and Concerning a Marvel"

With the malice of your enemies shall you be adorned.
With the virtues of your heart shall you be glorified.
With your good works shall you be crowned.
With our mutual love shall you be raised on high.
With my delightful marvel shall you be made holy.

37. The Soul Responds to God Saying She Is Unworthy of These Favors

O dearly Loved One, in undeserved humiliation I take delight.
Virtues of the heart are my desire.
Good works, alas, I do not have.
Our mutual love I sully.
Of your beautiful marvel I am utterly unworthy.

38. God Boasts That the Soul Has Overcome Four Sins

In heaven God boasts about the soul on earth that loves him and says:

"Look, how she who has wounded me comes ascending.
She has cast from her the ape of the world.
She has overcome the bear of wantonness.
She has trod the lion of pride underfoot.

She has torn apart the jaws of the wolf of lust
And, like the hunted stag, comes running to me, the spring.
Like an eagle she rises out of the depths to the heights."[54]

39. God Asks the Soul What She Is Bringing

"You rush restlessly about in your love.
What do you bring me, my queen?"

40. She Replies: Something That Is Better than Seven Things

"Lord, I am bringing you my precious stone.
It is greater than the mountains.
It is wider than the world,
Deeper than the sea,
Higher than the clouds,
Brighter than the sun,
More numerous than the stars.
It weighs more than the whole earth."

41. God Asks in Praise What the Precious Stone Is Called

"O image of my divinity,
Glorified by my humanity,
Adorned with the Holy Spirit:
Tell me, what is your precious stone called?"

42. The Precious Stone Is Called Heart's Delight

"Lord, it is called my heart's delight,
Which I have taken back from the world,
Retained for myself,
And denied to all creatures.
But now I can carry it no further.
Lord, where shall I put it?"

43. Put Your Delight into the Trinity

“The delight of your heart
You shall put nowhere else but into my divine heart
And onto my human breast.
There alone shall you be consoled
And kissed by my Spirit.”

44. The Sevenfold Path of Love, the Three Garments of the Bride, and the Dance

“Ah, loving Soul, do you wish to know what your path shall be?”
“Yes, dear Holy Spirit, instruct me.”
“When you have passed beyond the need of sorrow
and beyond the pain of confession
and beyond the travail of penance
and beyond the love of the world
and beyond the temptations of the devil
and beyond the influences of the flesh
and beyond cursed self-will

that thrusts many a soul backward with such force that she never achieves genuine love; and when you have struck down all your many foes, then you are so weary that you say: `Fair youth, I long for you. Where shall I find you?' And the youth says:

‘I hear a voice;
It speaks its piece on love.
I have courted her many a day,
But the voice never addressed me.
Now I am moved;
I must hurry to her!
She is the one who bears anguish
And love joined together.’”

In the sweet dew of the morning-this is the cloistered inwardness that first enters the soul-her chamberlains, the five senses, speak thus:

"Lady, you should dress yourself."

"Dear ones, where am I supposed to be going?"

"We have definitely heard it whispered about that the prince intends to come to you in the dew and in the delightful song of the birds. Alas, lady, do not tarry!"

Then she puts on the slip of soft humility, so humble that it cannot bear anything underneath it. Over it comes a white dress of spotless chastity, so pure that it cannot bear anything in thought, word, or touch that might soil it. Then she puts on the cloak of her good name, which she has gilded with all the virtues. She enters into the woods, the company of holy people. There sings day and night the sweetest of the nightingales, the well-modulated union with God; and she hears many a sweet voice of birds, holy knowledge.55 And still the young man did not come. So she sends out messengers because she is eager to dance. She sent for the faith of Abraham and the longing of the prophets and the chaste humility of our Lady, St. Mary, and all the holy virtues of our Lord Jesus Christ and all the excellence of his chosen ones. Then a splendid dance of praise takes place.

The young man finally comes and says to her: "Young lady, my chosen ones have shown off their dancing to you. Just as artfully should you now follow their lead."

She says:
"I cannot dance, Lord, unless you lead me.
If you want me to leap with abandon,
You must intone the song.
Then I shall leap into love,
From love into knowledge,
From knowledge into enjoyment,
And from enjoyment beyond all human sensations.
There I want to remain, yet want also to circle higher still."[56]

And the young man has to sing thus:
"Through me into you
And through you from me."

[The soul:] "Willingly with you,
Woefully from you."[57]

The young man speaks: "Young lady, you have done very well in this dance of praise. You shall have your way with the Son of the virgin, for you are delightfully weary. Come at noontime to the shade of the spring, into the bed of love. There in the coolness you shall refresh yourself with him."

The young lady says:
"Oh, Lord, that is too much
That she be your partner in love
Who has no love in her,
Unless she is moved by you."

Then the soul speaks to the senses, who are her chamberlains: "Now for a while I am weary of the dance. Leave me; I must go and refresh myself."

And the senses say to the soul: "Lady, if you wish to find refreshing coolness in the love tears of Mary Magdalene, they would certainly soothe you."

[Soul:] "Be still, my lords, you do not understand at all what I mean. Let me be on my own. For a time I want to drink undiluted wine."

[Senses:] "Lady, in the chastity of virgins great love is ready."

"That may be, but it isn't the noblest thing about me."

"In the blood of the martyrs you can cool yourself very well."

"I have been martyred so many times that I can't go there now."

"In the counsel of confessors the pure happily dwell."

"I shall always need counsel about what to do and what not to do; and yet I can't go there just now."

"In the wisdom of the apostles you will find much security."

"I have wisdom with me here. This shall always guide me to choose for the best."

"Lady, the angels are radiant and of love's color. If you wish to refresh yourself, rise up to them."

"The angels' bliss pains me in my love if I am not gazing upon their Lord and my Bridegroom."

"Then refresh yourself in the holy austere life that God granted to John the Baptist."

"The suffering I'm ready to bear, and yet the force of love transcends all austerity."

"Lady, if you want to refresh yourself in love, bow down to the small Child in the lap of the eternal virgin; and taste and see how the Joy of the angels sucked the unnatural milk."58

"That is child's love, that one suckle and rock a baby. I am a full-grown bride. I want to go to my Lover."

[Senses:] "Oh, Lady, if you go there,
We shall go completely blind.
The Godhead is so blazing hot,
As you well know,
That all the fire and all the glowing embers
That make the heavens and all the saints glow and burn
Have flowed out from his divine breath
And from his human mouth
According to the plan of the Holy Spirit.
How can you stay there even for an hour?"

[Soul:] "A fish in water does not drown.
A bird in the air does not plummet.
Gold in fire does not perish.
Rather, it gets its purity and its radiant color there.
God has created all creatures to live according to their nature.
How, then, am I to resist my nature?
I must go from all things to God,
Who is my Father by nature,

My Brother by his humanity,
My Bridegroom by love,
And I his bride from all eternity.
Don't you believe I feel him intensely?[59]
He can both burn powerfully and cool consolingly.
Now do not be overly sad.
You shall yet instruct me.
When I return, I shall certainly need your advice;
For the earth is full of snares."

Then the bride of all delights goes to the Fairest of lovers in the secret chamber of the invisible Godhead. There she finds the bed and the abode of love prepared by God in a manner beyond what is human. Our Lord speaks:

"Stay, Lady Soul."
"What do you bid me, Lord?"
"Take off your clothes."
"Lord, what will happen to me then?"
"Lady Soul, you are so utterly formed to my nature[60]
That not the slightest thing can be between you and me.
Never was an angel so glorious
That to him was granted for one hour
What is given to you for eternity.

And so you must cast off from you
Both fear and shame and all external virtues.
Rather, those alone that you carry within yourself
Shall you foster forever.
These are your noble longing
And your boundless desire.
These I shall fulfill forever
With my limitless lavishness."

"Lord, now I am a naked soul
And you in yourself are a well-adorned God.
Our shared lot is eternal life
Without death."

Then a blessed stillness
That both desire comes over them.
He surrenders himself to her,
And she surrenders herself to him.
What happens to her then—she knows—
And that is fine with me.[61]
But this cannot last long.
When two lovers meet secretly,
They must often part from one another inseparably.[62]

Dear friend of God, I have written for you this path of love. May God infuse it into your heart! Amen.

45. The Eight Days in Which What the Prophets Longed For Was Accomplished53

This is a day of longing and blessed joy
in the Annunciation of Christ.
This is a day of peace and dear tenderness
in the Birth of Christ.
This is a day of charity and blessed communion,
Maundy Thursday.
This is a day of generosity and heartfelt love,
Good Friday.
This is a day of might and happy joy,
the Resurrection.
This is a day of faith and the pain of separation,
the Ascension.
This is a day of truth and burning consolation,
Pentecost.
This is a day of justice and the hour of truth,
the Last Judgment.
This is a week whose seven days we should celebrate with constancy.
The eighth day our Lord wants to celebrate on the last day with us all.

46. The Diverse Adornments of the Bride; How She Comes to Her Bridegroom; and How the Retinue Is Composed, Which Is Ninefold

The bride is clothed with the sun and has trodden the moon underfoot, and she is crowned with union.64 She has a chaplain; this is fear. He has in his hand a golden rod; this is wisdom. The chaplain is clothed with the blood of the lamb and is crowned with honor; and wisdom is clothed with contentment and crowned with eternity. The bride has four bridesmaids. The first is

love, who leads the bride. She is clothed with chasteness and is crowned with dignity. The second is humility, who holds the bride. She is clothed with lowliness and is crowned with eminence. The third bridesmaid is sorrow. She is clothed with small grapes65 and is crowned with joy. The fourth bridesmaid is mercy. She is clothed with unguents" and is crowned with bliss. These two carry the coat of the bride, which is her holy reputation.

She has a bishop, which is faith. He brings the bride before the bridegroom. The bishop is clothed in precious stones and is crowned with the Holy Spirit. The bishop has two knights. The one is might and is clothed with battle and is crowned with victory. The other is daring and is clothed with boldness and crowned with all blessedness.

She has a chamberlain. That is watchfulness. He is clothed with constancy and is crowned with persistence. He carries a light before the bride and from behind her train. The light is understanding. It is clothed with insight and is crowned with generosity. The train is a holy conscience. It is clothed with good intention and is crowned with God's approval. She has a cupbearer, which is longing. He is clothed with desire and is crowned with peace. She has a minstrel who is amiability. His harp is intimacy. He is clothed with favor and crowned with help.

The bride has five kingdoms. The first are her eyes. They are founded in tears and adorned with restraint. The second are thoughts. They are founded in struggle and are adorned with good counsel. The third is speaking. It is founded in usefulness and is adorned with trust. The fourth is hearing. It is founded in the word of God and is adorned with consolation. The fifth is touch. It is founded in strength and is adorned with noble habit. These five kingdoms have an overseer. This is guilt. He is clothed with confession and crowned with penance. She has a judge. He is clothed with discipline and crowned with patience.

The bride has a beast of burden. This is the body. It is bridled with worthlessness: contempt is its fodder and its stable is confession. The pack it carries is innocence. The bride has a crimson silk cloth, which is hope. It is clothed with truth and crowned with song. She has a palm in her hand, which is victory over sin. In her other hand she has a canister that is full of longing and love. This she wants to bring to her Lover. She is wearing a hat of peacock feathers, which are her good name on earth and high honor in heaven. She follows a path, which is meekness. This is clothed with honey and crowned with safety.

And she sings:
“Chosen Lover, I long for you.
You take and give me many a heartache.
I have from you, besides, invisible suffering.
If you, Lord, command,
I shall be freed from myself.”

And he speaks:
“Dearest love, think of the hour
When you may grasp the full treasure.
Do not let the time seem too long.
After all, I hold you constantly
Embraced in my arms.”

Then our Lord says to his chosen bride:
“Come, my beloved, come. You shall be crowned.”[67]

And he gives her a crown of truth that no one may wear but religious people." On the crown one sees four virtues: wisdom and sorrow, longing and perseverance. May God give us all this crown! Amen.

Book II

1. Love Brings Elevation to the Soul, Not Inhuman Toil; That Comes from Self-Will

The elevation of the soul comes about in love, and the glory of the body comes about in holy Christian baptism. There is no elevation beyond that of love, and outside Christianity there is no glory. For this reason they make great fools of themselves who imagine that they are scaling the heights with loathsome, inhuman toils,' even though their hearts are full of rancor. They are entirely lacking in holy, humble virtues that guide the soul to God. False holiness likes to hide where self-will holds sway in a heart.

2. Two Songs of Love of Him Who Was Seen in Love

I would willingly die of love
If it could happen to me.
Him whom I love I have seen
With my beaming eyes
Present in my soul.
Any bride who has offered a dwelling place
To her love has no need to go far.
Love cannot easily disappear
Where the maiden oft pursues the young man.
His noble nature is quite ready to receive
Her eagerly and place her close to his heart.
This is easily missed by foolish people
Who are not willing to seek out the lover.

O noble Eagle, O sweet Lamb, O flaming Glow, set me on fire!
How long must I be so dry?
An hour is much too hard for me,
A day is like a thousand years
When you are of a mind
To be far away from me.
If it were to last eight days,
I would rather go down to hell—

I'm there already—
Rather than that God be away from the loving soul.
That is anguish beyond human dying
And beyond the torments of hell. Believe me!
The nightingale must ever sing,
For by nature it voices only melodies of love.
If that were taken from her, she would be dead.
Alas, great Lord, be mindful of my anguish!

The Holy Spirit said to the soul: "Ah, noble maiden, make ready; your Lover is about to come." This startled her, and she was inwardly glad and said: "Oh, dear messenger, if it would only happen! I am so worthless and so utterly faithless that I can never find rest apart from my Lover. Whenever I find that my love for him is growing cold I am utterly in torment, but resolve to follow him in sorrow."

The messenger said: "You must tidy up and wash. Prepare the bed and scatter flowers."

The lonely soul said:

"When I tidy up, I must be ashamed.
When I wash, I must weep.
When I prepare the bed, I must hope.
When I break off flowers, I must love.
When my Lord comes, I take leave of myself;
For he brings me so many sweet strains with his strings
That it stops all impulses of my flesh.
And his strings are so full of all sweetness
That with his airs he relieves me of all interior suffering."

3. The Tongue of the Godhead, the Light of Truth, the Four Rays of God Shining into the Nine Choirs, the Trinity, and St. Mary

The great tongue of the Godhead has spoken many a mighty word to me. I took them in with the feeble ears of my lowliness; and the brightest of lights opened up to the eyes of my soul. In it I saw the indescribable order and recognized the inexpressible glory, the incomprehensible marvel, the special intimacy with separation,' complete fulfillment, the greatest concentration in knowledge, bliss with interruption' in proportion to the capacities of the faculties, unadulterated joy in the common union, and the ever vibrant life in eternity as it is now and ever shall be.

There also four beams were visible that shot forth continuously from the crossbow of the Holy Trinity from the divine throne through the nine choirs.} There is no one, however rich or poor, whom the beam does not strike lovingly. The beam of the Godhead shoots incomprehensible light through them. Loving humanity greets them in fraternal company. The Holy Spirit touches them with the flood of the marvelous abundance of eternal bliss. Undivided God feeds them with the shimmer of his glorious countenance and fills them with the joyful breath of his flowing mouth. They glide effortlessly, as birds in the air do when not moving their wings, and they fly wherever they want, body and soul, and yet they remain separate in their own order.

The Godhead rings,
Humanity sings,
The Holy Spirit plucks the harp of the heavens
So that all strings resound
That are strung in love.

Also visible was that same glorious vessel in which Christ dwelt in body and soul for nine months, as she shall always remain, but as yet without the great adornment that the heavenly Father shall give to the bodies of the blessed on the last day. Our Lady will be without it as long as the earth floats on the sea. One saw how beautifully our Lady stood at the throne to the left hand of the heavenly Father, revealed in all her maidenly being; and how her human body is bathed and formed in the noble light of the soul of our Lady; and how her lovely uncovered breasts are so full of sweet milk that drops flow forth in honor of the heavenly Father and as a favor to humankind, so that man might be perfect above all creatures. The noble princes, the archangels, are so utterly amazed that other princes, who are human, have ascended above them, that it is praiseworthy that evidence of our perfection is there.'

On the right hand of our Lord stands Jesus, our Redeemer, with his open wounds bloody and unbandaged, ready to prevail over the Father's justice that severely threatens many a sinner. As long as sinning continues on earth, Christ's wounds shall be open: bloody, but not painful. But after judgment Christ shall put on such a garment as has never been seen, unless God revealed it, but this did not happen. Then the sweet wounds shall heal, as though a rose petal had been placed on the spot of the wound. One will then see the scars turned bright red-love's color; and they will never fade. Then the uncreated God shall make new all his creatures, so new that they can never grow old.

Now my German fails me; I do not know Latin. If there is something of merit here, it is not my doing; for there never was a dog so nasty that it would not come if its master coaxed it with a white breakfast roll.

4. The Poor Girl, the Mass ofJohn the Baptist, the Transformation of the Host into the Lamb, the Beauty of the Angels, Four

How useful it is for a person to have good will, even though she cannot perform good works. This was revealed by our Lord to a poor girl when she could not go to mass because unfortunately she was not well enough for his service. Thus did she speak to God: "Alas, my dear Lord, am I going to be without mass today?"

While she was in this state of longing, God took away all her earthly senses and brought her miraculously into a beautiful church. She found no one inside. She thought to herself: Oh, you poor lazy thing, you've come too late. That you got up just now isn't going to do you any good here. Then she saw a young man come in carrying a bunch of white flowers. He spread them beneath the tower and went away.' Then another youth came carrying a bunch of violets, which he spread in the middle of the church. Then a third youth came carrying a bunch of roses, which he spread decorously before the altar of our Lady. Then a fourth came carrying a bunch of white lilies and spread them in the choir.' When they had done this, they bowed reverently and went away. These youths were so noble and so beautiful to behold that, if a person could really see them, human bodily suffering could never be so great that all the suffering would not disappear. Then two school boys in white garments entered carrying two lights. They placed them on the altar. Then they withdrew properly and remained in the choir.

Then a fairly tall man came in, quite gaunt but not old. His clothes were so tattered that arms and legs showed through. He carried a white lamb on his breast and two cruets$ in his grasp. He went to the altar, placed the lamb on it, and bowed lovingly toward it. This was John the Baptist, who was going to sing the mass. Then a young man entered, quite delicate in his bearing, carrying an eagle on his breast. That was John the Evangelist. Then a simple man, St. Peter, entered. Then a strapping young man entered carrying a bunch of vestments, which the three men put on. Then a great throng came in. It was the mighty court of heaven that filled the church so full that the poor girl could not find a place where she might remain.

So she went back and stood beneath the tower, where she found a group of people dressed in white who did not have any hair. Instead, they wore simple crowns on their heads. These were those people who had not lived according to the law. They lack the ornament of hair, which is good works. How, then, did they get into heaven? By sorrow and good will at the hour of death. Farther away she saw people more beautiful, clothed in violet-colored garments. They were adorned with the lovely hair of virtue and crowned with God's law. She found people more beautiful still who were clothed in rose-colored garments. They wore the beautiful symbol of widows and the crown of freely chosen chastity.

The poor girl was wretchedly clothed and was physically ill. She was not able to remain in any of the three groups. So she went and stood in front of the choir and looked in to where our dear Lady was standing on the highest level. St. Catherine, Cecilia, bishops, martyrs, angels, and a large number of virgins were there. The poor thing looked at this imposing throng and then looked at herself. Did she dare stay there in her wretched condition? Suddenly she was wearing a deep red mantle woven out of love in proportion to the ardor of her faculties for God and all good things. The mantle was decorated with gold and also with a song that went: "I would willingly die of love.'" She saw that she was like a noble maiden and wore on her head a garland of splendid gold. On it was inscribed another song that went:

His eyes into my eyes,
His heart into my heart,
His soul into my soul
Untiringly enclosed.

And her countenance resembled that of the angels. "Alas, foul puddle that I am, what is happening to me? Unfortunately I am not nearly as blessed as I saw myself there."

All who were in the choir looked at her with a friendly smile. Our Lady motioned to her that she should stand above Catherine. She went and stood next to our dear Lady, for it could indeed rarely happen that she might address and behold God's mother: "Oh, dear and noble Lady!" She considered it a great favor that the lowly crow might stand next to the turtledove. All who were in the choir were clothed in radiant gold and enveloped in soaring bliss, brighter than the sun.

Then the mass began thus: Let us all rejoice in the Lord." As often as our Lady was mentioned, she genuflected," while the others just bowed, because God had given her the greatest honor. Then the wretched girl who had come to mass said: "Oh, Lady, may I receive the body of God since there are no dangers here?" The mother of God said: "Certainly, dear child, make your confession." Then the queen of heaven signaled to John the Evangelist. He went out and heard the confession of the sinful

girl. She asked him to tell her how long she would live. John said: "I am not permitted to tell you. God does not want me to. For if it were to be a long time, you might in your great sadness fall into deep depression. But if the time were to be short, you might in the sadness of your heart fall into a desire to live a long time."

Then John went to read the gospel, the Liber generationis.12 The poor girl said to our Lady: "Should I make an offering?" Our Lady said: "Yes, if you do not intend to take it back from him again." The poor girl said: "Dear Lady, you must give me this favor from God." Our Lady said: "Then take this golden penny your self-will-and offer it to my glorious Son in all things." With good manners and in holy fear the little maid took the large penny. She examined what image had been struck on the penny. On it was Christ being taken down from the cross. On the back was the whole court of heaven with the nine choirs and God's throne above. Then the voice of God spoke to her: "If you are offering me this penny with the intention of never taking it back again, then I will take you down from the cross and take you to me into my kingdom."

After that, the same priest, who had been ordained by the Holy Spirit in his mother's womb,13 celebrated a low mass. When he took the white host in his hands, the lamb, which was standing on the altar, got up and, at the words under the signs of his hand,14 joined itself to the host and the host to the lamb in such a way that I no longer saw the host, but only a bleeding lamb hanging from a red cross. It looked at us with such sweet eyes that I shall never, ever forget it. Then the poor girl begged our Lady thus: "Dear Mother, ask your glorious Son that he deign to give himself to me, wretched though I be." And she saw that a radiant beam shined forth from the mouth of our Lady onto the altar and touched the lamb with her prayer, so that God himself spoke out of the lamb: "Mother, I shall willingly put myself in the place you desire." The poor girl approached the altar with great love and an open soul. St. John took the white lamb with its red wounds and placed it between her teeth in her mouth. Then the pure lamb lay down onto its own image in her stable15 and began to suckle from her heart with its sweet mouth. The more it suckled, the more she gave it.

[Now the person to whom this happened is dead and gone beyond. May God help us that we might behold her in the company of the angels.] 16

5. A Song of the Soul About Five Things, and How God Is a Garment of the Soul and the Soul of God

You shine into my soul
Like the sun against gold.
When I may rest in you, Lord,
My joy is rich.
You clothe yourself with my soul
And you are her most intimate garment.[17]
That there must be a parting between them—
Never have I experienced greater heartache!
If you were to love me more intensely,

I would certainly pass away
To where I could love you as I wish unceasingly.
Now I have sung to you
And yet to no avail.
Were you to sing to me,
I would have to succeed.

6. God's Singing Response in the Soul in Five Things

[God:] When I shine, you shall glow.
When I flow, you shall become wet.
When you sigh, you draw my divine heart into you.
When you weep in longing for me, I take you in my arms.
But when you love, we two become one being.[18]
And when we two are one being,
Then we can never be parted.
Rather, a blissful abiding
Prevails between us.

[Soul:] Lord, then I shall persevere in hunger and thirst
In pursuing and in pleasure
Till that playful[19] hour
When from your divine mouth
The chosen words shall flow
That are heard by no one
But the soul alone
That has stripped itself of the earth
And puts her ear next to your mouth.
She, indeed, grasps the treasure of love!

7. In Suffering Praise God; Then He Will Appear to You. The Two Golden Chalices of Suffering and Consolation

I, sinful, lazy creature, was supposed to pray once; and God acted as though he did not want to give me any kind of favor. I wanted to give myself over to deep sadness because of the weakness of my flesh, which seemed to me to be an obstacle to spiritual pleasure. "No!" said my soul. "Keep in mind all his faithfulness and praise your Lord thus: `Gloria in excelsis deo. '"20

As I thus praised, a great light appeared to my soul, and in this light God revealed himself in great majesty and indescribable brightness. Our Lord held two golden chalices in his hands that were both full of living wine. In his left hand was the red wine of suffering, and in his right hand the white wine of sublime consolation. Then our Lord spoke: "Blessed are those who drink this red wine. Although I give both out of divine love, the white wine is nobler in itself; but noblest of all are those who drink both the white and the red."

8. Of Purgatory; a Person Freed a Thousand Souls from It with the Tears of Love

A person should pray very simply and with great intensity to God in heaven for the poor souls. Once God showed her21 the horrible purifying fire and the kinds of torment in it as varied as the sins punished there. This person's spirit was so fiercely moved that she embraced the whole of purgatory in her arms. She carried on caringly and pleaded lovingly. Then God spoke from heaven: "Stop that now! Don't inflict pain on yourself! You are making it too hard for yourself." The spirit lamented: "Alas, dear Lord, then free some of them!" Our Lord said: "How many of them do you want?" The spirit said: "Lord, as many as I am able to make reparation for in your goodness." Our Lord said: "Then take a thousand and lead them wherever you wish." Then, black, fiery, slimy, burning, bloody, stinking they rose out of the suffering. Again the person's spirit spoke: "Alas, my dear Lord, what is going to happen to these poor ones now? With such disfigurement they can never enter your kingdom." Then God inclined himself exceedingly low beneath his nobility and said something that serves to give much comfort to us sinners: "You should bathe them in the tears of love that now flow from the eyes of your body." Then there appeared a large round lake. They arose in unison and bathed in love, bright as the sun. The person's spirit felt indescribable joy and said: "Praised be you, dear Lord, by all creatures forever. Now they are suited for you in your kingdom." Then our Lord bowed to them from on high and placed the crown of love on them, which had freed them from thence, and he said: "You shall wear this crown forever so that all those in my kingdom might know that you were redeemed by tears of love nine years before your allotted time."

9. God Praises His Bride in Five Things

You are a light of the world.
You are a crown of virgins.
You are a salve of the wounded.
You are a pledge among the false.
You are a bride of the Holy Trinity.

10. The Bride Praises God in Return in Five Things

You are a light in all lights.
You are a flower above all crowns.
You are a salve on all wounds.
You are an unwavering pledge free of falsity.
You are an innkeeper in all hostelries.

11. Seven Kinds of Love for God

True love of God has seven approaches.
Cheerful love leads the way.
Fearing love takes on the task.
Strong love can accomplish much.
Loving love receives no honor.
Wise love has knowledge.

Free love lives without heartache.
Powerful love is forever happy.

12. Seven Kinds of Perfection

Willingly without honor,
Willingly unfeared,
Willingly alone,
Willingly quiet,
Willingly below,
Willingly high,
Willingly common to all.

13. Between God and the Soul There Should Be Love

Between God and you there should always be love.
Between earthly things and you there should be dread and fear.
Between sin and you there should be enmity and strife.
Between the kingdom of heaven and you there should be constant
hope.

14. Where Bitterness, Low Spirits, Sickness, Terror, Sensitivity, Distress, Forsakenness, and Inconsolability Come From`22

Bitterness of heart comes from humanity.[23]
Low spirits of the body come from the flesh alone.
Agility of spirit comes from the nobility of the soul.
Terror in the face of punishment comes from guilt.
Sickness of the body comes from nature.
Distress of loneliness comes from fickleness.
Infrequent consolation comes from restlessness.

15. How One Wounded by Love Is Restored to Health

Whoever at some point
Is seriously wounded by true love
Will never become healthy again

Unless he kisses that same mouth
By which his soul was wounded.[24]

16. The Seven Gifts of a Brother

The soul is boundless in her longing,
On fire in her loving,
Amiable in her bearing,
A mirror of the world,
Small in her greatness,
Reliable in helping,
Recollected in God.

17. How God Woos the Soul and Makes Her Wise in His Love25

Thus does God woo the guileless soul and make her wise in his love:

“Ah, precious dove, your feet are red,
Your feathers are smooth,
Your mouth is well-formed,
Your eyes are beautiful,
Your head is refined,
Your bearing is attractive,
Your flight is bold,
And you sink ever all too swiftly back to earth.”

18. How the Soul Interprets God's Wooing in Eight Things

“Lord, my feet are stained with the blood of your true redemptive act.
My feathers have been smoothed in your noble choosing.
My mouth has been formed by the Holy Spirit.
My eyes are brightened in your fiery light.
My head is ennobled by your constant protection.
My bearing is attractive because of your generous gift.
My flight is made bold by your restless exhilaration.
My sinking back to earth comes from your being united with my body.[26]
The greater the freedom you give me, the longer shall I soar in you.”

19. How Knowledge and the Soul Converse and How the Latter Says That She Is Threefold. Of the Three Heavens

Knowledge speaks first:

"O loving Soul, I have beheld you.
You are quite wondrously lovely.
A light was given me that I might look upon you.
Otherwise, it never would have been my fortune.
There is a threeness about you.
You can indeed be God's image:
You are a virile vassal in battle.
You are a finely attired maiden in your Lord's presence in the palace.
You are an eager bride in your bed of love with God.[27]
Loving Soul, in your battle you are armed with immense might
And with such great concentration of your faculties
That neither all the forces of the world

Nor all the aid of your flesh
Nor all the troops of the devil
Nor all the power of hell
Can bring you down from God's favor.
No one can boast of that any more.[28]
You constantly defend yourself with flowers.
Your sword is the noble rose, Jesus Christ.
That is how you defend yourself.
Your shield is the white lily, Mary.
It does not do them a bit of good
That they attack you.
Rather, they thereby enhance your beauty
And increase immeasurably in you God's honor.

All who are pure and fight to the end
Shall receive ample recompense from the Emperor.
O overwhelmed[29] Soul, what is your honor like
In the palace of the Holy Trinity, when you stand
Before your Lord so attractively adorned?"

"Lady Knowledge, you are wiser than I am.
Why are you asking me this?"

"Lady Soul, God has chosen you before all things.
You are my mistress and my queen."[30]

"Lady Knowledge, I was born noble and free.
I cannot be dishonored
Because of whom alone I love.
And so I shall bring it about
That the Holy Trinity loves, cherishes, and honors me,
And everything in heaven and on earth
Shall forever be subject to me.
If I let love have power over me,
Giving it room,

So that it can bind me to holy patience
And so that my guilt may not increase,
Then it will lead me to noble meekness,
That I may be ready for all good things;
And it will yoke me to strict obedience,
That I shall become lovingly subject
To God and all creatures."

"Mistress Bride, would you say a word to me
About the ineffable intimacy that exists between God and you?"

"Lady Knowledge, that I shall not do.
Brides may not tell everything they experience.
Holy contemplation and precious enjoyment
You shall learn about from me.
My privileged experience of God must always be hidden
From you and from all creatures except for myself."

"Lady Soul, your marvelous visions and lofty words
That you have seen and heard in God—
If you move me to divulge just a little,
Then I shall cast the light of the Emperor
Into a dark and dank stable.
Cattle eat their straw contentedly.

But there are some who seem to be God's children
And yet thrust about like unfettered cattle
In the dark stable and say:
'What is the point of such swindle?
It was thought up by self-will
And carried out in fake holiness.'"

"Lady Knowledge, one finds it written
That St. Paul was taken up into the third heaven.[31]
This never would have happened to him
If he had remained Saul.
If he had found the truth
In the first and second heaven,
He would never have climbed to the third."

"Lady Soul, there is a heaven
Which the devil made with his alluring false cunning.
There thoughts wander about with sad feelings,
And the soul remains completely unmoved
Because she does not find love corresponding to her nature.
The soul remains unconsoled there
And the simple faculties are deceived.[32]
In this heaven the devil reveals himself

As a radiant angel,
Even like God himself as to his five wounds.
Simple Soul, watch out!
The second heaven was created
By the longing of the senses
And by the first stage of love.
In this heaven there is no light;
The soul does not see God there.
Rather, she tastes an indescribable sweetness
That permeates all her members.
She hears as well a voice speaking of certain things

That she really wants,
For she is still joined to her earthly senses.
If she at this stage has not attained profound humility,
The devil brings his light there.[33]
What then happens is not from God.
But if she has perfect humility,
The soul shall travel on to the third heaven
Where the true light is given to her."

Then the senses say:
"Our lady, the soul, has slept since childhood.
Now she has awakened in the light of open love."
In this light she looks around herself to discover
Who that is who reveals himself to her,

And what that is that one is saying to her.
Thus does she see truly and understand
How God is all things in all things.

[Soul:] "Now I shall put aside all my cares
And go with St. Paul into the third heaven
If God in his love will beat down my sinful body."

This third heaven is vaulted, ordered, and illumined brightly with the Three Persons.34

20. How Sister Hildegund Is Adorned in Heaven with Three Mantles, with Seven Crowns, and How the Nine Choirs Praise Her

On the feast of the holy virgin St. Barbara, Sister Hildegund received her glory. God revealed this to a lame dog who is as yet licking its wounds in wretchedness.35 It happened thus while I was at prayer. I do not know whether heaven descended to me or I was drawn into the blissful house of God. There stood Hildegund before the throne of the heavenly Father, adorned as a new bride that the king had brought home. She had three mantles draped over her and wore on her head seven crowns, and the nine choirs offered her special praise. When I looked at her, I recognized her in all the gifts that she had received from God. I was eager to speak with her and, in order to remain longer with her in this blissful state, I asked her: "Tell me, where did you get that rosecolored mantle?"

Hildegund said: "I was a martyr in fiery love, so much so that often my heart's blood poured forth over my head."

Then I asked her further: "Where did you get this golden mantle that shines so splendidly?"

She said: "From the example of good works."

I said: "Where did you get this flowering white mantle?"

She replied: "From the overwhelming36 love, which I kept secretly in my soul and in my senses."

These were the seven crowns: the crown of constancy, the crown of holy faith, the crown of fidelity, the crown of generous mercy, the crown of holy understanding, the crown of love, and the crown of virginity.

Then I asked further: "Dear Sister, where is your crown of humility that is so becoming to religious persons?"

She answered: "I do not have it especially, nor did I ever attain it just enough that God took away pride with it."

These seven crowns are all specially adorned with a garland of the dignity of pure noble chastity. The nine choirs praise her for nine virtues thus:

“We praise you for your sorrow,
For your good will,
For your truth,
For your wisdom,
For your sweet grieving,
For your voluntary poverty,
For your strength,
For your justice.”

The Seraphim praise her thus, for they are her equals: "We praise you for your love, God's Queen."

The Thrones praise her thus: "We praise the bridegroom because of the beauty of the bride."

I asked her about many things which I shall now pass over in silence.
Though the kingdom of heaven is colored by love,
The kingdom of earth is, alas, quite changeable
For me and for many a person
Who never was taken up to heaven
Where one shall behold the truth.

21. If You Would Behold the Mountain, You Should Have Seven Thing.'

I saw a mountain—
That took place very quickly,
For the body cannot endure
The soul’s being there for an hour.
At its base the mountain was white, like clouds,
And high up at the summit, fiery bright as the sun.

Its end and its beginning
I could not find at all.
Inside, it playfully sparkled
And flowed golden in boundless love.

I spoke:
“Lord, blessed are the eyes
That shall forever gaze upon this surging of love
And grasp this wonder.
I can never describe it.”

The mountain spoke:
“The eyes that are to see me thus
Must be graced by seven things; otherwise,
They can never experience it.
These are: Slow to borrow, quick to pay back,
To hold back nothing for yourself,
To be kind in the face of hatred,
To be loving in the face of cruelty,
To be pure as to guilt
And ready for all one might receive.”

22. How Contemplation Asks the Loving Soul About the Seraphim and the Least of Men

"Lady Soul, would you rather be an angel of the order of Seraphim or a human being with body and soul in the lowest choir of angels?""

The Soul to Contemplation: "Lady Contemplation, you have certainly noticed that the Seraphim angels are exalted princes and that they are one love and one fire and one breath and one light with God."

Contemplation to the Soul: "Lady Soul, you have certainly noticed that the angels are simple persons and that they do not praise God nor love him nor know him beyond the limits of their nature. The least of human beings can catch up with them by Christian belief, sorrow, longing, and good will. It's just that the human soul cannot burn as intensely in the Godhead."

The Soul to Contemplation: "Lady Contemplation, you have certainly noticed that the Seraphim angels are God's children and yet his servants as well. The least soul is a daughter of the Father and a sister of the Son and a friend of the Holy Spirit and, indeed, a bride of the Holy Trinity. When the game is over, then let one see how the scales tip-the noblest angel, Jesus Christ, who soars above the Seraphim, who is undivided with his Father. Him shall I, the least of souls, take in my arms, eat him and drink him, and have my way with him. This can never happen to the angels. No matter how high he dwells above me, his Godhead shall never be so distant that I cannot constantly entwine my limbs with him; and so I shall never cool off. What, then, do I care what the angels experience?"

23. How Love Questions and Instructs Dull Souls and Would Like to Bring Them to Their Lover and Begins to Speak; and How the Dull Soul Responds

"Alas, foolish Soul, where are you, or what is your dwelling like, and what are you living for? Where can you find rest since you do not love your vibrant God more than your own will or beyond all your might?"

"Let me sleep. I don't know what you are talking about."

"One certainly has to wake the queen when the king intends to come."

"I am a member of a religious order. I fast, keep vigils, am free of serious sin; I am bound enough."

"What good does it do to bind an empty vessel if the wine still runs out? One has to fill it with the stones of external hardship and the ashes of transitoriness."

"I dwell in the comfort of my relatives and my dear religious friends. Besides, how can I enjoy loving someone I don't know?"

"What? You don't know how to recognize the Lord who has been spoken of so lovingly to you so often? You are more concerned about that mongrel body of yours than about Jesus, your sweet Lord; and so you are never going to win honor in his eyes."

"I live by my own will. That is what I like to do."

"If you want to render God genuine loyalty, for his love you should follow his spirit."

"I rest in the vigor of my body."

"You should be ashamed of yourself today in God's sight, that you call yourself a religious and yet busy yourself the whole time with your body."

"How am I supposed to stay well if I take on the burdens you involve?"

"Oh, traitor! He who made the soul so noble that she feasts on nothing but God-he will not let your body perish."

"You are rebuking me severely. If I knew where he was, I could yet change my ways."

"If you wish to dwell with him in noble freedom, you first have to clear bad habits out of this dwelling."

"If I knew what was best, I would choose the best."

"Alas! That many a man who is wise in learning and by natural good sense does not risk putting himself completely in the power of naked love! Rather, it is the simple and pure who seek God alone in all their actions to whom God, given his nature, must favorably incline."

"I imagined that, having entered religious life, I had climbed high enough."

"What good does it do to put fine clothes on a sleeping man and set gourmet food before him? As long as he is asleep, he can't eat anyway. Ah, my love, let me awaken you."

"Well then, tell me where his dwelling is."

"There is no other Lord that dwells in all his castles at the same time but him alone. He lives in the peace of holy affection and whispers to his beloved in the narrow confines of the soul. He also embraces her in the noble comfort of his love. He greets her with his loving eyes when they earnestly gaze at one another with love. He kisses her passionately with his divine mouth. You are happy, more than happy in this most glorious hour. He caresses her, as well he can, on the bed of love. Then she rises to the heights of bliss and to the most exquisite pain when she becomes truly intimate with him. Ah, dear Soul, let yourself be loved and don't fiercely fend it off."

"Who are those who defend themselves fiercely?"

"Those who pester others and themselves with their own spitefulness. Now I shall tell you who he is. He is the loftiest of all pinnacles, and this same loftiest of all pinnacles bent down into the deepest of all valleys, and this deepest of all valleys ascended onto the highest of all pinnacles. 0 dull Soul, look all around you and open your blind eyes."

"If he has climbed down from the highest pinnacle for love of me and given himself along with all creatures to me totally, and if he does not now intend to withdraw his goodness from me, then I might well be ever ashamed in his sight that I was never quite willing to give up my worthless copper in return for his precious gold. Alas, where have I been, poor blind me, that I have lived so long without strong love? With it I can indeed conquer all my troubles in spite of all my enemies. Poor wretch, although I have missed much that is good, I shall nevertheless still go out from all things and into God. 0 Love, will you still receive me?"

"Yes, I shall. God has never denied himself to anyone. This is an equal balance: If you want to have love, you must leave love."

24. How the Loving Soul Joins the Company of God and His Chosen Dear Ones and Shall Be Equal to All the Saints. How the Devil and the Soul Talk to Each Other

Oh, Lord Jesus Christ, that you suffered despite your guiltlessness gives me consolation, for in all that I suffer I am guilty; and your salvific death keeps my memory of you alive, and your immaculate blood has coursed through my soul.

Mary, dear Mother, I stand next to you under the cross with all my Christian faith, and the sword of holy sorrow cuts through my soul39 because so many of those who have the appearance of religious persons" are so unreliable.

John the Baptist, I was taken prisoner with you because the treacherous slut of deceitfulness killed the word of God in my mouth.'

John the Evangelist, I fell asleep with you in tender love on the breast of Jesus Christ, and then I saw and heard there such glorious marvels that my body often took leave of itself.42

Peter, I have been crucified with you because things never go right for me as a human being, and spiritually I am often in pain for the praise of Jesus Christ.

Paul, I was miraculously caught up with you" and saw such a house that nothing has ever surprised me as much as the fact that I have been able since then to remain a living person. When I recall that the heavenly Father is the blessed chalice-bearer there and Jesus the chalice, the Holy Spirit the unadulterated wine, and how the whole Trinity is the full chalice and love the mistress in charge of the wine cellar, then, God knows, I would be happy indeed if love would invite me into the house. But for now I am happy to drink gall here. Ah, dear Jesus, reward all those lovingly who have here poured out bitterness for me to drink, for they have made me rich in divine favors. I received a chalice filled with gall that was so powerful that it utterly permeated my body and soul. And so I offered special prayers to God for the pourer, that he would pour out for him celestial wine. And indeed, he did so, saying: "Noble Maiden, be of good cheer. The magnitude of my wonder shall come over you. Lions shall fear you. Bears shall accept your dominion over them. Wolves shall flee you. The lamb shall be your companion." I am certain of this and, up until now it has turned out that I have had to drain many a chalice of gall because, alas, the devil still has many a one among religious people willing to pour it out. They are so full of poison that they cannot drink it all up by themselves, but must pour it out maliciously for God's children.

Stephen, I kneel next to you in front ofJewish hearts under the sharp stones, for they fall upon me large and small." Those who appear to be good people stone me from the back and run away and do not want me to know anything about its having befallen me because of them: but God saw it.

Lawrence, I was bound next to you for more than twenty years on a horrible gridiron, but God preserved me unburned and freed me more than seven years ago.

Martin, I live with you in obscurity and God's true love martyred me beyond all adversity.

Dominic, my dear Father, I have something in common with you because I have desired many a day that the sinful blood of my heart might flow beneath the feet of disbelieving heretics.

Catherine, I go with you into battle because the lords of hell want to bring me down. One of them came to me splendorous as the radiance of the sun so that I might know that he was an angel. He was carrying a shining book and said:

"Go ahead and take this kiss of peace,45 when you cannot make it to mass."

The soul spoke with deliberate prudence: "He who has no peace himself, cannot bestow peace on me."

He went away and transformed himself and returned looking like a very wretched, sickly man whose guts were falling out and said: "Oh, you are so holy. Heal me."

The soul spoke again: "He who is himself sick cannot heal anyone."

"It is written: Who can do it better should help the other."

"It is also written: One should not help anyone against God."

"What one does for good is not against God."

"If there is nothing good about something, no one can achieve something good in its regard. You have an everlasting sickness.46 If you want to recover, go and show yourself to a priest or a bishop or an archbishop or the pope.47 I have no

power except that of being able to sin." The he replied in rage: "That I will never do!"

Then he became like black smoke and comported himself indecently and disappeared. But I am not afraid of him.4S

Mary Magdalene, I live with you in the desert wilderness, because all things are foreign to me except God alone.

Lord heavenly Father, between you and me there goes unceasingly an imperceptible breath in which I come to know and see many marvels and inexpressible things. Unfortunately, they do me little good because I am such a worthless vessel that cannot endure your slightest spark. Unbound love dwells in the senses because it is still mixed in such a way with earthly things that a person can cry out: "Love is in grace, distant in the senses and has, alas, not yet climbed atop the soul." Many people have fallen because their soul remained unwounded.49 Solomon and David received the Holy Spirit in their human senses, but when the senses changed, they fell into false love. God knows, their soul had not sunk into the lowest depths beneath all creatures nor was it wounded by the powerful part of love, for he who never tasted the best wine often whoops it up the most. Bound love dwells in the soul and transcends human senses and concedes the body nothing it wants.50 It is restrained and very calm. It lowers its wings and listens for the inexpressible voice and gazes into the incomprehensible light and works with great desire to achieve the will of its Lord. If the body can still flap its wings, the soul can never reach the heights that are attainable for human beings. In this bound love the wounded soul becomes rich and her external senses very poor because the more riches God finds in her, the deeper she humbly lowers herself because of the true nobility of her love. I cannot imagine a person bound by the deepest stirrings of powerful love falling into serious sin; for the soul is bound, she has to love. May God thus bind us all!

25. The Lament of the Loving Soul; How God Protects Her and Withdraws His Gift from Her Concerning Wisdom, How the Soul Asks God How She Is and Where He Is. Concerning the Orchard, Flowers, and the Song of the Virgins

“Oh, you treasure beyond reckoning in your abundance!
Oh, you incomprehensible marvel in your variety!
Oh, you infinite glory in the power of your nobility!
How painfully I long for you
When you want to spare me;
This all creatures would not be able to express to you fully
If they were to lament on my behalf;
For I suffer inhuman anguish.
Human death I would find more pleasant.

I seek you with my thoughts
As a maiden secretly does her lover.
I shall fall terribly sick from this,
For I am bound to you.
The bond is stronger than I am,
Thus I cannot become free of love.
I cry out to you in great longing,
A lonely voice;
I hope for your coming with heavy heart,
I cannot rest, I am on fire,

Unquenchable in your burning love.
I pursue you with all my might.
If I had the strength of a giant
And if I got onto your trail,
Still I would quickly lose your tracks.
Please, my Love, run not so far ahead of me
And tarry a while in love,
So that I can catch you.

Please, Lord, just as you have taken from me all things that I have from you,
Leave me, at least, through grace that same gift
That you have given to dogs through their nature—
That I might be loyal to you in my misery,
Free of all discontent.
This I do indeed desire
More than I yearn for heaven."

"My dear Dove, now listen to me!
My divine wisdom is so utterly upon you
That I direct all my gifts to you,
As much as your frail body can bear.
Your secret sighs shall reach me.
Your heart's anguish can compel me.

Your sweet pursuit shall so exhaust me
That I shall yearn to cool myself
In your limpid soul,
To which I have been bound.
The sighs and tremors of your wounded heart
Have driven out my justice from you.
That suits you quite well, as it does me:

I cannot be without you.
No matter how far we are apart,
We can still never be really separated.
No matter how softly I caress you,
I inflict immense pain on your poor body.
If I were to surrender myself to you continuously, as you desire,
I would lose my delightful dwelling place on earth within you,
For a thousand bodies cannot fully satisfy the longings of a soul in love.
And so, the higher the love, the holier the martyr."

"O Lord, you pamper to excess my dank prison,
In which I drink the water of the world and eat in great misery
The ash cake of my frailty,
And am wounded to the death
By the beam of your fiery love.
Now you leave me, Lord, lying in my misery,
My wounds untended, in great torment."

"Queen dear to my heart,
Must you always be so impatient?
When I wound you most deeply,
I immediately apply salve most tenderly.
The abundance of my riches is yours alone,
And even over me shall you hold sway.
You are very dear to my heart.
If you have the scales, I have the gold.
All that you have done for my sake, renounced, or suffered,
I shall balance off completely and shall give myself to you forever
Expecting nothing in return, just as you will."

"Lord, two things I ask you;
In your kindness instruct me:
When my eyes weep in loneliness,
And my mouth remains mute in its simplicity,
And my tongue is constricted in affliction,
And my senses ask me again and again
What is wrong with me,
Then, Lord, everything in me is directed toward you.
When my flesh wastes away,
My blood dries up, my bones torture me,

My veins contract,
And my heart melts out of love for you,
And my soul roars
With the bellowings of a hungry lion,
Tell me, dearest One,
What will it be like for me then,
And where will you be?"[51]

"You are like a new bride
Whose one and only lover has slipped away as she slept.
She had entrusted him with all her love
And simply cannot endure his parting from her for one hour.
When she then awakens, she can only have as much of him
As she can carry in her thoughts.
That is the source of all her lament.
As long as his bride has not been delivered to his house,
She must often be apart from her young man.
I come to you at my pleasure, when I will.
If you are patient and calm,
And hide your cares where you can,

Then the power of love shall grow in you.
Now let me tell you where I shall then be:
I am in myself in all places and in all things,
As I always have been eternally,
And I shall be waiting for you in the orchard of love
And shall pluck for you the flowers of sweet union[52]
And shall make a bed for you out of the soft grass of holy knowledge,
And the bright sun of my eternal Godhead
Shall make you radiant with the secret wonder of my attractiveness—
A bit of which you have intimately revealed—[53]

And I shall bend down for you the towering tree of my Holy Trinity.
Then you shall pick the green, white, and red apples of my succulent humanity,[54]
And the shadow of my Holy Spirit shall protect you
From all earthly sadness.
Then you will have no thought of your heartache.
When you embrace the tree,
I shall teach you the song of the virgins—
The melody, the words, the dulcet sounds,
Which those cannot understand in the least

Who have led unchaste lives.
Still they shall receive sweet compensation.[55]
Beloved, begin the song and let me hear how well you sing."

"Alas, my dear Lover, I am hoarse in the throat of my chastity,
But the sugar of your sweet kindness
Has let my voice resound, so that I can now sing thus:
Lord, your blood and mine are one, untainted.
Your love and mine are one, inseparable.
Your garment and mine are one, immaculate.
Your mouth and mine are one, unkissed.
Your breast and mine are one, not caressed
By any man but you alone."[56]

These are the words of the song.
The voice of love and the melody of the heart must be left unrendered,
For they can be captured by no merely human hand!

26. About This Book and the Writers of This Book

I was warned against writing this book.
People said:
If one did not watch out,
It could be burned.
So I did as I used to do as a child.
When I was sad, I always had to pray.
I bowed to my Lover and said: "Alas, Lord,
Now I am saddened all because of your honor.[57]
If I am going to receive no comfort from you now,
Then you led me astray,
Because you are the one who told me to write it."

At once God revealed himself to my joyless soul, held this book in his right hand, and said:

"My dear One, do not be overly troubled.
No one can burn the truth.
For someone to take this book out of my hand,
He must be mightier than I.
The book is threefold

And portrays me alone.
The parchment that encloses it indicates my pure, white, just humanity
That for your sake suffered death.
The words symbolize my marvelous Godhead.
It flows continuously
Into your soul from my divine mouth.
The sound of the words is a sign of my living spirit
And through it achieves genuine truth.
Now, examine all these words—
How admirably do they proclaim my personal secrets!
So have no doubts about yourself!"

"Ah, Lord, if I were a learned religious man,[58]
And if you had performed this unique great miracle using him,
You would receive everlasting honor for it.
But how is one supposed to believe
That you have built a golden house on filthy ooze
And really live in it with your mother, with all creatures, and with your heavenly court?
Lord, earthly wisdom will not be able to find you there."

"Daughter, many a wise man, because of negligence
On a big highway, has lost his precious gold
With which he was hoping to go to a famous school.
Someone is going to find it.
By nature I have acted accordingly many a day.
Wherever I bestowed special favors,
I always sought out the lowest, most insignificant, and most unknown place for them.
The highest mountains on earth cannot receive the revelations of my favors

Because the course of my Holy Spirit flows by nature downhill.
One finds many a professor learned in scripture who actually is a fool in my eyes.
And I'll tell you something else:
It is a great honor for me with regard to them, and it very much strengthens Holy Christianity
That the unlearned mouth, aided by my Holy Spirit, teaches the learned tongue."[59]

"Alas, Lord, I sigh, desire,
And beg on behalf of your writers
Who write this book after me,[60]
That you see fit to give them, too, as a reward
A favor that has never been bestowed on human beings.
Lord, your gifts are a thousand times more numerous
Than your creatures who might receive them."

Our Lord said:

"They have written it in gold letters.
All these words shall appear written on their outermost garments, forever visible in my kingdom
In heavenly shining gold above all their adornment,
Because to love freely must always be the highest value for people."

As our Lord was speaking these words to me, I saw glorious truth in its eternal excellence.

O Lord, I beg that you preserve
This book from the eyes of evil cunning,
For this has come among us from hell.
It was never taken from heaven;
It was begotten in Lucifer's heart
And was born of spiritual pride
And was puffed up in hate
And has grown so large in powerful rage
That it imagines that no virtue is its equal.

So must God's children perish
And allow themselves to be oppressed in degradation
If they want to receive the highest honors with Jesus.
A holy watchfulness we must keep about ourselves at all times
To preserve ourselves from shortcomings.
A loving watchfulness we should have toward our fellow Christians
When they blunder, that we say to them only
That which bespeaks our good intentions toward them.
This can keep us from much wasted speech. Amen.

Book III

1. Of Heaven and the Nine Choirs and Who Is Supposed to Fill the Breach.' Of the Throne of the Apostles and St. Mary and on Which Christ Sits. Of the Reward of Preachers, Martyrs, and Virgins, and of the Unbaptized Children2

The soul spoke thus to its longing: "I beg you, go off and see where my Lover is, and tell him I want to love."

Then longing went quickly off, for it is by nature swift, and reached the heights and called out: "Great Lord, open up and let me in."

The Master of the house said:

"What is it you want that you are making such a fuss?"

"Lord, I report to you that my lady cannot live much longer in her present condition. But if you were to flow, then she could swim. A fish cannot remain alive and stay fresh long on the sand."

"Go on back. I'm not going to let you in unless you bring me the hungry soul that I desire more than anything else."

The messenger returned and the soul heard about her Lord's wish. Oh, how she trembled with love! She rose up with a deft movement and in pleasureful flight. Very soon two angels came to meet her. God sent them to her out of tender love. They said to her: "Lady Soul, what are you doing way up here? You are still clothed with dark earth."

She replied:

"Ye lords, be completely quiet about that
And see that you extend to me a better greeting.
I am going loving.
The closer you sink to earth,
The more you hide your celestial splendor;
And the higher I climb, the brighter I shine."

Then they took the soul between them and with light hearts led her forth. Then the soul first gazed upon the land of the angels where she is known and meets with no ill will, and heaven opened up before her.

She stood there, her heart melting, looked upon her Lover and said: "0 Lord, when I look upon you, I have to praise you for your astonishing wisdom. Where have I come to? Am I now lost in you? I cannot even remember earth or any of my interior sufferings. On earth, when I caught sight of you, I used to wish to complain to you about many things. Now, Lord, the sight of you has struck me down. You have elevated me utterly beyond my worth."

Then she knelt down and thanked him for his favors and, taking her crown from her head, put it on the rose-colored scars on his feet and begged that she might come closer to him. He took her in his divine arms and laid his fatherly hand on her breast and looked her in the face. Well, was she kissed at all?4 In the kiss she was drawn up to the most sublime heights above all the angel choirs. The least truth that I saw and heard and understood there was incomparably more than the loftiest wisdom ever uttered here on earth. I saw there things never heard before, my confessors tell me, for I am ignorant of reading or writing. And now I fear God if I keep silent, but I fear uncomprehending people if I write. Dear people, what can I do about it that this happens to me and that it has often happened? In humble simplicity, in lonely poverty, and in demeaning shame did God show me his wonders.

There I saw the creation and order of God's house, which he himself built with his mouth.' In it he put what was most dear that he had made with his hands. The creation of the house is called heaven; the choirs in it are called kingdom. Hence one says kingdom of heaven. The kingdom of heaven has a boundary as to where it is placed, but as to its being a boundary will never

be found. Heaven goes around the choirs, and between heaven and the lovely choirs the worldly sinners are placed, always equal in height to the choirs, that they better themselves and convert. The choirs are so delicate, holy, and marvelous that no one can enter without chastity, love, and renunciation of all things. For they were all holy who fell from there, and accordingly they must also be holy who enter. All newly baptized and children up to six years fill the breach not higher than to the sixth choir. Then up to the Seraphim those virgins shall fill the breach who defiled themselves by their childish disposition, but never did so in deed, and who cleansed themselves afterward in confession. Still, they cannot recover from it completely since they have lost their purity. Those who are pure spiritual virgins shall after the last judgment fill the breach above the Seraphim, from where Lucifer and those closest to him were cast out. Lucifer committed at one and the same time three mortal sins: hatred, pride, and greed. These caused the choir to tumble into the eternal abyss as fast as one can say "alleluia. Then the whole kingdom was struck with terror and all the pillars of the kingdom of heaven shook. Then some of the others fell as well.'

The desolation' is as yet empty and bare. No one is there, and it is utterly pure in itself and sparkles with delight to God's honor. Above the desolation is God's throne vaulted with God's strength in blossoming, shining, fiery brightness, and it descends to the heaven opposite the Cherubim, so that God's throne and heaven are one glorious house; and the desolation and the nine choirs are enclosed within it. Above God's throne there is nothing but God, God, God. God infinitely great. Above on the throne one sees the mirror of the Godhead, the likeness of Humanity, the light of the Holy Spirit, and one understands how these three are one God and how they fit together into one. I am able to say no more about this.

John the Baptist will fill Lucifer's breach and will possess his honor in the sweet desolation above the Seraphim, and all pure spiritual virgins together with him. They are all destined for this desolation.

On the throne is our Lady, St. Mary, who shall not fill a breach; for with her Child she has healed the wounds of all men who accepted grace and could and willed to preserve it. Her Son is God and she a goddess. No one can be compared to her. The apostles dwell closest of all to God on the throne and have the empty places among the Seraphim as their reward according to how pure they are. John the Baptist is also a prince at the throne. Angels dwell no higher than the Seraphim. Those above will all be human beings. The holy martyrs and God's preachers and spiritual lovers enter into the choirs even though they are not virgins. Indeed, they enter gloriously into the Cherubim!

There without asking I saw the reward of preachers as it shall come about. Their chairs are wondrous, their reward is special. The front legs of the chairs are two burning lights. They signify true love, holy example, and faithful intent. The backs of the chairs are so pleasantly free and sweet in delightful repose-more than one can express-in contrast to the strict obedience to which they were subjected here. Their feet are adorned with various kinds of precious stones, so beautiful that I would truly be filled with joy to receive such magnificence as a crown. This they have because of the exertion required of their feet on earth. 0 ye preachers, how unwillingly now do you move your tongues and so grudgingly incline your ears to the mouth of the sinner! I saw in God's presence that in the kingdom of heaven it shall happen that breath shall shine forth from your mouths which will ascend from the choirs to the throne and will praise the heavenly Father for the wisdom that he placed on your tongues; and it will greet the Son for his glorious company, for he was a preacher himself; and it will thank the Holy Spirit for his grace, for he is Master of all gifts.

Then God's preachers, the holy martyrs, and the loving virgins shall stand up, for the highest honor is given them in the form of special garments, delightful song, and marvelous garlands, which they wear to God's honor. The virgins' garments are white as lilies. The preachers' garments are fiery, bright as the sun. The martyrs' garments are glowing rose-colored because they suffered with Jesus a bloody death. The virgins' garland is many colored; the crown of the martyrs is large, catching the eye. The preachers' garland is made entirely of flowers. These are the words of God through which they have come into great honor here. Thus does this throng of three blessed bands go merrily forth into the presence of the Trinity, dancing finely in a circle. Then toward them a threefold stream flows out playfully from God, filling their minds and hearts so that they sing the truth effortlessly with joy, as God had entrusted it to them.

The preachers sing thus: "0 chosen Lord, we have followed your generous kindness in voluntary poverty and have gathered together your straying sheep whom your hired shepherds let go off the right path."

The martyrs sing thus: "Lord, your innocent blood has made our death full, so that we are sharers in your suffering."9

The blessed, who now live so blissfully in heaven hovering weightlessly, are all suffused with light and are permeated with love flowing through them and are united in one will, and yet they do not have the dignity that attaches to their glorious chairs."

They rest in God's strength and flow in bliss, keeping themselves in God's breath, as does the air in the sun. But after the last day, when God shall hold his festive dinner, one shall seat the brides opposite their Bridegroom and thus shall love come to love, body to soul, and they shall possess full power in eternal glory.

O you charming Lamb and delightful Youth, Jesus, Child of the heavenly Father, when you then rise and pass through all the choirs waving lovingly to the virgins, they shall follow you filled with praise to that most overwhelming place of which I can say no more to anyone. How they shall then entertain themselves with you and devour your love's desire-that is such intimate sweetness and intense oneness-that I know nothing equal to it.

The widows shall follow as well in heartfelt yearning and will be utterly fulfilled in sweet contemplation when they shall see how the Lamb joins the virgins. Married people, too, shall look on lovingly in the measure possible to them according to their nobility, for the more one satisfies oneself with earthly things here, the less heavenly bliss shall be left over for us there.

The choirs each have a special light illuminating them and heaven has its own as well. The light is so extraordinarily glorious that I cannot and may not describe it. Many a dignity has been bestowed by God on the choirs and on heaven, and I can say a word or two about each-about as much as the honey a bee might carry off on its feet from a full hive.

In the first choir[11] bliss is the most exalted among all the gifts they have.
In the second choir it is meekness.
In the third choir it is charm.
In the fourth it is sweetness.
In the fifth it is cheerfulness.
In the sixth it is noble fragrance.
In the seventh it is abundance.
In the eighth dignity.
In the ninth burning with love.
In the sweet desolation[12] it is pure holiness.

The most exalted thing on the throne is mighty honor and strong dominion. Towering above everything that was ever in heaven is a sense of wonder. The most sublime thing is that they may behold that which is now happening and shall happen forever. Ah, the grand expanse and sweet eternity and the keen power to see into all things and the special intimacy that unceasingly exists between God and each individual soul is of such overwhelming tenderness that even if I had the wisdom of all mankind and the voices of all the angels, I would be incapable of describing it.

Unbaptized children less than five years old dwell in their own special honor, which God from his kingdom has provided for them. They do not have the qualities of someone thirty years old because they were not Christians with Christ." They do not have a crown; God cannot reward them for anything. And yet he has granted them in his goodness that they live in great comfort. The highest thing they possess is an abundance of favors. They sing thus:

“We praise him who created us,
But whom we have never seen.
If we were suffering pain,
We would forever lament;
But, as it is, we are doing quite well.”

Now some people might be surprised how I, a sinful person, can undertake to write such a description. I tell you in utter truth: If seven years ago, God had not offered support to my heart with special favor, I would still be silent and would never have written this. Now, because of God's goodness, no harm has come to me from it. This is because of the obvious lowliness I reflect-which is so clearly manifest to my soul-and the nobility of favors that are contained in God's true gift. Indeed, the higher the soul has climbed, the less praise one should give to the body in word and deed. One should also not complain about the troubles one sees, for he14 is by nature a coward. Rather, one should treat him like an old pensioner who can no longer serve at court, and so one gives him alms purely for the love of God. This is truly of practical value. The nobler the dog, the tighter the collar!"

Well, dear Lord, I commend this description to your generous goodness and ask, my dear One, with sighing heart, with weeping eyes, and with desolate soul that no Pharisee may ever read it. And I ask, in addition, dear Lord, that your children find that meaning in the text which you, Lord, in authentic truth have given it."

2. How the Soul Praises God and God the Soul for Seven Things. Of Balsam and Waiting

"0 sweet Jesus, most handsome Image, unconcealed to my exiled soul in distress and in love! In love I praise you through yourself in distress and in love in union with all creatures; I yearn to do this above all things.

Lord, you are the sun for all eyes;
You are the delight of all ears;
You are the voice of all words;
You are the force behind all piety;
You are the teaching of all wisdom;
You are the life of all that lives;
You are the ordering of all that is."

Then God praised the loving soul in fine words. He took great delight in doing so:

"You are a light to my eyes;
You are a lyre to my ears;
You are a voice for my words;

You are a projection of my piety;
You are an honor to my piety;
You are a life living in me;
You are a praise in my being."

"Lord, you are constantly lovesick for me.
That you have clearly shown personally.
You have written me into your book of the Godhead;
You have painted me in your humanity;
You have buried me in your side, in your hands and feet.
Ah, allow me, dear One, to pour balsam upon you."

"0 One dear to my heart, where shall you find the balm?"

"0 Lord, I was going to tear the heart of my soul in two and intended to put you in it."

"You could never give me a more soothing balsam than to let me unceasingly lie weightlessly in your soul."

"Lord, if you were to take me home with you, I would be your physician forever."

"Yes, I want that.
Still, my solicitude bids you wait;
My love bids you labor;
My patience bids you keep silent;
My concern bids you suffer poverty;
My dishonor bids you bear up;
My sufficiency bids you refrain from complaint;
My victory bids you pursue to the end all virtues;
My goal bids you endure many things;
For this you shall have glory when I remove your heavy burden."

3. A Lament That the Soul Is a Maidservant for the Love of God

"0 Lord, what a poor and forsaken soul it is that here on earth is a maidservant for love of you. Oh, who shall help me lament what pain she suffers? For she herself has no idea what it is that she is renouncing!"

"Mistress Bride," in the Book of Love you say to your Lover that he should flee from you.18 Tell me urgently, Lady, what caused you to do this? For I would rather die, if I might do so in pure love, than in darkened wisdom bid God depart from me. If I may play intimately with my Lover, there is no need for wisdom to teach me about separation. But when I busy myself with other things with my five senses, then I willingly accept its bringing me holy moderation."19

[The bride speaks:] "Listen to me, dear Playmate! I was pleasantly half drunk with love; this is why I speak tenderly from the senses. But whenever I become utterly inebriated, I cannot even think of my body; for love commands me. What she wants has to be. And what God hopes for I boldly undertake. If he takes my life, my soul belongs to him. If you wish to go with me into the wine cellar, it is going to cost you. If you have a thousand marks, you will use it up in an hour. If you drink the wine undiluted, you spend more than you have, and the innkeeper cannot fill your glass to the brim. Then you shall become poor and naked and despised by all those who prefer to enjoy the ooze rather than squander their hoard in the lofty wine cellar. You must also endure the envy of those who go with you into the wine cellar. Oh, how much will they often despise you because they will not risk the great expense! They want to mix water with their wine."

"Dear Mistress Bride, I shall willingly consume everything I have in the tavern. Let me be pulled through the coals of love and be struck with the firebrands of humiliation, so that I might very often enter the blessed wine cellar. This I gladly choose because regarding love I cannot lose. And so he who tortures and despises me actually pours out for me the innkeeper's wine that he himself drank. From that wine I shall become so drunk that I shall truly become so subordinate to all creatures that it seems to me, given my human lowliness and the baseness I have taken on, that no one has ever so wronged me as to have committed some sin against me, wretch that I am. Therefore, I cannot take revenge on my enemies for my sufferings, even though I well know that they may not break God's commandment in their treatment of me."

"Dear Playmate, if it happens that they close the wine cellar, then you will have to go out onto the road hungry, poor, naked, and so despised that you have no Christian sustenance left except faith. If you can then still love, you shall never go to ruin."

"Mistress Bride, I have such a hunger for the heavenly Father that I forget all cares. And I so thirst for his Son that it removes from me all earthly desires. And I have such a need for the Spirit of them both that it goes beyond the wisdom of the Father, which I cannot grasp; and beyond the Son's suffering, which I cannot bear; and beyond the consolation of the Holy Spirit, which I cannot receive."

Whoever becomes entangled in longing such as this must forever hang blessedly fettered in God.

4. How Our Lady St. Mary Can Sin and How Not, the Holy Spirit Teaches This

O Mary, glorious Empress, God's Mother and my Lady! I was asked concerning you whether you were able to sin like other humans when you were on this sinful earth. Now the Holy Spirit, who knows fully all your secrets, has instructed me, Lady, that you were able to sin; for you had been created a full human being in your complete feminine nature and in full virginity. There was no deficiency in your nature, and that makes your lifelong chastity noble and precious in God's eyes.

But, Lady, noble Goddess above all pure humans, you were also able not to sin. This you had not from yourself, for the heavenly Father watched over your childhood with the foresight of his having chosen you long before, and the Holy Spirit bound your youth with the fullness of his fresh love, and Jesus so passed through your body as the dew through a flower that your chastity was never touched. And the power of the Holy Trinity had so pervaded your nature that it did not dare, nor could it, experience all-too-human stirrings. And the eternal wisdom of the almighty Godhead gave you, Lady, a shadow in which you kept your human life so that you could suffer pain, despite not sinning, and so that your thriving humanity would not perish under the sun of the powerful Godhead. In this shadow you carried Jesus in human fashion and, as his mother, raised him. However, Lady, in the message from the Father,20 in the conception from the Holy Spirit, and in the birth of the Son, Lady, the fire of the Godhead and the light of the Holy Spirit and the wisdom of the Son were so great in you that you could hardly notice the shadow. God knows, Lady, later you would turn wretchedly cold in poverty, in trials, and in heartache. In spite of this, in your heart you continued to burn brightly in good works from that fire which burns in itself unaided without a beginning. This, Lady, pierced your walls with light and drove all darkness from your house.

5. How the Soul Complains That She Hears No Mass Nor Hours21 and How God Praises Her in Ten Things

Thus did a forsaken soul complain when God excluded her from his ecstatic love and loved her by means of great suffering: "Alas, how sulkingly does a rich man bear it when after glorious wealth he is led into great poverty!"

And she says: "Oh, Lord, now I am extremely destitute in my sickly body and am so miserable in my soul which is so lacking in spiritual order that no one recites the hours of the office in my presence and no one celebrates holy mass for me!"

The loving Mouth spoke, the Mouth that wounded my soul so terribly with his sublime words that I never received worthily:

“You are the feelings of love in my desire.
You are a sweet cooling for my breast.
You are a passionate kiss for my mouth.
You are a blissful joy of my discovery.
I am in you
And you are in me.
We could not be closer,
For we two have flowed into one
And have been poured into one mold.
Thus shall we remain forever content.”

"Ah, dear One, how intimately you speak to me. And yet I never dare think upon these words in joy. For I constantly notice with anguish the stench of that dead mongrel, my body; and others of my enemies are always assailing me; and I, Lord, when I consider the matter, have no idea how things shall turn out for me in the end. What is more, just beholding you I lose all awareness of suffering. Thus, Lord, have you taken me from myself and have stealthily entered into me. What you then promised me, may it happen and may it result in your praise."

Our Lord answers thus:

“Downward I reach,
Widely I roam,
Upward I yearn,
Long I wait.

"Again I must teach you: Noble maidens pay a high price for their good breeding. They must maintain restraint in all their suffering and must often tremble before their governess. So it is with my brides on earth as to their bodies. On earth I was oppressively enclosed for love of you, and my raging enemies bore my death in their hands before my very eyes, and in shame I suffered dire poverty. In all this I trusted my Father's infinite goodness. Direct your spirit accordingly."

6. If You Would Follow God Rightly, You Should Have Seven Things

Whoever wants to follow God in faithful toil should not stand quietly. He should often rouse himself. He should consider what he was in sin, how he is now in virtue, and what can yet become of him if he falls. He should lament and praise and pray day and night. When the faithful bride awakens, she thinks of her lover. If she cannot possess him then, she begins to weep. Alas, how often this happens spiritually to God's brides!

7. Concerning Seven Obvious Enemies of Our Happiness That Cause Seven Kinds of Harm

Aimless activity is a very harmful trait for us. Bad habits harm us everywhere. Earthly desires blot out in us the holy word of God. Base strife because of self-will brings about in us many a harmful murder. Enmity in our heart drives out the Holy Spirit. An angry temperament robs us of God's intimacy. False holiness can never win out. Pure love of God can never perish. If we are not willing to leave these enemies, they will take from us more than heaven; for if we live holy lives here, it is a pre-heavenly existence. But if we allow these enemies their deceits and their power over us, they rob us of the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, and they extinguish for us the true light of the genuine love of God. They also blind our eyes to holy understanding

and lead us thus blinded into the seven capital sins. Where else does that path lead but to the eternal abyss?

8. Seven Things That All Priests Should Have

The heavenly Father told me seven things that every priest of God should have and said: "They should be innocent in their persons, and the accoutrements for saying mass should be perfect. If there is any doubt about it, one should refrain from it22 and not do it. They should lay aside all fear from themselves and should forget the Jewish law and should eat my Lamb alive and should drink his blood sighing. Thus they can rightly call to mind his great passion. But if he has some personal guilt, then my children eat the Bread of Heaven and Judas goes to hell.21 And if the accoutrements for mass are not perfect, then God's table stands empty and the children's food is taken from them. But if they come into danger of death because of their age, it is better for them that they spill their own blood than his.

9. Concerning the Beginning of All Things That God Created out of Love

O Father of all goodness, I, an unworthy person, thank you for the faithful caring by which you have drawn me out of myself into your wondrous self in such a way that I have heard you in your whole Trinity and have witnessed the exalted decisions that took place before our time when you, Lord, were enclosed within yourself alone and your indescribable bliss was shared by no one. The Three Persons sent forth beautifully the beams of light in unison, each of them illumined by the other while remaining utterly one. The Father was adorned in his Person with the robust character of omnipotence; the Son was equal to the Father in infinite wisdom; and the Holy Spirit was equal to them both in full generosity.

Then the Holy Spirit in his superabundance played for the Father, plucking the Holy Trinity," and said to him: "Lord, dear Father, I shall give you out of yourself generous advice. We no longer wish to go on thus, not bearing fruit. We shall have a created kingdom and you shall form the angels in my image so that they are one spirit with me. For, dear Father, that alone is true joy, that in great love and infinite happiness one gather them in your sight."

The Father said: "You are one spirit with me. What you suggest and want is to my liking."

When the angel was created-you well know how it happened: If the angels' fall had been avoided, man would still have had to be created. The Holy Spirit shared his generosity with the angels, so that they serve us and are happy at the blessedness of us all.

Then the eternal Son spoke with great refinement: "Dear Father, my nature shall also bear fruit. Now that we want to undertake wondrous things, let us make man in my image. Even though I foresee great tragedy, I still shall love man forever."

The Father said: "Son, a powerful desire stirs in my divine breast as well, and I swell in love alone. We shall become fruitful so that we shall be loved in return, and so that our glory in some small way shall be recognized. I shall make a bride for myself who shall greet me with her mouth and wound me with her beauty. Only then does love really begin."

Then the Holy Spirit spoke to the Father: "Yes, dear Father, I shall deliver the bride to your bed."

And the Son spoke: "Father, you well know I shall yet die for love. Still, we want to begin these things joyfully in great holiness."

Then the Holy Trinity bent down to the creation of all things and created us body and soul in infinite love. Adam and Eve were formed and given a noble nature according to the eternal Son, who was born of the Father without a beginning. Then the Son shared with Adam his heavenly wisdom and his earthly power so that he possessed true knowledge and holy understanding in perfect love, and that he might command all earthly creatures. This is now rare indeed for us.

From the goodness of his heart God gave Adam a refined, noble, and delicate lady-that was Eve-and bestowed upon her the loving excellent moderation that his Son possesses to his Father's honor. Their bodies were to be pure, for God created for them no shameful members; and they were clothed with angels' garments. Their children were to be gotten in sacred love just as the rays of the sun play upon the water, though the water remains intact. But when they ate the forbidden food, they became shamefully deformed in their bodies, as is still evident in us. If the Holy Trinity had created us so hideous, we could never be ashamed of our being because of its noble nature.

The heavenly Father bestowed his divine love on the soul and said: "I am the God of gods; you are the goddess of all creatures, and I give you my solemn assurance25 that I shall never reject you. If you do not yourself lose your way, my angels shall serve you forever. I shall give you my Holy Spirit as a chamberlain, so that you may not unknowingly fall into any serious sin. And I give you free will in abundance. Dearest Love above all loves, be prudently on your guard. You shall obey a small commandment, so that you will remember that I am your God."

The unblemished sustenance that God promised them in paradise was supposed to remain in great holiness in their bodies. But when they had eaten the disgusting food that did not agree with their pure bodies, they became so filled with poison that they lost the purity of the angels and forgot their virginal chastity. Then for many a year the soul cried out in great darkness for her Lover. Her voice filled with misery, she cried: "0 Lord, dear One, where has your most delectable love gone? How bitterly have you called your wife and queen a whore! That is the meaning of the prophets .21 0 great Lord, how can you bear this endless distress and do not give the death to our death? If only you were to be born. But, Lord, since all your deeds are perfect, so is your wrath."

Then another council convened in the Holy Trinity. The eternal Father said: "I regret my work. I gave my Holy Trinity such an admirable bride that the highest angels were to be her servants. Indeed, if Lucifer had retained his honor, she would have been his goddess, for to her alone was given the bridal bed. She decided not to remain in my likeness. Now she is ugly and hideously deformed. Who might accept this filth?"

But look! The eternal Son then knelt before his Father and said: "Dear Father, I shall be the one. If you will give me your blessing, I shall take bloody humanity upon myself. I shall anoint man's wounds with the blood of my innocence and shall bind all man's sores with the cloth of wretched disgrace until my end; and I shall, dearest Father, atone to you for human guilt by means of a human death."

Then the Holy Spirit said to the Father: "0 almighty God, we shall form a splendid procession and shall go forth unchanged in great glory down from these heights. I was formerly, after all, Mary's chamberlain."

The Father then bowed to the wills of them both with great love and said to the Holy Spirit: "You shall carry my light before my dear Son into all the hearts that he shall move with my words. And, Son, you shall take up your cross. I shall traverse with you all your paths and I shall give you a pure virgin as your mother so that you might the more gloriously bear up under inglorious humanity."

Then in great joy the grand procession came down to the temple of Solomon.2' There almighty God would be sheltered for nine months.

10. The Passion That the Loving Soul Has from God, and How She Rises and Ascends into Heaven28

The loving soul betrays her true love in sighing for God.
She is sold in holy grief for his love.
She is sought with the host of many tears for her dear Lord,
Whom she likes so well.
She is captured in the first experience
When God kisses her in sweet union.
She is assailed with many a holy thought
That she not waver when she mortifies her flesh.
She is bound by the power of the Holy Spirit,
And her bliss is indeed manifold.

She is slapped with the great powerlessness
Of not being able to enjoy without interruption eternal light.
She is brought to judgment trembling with shame
Because God so often avoids her
Because of the stains of her sins.
She responds to all things in a holy manner
And cannot bear to treat anyone shamefully.
She is beaten at her trial
When the devils try her spiritually.
She is sent to Herod
When she recognizes herself to be worthless and unworthy
And despises herself with the great army of her thoughts.
She is delivered up to Pilate again

When she has to concern herself with earthly affairs.
She is buffeted and beaten with severe blows
When she must return to her body.
She is stripped of all things
When God clothes her with the silk of fair love.
She is delightfully crowned with manifold faithfulness
When she desires that God no longer reward her for all her woes,
Except to promote in the highest God's honor.
She is ridiculed in holy simplicity[29]
When she is completely dissolved into God
That she forgets all earthly wisdom.
One kneels before her in great shame
When in delicate humility she puts herself under the feet of all creatures.

Her eyes are bound with her body's baseness
Because she is so utterly imprisoned in its darkness.
She carries her cross on a sweet path
When she truly surrenders herself to God in all sufferings.
Her head is struck with a reed
When one compares her great holiness to a fool.
With the hammer of the chase of love[30] she is nailed so fast to the cross
That all creatures are not able to call her back again.
She suffers terrible thirst on the cross of love as well,
For she would like to drink the pure wine of all God's children.
But they all come thronging and offer her gall.
Her body is killed in living love

When her spirit is raised aloft above all human senses.
After this death she descends into hell with her might
And consoles the dejected souls with her prayer about God's goodness
Without her body's knowing it.
She is pierced in the side by a blind man
With a sweet spear of innocent love.
From her heart flows forth many a holy teaching.
She hangs on the cross of sublime love,
High in the air of the Holy Spirit,
Facing the eternal sun of the living Godhead,
So that she becomes completely dry and bare of all earthly things.

Then in a holy ending she is taken from her cross
And speaks: “Father, receive my spirit; now everything is perfect.”
She is interred in a sealed grave of deep humility,
When she becomes ever aware of being the most unworthy of all creatures.
She also rises joyfully on an Easter Day
After she has enjoyed a lament of love
With her Lover on the narrow bridal bed.
Then she consoles her disciples and Mary early in the morning
When she receives from God true assurance
That God has blotted out all her sins
Because of her love and sorrow.
She comes again to her disciples with the door shut
When she often repeats for her five senses the holy teaching of God.
Then she goes forth from the Jerusalem of Holy Christianity
With many a virtuous throng when the body becomes sad,

Which with its whole being in all its baseness would like to follow its own will.
And she says: “I am your master.
You shall follow me and obey in all things.
If I were not going to my Father,
You would remain as fools.”
She also ascends into heaven
When God takes from her all earthly things in holy transformation.
She is received in a white cloud of holy protection
When she ascends in love and joyfully comes back again, free of all trouble.
Then the angels return and console the men of Galilee
When we call to mind God’s chosen friends and their holy example.

This passion is suffered by every soul that in holy moderation of all her activity is truly permeated by genuine love of God.

11. Between God and the Loving Soul All Things Are Beautiful

When the loving soul gazes into the eternal mirror, she says: "Lord, between you and me all things are beautiful; and between the devil and his bride, the damned soul, all things are hideous and horrible indeed. When she remembers dear Jesus, she shudders and all her hellish suffering begins anew."

12. You Should Praise, Thank, Desire, and Beg. Concerning the Lantern and the Light

Oh, dear Lord, how poor I then was when I was not able either to remember all these words nor pray nor love! Yet I strove toward you with my forsaken senses and spoke thus: "Oh, dear Lord, by what means shall I now glorify you?"

And you said to the most worthless person you ever created:

“You should praise me for my faithful protection.
You should thank me for my generous gifts.
You should desire my holy wonder.
You should beg for a good end.”

Then the soul asked in reverence: "Dearest, what wonder should I desire?" This I must continue writing, weeping all the while. May God help me, the poorest of humans, that I remain in Jesus!

My Lover then spoke thus: "I shall place the light onto the lantern, and for all those whose eyes look upon the light a special beam shall shine from the light into the eye of their knowledge."

The soul then asked with great submissiveness but without fear: "Dearest, what is the lantern supposed to be?"

Our Lord said: "I am the light and your breast is the lantern."

13. Sixteen Kinds of Love

Lavish love arising from holy mercy drives out empty honor and evil sickness.

True love arising from divine wisdom brings satisfaction and drives out contemptible lust.

Humble love arising from holy simplicity alone conquers pride and brings the soul forcefully into holy knowledge.

Constant love arising from good manners cannot engage in duplicity.

Grand love arising from a bold deed finds for itself good counsel in all things.

Love that has discovered God's intimacy effortlessly blinds the earth.

Bound love of holy habit never rests, yet lives with ease within itself.

Permeating love arising from great overflowing lies completely at rest and finds all things bitter but God alone.

Love that calls out from noble impatience is never silent and has happily forgotten all guilt.

Love that understands God's teaching is quick to incline to a child.

Beautiful love in its exalted power rejuvenates the soul, though the body become old.

Lovely love with guileless gift blots out the surly heart's complaint.

Powerful love of rich delicacies has the sweetest pleasure in God.

Hidden love turns precious treasure from good will into holy deed.

Bright love of playful flood causes the soul sweet distress. It causes her to die without death.

Stormy love arising from great power-that is something no one can grasp.

14. Concerning False Virtues; Whoever Dwells Therein Lives in Lies

I have a teacher; it is the Holy Spirit. He teaches me very gently what he wants. Other things he withholds from me. He speaks thus:

Wisdom without grounding in the Holy Spirit turns in the end into a mountain of arrogance.

Peace without the bond of the Holy Spirit very soon becomes empty frenzy.

Humility without the fire of love ends in open hypocrisy.

Justice without the depth of God's humility immediately turns into fierce hatred.

Poverty with constant cupidity is in itself sinful prodigality.

Dreadful fear caused by real guilt brings repulsive impatience.

Right-seeming conduct with wolfish intent is quickly seen through by the wise.

Holy desire out of full integrity is attained by no one without great effort.

A good life without adversity becomes lazy in pursuing useful things.

Presumptuous virtue without God's gift will be struck down by pride.

Lofty promises not kept by deed are duplicity counseled by the devil.

Sweet consolation without true security of the soul and approval of the Holy Spirit leads in the end to a miserable death.

Great patience without inclining one's heart to God is secret guilt, for all who are not sustained by God's truth in all things shall in great shame slip away from God eternal.

Love that does not have humility as its mother and holy fear as its father is orphaned from all virtues.

15. You Should Approach God's Table with Eight Virtues. By Ransom a Person Released Seventy Thousand Souls from Ghastly Purgatory, Which Is of Many Kinds

O you terribly foolish beguines, how can you be so insolent that you do not tremble before our almighty judge, since you so frequently receive the Body of God out of blind habit. Though I am the least among you, I must feel shame, blush, and tremble.

On a certain holy day I was so troubled that I did not dare receive him, because I was ashamed of my best piety in his eyes. So I asked my very dear One that he deign show me his honor in this matter. He said: "Truly, if you go before me in humble sorrow and holy fear, I shall follow you as the high waters follow the deep millstream. But if you come to me with the blossoming yearning of flowing love, I must go to meet you and caress you with my divine nature as my one and only queen."

I have to make my presence known if I am truly to be able to bring about God's goodness. And that" really does not hold me back any more than it impairs an oven to shove in a full load of white rolls. And so I went to God's table in a noble throng. They watched over me with much concern, but also exposed me to much harsh treatment:

Truth was cross with me.
Fear scolded me.
Shame scourged me.
Sorrow condemned me.
Yearning pulled me.
Love led me.
Christian faith shielded me.
Pure intention in all good things prepared me.
And all my good works sounded alarm over me.
Mighty God received me.
His pure humanity united itself to me.
His Holy Spirit consoled me.

Then I said: "Lord, now you are mine, for you have been given to me today especially in the passage where it says: `A boy is given to us.," Now, Lord, I desire your praise and not my advantage, that today your glorious body might come as consolation to the poor souls.' You are truly mine. Now, Lord, you shall be today a ransom for those imprisoned."

Then she received such power that with his strength she led him, and they came to as grim a place as ever was seen by human eye-a horrifying bath, a mixture of fire and pitch, of muck, smoke, and stench. A thick dark fog was drawn over it like a black hat. The souls were lying in it like toads in filth. Their form was like that of humans, and yet they were spirits and had about them a similarity to the devil. They boiled and roasted all together. They screamed and suffered countless torments because of their flesh, which had plunged them so deep. Flesh had blinded their spirit. This caused them to boil the most. The

spirit of the person spoke: "0 Lord, how many are there of these poor beings? You are my real price of ransom. You simply must show mercy."

Our Lord said: "They go beyond human numbering and you cannot comprehend their number as long as your flesh has an earthly share of you. They were all broken vessels and while on earth neglected the spiritual life. They are from all walks of life and from all lands."

Then the human spirit asked: "Alas, dear Lord, where are the hermits? I don't see any of them here."

Our Lord answered: "They sinned in secret. Now they are alone at the bottom, bound together with the devils."

Then the soul of the person became very sad and prostrated herself at the feet of our very dear Lord and yearned powerfully and toiled lovingly and said: "Very dear One, you know full well what I desire."

Our Lord said: "It was right for you to bring me here. I shall not let them go unremembered."

Around them stood an immense throng of devils that tended them in the accursed bath. They also were beyond my reckoning. They rubbed them, washed them, ate them, and were sated; and they struck them with fiery scourges. The spirit of the person spoke to them thus: "Listen, you devourers of sin, look upon this ransom. Is it not of such value that you will be satisfied with it?"

At that they all shuddered, quaking in ghastly shame, and said: "Yes, just lead them away. However wretched we may be, we have to speak the truth to you."

Then our Lord from his divine heart fulfilled a delightful wish for the poor souls. In great joy and love they arose. The stranger soul said: "Alas, very dear Lord, where shall they go now?"

He said: "I shall bring them to a mountain covered with flowers. There they shall find more happiness than I know how to express."

Then our Lord served them and was their chamberlain and their very dear companion. Our Lord told me that there were seventy thousand of them. The soul then asked how long their torment had lasted. Our Lord said: "They have been separated from their bodies for thirty years, and for ten more years they would have been in torment, had not such a precious ransom been offered for them."

The devils fled from them and did not dare accept it. "Dear One," said the soul, "how long shall they be here?"

Our Lord answered and said: "As long as seems good to us."

16. After a Gift There Follows a Scourge and After Disgrace Honor

The soul reminded our Lord of his earlier words thus: "Lord, you said there is no gift on earth that does not have a scourge connected with it. You said this to me with your own mouth and have afterward many a time carried through on it with respect to me. You also told me more than six years ago that religious people3" would hold me in great contempt. This they are still doing persistently and have done it viciously at times. Is that, Lord, the wonder I am supposed to long for?"

Our Lord answered and said: "My Father gave me power over his truth and the craft of his holiness; afterward he subjected me to numerous humiliations. Still later he gave me great honor and infinite dignity. In this same way do I wish to give my Holy Trinity to you."

17. The Purgatory of a Religious Person, His Five Kinds of Help out of the Torment, and the Nobility of the Order of Preachers

I also saw a religious man suffering. During his life I had a high opinion of him. For three months I prayed for his soul with anguished heart, that it might never happen that I might have to look upon his distress until the evening of the last day.

When he gave up his spirit, he was immediately shown to me in the prayer I was saying for the poor souls. I saw him alone, and he was not able to show me his suffering. He was pale in a white mist. I asked: "Alas, why did you not go to heaven?"

He answered me in obscure speech, ruefully ashamed and weeping all the while as he read from a book. All the words were screaming at him with all the books that he had ever read chiming in. He said: "In my life on earth I was too fond of ideas, words, and deeds."

Two dragons were lying at his feet and sucked out of him all the consolation that he was supposed to receive from Holy Christianity in return for meager obedience, since he for no reason wanted to live according to his own will rather than according to the determinations of his superiors. I asked him: "Where are the enemies who are supposed to torment you?"

He answered: "Because of the dignity of my order no devil was ever able to touch me. I had a great struggle with my body, and I wanted to achieve a certain thing that would have been very harmful if I had been successful. Because of this God did not let me live any longer. I am burning within myself; my own will must torment me."

I asked: "Alas, tell me, how can anyone help you?"

He said: "If a person were to offer up a hundred venias,'S twelve disciplines," and many tears with a sorrowful heart from pure eyes every day for a year, that would be a penance for me. And one should say masses for me. Alas, tell virgins' and priests that they should pray for me. The end of my torment I do not want to describe for you because I do not want to sadden my brothers" with it. Now, leave me!"

Then he took on the likeness of the devil, burned, and became mute toward me.

18. A Knight's Battle in Full Armor Against Sensual Desires

I prayed for a person, as I was bid, that God might free him from those desires of the body that occur without sin for the reason that an evil will does not cause them. But our Lord said: "Stop such talk! Would it please you if there were a knight fully armed, with noble prowess, true manliness, and able hands who had nothing to do, neglected his lord's honor, and lost his rich recompense and the ringing of worthy praise that is the due both of the lord and the knight of the realm? Another thing: if there were a liegeman without armor who never came to battle because he lacked the equipment-if such a person would then take part in a tournament of princes, he would promptly lose his life." For this reason I have to spare people who are so prone to fall. I let such people do battle with children so that they win a garland of flowers as a reward."

19. Two Kinds of Poor People: Those Who Are Cheerfully Poor and Those Who Are Unhappily So

I have seen two kinds of poor people. The ones are cheerfully poor and are always in fear that they will receive too much of this poor earth. The others are involuntarily and quite unhappily poor, and they constantly run around in great anxiety that nothing on this poor earth will ever be theirs. Our Lord commented on this and said: "The unhappily poor are within my justice, for if they had an abundance of earthly things, they would not care to return my love with love nor to know me to the benefit of their holiness. And so I must win them by being very hard on them. To those who are cheerfully poor I give more than they dare desire, but I cannot bear the dust on them that comes from their excessively weighing themselves down with earthly things; and I desire that their hearts remain ever open to me and that I might, unimpeded and unceasingly, illumine them and shine through them and they in turn into mine."

20. The Five Prophets Who Illumine This Book

Our Lord promised me he wanted to illumine this book with five lights:

Moses' great intimacy," his holy efforts, special humiliation, which he suffered through no fault of his own, his glorious won ders, his joyful teaching, and the intimate conversations that he was chosen frequently to have face to face with God eternal 12 on the high mountain-all these things should be a light; and God has granted and shall continue to grant that I should go forth with a light and cheerful step under his protection through all the evil scheming of my enemies, free of all shame arising through my own fault, just as Moses did with his friends through the Red Sea. And Pharaoh and his friends shall not pursue us very far. Alas, how they were drowned in this sea! Alas, have mercy, dear Lord, that our enemies be converted.

King David is the second light in this book with his psalter, in which he instructs us, laments, begs, admonishes, and praises God.

Solomon's words illumine-but not his deeds, for he is himself darkened-from the book of songs,"3 where the bride is found to be so drunkenly bold and the bridegroom says to her so passionately: "You are so exquisitely beautiful, my Darling, and there is no flaw in

Jeremiah illumines also for his part when he speaks of the intimate secrets of our Lady45; for God told me that he possessed pure chastity, the most perfect love, and that he bore great torment in Christian faith, which he never saw with his fleshly eyes.

Daniel, too, illumines with marvelous wisdom. God, in his grace, gave him food for soul and body in the midst of all his enemies." The same thing happened to me, unworthy though I be, in my distress. This my enemies have noticed a bit and cannot tolerate it, and so they inflict much suffering on me.

21. Hell: How It Has Three Parts; How Lucifer and Sixteen Kinds of People Are Tormented; There Is No Help for Them. Lucifer's Garment47

I have seen a city,[48]
Its name is eternal hate.
It was built in the deepest abyss
From all kinds of stones of huge capital sins.
Pride was the first stone,
As is manifest in the case of Lucifer.

Disobedience, base greed, gluttony, lust—
These were four very heavy stones
Which our father Adam sent here.
Anger, duplicity, and murder—
These three stones Cain brought with him.
Lying, betrayal, despair of God, and rendering oneself lifeless:
With these four stones poor Judas murdered himself.
The sin of Sodom and false piety:
These are the essential cornerstones laid out for the structure.
The place was built many years ago.
Woe to all those who send their helpers there.
The more they send in advance,
The greater the shame with which they shall be received
When they themselves follow.

This place is so perverted that the highest are consigned to the lowest and basest place. Lucifer sits bound by his guilt in the deepest abyss. There flows forth unceasingly out of his fiery heart and out of his mouth all the sins, torments, sickness, and shame in which hell, purgatory, and the earth are so wretchedly entangled. In the bottommost part of hell the fire, gloom, stench, shuddering, and all kinds of intense pain are the greatest. It is there that Christians are placed according to their deeds. In the middle part of hell the suffering is more moderate. There the Jews are ranked according to their works. In the topmost part of hell the various kinds of pains are the least severe, and there the heathens are ranked according to their works. The heathens lament thus:

“Oh woe! If we had had a law,
We would not be suffering eternally such pain.”

The Jews lament as well:

“Alas! If we had obeyed God according to the teachings of Moses,
We would not be so terribly damned.”

The Christians lament even more, that they have lost great honor through their own evil will, though Christ had chosen them for himself with great love. In great anguish they constantly behold Lucifer and, naked with all their guilt, they are forced to parade publicly before him. Alas, how ignominiously they are received by him! He greets them grimly and speaks bitterly:

"O you cursed along with me,
What joys do you expect here?
You certainly never heard good spoken of me.
How could you then enjoy yourselves nicely?"

Then, first of all, he grabs the proud one and thrusts him under his tail and says: "I have not sunk so deep that I shall not lord it over you."

All the Sodomites pass down his throat and live in his belly. Whenever he draws a breath, they slide into his belly. But when he coughs, they are expelled again.

The false saints he puts upon his lap, kisses them hideously, and says: "You are my equals. I, too, was enveloped in false holiness; all of you are similarly duped."

Unceasingly he gnaws the usurer and rebukes him for never having been moved by mercy.

The robber he robs himself and hands him over to his henchmen to be chased and beaten mercilessly.

The thief is strung up by the feet to serve in hell as a beacon, but the damned do not see the better for it.

Those who were unchaste together on earth have to lie bound in like manner before Lucifer; but if such a one comes there alone, the devil is his partner.

The unbelieving teachers sit at Lucifer's feet so that they might look at their impure god directly. He also holds disputations with them that they might be humiliated.

The miser he eats, for he always wanted more. When he has swallowed him, he forces him out again by the tail.

Murderers must stand before him bloody and must receive fiery sword thrusts from the devil.

Those who here gave themselves over to fierce hatred must there serve as a smelling pot, ever hanging before his nose.

Those who here so keenly ate and drank to excess must there stand before Lucifer in unending hunger and eat glowing stones. Their drink is sulphur and pitch. There everything is sour instead of sweet. We see there what we have done here.

The slothful person is weighed down with all kinds of pain.

The hot-tempered is beaten there with whips of fire.

The bitterly poor minstrel who with high spirit41 can excite to sinful frivolity weeps in hell more tears than all the water contained in the sea.

I saw beneath Lucifer the ground of hell-a hard black pebblestone that shall bear the structure forever. Though hell has neither bottom nor boundary, it has as to ordering both depth and end.

How hell roars
And moans within itself.
And how the devils brawl
With the souls, and how these
Boil and roast,
And how they swim and wade
In the stink and swamp
In the vermin and foul puddle;
And how they bathe in the sulphur and pitch—
Neither they themselves nor all creatures can fully describe it.

When I had seen this misery without my own doing but rather as a gift from God, I was so wretchedly in pain from the stink and the unearthly heat that I could neither sit up nor walk and was without the use of my five senses for three days, like someone struck by thunder.'" My soul, however, suffered no distress since that malady that is called eternal death had not brought it there. But if it were possible that a pure soul could be among them, that would be for them eternal light and a great consolation. For the innocent soul must of its nature ever radiate and shine since she is born painlessly out of the eternal light.' But if she takes on the likeness of the devil, she loses her beautiful light. Is it possible in eternal hell that any consolation at all might come to the damned from prayer and from alms? I never heard that. They are constantly in such a grim state of mind that they feel loathing toward anything good.

After the last day, Lucifer shall put on a new garment that has spontaneously come about out of the manure of all filthy sins that he was ever able to suggest to men or angels. For he is the primary vessel of all sin. Then he is released, but his grimness and fierceness are so much a part of all the souls and all the devils that one is aware of his presence everywhere. At times he will swell up enormously and his muzzle shall open very wide. Then in a single breath he shall devour Christians, Jews, and heathens. Still, they shall have their full reward in his belly and their special feast. Woe then to soul and body! What a human mouth is able to say about it here is nothing at all compared to the indescribable anguish taking place there. For in truth I cannot bear to think about it for as long as it takes to say "Hail, Mary." Alas, so horrible is it there!

At the top hell has a head that is hideous and has on it numerous fierce eyes which shoot forth flames and envelop the poor souls that dwell in the anteroom from which God took Adam and others of our fathers. This is now the worst purgatory that a sinner can enter. There I saw bishops, high officials, and great lords in longlasting anguish with countless sufferings. All who came there God had barely spared from everlasting hell.52 I found no one there who at the end had made a pure confession with his fleshly mouth. When because of the nature of dying their outer senses had been taken from them, the body lay still-though the soul and body still had a common will. When they had left behind earthly darkness, God gave them true knowledge in secret. Oh, how narrow there is the path to the kingdom of heaven! The union of body and soul, not yet separated, spoke thus: "True God, grant me pardon; I sincerely regret my sins!" This is a brief hour in which God has secretly saved many a soul that to all appearances had been lost. I never saw a case where this happened to a person who had not done something good with a well-intentioned will. The devils lead the stained souls from their bodies to purgatory because the pure angels cannot touch them as long as they are not radiant with a brightness similar to theirs. However, a soul can have the aid of friends on earth that prevents the devils from ever attacking the soul. But if she is very guilty, she must nevertheless suffer other torments. All this she can better endure if the devils are not able to grab her and constantly ridicule her.

When our holy fathers went down to hell, what they brought with them was true hope in the Christian faith with the holy love of God and very many humble virtues and faithful striving. Although they went to hell, they had been prepared for heaven. Nothing in hell could daunt them. What they brought with them that kept them from burning was love. This shall burn everlastingly in all the children of God; otherwise, they shall never reach heaven. This God has so ordained: What we take along with us we have to eat and drink there." But the procrastinators, who leave here without having done penance for great sins,54 can never, short of being damned, suffer as terribly as they do before the mouth of hell. There at all times the breath of Lucifer shoots forth with all torments and permeates them so torturously that the poor wretches are just as utterly congealed in the flames and in the various kinds of savagery as the much blessed fathers were united in the sweet knowledge that God loved them. Of women there I saw only exalted ladies who here love all kinds of sins just as their husband lords do.

Hell also has a mouth at the top that remains ever open. All who enter into the mouth are never delivered from eternal death.

22. Of God's Mercy, His Concern, andJustice

I have heard and seen such boundless mercy from God that I said:

"Lord, how can this happen?
After all, your justice is equal to your mercy.
How is it that your goodness is so great?"

Then our Lord spoke a sincere word thus:
"I say to you by my divine faithfulness
That there are more Christians who from the mouth[55] enter the kingdom of heaven
Than there are who enter everlasting hell.
Justice has, indeed, its continual power.

Whatever is brought before it indicating guilt
Is never taken away by me from it.
Before all else, however, I want to come to the troubled soul as a Father[56]
If I have heard anything clearly good about her.
This arises from the great concern that I have for my children."

The soul said:

"Ah, my very dear Love, would you describe to me this concern
So that your pleasure and my desire might be united?"

Our Lord said:

"Now hear of my concern:
My goodness and my generosity,
My faithfulness and my mercy
Press me so urgently
That I let them flow over the mountains of pride
And over the valleys of humility
And over the bushes of confusion
And over the smooth paths of purity.
And my goodness actually presses me more insistently than an evil man is pressed
By his malicious disposition,
And yet my justice is even greater than the malice of all the devils."

The soul said:

"Lord, your justice corresponds quite well with the living truth,
So that it gives me boundless joy without suffering of the heart.
Wherever it tends,
Truth is always joyful."

23. The Intensity of Yearning Takes Away Words; God Cannot Do Without Virgins; God's Countenance, His Embrace, and His Joy Overcome a Thousand Deaths'

Whoever has burned in the powerful fire of love cannot endure abruptly cooling off through any kind of sin.

"Ah, dear Lover, when shall you yearn for what I yearn for?" Thus did a lonely soul speak.

Her dear One responded to her and spoke as though he did not know what she wanted: "What are you yearning for?"

She said in response: "Lord, the urgency of my desire has taken from me the ability to speak my thoughts."

He said: "Virgins do not know how to woo well because their modesty is by its nature refined."

She complained: "Alas, Lord, you certainly have been away from me much too long. If I could only win you, Lord, with magic, so that you could find rest only in me-ah, that would be a loving! Then you would have to beg that I behave sensibly."

Then he answered thus, saying: "0 you spotless Dove, now grant me that I might spare you. The earth cannot yet do without you."

She said: "0 Lord, if it could ever happen to me that I might gaze upon you as my heart desires and hold you in my arms, then the divine pleasures of your love would needs permeate my soul to the degree possible for people on earth. What I would be willing to suffer thereafter has never been seen by human eyes. Indeed, a thousand deaths were too little. Such, Lord, is my painful longing for you! For now I shall remain steadfast in my faithfulness. If you, Lord, can bear it, let me long pursue you in yearning. I know well, Lord, that the beginnings of desire for me will begin to stir in you. 1158

24. Two Kinds of Spiritsfrom God and from the DevilAre Offered to Two Kinds of Religious People. The Seven Kinds of Love

Now I want to write you about a true spiritual sister and about a worldly beguine. They dispute with each other thus: The spiritual sister speaks from the true light of the Holy Spirit, free from interior suffering; but the worldly beguine speaks from her flesh in Lucifer's spirit with dreadful effort.

There are two kinds of religious people on this earth, to whom two kinds of spirits are offered. God offers his Holy Spirit to pure spirits who live here in a faithful holy attitude with their whole being. Here two pure natures meet: the hot fire of the Godhead and the flowing wax of the loving soul. If a pure wick of constant humility is there, a beautiful light shall burn by which one shall see far. 0 loving Soul, you shall become so rich that no one can make you poor-and yet you are the poorest of all! Humility makes one rich and well-brought-up; good habits make one noble and well-bred. Love makes one beautiful and praiseworthy." Being scorned exalts one aloft in God. Mark this well, spiritual Sister, and let no one drive you away from your good habits. Then shall you remain holy.

The devil, too, offers his spirit to the spirits who are ready to do the worst with hatred and with arrogant rapacity. They do not know what good things love brings. They become so poor from mean hatred and from the devil's grimness that it would be impossible for them to find or follow God's love.

Faithful love raises constant praise to God.
Yearning love causes a pure heart much sweet anguish.
Searching love belongs to herself alone.
Knowing love shares itself with all creatures.
Clamoring love is still mixed with sadness.
Silent love enjoys effortless pleasure.
Ah, the body knows nothing of what love does in stillness.
Pure love finds rest in God alone
Because the two of them have a single will,
And no creature is important enough to disturb them.

Knowledge has written this out of the eternal book:
Gold is often made very impure by copper.
Duplicity and empty honor do the same.
They erode all virtues from a person's soul.
The base soul is so attracted to transitory things
That she has never been shaken by love.
In her God has never spoken lovingly.
Alas, for her this life is total night.

Book IV

1. Pure Virgins Should Have Five Things

If you want to enhance virginity, which God has so glorified that for love of you he became the Son of a virgin just think what that means!-then you should be humbly silent and lovingly suffer distress and throughout all your days and in all situations practice virginal modesty. This will make your chastity thrive. 0 virgin, what God wants to give you then! He wants to be your handsome young man and wants to lead you in the heavenly dance. 0 wretched lame dog that I am, I would also shuffle along with you. Consider how I mean that: The number of pure virgins is small.

2. This Book Has Come from God; the Soul Praises Herself for Many Things; She Is Given Two Angels and Two Evil Devils. With Twelve Virtues She Does Battle Against the Flesh

All the days of my life before I began this book and before a single word of it had come into my soul, I was one of the most naive persons ever to be in religious life. I knew nothing about the devil's malice; I was unaware of the frailty of the world; the duplicity of people in religious life was also unknown to me. I have to speak to God's honor and for the sake of the book's teaching: I, unworthy sinner, was greeted by the Holy Spirit in my twelfth year, while I was alone, with such an outpouring that I could never, ever after that endure letting myself be led into a clear venial sin. This precious greeting occurred every day and lovingly spoiled for me all worldly sweetness, and it is still increasing day by day. This happened over thirty-one years. About God I knew nothing more than what the Christian faith teaches and I strove with constancy to keep my heart pure. God himself is my witness that I never in will or desire asked him to give me these things that are written in this book. Also, I never imagined that such things could happen to a human being. As long as I was with my relatives and my friends, to whom I was always the favorite, I had no knowledge of these things. Long before this I had had the desire to be despised through no fault of my own. Then for the sake of God's love I moved to a town where no one was my friend except for one person. I was afraid that because of him holy contempt and God's pure love would be withdrawn from me. But God nowhere abandoned me and let me experience such delightful sweetness, such holy knowledge, and such incomprehensible wonders that I found little enjoyment in earthly things.

Then for the first time my spirit was brought up through prayer between heaven and the air. I saw with the eyes of my soul in heavenly bliss the beautiful humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ, and I recognized in his sublime countenance the Holy Trinity-the eternity of the Father, the suffering of the Son, the sweetness of the Holy Spirit. Then I saw an angel, to whom I was entrusted through baptism, and my devil. Our Lord said:

“I shall take this angel from you
And shall give you two others instead.
They shall take care of you in these wonders.”

When the soul looked at the two angels, oh, how completely was she unnerved in humble impotence, and she prostrated herself at the feet of our Lord, thanking him and urgently protesting that she was quite unworthy that princes such as this should be her chamberlains. One of the angels was from the Seraphim, and he is an igniter of love and a holy beacon for tender souls. The other angel was from the Cherubim; he is a keeper of the gifts and orders wisdom in the loving soul.

Then our Lord allowed two devils to come forth.
They were exalted masters, taken from Lucifer’s school,
And had seldom come out.

When the soul looked upon the terribly hideous devils, she shivered a little, commended herself to our Lord, and quite freely accepted them. The one devil is a deceiver with beautiful angelic garments. Oh, what a lot of false cunning he presented to me at first! Once during mass he came down from on high and said: "I am so beautiful; don't you want to worship me?"

The soul replied: "God alone shall one worship in all good things and in all distress!"

He said: "Don't you want to look up and see who I am?" Then in the lower air he displayed a beautiful sham radiance, which has seduced many a heretic, and said: "In the throne room upon this seat you alone shall be the most exalted virgin, with me the fairest youth next to you."

But she replied: "A person would not be wise to take the worst when he could easily achieve the best."

He said: "Since you do not want to surrender yourself to meyou are so holy and so humble-then I shall worship you."

She said: "No grace shall be given to you because you worship a foul cesspool."

Then he showed her the five wounds painted on his feet and hands and said: "Now you well see who I am. If you will live according to my advice, I shall give you great honor. You should tell people about this special favor; then much good would come of it."

She said-and his idle talk annoyed her greatly; nevertheless, she listened to it freely so that she might become more shrewd"You are telling me that you are God. Well then, tell me, who is that who is the Son of the living God now here in the true priest's hands?" He then wanted to depart, and she said: "By the almighty God, I admonish you that you now listen to me: I well know your intentions. If I were to tell everyone the secrets of my heart, things would be quite nice for me in the short term. But then you would intently strive to make the fun end badly. You would do this so that I might fall into doubt, sadness, unbelief, impurity, and thereafter into everlasting anguish. Another reason you are doing this is so that I might imagine that you come to me thus because I am so holy. Ha! You old archdeceiver, as long as God stands by me, all your efforts are for naught."

Then he cried out: "A plague on your magic; just let me get away from you. I'll never bother you again!"

The second devil who was assigned to me was a troublemaker and a master of concealed lewdness. However, God forbade him ever to come to me himself. Instead, he sent perverted evil people to me as his messengers who spoil good things for me and take what they can of my honor by their words. He also strives for this: where good people are together and are talking idly in a lewd manner, this cannot help but trouble poor me. Up to then that had never happened to me.

One night I was at prayer before my first sleep. This same devil came passing through the air and took a close look at the sinful earth. He was huge like a giant. He had a short tail and a crooked nose. His head was large like a tub. Out of his mouth fiery sparks came flying covered with black flame. He laughed with cunning malice and a horrible raucous voice. The soul asked him why he was laughing, what he was looking for, and what he was up to.

He answered and said: "I am glad, indeed, since I may not torment you myself, that I find so many who look like angels and are happy to torment you for me." Then he continued: "I am the chamberlain of religious persons and I look for two kinds of weakness in them that will separate them from God in an instant. One is concealed or secret impurity. Whenever a person in religious life seeks the comfort of the flesh without real necessity and in all his five senses, they become impure; that is, crass and lazy; and true love of God grows cold. The other is hidden hatred in open discord. This is a very useful sin for me. Wherever I find it unrepented overnight, there is a win for me, for it is the foundation of long-lasting malice and the loss of all holiness."

Then the soul said: "Since by your nature you have absolutely nothing good about you, how can it be that you can give a morally profitable explanation of your evil?"

And he replied: "Wherever I turn, God has me so firmly in his hands that I cannot do anything except what he directs me."

I, unhappy person, in my early childhood committed such a great sin that, if I had remained without repentance and without confession, I would have to have stayed in purgatory for ten years. But now, dear Lord, when I die, I shall cheerfully suffer torment there for love of you. I am saying this not from reason; love bids me say it.' When I entered religious life and took leave of the world, I looked at my body. It was fully armed against my poor soul with great fullness of strong power and with the energy of a complete nature. I saw full well that it was my enemy, and I also saw if I were going to escape eternal death, I would have to strike it down; conflict was inevitable. I also looked at my soul's weapon. This was the glorious passion of our Lord Jesus Christ. With this I defended myself. I had to remain constantly in great fear and throughout my youth had to deliver great defensive blows against my body. These were sighing, weeping, confessing, fasting, keeping vigils, scourging with rods, and constant adoration. These were the weapons of my soul by means of which I so completely conquered the body that in twenty years the time never came that I was not weary, weak, and sick-mostly from repentance and suffering, but also from holy longing and spiritual toil and, in addition, many a difficult day of sickness from my nature. There was also the violent force of love, which pressed me so intensely with these marvels that I did not dare remain silent about it. Still, because of my naivete, I had much to suffer. I said: "Ah, kind God, what do you see in me? You know quite well that I am a fool, a human being sinful

and needy in body and soul. You should be giving these things to wise people; then you would be able to receive praise."

Then our Lord got very angry with little me and asked me for my judgment:

"Now tell me, are you mine or not?"
"Certainly, Lord, that is what I long for from you."
"Shall I then not do with you what I want?"
"Yes, Dearest to my heart, gladly; even if I should thus become nothing."

Then our Lord said: "You shall obey and trust me in these matters, and you shall also become sick for a long time, and I shall take care of you myself; and everything that you need for body and soul I shall give you."

Then, a wretch trembling in humble confusion, I went to my confessor, told him the whole story, and begged for his advice. He said I should boldly go forward with a light heart; God, who had been leading me, would certainly preserve me. Then he gave me a command that often makes me ashamed and causes me to weep because my utter unworthiness is obvious to my eyes; that is, he commanded me, a frail woman, to write this book out of God's heart and mouth. And so this book has come lovingly from God and does not have its origins in human thought.

3. Sinners Fall Away from God, of Three Gifts of Wisdom; of the Stone; of the Praise of the Virgin Who Is Christianity2

Just as one soothes a dear child, so does one spank a nasty one. Just so does our Lord act, saying: "Whoever has nothing good about him shall never enter my kingdom; and whoever cannot be made full by transitory things shall be satisfied with hunger for eternity. And woe to him who has goods that stick to his heart and who wants to set himself above other people. He shall slip away from me into the bottomless valley."

To this, holy knowledge replies that God has given us three different gifts in true wisdom from which we should take our fill and by which we should preserve ourselves from all injury.

The first is priestly wisdom and Christian teaching, as God revealed them to me in great glory. With the true eyes of my knowledge, effortlessly and in sweet bliss, I saw a stone that was like a well-shaped mountain and that had grown out of itself and had taken on the beauty of all kinds of colors and gave off the strong fragrance of precious heavenly spices. I asked the very delightful stone who it was, and it spoke thus: "I am Jesus.'" Then I went out of myself in love4 and leaned my head on it. I saw that outside it was shut off from all darkness and was filled inside with eternal light.

Upon the stone there stood the most beautiful of virgins that was ever seen aside from our dear Lady St. Mary, but she is her playmate. Her feet are adorned with a stone called jasper. This stone has such great power that it drives out base cupidity from the feet of its desire.' It also bestows pure fragrance and stimulates holy hunger. It drives all darkness from one's eyes. This pre cious stone is Christian faith. The virgin stood on two feet. The one is the bond, the other is the loosening of holy power.' All Christian believing priests have these. She carries in her right hand a chalice filled with red wine, which she drinks alone in untold bliss. The angels never get a taste of it. The wine is the blood of the eternal Son, which fills her spirit so full that she gives us many a sweet teaching. In her left hand she wields a fiery sword that is full of golden cymbals hanging from it that sound so sweet that everyone must approach her who strives toward the Holy Trinity. I asked the virgin why it was that she carried the sword in her left hand and the chalice in her right hand. She said: "I am supposed to threaten because on the last day of each human being God shall strike his blow. I am also supposed to give away his blood with my right hand, just as Christ is turned to his Father in glory.'"

She also has great strength in her hands with which she draws all to herself who choose God and casts off from herself as well all who deliver themselves over to the devil. Ah, she has such a fair countenance. I look at her with ever increasing joy. Unguent flows from her throat; this is mercy, salve for sin. In her mouth she has golden teeth with which she chews the celestial junipers. These are the sayings of the prophets. From her tongue drips honey that the bustling bees, the holy apostles, have sucked from the sweetest wild flowers. She wears on her mouth blossoming roses and her nose is adorned with sweet violets.' She wears on her brow verdant white lilies.' This means she is a mother to widows, a dear friend to married people and a glory to all virgins. Her eyes sparkle full of delight, just as the sparkling sun prods on before it the pale green dawn. And just as her eyes are threefold and yet one, so it is with the Holy Trinity. The white refers to the Father, the green to the Son, the

radiant sun to the Holy Spirit." When they gaze at one another from their hearts, no greater joy can ever come about. This virgin also wears on her head a crown that is wrought from red gold. That is lofty counsel and holy action which one has from holy teachers. This crown is like a fortress with battlements before which lies a great pitiful army, and they have a terribly disloyal lord-that is the devil and his fol lowers-who is a treasonous wretch. Within the crown resides a praiseworthy army in full power with abundant defenses. They have a loyal Lord; that is Jesus our Redeemer. He constantly directs the defense of those under attack and leads the exhausted to the wine cellar.

In the crown there is a threefold horn"; in it the hardy shall dwell who are devoted to great love. They have to be the archers and sentries if the weakest are to survive. In the crown there is also a tower. The blessed who shall live there do not often need to enter the fray, but no one can climb up to it unless his complete earthly will has been taken from him by love. The crown has on the top of its battlements a great number of costly precious stones. These are those who have now gone from here to heaven. Inside in the heart of the virgin I saw a living spring flowing forth. Heathen children, all leprous and blind, were being brought there. Above this spring stood a deeply spiritual man. No one but him could reach into it. This wasJohn the Baptist. He bathed the children in the spring that they might become seeing and radiantly healthy. I asked the virgin who she was. She said: "I am she whom you love so well, and I am your playmate. I am Holy Christianity and we both have the same Bridegroom." This is the virgin of blessed priests who so often gaze upon her with love.

The second wisdom comes from our natural faculties by means of which one can do both: lose and win. In this wisdom resides a throng of perverse lay persons and false priests and cunning religious." Never does a person become so holy that he learns how to guard against these three completely. So vicious are they that they pervert everything that is good. No one becomes spiritual from this gifts" unless he also is a fool for the sake of God's love. For pure holy simplicity is the mother of true divine wisdom. What good does it do that a refined gentleman has a lot of money and yet buys nothing but hunger, thirst, long-lasting disgrace, and eternal interior torment as well?

The third wisdom comes from grace and orders all of God's gifts. It never becomes so abundant that it dare compare itself to the lowest creatures. Their distress never saddens it; rather, it rejoices only in God's will. Also, it cannot bear that a single virtue remain locked outside its door.

4. Two Dissimilar Paths: the First Descends into Hell; the Second Ascends to Heaven14

Abundance of transitory things is a capricious guest;
Holy poverty offers before God a precious burden.

Vanity reflects not on its destructiveness;
Constancy is fully laden with all virtues.

Folly is comfortable only with itself;
Wisdom is never satisfied with what it learns.

Anger brings utter darkness into the soul;
Holy meekness is assured of every grace.

Pride always wants to be the best;
Humility can never rest, but must offer its service to all creatures.

Empty honor is before God deaf and blind;
Undeserved disgrace sanctifies all children of God.

Deceit has a most fair appearance;
Perfection is despised by the high and mighty.

Cupidity always has a loud mouth;
Blessed moderation has a delightful foundation.

Sloth misses abundant treasure;
Holy diligence does not overly seek out its own comfort.

Disloyalty always gives bad advice;
Full loyalty never omits a good deed.

True spirituality never avenges itself on anyone;
The uncultivated heart always seeks to break the peace.

Genuine devotion cannot do evil;
Evil will is subordinate to no one.

Malice by nature is grounded in evil;
Divine grace has a lovely countenance and a sweet mouth.

Worldly hearts like to be honored;
A spiritual soul always wants to go elsewhere.

Hidden cruelty has a plain mouth;
Open kindliness discovers God's treasure.

Deceitful concern is hate's neighbor;
Holy mercy alone shall stand with God.

A lie appears outwardly beautiful and inwardly hideous;
This is why it receives a friendly welcome from its companions.

Truth is rejected because it is little esteemed;
Hence all who love it must suffer many a humiliation with Jesus.

Hate rages unceasingly;
Love burns without injuring; it is free of all torment.

Evil disfavor hates God's generosity;
A pure heart full of love rejoices at everyone's happiness.

Malicious gossip feels shame neither before people nor God,
Who, after all, hears and sees all things.

Despair is a horrible fall;
True hope preserves it all.

False consolation will never be happy;
True guilt saddens it[15] so.

After our dear Lord had revealed this to me, he then said: "He who considers how good I am always holds himself fast on me." To that end help us, Lord, for the sake of your own honor!

5. Our Sin, Future Fall, Earthly Being, the Kingdom of Heaven. God's Gifts Should Be Clearly Before Our Eyes

Lord, my guilt through which I have lost you stands before my eyes like an immense mountain and has created an exten sive darkness between you and me, and an eternal distance of you, alas, from me! Ah, Love above all loves, draw me back into you!

But, Lord, a future fall's stands before my eyes like a fiery dragon mouth that at any time would like to devour me. Ah, my only Good, now help me that I might flow spotless into you!

Lord, my earthly being stands before my eyes like a parched field on which little of value has grown. 0 dear Jesus Christ, send me the sweet rain of your humanity and the warm sun of your living Godhead and the gentle dew of your Holy Spirit, that I might lament my heart's suffering.

Lord, your eternal kingdom stands open before my eyes like the most splendid wedding feast and the greatest celebration

and the longest banquet. Alas, my Darling, there you shall forever draw your love-craving bride to your embrace.

Lord, your whole gift that I have received from you appears to my eyes like a wretched box on the ears, because your most sublime gift here makes me seem so worthless. Thus does God who gives it all speak:

"Your mountain shall dissolve in love;
Your enemies shall gain no part of you;
Your field has been penetrated by the warm sun;
And your fruit has nevertheless remained unspoiled;
And in my kingdom you shall be a new bride;

And there I shall give you a delicious kiss on the mouth,
That my entire Godhead shall soar through your soul;
And my threefold eyes shall forever sparkle unceasingly in your twofold heart.
So where is your grieving now?
Even if you pray for a thousand years,
I would not grant you a single sigh."

6. Being Chosen by God Cannot Hurt Anyone; True Repentance Earns Remission and God's Grace, and Frees from Purgatory

A despondent person asked me to pray for him, which I did with fear and special concern. God heard me with his gaze, with his words, and with his true voice, saying: "There is no lamb so white or so pure that it cannot be vanquished by wolves; yet no one can deter my determinations. I have made this clear to him in three ways. First, I was merciful in regard to his guilt. Second, I have given him my grace. Third, I have never allowed untrustworthy people to exercise any power over him."

Then I lamented for him thus: "Lord, he still has great fears that you have not completely forgiven him his guilt."

Thus did God reply: "That would be impossible. Whoever is sorry for his sins I forgive. Those who repent with deep compunction I grant my grace; and whoever so repents them that he would sacrifice his life before he would ever do it again and remains constant in this shall not be condemned to any punishment after this life because of his guilt, unless he commits real venial sins and is found unrepentant of them.

7. How a Free Soul Speaks to God in Total Love

Lord, because I was subservient to all creatures, you have drawn me up above all things to yourself; and, Lord, because I have no earthly treasure, I do not have an earthly heart either. For you, Lord, are my treasure, just as you are also my heart; and you alone are my good, but I am capricious in all things.

8. Concerning God's Body, Which a Sick Person Vomits Up, and Concerning Power

That a sick person who is vomiting may not receive the Body of God-I was so naive about this that I did not know how to figure it out completely by my own powers of thinking and my own faith, because one can lose God only by sinning. So my soul asked our Lord in the union of love what the truth of the matter was. Our Lord gave this reply: "You are right. One can only lose me by sinning, but one's body can lose my body through sickness." In these words I saw in the Holy Trinity this explanation: Whenever we receive God's Body, the Godhead unites itself to our innocent soul and God's humanity mixes itself with our hideous body, and thus does the Holy Spirit make his dwelling in our faith. This blessed union we should preserve with great care.

9. Four Kinds of Offerings to Priests

Then our Lord said to me that priests should receive offerings from four things and from nothing else: from the altar; from bringing God's Body to the sick-but the sick person should give an offering for the last anointing according to his means and

according to what he thinks is good; from the field" he should take what one wants to give him. A priest should not determine and should not demand, because what a sick person has given he should receive only as a favor and not as something rightfully his."

10. Concerning the Offerings of Laypersons According to Their Means

Laypersons who give an offering should keep themselves from evil parsimony when giving, as much as the priest should preserve himself from greedy cupidity. This is very important for both of us because the layperson should give his offering with great love and a cheerful soul into God's generous hand. The priest should take it in humble fear and quaking heart from God's hands and should in all his actions return it to God in a praiseworthy manner; for earthly goods are like slaves when one receives them, but they are like the freeborn when one gives them away.

11. Four Things Concerning How Christians Should Conduct Themselves in Dealing with Jews

Then God taught me how Christians should conduct themselves toward Jews. One should not observe their law. One should not reside with them. One should not even spend the night in their dwelling. One should buy and sell from them without acting too friendly and without cunning or greed.

12. How a Bride Who Is United with God Rejects Consolation from All Creatures Except for That from God Alone, and How She Sinks into Pain

So speaks God's bride who has taken her rest in the sealed treasury of the holy complete Trinity: "Oh, get up and depart from me, all you creatures! You cause me pain and you are not able to console me."

The creatures say: "Why?"

The bride says: "My Love left me as I slept, as I was resting in oneness with him.""

"Can't this beautiful world and all the good it contains console you?"

"No, I see the snake of deceit and how treacherous cunning slithers into all the pleasures of this world. I also see the hook of lust in the carcass of base sweetness with which she catches many."

"Can the kingdom of heaven console you at all?"

"No, in itself it would be dead if the living God were not there."

"Well then, Lady Bride, can't the saints console you?"

"No, if they were to be separated from the living God flowing through them, they would weep more bitterly than I; for they have ascended above me and dwell deeper in God."

"Can God's Son ever console you?"

"Yes, I certainly ask him when we stroll through the flowers of holy knowledge, and I beg him full of longing that he open up for me the playful flood flowing in the Holy Trinity from which alone the soul lives.

If I am to be consoled in proportion to my nobility,
God’s breath must draw me effortlessly into itself,
For the sparkling sun of the living Godhead
Shines through the bright water of cheerful humanity,

And the sweet pleasure of the Holy Spirit
Who proceeds from them both
Has taken from me everything
That dwells beneath the Godhead.
Nothing tastes good to me but God alone;
I am wondrously dead.
I am freely willing to give up this taste
So that he be wonderfully praised.
For when I, a worthless human being, cannot praise God with my powers,
I send all creatures to court
And bid them that they praise God for me

With all their wisdom,
With all their love,
With all their beauty,
And with all their longing,
Just as they were created by God in innocence,
And also with all their voices
As they now sing.
When I look upon this great praising,
I feel no pain.

"I cannot endure that a single consolation touch me except my Lover. I love my earthly friends in the company of heaven and I love my enemies in holy aching for their happiness. God has enough of everything; caressing souls is the only thing he cannot get enough of."

After this marvel and this consolation had been going on for eight years, God wanted to console me way beyond what was due to my soul's nobility. "No, dear Lord, do not elevate me so much," said the unworthy soul. "It's much too good for me in the lowest part; for your honor's sake I am quite happy always to remain there."

Then the poor wretch sank down among those suspended 21 and among the damned souls, and she thought this was too good. After that our Lord pursued her as he does those who experience the lowest kind ofjoy,21 for God shines beautifully into all according to the degree of holiness they achieved here in love and according to how noble in virtues they became. St. John says: "We shall see God as he is."22 This is true. But the sun shines according to the weather. There are different kinds of weather on earth under the sun, and in like manner there are different kinds of dwellings in heaven. Hence, he is to me as I can bear him and see him.

Then our Lord said: "How long do you want to be here?"

The bride said: "Oh, leave me, dear Lord, and let me sink further for your honor."

After this both soul and body entered into such a great darkness that I lost knowledge and light, and I knew nothing of God's intimacies. Even blessed love went off on its own. The soul said: "Where are you now, Lady Trust? I now want to entrust to you the duties of love, and you must preserve God's honor in me."

Then this chambermaid took charge of her lady in such a holy spirit of suffering and cheerful patience that I was living without a care. But then disbelief came and enveloped me completely in such great darkness and screamed at me in such great rage that I shuddered at its voice. It said: "If this favor had been from God, he would not have so utterly forsaken you."

The soul said: "Where are you now, Lady Constancy? Command true faith to come to me!"

Then the Father of heaven said to the soul: "Remember what you experienced and what you saw while there was nothing between me and you."

And the Son said: "Remember what your body suffered from my pain."

This is what the Holy Spirit said: "Remember what you wrote."

Then both body and soul answered with the constancy of true faith: "As I have believed, loved, enjoyed, and known, so shall I go forth from here unshaken."

After this came constant estrangement from God and enveloped the soul so completely that the blessed soul said: "Welcome, very blessed Estrangement. Fortunate I am that I was born-that you, Lady, shall now be my chambermaid, for you bring me unusual joy and incomprehensible marvels and unbearable delight as well. But, Lord, you should take delight from me and let me have estrangement from you. Ah, how good I feel, darling God, that I may bear it because love is changeable. How it comes to me I dare not say; only that gall has become honey for the palate of my soul."

Then I desired that all creatures might praise our Lord with the Te deum laudamus.23 But they did not want to do this and turned their backs on me. Then the soul became happy beyond all bounds, and herself said: "That you now despise me and turn your backs on me-look, I'm glad. This praises our Lord immeasurably. Now his honor is accomplished through me, for now God is strangely with me, now his estrangement from me is more welcome to me than he is himself." The soul knew full well that God would console her even in great estrangement. She said: "Remember, Lord, who I am and avoid me."

Our Lord said to her: "Grant me this: that I might cool the heat of my Godhead, the longing of my humanity, and the pleasure of my Holy Spirit in you."

To this she replied: "Yes, Lord, but in such a way that it is only good for you and not for me."

After this the bride entered such a great darkness that her body sweated and writhed in painful cramping. The pain was asked by someone2" to be a messenger to God for her. She said: "Lady Pain, this I bid you: that you release me now, for you are now the most important thing about me."

Then pain arose from the soul and the body like a gloomy shine and ascended to God with judicious intent and called out in a loud voice: "Lord, you know well what I want."

Our Lord went to meet her before the door of the kingdom, saying: "Welcome, Lady Pain, you are the garment I wore next to my skin on earth and the whole world's contempt was my finest mantle. Despite how much I loved you there, you are not entering here. Rather, to the virgin who is willing to do two things I shall give two things. She should constantly prove herself well-bred and prudent. Then shall she help you be her messenger, and then shall I give her my embrace and union with my heart."

Then pain said this: "Lord, I make many blessed and yet am not blessed myself, and I consume many a holy body and yet myself am evil, and I lead many to heaven and yet do not enter it myself."

To this our Lord responded: "Pain, you were not born from the kingdom of heaven; therefore, you may not enter it. Rather, you were born from Lucifer's heart; there you shall return and shall dwell with him eternally."

Ah, blessed Estrangement from God, how bound I am to you in love! You strengthen my will in pain and make pleasant for me the difficult long wait in this miserable body. By whatever means I make myself more your companion, the more intensely and wondrously God falls over me. 0 Lord, in the depths of pure humility I cannot sink away from you; alas, in pride I easily stray away from you!

But the deeper I sink,

The sweeter I drink.

13. The Text of This Book Is Seen, Heard, and Felt in All Members

I do not know how to write, nor can I, unless I see with the eyes of my soul and hear with the ears of my eternal spirit and feel in all the parts of my body the power of the Holy Spirit.

14. Of the Holy Trinity, of the Birth and the Name of Jesus Christ, and of Human Nobility

I saw and still see three Persons in the eternal heights before God's Son was conceived in the body of St. Mary. They were then known and seen by all the holy angels in their distinctness, in their completeness, in their name, and in how the Three were one God. No matter how good the angels' eyes were, they saw neither bone nor flesh nor color nor the glorious name Jesus. This was miraculously hidden from them in the breast of the eternal Father. They called the Father the uncreated eternal God, the Son wisdom with no beginning, the Spirit of them both they called right knowledge of truth. The fiery angels of the highest order, who are suspended opposite the loving Godhead in the breath of the whole Trinity, served and were witness to the blissful decision when God became man. Gabriel brought only the name down at the Annunciation. He was entrusted with neither bone nor flesh nor blood. The Second Person-that was always the eternal Son. Although he had not yet assumed human nature, he had always been ours but had not been given to us before Gabriel brought the message. If this same Second Person had been flesh, for the sake of redeeming us, before the Annunciation, then it would have to be a beginning; but this never took place.2' This same Second Person had become one nature with Adam's humanity before he debased himself in sin. Although Adam's nature was broken and changed and his inheritance lost forever, God never gave up on him. Hence we were and still are able to return. God has kept his noble loving nature intact. Hence he cannot withhold himself. God immediately cast Lucifer from himself into the eternal prison, but he pursued Adam, asked him where he was, and brought him back to the path. Lucifer had only a single nature in God. When he destroyed it, he could not return.

Man has a complete nature in the Holy Trinity, and God saw fit to fashion it with his own divine hands. When his holy efforts on our behalf went for naught, he was forced back within himself by a threefold delight. For this reason he wanted to restore us with his own feet and his own hands so that we would have great oneness with him. If man had remained in paradise, God would have been immediately visible to him, would have greeted his soul and refreshed his body. Thus did I see God come from heaven to paradise, like a great angel.

Also, this same nature forces God to greet us with knowledge and with holy intimacy to the extent that we are prepared through holy virtues and true innocence. When I reflect that divine nature now includes bone and flesh, body and soul, then I become elated in great joy, far beyond what I am worth. But angels are to some degree formed according to the Holy Trinity, but they are pure spirits. The soul alone with its flesh is mistress of the house in heaven, sits next to the eternal Master of the house, and is most like him. There eye reflects in eye, there spirit flows in spirit, there hand touches hand, there mouth speaks to mouth, and there heart greets heart. Thus does the Lord and Master honor the mistress at his side. But the princes and the vassals-these are the holy angels-these the Master keeps in full view. All service and all praise the angels engage in are offered totally to the mistress as well as to the Master. Our vassals rank in nobility according to how rich in holy virtues we are on earth.26

15. Genuine Pure Love Has Four Things; If You Surrender Yourself to God, God Will Also Surrender Himself to You

Genuine pure love of God has four things about it that never rest. The first is growing desire, the second is flowing suffering, the third: burning sensation in soul and body, the fourth: constant union bound to great vigilance. No one can achieve this unless one enters into a full exchange with God, such that you give God everything that is yours, both inwardly and outwardly, and he truly gives you everything that is his inwardly and outwardly.

When the hour of bliss has passed when God gave his most sublime consolation to the loving soul, ah, then the beloved is so content that she considers everything good that estranged souls feel as pain. If you are then cross, you might well fear that the devil has anointed you.

16. Great Love Has More than Ten Parts and of Two Kinds of Complaint

Great love gets its nature from this: It does not flow with tears; rather, it burns in the great fire of heaven. Within this it flows forth most lavishly and yet remains within itself in utter calm. It climbs up closest to God yet remains utterly interior to itself. It grasps the most and keeps the least.

"0 most blessed love, where are those who know you?"

"They are totally consumed in the fire of the Holy Trinity; they do not dwell in themselves. These blessed ones can never fall into mortal sin."

"Why?"

"They are so completely permeated with and absorbed in God; the more they are tempted, the stronger they become."

"Why?"

"The longer they are here in the struggle and keep on loving, the more noble does God seem to them and the more frail and wretched they seem to themselves."

"Why?"

"The holier the love, the greater the fear; and the more consolation, the more constant the fear. But the loving soul cannot cravenly fear; she fears nobly."

There are two things that I cannot condemn enough: the first, that God's kindness is so forgotten in the world; the second, that those in religious life are so imperfect. Because of this many a fall must occur, for the perfect have never fallen.

17. Concerning a Lady Who Liked Being at Court; Concerning Her Devil Who Recommended to Her Seven Kinds of Evil

A lady had retreated from the world" and yet still wanted to serve at court. I prayed for her with all my might, both day and night, for I saw that the damage to her was so great that, if she remained there, she would woefully become the devil's companion upon her death. Why? Because she loved her importance there to excess and did not strive for God's honor. Rather, she gave herself over to idle courtly manners and kept her eyes focused on the prestige of her lord and lady.

After this a huge devil came-fiery, bloody, black, with claws, with horns,28 and with glassy eyes. It came and stood before me. But I was not afraid of it. I just blessed myself and went to sleep. Then it trundled over me like a sack full of water and tormented me so much that I sought relief from our Lord. A white angel came to my aid. It was from the fourth choir of angels and was the guardian angel of this same lady. I asked him who this enemy was and why he was assailing me.

Ah, then the lovely angel said in a heavenly voice: "He is one of the most malicious devils that hell can muster. His task is to bind up with ruinous love the hearts of the pure who really do want to be good, and he is tormenting you because you are trying to push him away from this lady."

"Alas, is he going to torment me for a long time?"

"No, God shall soon show his mercy."

After this the devil came again and shot fiery rays at me that inflicted hellish pain on me in body and soul.

I said: "Do everything to me that God allows you."

At this the devil was weakened and said: "Since you humbly submit yourself to this suffering, I am losing all my power."

The soul said: "By the living God, I admonish you to tell me your name and what your business with this lady is."

"My name-ha! That I shall not tell you because that would do me too much harm."

"You must, by the last judgment!"

"I am fostering in her fierce arrogance, deceitful cunning, and powerful lust; and I fend off from her all mercy. My name is Raging Anger that destroys spiritual hearts."

18. A Spiritual Person Resembles an Animal in Thirty Things as to His Nature29

Thus does a despondent soul lament and speak forlornly to her Lover: "Ah, Lord, for a long time I have desired two things that have not yet been granted me. The first is a faithful spiritual life. Alas, Dearest to my heart, that has all been left undone.

The second is a holy end. I am so looking forward to it that I am losing my doleful earnestness."

To this our Lord replied by showing me a frail, insignificant little animal and saying: "Look, you are like this tiny animal."

Then I saw how the animal was brought forth on an island in the sea out of the slime that had separated from the sea between the hot sun and the water in such a way that the sun was the animal's father, the sea its mother, and the slime its matter.

Thus was Adam created by God's power on earth out of weak matter. The animal signifies true spiritual people. When a person receives a spiritual spirit, he is begotten by the burning Godhead and is conceived in his mother, God's humanity. The matter he is made of is the Holy Spirit, who rubs out his sinful nature in all respects. The animal grows toward the warm sun. So does a spiritual person who has received" God's Spirit. This is such noble seed; it sprouts and grows till the blessed person's end.

This animal does not eat. Rather, it has a large tail that is full of honey. This it sucks on every day. It also has a golden beard that rings so delightfully when it is sucking that its sweet voice and cheerful sound echo playfully in its heart; and its body is nourished by drinking the sweet honey. This tail is the death of holy people, which they cheerfully and prudently keep before their eyes in their good works and constant practice of virtue, and they joyfully practice faithfulness in patient waiting. The golden beard is God's noble love that chimes through the loving heart into the noble soul. Fortunate is he to have become a human being who ever really experiences this!

This animal has at times a natural desire to drink from the sea because of a misguided sense of thirst. It cannot regain its health unless it voids and gives back the bitter seawater. Thus it is with us sinners: when we drink of the foul puddle of the world and make use of the baseness of our flesh according to the counsels of the evil spirit, we poison ourselves with our selves. If we ever want to survive, we have to leave ourselves and give back what we owe to the world.

This animal has big ears. They are exposed to the heavens, and it listens for the song of birds. It flees vicious animals and fears the snakes of the earth. This, indeed, is also what the loving soul does. It constantly flees evil company and detests false wisdom, and its ears are wide open to hear God's wisdom.

This animal has a noble temperament. It cannot remain in the sea when animals do their mating dance and the water is raging. It loves chastity and hurries up the highest mountain that it knows, and it picks out the most beautiful tree and climbs it with cheerful effort and clasps the lofty trunk; and so does it rest with great pleasure in lofty freedom. This is what the loving soul does. She finds vanity bitter and flees urgently what is merely passing that flows onward like water. She also knows how to work with great virtues and holy efforts on the highest mountain in the beautiful kingdom of heaven. Effortlessly, she climbs further into grace upon the fairest tree of the Holy Godhead. There she embraces the loftiest trunk and is herself embraced by the Holy Trinity.

This animal has two sharp horns with which it defends its body with such intelligence that it goes free among all the animals. 0 loving Soul, this you well understand. You drive the devil away from you through God's intelligence and you live in holy purity, free of all sin.

This animal has two beautiful human eyes that pour forth tears toward the beautiful mountain where it would like to be again. Ah, loving Soul, how fair are the eyes of your knowledge, for you have gazed into the eternal mirror and your sweet tears are ready to fall from love. And yet you willingly endure the bitterness of the sea of sin.

This animal has a soft mouth and a pure tongue, but it does not have teeth. It can neither snarl nor bite. The loving person also has a useful mouth; he eagerly teaches and instructs at all times. His tongue is far from and closed to all harmful words. He, too, has no teeth for biting. He willingly consoles those who are sad. There is also no viciousness in him except against sin and derision of God. Indeed, nothing hurts him as much as this. The mouth of this animal is wide open on top and small at the bottom. The large part of our mouth is the unrestrained praise that we should offer to God in the company of all creatures in all our actions and in all things at all times. The lower part of our mouth is all too ready to speak about the sinful earth. Woe to all empty phrases! What shall become of the impostor saints who fraudulently nourish their sinful bodies with gifts meant for holy people and comport themselves as though they gained complete knowledge of God's holy truth? May God in his trustworthiness, who alone has loved the truth, preserve his innocent friends from them!

This animal is swift of foot and has no voice. It is quiet by nature. The soul in rapture has this same nature: at the height of

love she is both swift and at rest.

This animal's skin and hair are of a common color, and is faded and ugly to behold. No one hunts it for its present beauty. But after its death, when other animals rot, its skin becomes so ennobled and its hair so richly beautiful that all the most prominent people that can get it wear its coat rather than the finest sable. The peace, useful habits, and holy teachings of people striving for perfection receive, alas, little notice during their lifetime; but after their death, whenever we sinners come into need and we then remember how holy their lives were and how solicitously they warned us, as sinners we feel shame that we kept our distance from them. And so their life becomes a beautiful sable that in its full beauty we sinners keep before our eyes and in our hearts. And yet during their life, we always fear for our worthless copper, so that we willfully neglect reaching out for refined gold.

This animal's flesh is eaten on Friday. It does not die unless it is beaten to death by the waves of the sea. The lives of holy people consist only of Fridays, for they constantly fast because of sin and do not eat forbidden foods; rather, they live in a godlike manner. The great stormy swells of tempestuous love make them die to all things and live in God alone. Indeed, all things are not really theirs except as shared with God in love. Thus does their love have the valuable power of praising God in all things.

This animal's bones are the skeleton of a noble fish.' From it one can fashion beautiful jewels that noble persons wear in honor. What a precious jewel is a holy body full of love and free from sin! God shows us this through the example of his dearest friends when we discover the true signs in them. In his holy friends God has given us many a valuable jewel. If we do not praise him for this, we cannot become one with the saints, whom one here elevates from the earth.32

This animal's name is, in German: Valuable for Everything.33 Fortunate is he that he ever became man who has this name before God.

19. The Task of Blessed Love Is Manifold

O blessed Love,
This has always been your task, and still is:

To bind together God and the human soul.
That shall be your task forever.

Greetings, my Lady, and take care
That I do not complain about you to my Lord.
If he intends to be away from me too long,
I would freeze too much.
Keep that from happening, Lady of my heart and Queen.
You have seduced me in God
So that I am blissfully bound.

O Love, Lady, help me
That I may die in his arms which now embrace me.
But still, willingly shall I suffer the pain of death
In my sinful body.

Love, you have ever more the greatest power of all the virtues;
For this I shall ever thank God. You free me from many a heartache.
I no longer have any virtue;
He serves me with his virtues.
That I ever could do anything good separated from my Lord:

That would be more difficult for me than death.
I dare not, alas, claim credit
For everything that I say about love.
It is God, rather, who is thereby reaching out
To all those chosen in his heart.

Those to whom this is addressed shall indeed know:
Love makes empty hearts full.
But when we are full of wrangling and discontent,
The game of love is completely closed to us.

Good night, Love. I'm off to bed, alleluia!

20. The Six Virtues of St. Dominic

On the feast of St. Dominic I prayed to our Lord for the whole Order of Preachers. Our dear Lord deigned to come to me himself and he brought along St. Dominic whom, if I dare say it, I love above all the saints.

Our Lord said: "My son Dominic had four things about him while on earth that all priors should have about them. He loved his fellow Dominicans so much that he could never bear to trouble them with things arising from some whim of his own. The second is that he often improved the food to help and show affection for his brethren, so that the young brothers might not think back on the world and so that the older ones might not succumb on the way. The third is that in holy wisdom he provided for them the model for being moderate, for the sake of God, in their whole being, in all their customs, and in all their wants. The fourth is that he was so merciful that he never wanted to burden his dear brethren with any kind of penance that the order did not require for wrongdoing."

And our Lord continued: "I shall mention two more things. Whenever Dominic laughed, he did so with true delight of the Holy Spirit. But when he wept, he wept with such sincerity that first and foremost among his desires he always put his brethren before my eyes and, in addition, with all his strength, Holy Christianity." Before this I did not know that any laughing could be free of frivolity and not wrong.

21. Sixteen Reasons Why the Order of Preachers Is Dear to God'

After this our dear Lord said: "I love two things in the Order of Preachers so much that my divine heart unceasingly smiles upon it. The first is the holiness of their life; the second is their great value for the church. In addition, they greet my Holy Trinity with seven things. These are: deep sighs, sincere weeping, intense longing, strict discipline, distressful exile, genuine humility, and joyous love."

Our Lord spoke again: "They also glorify my three names externally in seven ways: with hymns of praise, with sincere preaching, with correct remission," by lovingly consoling, with friendly help, by being models of holiness. They are also a wholesome bond of Christian faith."

In addition, our darling Lord said: "The alms they give to the poor for love of me are so holy that the sins of the poor people who receive them are reduced and, then too, the devil is not able to remain where their gifts are being eaten. This is because of the holiness of their pleasing poverty."

Ah, eternal spring of the Godhead, out of which I and all things flowed, I, unworthy creature, praise you with everything that is below you that, in spite of everything, Lord, I have been consoled by you. Amen.

22. Brother Heinrich's Fourfold Crown and of the Dignity of St. Dominic3e

In the Order of Preachers a brother died on the solemn feast of Easter after he had preached, sung mass, and had given people the holy body of our Lord. And when he had taken care of all his duties, he had himself anointed and departed toward nightfall. After he was buried, a certain person37 went to where his dead body was and greeted both soul and body. She did this regularly upon the death of religious people. There God celebrated in her soul a divine feast, and his soul was shown to

her in God's embrace in great glory. She saw clearly that his glory was not yet complete, and she asked our Lord how long he was going to remain like that and whether he had suffered at all in purgatory. Our Lord said: "He shall remain like this for a week."" That is, seven days and seven nights. He had rested himself on God's breast in untold bliss of spiritual fervor that he had not experienced on earth. Very quickly had he come there without suffering,just as a mother takes up her dear child out of the ashes onto her lap. He said: "Tell my sister39 I shall console her with God in fourteen days." It happened. She died fourteen nights later.

Then he invited me to his feast, where he was going to receive his glory. The whole heavenly army prepared for it and joined together in a beautiful procession. St. Dominic came with a whole throng. They were all preachers, and they all wore the golden crowns of those who died in the order, crowns that differed in value according to how holy they had been in the order. St. Dominic brought a shining crown toward Brother Heinrich that sparkled as beautifully as the sun at its brightest. He gave it to him as a reward from God, because he had followed his holy example in the Dominican order.

St. Dominic is indescribably more beautiful than the others because he receives a special honor from each brother as a reward. I saw him especially well clothed because of three qualities. He wears a white garment of innate purity; in addition, a green garment of growing wisdom of God, and also a red garment decorated with clasps because he had suffered spiritual martyrdom. They carry a military standard displaying the order's honor, one that no one else carries. A fine banner precedes them that all follow who on earth have lived according to their teaching.

Our Lord sat in his omnipotence and crowned this brother with three kinds of honors. They were: simple obedience, voluntary poverty, constant humiliation. Brother Heinrich thanked our Lord thus: "I thank you, Lord, that you found me, preserved me, and received me." He then bowed to our Lord and turned to his brothers. St. Dominic said: "Welcome, dear son, now enter into the glory of your Lord, alleluia!"

That I might experience this favor and might see this was especially due to my being lonely for the love of God and to being constantly treated with malicious contempt by the friends of God.

23. About the Burial of St. John the Evangelist40

I actually saw the body of St. John the Evangelist with the eyes of my unworthy soul. He lies unburied in great bliss above all corruptible things beneath the creation of the eternal kingdom." His body has now taken on so much of divine eternity that it glows like a fiery crystal. He lies there so lovely in his human form, as though his spirit had fallen asleep in the midst of a heavenly rapture. His eyebrows are still brown; his eyes are closed and he is lying on his back. Beneath, above, and all around him everything is bright, and every seven hours the holy angels come to his body with a song of praise that goes like this: "Holy, pure, simple, wise, and dear to God's heart." The song has a sweeter melody than the sound of a thousand strings or harps. Between his body and the creation of the kingdom of heaven exists only a thin wall, like the membrane of an egg, and yet it is forever tough, so that no body is able to pass through it until the last day.

24. How God Receives the Souls in Heaven; How He Crowns Three Kinds of People; How He Greets, Adorns, Praises, and Thanks Them

The kingdom of heaven has many beautiful gates and yet it has none. The many doors are the glorious different rewards with which God receives each soul, and all of heaven opens up for God's lovely bride. God descends through all the choirs toward the soul, and the whole heavenly host follows him with everything beautiful in proportion to what she may receive as her reward. Thus does the soul joyfully leave purgatory or her exile on earth. Many a fair angel follows her as well. At the gates of heaven the two lovers meet-God and the soul. The noble look with which he receives her and the holy reflection of his splendor that she receives from him have such power in her that she can never again think of what has caused her harm or interior sorrow.

The usual crown of the kingdom is placed upon her head at the gate; that is God's will. With it he leads her in with honor. That is why it is called the crown of the kingdom. That sinner who was evil to the end and to whom God then sends sorrow receives no other honor as his reward. God crowns three kinds of people with his fatherly hands: virgins, widows, and married people. Just as he receives them with all praise, so does he then crown them. Widows and married people are crowned by our Lord as he sits in almighty glory. But for the virgins he rises and crowns them, standing like the son of an

emperor. He greets them inwardly with his living Godhead; he honors them outwardly with his almighty humanity; he adorns them with the generosity of the Holy Spirit; he also rewards them everlastingly according to rank with the whole Trinity in his kingdom for all that which they bring along. He thanks them all individually for coming, and they praise God fervently that he saved them from eternal death.

25. How We Are Now Present in Heaven, Purgatory, and Hell

We are now present in heaven. Just as we are now on earth clothed with virtues and adorned and permeated with holy love of God, so are we now visible to all the blessed, and they praise God and rejoice because of us, as though we were now with them there. They do not see in advance what is happening to us, but they do see that we are growing in nobility, increasing in splendor, and ascending to the heights. This is what is happening hour after hour to the blessed who are still on earth. Because of it the joy of the saints and angels increases. Alas! If we sink into great venial sins, our fair heavenly radiance is extinguished. Then the angels beseech and the saints beg our dear Lord that we turn back and become pure again.

We are also present in purgatory as soon as we have earned it on earth. This pains all those who are there, but they cannot help us because they are themselves burning in such torment. There are many poor souls in this purgatory with such guilt that they cannot know whether they are ever going to be redeemed." Why? Because they never wanted to confess with their fleshly mouth. We have seen how they may be saved in a different chapter.4"

The sinner's presence is also manifest in hell. God's mercy follows him. Hence they are there today, and tomorrow they are the angels' companions.

Thus does our presence go in and out of heaven, purgatory, and wretched hell according to where our own free will seeks to align itself.

26. God Consoles the Depressed Brother Baldwin'

A brother in the Order of Preachers was so weighed down by an important office accepted under obedience-as happens to many-that his youthful vigor was drained from him and he lost his natural strength; yet he still carried on with good intentions. So I begged our Lord that he might turn his favor in that direction. Our Lord instructed me and said: "I have heard and seen all the distress he is suffering, and what he reads and writes. All this shall become the following song of love praising me before my eternal court: Great God, eternal, mighty, marvelous, alleluia. And I shall lift up his head and increase all his might, just as I have done for you-not just by nature, but rather even more by grace."

27. Concerning the End of the Order of Preachers and the Antichrist; Concerning Enoch and Elias

The Order of Preachers was under severe attack from false teachers and, in addition, from many greedy sinners. So I prayed to our dear Lord that he might protect in them his own honor. God said: "As long as I want to keep them, no one can destroy them."

I asked: "0 dear Lord, will the order exist until the end of the world?"

Our Lord said: "Yes, they shall continue until the end of the world. But another kind of people shall come." They shall then instruct these people who then come so that they shall be wiser, mightier, and poorer in earthly needs, and made more fervent by the Holy Spirit because of the wretched ill fortune that is approaching for Holy Christianity."

Then I saw these people, their garb, their manner of life, and that there were a great number of them. They had no more than two garments; the undergarment is white and the outer garment red, signifying the pure humanity of our Lord and his holy death. Their hair and their beards were let grow as long as they would. Their belt is fashioned of woven material from an olive tree signifying holy mercy, which they bring to misguided Christianity. They all go barefoot, but in regions where it freezes they wear red shoes with white laces but no stockings. They wash their faces in summer with water, even in the woods, but not in winter, for they have no dwellings of their own. They are strangers in all places and suffer much distress. They have neither house nor home, and neither silver nor gold stored anywhere. Each of them walks with a white staff colored red. The staff has a curved upper part that is a span long and made of ivory. The ivory means they should be chaste and pure in all things. The

staff is white and red; thereby they call to mind Christ's death. Into one side of the staff is carved the passion of our Lord; on the other side his ascension into heaven. They must keep this staff with them in all places, when eating or sleeping, praying or preaching, celebrating mass or hearing confessions. And when they put the staff aside, they must stick it into the ground before their eyes, so that they might constantly behold the passion of Christ.

When their journey is thirty leagues long and they must go to be of help or out of necessity, so may the two of theme take along a donkey they may sometimes ride. In such cases they may not carry their staff at their side but must carry it upright in front of them in their hand as God's cross. They must ride this lowly animal so that they might resemble God in humility. Also, their feet shall cause them such pain that they cannot complete the whole distance. But they may not wear shoes any longer than from All Saints until the day on which St. Peter became pope.47 They shall ask no one for breeches or other clothing, but when no one offers them bread, they should humbly ask for it and should eat and drink with the common people all the food that is given them with the exception of meat. Also, they should not fast any more than Christian law already commands, and they should find such shelter that they might pray and sleep under a separate roof away from other people.

As people come to recognize and acknowledge their holy way of life, they will be so improved because of it that they shall give them willingly what they need in great love. They should also not dwell under the same roof with any widow. People should wash their calloused feet with great tenderness, and they should thank God profusely that they go forth and anoint misguided Christianity, just as Mary Magdalene did for our Lord.48 They anoint them also, but only men should do it because they are not God.49 When people notice that their clothing is worn out, they should give them new clothing. If someone freely wants to give them much, they should not accept it. Rather, they should advise people to give with compassion wherever it does some good.

Their general chapter meeting takes place twice a year for the good and benefit of Christianity: in summer in the woods, in winter in the town hall. Whoever wants to enter this order should himself have two books at hand. He shall preach from the larger book. The first thing that is written in this book is the Credo in deum,50 and thereafter it is filled with learned sermons all ordered according to the articles of Christian faith. From the smaller book he shall recite to our Lord the hours of the Holy Office. The first master51 who will take up this way of life will be the son of the king of Rome. His name before God in German is Alleluia. The pope shall invest him with his immediate power. After that he shall himself choose and shall receive this way of life from the pope.52

Then many important masters shalljoin him. They should not be younger than twenty-four years of age. They shall accept no one except those who are healthy and have had advanced studies. They must all be priests, confessors, and sound, well-qualified masters. The first master shall be called their prince and should be accompanied by three brothers, because the Christian faith shall undergo trials most frequently in his case. There should be one master for every thirteen of them. They shall call him their protector, and he should be accompanied by two brothers. Their power is very great, for no bishop is their equal. Wherever they go, they shall be authorized to preach, hear confessions, and sing and say mass. In each diocese there shall be seven of them, signifying the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit. In an archdiocese there shall be thirteen of them, signifying the holy convent of our Lord.53 At Rome there shall be thirty of them, signifying the blessed selling that took place with Christ." The greatest number of them shall be in Jerusalem where Jesus suffered death for our sake. Their small chapter meeting shall be held every three weeks, signifying the complete union with the Holy Trinity; by five brothers, signifying the five wounds; or by seven, signifying the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit; and thereafter by as many as can gather together. Wherever they eat or drink, the oldest in the order shall speak for a while about Christ's deeds and his holy life, and the others should be silent.

I also saw their bed-how they should lie on straw between two white woolen blankets with a pillow under their head. This should be placed under the bottom blanket on the straw. Their loins shall never sit nor lie comfortably, for they shall be hardy all their days until their holy martyrdom, as was the case with Christ. However, if an old master who has served well, and because of age cannot practice austerity up until the end of the order, should become sick or weak, he should be bedded in comfort and lovingly cared for, because they are still capable of giving much holy advice. And they should also be given the best nourishment. This holy life shall continue in great tranquility for thirty years. During that time they shall so greatly illumine and instruct Christians that no one shall turn away from the Christian faith because of untutored simplicity.

Woe, thereafter calamity shall strike! The Antichrist shall come55 and assume power over the secular princes by means of gold, precious stones, and unimaginable deceptive cunning, to which they are now so drawn. Hence they follow him quite happily and say that he is their god and lord, and they follow him in solemn procession, presenting him with their seal and

proclamations. Alas, then he comes to the spiritual powers. There he also discovers greed and brings such great perverse wisdom that very few bishops, priors, and priests withstand him. But these blessed brothers shall put their life on the line and preach fervently the Christian faith. And they shall give true indulgence for all sins to all those who die in the Christian faith with true sorrow, so that they will be saved without purgatory. Because these pious brothers dealt with people in such a pious manner earlier, many a holy martyr among them shall triumph. Many Jews and some wise heathens shall receive holy baptism and the Christian faith from these brothers. This shall so enrage the Antichrist that he shall impose his stern prohibition and intense severe oppression upon all those who go to their sermons. Whoever then goes there and stands by them is certainly a blessed person.

Then tribulation begins. The good separate from the evil and risk their bodies and all that they have. The Antichrist's messengers arrive there and, first of all, stab the holy preacher with an iron pole because of his Christian faith. God's dear friend must hang there writhing in front of the children of God. Thus do they carry the holy man impaled between them for all the world to see. The evil ones laugh, the good weep. And he sings with the voice of the Holy Spirit: "Credo in deum," and he consoles and calls out: "Follow me, ye holy children of God!" All who then follow him are captured, have their eyes bound, are struck with scourges, and are driven like sheep being stolen to a place where a flood of water is passing by. There, their blessed heads are all chopped off and hurled into the water. Where there is no water, they are driven onto a field and martyred. God gives the evil ones the idea to bind the eyes of the good so that in their prison they may not see the great splendor, the enormous power and honor that the accursed ones have from their lord, the Antichrist. So may they the better persevere; for they, too, are just human, as are these. They take the dead blessed preacher and put him high up on the same place from which he spoke God's word and was martyred. Those who wish to preach there according to the Christian faith have to be living martyrs and great saints.

The Antichrist's power is so great that no one is his equal. When the pope can no longer do battle against him, he turns to the holy brothers and suffers what they suffer. Then Enoch and Elijah come to their aid.56 They are now in sweet paradise, living there in both soul and body in the same bliss and eating the same food that had been given to Adam if he had remained there. They, too, in obedience to God, must avoid the same tree from which Eve and Adam ate the apple when they broke God's commandment. I have seen this tree. It is not large, and its fruit is outwardly quite lovely and desirable like a rose; but under the surface it is by nature very sour. That signifies the bitter harm of sin, which God never intended for man. Because this fruit is so detrimental for a noble person that it is still poison for us, God has put his prohibition on it, for he never wanted to cause human beings distress.

In this final agony, after these blessed brothers have consoled the simple folk until no good person is left who has not suffered a martyr's death, most of these brothers will be still alive. Though innocent, their suffering is so great and their prayers so holy, that God then sends Enoch and Elijah to them, who console them and lead them out of the woods so that they might go preach again and prepare for death. These two lords, who then come from paradise, are so wise in divine truth that by their might they turn the Antichrist around and drive him off. They tell him clearly who he is, from what power his emblems derive, how he has gotten where he is, and what sort of end he shall have. When the perverted ones hear what a pitiful god had been given them because of their great greed and because of their lust for the many kinds of evil that God sees in their hearts, then many a noble man and many a fair woman among Christians who had followed the Antichrist are converted. And so these blessed must be martyred, for then the Antichrist is given supreme power on earth. He commands that all the men be rounded up so that he can test their Christian faith. On the streets red-hot griddles are made ready to which they are then driven all together. Their wives and fair children are summoned. Then they are commanded to choose: whether, by denying their faith, they prefer to keep their lovely wives and dear children, their riches and honor or, by keeping their Christian faith, they are willing to cook on the griddles and lose their lives. The men say: "Oh, dear wives and children, do not think about me; remember rather that you are Christians and offer your bodies to God. Then we shall not be separated."

Then the men are bound hand and foot and are thrown onto the griddles. The women and children say: "Lord Jesus, Child of Mary, for love of you we gladly want to suffer the same torment."

Then a pit filled with fire is made ready. The children and the mothers are hurled into it, and firewood and straw are heaped upon them. Thus are they burned to death.

An angel accompanies Enoch and Elijah from paradise. The radiance and bliss that show on their bodies shall always be preserved. When they behold the earth, they shudder, as men do who look upon the sea and wonder in fear how they are going to get across it. Then they" receive earthly appearances and, as a result, become human beings who are mortal. They eat honey

and figs and drink water mixed with wine, and their spirits also receive sustenance from God.

28. The Fivefold Power of Love. Because of the Weakness of People and the Treachery of the World One Must Remain Silent About the Truth

This book was begun in love, it shall also end in love; for nothing is as wise or as holy or as beautiful or as strong or as perfect as love. Our Lord Jesus Christ said: "Speak, Father; I shall now be silent as you are silent in the mouth of your Son, angered because of the weakness of people. Just so did my humanity speak trembling at the treachery of the world; for it rewarded me with bitter death."

Book V

1. Three Kinds of Sorrow, Ten Kinds of Benefits, and the Path of Angels and Devils

There are three kinds of sorrow by which the sinner conforms himself again to the seal that was inscribed on the cross when sins crushed us. The first is sorrow for guilt, which has three qualities: bitterness in the heart out of which the sin flowed; shame in the senses that took pleasure in the sin; a clear image of the life in which the person became evil. This sorrow reconciles the sinful soul to the heavenly Father and frees her from the eternal pains of hell. The second is sorrow of penance, which also has three qualities: intense striving and constant aspiration and pure victory over all temptations. This sorrow completely frees the sinner from purgatory. The third is sorrow out of love, for it is true to God alone. It considers an insult to God much more serious than harm to itself or its own interior suffering. Also, it would rather go body and soul to hell than sadden its lover with a serious sin. This sorrow out of love makes people on earth holy and perfect, and raises them up before God in heaven. When the blessed soul is in such a state, God is dearer to her than she is to herself, and sin is her most serious regret.

The blessed person who has these three kinds of sorrow receives the honor here on earth that God lets his fiery spirit shine forth unceasingly from his Holy Trinity into this loving soul, just like a bright sunbeam shining forth from the hot sun lights up a new golden shield. The radiant light of God and the loving soul that so delightfully sparkles forth from both of them has such great power and shines so brightly for all who are in heaven, purgatory, and hell that the highest angels, Cherubim and Seraphim, feel an intimate closeness to the loving soul, and in this same light, on fire with boundless love, they descend to the soul as it flames with love.' That is the path of the noble princes2 to the pampered soul in this poor body, for the angel and the loving soul are from God a whole nature in their innate chastity and in the fire of love in the Seraphim. But acquired chastity, adorned and illuminated with the flowing fire of divine love, beams forth downward into the Cherubim.' Toward them in turn fiery bright joys of love burst forth from the Seraphim, for they4 are on fire with love. This is why the exquisite radiance travels down, causing them5 to flash with love. The angels that are given to us in baptism cannot tend this burning love, for God has not given them the heat. Rather, they are given to us to cultivate our virtue; and their noble presence and our best free will sanctify all our actions and drive the devil's cunning and power away from our five senses. But the great fiery radiance that lights up everything, as it descends from the Holy Trinity into the loving soul, strikes such fear into the devils that they dare not pass through this holy ray. Because of it they suffer much humiliation. The paths that God has allowed them in the air-these can be taken from them by an earthly human being through union with God. They can freely travel over those paths where evil wants them to be. But where they sense a loving soul in a body, they must pass by under the earth. Also, they cannot foul the air where they find those blessed who truly live free of serious sin. All the sins they bring to us they must always begin on earth. As we then ascend to God with our Christian faith in our best strivings, they lose all their power and must hasten away from us.

2. Two Kinds of Suffering, Four Kinds of Benefits, and the Manifold Host of Sins

I thank God for all goodness and I find fault with myself the while I live, for God does not punish without a reason. As long as a person has the ability to sin, he needs suffering as well as virtues. That suffering is very profitable which a person inflicts upon himself for the love of God after seeking counsel. But that suffering is much nobler and more useful which God inflicts upon us by means of his enemies or his friends, since he is nobler than all tormentors. Christ did not redeem us with the pain that he inflicted upon himself; rather, he taught us how we should serve him in toil and suffering. But he redeemed us with the suf fering that his enemies inflicted upon him, despite his innocence, and with his woeful, shameful death, when no one remained his faithful friend except one maiden: Mary, his mother, was truly inwardly united to him, as she outwardly remained there standing near him.

As I, in my disloyalty, was being ill-tempered because of my suffering, God gave me this consolation and said: "Look, no one can do without suffering because it purifies a person of his many sins from hour to hour." Alas, I saw such a huge and frightening host of sins of all kinds following us, as though all the mountains, all stones, every drop of rain, all grass, trees, greenery, and sand were all living persons and were trying to crush us so that we would never ascend to God. Alas, for the pitiful mote sins that we cannot express in words; for them that suffering is visited upon us here which we carry secretly on our

wretched body. Second, the bitterness of suffering protects us from a future fall, which often causes a pure heart to tremble, though it carries enclosed within it God's spirit. Third, the nobility of suffering makes us worthy to receive God's favor; for if I receive all my comfort, my necessities, and my earthly consolation with fear, with dread, and with a lonely heart, then God is present with his consolation.

3. God Shall Weigh All Innocent Suffering and Also the Blood of Three Kinds of People

On the last day, Christ Jesus shall hold aloft a glorious scale before his Father. Upon it will lie his holy toil and his innocent suffering, and in it and next to it all the blameless torment, humiliation, and interior pain that was ever suffered by human beings for the love of Christ. Indeed, when the right side of the scales sinks, those rejoice the most who have much upon it. The blood of virgins by its nature, the blood martyrs shed for their Christian faith, and other blood spilled through killing but shed in innocence during justified self-defense: this is what the holy Son of God shall weigh together with his blood, because it was poured out in true innocence. Marriage blood is not put onto the scale. Why? It is beforehand impure, but it extinguishes that very sin that arises from carnal knowledge.6

4. The Power of Marvelous Love Is Manifold; How the Soul Sinks. Four Kinds of Humility. The Sevenfold Beauty of the Loving Soul

O wondrous Love of God, you possess great sacred power, you illumine the soul, teach the senses, and bestow full strength on all virtues. Fortunate am I, poor village maid, that I ever beheld you, dear Lady. 0 Love, you are full of delight and worthy of praise in all your acts. This is what I experience in my soul. All virtues are your subjects. But sinking humility that has not been fouled with arrogance in spirituality, and chastity-innate or acquired, that are both completely pure-these two virtues must accompany love, though they are subject to her.

This love passes through the senses and storms the soul with all its might. All the while that love grows in the soul, it ascends to God longingly and, richly flowing, opens up to receive the wonder that is approaching. It dissolves through the soul into the senses. Then does the body gain its share, so that it is refined with respect to all things.

Can someone who loves God have evil habits? Nowhere do I find this to be the case; such great power does genuine love of God have. And yet the soul is never so utterly flooded with divine love that she is not often tempted by earthly things. This love a soul can never receive that is riddled with false love. When love has grown to ripeness in the soul, it has also ascended as far as is humanly possible. For love is limited in its capacity. If it did not have a limit, alas, sweet God, how many a pure heart would burst in sweet bliss.

When the soul in her pursuit of love and the great longing of her God-stalking heart has ascended the lofty mountain of powerful love and beautiful knowledge, she acts like the pilgrim who has climbed mountains with great zest but then climbs down the other side in great fear, so that he does not take a tumble. Just so, when the soul has been permeated by the radiant heat of long love and has thus become faint in the embrace of the Holy Trinity, she begins to sink and to cool, as does the sun when it descends from its highest point and sinks down into the night. God knows, this is what happens to the soul and also to the body. The soul, rich in love, sinks downward under the pull of profound humility and constantly retreats from what God does to her out of love. This is very agreeable to her because of her noble nature, which God and she fill to the same single end. Also, she turns the eye of her desire from all things in order to be able to gain much praise for God. The body, too, sinks far down when it serves its enemy,' obeys without complaint, and avoids its friends to God's honor. The soul sinks deeper still because she has more strength than the body. She sinks with great zeal to the lowest place that God holds in his power. Oh, how dare I name this place for those who know nothing of sinking humility.

First humility is external, having to do with one's dwelling place and clothes-that they are proper, are tailored to a religious cut, and yet are clean. Second humility has to do with conduct in the company of others-that it is lovingly attuned to all needs and in all things. Out of this grows the holy love of God. Third humility has to do with the senses-that a person make proper use of them in all things and love in the right amount. Fourth humility dwells in the soul. This is sinking humility, which performs many a sweet marvel in the love-rich soul. It chases her up into heaven and drags her down again into the abyss. It leads the soul to all creatures one by one and says: "Now look, all this is better than you are!" And it brings her then to the spot where she can go no further: under Lucifer's tail.' If, in her desire to honor God as she would want, she could remain there, she would prefer nothing better. So tightly is the poor love-rich soul bound by humble love that she feels no fear or shame except in the

temperate way one is accustomed to fear in heaven.' But the poor body must feel both fear and shame because of the darkness of its heart and the weakness of its external senses, because it has not yet been transformed by death.

The soul, on the other hand, is just as beautiful in her body as she is in heaven, but she is not as secure.
She is just as bold but she is not as strong.
She is just as powerful but she is not as constant.
She is just as lovely but she is not as happy.
She is just as generous but she is not as rich.
She is just as holy but she is not as innocent.
She is just as content but she is not as full.
That soul alone is satisfied which is here flooded with the humble love of God.

When she has thus ascended to those heights possible for her while she is still attached to the body and has sunk to the deepest point that she can find, then she is fully grown in virtues and holiness. Then she shall be adorned with the suffering of long waiting.

Then she goes to wait faithfully
And looks upon all things with great wisdom;
Nothing can escape her;
She makes it all yield its praise to God.

5. The Purgatory of a Beguine Whom No Prayer Helped Because of Her Selfishness

Woe, Sin, you are so destructive since even holy works that one performs without counsel are very destructive if one speaks thus: "No, I am beyond the need for human counsel. I intend to live according to God's counsel." I always shudder at these words because no person in any situation can humble himself to better advantage than by following Christian counsel with an obedient heart. This became clear to me in the case of a woman who loved our Lord from her heart and cherished this love with such superhuman exertion that her nature shriveled up and she died. As is the Christian custom, I prayed for her. In a rapture of my spirit I saw her spirit, which was in itself bright as the sun. This came from the faithful love in her pure heart. She was surrounded by great darkness and urgently desired to reach eternal light. Whenever she was ascending, dark night always blocked her. This was her selfish will refusing counsel that so utterly held this person back.

I asked her: "How can one help you?"

She replied: "While on earth I never wanted to follow anyone's advice given according to Christian custom. Because of this no one's prayer or desire can be of help to me."

So I turned to our dear Lord and asked him how it could be that a person could be delivered over to suffering who, while on earth, has assumed so much holy suffering out of love for him.

Our Lord said: "All virtues are worthless to me that come about apart from counsel; for I came to earth because of counsel." And I served my Father and all men on earth with great submission, and then I ascended into heaven in complete freedom. But in what I always did, no one follows me. The longing, prayer, and all the effort that one expends on her on earth shall adorn her when she ascends to heaven."

The soul: "Everything that is given to us as a help on our path to heaven is rightfully ours. But once we arrive there, it is shared by the souls. This God does for us for our own good, so that they might more readily come and help us praise God in eternal glory."

In justice, her suffering was to last seventeen years, but God's mercy reduced it to seventeen months because she had acted out of such intense love. May God help us to right moderation! Amen.

6. How the Soul Praises the Holy Trinity

Lord Jesus Christ, you have flowed spiritually out of the heart of your eternal Father from eternity and were born in the flesh from a pure and untouched virgin, St. Mary, and are with your Father one spirit, one will, one wisdom, one power, one superior might over everything that ever was, forever!

Lord, eternal Father, I, too, the most unworthy of all human beings, have flowed forth spiritually from your heart and, Lord Jesus Christ, was born in the flesh from your side and, Lord God and Man, I have been purified by the Spirit of you both. Thus do I, poor despondent human being, speak:

"Lord, heavenly Father, you are my heart.
Lord Jesus Christ, you are my body.
Lord Holy Spirit, you are my breath.
Lord, Holy Trinity, you are my only refuge and my eternal rest!"

7. How God Praises the Soul in Return

You are a solid foundation for my divine flowing.
You are a glory of virginal constancy.
You are a flower of sublime delight.
You are a vanquisher of devils.
You are a mirror of inward contemplation.

8. A Good Person Should Have Three Children for Whom to Pray

No one knows what consolation or suffering or longing is unless he is touched by these three himself. I am seeking help because I am sorely afflicted. I have three children that I see suffering great distress.

The first child is poor sinners who lie in eternal death. There is nothing to console them with except that they have a living human body." Alas, I look at the child with a bloody heart and I take it into the arms of my soul with weeping eyes and carry it before the feet of its Father from whom I got it. Then I look at the child and beg its faithful Father, Jesus, that he awaken this child with the same voice of his divine mercy with which he awakened Lazarus.12

To this God replies: "I shall heal the sickness of this child. If it does not again succumb to this death, it shall be like me in my beauty, in my nobility, and in my abundance, surrounded and permeated by all bliss in eternal everlastingness. Arise, my dear child, you are healed! Free will I have given you and shall never take it away, for according to it all your dignity shall be measured, like that of the saints, in the beautiful kingdom of heaven." Alas, this child still lies motionless upon its own selfish will.

My second child: these are the poor souls who are tormented in purgatory; to them I must give my heart's blood to drink. When I pray for them and see the many kinds of distress and the bitter thirst that they suffer in a specific manner for each sin, then I suffer the pain of a mother. And yet I am happy that they suffer torment for their real guilt to the glory of God. They accept their suffering with great patience because they see all their guilt clearly. They suffer their pain with acquired wisdom and drink into themselves much interior suffering. If this child is to recover soon, its mother has to be very faithful and merciful.

My third child: these are the imperfect in religious life. When I look upon all my sick children, for none do I feel more distress than for this one because, alas, it has so completely estranged itself from heavenly things through its external preoccupation with transitory things that it has utterly lost its noble way of life and its sweet intimacy with God, to which God had drawn it by especially choosing it. Because of this they become so completely disoriented that no one can turn them around with words. And so they revile the interior life, pervert God's sweetness, and maliciously interpret everything they see and hear, as well. Thus they appear wise outwardly but unfortunately are all fools inwardly. This child has the worst chance of recovery because it is the first to slip into stubborn contentiousness, then into indolence, then into false consolation, then into despair, and then, alas, it loses all grace. And so this poor child creeps along in its sinful existence till its end. Thus it is very doubtful indeed which direction this confused soul will take.

9. Concerning the Glory of Seventy Men Who Arose with Christ as Testimony

On the glorious day of Easter, when our redemption was so clearly made manifest and Jesus Christ arose in such might and left his grave in such majesty that the Jews and the heathens lost their power and all their honor and true Christians were blessed by the Father's good will, were made fortunate by the power of the Son, and were made holy evermore by the teaching of the Holy Spirit: on that day seventy men arose together with our Lord. They had been obedient to God's commands when they fought God's fight. They were found to be just when they were tempted and, in their great thirst, they splashed water with their hands to their mouth. Their souls were joined again by God to their bodies but in such a way that one could clearly tell that they had been dead.'

But the sinful human juice that Adam bit from the apple, that still courses through all our members because of our nature and, in addition, the cursed blood that originated in the apple for Eve and all women-that was not given back to them because their transformation was supposed to be a divine testimony with God that eternal death was dead. They were no longer subject to death because they did not have in themselves these two things.' Their soul separated from their body without pain or suffering. Their bodies lie in beauty above the air and above the stars. Because they did not die a second time in a human manner, their bodies did not need to be buried on earth.

Adam, and all men with him, retained this juice. Eve and all women kept this shameful blood. This alone it is that by nature torments our flesh and our senses, and ultimately has to die bitterly within us. For after Adam's fall the only affliction Jesus Christ took from us was eternal death and he ordained that, through sorrow, we might come back. He did, however, give us very much sweet consolation, counsel, and teaching through which we might easily recover from all our debilities.

10. How Sin Is Like God's Greatness

The greatness of almighty God is similar to nothing as much as it is to the sinful immensity of my wickedness.

11. A Religious Name Shall Be Exalted. Concerning the Conduct of Sisters. How They Should Pray and Toil with God

O religious Name,15 how noble you are above all earthly names. For this reason Jesus Christ himself wanted to bear you so faithfully his whole life that all lofty names-king, emperor, count, and all names that are named for nobility-must decay; but a religious name alone shall be exalted to the extent that it has been here nobly borne. Indeed, it shall be wonderfully, especially, and in sanctity raised up near Brother Jesus and Sister Mary, who were the very first always to bear a religious name, suffering outwardly such great contempt but with such holiness inwardly. This is very much contrary to those people who here with much ostentation adorn themselves spiritually with holy bearing and deep bowing, and drape themselves in public in beautiful words that one might well imagine that inwardly they possess the flood of the Holy Spirit which is causing it all to come gushing forth. No, unfortunately it is sometimes a very cunning temptation that causes a person to assume out of self-will that, without effort and without striving, he has a good name; and yet he does not feel in his heart the full birth of the Holy Spirit. This comes clearly to light when he turns into a fierce bear and a roaring lion in the presence of his closest companions, when he should be a lamb as to meekness and a dove as to virtues. Thus their life before the world is a sham, and before God and their equals a very damaging lie.

Woe to you, most wretched Lust, how my heart is enraged by you! For you rob my dear sisters of their inward sweetness of God and the outward loveliness that should be preparing them and leading them to the holy bridal bed of the Holy Trinity. You make them so hard inwardly and so indignant outwardly that one cannot utter a spiritual word in their presence without their immediately twisting it.

No, dear Sister, before all else you must have an open mind. Then you will get an obliging heart and an open soul into which grace can flow. If you expand too much your basic needs without reason or necessity, truly you shall never have a share in the heights of holy longing, the breadth of divine feeling, and the depths of God's flowing sweetness. It is an eternal shame and an extreme crudity that a king's bride so much enjoys wallowing in muck.

Ah, Sister, if you are to pray as you should, surrender yourself to God completely and say: "Dear intimate Friend, Jesus, this hour belongs to you alone, to poor sinners, to Holy Christianity, and to distressed souls, but not to me. All power and strength of my heart I give you today, Lord, that you, my Love, to your own praise might come to their aid in accordance with my desire; and grant me thereafter, Lord, that I really know who I myself am. Then I shall really be downcast."

But, dear Sister, when you go to your work, bless yourself and say: "Lord, this hour belongs to you and me. Help me, Jesus,

Love of my heart, that I may burrow my soul and my mind so deeply into you that earthly desire may not devour me." Indeed, Sister, if you are just humanly wise, desire will attack you fiercely. But if your wisdom comes from grace, no evil can seduce you or betray you. For in that grace which flows forth from the Holy Trinity into a heart that remains ever open to heaven, one finds truth and good judgment in all things. It is quite easy to seem good to people. But if truth is absent, you are snake's venom. Make your heart ever pure within and be humble outwardly. Then you are one with God.

12. How God Responds to a Brother Concerning What Is Written in This Book"

Master Heinrich, you are surprised at some of the words that are written in this book. I am surprised that you can be surprised at this. Indeed, ever since I, sinful woman, have been required to write, it has been a matter of great distress to me in my heart that I am able to describe this authentic knowledge and these holy sublime contemplations to no one except through these words. They seem to me, compared to eternal truth, all too feeble.

I asked the eternal Master what he had to say about this. He replied: "Ask him how it happened that the apostles, after having been so timid, became so bold when they received the Holy Spirit." Ask also where Moses was when he saw nothing but God.' Then ask as well how it happened that Daniel spoke in childhood.""

13. Tm Kinds of Benefit a Good Person's Prayer Has

That prayer has great power
Which a person undertakes with all his might.
It makes a bitter heart sweet
A sad heart happy
A poor heart rich
A foolish heart wise
A faltering heart bold
A weak heart strong
A blind heart seeing
A cold soul burning.
It draws great God down into a small heart.
It drives the hungry soul up to God’s fullness.
It brings together two lovers, God and the soul, to a place of bliss.
There they talk much of love.
O woe! That I, unhappy sack of misery, cannot die there!

14. The Purgatory of Bad Priests

It has been a long time since I saw purgatory. It was like fiery water and boiled like fiery bell metal. Above it was a cloak of murky fog. In the water fish were floating about that had human form. These were the souls of wretched priests who in this world floated in greedy desires and burned in damned lust that so utterly blinds them that they are unable to love anything good. Upon the water were fishermen who had neither boats nor nets. Instead, they fished with their fiery claws because they actually were spirits and devils. When they brought them to the shore, they cruelly tore their skins off and threw them right into a boiling pot. Then they jabbed them with fiery pitchforks. When they decided they were well done, they gobbled them with their beaks. Then the devils went back out on the water, expelled them from under their tails, and then fished for them, boiled them, and devoured them again.

15. The Purgatory of a Good Priest

A pure priest died in his own assigned parish. I prayed for him, as one Christian is accustomed to do for another. Then my soul saw him in marvelous honor, as he was yet in the state of waiting for heavenly glory. Four angels led him across the storms in the first heaven and plucked harps with heavenly strings for his enjoyment. This was the purgatory by which they prepared him for heavenly bliss. I asked him how he had gained this special honor.

He said: "On earth I loved solitude and was fearful only in my prayers."

I said: "Ah, most blessed Man, why did you not ascend right to heaven with these delightful angels?"

He replied thus: "The glory that I am to receive because of my pure priestly life is so great that I cannot yet enter into it."

16. It Is Diabolical to Sin

Some people who are learned say it is human to sin. In every temptation of my sinful body, in every movement of my heart, in every bit of knowledge of my senses, and in the whole nobility of my soul, I could never find anything else but that it is diabolical that one commit a sin. Whether the sin be small or great, the devil is always its companion. Indeed, it is the devilishness that we take upon ourselves through our selfish free will that is much more harmful to us than our whole human nature. This is human: hunger, thirst, heat, frost, pain, grief, temptation, sleep, weariness. These are the things that Christ, who was true man, bore upon his person because of us and with us. Indeed, if sin were purely human, then he should have sinned, too. For he was true man in the flesh, a just man in wisdom, a man steadfast in virtue, and a perfect man in the Holy Spirit. Beyond that he was eternal God in eternal Truth and not a sinner. But if we are to become like him, we also have to live like him or be saved by sorrow.20

17. This Is a Greeting, Praise, and Prayer of a Sinner21

Greetings to you, living God.
You are mine before all things.
I am endlessly glad
That I can speak to you without guile.
When my enemies pursue me,
I flee to your arms
Where I can complain about my suffering
While you incline yourself to me.
You well know how you can pluck
The strings of my soul.
Ah, begin at once

That you may be ever blessed.
I am a low-born bride;
And yet you are my lawful husband.
I shall ever rejoice about this.
Remember how well you can caress
The pure soul on your lap
And do it, Lord, to me now,
Even though I am not worthy of you.
Ah, Lord, draw me up to you.
Then I shall be pure and radiant.
If you abandon me to myself,
I shall remain dark and sluggish.

18. How God Responds to This

Thus does God answer:

“I respond to your greeting with such a heavenly flood:
Were I to give myself to you in all my power,
You would not preserve your human life.
You well know I must hold back my might
And hide my splendor

To let you remain in earthly misery
Until all my sweetness rises up
To the heights of eternal glory,
And my strings shall play sweetly for you
In tune with the true value of your patient love.
Still, before I begin,
I want to tune my heavenly strings in your soul,
So that you might persevere even longer.
For well-born brides and noble knights
Must undergo a long and intensive preparation at great cost."

19. How Seventeen Kinds of Sin Pursue a Person

These things drive a person so far from God that he can never come back to God unless great force is exerted upon him by the Holy Trinity.

Vanity is the first sin that begins to chase a person away from God;
And if we don't leave it, then lust rises up;
But if we don't leave lust, then greed rises up;
If we don't leave that, then sloth rises up;
If we don't leave that, then lying rises up;
And if we don't leave that, then perjury rises up;
If we don't leave that, then anger rises up;
And if we don't leave that, then slander rises up;
If we don't leave that, then pride rises up;
And if we don't leave that, then hatred rises up;
And if we don't leave that, then vengeance rises up;
And if we don't leave that, then despair rises up;
If we don't leave that, then insolence rises up;
If we don't leave that, then shamelessness rises up;
If we don't leave that, perverted wisdom rises up;
If we don't leave that, unbelief rises up and says: "It is not as they say."

Alas, they then receive all things coming from God with such distrust that one scarcely dares say anything at all to them. And what they produce themselves is so twisted and utterly shot through with lies that, alas, no one can find the Holy Spirit in their words. But sometimes they act in a praiseworthy manner. Unfortunately it is deceptive.

Perfect soul, rejoice.
You alone are like God.
This is indeed fitting;
For you drink in with godlike patience
Many a bitter draught though guiltless.

You are often saddened by your enemy like hell's frost on heaven's flowers. Yet they go on blooming, exalted in their noble beauty. For through the Holy Spirit the root of their constancy is green in all seasons.

20. Praise of God in Eight Things. An Offering for Sins

O great dew of the noble Godhead,
O tender flower of the sweet maiden,
O beneficial fruit of the fair blossom,
O holy sacrifice of the heavenly Father,
O faithful pledge of redemption for the whole world!
You, Lord, are my refreshment
And I am your blossoming.
You are small before me, Lord, in your submissiveness,
And I am great before you in the misery of my wickedness.
Daily I offer you whatever I have:
Nothing but baseness.
And you, Lord, shall infuse me with your grace.
Then I can flow from your love.

21. Why Man Is Rejected and Yet Loved, and How You Should Bless Yourself

Thus does the mind of a person speak who has experienced truth: Lord, my body has been killed through the elimination of all wickedness. That is why your enemies have cast me from their presence like a dead man who smells foul. And yet, Lord, my soul is alive in you. That is why I am loved by your friends. Ah, Bridegroom dear to my heart, my sweet Jesus Christ, I bless myself unceasingly in my heart before all earthly things and I beg you that you keep me untouched by them; for no matter how holy they are, they draw me away from you at the highest point. That I cannot bear, and that is why I must creep away from them.

22. The Seven Things ofJudgment; Shame and Good Will

The noblest joy of the senses, the holiest peace of heart, and the greatest delight in doing come from keeping one's integrity in all that one does. Our dear Lord speaks about this and teaches me seven things that all the blessed shall have about them who shall preside over the last judgment with Jesus Christ.22 Whoever does not have these things shall stand before the court like a sold servant before his master. For all who here struggle against God's truth on the side of crafty lying sell off these virtues.

The first is: to be just in the present life. This means: if I see my friend treating God's enemy and mine unjustly, then I should in loyalty reprove my friend and in charity help my enemy. The second is: to be merciful in distress. Explanation: if I see my friend and my enemy in equal distress, I should help both equally. The third is: to be faithful in public. Explanation: I should never scold my companion except for his unrepented sins. The fourth is: to be ready to help in secret. Explanation: that one search out and inquire where the lonely, sick, and prisoners are; and that one soothe them with words and bid them tell you their secret distress, so that you might be able to come to their aid. Woe to those who pass by those who are sick and alone without groans, tears, or any sign of compassion. How ill that befits those in religious life and, alas, drives them so far from God that they immediately lose sweet intimacy with God; yet they do not want to believe that God's judgment has struck. The fifth is: to be silent in distress. Explanation: that one not speak those reckless words that arise out of an arrogant and angry heart. If one so refrains, one shall find unfathomable favor with God. The sixth is: to be full of the truth. Explanation: that person is genuinely full of the truth whose heart, to the best of his knowledge, reproaches him with not the slightest wrongdoing and who is glad that God's eye sees into his heart, and who would not need to feel ashamed anywhere, even if everyone looked into his heart. The seventh is: to be the enemy of lies. Explanation: that we reproach lies in everyone and we do not cover them up in our own case.

These seven things we should practice and accomplish against the desires of our miserable flesh and against lust and the weakness of the human senses. We can accomplish them in no other way.

But the nobility of our soul gives us the first counsel for all good things with God's true sweetness; however, our perverted flesh in its baseness neglects many a godlike deed. Whenever we remember the blessed hour when God so skillfully created us out of the infinite depths of his heart, and out of his wisdom and out of his cheerful disposition, which pours out in all its goodness without surcease, and out of his sweet mouth-spiritually into our soul, with wisdom into our mind, with benefit to our body, then we must outwardly be ashamed of our evil habits and inwardly of our fickle heart. We should also, alas, be consciously ashamed that with so little benefit we bear the noble and numerous gifts of God, that they return such puny fruit to

the place from which they flowed out.23 Good will brings all virtues to their rightful place, even when the body is incapable of the deeds.

23. St. Mary's Prayer, Gabriel's Light, the Child's Blanket, Where the Milk Came from, the Gifts for the Child, the Devils, and the Hunger Cloth

I saw a maiden at her prayer. Her body was bowed to the earth and her spirit had raised itself toward the eternal Godhead; for before the time when Jesus Christ opened heaven with the key of the holy cross, no human being was so holy that his spirit could or would ascend to the eternal heights by striving and soaring, by longing and embrace with the love of the Holy Trinity. This is why the spirit of the pure virgin was not able to enter heavenbecause Adam had shoved the bolt shut so fast. But God inclined himself at times so close to the earth that he consoled his friends and they perceived his will. And the prophets cried out and entreated our Lord to come down. But it was this virgin who drew our Lord down here with the sweet voice of her soul; and she said in her prayer when she was alone: "Lord God, I am happy that you intend to come in such a noble manner that a maiden shall be your mother. Lord, I want to serve in this with my chasteness and with all that I have from you."

Then the angel Gabriel strode down here in a heavenly light. The light surrounded the virgin all around, and the angel wore garments the likes of which I never discovered anywhere on earth. When she glimpsed the light with the eyes of the flesh, she arose and was frightened. Looking at the angel she discovered in his face the same chasteness that she had. She stood there with great composure, inclined her ear, and raised up her mind. Then the angel greeted her and announced God's will to her. His words were pleasing to her heart; her senses became full and her soul fiery. But still she asked for clarification. Her maidenly modesty and divine love moved her to do so. When she had been instructed, she opened her heart willingly with all her might. She knelt down and said: "I surrender myself to God's service according to your words."24

Then the whole Holy Trinity, with the power of the Godhead, the good will of its humanity, and the noble delicacy of the Holy Spirit, passed through her whole virginal body into the fiery soul of her devout will, placed itself in the open heart of her most pure flesh, and united itself with all that it found in her, so that her flesh became its flesh in such a manner that a perfect child grew in her body and she became a true mother of his flesh, while remaining an unblemished virgin. The longer she carried him, the more radiant, beautiful, and wise she became. Then she arose and said: "Lord Father, I praise you because you have made me great, and my family shall become great in heaven and on earth."25

When the time had come, when other women are sad and move about with difficulty, Mary was agile and cheerful. And yet her body was quite swollen because she had within it the fully developed Son of God. Mary did not know in advance when God wanted to be born of her until she saw him in her lap on the road on that night in Bethlehem-in a strange town where she herself was a poor homeless guest. The almighty Father with his wisdom, the eternal Son with his human truth, the Holy Spirit with his delicate sweetness passed through the intact wall of Mary's body with blissful ease and without any effort. It had happened just as quickly as when the sun in loving calm sends forth its light upon the sweet dew.

When Mary gazed at her fair child, she inclined her head to his face and said: "Welcome, my innocent Child and mighty Lord, all things are yours." At the conception of our Lord, while his mother was expecting, at his birth, and while he was on the lap of his mother before being placed in the crib, the power of the Holy Trinity and the blissful celestial fire in Mary were so intense that the spirit of hell, which travels about the whole world and knows everything that happens to all things, was not able to approach closely enough to the land and place where Mary was to learn of the miraculous way the Child had gotten there.

Mary took a coarse blanket from Joseph's saddle-one that the donkey had on his back under the saddle-and the upper part of her shift under which she had carried our Lord. The other part she tied around her body again. The delicate virgin wrapped the hardy Savior in this blanket and laid him in the crib. Then he immediately began to cry like a newborn child. As long as babies are unable to speak, they never cry except to express a real need. This is just what our Lord did when, despite his noble nature, he was put to bed in a cowshed because of base sin. He wept for all humankind, hiding all his happiness and all his power. The virgin was sad, and the Child was hungry and cold.

Then the mother had to nurse her Son. This was his Father's will and the Holy Spirit's pleasure. In maternal love, with maidenly bearing, the virgin bent down to her afflicted child and offered him her youthful breast. Now hear of the marvel! The bright blossoming of her fair eyes, the spiritual beauty of her maidenly countenance, the sweetness flowing from her pure heart, and the delightful sparkle of her noble soul: these four things drew together according to the will of the Father, the need of the

Son, and the delight of the Holy Spirit in her maidenly breast. And sweet milk flowed forth from her pure heart without any pain. The Child suckled like a human child and his mother rejoiced in a holy manner. The angels sang to God a hymn of praise. The shepherds came and found for all to see our true pledge of redemption in a crib belonging to another.

Then I asked Mary where Joseph was. She said: "He has gone into town and is buying us some small fish and plain bread." Water is what they drank. Then I said: "Lady, you should be eating the very best bread and drinking the finest wine." "No," she said, "that is the food of rich people. We don't have any of that in this poor life."

When the strange star appeared, Satan, too, came to Bethlehem and cunningly followed the three kings; and he gazed with much malice at the Child.

As they were offering the Child great honor with expensive gifts, Satan's thoughts became very confused and he said this to himself: "Poor wretch, what is happening to you now? This could well be the same child of whom the prophets have written, whom your master Lucifer so long and so often put in your charge-that you should come to his birth and make it impure. Then the whole world would remain subject to hell. This child was begotten and born without sin. Otherwise, it would not have been hidden from me. Now all my wiles have been lost. Now I will have to return to my master and lament to him my distress, for this child is going to be too much for us. If it is going to climb above us, how are we supposed to put up with that? Never was any child born who was given such honor."

When Lucifer heard this news, the archfiend sat there gnashing his teeth and shrieking, and the fire of his wrath lit up all of hell. He spoke: "If a human being is to be judge over us, we shall have to tremble evermore before all men who live according to his will. Go back again, Satan, and get the help of the princes of the land, the teachers of the Jews, and teach them how to kill him while he is still a child before he goes to school."

When Satan came to Herod, he discovered Lucifer's likeness in this evil man: hate, pride, greed. On these three paths the great devil proceeded into his bulky heart and spread out into all his five senses and made the king so murderous that he carried out the devil's will on innocent children, who are now glorious saints in heaven.

I asked Mary what she had done with the gifts26 since she did not buy a sacrificial lamb.27 She said: "Sacred flowing generosity, mercy to those in distress, and the love of voluntary poverty took this treasure from me. My sacrificial lamb was Jesus Christ, the Son of God almighty, who was born out of my heart and whom, according to the decree of his Father, all immaculate lambs signify who were ever brought for sacrifice in honor according to his Father's intention. He is my true sacrificial lamb; I was to have no other. The offerings that were brought to my Child I used to remember all those whom I found truly to be in need. These were poor orphans, and pure virgins who were thereby able to marry and not be stoned.2S Also, those who were alone and ill, and those far advanced in age: these were supposed to have the advantage of it, and God intended it for them. But thirty marks of gold were left over after I soothed the distress of these poor. These I was supposed to give for a hunger cloth to which the common people went for their prayer; for there were many symbols pictured on it."29

The cloth was half black and half white. On the north side in the temple the cloth was black. This signified the long-lasting darkness during the old law.30 Upon it were embroidered green images; for although the old law was darkened by many serious sins, yet there were some people during that time who did not shrivel up from their sins; rather, they were dark because of the legalistic observances. All the pictures showed the guilt and distress that so greatly moved mighty God to preserve Noah the just man and his household and let the whole world perish. On the south in the prayer house the cloth was splendidly white. This was a sign of the pure radiant chastity of St. Mary, through which we all should still overcome all the sufferings of our hearts. Upon it were embroidered pictures in gold, likenesses of the birds that Noah sent forth from the ark, which were recognized as signifying the faithless greedy ones who seek all their comfort here on earth. Also embroidered there was the pure dove with the green branch who, guiltless of this, came back again, who did not take the carrion flesh into its mouth. This signifies those who day after day approach God with new virtues and keep themselves steadfastly flying on course toward heaven, drawn by the Holy Spirit.

All the way down the middle, where the pieces came together, was a stripe of gold. Through the middle of this went a green border encrusted with precious stones. This signified the most precious wood that bore the body of our Lord when the gates of heaven were pierced through and beat upon with hammers, and the bolt of Adam flew off them. Although few recognized the meaning, the two ornaments were a glorious cross.31 Upon the cross was embroidered a white sacrificial lamb and it was adorned with precious stones and bright gold, as though it were about to catch fire. This was a prophetic symbol-and it then

came to passwhen the innocent Lamb of God suffered a great death of love upon the lofty tree. This is why, at the passion of our Lord, the lifeless hunger cloth fell, together with the dead lamb, so that the living Lamb of God should ever be adored on that very spot. Mary sewed for her Child Jesus a coat with an adjustable seam, so that when the coat became too short or tight, she would widen and lengthen it. The coat was brownish and of coarsely fibered thread.

Joseph was a poor people's carpenter and earned many a penny for their needs. Mary sewed and spun to make clothes for the three of them. When they fled into Egypt, God's angel embraced them with a heavenly light, so that the devil did not know where the Child had gone off to until the time when it had grown to a youth thirty years old and was a perfect man. Then the devil became aware of him in the desert and thereafter on many occasions when he manifested his divinity. Then he turned to the Jewish teachers; they were inwardly very wicked but outwardly quite handsome in their bearing. He taught them how they might resistJesus with twisted words and not accept his teaching, but might stand firm in their Jewish law.

Then Satan went again to Lucifer and said: "Alas, Master, our honor shall fall! I have found on the sinful earth a man who is by himself stronger and wiser than were all of us before we fell. Even with all my wits I cannot make him entertain a sinful thought."

And Lucifer again bared his fangs like a dog and snapped with his hellish mouth and said: "You shall stir up all men against him. If he is the most exalted of all men, he will be able to escape all sin."

"Master, we can easily get out of this mess, for I can find a lot of people who would gladly kill the man."

He said: "No, I am afraid it might well turn out bad for us, for with the power of God on high he so easily frees people from infirmities of the flesh and from human death. If his body were taken from him, I fear even more that his soul would come to us and free those who are his. For that goes far beyond our power that he frees people on earth-contrary to nature-from all kinds of suffering and even death. Still, because of original sin he must go down to hell himself. But if he remains pure of all sin and if one takes his life from him though he is innocent, then he does not belong in hell, for never was an angel or a human being damned without being guilty. But if he is noble and free, then whatever he wills shall happen, no matter what we want. But you can see to it with your artful ways that the greatest crowd belongs to us, to hell. And you should constantly strive that people revile him to the limit and that they torture him with the most excruciating pain. If he then turns out to be simply human, he will fall into great despair and thus will remain ours."

Mary, our Lady, spoke to our Lord with her thoughts as often as she wanted, and his Godhead then answered her sometimes. This is why she bore the sufferings in her heart with such control. Mary Magdalene, however, was quite unprepared when she did not see our Lord with the eyes of the flesh.32 She was inconsolable and her heart was the while full of grief and distress. She burned intensely in simple love without lofty knowledge of heavenly things until the hour when the apostles received the Holy Spirit." Only then was her soul wounded by the Godhead. But our Lady was very calm when our Lord arose from death so gloriously. And yet of all humankind her heart was most deeply filled with divine knowledge.

24. The Six Kinds of Children of Our Lord God and the Virtues of St. Dominic and How God Has Honored His Order in Four Ways

An exalted prince has a son who is an advantage for him and brings much consolation to his people. The son is such a cause of praise for his father and such a gloriously dear son that the memory of the son and all his deeds engender the father's glory wherever the son turns. This exalted prince is our dear Lord, the heavenly Father. He has gotten seven capable sons and a very beautiful daughter by our mother, Holy Christianity. His first Son, our dearest Brother-that was our Lord Jesus Christ. What honor the heavenly Father has from this Son and what consolation his people have from him are quite obvious. And how the heavenly Father united himself with this Son and how he has put him at his right hand and how much majesty and honor he has given him-that is boundless and yet fitting. The second son of the heavenly Father were the holy apostles, who preserved for us the precious treasure that was dug out of the lofty mountain34 that a tree bore, and our enemies pierced through it35 at five places and drove out and smashed all our heavenly treasure. The third son were the bold martyrs who drenched the path to heaven with their blood. The fourth son were the steadfast confessors who cleanse us and teach us. The fifth son were the pure virgins who have preserved their chastity out of love for God. They are able to move the heavenly Father on our behalf because they bear his likeness fully in themselves. He wants to have them for himself alone, and they shall wear their garlands in his embrace forever. Indeed, they shall not cover their heads in shame, as is the custom for earthly brides.

When our Lord so gloriously put these worthy children near him in such sublime hospitality that all their earthly suffering and practices had been forgotten, his common folk wandered so far off from the true faith and from sincere confession that the heavenly Father felt compassion and got then two more sons at one birth by our dear mother, Holy Christianity. And she nursed these two sons herself at her two breasts which are so full of sweet milk that never in the least can they be sucked dry. These breasts were and are the old law and the new law with which our mother, Holy Christianity, nurses all God's children.

Our Lord said this, too: "One should not ordain anyone a priest unless he is familiar with both the Old and the New Testament, because with just one leg no one can go to court or serve for any length of time."

The two sons are the preachers and the lesser brothers, of whom St. Dominic and St. Francis were the first roots. Alas, how much of what they faithfully practiced has been lost! The more that is lost, the weaker the order becomes. The less long it stands, the sooner another son shall be born out of the faithful heart of the eternal Father, who does not want to desert his children in these times.

St. Dominic watched out for his brothers with true devotion, with a friendly face, and with holy wisdom; not carelessly, not with perverse intentions, and not in a cruel manner. The wise man he taught, in addition, to temper all his knowledge with divine simplicity. The simple man he taught true wisdom. Those suffering temptation he helped bear all their interior suffering in secret. The young he taught to hold their tongues; because of this they became outwardly proper and inwardly wise. The sick and the frail he consoled quite lovingly and also showed serious concern for all their distress. They were all very happy that he stayed with them so long, and his sweet company soothed them for all their wearying toil. In its beginnings this order was pure, simple, and full of burning love of God, as well. The pure simplicity God gives to some people is at times so ridiculed by others that the gift in which one finds and chooses God's wisdom is lost. This extinguishes the burning love of God as well.

That member of the order who finds it painful to be highly esteemed and who considers all earthly honor to be a serious temptation cannot desert this way of thinking because of the nobility of his religious spirit that he accepted from God in an attitude of holy submission of his heart to all creatures. Either he will retain the honor in shame and fear, in constant zeal, in compassionate helping, and in cheerful joy, or he must strive with all great wisdom to put down the burden honorably. For the heart of a religious must have calm peace and must blossom forth in love toward the Holy Trinity.

God has given special honor to these two sons in four things. He did this so that they would have no other concern about themselves except to avoid sin. "Rather," our Lord said, "all their concern and striving should be directed toward my people's becoming blessed and holy." The first thing is that they are handsomely welcomed by people. The second is faithful help without payment with the necessities of life. The third is holy wisdom coming from divine truth. The fourth is power in practical matters in Holy Christianity. When one mercilessly drives the brothers to work without gentle counsel, much damage results, about which I must now be silent.

25. Something That One Misses in Heaven in Seven Things; Thereafter Follow Seven Things; the Praise of a Disheartened Person Is Beneficial in Seven Ways

One thing in heaven I miss most of all. It is also the noblest, shines forth toward the Trinity most beautifully, and costs the most in this life as well. This is that one is willing, able, and skillful in praising God well from the heart and in thanking him cheerfully and in raising one's desires aloft and in bringing one's works to fruition while one is in poverty, in disgrace, in loneliness, in times of suffering, in spiritual aridity-which is most difficult of all, while compelled by obedience, and in all kinds of bitterness both within and without. Because of this the soul and body in heaven become so worthy of esteem and praise that they sing more beautifully of love than the others, shine more radiantly in joy than the others, soar higher than the others, and live in greater bliss than the others. They are more finely adorned than the others, have a greater abundance of honor than the others, enjoy greater delight, and drink more deeply in the Holy Trinity than the others.

"Lord God, I ask you: How fragrant do you find this praise and these acts of thanksgiving that a despondent person offers without experiencing any sweetness?"

Now hear what he said: "It rises up majestically, its honor is and shall become manifold; for all that ever was shall yield to it until it arrives at the abode of my Holy Trinity and there performs such marvels that it utterly permeates my Three Persons and stirs, charms, and enamors my whole Trinity. The soul senses quite well the fragrance I possess. I cannot be completely intimate with her unless she is willing to lay herself in utter repose and nakedness in my divine arms, so that I can take delight

in her. For it was for this that I surrendered myself into her power-like a child, poor, naked, bare, scorned, and finally into death-that she alone-ah, if she desires it-might be my closest, my dearest companion. And she shall ever more in soul and body soar about and play to her heart's content in my Holy Trinity and drink herself full like the fish in the sea. And all the pain that she suffered for love of me and in imitation of mewhere has it all gone then? Thus shall I prepare for her sweet amusements.

26. How God Praises Himself and Celebrates Himself in Song

Ah, now listen how the Holy Trinity praises itself with its wisdom that has no beginning, with its goodness that has no end, with its everlasting truth, and with its whole eternity. Now harken to that sweetest, most sublime, and bliss-filled voice, as the Holy Trinity sings with full voice within itself from where have flowed forth the sweet voices of all the saints that have sung in heaven and on earth, and shall do so eternally.

The Father's voice recites a hymn of praise to himself: "I am a flowing spring that no one can block; but a man can easily block up his heart with an idle thought, so that the restless Godhead that continually toils without toil cannot flow into his soul."

The Son sings thus: "I am a constantly recurring richness that no one can contain except the boundlessness which always flowed and shall ever flow from God, and which comes again in its fullness with his Son."

The Holy Spirit sings this praise: "I am an insuperable power of truth. This one finds in a person who to his honor perseveres in God, come what may."

Thus does the whole Trinity sing: "I am so strong in my undividedness that no one can ever separate me or shatter me in all my eternity."

27. The Heavenly Father Received His Son, Jesus, with Twelve Words

With these words the heavenly Father received his Son when he had come out of this earthly strife into heavenly peace: "Welcome, my glorious Son, who are I myself, my hand in your works, my honor in your power, my strength in your struggle, my praise in your victory, my will at your resurrection, my marvel at your ascension, my wrath at your judgment. The immaculate bride that you are bringing me shall belong to you and me indivisibly forever. My Godhead is your crown, your humanity is my reconciliation." The Spirit of us both is one will, one counsel, one strength in all things without end and without beginning. Your soul is the most intimate bride of our Three Persons."

Oh, how delightfully the soul of Christ sparkles in the whole Holy Trinity, just like the delightful flashing in the beautiful sun that no one can see who does not have the fairest of eyes.

28. The Seven Crowns of Brother Albert. Disposition Is One Thing, Choice Is Another

Wherever knowledge includes wisdom and love, choice brings fruit; and no one knows whether one is good until one is tempted by evil.

I prayed for the soul of Brother Albert of Minden, and God showed me his excellence. I saw the crowns of seven virgins suspended above his head. I was greatly puzzled how this could be, because he had been a penitent.37 Our Lord said: "He won these crowns because he preserved seven virgins' chastity through much effort simply out of love for me; and all of them shall enhance his dignity eternally, but they shall never touch his body or his soul."

I saw this in heaven: reward, dignity, and crown; and it is not all the same thing. Reward has to do with actions, dignity with virtues, the crown with love. But the reward's abundance is determined by the number of good actions. Dignity is extended by the amount of virtues. The crown shines on high according to the intensity of the fire of love.

Brother Albert told me then that a brother was going to die in six years, but this turned out not to be true. In the seventh year I asked our Lord why this was the case. Our Lord said: "He saw the predetermination and not my choice. I choose for my special friends long humiliation for which they are not at fault, and I keep alive in them the holy desire to live longer."

Whenever a person scrutinizes his heart in the light of love, that is, in truth, then he discovers nothing other than that he

should by rights be scorned more than anyone else. In this state his desire grows with boundless hunger and draws the person out of himself and into God's will to such an extent that God sees fit to prolong his life and bestows upon him completely new favors, if he is willing to keep and preserve them with diligent care.

29. After Ecstasy with God a Person Would Be Like an Angel If He Were to Follow It, and Concerning the Wickedness of the Devil

If a person were to conduct himself rightly after the ecstasy that comes from God and after the light which he experiences, he would enter into such great delight and such holy knowledge that no heart would be able to bear it. He would thus be like an angel ever in all things united in love with God. He would thus become the hell of the devil and the heaven of God. But when a good person leaves this rapture, God sends the devil to him to tempt him with those things that are hardest of all, so that he might wake him up again. But our dear Lord takes the devil's power away from him and protects the person so that he cannot bring him down. And yet he really thinks that he has been given leave to bring the person down as he would like. This is why he is so busy day and night. Alas for me! This has often happened to me!

God revealed to me such a glorious thing, promising to fulfill it, that because of my worthlessness I did not dare believe it. And so, alas, I did not thank him for it. Then the devil came and wanted to inflict pain on me.

I said: "What do you want? You see quite clearly that God is with me. How dare you torture me in his presence!"

The devil said: "I want now what I have always wanted-to put my chair next to his. Indeed, I would like to drive him from the chair of your soul, if I could, and sit down on it, and I would like heaven, paradise, purgatory, and earth to be one big hell in hell eternal."

And I said: "Don't you wish that all these things were heaven, so that you, too, might receive favor?"

He said: "No, that I can never do."

I said: "Alas, how very miserable you are, that you feel no shame before God!"

He said: "Whoever has anything good about himself is not completely evil, and he who sins loses all sense of shame; for if he felt shame he would not commit any sins. I am as cocky as a fly and land on everything. I spare no one.

Only the one who defends himself with virtue
Remains untroubled,
And he who stands firm in God
Conquers gloriously all the sorrows of his heart."

30. Twenty Powers of God's Love and Many Kinds of Names

Ah, dear divine Love, ever embrace my soul,
For it would murder me beyond all pain

If I were to be separated from you!
Ah, Love, let me now not grow cold,
My actions are all dead
When I do not feel you.
O Love, you cause sweet pain and distress;
You give the true children of God instruction and consolation.
O Fetter of love,
Your tender hand is strong.
It binds both young and old.
O Love, you make large burdens light,
And to you small sins seem heavy.
You serve without reward
Ministering to all creatures.

Ah, sweet divine Love, whenever I sleep too long
And miss good things,
Be so kind and awaken me,
And sing to me, Lady, your song
With which you touch the soul
Like a sweet chord of strings.

Ah, Lady Love, throw me beneath you.
I would gladly suffer defeat.
If you would only take my life,
That would be, Lady, all my solace.
Alas, generous divine Love, you pamper me too much.
This shall be my constant complaint.
Love, your most elegant greeting
Has filled my spirit.
Love, your most pure sufferings
Make me live without sin.

Love, your constant devotion
Has brought me to such sweet distress.
O divine Love, how can I be patient in your absence
If you want to be estranged from me?
Love, it is a blissful, heavenly exhilaration
That your absence is so pleasant for me.
O wondrous Love, ever blessed is he indeed,
Whom you instruct.
That is his most blissful humility,
That, Lady, he asks you to leave him.

Ah, Love, how few do you find
Who seek you with all their might in all things,
And with constant effort enjoy you
And who in the pangs of love bid you
That you flee from them.
But there are many
Who call out to you with their mouths
And turn from you in their actions.

Love, your leaving and coming
Are equally welcome to the well-ordered soul.
Love, you have worked that great miracle,
That God has performed with us in heartfelt love.

Love, your most refined purity
Standing like a lovely reflection
Of the chaste soul in God's presence
Creates in the breast of virgins
Hot pangs of desire
For Jesus their Love.
Those who love intensely and are virgins,
These are the maidens of the Seraphim.

Love, your holy mercy
Causes the devils much suffering.
Love, your sweet peace
Fosters calm minds and a pure life.
Love, your holy fulfillment
Makes spirits free
In voluntary poverty.
Love, your true perfection
Does not easily complain about misfortune or hardship.

31. Of Ten Powers of Love and That No Creature Can Fully Imagine the Longing of the Soul for God

O Love, how far your light shines in the soul
And how fiery is your glow
And how incomprehensible is the wonder of you
And how rich is your wisdom

And how ready is your gift
And how powerful are your bonds
And how perfect is your being
And how pleasant is your flow
And how abundant are your refreshments
And how faithful is your labor
And how holy is your discretion.

When you pass through the soul with all these things and she then rises up and begins to fly with the wings of a dove, which are all the virtues, and she then begins to desire with the longing of the eagle, she follows the heat up to heaven, for she finds everything transitory to be cold and tasteless.

Thus do I then speak from the mouth of truth:

Lord, the desire I have for you when you draw me up,
Lord, the wisdom I then receive in the flights of love,
Lord, the union I then grasp in your will,
Lord, the constancy I then preserve as your gift,
Lord, the sweet remembrance when I think of you,
Lord, the pampering love that I feel for you

is so rich in itself and is in your divine eyes so great-even if you did not know it, Lord, not even all the grains of sand, all the drops of water, all the grass and leaves, stones and wood, all lifeless creatures; in addition, all living creatures: fish, birds, animals, worms, flying and creeping things, devils, heathens, Jews and all your enemies; and more: all your friends, humans, angels, saints-now if all these persons could speak, were willing to, and called out unceasingly till the last day; truly, Lord, as you well know, they could not make clear to you even half of the intensity of my longing and the pain of my suffering and my heart's pursuit and my soul's striving for the fragrance of your balsam, to hang inseparably in your embrace forever.

Indeed, Lady Mary, Mother of God, how did you fare when with your Son you began to experience the love of the eternal

Godhead that a soul free of duplicity has in this life, united with the eternal Godhead, and the caresses with which he cherishes her? Lady, you could become weary and your Son would become faint, for the fiery energy of divine love surpasses all human strength.

32. The Sublime End of Sister Mechthild

Now I must, though under duress, write this story that I would gladly pass over in silence, because I greatly fear the stealthy sword thrust of empty glory. But I fear much more, if God gives me my due, that I, poor woman of God, have already kept silent about too much. Misery, fear, and constant suffering of the heart have I borne secretly from childhood regarding a good end. Now, most recently, God has revealed to me that two throngs came down from heaven in procession. These were virgins and angels. The virgins signify virtues with which a person has served God. The angels signify a pure life in which a person has followed God.

Our Lord and his glorious mother followed this delightful procession until the first ones stood before the person's mouth. The path was peaceful; all around it was brighter than the sun from the radiance of the saints who came out of God's bliss. Then the soul said: "Lord, this path suits me just fine, out of all proportion to my worth. But I greatly fear that I shall come out of my body."

Our Lord said: "If that should happen, I shall draw you into my breath, so that you will follow me like you would a magnet."

On both sides of the procession was a throng of devils. There were so many of them that I was unable to encompass them all with my sight. Still, I was not afraid of a single one. They thrashed about with great ferocity and they clawed each other like madmen. The soul was all the more elated when she then saw our Lord before her. In great astonishment she asked our Lord how this could be. Our Lord said: "The elation comes from the positive certainty that you know for certain that all these devils can never, ever keep you from me."

33. How Small Sins Harm Perfection and How Through Them the Devil Draws Close to the Soul

It impedes people in religious life most of all in their pursuit of perfection that they pay so little heed to small sins. I tell you truly: whenever I blunder with a laugh that harms no one, or with an annoyance in my heart that I reveal to no one, or with a bit of impatience at my own suffering, then my soul becomes so dark and my mind so dull and my heart so cold that I must weep in my gloom and lament in misery and amicably beg and strongly desire and humbly recognize all my deficiencies. Only then is the favor granted me in my wretchedness that I may creep back like a beaten dog into the kitchen. Further: when I have a defect about me that is unrecognized and unrepented, there immediately arises a hell stain on my soul. There is no help for it. The devil who is in charge of purgatory, where the sin shall burn, immediately thinks he is seeing his likeness. Terror begins to come over me since I am alone, though my soul had been made free of all terror when I received the gift that one calls conscious love. Then I fall immediately to the ground and say: "Have mercy on me, God" or "Our Father."" And then I return immediately into my sweet paradise out of which the stain had driven me.

34. Five New Saints Sent for the Sake of Bad People and How God Will Hereafter Wash Christianity in His Own Blood

Given the nobility of holiness and the weakness of human nature, I am very surprised that St. Elizabeth was so quickly canonized a saint after having been buried so short a time." Our Lord explained this to me and said: "It is right for messengers to be quick. Elizabeth is and was a messenger whom I sent to wretched women living in castles who were so permeated with lust, so covered with arrogance, and so constantly engulfed in vanity that they by rights should have gone into the abyss. But many a lady followed her example to the extent they could and wanted. I sent St. Dominic as a messenger to unbelievers and as a teacher to the ignorant and as a comfort to the despondent." I sent St. Francis as a messenger to greedy priests and arrogant lay persons.' St. Peter, the recent martyr, is my messenger of blood in which heretical Christianity so miserably lies imprisoned .12 They all say they are pure, but in my eyes they are impure. They say they are faithful, and yet in my eyes they are false. They say they love me, but they love their own flesh much more. Whoever wishes to remain with me, let him renounce with St. Peter his earthly body. Hidden guilt ultimately creates public distress."

I, poor wretch, became so bold in my prayers that I acted foolishly and took depraved Christianity into the arms of my soul.

I groaned to raise her up. Then our Lord said:

"Give up, she is too heavy for you."

"No, sweet Lord, I shall lift her up
and carry her to your feet
with those very arms of yours
with which you carried her on the cross."

And God granted wretched me my wish
So that he might make me hush.

When poor Christianity then stepped before our Lord, she was like a maiden. I looked at her and I noticed that our Lord was looking at her as well. I became very ashamed. Our Lord said: "Now just look! Isn't this maiden clearly the right one for me to love without end in my eternal nuptial bed and for me to take in my lordly arms and gaze upon with my divine eyes? She is blearyeyed in knowledge and her hands are crippled as well. She can hardly do any good works. She hobbles on the feet of her desires, for she seldom and listlessly thinks of me. Her skin is filthy as well, for she is impure and unchaste."

Then the poor spirit" said: "What can be done for her then?" Our Lord said: "I shall wash her in my own blood, and all the blessed who are truly guiltless I shall protect and take unto myself secretly in a holy death. What is more," said our Lord, "Sister Jutta of Sangerhausen I have sent as a messenger to the heathens with her holy prayers and good example."`

Our Lord said this as well: "I hereby send this book as a messenger to all religious people, both the good and the bad; for if the pillars fall, the building cannot remain standing." Truly, I say to you," said our Lord, "in this book my heart's blood is written, which I shall shed again in the last times."

Our Lord told me about three kinds of blood: "The first blood that was shed by Abel, the holy innocents, John the Baptist, and all those who shed their holy innocent blood before the death of our Lord-that was Christ's blood because for his sake they suffered a holy death. The second blood was the blood of the heavenly Father, which Christ poured forth from his innocent heart. The third blood, which shall be shed in Christian faith before the last day, is the blood of the Holy Spirit, for without the Holy Spirit's help no good action has ever been performed. The blood of the martyrs shed for the love of Christ gives participation46 and a crown. The blood of the Father in Christ gives redemption and faith. The last blood in the Holy Spirit gives perseverance and glory."

35. How Sister Mechthild Thanks and Praises God and Prays for Three Kinds of People and for Herself

Ah, kind Father, God in heaven, draw my ever-flowing soul unimpeded into yourself and flow toward her, Lord, with all the delightful things you have within yourself. Then she can beg and demand and praise you to the fullest for your goodness.

Ah, and give me, Lord, the rapture of your Holy Trinity in the sweet soaring of love, Lord, so that I may enjoy with honor all your generous gifts and so that, sweet Lord, I may never ask you for something, Lord, which you do not want to give me for your glory. Amen.

Ah, Father of all goodness, I, a poor sinner, thank you for all your faithful concern for my ravaged body, for my forsaken soul, for my sinful heart, for my saddened senses, for my being, which is despised in this world-Lord Father, these are what belong to me and nothing else-and for your dear Son, Jesus Christ, and for the community of all creatures when they were as yet undepraved and as they shall come again into the most glorious state that they can and want to attain.

Ali, sweet Father, with all these things I praise you today for all your faithful protection that you granted to my poor body and my forsaken soul. With these same things, great God, I thank you, Lord, for all your generous gifts which you, Lord, have ever deigned to give me in body and soul. With this throng of all creatures, I desire today, Lord, your praise in all things and for all things that, Lord Father, have flowed spotless out of your sweet heart. But with all these things, my Dearest of all dear things, I beg you, Lord, to give honor to yourself by the true transformation and complete conversion of poor sinners who today lie in mortal sin. I beg you also, my true Love, for a holy increase in all virtues and in Christian constancy for all the blessed who live here free from mortal sin. I pray to you also, Dearest, for all the suffering souls who have gone to purgatory because of our sins, souls whom we should have kept safe by our good example. I beg you, Lord, for holy sanctification, for true

protection, and for the fulfillment by the Holy Spirit for all those expressly who, for the sake of your love, have helped wretched me, Lord, endure my exile in body and soul.

I beg you, bountiful God, for the sake of your poor Son, Jesus, that you turn the pain of my spiritual poverty and the gall of my bitterness into honey on the palate of my soul. I pray to you, living God, on behalf of the eternal nobility of our Christian faith, that you, Lord, preserve it for us in your divine wisdom against all false testimony; and fortify, Lord, our spirit that it rest in your Holy Trinity. I pray to you, sweet Lord, for all my Christian torturers, that they may yet get to know you and love you in holiness. I pray to you, almighty God, for true support for false people in power to rule with good judgment and that the innocent in the community be mercifully spared. I beg you, eternal Consolation, that you come today to comfort all burdened souls who on this day in fear take leave of their bodies, that you, merciful-hearted God, may be their champion and mete out to them eternal life. I beg you, Lord, for the complete purification, spiritual constancy, and glorious preservation of divine truth in all things for all those especially who wear the garment of religious life and wield spiritual authority purely out of love for you.

I beg you, kind God, for true thankfulness at all times for all your gifts to help those who for love of you carry troublesome burdens. I beg you, holy God, for mercy when you consider my worthless life, and for constant union, Lord, of yourself with my soul and for the trusted viaticum of your holy body, that it may be at the end my last nourishment for soul and body. I also beg you, sublime, bliss-filled Trinity, at the last hour of that difficult separation of my poor soul from my sinful body, that you then, Lord, incline toward me so that all my enemies depart from me sad and I, Lord, according to your sweet pleasure and my long-felt desire, might unceasingly so gaze upon you that the eyes of my soul might sparkle in your Godhead and the sweet pleasure of your love might glide out of your breast and through my soul. Through our Lord Jesus Christ your Son."$ Amen.

Book VI

1. How a Prior or a Prioress or Other Religious Superiors Should Conduct Themselves Toward Those Under Them

Great fear is bound up with power. When one says, "You are now our superior or our prior or our prioress," God knows, my dear friend, you are in dire straits. You should then perform your venia' with great humility, turn immediately to prayer, and let God console you. You should so transform your heart in God's holy love that you love in a special way each and every brother or sister entrusted to you in all his needs. In all their difficulties you should show your subordinates and brothers loving cheerfulness or kind concern and compassion. With friendly words you should bid them go forth and preach boldly and hear confessions competently, for this is why God has sent them into this world-that they should be redeemers and helpers for poor sinners in the same way Christ was the Redeemer of the whole world, coming down from the lofty palace of the Holy Trinity into this stenchoozing world.

Thus shall you speak to each of your brothers in the deep humility of your pure heart: "Alas, my dear fellow, I, though unworthy of anything good, am your servant in all the ways I can be and not your master. Unfortunately, however, I have authority over you and send you forth with the heartfelt love of God. The difficulty of your task moves me deeply, and yet I make the decisions. I rejoice in the sublime honor the heavenly Father has prepared for you.

"I hereby send you forth in the same name, just as Jesus went forth from his Father, when he went searching for the one lost sheep for such a long time that he died of love. May God's true love go with you on holy paths and in productive efforts. I shall send along with you the longings of my soul, the prayers of my heart, and the tears of my sinful eyes, that as a favor to me God might send you back here holy and full of love. Amen."

Thus shall you encourage all your brothers as they go forth. You should also raise their spirits when they return. You should go in advance to the guest quarters and with God's liberality make all arrangements for the basic comfort of God's disciples as far as is in your power. Indeed, dear fellow, you should even wash their feet yourself. You still remain their master or mistress. And be subject to them in humility. You should not spend a long time with guests. You should keep good order in the religious community. The guests should not stay up late; this is a holy matter. You should visit the infirmary every day and comfort the sick with the consoling words of God and refresh them generously with earthly things, for God is rich beyond all accounting. You should clean for the sick and in God cheerfully laugh with them. You should yourself carry away their personal waste, lovingly ask them in confidence what their private infirmity is, and truly stand by them. Then God's sweetness shall flow into you in marvelous ways.

You should also go into the kitchen and see to it that the needs of the brethren of the community are well taken care of, that your own stinginess and the laziness of the cook do not steal from our Lord sweet song in the choir. For a starving cleric does not sing well. Also, a hungry man cannot study with concentration. And so God often loses the best through the worst.

At chapter meetings you should be just but with a gentle spirit, basing your judgments completely on the amount of guilt. You should be very careful not to use your authority contrary to the will of the brethren or the community, for that is the source of much dissension.

You should always bless yourself when prideful thoughts come to you. Unfortunately, these do come into the heart under the semblance of good and say, "Well, after all, you are prior (or prioress) in all matters. You can certainly do what you think is best." No, dear fellow, in so doing you disturb God's holy peace. With a submissive spirit and endearing cheerfulness you should say: "Dear brother (or sister), how does this suit you?" and then take action according to their best-intentioned wishes.

Whenever the brothers (or sisters) in your community offer you honor, you should be inwardly afraid with a sharp watch on your heart, and outwardly you should show moderate embarrassment. You should receive all complaints with sympathy and you should offer all advice with sincerity.

If your brothers are planning great building projects, turn it into something holy and say: "Oh, dearly beloved brothers, let's

build the Holy Trinity a delightful palace in our souls with the Holy Scripture as the lumber and with noble virtues as the stones." Profound humility is the cornerstone of this glorious palace in which God eternal shall caress his love-starved bride without end with all the pleasure in his power according to her consuming desire. It has been chiseled in the sweet sufficiency of earthly transitoriness, where insatiable arrogance and cutting empty honor shall never provide the urge that we build something the way worldly lords or ladies do. Rather, we want to build on earth as heavenly princes do. Then, on the last day, we shall sit byJesus, who will still be poor, just like his holy apostles.2 Dear brothers, we want to build our dwellings in heaven with divine joy, and we want to build our huts on earth with concern,' for we have no certainty that we will live until tomorrow.

You should have an eagle's eyes, observing and seeing those under you lovingly in God, not with malice. If you find someone secretly suffering temptation, by all means stand by him with great love. Then God cannot help but be secretly close to you.

I want to tell those blessed brothers who have some office some words of truth that I saw in the Holy Trinity when I was alone in prayer. When a person prays in Christian faith with a heart so humble that one cannot endure a single creature to be beneath one, and with a soul so detached that all things but God alone disappear when one is praying, then a person is a divine God with the heavenly Father. But if a person then has a profound realization of how frail he is on his own, even in sweet embrace he will remain fearful to the extent that nothing will concern him but God's honor alone.

When, however, because of a real need and to achieve a practical result a person toils with the same love with which he prayed, then he is a human God with Christ. But what one botches up and does to no practical purpose and out of no real need is all dead before God.

When a person purely for the love of God and not for earthly reward instructs the ignorant, converts sinners, consoles the despondent, and brings those in despair back to God, then he is God the spirit with the Holy Spirit.

Ah, that is a very blessed person who does everything humanly possible that is praiseworthy in God's eyes with that same love for God's praise and with the constant good intention of his whole heart. That person is one whole person with the Holy Trinity.

But the dust of sin that settles upon us constantly, even against our will, is quickly annihilated by the fire of love when the glance of the eyes of our soul touches the Godhead with the lonely sighing of sweet desire that no creature can resist. When she begins to rise, the dust of sin falls away from her and she becomes one God with God in such a way that whatever he wills she wills as well, and they can be united in complete union no other way.

Indeed, dear fellow, you should readily offer our dear Lord God a free hour, day or night, during which you can pray lovingly and undisturbed. For heaven's gift with which God greets and instructs his chosen dear ones is in its nature so noble and so refined and flows so sweetly that when God eternal, gravely wounded by love for her, wants to visit the love-hungry soul in the cozy bridal bed, he would renounce for more than thirty years everything that he found pleasant if he might kiss her again and again and embrace her with his bare arms. If you were to think about this, how could you act so crudely as not to give him an hour a day in return for those thirty years?

When I, the most wretched of persons, go to my prayer, I deck myself out according to my worthlessness. I dress myself in the foul puddle that I myself am. Then I put on the shoes of precious time that I wasted day after day. Then I gird myself with the suffering I have caused. Then I put on a cloak of wickedness of which I am full. Then I put on my head a crown of secret shameful acts that I have committed against God. After this I take in my hand the mirror of true knowledge. Then I look at myself in it and see who I really am. Alas, I see nothing but utter misery. I prefer to wear these clothes rather than to have my wish regarding all earthly possessions. And yet they cause me such distress in my wretched fury that I would rather be clothed with hell and crowned with all the devils if this could happen through no fault of mine. Alas, how very often do robbers-our own ficklenesscome and strip these clothes from us when we are pleased with ourselves and in our guilt declare ourselves innocent?' Then we have been robbed by vain honor and struck down by pride. Then we are more naked than naked. Alas, how deeply must we then be ashamed before God, his friends, and all creatures!

If we want to overcome our shame with great honors, we must clothe ourselves with ourselves. So adorned, I seek Jesus, my sweet Lord, and I find him so quickly by no other means as by those things that are repugnant and burdensome. One should

very eagerly step forward with intense desire, ashamed of one's guilt, and with flowing love and humble fear. Then the filth of sin disappears from the divine sight of our Lord. And then lovingly he begins to cast his radiance toward the soul and she begins to dissolve out of deeply felt love. The soul loses all her guilt and all her sorrow, and he begins to teach her his complete will. Then she begins to taste his sweetness and he begins so to greet her with his Godhead, that the power of the Holy Trinity penetrates fully her soul and her body; and she receives true wisdom. And then he begins so to caress her that she becomes weak. She so begins to drink it all in that he becomes lovesick. Then he begins to limit the intensity, because he knows better her limits than she herself does. And then she begins longing to show him great faithfulness. And then he begins to give her full knowledge. And then she begins to taste with delight his love on her flesh. And then he begins to strengthen with holy feeling in her soul all his gifts. If she then guards against the ignoble love of her flesh and the alluring sweetness of all earthly things, she will be able to love to perfection and gain much praise for God in all things.

Now, dear fellow, there are still two more things that you must guard against with holy zeal, for they have never borne fruit. The first is that a man or woman wants to accomplish much in pursuing good deeds and fine conduct in order to achieve a high church office. Such an attitude vexes my soul. When such people have then achieved power, their baseness becomes so many-faceted that no one who voted for them with great enthusiasm is happy with them. They then become misguided by honors and their false virtues turn into vices.

The second is when a person is chosen rightfully with no meddling on his part and he then changes so completely that he never feels the urge to leave this office. This is a sign of many failings. For even if he is irreproachable in it, he should still be fearful and humble.

A sincere woman and a good man who after my death would have liked to talk with me but cannot should read this little book.

2. The Rule of a Canon: How He Should Conduct Himself. This Came from God

We should greet people in the Holy Spirit with his divine fullness, and we should thank them for their merciful gifts. But even more, in union with all creatures, we should thank the heavenly Father for his holy favor that he unceasingly pours out of his Holy Trinity day after day into the hearts of sinners. That the eagle flies so high, it has no need to thank the owl for that.

I prayed for a noble cleric at his wish.' This is the holy answer from God which he spoke to me: "His wish is to sink to a humble life, the favor I give him is great, and his will is holy. Nevertheless, he should remain right where he is." God, the sublime pope of heaven, has sent him this rule, and it reads as follows: "He should pray always and without ceasing according to the rules for clerics. In addition, I shall grant him my divine sweetness. This he shall enjoy in the solitude of his heart. Whenever he is tempted, he should call out to me with great vigor and I shall come quickly to his aid. He should fulfill his duties completely but should keep expenses small. He should keep no one in his pay for the sake of power or as a return for favors. Rather, he should retain honest servants in proportion to his rightful needs. He should not occupy himself with the concerns of his relatives. But if one of them wants to follow him, he should help him. He should wear simple, comfortable clothes, as he presently does; but next to his skin he should wear coarse clothing to combat the various pleasures he has received in his skin. In addition, he should sleep on straw between two woolen blankets, and he should have two pillows for under his head. During the day he should cover his bed with a fine quilt, and his bed should remain exactly where it was before for all to see. In front of his bed he should lay a mat and a kneeler. Thus, with humble heart he should give good example against an evil life. He should also have two switches next to his bed to chastise himself with upon awakening.

"Once a day, while he lies fully prostrate, his prayer should be as follows: `Lord, eternal Father, God of heaven, I, a worthless human being, thank you, Lord, that you have let your grace descend upon me. I ask you now, dearest Father, together with all those close to you, that your sweet heavenly flood that ever pours down out of the inexhaustible living spring of the whole Holy Trinity may cleanse my soul continually of all stains through our Lord. '"6

At this point I asked: "Lord, how shall he preserve himself in earthly honor without sinning?"

Our Lord said: "He should keep himself in constant fear, just like a mouse that is caught in a trap and awaits its death. The bottom part of the trap is earthly honor; the upper part is my almighty power." This is the explanation our Lord gave: "Whoever desires that I taste good to him should tremble in fear at all times in all things at the taste of his own flesh, where the heart plays with hidden lust. Therefore, when he eats, he should be easily satisfied and selfless. When he sleeps, he should be

disciplined and alone with me. When he is out in the world, he should be a mouse in his heart. When he goes to confession, he should be truthful and obedient and act in all matters as his confessor advises."

3. God Gives Authority. How Billy Goats Become Lambs

That this same noble cleric' was chosen deacon is God's will. For he himself said: "For this reason I have taken him from one chair and put him onto another, that he might be food for billy goats.'" Explanation: God calls the cathedral canons billy goats because their flesh stinks of lust in eternal truth before his Holy Trinity. The skin of a billy goat is noble, and this is true of their authority and possessions. But when this skin is removed at death they lose all their nobility. And our Lord was asked how these goats might become lambs. Our Lord spoke thus: "If they eat the fodder that Canon Dietrich puts in their trough, that is, holy penance and sincere advice in confession, they shall become the kind of lambs that one calls sheep rams: lambs with horns." The horn is spiritual power that they use in a holy manner to God's praise. One should be strong and trust God utterly, for he says: "I myself shall help this canon successfully atone for his guilt."

4. Discernment and Fear That Preserve the Senses from Earthly Things`'

Oh, what a wretched person I am! I complain to God in heaven that I am worse than I was thirty years ago. For the creatures that then helped me bear my misery did not have to be so noble to help this poor body thrive. This is why I must constantly station two guards between my soul and all earthly things, so that she may find just that amount of pleasure in my flesh that my meager needs require. They also preserve my senses, so that these earthly things do not lead me astray into a greedy desire to possess much or to linger in pleasure.

The one guardian is discernment, which arranges all things in such a way that they are used entirely according to God's will. In this way a person always retains a heart alien to all earthly things, so alien that, if a person loses earthly things, his heart becomes so buoyant, his soul so unfettered, and his senses so carefree that he feels as comfortable in God as though his dearest friend had taken the heaviest of all burdens from him; for whichever person does not find earthly things to be a heavy burden cannot be called a truly spiritual person before God. This is why our Lord said: "In times of want one uses all things rightly. What is good about poverty is that it uses only what is necessary. That is why it is holy. Then overindulgence cannot bring darkness into the soul."

My other guardian is holy fear, which together with God's wisdom keeps my soul from smiling upon the earthly things that are given to her. Rather, she receives them as though they were a temptation, a hook baited to catch cupidity and vain honor, which cast many a praiseworthy person in religious life into such darkness that he loses the light of discernment, the fire of love, and the taste for God's sweetness, peace, and mercy without even noticing it.

And so our Lord said: "Indeed, they make fine arguments: that they want to love earthly things and gather much for themselves so that they might the better serve me. But they serve themselves more than me." The person who works only for his own comfort and advantage is his own self. However, everyone should be a Christ in himself, living for God and not for himself. For that most blessed person who lives completely in God, it is all the same to him what he has. For it is holy poverty into which God casts this man with his power in the same way he cast his most beloved Son down from heaven onto the road and into a feeding trough belonging to someone else. Just so does our Lord cast his chosen friends far from earthly consolation, so that they might hunger for heavenly consolation.

A truly holy person fears earthly happiness more than he shows concern for the basic necessities of life. Why? His home is in heaven and his prison is in this world. This is why our Lord said: "Those who know and love the nobility of my liberty cannot bear to love me only for my own sake. They must also love me in creatures. Thus do I remain what is most close to them in their souls."

5. After Love and Desire the Beauty of Creatures Gives Knowledge Along with Sadness

The first knowledge that God gave me, after touching me with love and after the flood of desire, was accompanied by sorrow. Whenever I glanced at anything that was beautiful or dear to me, I began sighing and then weeping; and then I began to reflect, to complain, and to speak thus to all things: "Alas! Be careful! No, this is not your Beloved who greeted your heart, lit up your senses, and captured so blissfully your soul. Don't let the rich delights of earthly things push you away from him.

Rather, in the nobility of creatures, in their beauty and usefulness, I shall love God and not myself."

6. At the End You Should Have Love, Longing, Fear, and Three Kinds of Sorrow

I asked our Lord how I should conduct myself in the time just before my death.

Our Lord said: "You should conduct yourself in the final hours just as you did in the beginning. You should have love and longing, sorrow and fear; for these four things were the beginning of your life, and so they should also be your end."

Then I said: "Dear Lord, what happens to those two things that are the foundation and crown of heavenly honor: Christian faith and true hope?"

Our Lord responded thus: "Your faith becomes a knowing and your hope is transformed into true certainty."

I saw these explanations in his words and know them in my heart, as well.

My sorrow arises from three things. Most of all, I am sorry for my sins. This is the result of love. But by constantly loving I have lost the pain of sorrow. I am sorry for the sins of all human beings, which makes me like a sick person who has a craving for something very fine that he can never or seldom have. And so my heart remains disconsolate and my soul in her desire chases after a huge wild animal. Our Lord said about this: "One cannot catch large animals unless one drives them into water. Thus a sinner will never be converted unless he is pursued by the swift desire of holy people into the deep tears of their hearts."

I am sorry for all the good works that I have failed to do out of love of my flesh without real necessity. Our Lord said about this: "One cannot build a dwelling unless one has a place to build. In like manner one cannot receive a reward in heaven without having performed good works." Our Lord lets this hold true because of love in his heart, so that he can say to each and every soul: "Receive, my very dearest, this rich honor you yourself have earned." That God might be able to address these words to the soul with sincerity to her glory and love, as though he were not the cause of her happiness, and that she might receive in body and soul full honor-this is why our Lord is so deeply concerned that in our struggles, in our want, and in times of suffering we carry on in sincere love: that he might in generosity depart from his justice as much as is fitting for his Godhead. This is what I discovered in the heap of God's favors.

7. Our Self-Will Can Resist the Barbed Hook. The Good Soul Comes Swiftly to God

In my community there is a religious person who causes me much distress because of her contrary disposition. This person is not willing to obey me in regard to anything.' With great intensity I complained to God and was very perplexed how this could be. And our Lord said: "Look what is causing the trouble."

Then I saw that a special devil was clinging to this person and was pulling her away from all good things. So I said: "Who gave you the power to cause God such great humiliation through this person?"

And the devil said: "Nothing other than this person's own selfish will gave me this power."

At these words I saw that the devil pursued all religious persons who give him the opportunity with such derisive contempt because they lead such phony lives by making excuses for themselves before God and all creatures.

Then I said: "Who is going to help this poor wretch to become free from you?"

The devil, under compulsion from God, said: "No one can help her but her own free will, for God has given her the power to change. If she does that, I will be forced to scurry off."

"I hereby ask you by the eternal Truth: what is your name?"

The devil replied: "I am called Barbed Hook, and this throng that you see back there are all mates of mine with the same task that I have. There are as many of them as we find people who are not willing to obey their well-intentioned superior in good things."

Thereupon my soul flew to God so swiftly that she literally arose with no effort on her part and snuggled herself into the Holy Trinity, just as a child snuggles into its mother's coat and lays itself right at her breast. My soul then spoke with the power and the voice of all creatures thus: "Ah, dear Lover, consider my distress with this person so that, Lord, you change her attitude with your divine sweetness."

"No," said our Lord, "she is not worthy of my sweetness. Instead I shall make her body sick, and the pain will so paralyze her that only with great difficulty will she continue on her sinful path. And I shall strike her dumb, that she not utter spiteful words. She shall also become so blind that she will be ashamed to see frivolity. And yet, whatever one does to her, one does to me."

Fourteen days later this actually happened. Alleluia.

8. Between God and Lucifer There Are Two Kinds of Purgatory. How the Devil Tortures Souls

Our human brother Jesus Christ ascended with all virtues into heaven to the heights of his Godhead. And no one can follow him in this unless he, too, has all virtues. Similarly the Holy Trinity has ascended in glory above all things to the blissful heights with all its virtuous friends, who are ever glorious, fair, and joyous in the same measure that they possess within themselves praiseworthy likenesses of his divine virtue. Indeed, all virtues that are practiced on earth with good intentions and not hypocritically, and are adorned with love and performed without sin, are the musical strings in heaven that resound without end out of the faithful soul and out of the submissive body into the Holy Trinity. The Father thanks the Son for having brought her there with virtues, and the Son honors the Father for having created her, and the Holy Spirit gently urges Father and Son that the Holy Trinity might flow out to her with such force and sing so sweetly that she view and love all things with God. Then the sinful devil Lucifer has sunk down under all things together with those who strive after and love only the vices.

Between God's heights and the devil's pit there are two kinds of purgatory. In these two purgatories there are many kinds of suffering and anguish. The first purgatory consists of profitable sufferings that afflict us in this world with various kinds of pain. The second purgatory-after this life-is so large that it begins at the mouth of hell and ends at heaven's gate. But the devils can torment souls only on earth, in the air, and in all the places where a person has sinned, and in the heights where he polluted the air with his sins. Thereby the devil convicts them, so that their shame and torment are all the greater because of all the sins that remain unatoned here. But when they have become so blessed that they have been freed from the hands of the devil, they still burn painfully within themselves because of small wrongdoings. Thereafter, through help and forbearance they pass beyond all distress. This is so close to heaven that they possess all joys but three: They do not see God. They have not yet received their honor. They have not yet been crowned. This is the purgatory on earth and the one in the air between hell and heaven. Because of her spiritual nature, however, the soul cannot suffer torments from physical things once she has left the body."

9. The Saints Honor Those Who Honor Them and They Console Them at Their Death

When one honors the saints by remembering them well, together with all the throng,12 as one can do on the day that God honored them with a holy death, they are so grateful that they immediately come in all the glory that they received from their holy actions. I actually saw this on the feast of St. Mary Magdalene as one was glorifying God with songs of praise for the great honor that she received as a reward. She danced about in the choir to the holy song and looked each of the singers in the eyes. She came forward and said: "All those who honor my death, I shall be with them at the end and shall honor them in return. I shall stand ever at their side, giving as much help as they are capable of receiving."

Four majestic archangels led her in their midst and the number of lesser angels was beyond human reckoning. Then I asked her what the names of the four princes were. She said: "The first is called Power; the second is called Longing; the third is called Good Will; the fourth is called Constancy. With these four virtues I overcame all the sufferings of my heart. For this God gave me two things as a reward: noble servants and a crown. It is the same with other saints as well."

Our Lord says: "When one blows upon the tiniest spark, it contributes warmth and brightness in heaven's fire, where the saints are all aglow."

10. Prayer, Masses, God's Word, the Lives of Good People, Fasting, and Carenae13 Free Souls from Purgatory

I prayed for a soul whose body had been killed in the midst of a sinful life. Then our Lord said this: "Seven years of fasting and seven years of carenae would be like one raindrop on a huge fire. With less than thirty years of praying he cannot be helped, because he lost his life thirty years before his time through foolish pride. These he has to make good to me with suffering."

[The soul speaks:]' "Alas, Lord, can I not beseech your goodness?"

[God speaks:] "Indeed, when two wrestle with each other, the weaker must lose. I shall willingly be the weaker, even though I am almighty. Three thousand masses are the price of his redemption, for he never attended a whole mass except out of human respect."15

"Lord, what was it that saved him?"

"Whenever he heard my words, he sighed. I rewarded him for that since toward the end he so lived that he sighed because of his sins."

"Lord, if his mother's brother-who from his youth till he turned gray has been considered a pious man and who is worn with toil and care-were to offer all this up for him, and for love of you were to depart and place himself in the position where he first became well known, would you perhaps let this soul go free?"

"Yes," said our Lord, "if I were so urgently importuned, I would have to grant everything that one wanted."

"Lord, if this religious man were to give his good works to this poor soul, what would happen to it then?"

Immediately, God let me see this blessed person;
This was not possible for me before
Because of the coarse nature of his punishment
Which my soul cannot bear.
He was fairer than the sun
And he soared in bright bliss
High above all earth's misery.

Full of cheer and contentment he said: "Tell my friends: even if the earth were made of gold and the bright sun shined upon it constantly both day and night with the sweet breezes of May and with delightful flowers ripening to fruit, I would not want to be there for one hour, so blissful is this life."

Hehad not yet entered heaven eternal.

11. How a Student Is Dead and a Dominican Was Seems

Our Lord spoke thus: "I say to you with my burning Godhead and with my living humanity that his nature is dead in a holy death, and so he can no longer commit serious sins on earth."

Then he was seen looking like a Dominican, standing on a column of red marble and preaching to the people thus: "Come, blessed of my Father," come to me, all ye blessed; and depart from me all ye cursed."

Then it was seen and understood that all preachers preach and teach us from these two sayings.

12. How You Should Conduct Yourself as to Fourteen Things

When you pray, you should be humble.
When you confess, you should be truthful.
When you do penance, you should be untiring.
When you eat, you should be frugal.
When you sleep, you should be disciplined.
When you are alone, you should be faithful.
When you are with people, you should be discreet.
When one teaches you good manners, you should be receptive.
When one castigates you for your wickedness, you should be patient.
When you do something good, you should think yourself bad.
When you do something bad, you should immediately seek
forgiveness.
When you are vain, you should fear.
When you are sad, you should have great trust in God.
When you are doing manual work, you should go at a fast pace:
Then you can drive away evil thoughts.

13. How Religious out of Blindness Fend Off Inwardness from Themselves. The Sixfold Power of God's Gift

"Ah, dear Jesus, God of heaven, I have to ask you about something, Lord. I just cannot stand it any longer because of the great blindness that I recognize at the bottom of it." It is this: that religious people fend off divine inwardness in the following way. When God sees fit to let his divine heart shine forth in love toward the very blessed soul so intensely that a small spark alights on the cold soul and she receives so much that the heart of this person begins to glow, his soul to melt, and his eyes to flow, then our Lord would like to make an earthly person so heavenly that one actually wants to follow, love, and see God in him. And the person's senses say: "No, I can be of much use in external matters."" And it is especially cloistered people who say this when they are being especially clever.

Our Lord responds to this in the following way:
“My Godhead came to earth;
My humanity did the work.

My Godhead went on the cross;
My humanity suffered death.
My Godhead arose from death
And led humanity to heaven.
All those who drive me away from them
Shall be driven away from me.
What is a human being capable of doing on his own?
[Nothing but sin.][19]
Never did my humanity ever do something
That my Godhead did not plan in advance.”

“People say, Lord, that it is the mark of wisdom
To spare the body.[20]
For your divine breath wafts down
From your Holy Trinity so delightfully
And penetrates the soul so powerfully
That the body loses all its strength:
This makes a person unproductive.”

Our Lord said this:
“One should not offer gratis the king’s food
Until one has consumed the ordinary bare sustenance.
My special favor endows a person with special dignity,
In body and soul.
It provides instruction for the ignorant
And consolation for the wise.
It also gives eternal praise and boundless honor
To the fathomless spring from which it has flowed
When it swirls up again, having borne full fruit,
To where it flowed forth from me.”

Indeed, this favor that God is wont to grant a person powerfully and unexpectedly is so noble in itself and brings with it such closeness to God that it is no small sin that a person commits who rejects him for the sake of some earthly thing. Alas, ignoble soul, how can you manage to reject God before enjoying him fully, as is his will? For his most sublime pleasure lies hidden in you.

Do you want to know how you should make use of God's holy favor and enjoy it according to God's will? Well, it shall teach you this itself if you welcome it. You should receive it with external virtues and internal desire. In humble fear you should keep hold of it, submissive in all tribulations. Give it time and room in you; that is all that it asks of you. It shall melt you so deeply into God that you know what his will is concerning how long you should pursue his intense caressing of you, and when and how you should work for sinners and for those in purgatory, and should attend the needs of each and every person, alive or dead.

When you have accomplished this inwardly to God's pleasure insofar as lies in your soul's power-she will grow weary in herself as long as she is in the grips of her mortal body-then the soul says after this pleasurable experience:

“Lord, now flee from me inwardly,
And stand by me outwardly,
So that all my actions shine forth
In proportion to your favor,
And that I suffer willingly
And hardly complain about my cares.”

14. Those Who Complain in Suffering Lack Six Things; How One Should Bear Sickness and Contempt

Whoever in pain complains of his burdens
Is either blind in knowledge
Or spineless in forbearance.
His love has grown cold
And he is jaded in virtue,
Or his mind is dull
And blunt as to good words.

For this reason our Lord said: "This person does not want to be sick and does not want to be scorned. What, then, shall I use as the foundation of his glory?"

"Lord, when a person is sick and scorned, how can he then increase your glory?"

"When he is sick, he should honor, serve, and love me alone with cheerful forbearance. When he is scorned, he should love me and wait patiently. When preachers and confessors are forced from their office and cannot exercise it but still have the holy wish to do so, that is not an obstacle to their happiness. It is an enhancement of their glory."

15. The Sufferings of Enoch and Elijah, the Last Preachers, and the Wickedness of the Antichrist'

O mighty divine love, you have inflicted such sweet anguish on me that my soul languishes in wonder. When I consider that my body shall so fade away at death that I shall no longer suffer or praise my beloved Jesus, then I feel such pain that I desire, if that were possible, to live till the last day. Faithful love that is from God and does not have its source in me forces me to long for this. This is why our Lord said: "If you die, let your days fill you with sorrow, however holy you may be."

"Truly, Lord, I beg you that my longing not die when I can no longer serve you with my body."

Our Lord said: "Your longing shall live. It cannot die because it is eternal. If it keeps striving for my sake till the last day, then soul and body shall be reunited. When I put them together again, she shall praise me without end. Also, she has served me since the very beginning, for you wanted to exist from the time of Adam until now for love of me, just as you wanted to experience all human suffering and serve in all human labor for love of me. Moreover, I declare that your being shall remain until the end of humanity."

"Ah, my Dearest, who shall be the last human to whom my being might be joined? The life of religious people at the end of the world shall be precious."

Our Lord responded thus: "Enoch shall be the last human being to cultivate the spiritual life."

Thereupon God again showed me the end of this world, when the last brothers shall be martyred. Their hair, that they shall never cut, has a specific purpose in God's will: The Antichrist shall command that they be hung up by it onto trees. There they shall hang and nobly die, for their heart burns within them with the sweet fire of heaven as intensely as the body languishes in distress. And so, in the midst of the solace of the Holy Spirit and the pain of the miserable flesh, their soul shall depart from their body with no terror of these sufferings.

Elijah and Enoch shall travel from India to the sea, and a great throng shall follow each of them-all of them Christians fleeing to them from the Antichrist. They shall all be clubbed to death like rabid dogs that one chases down on the street, that have been poisoned and can live no longer. These are then followed by others who are secretly Christians. For they know well from God that they can escape heathenism no other way.

Elijah will be the first to be martyred. He shall be bound to a lofty cross, his hands nailed through.

They do this out of fierce hatred,
Because he constantly spoke of the holy cross
And what happened to Christ on it.
They do not let him die,
In the hope that in suffering so long
He might forsake Christian teaching
And thus turn to the Antichrist.
And so he hangs there, this holy intimate friend of God,

And no cry of pain escapes him.
Three days and three nights
He comforts Holy Christianity
Until his soul departs.
I saw the heavenly Father at his end,
And he received Elijah's soul
With his human hands and said:
"Come, my dear one, it is time for you."
And in a flash from heaven God led him away.

That wretched man, the Antichrist, does not allow God's intimate friend to be buried, for he wants all Christians to abjure their faith. In that he is deceived, for all who gaze upon the body are moved to Christian faith, and they desire to worship it. So filled with sweetness are they by the presence of the holy body that they forget all the agony of death and all earthly goods.

Enoch is still alive, for the Antichrist desires to hear all the wisdom that Enoch knows from God so that he can twist it

publicly with his false teaching and perhaps draw Enoch to himself. The whole world would then be his in great honor.

Meanwhile so many of the wicked are drawn away from the Antichrist that he attacks Enoch with fierce words. Not till then does Enoch tell the Antichrist the truth:

"You are a scourge to the whole world
Sent by God because of the evilness of the wicked
And for the holiness of the good.
You are well versed in the writings of the Old Law
And the New Law as well.
Now see how you shall fare after all your efforts.
You have made your choice with full intent.
According to scripture you shall be lost,
As you can well read for yourself.
It wasn't you who created earth and heaven.

You do not give the angels eternal life.
You did not make man,
Neither soul nor body.
You have never given any creatures their natural life.
How, then, could you ever be God?
You have wrought all your works in lies and evil scheming.
The eternal Truth is Jesus Christ,
Who is one eternal God with his Father."

Sullenly the Antichrist says:

"How dare you speak the name of my enemy in my presence,
To whom you ascribe more of my honors than to me?
But I shall yet get even with you
And shall free the whole world from you.
Take him at once into my power
And pour boiling pitch into his mouth
And put a tight noose around his neck.
That will make my enemy shut up at once.
If I could hear his words,
I would gladly let him suffer more.
So hang him dead, high above all murderers,
So that all who look upon him
Desert the Christian faith.

He has insulted me in my honor.
No one needs his instruction.
I have been expected since long ago.
Everything shall be done according to my plan."

Enoch recites his holy prayer in his pure heart thus:

“Eternal Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
You eternal God undivided,
I thank you, Lord,
That you chose me long ago,
And I praise you, Lord,
In this anguish.
I pray to you, Lord,
For your sheep and mine,
That shall now be without a shepherd.
Keep them, Lord, each and every one,

And comfort them in secret.
Receive now, Lord, my soul.
I have no earthly love for my body.”

The response that God will give to his thanksgiving and his entreaty has been written here. I saw it and read it as written in the Holy Trinity:

“Dear son, come swiftly now to me.
I am truly in you.
Your dear ones for whom you have prayed to me
Shall baptize their children themselves.
I shall free them from the Antichrist at once.
In their hearts they shall remain Christians.
And I shall preserve them from all wavering.
Come, dear intimate friend, I await you,
And my heart skips forth to meet you.”

16. How the Soul of Our Lord Dwells in the Trinity and What Its Task Is; How It Speaks for the Sinner and Concerning the Task of Our Lady

When I wake up at night,

I wisely try my powers,
To see whether I, poor wretch, can pray at all
For this faithless Christianity
That inflicts such suffering on my Beloved.
Sometimes he draws me along a different route,
Pathless and bridgeless,
Where I must follow him barefoot
And stripped of all earthly things.
Who can so delicately conquer humanity?
Who can so swiftly transport the soul?
Who can so nobly illumine the mind
But God, who created it?
He works wonders with us.

Thus did I of a night
Call to mind the Holy Trinity
In the spontaneous sweet flowing of my soul.
There in the heights of the whole Holy Trinity
I saw without asking the soul of our Lord Jesus.
His soul dwells forever, unsurpassed in dignity,
In the Holy Trinity.
Therein it is enclosed and mysteriously entwined,
And it shines forth fair and glorious on all creatures,
Through the Holy Three Persons.

Then, with proper restraint, as is the custom at court, I asked to speak to the soul of our Lord for his glory, because it seemed to me that it worked special miracles. I hovered so close to it that I greeted it thus: "May you be blessed, dear One. What marvels do you perform in this eternal mirror,22 in which all the blessed gazed upon themselves in wonder? You have a delightful labor in blissful restlessness."

The soul of our Lord replied to the pitiful creature: "Welcome, my likeness,23 for I, too, am a soul as you are; and I carried the burden of all souls with my guiltless body. This is my task: I constantly move the limitless Godhead, thereby recalling to the heavenly Father the infinite love he has for the human soul. I greet my divine humanity as well and thank it for my blessedness; and I call to mind its bond-for he24 was himself an earthbound human-that he remember where he came from, how great and how noble is man's kinship to him,25 and that he should never let man perish. For no one ever begot or gave birth to himself. Because of this you overcame all your sufferings without sin. Thus do I urge God's humanity to special mercy and that he remember how weak man is, and that he was not created free of his enemies, and that man must ever and again fight as one well-armed but whose eyes are bound. It is dark humanity that binds them. Remember, noble Son of God, how wretchedly sad I was on earth within you, and continue to help like a father all those who carry my likeness within them; for I am your soul. I must also wrest from the Holy Spirit his gift, for he shall bring to earth all blessedness to humankind from heaven."

"Heavenly Father, did you thrust the bolt of your justice so firmly across the gate of heaven that poor sinners can never enter? I shall take my complaint to Jesus, your dear Son, who holds the key to your kingdom2fi in his human hand with your almighty power."

This very same key was fashioned in the same land by Jewish hand. When Jesus turns the key, the outcast sinner shall come into your favor.

This is the word of the heavenly Father: "My soul cannot endure that I banish the sinner from me. And so I pursue many of them on and on till I have them in my grasp, and I save them a place so narrow that no one, no matter how clever, can follow me there."

And then the soul of our Lord speaks again:

“This is my glory,
And thus am I adorned.
The Godhead is my crown;
His humanity is my reward.
The Holy Spirit has embraced me
And so wondrously permeated me
That no creature can equal me or reach me.
Thus do I carry constantly in this Holy Trinity
All the sinners of earth, on and on,
That God not let them fall
Into the eternal abyss.

But this virgin in whose body I found shelter,
When I left the Holy Godhead for the humanity of her Son,
This virgin is a protectress of all chastity
And an advocate of all those tempted
Who show sorrow and reverence
Before the Holy Trinity.
Judgment is yet in her hands."

17. God Considers the Sinner Good, What a Good Right Will Is, Concerning a Good Burden27

This is incomprehensible: that God considers the sinner as a converted person. And that is right will in serving God, that one swiftly hurry to me and not look back; and I carry all burdens that are accepted for love of me.

18. You Should Scrutinize Your Heart at All Times

Look into your heart at all times
With the truth of the Holy Spirit.
Then you will find all lying purely detestable.
For lying drives out God's love,
And it strengthens in one's heart
Secret cunning, hate, and rage.

19. Good Intentions That One Cannot Turn into Deeds

I have often been much saddened
That I could never turn good intentions into good works.
Wavering and weakness rob me of them,
And that no one dares offer me sound advice.
And, alas, I dare not venture beyond my nature.
This has been the case since the time
God let me fall of my own free choice
From the bliss of the heights,
Where I was so lost in wonder
That I could not find the boundaries of things,
Where powerful love had drawn me in

With the flames of its fire.
But now it has pressed me down
Into a bottomless swamp
Where I find no footing.
And yet all that I suffer
I do not call pain,
For I would rather be yet further removed—
To the lowest place—
Cast off like a raging dog
And no one's friend,
Unknown, in banishment,
With poor people in a foreign land.

And yet I shall not live except under obedience,
For holy, humble obedience is the seal of all virtues.
Good intention that a good person has
And cannot turn into a good deed
Is like exquisite, fair flowers,
Giving forth fragrance but no fruit.
Thus did God console me:

That all good will shall
Out of the abundance of a good life
Become blossoms of eternal bliss
From which God shall make wreaths
For his never-ending wedding feast
Which his chosen ones shall wear there
Who here go on so faithfully
With a wealth of good will
Which they are not able to turn into good works.

O generous God, hold out your fatherly hand to me,
And lead me into the land of love;
For I have, alas, lost much time,
And I would like to make up for it with you, Lord.
For comfort of the body and contentment of the senses
Must be received in humble fear
If one is to remain in whole truth.

20. This Book Came About out of a Threefold Favor; Love Flows, It Is Rich and Full of Desire, It Becomes Sick; Who Possesses Heaven; God Bestows Suffering and Consolation as Well

God bestowed upon me the favor that is written down in this book in a threefold manner. First and foremost, with great tenderness; then, with sublime intimacy; and now, with intense suffering. I much prefer to remain in this state than in the other two. This is why: although God's tenderness and intimacy are in themselves eternal and noble, they are unfortunately so foreign in this world that all who truly grasp them are not at all able to describe them. And so I have the greatest fears when enjoying pleasure, because Christ suffered much intense pain in this world. But the nature of love is such that it flows in sweetness; then it becomes rich in knowledge; thirdly, it becomes full of longing in rejection.

Oh, you are terribly inconstant. And, alas, sometimes true love of God becomes so weak from the base sweetness of empty honor, from swollen pride and from the loathsome frenzy of anger and from the unchecked desires for the things of this world that it becomes paralyzed in all its members. This is the way it works from the very beginning; this is its nature.

Further, no one possesses the whole of heaven in his heart but he alone who has removed himself from all consolation and all favors in this world. For pleasure has cut us off from God. And so we must return to him through suffering. And yet God cannot restrain himself-and we cannot do without it-from giving us his abundance and his favor for everything we do, refrain from doing, and suffer.

21. How Bad Priests Shall Be Humiliated; [How Preachers Alone Should Preach and Be Bishops;]28 Concerning the Last Brothers

Woe, Crown29 of Holy Christianity, how greatly have you been sullied. The jewels have dropped from you, for you are undermining and violating the holy Christian faith. Your gold lies tarnished in the foul pool of carnality, for you have become shabby and do not have the least bit of true love. Your purity has been consumed in the lustful fire of gluttony. Your humility lies buried in the swamp of your flesh. Your truthfulness has been reduced to nothing amid the lying of this world. Your blossoms of all virtues have fallen away from you.

Woe, Crown" of the holy priesthood, how utterly have you disappeared. You have nothing left but your trappings; that is,

ecclesiastical authority with which you war against God and his chosen intimates. For this God shall humiliate you before you know it, and our Lord speaks thus: "I shall touch the pope in Rome in his heart with great misery, and in this misery I shall tell him reproachfully that my shepherds of Jerusalem have become murderers and wolves. Before my very eyes they murder the white lambs, and the old sheep are all sick in the head because they cannot eat from the healthy pasture that grows in the high mountains, which is divine love and holy teaching.

"He who does not know the path to hell, let him look at the corrupt clergy, how their lives go straight to hell with women, children, and other public sins. This is why it is necessary that the last brothers come.

For when the cloak is old,
So is it also cold.

And so I must give my bride, Holy Christianity, a new cloak." These shall be the last brothers that were mentioned earlier."

"Son Pope, this is what you should bring about; then you shall be able to live a long life. The reason your predecessors did not live long is that they did not bring about the hidden intentions of my will. "32

Thus did I see the pope at prayer and heard God give him this message.

22. Seven Things, Five of Which One Finds in Heaven and Two on Earth"

23. How God Speaks with the Soul in Three Places

At the first place the devil often speaks to the soul. At the other two places he cannot do so. The first place is a person's senses. This place is equally accessible to God, the devil, and all creatures. They can speak here as they wish.

The second place where God speaks with the soul is in the soul. No one can enter this place but God alone. But when God speaks in the soul, it happens without any kind of awareness by the senses, in a great, mighty, swift union of God with the soul. Thus the senses cannot hear this delightful conversation. They become so humble that they cannot bear any creature beneath them. Should a person humble himself beneath the devil? Certainly, with this in mind: it should seem to him who has caused God such great insult with his life that he has often painted the devil's likeness onto his soul through his daily sins and sometimes inflicted large wounds on his soul with mortal sins. The soul that is in the embrace of the Holy Spirit cannot contain herself. She must ever sink away from all earthly comfort and from the pleasure of this comfort. But the soul that is in the embrace of its own selfish will inclines with much pleasure to earthly things.

The third place where God speaks to the soul is in heaven, when God raises up the soul in the pleasure of his will and suspends her there where she may take pleasure in the wonder of him.

24. How Christ Reveals His Wounds in Days of Suffering. Four Things Knock on Heaven's Gate

In my days of great suffering, God revealed himself to my soul, showed me the wounds of his heart, and said: "See how they have hurt me."

And my soul said: "Alas, Lord, why did you suffer such distress? From that time when so much of your pure blood was shed from your pure heart the whole world should rightfully have been redeemed by it.""

"No," he said, "that did not satisfy my Father. For all the poverty, all the toil, and all the suffering and humiliation are just a knocking at the gate of heaven up to the time when my heart's blood poured onto this earth. Only then was heaven opened."

The soul said: "Lord, when this happened, you were dead. I am confused. How can someone dead still bleed?"

Our Lord said: "My body was then in a human manner dead when my heart's blood flowed with a beam of the Godhead through my side. The blood issued forth by grace, just as did the milk that I drank from my virginal mother. My divinity was present in all members of my body while I was dead, just as it was before and afterward. After its long sadness, my soul rested the while in my Godhead. And a spiritual image of my humanity has always existed without a beginning suspended in my

eternal Godhead."

25. Concerning Burned Love

"Ah, dear Lord, have mercy on one who has been consumed here in the fire of your love and has been absorbed in your humility and has been annihilated in all things."

God speaks:

"My Godhead burned you;
My humanity recognized you;
My Holy Spirit sanctified you in your poverty.
Those who love much like to remain silent.
Those who do not love have always been schemers against love."[35]

26. Thinking About Death and Living Long Are Good

I am very surprising, and I am surprised in my human way of thinking that my soul is so surprising. Whenever I think of death, my soul looks forward to her leaving with such intensity that my body floats in great superhuman delight and my senses recognize ineffable wonders in the departure of the soul. Thus I would most of all like to die at the time God has foreseen. And yet, on the other hand, I say I want most of all to live until the last day. Then again my desire reaches back to the time of the martyrs, that I might shed my sinful blood in true Christian faith for the sake of Jesus whom I love. A special gift forces me to dare to state this: that I love God. For whenever vice and suffering come my way, my soul begins to burn in the fire of true love of God with such sweetness that my body floats suspended in divine pleasure. But a sadness remains in my senses, and I pray to God for all who slander me or revile me, that God preserve them from sin.

27. How You Should Thank and Ask

Lord heavenly Father, I thank you that you created me.
Lord Jesus Christ, I thank you that you redeemed me.
Lord Holy Spirit, I thank you that you have purified me.
Lord Holy Trinity, whole and undivided, I ask you to remember all faithfulness
And send me a merciful death
That will free me from all distress.
Into your hands I commend my spirit.[36]

28. When You Are to Die, Take Leave of Ten Things

When I come to die, I shall take leave of all those things from which I am departing.

I shall take leave of Holy Christianity and I shall thank God that I bear the name of Christian and that I came to true Christian faith. And if I were to remain here longer, I would strive to be a help to Holy Christianity that is afflicted with many sins.

I shall take leave of all the poor souls who are now in purgatory. If I were to remain here longer, I would eagerly help you atone for your guilt, and I thank God that you have found grace.

I shall take leave of all those who are in hell, and I thank God that he has exercised his justice in regard to them. If I were to remain here longer, I would never wish them anything good.

I shall take leave of all those sinners who are in mortal sin. I thank God that I am not one of them. And if I were to remain here longer, I would eagerly carry their burden before God.

I shall take leave of all those penitents who are engaged in doing their penance. I thank God that I am one of them. If I were to remain here longer, I would have to hold them dear.

I shall take leave of all my enemies. I thank God that they did not get the better of me. If I were to remain here longer, I would lay myself under their feet.

I shall take leave of all earthly things. I lament to God that I never made use of them according to his holy determination.

I shall take leave of all my dear friends. I thank God and them that they were my help in need. If I were to remain here longer, I would have to feel shame for the failings that they noticed in me.

I shall take leave of all my baseness. I lament to God that I so ruined his holy gift to my soul that there was never a shortcoming so trivial that it was not noticed by heaven in my soul. No matter how penance was done for it, there was always some damage involved. Lord Jesus, I make my complaint to you, but the shame is all mine.

I shall take leave of my wretched body. I thank God that on many occasions he preserved me from many a sin. If I were to remain here longer, its baseness is of so many kinds that I would never get to like it.

29. Ten Parts of Divine Fire out of God's Nobility

An unworthy person pondered in her simplicity God's nobility. And God let her recognize in her senses and see with the eyes of her soul a fire that burned unceasingly in the heights above all things. The fire had been burning without a beginning and shall keep on burning without end. This fire is God eternal, who holds within himself eternal life and from whom all things have come forth. The sparks of the fire that have shot forth are the holy angels. The bright flickerings of the fire are all the saints of God. For their life has given Christianity many a fine sparkle. The ever-glowing coals of the fire are all the blessed here on earth who are on fire with heavenly love and shine with good example. All those who have grown cold in sin can warm themselves on the coals. The embers of the fire have been scattered and extinguished. These are the bodies of the blessed waiting in the earth for their heavenly reward. The rule of the fire is yet to come. That is Jesus Christ, to whom his heavenly Father has entrusted the first redemption and the last judgment. On the last day, out of the embers, he shall fashion for the heavenly Father the most exquisite chalices from which at his eternal wedding feast he himself shall drink all the holiness that, together with his dear Son, he has poured into our soul and into our human understanding.

Ah, I shall drink of you
And you shall drink of me
All the goodness that God has preserved in us.
Happy is he who stands firm
And does not let spill
What God has poured into him.

The smoke of the fire is all earthly things that one often makes use of with improper pleasure. How beautifully they shine in our eyes. How wantonly they play in our hearts. And yet they bear hidden within them a great amount of bitterness, for they disappear like smoke and blind the best. They make even the holiest persons bleary-eyed.

The comfort of the fire is the delightful pleasure that our soul receives inwardly from God through the warmth of the divine fire, so sacred that we, on fire, reflect back toward the heavenly fire, and we persevere in virtue so that we are not extinguished.

The bitterness of the fire is the word that God shall speak on the last day: "Go from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire!""

The radiance of the fire is the gleaming sight of the divine countenance of the Holy Trinity that shall flood our body and soul with light, so that we shall see and know there the marvelous bliss that here we cannot even name.

These things have come out of this fire and flow back into it, each according to God's disposition, in eternal praise.

Whoever wishes to speak more about this,
Let him prostrate himself in this fire
And see and taste how the Godhead flows,
How humanity pours,

How the Holy Spirit wrestles
And vanquishes many a heart,
Forcing it to love God in many different ways.

30. Pure Love Has Four Things

Pure love of God has four things about it: that one be so utterly of one mind with God that whatever might happen to us, except for sin, we thank God devoutly for it.

Secondly, that we use to good effect the gifts we have from God in body and soul.

Thirdly, that we live purely and morally, free of sin.

Fourthly, that we have all virtues in us. Alas, if only I had them and really put them to good use with regard to everything, I would exchange that for all the marvels of contemplation that I ever heard anyone mention. What good are lofty words without works of mercy? What good is love of God when joined to rage against good human beings?

You say: "If God were to give it to me, I would be happy to do it. "38

Now listen here: Virtues are half gifts from God and half our own doing. Whenever God gives us insight, we should put virtues to good use.

31. How God Made the Soul. Concerning Pleasure and Pain. How God Is Like a Sphere

I said in one passage in this book that the Godhead is my Father by nature." You do not understand this, and say: "Everything that God has done with us is completely a matter of grace and not of nature."

You are right, but I am right, too. Consider this analogy. No matter how good a person's eyes are, he can't see farther than a league. No matter how acute a person's mind is, he cannot grasp nonphysical things except with faith, and he gropes around like a blind man in the darkness. The loving soul that loves everything that God loves and hates everything that God hates has one eye that God has illumined. With it she peers into the eternal Godhead and sees how the Godhead has labored in the soul with her nature. He formed her according to himself. He planted her in himself. With her, most of all among all creatures, he united himself. He enclosed her within himself and poured so much of his divine nature into her that she can say nothing else but that with all this oneness he is more than her Father.

The body receives its value from its relationship as brother of the Son of the heavenly Father and from the reward of his toils. The Son of God, Jesus Christ, performed his work with heartfelt love, by suffering poverty, pain, toil, humiliation-even unto his holy death. The Holy Spirit also performed his works, as you say, with his grace and has produced all the gifts that we ever received. These are three different kinds of works, and yet one undivided God performed them in us.

Two things are continually at work on earth and in purgatory through the power of God. One continues to work only in heaven. The second continues to work only in hell. This first is bliss without suffering in heaven. The second is suffering without bliss in hell."

Where was God before he created anything? He was in himself and all things were as present and as manifest to him as they are today. What form did our Lord God have then? Exactly like that of a sphere, and all things were enclosed within God with no lock and no door. The lowest part of the sphere is a bottomless foundation beneath all abysses. The highest part of the sphere is a top above which there is nothing. The circumference of the sphere is an unmeasurable circle." At this point God had not yet become Creator. But when he created all things, did the sphere open? No, it has remained whole and it shall remain whole forever. When God became creator, all creatures became manifest in themselves: human beings in order to love God, to

enjoy and know him, and to remain obedient; birds and animals to live according to their nature; inanimate creatures to remain firmly placed in their being. Now listen to this: Whatever we know is absolutely nothing unless we love God properly in all things, just as he himself created all things in properly measured love and offered and taught us love, as well.

32. How We Become Like God, St. Mary, the Angels, and the Saints

To the extent that we love mercy and practice constancy we are like the heavenly Father, who without ceasing performs these things in us.

To the extent that we suffer poverty, humiliation, rejection, and pain here we are like the true Son of God, who endured in complete forbearance all his adversity and suffering.

To the extent that we here flow outward with all the abundance of our heart to give our possessions to the poor and to spend our lives in the service of the sick we are like the Holy Spirit, who is an abundant outpouring of the Father and the Son.

To the extent that we are truthful, temperate, and modest in holy simplicity we are like the Holy Trinity, who is true God and has performed all his works, and still does, in the order proper to them.

To the extent that we are chaste in complete purity, humble in complete submissiveness, ready to serve in all holiness, innocent of all ill will we are like our dear Lady St. Mary, who was ennobled through these virtues, so that she, a virgin, became a mother and, though a mother, remained a virgin, and is alone empress over all creatures.

To the extent that we are kind, friendly, and peace-loving we are like the angels, who never do anything wicked.

To the extent that we lead a holy life in exile and are unconsoled in hardship we are like St. John the Baptist, who has been elevated above many saints.

To the extent that we desire that God be praised, recognize what we have been given, and properly carry out God's will we are like the prophets and the holy fathers, who through great virtue overcame themselves in God.

To the extent that we learn wisdom and through it change other people and stand true to God in all trials we resemble the holy apostles, who went out of themselves even to death.

To the extent that we are patient in all distress and in the measure that we hold fast to our Christian faith, even in the face of death, we resemble the holy martyrs, who have marked out for us through the shedding of their blood the true path to heaven.

To the extent that we resolutely bear the difficulties of Holy Christianity, both those of the living and those of the dead, we are like the holy confessors, who remained watchful in great toil and heard confessions with sympathy.

To the extent that we remain unconquered in battle42 and preserve our maidenly honor we are like the holy virgins, who have not lost true victory.

To the extent that we have deep sorrow and to the extent that we perform many kinds of holy penance we are like those holy widows, who, after sinning, attained such great honor.

To the extent that we have all the virtues about us we are like God and all his saints, who have followed God with complete devotion.

33. Concerning a Strict Chapter43 to Which a Pilgrim Came Who Turned Out to Be a Great Lord

For a long time a certain person used to hold a strict chapter in his heart, considering how he had harmed himself, and the humiliation arising for God because of him. And then he cast out from his heart all the sinful desires of his flesh and put in their place a willingness to suffer all torments for love of God. He cast out all the pleasures he had with friends and relatives and put in their place all the humiliation that those hostile to him wished to inflict on him. He cast out as well all love of wealth and honor that give the sinful world such joy and put in their place all the poverty that one can possibly endure with good counsel.

To this chapter our Lord Jesus Christ came, looking like a poor pilgrim. The person's spirit was so enlightened that he recognized that it was our Lord, and he said: "Hello, dear Pilgrim, where are you coming from?"

He answered: "I am coming from Jerusalem. I was seriously wounded there. I suffered deep humiliation, poverty, and pain. I brought it all to you."

"I thank you for that, very dear Lord; I have certainly experienced that many a day."

Then our Lord took a simple crown, put it on the person's head and said: "This is the crown of poverty, humiliation, and suffering. This crown shall yet be adorned with my own image." Then the pilgrim went away.

The person became sad, and said: "Alas, alas for my dear Pilgrim. I really wanted to talk more with him." Then she44 looked up in the heights and caught sight of him.

He resembled a powerful lord and was surrounded by heavenly delights, and said: "I bless you and greet you. My peace be with you always! Amen."

34. Someone Who Despises the World Should Be Honored with Nine Things

A voice was heard and these words were spoken:

"Look! Here she comes who despised the world
And who put lies to flight
And who loved truth
And who blessed me.
She shall be received with all honor.

She shall be grounded in truth.
She shall be blessed forever.
She shall be clothed with all beauty.
She shall be crowned with all dignity.
She shall be placed on the chair of eternal rest.
She shall be welcomed by every tongue.
She shall be served with all benefits.
She shall enjoy all gifts."

35. How the Soul of One Blessed Speaks to Her Body on the Last Day

Rise up, my dearly beloved,[45] and be healed of
All your sufferings,
All your days of pain,
All your humiliation,
All your sadness,
All your loneliness,
All your wounds,
And all your toils.

The morning star has arisen: that is the birth and life of St. Mary.
The sun has sent forth its radiance: that is when God became man,
labored, and ascended into heaven.
The moon shall ever remain unchanged: that is that we ever after shall
remain unchanging in eternal life.
In the past my whole well-being depended on you;
Now all your consolation depends on me.
If I had not come back to you,
You would never be taken from these ashes.
Eternal day has arisen for us.
Now we shall receive our reward.

36. That John the Baptist Sang Mass for the Poor Girl Was Spiritual Knowledge in the Soul

One cannot grasp divine gifts with merely human understanding. And so they sin who do not keep their spirit open to invisible truth. What one is able to see with the eyes of the flesh, hear with the ears of the flesh, and say with one's fleshly mouth is as utterly different from the open truth of the loving soul as light from wax is from the bright sun.

ThatJohn the Baptist sang mass for the poor girl was not of the flesh; it was so spiritual that only the soul saw it, understood it, and enjoyed it. The body had nothing from it except what it could grasp in its human senses through the nobility of the soul. And this is why the words had to be expressed in human terms.

My Pharisee remarked in response to this description thatJohn the Baptist was a layman. The Most Holy Sacrament in the mass is God's body.' John the Baptist touched this same Son of God in humble trembling fear while leading a holy life of such dignity that he heard the voice of the heavenly Father and caught his words and saw the Holy Spirit and recognized the Son in them both.47 John the Baptist also preached the holy Christian faith openly to all the people and pointed out for the people with his finger the true Son of God who was there present: "Behold the Lamb of God."" Neither pope nor bishop nor priest can ever speak so perfectly the word of God as did John the Baptist, except through our Christian faith which is above human understanding. Was this man really a layman? Prove me wrong, you who are blind! Your lies and your hate shall never be forgiven you without punishment!

37. You Should Praise God, Lament, and Ask for Twelve Things

Blessed are you, dear Lord Jesus Christ, God, Son of the living God! Through the tenets of my faith I know truly that you are here present, true God and true man. In this same name I adore you, Lord, today as my God and my Lord, as my Creator and my Redeemer, as my most dearly Beloved of all men and the most worthy of all lords, now and forever. Lord, heavenly Father, lament to your Holy Trinity that I have sinned before your eyes without fear and without shame. Alas, help me today, generous God, with all your favor, for my heart has been darkened by the habit of sinning. Cleanse my heart today, Lord, of all earthly love; and pour down, Lord, your heavenly flood into my and soul, that I might weep over indignities to you and over how deplorable my sins are.

Lord, I thank you for all the favors that you, dear Lord, have shown us, are showing us and shall show us eternally. I ask you, Lord, heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, that you purify me with your grace of all my sins and protect me from all sin, and that you make me holy for eternal life with all virtues.

I ask you, Lord Jesus Christ, by your holy death and by the pitiful suffering your holy body suffered on the holy cross, that you, Lord, with the eyes of your divine mercy, of your human faithfulness and the favor of the Holy Spirit, deign to look upon all my distress and, at the end, my death. Give me then, Lord, your very own body, that I might receive you, Lord, with true Christian faith, with genuine love, so that your holy body might be and remain the last food of my body and the eternal bread of my poor soul.

I ask you further, dearest Lord, that you might want to comfort my poor soul with your own self and might release me from all enemies. I ask you, dearest Lord Jesus Christ, that you then receive my poor soul into your fatherly hands and take me then in great joy out of this wretched banishment into the land of your blessed Father, where, Lord, I might bless you and praise you

with all the saints who are now there present and shall yet come. Grant this to me, dear Lord Jesus Christ, and to all those with me who are kind and faithful to me out of love for you. And come to the aid of those with me, too, who are unkind and unfaithful to me against your wishes, together with all those who, with me, are believing Christians.

I ask you, Lord, for the sake of your own honor that you give us Christians always on the chair in Rome a leader filled with all Christian virtues through which Holy Christianity may expand in love and be freed from all sins and be made holy with all virtues, so that you, dear Lord, might see fit today to free with your almighty hand Jerusalem and all the towns and lands that are oppressed by unjust power, for the sake of your three glorious names."

Together with all the saints I ask you, dearest Jesus Christ, for Christian peace, for a sufficient harvest and for good weather for this land and for all Christian lands. I ask you, dear Lord, that you keep your friends in your service and that you convert your enemies and undermine their wickedness. I ask you, Emperor of all honors and Crown of all princes, Lord Jesus Christ, on behalf of the princes in this land and those of all Christian lands, that you deign today to unite them in your Holy Spirit, so that they never again instigate a sinful war against your will and against their own well-being.

I pray to you, dear Jesus Christ, for all Christians who are today in distress, suffering drought, are sick, in prison, in sadness, in severe poverty. I ask you in your generous kindness that you might so comfort them today that they may never lose your eternal comfort and your blessed favor.

I pray to you, holy Father of heaven, for all Christian souls that depart from their bodies today, that you, merciful God, might be their Preserver and impart to them eternal life. Ah, dear Lord, have mercy on the souls of my father and mother, and on all the souls in purgatory. Free them, Lord, at this hour through your three glorious names. May they rest in peace. Amen.50

I pray to you, dear Lord, for all my companions," that you may give all of us the virtues that purify and sanctify our life for your praise and for the benefit of Holy Christianity. Receive today, Lord, this prayer and my lament, and hear and answer me according to your grace. Amen.

38. No one Can Destroy God's Heaven. Hell Drives God Out

"Alas, dear Lord, almighty God, how long shall I stand here on the earth of my flesh like a stick or a target that people run, hurl, and shoot at, having long ago sullied my honor with cunning and malice?"

Now listen to this reply:

“No one is so swift of foot,
No one is so strong at hurling,
No one is so cunning in shooting,
No one is so malicious in his rage
That he can destroy my heaven
Or smash to pieces or damage the place where I dwell.
What is more: Those who today offer me shelter
And tomorrow throw me out,
They are like hell.
Whose foundation I am,
I shall be his pinnacle as well.”

"Alas, Lord, who shall help me that I always travel on the path that, if I slip, I not fall?"

Fear of God shall keep me upright; God's will shall guide me.

39. The Reflection of God's Radiance by Our Lady and Her Power

Oh, oh, oh, three Persons have one name undivided in one God. Gracefully they flow full force toward Mary's countenance, inseparable in one light beam, richly bestowing the bright light of heavenly honors. With an indescribable greeting52 it touches her heart, which shines and glows in such a way that the sublime reflection of the Holy Trinity lingers on her countenance.

It flows farther still
And fills all the humble vessels of love,
Giving them splendor and honor
Far beyond the others.

In this bright reflection our Lady can well make demands. And yet, if she wants to request something, she does so with humility; for God in his love became man in her humility. Does our Lady need humility in heaven? Only to the extent that she honors God more than herself, submissively together with all the blessed who follow her example.

Our Lady's radiance is illumined by all the pure gifts that she received from God. She is adorned as well with all the virtues perfectly. She is crowned with all dignity. Thus does she flow back into God full of all charm.

How our Lady feels bliss in the Holy Trinity and how God unites himself to her beyond how he does with all pure persons cannot be expressed in words. But to the degree they were united here on earth, our Lady feels bliss in heaven, and, in like measure, our Lord pours into her, beyond what he does with all the other saints. Our Lady has power over all the devils to keep them away from people. And that is why we like to proclaim our Ave Maria in her splendorous presence: so that she might remember us here.

40. Temptation, the World, and a Good End Test Us

No one knows how firmly he stands until he has been flung into the temptations of the body.

No one knows how strong he is until he is assailed by the wickedness of the world.

No one knows how good he is until he has achieved a good end.

41. How God's Splendor Is Reflected in a Human Being and in the Angels

You53 want me to continue to write, but I cannot. Bliss, glory, brightness, intimate love, truth: these so overwhelm me that I have become dumb, unable to say more of what I know.

And yet: A mirror was seen in heaven before the breast of each soul [and body] .54 In it shines the mirror of the Holy Trinity, giving truth and knowledge of all the virtues the body ever practiced and of all the gifts the soul had ever received on earth. From here the glorious reflection of each and every person shines forth back again into the sublime majesty from which it flowed forth. The radiance of the angels is fiery, bright with love, for they take great delight in our blessedness. They serve us effortlessly and their reward increases while the earth exists. True love of God has the same power in the angels that it does in men. That our serving requires great effort is due to our being sinful.

42. Sister Mechthild Wrote the Following in a Note to Her Brother B., of the Order of Preachers, Saying55

"The greatest j oy in heaven is the will of God. When unwillingness becomes willingness, God's j oy enters into the heart of a sad person. This is the confession of a spiritual person-that one has carelessly scorned a gift that comes from God. We should accept gifts of pain with j oy. We should accept gifts of comfort with fear. Thus we can put all things that come our way to good use.

Dear friend, be in harmony with God, and be happy with his will.

[43. This Writing Flowed out of God's

The writing in this book flowed out of the living Godhead into Sister Mechthild's heart and has been as faithfully set down here as it was given by God, out of her heart and written by her hand. Thanks be to God.]57

Book VII

1. The Crown and the Dignity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Which He Shall Receive After the Last Day

Our Lord, the heavenly Father, in his divine wisdom has stored away many ineffable gifts with which he intends to adorn his chosen children after the last day. Especially for his only begotten Son, Jesus, our Redeemer, has the heavenly Father prepared and fashioned a crown with such rich and exquisite workmanship that all the craftsmen who ever existed, are now, and ever shall be could not fully capture the splendor and rich delights of this crown. The spiritual eyes of the loving soul beheld this crown in limitless eternity and its nature was made known to her. What is this thing called eternity? It is the uncreated wisdom of the infinite Godhead that has neither beginning nor end.

The crown has three arches. The first arch is that of the patriarchs, the second that of the prophets, the third that of Holy Christianity. The crown is formed by the images and decorated with the presence of all the blessed who are destined to possess God's kingdom on the last day. They shall have honor that is portioned out to them according to their works.

The first arch of the crown is fashioned and illumined with the precious stones of the holy interior life and good works the patriarchs ever performed. The arch is also formed by human likeness, body and soul. The first likeness on the arch of the crown is that of St. Stephen, and all the martyrs who ever shed their blood in Christian faith are depicted together with him. Next to this, St. Peter and all God's apostles with him are also depicted; then come all the blessed who followed the teachings of the apostles. Those married people shall also be depicted on this arch, together with their children, who have followed God through good works.

The second arch of the crown is covered with the likenesses of the popes together with all the spiritual fathers to whom God entrusted his sheep. This arch is fashioned with all spiritual authority and decorated with the flowers of Christian teaching.

The third arch of the crown is formed most beautifully of all, with the noble human form of our Lord Jesus Christ, and with him his glorious mother Mary with all her virgins who shall follow the Lamb.' St. John the Baptist is represented there very close to the Lamb, and all those who became Christians under his hands are splendidly represented with him. This arch of the crown is adorned with the natures of all creatures in accordance with the love and affection that the creator had for them when he created all things according to his will.

The crown is garlanded with many knightly shields of mighty Christian faith. The empire shall also be represented on the crown, fashioned and decorated down to the very last peasant, their honor always depending on how well they served God.

At the time of the Antichrist the crown shall be crenelated with many a glorious image, such as that of Elias and Enoch, and many holy martyrs shall be there before them wearing the flowers of the holiness of their life and enhanced by their precious blood.

The crown shall also be dyed in the blood of the Lamb, and shall shine forth and be gilded with the powerful love that broke the sweet heart of Jesus in two. Our heavenly Father created this crown; Jesus Christ earned it; the Holy Spirit fashioned it and hammered it out in fiery love, making it so pliable with the refined skills of the Holy Trinity that it fits our Redeemer Jesus Christ so well and looks so glorious on him that the heavenly Father receives more joy still from his only begotten Son. This has to be, even though the eternal Godhead without a beginning always contained all bliss and joy within itself, does now, and ever shall. And yet it causes him special eternal joy, that he shall gaze with such happiness upon his eternal Son, together with all his followers.

When Jesus Christ has held his last judgment and has served and celebrated his last supper, he shall receive this crown from his Father in great honor and with him all those who in body and soul with great effort have come to the eternal feast. Each soul and body shall see its honor on the crown.

The crown was produced on earth at a great cost-not with gold, nor with silver, nor with jewels; rather, with human toil, with human tears, sweat, and blood, with all the virtues and, finally, with painful death. Angels will not be seen on the crown because they are not human beings. But they shall praise God for the crown with delightful song.

The first choir sings: "We praise you, Lord, because of your glorious law from which have come forth all here present whose likenesses appear on your crown."

The second choir: "We praise you, Lord, with the faith of Abraham and with the fervent longing and prophecies of all the prophets."

The third choir: "We praise you, Lord, with all the wisdom and piety of all your apostles."

The fourth choir: "We praise you, Lord, with the blood and the constancy of all your martyrs."

The fifth choir: "We praise you, Lord, for the holy prayer and Christian teaching of all the baptists and confessors."

The sixth choir: "We praise you, Lord, with the steadfastness of the penitence of your widows."

The seventh choir: "We praise you, Lord, with the chastity of all virgins."

The eighth choir: "We praise you, Lord, with the fruit of your mother and virgin."

The ninth choir: "We praise you, Lord, for your holy death and your glorious life after your death, and for your great outpouring of every gift and every goodness with which, Lord, you have raised us up and admirably ranked us. We praise you, Lord, with your fiery love in which you have made us one."

Above the crown flies the loveliest banner ever seen in this empire. This shall be the holy cross on which Christ suffered his death. The cross has four ends. The bottom end is decorated with bliss brighter than the sun. On the right side beneath the cross the pillar is suspended upright, stained with the blood of the Lamb, festooned and decorated with the nails with which our Lord was wounded. At the top of the tree of the cross hangs suspended the fairest imperial thorn-crown of the realm.

The thorns have blossoms
Lily white, rosy pink,
Delightful, bright as heaven.

That is the banner of the crown with which Jesus won the victory and returned alive to his Father.

Right after the last day, at the eternal celebration, when God has made all things new, this crown will be revealed and will sit lightly upon the humanity of our Lord to the glory and praise of the Holy Trinity and the joy of all the blessed evermore.

The humanity of our Lord is an intelligible image of his eternal Godhead,2 so that we can grasp the Godhead with the humanity and, like the Holy Trinity, enjoy, hug, kiss, and embrace God in an incomprehensible manner, whom neither heaven nor hell nor purgatory can ever grasp or resist. The eternal Godhead shines forth, lighting up all the blessed who are in its presence and making them ready for love, so that they freely rejoice and live ever free of interior suffering. The humanity of our Lord greets, rejoices, and loves his flesh and his blood without ceasing. Though there is no longer flesh and blood there, still the brotherly kinship is so great that he has to love his human nature in a special way.

The Holy Spirit, too, shares its heavenly outpouring of love, enriching the blessed and so utterly satisfying them that they sing with joy, charmingly laugh and leap with measured step, flow and float along. They soar and climb from choir to choir to the heights of the realm where they gaze into the mirror of eternity' and understand the will and all the works of the Holy Trinity and how they themselves have been formed in body and soul, as they shall remain forever. The soul is formed in the body with human qualities but has a divine shimmer about it and shines through the body as radiant gold shines through pure crystal.

Thus do they[4] become utterly free and happy,
Agile, strong, and filled with love,
Radiant and as godlike as one can be.
They travel about wherever they want
As swiftly over a thousand leagues

As one here forms a thought.
Just think what such movement is like!
And yet never can they touch or grasp an end of this kingdom.
The expanse of space and streets of gold are overly large,
And yet are the right size and not really golden.
They are infinitely better than gold and precious stones.
These things are completely of the earth and shall be annihilated.

And now comes the end of the crown: The Holy Spirit will be fashioning the crown until the last day. Then the Father and the Son shall reward him for his work. As recompense hey shall give him all the souls and bodies that are assembled in the kingdom of God. There within them the Holy Spirit shall rest eternally, and he shall constantly hail them and fill them with joy. Everything that was ever done or will ever be done for the love of God, everything that was ever endured or forsaken for God's sake shall all blossom forth on the crown. Ah, what a crown! Ah, who can help me become a tiny flower on the crown like the newly baptized infants who are the tiniest flowers on the crown?

If this description is too long, it is because I take such rich delight in the crown. Actually, I have set down many a long description with few words. I say this to myself: "How much longer, helpless puppy, will you go on yapping? You have to quiet down because I have to keep silent about what is finest."

2. How a Person Prayed for All the Souls on All Souls 'Day

On All Souls' Day I prayed together with Holy Christianity for all the souls that are doing penance in purgatory. Then I saw a purgatory that was like a stove. On the outside it was black; inside it was full of fiery flames. Looking inside I saw how they stood in the flames and burned like a bundle of straw. Then someone was standing next to me who looked like a large angel. I asked him how it was that the souls squeezed themselves outside when the prayers of good people reached them. Some squeezed themselves outside and some were unable to do so. Then he whom I asked answered me: "When they were on earth, they did not want to come to the aid of those who were begging them for help in their distress."

Then my soul was moved to pity because of their power and dignity, and cried to heaven: "Lord God, could I go inside to them and suffer with them so that they might come to you sooner?" Then our Lord revealed that he was the angel standing next to me, and he said: "If you are willing to go in, I shall go in with you." Then our Lord clasped the spirit of this person to himself and brought her inside. When the soul came inside with our Lord, she felt no pain. Then she asked how many of them there were. Our Lord said: "You can't finish counting them, and these are the ones for whom you prayed while they were on earth."

Then I found a person for whom I used to pray thirty years ago. And I was saddened because I had nothing to give him and, because of my wretchedness, I did not dare ask for great things from such a great Lord. Then I said the following words: "0 dear Lord, would you release them?" Then all at once they rose up in great numbers wonderfully whiter than snow, and they floated off toward paradise in pure sweet bliss. There they rested in joy. When they rose out of the fire, they all sang the following psalm: "Praise the Lord, ye children. After that they sang: "We praise you, Lord, for the greatness of your goodness, for the generousness of your gift and for the faithfulness of your help."

Our Lord was still standing next to the place of fire and held the spirit of the person in his embrace. The soul of the person said: "0 Lord, you well know what I desire." This was that she might be at the feet of our Lord in order to thank him.

Our Lord then let her down,
And she thanked him again
That she was able to witness the great honor
That the poor souls had received from God.
Then she found on his feet
The rose-colored wounds
Of our true redemption.

Then she prayed: “Lord, give me your blessing.”
And our Lord said: “I bless you with my wounds.”

May this happen to me and to all God's friends and mine. This, alas, did not come about through my efforts, for I consider the entreaties of Holy Christianity to be worth much more than mine.

3. How Beneficial It Is for a Person to Examine His Heart Constantly with Humble Fear

I know of no one so good that it is unnecessary for him to examine his heart constantly, to recognize what dwells within it, and also to criticize with great frequency all his deeds. One should do this with humble fear. God's voice taught me this, for I have never performed any deed so well that I could not have done it better. This is what I criticize myself for.

This is how we should chide our frailty: "Well now, you most wretched of all creatures, how long do you intend to harbor useless habits in your five senses? Our childhood was foolish, our youth became troubled. How we then conquered is clear to God. Alas, in my old age there is, unfortunately, much that I must criticize, for it is unproductive in resplendent deeds and cold as to graces. It is powerless as well, since it does not have youth with which to sustain fiery love of God. It also has no tolerance for pain, so that a small twinge that youth would ignore is quite painful. But proper old age is joyfully patient and trusts in God alone.

Seven years ago a discouraged old person complained to God about this sorry state of things. God gave this reply:

“Your childhood was a playmate of my Holy Spirit.
Your youth was a bride of my humanity.
Your old age is now a housewife of my Godhead.”

Alas, dear Lord, what good is it that a dog barks if the owner of the house keeps on sleeping? The thief breaks into his house anyway.

And yet the prayer of a pure heart sometimes awakens the dead sinner. Woe, sinner! How bitterly can one weep for you, for you are your own murderer and you are harmful to all goodness and yet a benefit to it. A good person receives great profit when he sees someone weaken or fall into sin. He then looks very carefully around him so that he might not get into that trouble at all. Thus does a good person better himself through evil things. Freely performed good deeds then follow. But a wicked person gets worse when he sees bad examples. He becomes so evil that he looks with contempt upon good deeds and good people. And he is most comfortable with his own perverse wisdom.

My dear Schoolmaster, who taught me this book, silly stupid person though I be, also taught me the following saying: You should not trust someone who is not sincere in what he does. I know an enemy who is a destroyer of divine truth in the human heart. If one gives him room, he writes, with the approval of the person, false wisdom into the person's heart and says: "I am quick to anger and weak by nature." This is not an honorable excuse before God. With the help of grace you should become meek and strong.

"I have no grace." Then in your lack of grace you should call out to the God of grace with humble tears and with constant prayers in holy desire. Then the worm of anger will die. You must do violence to yourself. Then there will be no need for any hurtful force from God or anyone else to come upon you. Then the worm of anger shall be annihilated. If, with God, we want to overcome and drive out our anger and all our imperfections, we simply have to ignore our sinful temptations in secret and outwardly put on a holy, cheerful demeanor.

Alas, wretched brood, as long as we storm around in anger, even if there is anything good about us, we still have to come back to our heart.' Then we must rightly be ashamed. The anger consumed our strength and dried out our flesh, and so we wasted our valuable time when we should have been serving God. Alas, this is an eternal loss! Again, alas! I regret the sinful tears that were shed in haughty anger. The soul becomes so darkened thereby that a person is incapable the whole time of rightly enjoying any good things. But tears of sorrow are so holy. If a great sinner could shed one tear of sorrow for all his sins, he would never go to everlasting hell-if he remained in this disposition.

No matter how small the sins are that a good person commits regularly, which he just won't give up the while he lives-if he dies thus without confession and penance, no matter how holy he is, he will end up in bitter purgatory. For as merciful as God is, he is also at the same time just and angered by all sins. I tell myself that love must dwell in us. Never should we be self-righteous. Then humility will dwell within.

4. Our Lord's Switch

Not long after I arrived at the convent,' I was so terribly afflicted with sickness that my Lady felt pity. So I said to our Lord: "Dear Lord, what is your purpose with this suffering?" And our Lord said this:

"All your paths have been measured out;
All your footsteps have been counted.
Your life has been sanctified.
Your end shall be happy,
And my kingdom is very close to you."

"Lord, why is my life sanctified, since I can do so little that is good?"

Then our Lord said: "Your life has become sanctified because my switch never leaves your back."

We praise you, God,' that God is so good.

5. Why the Convent Was Once Undergoing Trials

One should do good to those who one knows are in need of it. For I do not want to have from the convent the good that one withholds from them. This is the explanation: Each one according to his office should in mercy do good to those he knows to be in need.

6. The Chapter Room1° and How a Person Should Examine His Infractions and Weep for Them; Two Golden Pennies and Good Will and Desire

Whoever has this knowledge, let him lament and weep with me. For the chosen children of God frequently take God's body, receiving it in a holy manner. But I have to go to my chapter room accompanied by my burning conscience.

Then my unworthiness comes and chides me.
Then my indolence comes and accuses me.
Then the frivolousness of my personality comes and points out my capriciousness to me.
Then the wretchedness of my useless life comes and saddens me.
Then fear of God comes and scourges me.

Then I crawl forward like a tiny worm on the ground and hide myself under the grass of my many various omissions all my days. There I sit and cry to heaven: "0 merciful God, grant me that I might today share in the grace that your chosen ones have now received."

Thereupon our Lord replied: "Take two golden pennies that weigh the same and go shopping with them. If they are of equal value, they are equally good."

"Alas, dear Lord, how can my wretchedness be equal to your goodness? For I am not the person who could well offer you honor. I have nothing that is suitable for you, and for consolation my soul clings to worthless nothings in the world. And so I am rejected and, alas, corrupt. I am not at all what I have long desired to be."

Our Lord said: "With good will and with holy desire you can make good whatever you want."

7. How a Person May Always Be United with God

For a person to be constantly united with God is heavenly bliss beyond all earthly pleasure. How is this supposed to happen to us? Our longing should constantly accompany all our actions, and we should constantly examine all our actions in Christian faith and from God's point of view, and never be useless. Thus we praise God with all our works for all the works he ever performed on earth for love of us. Then we are united with him in his works on earth with celestial love. After this we shall be spiritually illumined. Then we praise our Lord God with all the gifts that he ever gave us: our body and possessions, friends and relatives, and all the earthly joy that we could desire. In so doing we thank God for all his generous gifts that he ever gave us on earth for body and soul. Then we are united with God in the love of receiving and in humble gratitude. We should thereby press all God's gifts to our heart. Then our heart becomes full of love, our senses are opened, and our soul so resplendent that we look into divine knowledge like someone who sees his own countenance in a bright mirror. Thus can we know God's will in all our actions, so that we glorify God's will and love it whether it brings suffering or comfort; and we are happy about what happens to us, except for sin. This we should weep over and hate, for it is always cursed. Thereby we on earth become united with the saints in heaven because they are the happiest of all about the will of God in heaven.

I do not know how the enemy found out when God gave me this knowledge at night and I was united in it with great joy. He came to me and spoke to me in confidence because he wanted to trick me. I heard his voice with my fleshly ears, and I saw his form with spiritual eyes-black, filthy, and like a frightening human. But I was not afraid of him. This is why: Whenever God's grace is present in the soul and occupies the senses, the body cannot be afraid in his presence. But when the body is still occupied with useless activity-if he comes then, the body suffers such pain in his presence that I have never suffered that amount of pain in my life.

Then he said to me: "I dreamed at night that I was rich and had a lot of possessions."

He wanted me to think that this holy union of God with the soul was just a dream. The housewife of the body, the soul, said inwardly: "You are not truthful."

And he said: "Yes, and I shall exist as long as God lives."

And the soul said: "You certainly are smart. Tell me, what should I do?"

The devil went too far: "You should be happy and should make a show of this great event in your demeanor."

The soul: "Unfortunately, I am not so small that I can grasp through the eye of the needle all my enemies to the heavenly gates of my everlasting land."

The devil: "You are shielded all too well."

The soul: "In your words I recognize your falseness, doubt, empty glory, and arrogance. Even if a steel wall up to the clouds were around me, my heart would still never be free and safe from my enemies."

Then he stood there and trembled before me. Oh, how full of falseness that seemed to me to be! Then he tore out his hair and sprang away angrily.

8. How a Person Seeks God

When God chooses to withdraw from someone, that person seeks our Lord God and says:

“Lord, my suffering is deeper than the abyss.
My heart’s anguish extends outward wider than the world.
My fear is larger than the mountains.
My longing is higher than the stars.
Nowhere in these things can I find you.”

In this distress the soul noticed her Lover near her, resembling a fair young lad, so fair that it cannot be described. And yet she would have hidden herself. Then she falls at his feet and greets his wounds. So sweet are they that she can no longer feel any of her pain or anything of her age. And she thought: "Alas, how much you would like to look upon his countenance, but then you would have to abandon his wounds. And how much you would like to hear his words and wishes." Then she arises clothed and adorned in spotless propriety.

Then he says: "Welcome, my dearest love." In the sound of the words she knew that every soul that serves God in his favor is his dearest love.

Then he said: "I must temper you as to pleasure, both yours and mine." The pleasure is beyond describing.

He said: "Receive this crown of virgins." Then the crown went from him and came onto her head. It shone as though it were of pure gold. The crown was double and was also the crown of love.

Then our Lord said: "This crown shall be displayed before the whole army of heaven."

Then she asked: "Lord, are you going to receive my soul tomorrow after I have received your holy body?"

"No," he said, "you are to become richer still in suffering."

"Lord, what should I be doing here in this convent?"

"You should illumine and teach them and should remain with them in great honor."

Then she thought: "Ah, now you are here alone with our Lord."

As she thought this, she saw two angels standing next to her. They were as worthy of respect as secular princes are in comparison to poor people. Then she said: "How can I now hide?"

They said: "We shall bring you from suffering to suffering, from virtue to virtue, from knowledge to knowledge, from love to love."

That a sinful mouth should and must say all this is difficult for me; and yet, before God and because of obedience, I dare not omit it. May I keep a human sense of shame and fear of God all my days!

9. How the Loving Soul Praises Our Lord with All Creatures

The loving soul never has enough of praising. That is why she gathers within herself in her longing everything that God ever created and then calls out to heaven: "Lord, if it were possible that all these people were as perfect and as holy as your blessed mother, Mary, that still would not be enough for wretched me for praising you fully with your only begotten Son. Lord, can one ever praise you enough? No, and that makes me happy."

To this our Lord replied: "Those virgins who have long served me shall praise me."

10. This Happened at a Time When There Was Great Turmoil

I prayed to our Lord for distress caused by war and for the many sins of the world. And our Lord answered and said: "The stink of sins nauseates me from the abyss of earth to the heavens. If it were possible, they would drive me out. Sins once did drive me out; then I came in humility and served the world until my death. Now nothing like that can ever happen again. Now because of sin I must sometimes bring my justice into play."

"Dear Lord, what then should we poor wretches do?"

Our Lord said: "You should humble yourselves under the restless hand of God almighty and fear him in all your actions. I shall yet free my people from all distress; they are my friends. Prayer in common appeases my heart. I shall show how I am disposed. I hear with pleasure the prayers of religious people who mean it from the heart": Our help is in the name of the Lord. Praise the Lord all ye nations. And the Son is glorified. The kingdom of the world. My heart leapt up. Whom I saw. Glory be to the Father and the Son."

"Lord heavenly Father, accept your service and your praise from your downcast children and free your people from this present distress and release us all from all our bonds except from the bonds of love. May they never be taken from us!"

11. How Our Lord Was Seen Looking Like a Worker

Our Lord showed me an allegory that he realized in me and still does. I saw a poor man get up from the ground. He was clothed in poor linen cloth like a worker. In his hands he had a carrying frame. On it lay a burden similar to the earth. I said: "My good man, what are you carrying?"

"I am carrying," he said, "your sufferings. Turn your will toward suffering; lift, and carry."

And the person said: "Lord, I am so poor that I do not have anything."

Our Lord said: "This is what I taught my disciples when I said: `Blessed are the poor in spirit.'12 This is the case when a person can do nothing but would like to-that is spiritual poverty."

The person: "Lord, if it is you, turn your face toward me so that I can recognize you."

And our Lord said: "Recognize me within."

The soul: "Lord, if I were to see you in the midst of thousands, I would easily recognize you." My heart turned me within into a guard and I did not dare dispute with him that it was he. So I said: "Dear Lord, this burden is too heavy."

And our Lord said: "I shall put it so close to me that you can carry it quite well. Follow me and see how I stood on the cross in the sight of my heavenly Father, and remain like that."

She said: "Lord, give me your blessing for it."

"I bless you without ceasing. There will be good help for your sufferings."

"Lord, help in this all those who willingly suffer torment for love of you."

12. How a Person Should Resist Vain Honor and Temptation

Whenever a person thinks well of himself, vain honor immediately leaps forth out of a corner of the human heart along with sinful desire and tries to sprawl out into the five senses. Then one should take oneself in hand and instantly beat one's breast in humble fear and bless oneself with the sign of the holy cross. Then it will immediately disappear, as if it had never existed. I in my wretchedness have often had this experience. One should do this same thing the minute evil thoughts come shooting in. They, too, disappear because of the power of the holy cross-if one is really sorry for them.

13. How Our Lord Was Seen Looking Like a Pilgrim

I, a poor unworthy person, shall disregard myself and tell what I have seen and heard in God. One night I saw our Lord standing there in the likeness of a pilgrim. He acted as if he had been trudging through all of Christendom. I fell at his feet and said: "My dear pilgrim, where are you coming from?"

He said: "I'm coming from Jerusalem." By that he meant Christianity. "And I have been driven from my shelter. The heathens do not acknowledge me, Jews do not want me, Christians attack me."

Then I prayed for Christianity. And our Lord made clear in fine detail his innocence regarding the great shame that he suffers from Christianity and explained how much good he has done for Christianity from the beginning and how he has labored for Christians and day after day still searches for ways to pour his grace into them.

Then our Lord again complained and said: "People drive me from the shelter of their heart with their selfishness, and when I find no room in them, I let them be in their selfishness. And when they die I judge them as I then find them to be."

Then I prayed for the convent: "Dear Lord, do not let them perish."

["I shall let no one perish."]" "I shall put a light in their cemetery. In it they shall know themselves."

14. God's Choosing and Blessing

Another night, while I was at prayer and filled with longing and oblivious of myself, I became aware of our Lord. He was standing in the cemetery and had the whole community before him lined up according to when they had entered the convent. And our Lord said to them: "I have chosen you. If you choose me, I shall give you something."

Then I said: "Lord, what shall you give them?"

And he said: "I shall make of them on earth shining mirrors, so that all who see them shall recognize their life in them. And in heaven I shall make them radiant mirrors, so that all who look upon them will know that I have chosen them." Then our Lord stretched forth his hand and gave them his blessing saying: "I bless you with myself. Choose me in all your thoughts."

The ones who choose our Lord in all their thoughts are those blessed who praise our Lord fittingly.

Then I said: "They are going to ask me in what form and fashion I saw you."

And he said: "There are some among them who know me."

15. How a Person Who Loves Truth Should Pray

The person who loves truth likes to pray thus: "Ah, dear Lord, grant me and help me that I always seek you in a holy manner with all my five senses in all things, for I have chosen you in preference to all lords and all sovereigns as Bridegroom of my soul. Grant me also, Lord, that I might find you with all my longing, burning or spent though it be. I desire also that I may enjoy you with the flowing love of all your gifts. Give me, Lord, abundantly of your outflowing, that it fill my heart and mind so that pain, scorn, and bitterness may ever feel pleasant to me. Grant me that it may ever turn out that way for me through your favor, generous God; now grant me this. Help me also, Lord, to keep you by giving up completely my own will according to your desire. Then I would never, ever lose that love that never ceases to burn. Amen."

16. How a Person Spoke and Prayed

For a long time a person desired more than all gifts and suffering that God release her soul with a holy end. And our Lord said: "Wait for me."

The person said: "Dear Lord, I cannot control my longing; I would so dearly like to be with you."

Our Lord said: "I longed for you before the beginning of the world. I long for you and you long for me. Where two burning desires meet, there love is perfect."

17. How Knowledge Speaks to the Conscience

Knowledge said to the conscience: "No matter how much people despise you and inflict suffering upon you, nevertheless stand pure in God."

Conscience: "Lady Knowledge, you have put it very well. To feel comfortable in all kinds of trouble a person must have a

humble heart."

Knowledge: "Lady Conscience, you have such a fine mirror in which you frequently examine yourself very meticulously. This14 must indeed be the living Son of God with all his works. It cannot be that you are so wise by some other means."

Conscience: "Lady Knowledge, when I examine myself in it, I experience both pleasure and pain. Pleasure, because God comes to me as a flowing goodness; pain, because I am so feeble in good works."

Knowledge: "Lady Conscience, in all things you prefer God's will and God's glory to your own benefit for body or soul. You are hell for the devil and heaven for God. To what can one compare you?"

Conscience: "Lady Knowledge, everything I have from God was given me on loan, so that with it I might gain praise and glory for him and for my own benefit as well. For if I am to pay him back, I shall certainly need his grace."

Knowledge: "Lady Conscience, you are very much fettered by the sins of the world, and the imperfections of religious people cause you much heartache. They have freedom of choice to go to heaven or to hell or to a long stay in purgatory. That is a heavy burden for you."

Conscience: "Lady Knowledge, I do not complain because I am met with dislike or because I have days of suffering. Rather, I feel sorrow for the sins of the world just as I do for my own. Suffering cleanses the body of sin and sanctifies the soul in God. This is why we joyfully stand ready for its command."

Knowledge: "Lady Conscience, the well-intentioned high and mighty in the world offer up to God their possessions and their alms. Religious people offer their flesh and blood in his service, offering up to God, above all things, their own will in obedience. That weighs more, that has greater value."

Conscience: "Lady Knowledge, that is not enough. If we want to enjoy God in the heights, we must have the crown of humility and pure chastity, from birth or chosen later, and the pinnacle of love before all else."

This same delightful garment is worn by the Holy Trinity: the Father-the pinnacle of love; the Son-pure, humble chastity that he imparted to all his chosen ones; the Holy Spirit-on fire with love for us in all our good actions in true humility.

Knowledge: "Lady Conscience, steadfastness in good things: that is a love that toils. One cannot do without it if one wants to possess with God the highest honor, both here and in his eternal realm. Happy the person who here strives for it."

18. Suggestions for the Seven Hours15 for Honoring the Passion of Our Lord

At matins:"

O great dew of the noble Godhead,
O tender blossom of the sweet maiden,
O beneficial fruit of the beautiful flowers,
O holy sacrifice of the heavenly Father,
O faithful pledge of redemption for the whole world, Lord Jesus Christ!
Receive your holy morning service as praise and honor
For your birth in exile, your lonely distress,
Your extreme suffering, your holy death,
Your glorious resurrection, your splendid ascension,
Your almighty glory as praise and honor.

Remember, dear Lord, that I must carry out your holy will to a good end in all I do and leave undone in my whole life to honor your Holy Trinity and for all those who are with me and in your name are your friends and mine.

At prime:

0 wretched shame, 0 dreadful pain that killed your glorious body and sweet heart. Help me, dear Lord, that I can and shall make the best of being despised and of all my interior suffering in your love, as it may please you in your eternal glory.

At terce:

O heavy burden, 0 wretched weight that you carried for us, Lord, under your cross! Carry us, Lord, through all our distress into eternal life.

At sext:

O bloody agony, O wounds so deep,
O pain so great.
Let me, Lord, not perish
In all my painful anguish. Amen.

At none:

O most blessed anguish, O most holy death,
O most delightful mirror of the heavenly Father,
Jesus Christ, fastened high on the cross by hand and foot!

I commend to you, Lord, my soul at my final end, that I may unceasingly and forever more be united with you just as your heavenly Father was and is. Grant this to me and to all who love you faithfully.

At vespers:

O bound flowing of love,
O faithful outpouring of the heart,
O glorious body that was killed there for my sake,
Dearest Lord Jesus Christ!

I beseech you that my five senses may and shall constantly rejoice in the bloody lance and in the wound of your heart, and that my lonely soul shall eternally rejoice therein, along with those for whom I shall and want to pray according to Christian practice. Amen.

At compline:

O holy depths of all humility,
O generous breadth of all gifts,
O glorious heights of all love,
In which you, Jesus Christ, pray to your heavenly Father!

Fulfill now, Lord, your prayers in us and sanctify us in truth, and give us the depths of all humility in which we may bow low beneath all creatures, since creatures resist someone who does not do as we do. Grant us, Lord, the breadth of all generosity, and that we, for love of you, fulfill willingly the rule of our order; and give us, Lord, the heights of your love that it may preserve us pure in you and uncorrupted by all earthly things. Amen.

19. The Greeting of Our Lady

Hail, dear Lady Mary, you are the everlasting joy of the Holy Trinity.
Hail, dear Lady Mary, you are the beginning of all our happiness.
Hail, dear Lady Mary, you are the companion of the holy angels here and in God's kingdom.
Hail, dear Lady Mary, you are the flower of the patriarchs.
Hail, dear Lady Mary, you are the hope of the prophets.
Hail, dear Lady Mary, you are the white lily of humble virgins.
Hail, dear Lady Mary, remember how the greeting came to you from Gabriel's mouth and welcome my soul in my final hour, and bring me with joy unspoiled out of this land of exile into the richly joyous land of your dear Child where I may find rest.

Hail, dear Lady Mary, you are the wisdom that taught the apostles.
Hail, dear Lady Mary, you are the rose of the martyrs.
Hail, dear Lady Mary, you are the protection of the confessors.
Hail, dear Lady Mary, you are the helper of all widows.
Hail, dear Lady Mary, you are the glory of all the saints of your dear Child. Pray for me, that I might be sanctified with them with all my works as far as it is possible for a lowly person like me, Mary, dear Empress.
Hail, dear Lady Mary, you are the refuge of sinners.
Hail, dear Lady Mary, you are the mighty helper of those in despair.
Hail, dear Lady Mary, you are the consoler of all Holy Christianity.
Hail, dear Lady Mary, you are the terror of all evil spirits, for they took flight from you. Drive them from me, dear Lady, that they never, ever find joy because of me, and may I ever be constant in your service.

20. How One Should Pray the Ave Maria to Our Lady

Hail, celestial Empress, Mother of God and the dear love of my heart. Receive, lady, your Ave Maria today as praise and honor for the blissful sight of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, which is wonderfully unconcealed and opened to the virginal maternal countenance, filled with all happiness. Ali, lady, remember all my longings and all my prayers, all my torments and all my distress and all my interior suffering, my honor, my soul, and my final end, when I leave this deplorable exile. I commend all of this ever and again to your motherly faithfulness and your maidenly honor and your womanly goodness and, in addition, I commend all those with me who are my friends and yours in the name of God almighty, my dearest Lady, Mary, noble Empress!

21. How One Should Examine One's Heart Before Going to God's Tablet'

You" want to have instruction from me, but I myself am uneducated. What you are searching for you can find a thousand times better in your books.

Whenever I, in my unworthiness, am about to go up and receive the body of our Lord, I examine the countenance of my soul in the mirror of my sins. There I see myself as I lived, as I am now living, and as I shall live in the future. In this mirror of my sins I see nothing but alas and woe. Then I cast my face to the ground and weep plaintively, if I can, because eternal incomprehensible God is so kind that he wants to bow down to the filthy puddle of my heart. Then I call to mind that injustice it would be fairer if one were to drag my body to the gallows, like a thief who had stolen from his rightful lord the precious treasure of purity, which God gave me in holy baptism.

As long as we live,
We shall ruefully lament
That we have darkened ourselves.
For this, Lord, may you forgive us like a father.

If a person did not confess a sin and has no intention of confessing it, he should not receive God's body.

Now I shall approach true hope
And shall thank God
That I was ever noticed,
That it can actually happen to a wretched person like me
That I may receive the body of God.
Now I shall joyfully go to God's table
And I shall receive that same bloody Lamb
That willed to be on the cross,
Bloody, with his holy five wounds untended.
Fortunate for us that this ever happened.
In his holy passion I shall endure all my troubles.
We go joyfully, then, and with hearts filled with love
And with our souls open, and receive our Beloved,
The most Beloved of our hearts,

And lay him down in our soul
As in a cozy cradle,
And sing his praise and honor
For that first hardship that he wished to endure
When he lay in the crib.
Then we bow down with our soul and our five senses
And thank our dear One and speak thus:
"Lord, I thank you for you.
I ask you now whether you might give me your jewels,
That I might live pure,
Free from all sin.
Lord, where shall I then put you?

I shall give you what I have.
I shall put you in my little bed.
This little bed is made completely of suffering.
When I ponder your suffering,
I forget about mine.
Lord, you shall lay my cheek down for me.
The pillow for my cheek is the pain I feel within
That I am not always ready
To receive your gifts of suffering.
That, Lord, is my whole lament.
The bed's blanket is my longing

That binds me.
Now if, Lord, you wish to soothe me,
Then do my will
And give me those sinners
Who are in the state of mortal sin.
Then you will bring joy to my soul.
Lord, what then do we want to say about love
As we are lying here so close together
In the bed of my suffering?
I have received you, Lord,
As you were when you arose from the dead.
Dear One to my heart, now console me
That I might remain pure with you always.

Great happiness shall follow.
Give me, Lord, the guilty souls from purgatory,
Though I do not have enough to pay the ransom.
I have just received you, Lord,
As you were when you ascended to heaven.
Now, Dearest, you should not be too easy on me.
I would like one day to die of love.
Lord, you can satisfy me no other way.
Give me, Lord, and take from me, Lord,
Everything you want,
And leave me just this wish—
That I might die of love in love. Amen."

22. Praise of the Heavenly Father

It is well for me that I praise you, God, all ways for your noble goodness, that you have chosen me for your holy service. Sanctify my heart and mind, that I might receive all your gifts with holy inwardness and might remain with you in joy.

23. How One Should Thank the Son

It is well for me to thank you, imperial Son of God. I shall thank you always that you took me, in the world, out of the world. Your holy pain that you suffered for my sake is mine. All that I ever suffer I want to give to you in return. Even though this is an unequal bargain, it nevertheless makes my soul free. Keep me always in your favor, so that you may be praised forever. Jesus, my dearly Beloved, loosen my bonds; let me remain with you.

24. The Flood of Love

It is well for me to thank you, Holy Spirit. It is my belief that you are one Person of the Holy Trinity. Your sweet loving spring waters erase all the suffering of my heart, for they come forth softly out of the Holy Trinity. I beg you, Lord Holy Spirit, to protect me from all malice of the evil spirits with your divine love, so that they not find in me what they are seeking.

25. The Greeting for the Holy Trinity

I, lacking all virtues; I, fragile in my being; if I dare or can, then I shall greet the sublimity, the splendor, the bliss, the wisdom, the nobility, and the wondrous oneness of the Holy Trinity. Out of it has flowed forth immaculate all that was, that is, that ever shall be. There I must one day enter again. How shall that happen? I must crawl back, for I am sinful. I must make amends with good works. I must hurry with faithful diligence. I must fly with the feathers of doves-these are virtues and goodness and a holy frame of mind. I must soar in all things above myself. When I am utterly spent, then I shall enter. How I shall then be received-never has a human eye beheld such a sight; never has a human ear heard it; never could a human tongue

describe it.19 Glory to you, Trinity!20

26. How One Should Entreat God in Temptation

Lord Jesus Christ, I, a poor human being, implore you and desire your help, for my enemies are hunting me down. Lord God, I appeal to you, for they want to drive me from you. Lord, almighty Son of God, drive them away from me. Do not deliver me into their power, and keep me pure in you, for you have redeemed me with your suffering. Be now my help and my consolation. Lord, let me not perish, for you willingly died for my sake. Lord Jesus Christ, I seek your help. Awaken my soul from the sleep of my lethargy and illumine my senses from the darkness of my flesh. Accompany me as I travel all my paths to you, as far as is humanly possible, without sin; for your eyes see my failings.

Mary, Mother of God, heavenly Empress!
May you be my helper in this,
For I am, alas, a sinner.
May I find favor
With your dear Child.
Mother of all chastity.
I lament all my interior suffering to you.
Hail Queen![21]

27. How a Religious Person Should Turn His Heart Away from the World

When a person in religious life sees his relatives and dearest friends fashionably dressed and decked out, he indeed needs to be armed with the Holy Spirit so that he not entertain the thought: you could have had such a life. From such a thought his heart becomes so dark and his mind so unreceptive to God and his mouth so sluggish for holy prayer and his soul so completely alienated from God that inwardly he resembles his relatives much more than he does a person in religious life.

If he wants to stand pure with God,
He must take up the struggle.
For his conscience is then clouded,
This beacon of the Holy Spirit.
For the conscience does not shine
Without the light of the Holy Spirit.
But when the beacon has been brightly lit,
Then is its splendor well recognized.
So it is, too, with a religious person
For whose heart the baubles of the world are a terror.

He preserves well his beacon unextinguished.
But if his heart is open to the world,
His beacon shatters
And the bitter north wind of craving the life of our kinfolk comes,
And they claim they are unaffected by the swamp
In which, alas, they are indeed sinking
And drowning in sin.
Thus is our beacon extinguished,
And yet we have nothing from worldly things.
After this comes the south wind,
The fraudulent allurements of the world,

That appear so beautiful
Yet contain much bitter suffering.
If this is what pleases us,
Eternal loss is ours.
We must indeed preserve ourselves,
For there is no sin so small
That it does not leave its eternal mark on the soul.
Why is this so?
Never was a sin repented so completely
That it would not have been better left undone.
And so we should be in constant fear

If we want to stand pure with God.
What we have given to God,
We can never take back without serious harm to ourselves;
For we were given to him in a fair deal.
The fish in water sees with great appetite the dead red bait
With which one wants to catch it.
But it does not see the hook.
So it is with the poison of the world.
She[22] does not reveal its danger.

If you really want to reform,
Then look to your Bridegroom,
Lord of the whole world.
How fair he stood there
Richly clothed in bloody red,
Blackened, battered with scourges,
Bound to the pillar.
There he received many piercing wounds for love of you.

Take this to heart
And you will be able to escape the deceits of the world.
If you would follow further with your holy thoughts,
Then look up and behold
How he stood there on the cross
Raised up on high before the eyes of the world,
Blood running down over him.
These garments shall be the darlings of your heart,
His kingly eyes brimming over with tears,
His sweet heart flooded with love.
Now harken to the voice
That teaches you of God's love:

How the henchmen's hammers pounded
And pierced through his hands and feet on the cross.
Remember, too, the wound of the lance
That went through his side to the center of his heart,
And lament to him all your sins.
Thus shall you gain knowledge of God.
Look at the piercing crown
That he wore upon his head.
Kiss him before all else.
He gives you richly all delights.
Thank him for wishing to die out of his great love for you,
And let no one deceive you.
Then you can be a queen of his realm forever.
If this is what you choose,
You shall in joy overcome the sufferings of the whole world.

28. The Misfortunes of War

I was commanded with a holy seriousness to pray for the troubles now going on in Saxony and Thuringia." When I set about doing this with prayers of praise and petition, our dear Lord did not receive me and remained gravely silent. I had to endure this in loving patience for seventeen days. Then I said to our dear Lord: "0 dear Lord, when is the fortunate hour to come that you want and that I must pray for because of this distress?"

Our Lord then revealed himself to me and said:

"The bliss-filled dawn,
Rich in hues,
Is the poor people
Who are now enduring many kinds of misfortune.
After this the eternal sun of everlasting light
Shall rise for them,
Which after this trial shall shine upon them in eternal joy.
They shall be made holy thereby and as bright as the dazzling sun
As it rises in mid-morning and reaches its zenith.

Some are in the army out of need and fear. These I shall let be taken prisoner and die, so that they can come to me. Those who are the causes of the war are more horrible in themselves and more fierce in their deeds than if they dared to attack the images in my churches."

Then I saw that eternal death followed those common foot soldiers who robbed and pillaged on the streets. If there were no war, they would be thieves and charlatans. But, as always, the bad people are making the blessed good. Thus must God show his love through suffering. He can win them no other way. Thus did God explain to me the advantages,24 and I know not when or where it shall finally end.

I know this for certain: that I shall gladden the hearts of God's friends. I know this for certain: that no matter what the friends of God suffer, God never forgets them, for he is their help and their consolation in all their troubles. We should fight on accordingly, and suffer willingly in joy. Then we shall sparkle and shine in the sight of God.

29. A Teaching

If you want to turn your heart completely to God,
You should hold onto three things as a teaching:
Fearful in the face of sin,
Well-intentioned as to all virtues,
Constant in all good things.
Then shall you bring your life to a good end.
If you make yourself act thus,

You can indeed accomplish it with God's help.
Pray to God for this constantly
And you shall bear all your troubles lightly.
Confess purely and serve God diligently
And you shall be rich in joy.

30. A Prayer When Virgins Receive Their Crown

Receive, Lord, your brides, and approach them with the lilies of pure chastity all their days.

Receive, Lord, your brides, and approach them with the roses of diligent work for a good end.

Receive, Lord, your brides, and approach them with the violets of profound humility and lead them to your bridal bed and, united inseparably with them, embrace them with all love forever. Amen.

31. A Lament

This is the lament of the loving soul,
The only one she cannot bear.
She must tell it to the friends of God
So that they may find love more enjoyable:
"Lovesick and weak in body,
The trials of suffering and the harshness of force,

This is what makes the way
To my dear Lord too long for me.
Lover, how can I do without you for so long?
Indeed, I am, alas, far too distant from you!
Lord, if you will not receive my complaint,
I must again take up my sorrowing
And wait and suffer both inwardly and outwardly.
You know full well, dear Lord,
How much I want to be with you."

Our Lord:

"When I come, I come in magnificence.
Never was there anguish so great
That I could not heal it completely.

You must continue to wait.
I want to prepare you better
Before I bring you to my Father,
So that you please us all the more.
I still hear your plaint of love with pleasure."

Whenever our human understanding grows dark,
With the lament in our heart we awaken divine love.

32. How the Works of a Good Person Shine Forth in Relation to the Works of Our Lord

How the works of a good person shall light up and shine in heavenly honor these words make evident:

To the degree that we have been innocent here, God's holy innocence shall light up and shine into our holy innocence.

To the degree that we perform good works here, God's holy toil shall light up and shine into our holy toil.

To the degree that we possess inwardness here in intimacy with God, God's holy intimacy shall richly light up and send sparks into our holy inwardness.

To the degree that we accept our suffering with gratitude here and bear it with patience, God's holy suffering shall light up and shine into our suffering.

To the degree that we have diligently practiced all virtues here, God's holy virtue shall light up and shine into our virtue with much glory. May this last forevermore.

To the degree that we here burn in love and shine in a holy life, God's love shall burn in our soul and our body unceasingly forever, and never be extinguished.

These counter-illuminations light up and shine forth from the eternal Godhead. We receive these good works from God's holy humanity and perform them through the power of the Holy Spirit. Thus do our works and our life return to the Holy Trinity. Then it becomes manifest how we are doing here. To the degree that we lead a holy life in divine love here, we shall blissfully soar there in the heights, and to that degree shall the power of love be given us there as a reward, that we receive the power to carry out our whole will, that we are known by the saints as we have been. Thereby shall we be their companions! Amen.

33. A Spiritual Potion

I am sick: I thirst longingly for the health potion that Jesus Christ himself drank. When he, God and man, came into the crib, the potion was ready at hand. He drank so much of it that he became so drunk with the fire of love that with all virtues he endured for us all his intense sufferings. He always bestowed virtue; his goodness never faltered. I long for a health potion. This potion is suffering for love of God.

Suffering is bitter. And so we grind up a spice called "willingly suffer." A second spice is called "patience in suffering." It is also bitter. And so to counter it we grind up another spice called "holy intimacy," which turns patience sweet, as well as all our hard work. A third spice is "to persevere long in suffering," waiting for our eternal life and salvation. This is also very bitter. And so to counter this we grind up a spice called "with joy unflagging."25

Ah, dear Lord, if you would give me this potion, I could live unflagging in suffering with joy. Then I would for a time forgo heaven. So intense is my longing for it. Lord, may you give this potion according to your very dear will, to me and to all those who desire it for love of you.

34. Spiritual Food

After a bitter potion one is certainly in need of tasty food. Rising desire and sinking humility and flowing love-these three maidens bring the soul up to heaven before God. And then she becomes aware of her Lover. She says: "Lord, I make my complaint to you that you are under attack by what is dearest to you on earth; namely, by Christians. Lord, I make my complaint to you that your friends are so seriously hampered by your enemies."

Our Lord: "If they have true goodness, they can transform all that they encounter, except for sin, in a marvelous manner into a valuable dissemination of the word of God." That is why suffering shouts the loudest of all ways of serving God: "Depart from me, for it is better for a person to be unconsoled in accordance with God's will than to be consoled in accordance with

his own will." God's will is pure; our will is very much contaminated by the flesh. All who inwardly love intensely become outwardly calm, for all outward effort hampers the inward spirit. What the spirit then sings inwardly transcends every earthly voice.

Patience sings most sweetly of all above the angelic choirs, for angels have no patience since they experience no pain. We have this from the humanity of our Lord, but all honor as well by which we are honored by God on earth and shall also be elevated in heaven. Through the noble struggle of our Lord and through his holy suffering our Christian struggle and our suffering, accepted in good spirit, are ennobled and made holy in the same way that all waters have been made holy from the River Jordan, in which our dear Lord was baptized.

Ah, dear Lord, help us that our holy desire may never rest and our sinking humility may never rear up in arrogance. May the flowing fire of the holy love of God be here our purgatory, where all our sins shall be devoured.

35. The Seven Psalms

Dear Lord Jesus Christ, I recite these holy seven psalms26 in praise and honor of all your holy suffering in which you wanted to die on the holy cross for my sake. Dearly Beloved, I ask you, when the time comes for you to carry out your command regarding me-that I am to die-may you then come to me as a trustworthy physician to his child; and give me then, Lord, a holy sickness in which I may prepare myself with the proper attitude and with true Christian faith. "Lord, rebuke me not in thy anger."27

I ask, dearest Lord, that you come to me as my very dearest friend in my distress, and bring me then, Lord, such sincere sorrow that all my sins shall be blotted out, so that they shall not sadden me after this life. "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven."28

I ask, dearest Lord, that you come as a trustworthy father confessor to his dear friend, and bring me then the true light, the gift of your Holy Spirit, that I might see and know myself in it, and lament all my sins from the heart with such holy hope that my mouth not become bound by all my sins and that I be found pure. And give me then, Lord, your very own body, that I may receive you, Dearest One, with as much love as ever a human heart can. May you remain sustenance for the journey of my lonely soul, so that I, Dearest One, remain your beloved companion with you for life eternal. Amen. "Lord, rebuke me not in thy anger. "29

I ask you, dear Lord, to come to me as a faithful brother to his dear sister, and bring me holy armor with which my soul may prepare herself, so that my enemies cannot harm me when they shall accuse me. May they feel shame for all their efforts directed against me. "Have mercy on me, 0 God."'°

I ask you, Lord, to come to me as a trusted father to his dear child, and watch over my end. When my sinful mouth can no longer speak, then speak to my soul inwardly that you might console her and protect her forever, so that I might feel joy and not sadness. For this I beg you, Lord, through your abundant goodness. Amen. "Hear my prayer, 0 Lord; let my cry come to thee!""

I ask you, Lord, to send me your virgin mother. I cannot do without her. May she then fulfill what I have long desired and defend my poor soul from all her enemies. "Out of the depths I cry to thee, 0 Lord!"32

I ask you, dear youthful Jesus, Child of the pure maiden, to come as my dearest bridegroom and make me rich, as is the custom for noble bridegrooms when they give their brides a handsome morning gift," and receive me on the arm of your love and cover me with the mantle of your long-cherished desire. Blessed am I forevermore when I am then released! If we were to think of this hour often, all our pride would sink to the ground, as he shall then reveal his glorious countenance to us. Then my soul shall have its favorite pastime. What I now painfully long for can never happen on earth as I wish it. "Hear my prayer, 0 Lord, give ear to my supplications.""

36. A Spiritual Convenf5

I begged God to let me know, if it were his will, that I might stop writing. Why? Because I know that I am just as weak and unworthy, and more so, than I was thirty years ago when I was required to begin. Then our Lord showed me a little sack in his hand and said: "I still have healing herbs."

And I said: "Lord, I don't know these herbs at all."

He said: "You shall well recognize them when you see them. With them one shall refresh the sick, strengthen the healthy, awaken the dead, and sanctify the good."

After this I saw a spiritual convent that was constructed of virtues.

The abbess is sincere love
Who has much holy understanding
With which she diligently preserves the community in body and soul,
All for the glory of God.
She gives them many a holy teaching—
Whatever God's will is.
Thereby she frees her own soul.

The lady chaplain of love is divine humility.
She is always subordinate to love.
Then pride must depart.

The prioress is the holy peace of God.
To her good will is given patience
To instruct the community in divine wisdom.
To whatever things she gives her attention
It is always done for God's glory.

The subprioress is amiability.
She it is who gathers up faults and disposes of them with kindness.
Whenever one does something wrong,

One should not carry it around inside for a long time.
Thus does God increase a person's goodness.

The chapter should have four things about it[36]:
Manifestation of holiness that is rooted in God's service.
Its calming efforts hurt the enemy and honor God.
This is cause for it to rejoice much.
It should guard against empty honor
And should be a help to honor for others.
If they serve diligently,
God shall reward them accordingly.

The choir mistress is hope.
She fills one with holy humble devotion
So that the impotence of the heart rings in song so beautifully before God
That God loves the notes
That sing in the heart.
Whoever sings along with her
Shall share her success
In celestial love.

The schoolmistress is wisdom
Who sedulously teaches the unlearned with even temper.
For this she shall be honored before good people.
That someone enjoys zealously teaching the helpless poor
Brings the convent holiness and honor.

The mistress of the cellar is an outflowing of helpful gifts.
Because she does this in divine joy
She gains from divine grace a holy heart and mind.
All who ask anything of her
Should be ever disciplined, frugal, and uncomplaining.
Then God's sweet gift shall flow into their hearts.
Those who are her helpers
Shall gain God's sweet gifts, just as she.

The mistress of the chamber is generosity
Who always enjoys doing good in measured amounts.
She gives what she has kindly.
For this she shall receive from God a special gift.

Those to whom she gives something thank God with holy fervor.
He finds his dwelling place in her heart,
As does a noble drink in a spotless cask.

The mistress of the sick is toiling mercy
Which ever hungers to be untiringly at the service of the sick
With help and with cleanliness,
With balsam and with good cheer,
With solace and with friendliness.
God gives her recompense,
That she might ever serve gladly.
Whoever sends her help
Shall be treated the same way by God.

The portress is watchfulness
That always accomplishes with a holy will
Whatever is demanded of her.
Thus her efforts are not lost,
And she comes to God well prepared.
Whenever she wishes to pray,
God is with her in holy peace
To soothe the sufferings of her heart.
When she sometimes falls into difficulty,
Holy obedience, whom she joyfully serves,
Smooths it all over.

The mistress of discipline is holy custom.
It shall always burn like a candle
Inextinguishable in heavenly freedom.
Thus we easily endure all our interior sufferings
Until we achieve a holy end.

The provost is divine obedience, not sinful obedience.
To him all virtues are subordinate.

Thus can the convent thrive in God.
Whoever enters this convent
Shall ever live in divine joy
Here and eternally.
Blessed are they who persevere in it!

37. The Eternal Feast of the Holy Trinity

Whoever in sincere love wishes to prepare himself for the eternal feast of the Holy Trinity has to begin it here. He should obey and serve the heavenly Father constantly in all things with holy fear and humble humility. He should obey and serve his Son in suffering and in patience, with voluntary poverty in holy toil. He should obey and serve the Holy Spirit in holy hope beyond all fear with a joyful heart and an ever-gentle disposition. Then one shall taste his goodness.

Pure loving virgins shall, moreover, follow the noble Youth, Jesus Christ, Child of the pure maiden, who is utterly filled with love, as he was at age eighteen. His Person is the most beloved of the virgins, and he is the most handsome of all. They follow him with bliss-filled tenderness into the blossoming meadow of their pure conscience. There the Youth breaks for them the flower of all virtues from which they fashion garlands that they shall wear to the eternal celebration.

When the fine meal has been enjoyed, which Jesus Christ himself shall serve, one shall look on at the most sublime dance of praise. There soul and body shall wear the garland of their virtues which they have practiced here with great holy devotion. And they shall follow the Lamb in untold bliss'; from bliss to love, from love to joy, from joy to splendor, from splendor to power, from power to the highest heights before the eyes of the heavenly Father.

This is how he greets his only begotten Son and also his many pure brides who have accompanied him: "Ah, dear Son. What you are, I am. What they are fills me withjoy.3$ My dear brides, be joyful forever, rejoice in my eternal purity; let all pain and all suffering softly disappear. My holy angels shall serve you; my saints shall honor you; the mother of my Son's humanity shall be ready with praise for you because you are like her. Rejoice, dear brides, my Son shall embrace you warmly; my Godhead shall permeate you totally; my Holy Spirit shall lead you evermore, all according to your wish, to a delightful feast for your eyes. Could your success ever be greater? I myself shall love you. Those who are not pure virgins shall share and observe and enjoy this feast as far as possible."

After hearing and seeing this with the eyes of my soul in a short time, I was human dust and ashes as I had been before.

38. How a Person in Religious Life Should Daily Lament and Confess His Sins to God

I, a sinful human being, lament and confess to God all the sins of which I am guilty in God's eyes. I confess and lament all the good works that I did not perform. I confess and lament those sins I committed when I did not know what sin was.39 I confess and lament those much worse sins I committed knowingly and maliciously and actively and out of vanity.

Have mercy on me, 0 Lord, for I am truly sorry for them; and give me, Lord, complete certainty that you have forgiven me for all of them. Otherwise, I can find no joy in living. Jesus, dearest Lover of mine, let me approach you in true sorrow and with deep love for you in my heart, and never let me grow cold, so that I constantly feel your intense love in my heart and in my soul and in my five senses and in all my members. Then I can never grow cold.

39. How the Devil Rages and Chases About, Bites, and Gnaws When a Loving Soul That Burns with Divine Love Departs This World

Blessed is the good person that he was ever born who follows God with all the virtues he can possibly attain. His soul will be free in love. At the end of life the holy angels come and receive the pure souls with immeasurable love into the bliss of heaven and lead them off from here and bring them with great praise to God.

The enemies from hell who came there4° will find all their efforts in vain. They had come there filled with hate and rage. When they then realized that they were not going to get their way at all, how they did rage about and chase around! How they did gnash and gnaw! How they did howl and whine! For they feared the horrible torments that they were going to receive from their masters because they had lost the soul. Thus do they curse at each other:

"You wretch, it was your fault."

"Shut up, mate. I never caught her in great impatience. When I assailed her with evil thoughts, sorrow was always her companion."

"That whispering to her confessors robs us of all our glory. There were a lot more like us to whom she was dearly entrusted. How can we now show up back at court?"

"Woe, master, what were you trying to prove by assigning this person to us? We couldn't discover any big sin in her."

"I often tempted her severely, and then she would start bawling. Me and my mates, we couldn't bring her down. With her weeping she drove me off. With her sighing she singed my hair and burned my claws. I just could never get near her."

"Her obedience was so great; never was it ever equaled. That is how she escaped us fair and square. This was our greatest disadvantage: All her good works burned inside with divine love, for she performed all her good works with good intentions."

And their master says: "Gentlemen, you have come here to court heavily incriminated. I entrusted her to you. The pain I shall impose upon you shall last forever. You shall not spend time among humans, as I would gladly do if I were granted the honor. But now you shall lie with me here in hell. That shall be your punishment. I shall send forth learned scholars to blind the understanding of good people. If we could destroy the great zeal they have for God, we would recover all our honor, the young would follow them, and our tribe would be increased. If only one soul could belong to me that so brightly burns with love of God, I would wear her as a crown and would reward myself for my tenacious efforts. Thus would I have pleasant recompense for my grief."

"Forget your presumptuous wishes." You desire something that you have never gotten and never will, come evil or torment. All the blessed Christians who love God in their interior suffering are so flooded with and immersed in love that they radiate holy virtues and are aflame with love in all their works. You well know it profits you not one whit that you tempt them so severely. They simply wait until it turns into an occasion for praising God. No matter how much you plot trickery against them, they are always ready with praise."

The growling and shrieking, the biting and gnashing he did in his bonds are beyond description."

Lord God, we thank you; give us a holy end. This is one of the greatest j oys that the blessed soul has, that she sees and knows that the enemies who have caused her so much pain fight among themselves and suffer their punishments in hell. In spite of it all, she has j oyfully escaped them and shall wear the eternal crown because of the torment they inflicted on her.

40. Thus Does the Loving Soul Speak to Her Dear Lord

If all the world were mine,
And if it were pure gold,
And if I were to be here eternally, as I wished,
The noblest, fairest, and richest empress,
That would ever be worthless to me,
So great is my joy in seeing Jesus Christ, my dear Lord,
In his glory in heaven!
Consider what they suffer who must wait for him so long.[43]

41. How a Dominican Father Was Seen

Forty years agog I knew a religious man. In those days religious people were without duplicity and aflame with love. He progressed in the spiritual life and in piety and clearly performed much holy work for our Lord. He has now departed from here. I prayed to our Lord for his soul, as Christians do, that God might forgive him if he were guilty of anything. Then I saw, first of all, a radiance. God had prepared it for him. But I did not see him in it and this saddened my soul.

Some time later, when I was again praying for him, I discovered him in a fiery cloud. He was asking that he be forgiven. So I spoke with all my might to our dear Lord: "Ah, dear Lord, grant me this, that I might repay evil with good."

Then he drew himself up in the cloud and said: "0 Lord, how strong is your power, how right is your truth!"

And I said: "Well then, how are you doing now?"

He said: "You can see for yourself how I am doing."

"Why are you suffering these torments?"

The soul: "Those who falsely appeared to be holy made accusations to me against innocent people. I judged them accordingly and had a sinful opinion of them. That is why I suffer these torments. Ah, if I could still sigh!"45

I was unable to help him in this matter. He had also harmed me a bit.

A third time I again prayed for him. Then he ascended in bliss. Our dear Lord went to meet him and said to him: "That your path after your death has been so long and so difficult is the result of malicious people. You followed me in a holy manner and served me loyally. You shall wear the crown of virgins, the crown ofjustice, and the crown of truth."

Then he ascended in radiance above eight choirs and touched the ninth. Then I saw him no longer. Had false liars not influenced him, he would have entered into eternal joy with no suffering. That he trusted them was his undoing.

42. The Drink of Honey

Lord God, bless your precious treasure with a holy end and open it so that it might be a cause for praising you in heaven and on earth.

And a voice said:

"You shall keep your drink of honey.
It lies hidden in a safe place.
I shall open it
So that many might enjoy it."

43. Of Simple Love, How Wisdom Is Seen

Those who wish to know but have little love
Remain forever at the beginning of a good life.

And so we must ever be in constant fear
How we are pleasing God in it.
Those who simply love and know very little
Are opened to great things.
Holy simplicity is the physician of all wisdom.
It causes the wise man to see himself for the foolish person he is.
When simplicity of heart dwells in the wisdom of the mind,
Much holiness results in a person's soul.

44. Five Sins and Five Virtues

Covetousness in poverty,
Falsity in truth,
Slowness to show mercy,
Sneering ridicule in public,
Neglect of order:
These five failings seriously infect the spiritual life.

Truth free of duplicity,
Manifest mutual love,
Fear in speech,
Hidden love for God in one's heart,
Open zeal for all good things:
These five things keep the spiritual life healthy.

45. Seven Things, Five of Which One Finds in Heaven and Two on Earth"

Seven things I must say to God's honor: "Lord God, if it is possible, grant that I never forget them on earth." Five are found in heaven; two must remain here.

The first is: harm that is my fault because I have sinned and neglected to perform good works I could easily have done.

The second is: that I, Lord, wait for you with constancy, no matter when you want to come to me and in whatever manner you ordain a holy end for me.

The third: the fiery longing that I have for you.

The fourth: the burning love unextinguished in me that you cause.

The fifth: the first look of your sublime countenance upon me. Alas, that I was never able to experience this on earth as I desired. This is why my soul often sings, "Woe."

The sixth I scarcely dare to mention.
I might be struck dumb in mentioning it.
I never heard it named on earth.
This is the playful flood of love
That flows mysteriously from God into the soul
And through his power flows back again according to her ability.
What bliss there is then between them!
No one else knows
What activity goes on between them.[47]
For each finds its part.
Whatever one has given out here
Will all be given back there.
This is God's heavenly love
That begins here so delicately
And goes on there boundlessly.

The seventh can hardly be touched with words.
One can sense it through Christian faith:
How great it is, how lofty, how vast, how blissful,
How glorious, how joyous,
How full of unending joys.[48]
Blessed is he who shall dwell there forever.
The happy sight full of all pleasure
And the holy enjoyment of one's wishes,
They are of many kinds
And go on endlessly without number,
Glorious yet measured.
For they spring forth from the living God.
The deliciously sweet desire,
Blissful, ravenous, full of love,
Flows ever forth lavishly from God.
And yet the soul keeps her sweet hunger
And lives on without care.

46. How the Soul Presents Herself in Spiritual Poverty

Here the soul presented herself in spiritual poverty and in eternal love to God and in restless longing to go to God. Thus does she speak: "The long waiting is coming to an end. In the future God and the soul shall be united, unseparated forever. Whenever I think about it, my heart feels intense joy. Ah, dear Lord, how still you have become. I thank you evermore that you have been avoiding me for so long a time. And so may you be praised eternally that your will is done and not mine. And now today I shall find consolation in your words that I heard in Christian faith, when you say: `I love those who love me. We want to come to them, my Father and I, and want to make a dwelling place with them. '49 Blessed am I, dear Lord, because of your generous goodness, which makes you hold back nothing."

Then our Lord said: "When the time of redemption comes, when I shall give you heavenly gifts, then I shall act very quickly because my eternity is contained therein. I shall unfold and raise it high above the bloody earth. I can think of nothing I would like more."

Eternal love of God dwells in the soul. Transitory love of earthly things dwells in the flesh. The five senses have the power to determine which way they turn.

47. One Sin That Is Evil Beyond All Sins

I heard tell of a sin. I thank God that I never had anything to do with it. It seems to me, and is, evil beyond all sins. This is total unbelief. It enrages me in my whole soul and in my whole body and in all my five senses and in my whole heart. I thank Jesus Christ, the living Son of God, that it has never entered my heart. This sin did not arise among Christians. The arrogant fiend has duped simple people with it. They claim to be so holy that they shall enter into the eternal Godhead and rest next to the eternal holy humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ. Though they think they are in a sublime state, they have really delivered themselves over to being eternally cursed; and yet they claim to be the holiest. They scoff at God's words written about the humanity of our Lord.

You, most needy of all humans, if you really had knowledge of the eternal Godhead, it would be impossible for you not to know the eternal humanity as well that hovers in the eternal Godhead. You would have to know the Holy Spirit as well, who illumines the heart of a Christian there and whose fragrance in the soul surpasses all sweetness and who instructs one's mind better than any learned professor, so that one then says in humility that one cannot be perfect in the sight of God.50

48. How Love Was Seen with Her Maidens

In the night I spoke thus to our Lord: "Lord, I dwell in a land called exile, which is this world. For nothing in it can console me or cheer me except suffering."" In this place I have a house. It is called full of pain. This is the house where my soul lies

captive: my body. This house is old, small, and dark. One should take this in a spiritual sense.

In this house I have a bed called restlessness, for everything not connected with God causes me pain. In front of the bed I have a chair called discomfort. It causes me discomfort to see the sins of others of which I was never guilty. In front of the chair I have a table called vexation, because I so seldom find a spiritual way of life among religious people. On the table is a tablecloth that is clean. It is called poverty. It contains much holy goodness. If one were to use it properly, one would cherish it in one's heart. Love of riches is a thief of poverty. On the table a dish is served up to me called bitterness of sin. It should be called well-intentioned effort as well. The beverage is called scant praise, because, alas, the good works I perform are all too few.

This house looked dark inside. Then true love of God revealed itself to me. It was like a noble empress. The outline of her body was refined, white, and rosy in the blossom of youth. She was accompanied by a great number of virtues. They all resembled maidens. She put them at my disposal if I myself wanted them. For her part she would gladly put all of them at my service. She was more splendidly crowned than with glittering gold. Her clothes were like green, light taffeta. When I gazed upon her properly, my dark house was all lit up so that I saw everything that was in it and that had ever happened there. When I looked at her, I recognized her easily, for I had also seen her when she was my dear companion. But now I shall not talk about this because this has all been put down in the book.52

Then I said: "Ah, dearest of all ladies, you are more than a thousandfold above me, and yet you serve me with such great honors, as though I were more than an empress."

She replied: "When I found you with the pure intention of separating yourself from all earthly things, I didn't just want to be your lady. I also had to be your constant lady-in-waiting. Such is the pleasure I take in a pure heart that has freed itself from all earthly things through sincere love of God." By this she meant: No matter how many earthly things a person has, they must not be allowed to stick to a person's heart.

"Dear maiden," since you have served me for so long a time, it is only right that the feeble lady reward the maidservant honorably. As a reward I have given you everything I had and could achieve on earth."

She said: "I have gathered it all up; I shall return it to you with great honor."

"I don't know, lady, what else I can give you, unless you want my soul. That I shall be very happy to give you."

And she said: "That is what I have been longing to have from you for a long time. Now you have finally given her to me. Speak to my maidservants also, that they serve you diligently. Then I can remain with you in God's true love, which I myself am. God is love.""

Then the soul speaks to the first maidservant-sorrow: "Lady True Sorrow, come to me and bring me holy tears. They shall make me free of sin.

"Lady Humility, sit at my side and drive pride and vain honor away from me. When they see you near me, they are forced to flee from me.

"Dear Lady Gentleness, sit by me beneath my habit. Then friendliness will be at my disposal.

"0 noble Obedience, I subordinate myself to you in all my actions. May you never leave me. Then in all my actions I shall retain divine truth free of lies, which well befits God's intimate friends.

"Dear Lady Mercy, be at my side when I minister to the sick, that I be hardworking, that I may well bear the cost, that I may serve them with my person and my resources.

"Ah, dear Lady Chastity, I commend my virginal garment to you, that it may ever be pure and clean; for my dear Bridegroom Jesus Christ is always at my side.

"Lady Patience, I have great strength in silence and suffering. You rob all my temptations of their power, so that they are not able to harm me. I want to have you toiling with me.

"Lady Sanctity, come here to me and kiss the mouth of my soul and dwell in the ground of my heart. Then I shall always remain healthy.

"Lady Hope, I ask you to bind all the wounds of my heart that love has inflicted upon me so that I may ever keep God's blessing, no matter what distress I am given.

"Ah, glorious, holy Christian Faith, you have always illumined the eye of my soul so that I well know where to turn in matters of Christian thought. I commend to you my works and my mind.

"0 dear Lady Vigilance, do not sit, but rather stand always at my side. Then I shall remain free of evil.

"Lady Temperance, be with me always. Then I shall be ever ready for God's service.

"Lady Frugality, may you be my dear chambermaid. I shall love you so. You make my hard bed soft, my coarse food tasty. You give me power in poverty. This comes from God's goodness.

"Peace and Calm, I cannot do without you. May you walk with me on all my journeys. Those who talk much and whisper much seldom keep their honor. Those who boast-that can never be all to their advantage.

"Wisdom is always together with love and is the mistress of all maidens. She keeps whatever love gives. She makes useful whatever a person learns or reads.

"Chaste Modesty has special qualities about her. She is pleased to remain without praise in the presence of all people.

"Now I am well provided for as to ladies-in-waiting. But there are two more that I do not want to forget: Fear and Constancy. May the two of them be ever with me. Then all my servants shall be attentive to their duties.

"I thank you, dear Love of God, Lady Empress, that you have given them all to me as a help as I travel in exile on the road to heaven."

49. Concerning a Lay Brother

A lay brother of the Order of Preachers was struck dead by thunder. Prayers were said for his soul with the sincere wish that anything for which he had not done penance might be forgiven him. And his soul was shown to that person who was praying for him. He was fair in celestial bliss and in no way suffering. His soul gave the reasons why this was the case: "I was always humble in my heart, cautious in my thinking, and well-intentioned in my actions. That is why I experience no pain."

The soul: "Why then didn't you go immediately to heaven?"

He replied: "I had to receive divine knowledge and heavenly love here first. I didn't have these on earth."

"Why do you have that small blemish on your face?"

He said: "I used to frown at those who didn't do what I wanted. I never did penance for this."

"How can the blemish be removed?"

He said: "If I just had a sigh!"

But he could not get one from that person, for at that instant he was given it.55

Then he was happy and said: "Now it is gone."

"Why are you wearing this crown? After all, you are not yet in heaven."

He said: "I had an unusual death. That is why God gave it to me."

50. The Visible Favor of God

O dear Lord Jesus Christ, who are one eternal God with the eternal Father, remember me! I thank you, Lord, for your visible favor with which you constantly touch me, which cuts through all my bones, all my veins, and all my flesh. Whenever I can repay you for it, Lord, with holy thankfulness, I am secure; otherwise, I am not. You can certainly consider your frail creature feeble, Lord, for your intention is good, even better than good. For many things are called good which are not as good as that which you do to me. But when you touch me with your most sublime sweetness that permeates my body and my soul utterly, then I fear that I can draw to myself all too much of your divine pleasure. For I am unworthy of it on earth. And so I pray to you at times more for other people than for myself, so that I might draw away from my pleasure out of love of God and Christian loyalty. Thereafter I fear the rearing up of pride, which cast the most exalted angel out of heaven. I also fear the serpent of vain honor that deceived Eve. I fear the betrayal that thrustJudas from God. If I am faithful to God, I shall persevere in all virtues, in all goodness, and in great vigilance with God along with our dear Lady, his virgin mother.

51. A Prayer Against Sins of Omission

I, the least, the weakest, the most unworthy among the whole human race, it is my desire and I beg you, Lord heavenly Father, Lord Jesus Christ, Lord Holy Spirit, Lord Holy Trinity, that you might forgive me today all my sins of omission which I have committed in your holy service, and not just while seeking my advantage or out of necessity, but rather because of my sinful malice, which I could easily stop if I wanted to. Accept now, Lord, this tiny improvement that I now achieve with my will to the honor of your dear mother and of all the saints who are being honored today by Holy Christianity, and to praise and honor the blessedness of all God's saints through which, dear Lord, they have drawn near to you. Now help me, dear Lord, to such a change in my life that I may so become a companion of your saints on earth through a holy life that I might share their company in your kingdom before your glorious countenance along with all those who desire me to pray for them.

52. How the Loving Soul Bows Beneath the Hand of God

I say to my five senses: "Bow beneath the almighty hand of God. Even the fiends of hell, no matter how arrogant they are in their fiery fetters, must bow and cower beneath the hard coercion of almighty God. Those in purgatory must in their guilt bow beneath their punishment until that final hour when they shall be found pure. Sinners on earth must bow under the burden of their guilt and be judged penitent by doing penance or be damned to eternal hell. Good people on earth must bow in sorrow to do penance all their days. The chosen pure who love God in utter faithfulness are much oppressed and suffer much holy distress. They bow and bend down beneath all pain and beneath all creatures with their ever-hovering love. Pride is rare among them.

"This is what I should keep in mind, and I shall and must drink from the same cup out of which my heavenly Father drank if I am to possess his kingdom." The kingdom of heaven bows with all the holy angels in delight-filled holiness. For their existence and life were given them by God as a gift. The saints bow and bend low before God in flowing love and in blissful longing with zealous devotion. Thus do they thank God for putting his gift so lovingly at their disposal in their distress on earth. This enabled them to endure all their anguish of heart. May I also experience this, for I, too, am in much distress for love of him."

53. The Prison of Religious People

I felt sorry in my heart for the distress of the community in which I live. In the night I spoke to our Lord in the solitude of my heart thus: "Lord, how do you like this prison?"

And our Lord said: "I am held captive in it."

In these words I understood the meaning of all the following words:

“I fasted in the desert with them.
I was tempted by the enemy with them.
I toiled all my days tirelessly and productively with them.
I was betrayed in hate with them.
I was sold in unbelief with them when they offered themselves to me in God’s service.
I was treacherously ambushed with them.
I was fiercely attacked with them.
I was taken captive in grasping envy with them.
I was bound in obedience with them.
I was scorned in great contempt with them.
I was beaten in great innocence with them; what they are forced to hear against their will should not sadden them.

I was dragged before the court with them like a guilty thief; they should call this to mind during chapter meetings and in confession.
I was scourged with them; when they scourge themselves, they should remember me.
I bore my cross with them; when they are downcast, they should remember me.
I was nailed to the cross with them; for this reason they should suffer willingly and complain little about their troubles.

I entrusted my spirit with them to my Father at my death; thus should they entrust themselves to me in all their trials.
I died with them a holy death; thus shall they become free of all their bonds.
I was buried with them in earthly stone; thus shall they be and remain pure of all earthly things.
I arose from the dead; thus shall they always rise out of their failings; thus may they receive heavenly radiance into their souls.
I ascended into heaven by my divine power; there they shall follow me in all the power of these words.”

I truly hope that you57 constantly achieve this and know; whoever has not yet done so, may the true God bring it about in him.

54. Four Qualities of Faith

That one believe in God in a Christian manner and that one love God in a holy manner and that one truly know Jesus Christ and that one faithfully follow his teaching to one's human end: I believe that in these four things one shall find eternal life. We believe as Christians, not like Jews or like unbelieving Christians. They claim to believe in God but do not believe in his most holy work that he wrought; that is, that he gave us his only begotten Son. They reject him. Lord God, this is what we complain about to you. We believe it was the divine will that he sent us his only begotten Son into this world. We believe in the works and the death of our Lord Jesus Christ by which he redeemed us. We believe in the Holy Spirit who brought our happiness to completion in the Father and in the Son, and brings it even now to completion in all our good works.

How should we love God in a holy manner? We should love everything that the Holy Trinity commands us to love. God did not create sin. This is why he hates it in us. God loves goodness in us, which is he himself.

How should we know Jesus Christ? By his works we should know him and should love him more than ourselves.

How should we follow his teaching? Just as he taught us to and as his followers still teach us. As long as we do this, our blessedness shall increase.

55. How a Friend Writes to a Friend

Because you love God beyond your human power, because you hold God dear with all the strength of your soul, because you know God with all the wisdom of your soul, and because you have received God's favor with much holy thankfulness, I am sending you this letter.

The great outflow of divine love that never ceases flows on and on unceasingly and effortlessly in such a sweet course unfailingly that our tiny vessel becomes full and brims over. If we do not block it with self-will, our small vessel is always overflowing with God's favor.

Lord, you are full and you fill us as well with your favor. You are great and we are small. How are we to become like you? Lord, you have given us much and we should pass it on in turn. Though we are a small vessel, still you have made it full. One can pour a small full container into a larger container so often that the large container becomes full from the small container. The large container is the satisfaction that God receives from our works. We are, alas, so tiny that a single little word from God or from Holy Scripture fills us so completely that for the moment we can take in no more. Then we pour the gift back again into the large container that is God. How are we to do this? In holy longing we should pour it over sinners that they be cleansed. If it again becomes full, we should then pour it over the imperfection of religious people that they fight on and become perfect and remain so. If it again becomes full, we should pour it over the distress of poor souls who are in torment in purgatory, that God in his goodness might relieve them of their many sufferings. If it again becomes full, we should then in holy mercy pour it over the distress of Holy Christianity that is afflicted with many sins. Our Lord God loved us first of all. He also toiled for us first and foremost. And he also suffered most of all on our behalf. We should give him the same in return if we want to be like him.

Thus did our Lord speak to a person: "Give me everything that is yours, and I shall give you everything that is mine." The recompense of love that we return to God is sweet indeed. The recompense of the toil is very often, alas, burdensome, for a person must sometimes outwardly do without what love has inwardly consumed. Someone asked me how difficult that is. I could not in the least make it clear through merely human concepts. Our Lord suffered much for us, even death. But, alas, a small suffering seems to us great indeed. Because of this I have to feel contempt even for myself and complain to God that I have so little virtue. Love makes suffering sweet, more than one can say. And if we wish to become like God, we have to overcome in many a conflict. The mind of God and of the loving soul come together in the same manner as the sun and the air join together through the majestic energy of God in a sweet, vibrant mixture in which the sun overcomes the coldness and darkness of the air, so that one notices only that it is all one sun. That comes from divine bliss.

May God give us all this love and preserve it for us! Amen.

56. How God Touches His Friends with Suffering

When one experiences sadness
That one has not sought
And in no way has been the cause of,
Our Lord says this about it:
“I have set it in motion. That is,
Just as my Father had me set in motion on earth,
So, too, those whom I draw to myself on earth
Suffer much pain because of it.
They should indeed know this:

The harder I draw them toward me,
The nearer they come to me.
When a person so overcomes himself
That he considers suffering and consolation of equal value,
Then I shall raise him up into sweetness,
And thus he shall have a taste of eternal life.”

57. A Bit About Paradise

This was revealed and I saw how paradise was constituted. Of its breadth and length I could find no end. I first approached it between this world and the beginning of paradise. There I saw trees, foliage, and a little grass but no weeds. Some trees bore apples but most of them had only leaves with a refined fragrance. Swift waters flow through there and the wind blows from south to north. There in the waters earthly sweetness is found mixed with heavenly bliss. The breeze was sweeter than I can say. Neither beast nor bird was there, for God had entrusted it to man alone, that he might live there in comfort.

I saw there two men, Enoch and Elijah." Enoch was sitting and Elijah was lying on the ground in great fervor. Then I spoke to Enoch. I asked him whether they were living as humans do. He said: "We eat a bit from the apples and drink a little of the water to keep the body alive. But most important is God's power."

I asked him: "How did you get here?"

"I came here in such a manner that I don't know how I got here or what I was doing before sitting down here."

I asked him what his prayer was like.

"Faith and hope are the basis of our prayer."

I asked him how he felt, whether he found it at all irksome to be there.

He replied: "I am perfectly fine and suffer no discomfort."

"Do you have fears about the conflict that is yet to take place in the world?"59

"God shall arm me with his strength so that I can hold my own in the struggle."

"Do you pray at all for Christianity?"

"I pray that God free them from sin and bring his kingdom to them."

Elijah sat up and his countenance was fair, fiery, the color of heaven. His hair resembled white wool. They were attired like poor men who seek their bread with a staff in their hand. I asked Elijah how he prayed for Christianity.

"I pray with mercy, humility, faithfulness and obedience."

"Do you pray for souls?""

"Yes, when I entreat, their suffering is decreased. When I ask, the suffering even disappears."

"Are they ever redeemed?"

"Yes, many of them."

"Why did God bring you here?"

"That we might be helpers of Christianity and of God until the last day."

I saw a twofold paradise. I have described the earthly part. The heavenly part is up above and covers the earthly part against all storms. In the highest part are those souls who have no need of purgatory but have not yet come into God's kingdom. They hover in bliss as does the air in the sun. Power and honor, reward and crown are not yet theirs until they enter God's kingdom.

When the whole earth passes away
And the earthly paradise no longer exists;
When God has held his judgment,
The heavenly paradise shall also pass away.
All that come to God
Shall dwell in a common house.
There shall be no more hospitals for the sick.
Whoever enters God's kingdom
Is free of all infirmity.
May Jesus Christ be praised
Who has given us his kingdom.

58. St. Gabriel`

Holy Angel Gabriel, remember me.
I entrust the message of my longing to you.
Tell my dear Lord Jesus Christ
How sick with love for him I am.
If I am ever to recover,
He himself must be my physician.
Tell him in confidence
The wounds that he has inflicted upon me
I can no longer endure
Unsalved and unbandaged.
He has wounded me to death.
If he leaves me lying here untended,

I can never recover.
If all mountains were a balsam for wounds
And all waters a health potion
And all blossoming trees a bandage to heal wounds,
They could not restore me to health.
He must lay himself onto the wounds of my soul.

Holy Angel Gabriel, remember me.
I entrust this message of love to you.
Whoever wants to hold God dear,
This love letter shall awaken his senses,
If he wishes to follow God.

59. How the Message Came Before God

In my spirit I heard the truth clearly;
My message has reached God.
The reply that is to come back to me
Is so great, so powerful, so profound,
So rich, so blissful, and so overwhelmingly radiant
That I am incapable of receiving it
The while I am a creature of the earth,
Unless I depart for a short while from this poor existence
In such a manner that I remain in it not at all.
But for now I must simply keep silent about this message.
I was able to receive no more of it
That one may speak of openly.

To the extent that a poor creature like me could,
I saw St. Gabriel in blissful glory
Standing in the heights of heaven before God.
He was clad in new garments ablaze with love.
They were his reward
For so ably and honorably bearing messages.
I saw the flames of love playing brightly about his face.
He was in the embrace of the Godhead
And permeated by it.
I could neither understand nor hear his words,
For I am still the likes of an earth-bound fool.

60. How the Child Was Seen

In the night when the Son of God was born, the Child was seen wrapped in poor pieces of cloth and tied with string. The Child lay alone on the hard straw in front of two animals. Then I spoke to the mother: "0 dear Lady, how long shall your dear Child lie there alone like that? When will you take it on your lap?"

Our Lady replied that she never let the Child out of her sight. She held out her hand to him and said: "It shall lie on this straw for seven hours by day and by night. Its heavenly Father wants it that way."

I then realized that the heavenly Father was especially happy with this. I prayed to the Child for those who had commended themselves to me. Then a voice spoke out of the Child, though its mouth did not move at all: "If they want to keep me in their minds, I shall keep them in my favor. I have nothing to give them but myself and eternal life."

In the crib[62] the Child lay on the hard straw.
Its heavenly Father wanted it that way.

61. How One Should Prepare Oneself for God

If a bird remains on the ground for a long time, its wings deteriorate and its feathers become heavy. Then it raises itself aloft beating its feathers and drawing itself far upward until it catches the air. Then it takes flight yet higher. The longer it flies, the more it soars in exhilaration, scarcely returning to earth to refresh itself. Thus did the wings of love take from it earthly pleasure. In this same way we should prepare ourselves when we are to approach God. We should raise the feathers of our longing to God. We should elevate our virtue and our good works with love. If we do not give up on this, we shall become conscious of God.

Ah, Desiring Love,
You call out many a sweet word
To the ears of your dear Lord.
You rarely rest.
Now be glad and let yourself be heard.
He shall yet turn to you in joy.

Ah, Sinking Love,
You suffer much sweet anguish.
Your loneliness is great.
How shall you win Jesus?
He is running much too far ahead of you.
Indeed, you chose him instead of sin
And have lost yourself in him.
And so you must suffer many a torment.
I shall restore myself in him.

Ah, Free Love,
You so strongly lure my heart and senses

That I would soon bolt from here.
Yet I cannot win you as I would.
And so I must still love you in anguish.

Ah, Powerful Love,
You are well protected.
You have good intentions in all things.
You carry one well past all troubles.
Your hope and your faith are great.
You shall overcome all your troubles.

Ah, Wise Love,
You keep holy order
As you praise God and know him therein
And accomplish his will in all things.
If you do this faithfully,
You shall take your rest in God.
This shall be the cause of my rejoicing.

62. How the Maidens Serve Their Lady the Queen

This conversation was revealed to a person in her spirit as follows: I saw a path that went from the east where the sun rises to the west where it sets. All those who have good will toward God traveled this path. They all passed through the valley but traveled at different speeds. They journeyed as pilgrims who had left what was dear to them and wanted to seek what is best of all: God. Some turned back to the sensual pleasure they had left and did not complete the journey. Some rested in the grass of various pleasures and among the flowers of vanity. They remained a very long time on the journey. Thereafter, they shall experience the stern rod of bitter purgatory, even if they live free of mortal sin. Concerning this our Lord said: "Some people journey with good intentions in their holy works yet have about them such bad habits and are so repulsive in their vehemence that one can hardly put up with them. In the case of such people I withhold my judgment. They should seek mercy from me in humble fear. Then they would not lose their good works, and the bitterness in their hearts would disappear. Then they would be able to become themselves again. Whoever seeks my mercy cannot endure the darkness."

One person went alone along the path. This was because earthly pleasure was not able to give his soul consolation. Then the person saw two persons going along before him. One went on the left side of the path, the other on the right. He asked them who they were and what they were doing. The one on the left said: "I am God'sjustice. God's judgment was entrusted to me and is mine since Adam sinned in paradise. My judgment has long-lasting and serious consequences. Now this maiden has come along and stands beside me. She has become my equal. Her name is mercy. All who seek her and constantly call out to her overcome all their inner anguish. She is utterly perfect. She has taken from me what was rightfully mine. Whatever troubles a person has, if he then flees to me in penitence, she lays her soft hand on what is crooked. Then I stand there like an idiot and can do nothing about it. All of this came about through the true Son of God, who robbed me of my strictest justice with his mercy. She consoles the downcast; she heals wounds; she brings joy to all who come to her. She wrested great power from me. I am dear to her and she to me. We shall always be together until the last day. Then judgment is mine."

God's judgment and God's justice are not completely one and the same. Judgment portions out guilt for what comes before it unrepented. Justice is a holy life God has given to all his dear friends. He practiced it in his own life. For he was just in all he did. Hence he knows when we practice it. Thus can we become pure with him.

This mercy of God and the holy justice of his Son, to which he held during his life on earth, and the favor of the Holy Spirit of them both were followed on the path by a worthy throng. They all resembled virgins. When I saw them, I recognized all of them easily. And yet I made inquiries of them because I was interested in their replies. I asked who they were and what their duties were. They said: "We are noble and well-bred maidens and serve to God's praise his most beloved queen, whom God has chosen above all things; that is the human soul. We serve our lady the queen so that she might accomplish her Lord's will

with all zeal and with her full attention in all things, always according to the Christian dispensation. Then she shall never be found guilty."

"Lady Wisdom, what service can you render together with your sister Discernment?"

"We teach my lady the queen to distinguish between evil and good in divine wisdom with the holy power of discernment, so that she can imagine how things are now and might be later. Thus she gains a practical advantage in all things."

"Lady Truth, what service can you render at court with your sister Sanctity?"

"I serve my Lord and my lady the queen in total devotion, that she might always be true to her Lord in all trials. Thus shall she ever remain secure and free and be ever inwardly holy, subject to her Lord in all things. This shall keep her outwardly worthy of praise."

"Lady Humility, what service can you render together with your sister Gentleness?"

"I teach my lady the queen to love from the heart the will of my Lord and all his gifts. Thus can she rest in holy gentleness, driving out with cheerfulness all her interior suffering."

"Lady Generosity, what service can you render together with your sister Obedience?"

"I teach my lady the queen, with her longing love of God, always in her prayers to be generous to the wicked and the good, to the living and the dead. The treasure is manifold and large; it all returns to her lap. If she carries out her Lord's will, she shall practice holy obedience in all her works. Thus shall she remain God's queen."

"Lady Strength, what service can you render together with your sister Constancy?"

"I teach my lady to be strong in all conflict. Thus can she remain in her kingdom being ever constant. Then she shall remain ever free before her Lord."

The number of these maidens is beyond human reckoning. For everything that a good person does in God, inwardly and outwardly, requires virtue.

Together on the path with these maidens there j ourneyed a great lord who resembled a very holy and mighty bishop. This was our Christian faith. He was fiery within and was completely aflame with divine love. Together with all these virtues he served this queen.

High overhead hovered a maiden resembling a golden eagle. She was surrounded by a heavenly radiance. She illumined and taught and put all these maidens in the proper order for serving their lady the queen. This love dwells in Christian faith; she rests in the palace of her lady the queen. It is her task to force love to love, God to the soul, and the soul to God. That is why she is in the first commandments'

63. God's Will Is a Sovereign Lord in All Being

Constant longing in the soul,
Constant days of pain in the body,
Constant anguish in the senses,
Constant hope in one's heart for no one but Jesus—
All who have forsaken themselves in God
Know well what I am saying.

For two days and two nights I was so seriously ill that I had hope that my end had come. I thanked God as best I could for his favors. And I urged God to take me to him if that were his dearest will. "And yet, Lord, if your praise can at all be increased thereby, I shall gladly remain in this miserable body for love of you. Lord, I have so lived for many a day that, Lord, I never offered you such a difficult sacrifice as this. Lord, thy will be done and not mine. I do not have dominion over myself. You do in all things."

Then I saw high up in the distance how the saints were making preparations as though they were about to come to my end. I could not distinguish the individual persons among them. For such a powerful light was shining in their midst that it seemed to me that I was one with them. This was high in the west where the sun sets. From the north came evil spirits who stood close by. They had to witness my judgment. They were all tangled together and tied up like whipped dogs. Choking at the collar, they tried to get at me. I was not afraid of them. I was glad. I realized that their presence would have to bring honor to God because God has relieved his friends of all harassment from them and they, in their wickedness, return to hell.

In the midst of all this a change took place in my condition, so that I had to remain in this bitter, wretched life. I had been so secure and free, without fear or suffering. Woe, woe, woe! If only I could have remained in this death! If it were not for God's goodness, I would now be utterly disheartened. If I now had normal human strength and divine love, then I would really start serving God. I would try to bring things to a good end, just as I always wanted to and still do.

64. How God Serves Man

Thus does a beggar woman speak to God in her prayer:

"Lord, I thank you because in your love you have stripped me of all earthly riches and now clothe and feed me from the resources belonging to others. For everything that clings to me in possessiveness, causing pleasure in my heart, has to become completely alien to me.

"Lord, I thank you for taking from me my eyesight and for now serving me with the eyes of others.

"Lord, I thank you for taking from me the use of my hands and for now serving me with the hands of others.

"Lord, I thank you for taking from me the strength of my heart and for now serving me with the hearts of others.

"Lord, on their behalf, I beg you to reward them on earth with your divine love, that they might entreat you and serve you with all virtues until they achieve a holy end."

All who for love of God leave all things with a pure heart-they are all archbeggars. On the last day they shall sit in judgment with Jesus our Redeemer.

"Lord, may you change in me and in all sinners everything I complain of to you.

"Lord, for your own honor may you grant me and all imperfect religious people everything I ask for.

"Lord, whatever I do, fail to do, or suffer, may praise of you never grow silent in my heart. Amen."

65. How God Adorns the Soul with Suffering

Whenever virgins in all ages are clothed according to the will of their Bridegroom, they need nothing more than their wedding dress. This means being racked with pain in sickness, in days of suffering, in temptation, and in much anguish of heart. We find much of this among sinful Christians. These are the wedding dresses of loving souls. But the everyday work clothes are fasting, keeping vigils, scourging oneself, going to confession, sighing, weeping, praying, fearing sin, severely curbing the senses and the body in God for love of God, sweet hoping and ceaseless loving desire and a constantly praying heart in all one's works. These are the work clothes of a good person. When we are sick, we wear wedding dresses; and when we are healthy, we wear work clothes.

This is how the tormented body speaks to the lonely soul: "When shall you soar with the feathers of your yearning to the blissful heights to Jesus, your eternal Love? Thank him there for me, lady, that, feeble and unworthy though I am, he nevertheless wanted to be mine when he came into this land of exile and took our humanity upon himself; and ask him to keep me innocent in his favor until I attain a holy end, when you, dearest Soul, turn away from me."

The soul: "Ah, dearest prison in which I have been bound, I thank you especially for being obedient to me. Though I was often unhappy because of you, you nevertheless came to my aid. On the last day all your troubles will be taken from you.

Then we shall no longer complain.
Then everything that God has done with us
Will suit us just fine,
If you will now only stand fast
And keep hold of sweet hope."

Obedience is a holy bond. It binds the soul to God and the body to Jesus and the five senses to the Holy Spirit. The longer it binds, the more the soul loves. The less the body preserves itself, the fairer its works shine before God and before people of good will.

NOTES TO TEXT

Prologue to the Lux Divinitatis

1. Revelationes Gertrudianae ac Mechtildianae, ed. Solesmes Monks (Louis Paquelin), 2 vols. (Poitiers and Paris: Oudin, 1875-77); Vol. 2: Sororis Mechtildis Lux divinitatis, pp. 435-37. Hereafter referred to as Rev. I and II.

2. This Heinrich cannot be Heinrich of Halle, Mechthild's longtime spiritual advisor, who died before the translation was undertaken. Because of the consistency in style between this prologue and the text of the Lux div., Neumann concludes that this Heinrich, a lector in the Dominican house in Halle, is responsible for both (1964, 193-94).

3. Satan's "body" signifies his follower and provides a parallel to "Christ and his church."

4. Historical and mystical indicate that the book should be read on more than one level, as was the common way of reading the Bible, which was often said to have four senses or meanings: literal or historical, allegorical, anagogical, and mystical. As used here, mystical seems to comprise all those ways of interpreting that are not literal or historical.

5. Cf. Liber specialis gratiae, Mechthild of Hackeborn in Rev. II, 11 42; V 3, 3; and Legatus divinaepietatis, Gertrud the Great in Rev. I, V 7.

6. The rest of the prologue, which continues for a few pages, is comprised almost entirely of quotations taken from various parts of the Lux div.

Latin Foreword with Table of Contents and Middle High German Translation

1. This foreword precedes the text of the FL. A later hand has added in German the heading "Concerning the Revelations of a Loving Soul." About the author of the Latin foreward it can be said that he struggled to write it in Latin (the final paragraph is in Middle High German); that he wrote it about 1270 and was familiar only with Books I-V; and that his index of subjects, which he takes imperfectly from the chapter headings, shows him to be careless and superficial. See Neumann 1964, 180-83.

2. The Latin word inspiratus literally says that the book was "breathed into" its human author by the Lord through grace.

3. The Latin word conscriptus seems to refer less to writing as done by an author than to the acts of compiling or writing down something being dictated. See Neumann 1964, 183-84.

4. Neumann (1964, 182-83) believes that this final thought about reading the book nine times, etc., was added about the middle of the fourteenth century.

Book I

1. The first paragraph of this prologue, which is best understood as an introduction to FL as a whole, has been pieced together from sentences coming later in the text. Neumann credits these lines to the compiler or editor (1964, 182-83). The first part ("This book... standing") is taken from V 34, 41-43; N I 195. The second part ("and it... me alone") is taken from 11 26, 11; N I 68. The third part ("and proclaims ... intimacy") is modeled on 11 26, 15-16; N I 68. Unlike the concluding sentence ("All who... nine times"), which Neumann considers to be, both here and in the Latin prologue to FL, a mid-fourteenth-century addition, these lines are also found at the beginning of the Lux div. and hence were part of the book before Mechthild's death. Because these lines are preceded by the statement that God himself speaks the words of the book and, more importantly, because the words are spoken by our Lord (V 34), or God (11 26), in their original context, the "I," "me," and "my intimacy" must be taken to refer to God and not to Mechthild.

2. Given the context, it is most likely that "religious people" means primarily members of the clergy and religious orders.

3. That is, the pillars of the church.

4. An example of clever wordplay gets lost in the translation: gemachet and unmaht. The word gemachet (made) recalls

God's maht (might or power). Thus his unmaht (un-might) is his powerlessness to withhold the gift of making the book.

5. This chapter is a fine example of Mechthild's appropriation of the language and conventions of courtly-love poetry for her purposes. The dialogue was a popular device in courtly-love poetry. Here it is combined with allegory: in courtly fashion the soul (queen) converses with the allegorical figure Lady Love. Love is addressed as frouwe minne and the soul as frouwe kfineginne. However, though each uses frouwe (lady or mistress) in addressing the other, they are not equals, as the course of the dialogue makes clear. As to rank, the soul is superior and, when Lady Love uses frouwe in addressing her, frouwe retains much of its original meaning as the feminine equivalent of lord, or one's feudal master. Thus, I have chosen to renderfrouwe kicneginne with "my Mistress and Queen," which is meant to convey the deference Love shows the soul. Emotionally, however, the roles are reversed. Clearly the soul is utterly dependent on Lady Love, who is, of course, divine love in both senses-the soul's love for God and God's love for the soul, which is the soul's reward for having given up everything for God. When the soul addresses Love as frouwe, she is acknowledging the latter's nobility. Hence the more usual translation "Lady" seems appropriate. As the course of the dialogue reveals, however, the soul has surrendered everything to divine love. Hence the more radical dependence is that of the soul on Lady Love. This dependence is conveyed to the audience in part by the soul's using frouwe to address her.

6. As becomes clear through the word hundredfold and Lady Love's statement that the soul can demand God and his kingdom in return for leaving everything, the scriptural context for this dialogue is Matthew 19:27-29.

7. In this chapter Mechthild offers us a poetic description of mystical union or the experience of ecstasy, which she calls God's greeting. One is left with the impression, however, that she is not recounting one specific event in her life but rather is giving a generic description of such experiences.

8. In order not to offend against orthodoxy in describing ecstasy, one could not imply a complete separation of body and soul. For more on this, see Schmidt, note 13, p. 347.

9. The predicate of this sentence is Neumann's not completely convincing attempt to save a corrupt passage. See note to I 2, 13; N 11 5.

10. In addition to "laments" the ms seems to suggest "recognizes" as a possibility as well. See note to I 2, 23; N 11 6.

11. "Raised up" (verzogen) alludes to her having been raised up, like Paul, in ecstasy or rapture. Cf. 2 Cor 12:2-4.

12. In the Song of Songs the bride is frequently called a dove by the bridegroom. Cf. Sg 2:14; 5:2; and 6:9.

13. From what follows it seems that the "master of the house" is the body to whom the soul is unhappily married. A nasty spat ensues when the soul returns from her tryst.

14. This calls to mind a poem by Walther von der Vogelweide, "Nemt, frouwe, disen kranz," in which the speaker of the poem is dreaming of a love encounter and is so elated that he laughs, wakes himself up, and thus spoils the dream. Perhaps Mechthild is alluding to this poem.

15. That is, to me, Mechthild.

16. Mechthild's oxymoron, that she wishes to "die living" to describe ecstatic union, may be in imitation of Gottfried of Strassburg who, in his narrative Tristan, often similarly juxtaposes love, life, and death.

17. Mechthild repeats this theme of "blind saints... who love and do not know" in a varied form in I 20 below.

18. Many themes and images occurring in this chapter are similar to themes and images in the Song of Songs; examples include the beating and wounding of the beloved (5:7), the bed of love (3:1), and love sickness (2:5 and 5:8).

19. This translates Neumann's rendering of the sentence and implies that the soul wishes that love kill her. This fits well with the lovedeath thoughts of the previous chapter. The punctuation in Morel's edition elicits the following translation: "Am I not going to be killed by your hand? Then it would be better if I had never known you."

20. During the offertory of the mass a drop of water is added to the wine in the chalice and loses itself in the wine.

Mechthild is no doubt alluding to this. The passage also recalls Bernard of Clairvaux's discussion of union with God in On Loving God 10.28.

21. The German title differs markedly from the Latin title in the Lux div. (De collatione anime et corporis). Neumann (note to I 5, 1; N 11 9) takes this as an indication of an early corruption.

22. Paul (Rom 9:3) expresses similar sentiments.

23. Cf. I 2 and note 7 above.

24. The most influential thinker on the doctrine of angels in the Middle Ages was Pseudo-Dionysius, who divided them into nine ranks or choirs. Beginning with the highest rank, these are Seraphim, Cherubim, Thrones, Dominions, Virtues, Powers, Principalities, Archangels, and Angels.

25. The speaker is presumably the Lord.

26. That is, free of bitterness or rancor.

27. Chapters 12-21 bear resemblances to two types of poems occurring in courtly-love poetry: the dialogue and the Wechsel (exchange). The dialogue is a conversation between lovers who talk to each other directly. Chapters 14-15 seem the clearest example of this. The Wechsel consists of two or more loosely connected strophes. The lovers do not address each other directly but speak of what they share: their love, for example, or a common experience. Though the logical connection between the strophes is weak, each speaker speaks a kind of monologue that the reader intuitively refers to the other speaker. Many of these chapters may be thought of as part of a Wechsel.

28. For an interesting study of this passage, see Paul Michel, "Dutch die bilde uber bilde: Zur Bildgestaltung bei Mechthild von Magdeburg," In Abendlandische Mystik im Mittelalter, Symposion Kloster Engelberg, ed. Kurt Ruh (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1986), 509-26.

29. Cf. the frequent similar references to fragrance in the first chapter of the Song of Songs.

30. Cf. Sg 1:13.

31. The word I have rendered "protection" (sicherheit) means, among other things, the oath of submission that a knight conquered in single combat, if he is to avoid being killed, must swear to the knight who has bested him. In view of the preceding phrase ("defeat and retreat"), the soul might well be admitting that she has been conquered by divine love, to which she then utterly submits in order to stand under its protection.

32. Schmidt (note 20, p. 349) points out the similarity of this thought to one occurring in William of St. Thierry, to the effect that one needs two eyes to know God: love and knowledge. One eye, working alone, does not suffice.

33. Jubilus is a Latin word used here and in other spiritual writings of the age to signify rapture or ecstasy in which the soul is raised up above all earthly things. It is interesting to note that Mechthild uses it here for the state or condition of the Trinity as it creates the human soul.

34. Here begins a long series containing a good number of mystical paradoxes, which caused the copyists much difficulty, as is evidenced by the number of corruptions and questionable passages. Neumann is quite aware that he has not been able to restore the original wording in every case. Cf. note to I 22, 12-34; N 11 14.

35. Despite the attempts of others to replace "experiences" (ervert) with something else, Neumann decided to retain it from ms E.One suggested substitution is erwert (= enwirdet: becomes nothing, is annihilated). Cf. note to 1 22, 13; N 11 14-15.

36. All editors assume a lacuna here and in the other instances in this passage where ellipsis points occur.

37. That is, the deeper she dwells in infinite God.

38. The Middle High German word eigen, which I have translated by "own," means more than simply belonging to

someone. When used with reference to a person it implies the status of an unfree serf (eigenman=serf). Thus God here becomes the unfree serf or slave of the soul.

39. That is, in the Trinity.

40. The red wine of Christ's suffering restores the health of the soul.

41. In the original, for purposes of rhyme (lust-brust), the singular (breast) occurs.

42. Schmidt (note 24, p. 351) calls attention to the long tradition, beginning with early ecclesiastical writers, according to which Mother Church (ecclesia) suckles Christians. See also Caroline Bynum's treatment of this theme in her Jesus as Mother: Studies in the Spirituality of the High Middle Ages (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982).

43. Chapters 23 and 24 offer another example of dialogue similar to that found in courtly lyric poetry.

44. Neumann finds this sentence puzzling and possibly corrupt. Though he does not emend it, he considers emendations that would make it mean: 1. His (Christ's) life died out of love for you. Or: 2. Your lover (Christ) died out of love for you. Cf. note to 1 28, 5; N 11 19.

45. "Death... life": the usual order (life-death) is reversed here because of assonance rhyme (beliben-libe).

46. Neumann (note to I 29, 2; N 11 19) attributes the final phrase, "in Twenty-Three Steps of the Cross," to Heinrich of Halle's sense of order. The Lux div. introduces this chapter with the following narrative: "One day, when the sisters all hastened off to hear the word of God, Sister Mechthild remained behind alone, shut up in a small room. She began to lament sorely and to be sad, saying in her heart: `Woe is me, Lord, that I, poor wretch, because of my infirmity am not strong enough to be present to hear your word.' Soon there appeared the Consoler of those who grieve in the habit of the Dominicans, and he said to her: `Look at me, my bride, and see.'"

47. This phrase is in Latin in the text: Vide me, sponsa!

48. These are the hours at which the corresponding parts of the Divine Office are sung.

49. The charm of this chapter rests largely on the fact that each line has interior rhyme.

50. The Lux div. adds here: "The holy woman used to sing these seven phrases to the Lord when her body was weakened by sickness or in ardor of the spirit or in the delight of longing love."

51. Nothingness (das niht) and somethingness (das iht) are staples of the vocabulary of later mystics, especially of Meister Eckhart. Here we find a clear indication that they predate Eckhart's innovative influence on vernacular mystical vocabulary.

52. This is most likely a reference to the standard interpretation of the story of Martha and Mary (Lk 10:38-42), in which Jesus chides Martha for being too busy and worried regarding everyday matters and praises Mary's contemplative focus on what alone is truly necessary.

53. Chapters 36 and 37 present us with another example of Mechthild's employment of a device related to the dialogue form of courtly lyric poetry.

54. The deer and the eagle are traditional animal symbols of the contemplative soul based on Psalms 41:2 and 102:5, respectively.

55. These last sentences continue the allegory: the woods are the companionship of holy people; the nightingale is union with God; and the voice of the birds is holy knowledge.

56. I have chosen to follow Schmidt here and have translated "to circle higher." Cf. Schmidt, note 37, p. 354. Neumann (note to I 44, 36; N II 23-24) seems to conclude that the original phrase meant "to crawl/creep further."

57. That is: I will accompany you willingly, I depart from you in sadness.

58. Neumann (note to I 44, 62; N 11 24) is of the opinion that Mary's milk is unnatural because of its miraculous origin, which Mechthild explains in detail in V 23 below.

59. This is Neumann's proposed reading of a very problematic sentence. See note to I 44, 74 f.; N 11 25-26.

60. The original has: "ir sint so sere genattirt in mich" (I 44, 82; N 31). This translates literally as: "You are so very natured into me." This line serves as the culmination of Mechthild's play with "nature" in this chapter. For more of her thoughts on the nature of the soul, see VI 31 below.

61. This coyness is reminiscent of passages in courtly poetry: the poet of the Nibelungenlied, for example, discreetly refuses to reveal explicitly to his audience the joys of Siegfried and Kriemhild on their wedding night; and the girl in Walther von der Vogelweide's Under der linden hopes no one finds out what happened when she met with her lover.

62. Courtly poetry often plays with the paradox of lovers being inseparable, even when they must leave each other.

63. The names of these feast days may have been added to the original text by a later hand. Cf. note to I 45, 3-18; N 11 27.

64. Cf. Rv 12:1.

65. Schmidt (note 45, p. 357) points out the frequent occurrence in the Bible of images of grapes, wine, and the wine press, usually referring to a process of transformation. Cf. Lam 1:15; Is 5:2 and 63:3; Prv 3:10; Mt 21:33; and Rv 14:20.

66. Hartmann von Aue in the prologue to Gregorius (11. 97-143) gives an allegorical interpretation of the parable of the Good Samaritan (Lk 10:25-37). The oil and wine the Samaritan pours on the wounds of the robbers' victim are taken to be the balm (oil) of mercy or grace and the stinging antiseptic (wine) of the law or justice, which requires penitence and penance.

67. These words are in Latin in the text: "Veni, dilecta mea, veni, coronaberis!" As Neumann (note to I 46, 51 f.; N 11 28-29) points out, these words, taken from Song of Songs 4:8, were sung during the consecration of a virgin, a ritual in Mechthild's time not exclusively reserved for the ceremony of nuns' professing their vows but allowed also to women living outside the cloister, such as beguines.

68. I have used "religious" to translate geistliche here. It seems to indicate priests and members of religious orders, but perhaps it is not restricted to such in this context. Cf. Book I, note 2 above.

Book II

1. The toils Mechthild has in mind are most likely extreme acts of asceticism.

2. The phrase "with separation" possibly indicates that God and creatures retain their separateness even in special intimacy.

3. The uninterrupted bliss of the soul in heaven after death would be more than a human being on earth could endure.

4. That is, the nine choirs of angels mentioned in I 6 above.

5. The thought seems to be that it was a good idea for God to put Mary, the pinnacle of his creation, next to his throne. The archangels, surprised to see mere human beings above them in heaven, cannot quibble about someone as perfect as Mary being above them.

6. The tower should be thought of as being at the west end of the church over the entrance, at the opposite end from the altar.

7. The choir is that section of the church situated between the nave and the sanctuary, usually separated from the nave by a grill or something similar.

8. The Middle High German word ampellen (Latin: ampullae) can mean both small containers for liquid and lamps.

9. The complete lyrics can be found in 11 2 above.

10. These words are in Latin in the text: Gaudeamus omnes in domino. They are the first words of the introit for the feast of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Good Counsel, April 26.

11. Following the Lux div. Neumann (note to 11 4, 65 f.; N 11 31-32) takes this she to be the poor girl.

12. This "Book of the Genealogy" ofJesus Christ is Matthew 1:1-16 and is read on the feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, September 8.

13. Since Mechthild uses the word wihen (ordain) here in alluding to the marvelous happening that occurred when the pregnant Mary visited pregnant Elizabeth, whose baby leaped in the womb and was filled with the Holy Spirit (see Lk 1:41), perhaps she is interpreting this event to mean that John thus received ordination. However, when she later defends this vision against the charge that it is not authentic because in it John the Baptist, a layman, celebrates mass, she does not bring up such an argument. See VI 36 below.

14. Neumann (note to 11 4, 89-91; N 11 32) finds this phrase confusing. He suggests emending the text to read "at the words [of consecration] and signs of his hand."

15. This is probably best taken to mean that the lamb unites itself completely with the soul of the girl, which is in the divine image. This happens "in her stable," her body.

16. The lines in brackets, which also occur in the Lux div., were obviously added after Mechthild's death. No one, however, has been able to offer convincing arguments as to exactly when, where, or by whom they were added.

17. That is, the garment worn next to the skin.

18. The reader is warned not to attach undue theological weight to the phrase "one being." The context does not warrant it. God speaks here in lyrical phrases and as a lover-not as a theologian-in saying he and the soul shall become one.

19. As Neumann (note to 11 6, 14; N 11 33) points out, Mechthild usually employs Playful or playing (spilend) to refer to ecstatic mystical union, availing herself thereby of the traditions of courtly love and bride mysticism.

20. This is the beginning of the Gloria in the ordinary of the mass. Translation: "Glory to God in the highest."

21. In the text the pronouns and possessive adjectives in the beginning of the chapter are masculine because they refer back to "A person" (Ein mensche), which is masculine. They are best taken, however, as referring to Mechthild herself because she often refers to herself this way. Therefore I have changed he, him, and his to she and her.

22. Neumann (note to 11 14, If.; N 11 33) considers this title to be at least partially corrupt.

23. Because the Lux div. translates "from humanity" with "from the weakness of humanity" (ex infirmitate humanitatis), Neumann (note to II 14, 3; N 11 33-34) weighs the possibility that the original might have been more in line with the Lux div.

24. The lyrical charm of this passage, as in many passages, is enhanced by the rhyme in the original: stunt, runt, gesunt, munt, count.

25. Chapters 17 and 18 are another example of Mechthild's employing the courtly-lyric form of the dialogue or exchange.

26. That is, regrettably I sink back to earth because our union also involves my body, which weighs me down and hastens my return to earth.

27. A more literal rendering: "in your and God's bed of love."

28. I have adopted Schmidt's (p. 54) punctuation here because I cannot discover a plausible meaning by following Neumann's (II 19, 12-13; N I 50) punctuation.

29. As Neumann (note to 11 19, 17; N 11 35) points out, notlich, which I have rendered as "overwhelmed," is used by Mechthild to refer to the soul or God's (overwhelming) love at the point of mystical ecstasy.

30. In I 1 above, Lady Love also addressed the soul as her mistress and queen.

31. Cf. 2 Cor 12:2-4.

32. I have not translated this last clause in line with the reading that Neumann, despite misgivings (note to51 ; 11 19, N 11 36), has decided to retain. A literal translation of that reading would indicate that the soul deceives the senses. Taking the context into consideration and the translation of the clause offered in the Lux div., it seems likely that Mechthild wants to say that, in this heaven created by the devil, either the senses are themselves deceived, or they deceive the soul.

33. Cf. 2 Cor 11:14.

34. I have omitted two lines after" Three Persons" that Neumann puts in brackets because they were clearly not written by Mechthild. Translation: "which begin thus: God's true greeting, coming from the heavenly flood." This is a reference to the opening line of I 2 above.

35. Another of Mechthild's references to herself as a dog. Cf. 11 3 above.

36. See Book II, note 28 above.

37. The Lux div. introduced this chapter with "In raptu... "(In a rapture,...).

38. The Seraphim are those in the highest order of angels. The lowest order is made up of those simply called angels.

39. Concerning a sword piercing Mary's soul, cf. Lk 2:35.

40. That is, clerics and/or members of religious orders.

41. C£ Mt 14:1-12 and Mk 6:14-29.

42. John the Evangelist, the disciple "whom Jesus loved" and who at the Last Supper "was lying close to the breast ofJesus" (Jn 13:23), was in medieval times considered the mystic among the apostles. His symbol was the eagle, which, according to medieval lore, was the only animal that could look directly at the sun and not go blind. In like manner, John was thought to be able to look into the Godhead and not go blind.

43. Cf. 2 Cor 12:2-4.

44. Cf. Acts 7:54-60.

45. The word in the text, petze, is a corruption of the Latin pax (peace) and refers to the kiss of peace in the mass or to the object (crucifix or image of Christ) that the celebrant passed around to be kissed after the recitation of the "Lamb of God."

46. Cf.Jer 30:12.

47. Cf. Mt 8:4

48. The whole exchange between Mechthild and the devil is modeled on Christ's temptation in the wilderness. Cf. Mt 4:1-10; Mk 1:12-13; and Lk 4:1-13.

49. That is, by love.

50. Schmidt (notes 85 and 87, p. 363) points out Mechthild's probable dependence on Richard of St. Victor's De quattuor gradibus violentiae caritatis (On the Four Steps of Violent Love) for her concept of "bound love."

51. Cf. Jb 7:5 and 30:30.

52. In love poetry to break off or pluck flowers is frequently an allusion to loss of virginity.

53. This is perhaps a reference to her writing the FL.

54. For the apples, cf. Sg 2:3-5. The tree in most medieval interpretations of the Song of Songs is the cross of Christ. Concerning color symbolism, see Horst Laubner, Studien zum geistlichen Sinngehalt des Adjektivs im Werk Mechthilds von Magdeburg (Goppingen: Kummerle, 1975), 41-48.

55. Because this line is missing in a good manuscript (B) and in the Lux div., and because its meaning in this context is unclear, it may not be authentic. Cf. note to 11 25, 129; N 11 45.

56. These two final lines occur only in the Lux div. In the critical edition Neumann offers a Middle High German reconstruction of them (translated here).

57. That is, because I am trying to honor you by writing this book.

58. These last three words succinctly describe the three major difficulties Mechthild faces in seeking acceptance for her book: 1. Learned: she has little education. 2. Religious: she does not belong to a religious order approved by and under the jurisdiction of the church. 3. Man: women in general found it difficult to be taken as speaking with authority. Thus arises the need to insist that God is the book's author.

59. The gospel passage providing the foundation for this entire speech by God is Matthew 11:26/Luke 10:21-22.

60. The sentence up to this point presents some textual difficulties. How many writers are indicated? What does Mechthild mean by "write after me"? Neumann has chosen to rely heavily on the Lux div. in attempting to establish the critical text. The Lux div. speaks of writers (plural) and has them writing (conscripserint; most likely a future perfect indicative) after Mechthild (post me). Conscribere can indicate either the act of writing according to a model or text, or the act of taking down dictation (note to 11 26, 34 f.; N 11 46 and Neumann 1964, 183-86).

Book III

1. That is, the empty space left by the fallen angels.

2. For an extended study of this chapter, see Petrus Tax, "Die grol3e Himmelsschau Mechthilds von Magdeburg and ihre Hollenvision," Zeitschrift fur deutsches Altertum and deutsche Literatur 108 (1979), 112-25.

3. This is a ceremonial greeting. Schmidt (note 98, p. 365) describes a picture in a ms in Einsiedeln (Cod. Eins. 710, fol. 20b) of Christ laying his right hand on the breast of the soul represented as a nun. She has her left hand resting on his right shoulder.

4. Cf. Walther von der Vogelweide's Under der linden, where the girl asks: "Did he kiss me?" (Kust er mich?); to which she immediately supplies the answer: "Yes indeed, a thousand times." Schmidt (note 100, pp. 365-66) gives examples of occurrences of the divine kiss in medieval religious writings.

5. God, a spiritual being, creates or makes by giving a command with words; e.g., "Let there be light" (Gn 1:3).

6. Tax, "Himmelsschau," p. 117, interprets this to mean that a whole tenth (and highest) choir fell together with Lucifer.

7. This short sentence probably means that some angels from the other nine choirs fell with Lucifer as well.

8. Tax, "Himmelsschau," p. 117, considers desolation (das ellende) to be a synonym for breach (bruch). But perhaps it is better to think of it as the upper reaches of the breach. Cf. also Schmidt, note 103, p. 366.

9. The song of the virgins that one would expect here is absent from all mss.

10. That is, they have not yet assumed their places on the chairs.

11. First in ascending order.

12. That is, in the choir totally vacated by Lucifer and those closest to him.

13. Christ arose from the dead in the perfect manhood of someone thirty years old. All redeemed Christians shall rise from the dead as thirty year olds. But the unbaptized children shall not rise from the dead in the same manner as the faithful elect.

14. That is, the body.

15. Exactly what Mechthild means by this allusion is not clear. The Middle High German word used here to describe the dog is edel (noble), but the Lux div. translates edelwith crudelior (fiercer). Perhaps that conception is that a dog with good bloodlines is a better watchdog or hunter.

16. This concluding paragraph offers a clever defense against possible objections: first, by calling to mind the evangelical injunction to become as guileless children and not take on the legalistic attitudes of the Pharisees; and, second, by stating that God is the chapter's primary author. Perhaps already at this stage of her writing Mechthild was experiencing attacks by detractors, or perhaps she added this paragraph later.

17. Mechthild here addresses the bride in the Song of Songs.

18. Cf. Sg 2:17.

19. That is, that wisdom teach me moderation.

20. That is, the Annunciation.

21. That is, that she cannot be present at the recitation of the Divine Office.

22. That is, from celebrating mass.

23. That is, if a priest in serious sin celebrates mass, the mass is valid but the priest sins mortally.

24. The image (plucking) is that of the Trinity as a stringed instrument.

25. The word hanttrfiwe (solemn assurance) means literally hand-loyalty; i.e., faithfulness promised by some formal gesture with the hand. It is used in reference to the faithfulness promised by the groom to the bride at the wedding ceremony. Cf. note to 111 9, 52; N 11 56.

26. The prophets frequently called Israel a whore for being unfaithful to its God. Cf., for example, Is 1:21; Jer 3:6-10; and Ez 16 and 23.

27. The Lux div. reads "mystical temple of Solomon."

28. The following chapter is filled with allusions to the accounts of the passion and death of Christ given in the gospels.

29. I have rendered mit heliger italheit by "in holy simplicity." However, as Neumann (note to 111 10, 22; N 11 57-58) points out, the phrase is troublesome for several reasons. Another possible reading is "in hellish vanity."

30. Neumann's (note to III 10, 29; N 11 58) best guess for this difficult word (minnelouffe) is to relate it to the chase or hunt imagery of the Song of Songs, imagery that appears also in 11 25 above.

31. Mechthild seems to be saying that "that," i.e., receiving communion despite her feelings of unworthiness, is no more a hindrance to her glorifying God in so doing than it is to use an oven to bake. Just as an oven fulfills its purpose through baking, she fulfills hers by accomplishing in herself God's goodness. And to do so, she must receive communion.

32. This is in Latin in the text: Puer natus est nobis (Is 9:6). It is from the introit of the third mass of the Feast of the Nativity of the Lord.

33. That is, those in purgatory.

34. That is, members of the clergy and/or religious orders.

35. A venia is a complete prostration performed while praying.

36. A discipline is a whip made of cord for penitential practices.

37. That is, female members of religious orders and beguines.

38. That is, fellow members of my order.

39. The biblical imagery most similar to that in this chapter would seem to be Paul's in Ephesians 6:11-17.

40. The final section of this sentence is hopelessly corrupt in ms E. The Lux div. preserves a vestige of the image of mutual illumination between God and creature found elsewhere. The final three words of the critical edition are "in das mine" (into mine). I have rendered them literally and think that mine means my (God's) heart, parallel to creatures' hearts mentioned earlier in the sentence.

41. That is, with God, or familiarity with divine things.

42. I have translated "gegen dem ewigen gotte" by "face to face with God eternal." Although face to face may seem at first an unnecessary addition, I think it is warranted because, in the standard medieval view of Moses, which goes back to Augustine (De genesi ad litteram 12, cap. 27, n. 55; PL 34, 477-78), this prophet's exalted position rested on his being the only Old Testament figure to have seen God face to face. The preposition gegen employed by Mechthild instead of the more usual mit (with) seems to imply this traditional thought concerning Moses.

43. That is, the Song of Songs, whose author was believed to be Solomon.

44. Cf. Sg 4:7.

45. Cf. Jer 31:22. Patristic theology considered this passage to be a prophecy of the Incarnation.

46. Cf. Dn 14:30.

47. For a detailed analysis of this chapter, see Tax, "Himmelsschau," pp. 126-36.

48. A medieval reader would most likely see this as an allusion to the city of the devil, or Babylon, as described by Augustine in his City of God.

49. "High spirit" (hoher muot) is a conventional term in courtly poetry and describes the feeling of exhilaration one should feel because one is a member of such a worthy society. Thus, Mechthild seems to be condemning courtly literature as a frivolous pursuit that distracts from serious spiritual concerns.

50. Such effects of a powerful vision have a long tradition. Cf., for example, Dn 7:28; 8:27; and 10:7-9.

51. The neo-Platonic influence and perhaps heretical implications of the soul's origin emanating from this passage need not be taken with complete theological seriousness. Content here is clearly being influenced by Mechthild's striving for rhyme and lyrical effect.

52. Mechthild seems to be saying that limbo (or Abraham's bosom), where those pre-Christian figures destined for heaven, such as Adam, Eve, Moses, the prophets, etc., had to wait until saved by Christ's redemptive act, was converted into the worst part of purgatory after Christ's ascension. Just as Mechthild condemns Christians to a worse punishment than non-Christians, so also does she consign prominent Christians who barely avoided hell to this "renovated" limbo.

53. That is, what we have not done penance for on earth has to be atoned for hereafter.

54. That is, they have repented and confessed their sins, but have never done penance for them.

55. The Lux div. translates this phrase by "sine medio" (directly). Perhaps the image is that of the soul at death escaping the body through the mouth.

56. The critical edition has a period here and joins the following clause to the next sentence. I find it much more difficult to come up with a satisfactory reading following that punctuation. Schmidt (p. 113) punctuates as I do.

57. Neumann (note to 111 23; N 11 64) remarks that this chapter has no corresponding chapter in the Lux div. and was probably moved here from Book VII.

58. The soul's final speech marks her as a courtly lover pursuing her beloved. Her love consists in desire rather than in fulfillment. She is willing to suffer anything to attain her goal, but she knows, as does, say, the poet Reinmar von Hagenau, that her basic manner of bearing herself is to be one of faithful waiting.

59. Here Mechthild expresses a thought that recalls lines of a poem by Walther von der Vogelweide (Herzeliebez frouwelin) in which he states that it is not beauty that causes love but rather love that causes one to be beautiful: "Liebe machet schoene wip" (Love makes women beautiful).

Book IV

1. Neumann (note to IV 2, 101-3; N 11 66) thinks these last two sentences might well have been added by Mechthild later, as she was editing her work.

2. Schmidt (p. 125) translates die cristanheit with "the church" (die Kirche). I have chosen the more literal "Christianity." Clearly, however, the two concepts are almost identical in Mechthild's thinking.

3. These three words are in Latin in the text: "Ego sum Jhesus."

4. Mechthild seems to be indicating here that she went into ecstasy.

5. That is, the cupidity's desire.

6. That is, the spiritual authority Christ gave to Peter and his other disciples to bind and to absolve. Cf. Mt 16:18-19; 18:18; and Jn 20:23.

7. Neumann (note to IV 3, 37; N 11 67) explains that this refers to Christ's sitting at the right hand of the Father.

8. A more literal translation would be: "and her nostrils are stuffed with sweet violets." I doubt, however, that such a rendering captures the spirit of the image.

9. I have rendered "die gruenen wissen lylien" (green white lilies) as "verdant white lilies" and "das wisse gruene morgenrot" (the white green dawn) as "the pale green dawn" because a literal translation leads to confusion about the colors. However, as Mechthild continues her allegorical description, it is important to realize that green and white have already been explicitly mentioned twice.

10. The Trinity is threefold and one, like an eye that is made up of white (Father); green, i.e., the iris (Son); and light, i.e., the pupil (Holy Spirit).

11. Neumann (note to IV 3, 60; N 11 68) explains horn as a corner of the battlements and remarks that Mechthild is here exploiting the tradition of the fortress of love allegory frequently occurring in courtly poetry, but that she adds to it by employing technical terms of military engineering. Schmidt (note 144, p. 375) notes the implied reference to the Trinity in the threefold horn and recalls the symbolic meaning of the horn among the ancient Assyrians, Babylonians, and Hebrews as well as the horns on the head of Moses in Christian art.

12. That is, members of religious orders.

13. That is, the gift of the wisdom from the natural faculties.

14. The verse form Mechthild chooses for this chapter, except for the last few lines, resembles the couplet, though the lines vary in the number of feet, and not all couplets rhyme.

15. The "it" refers to false consolation.

16. This should probably be interpreted to mean: the possibility that I might sin in the future.

17. Probably an offering connected with a successful harvest.

18. Just what the four kinds of offerings are is not self-evident. Neumann (note to IV 9, 3; N 11 70) suggests: for mass, for bringing communion to the sick, for the last anointing, and at harvest time.

19. Here Mechthild is drawing on the tradition of the dawn song, which expresses the sadness of the lovers because, after a night together, they must separate. Cf. also, Sg 3:1.

20. That is, the souls in purgatory.

21. That is, the lowest joy in heaven.

22. 1 Jn 3:2.

23. Translation: We praise you, God.

24. That is, Mechthild.

25. A very confusing sentence that puzzles the commentators. The Lux div. seems to interpret it to mean that, if the Second Person had been flesh before the Annunciation, flesh would have been a beginning or principle of the Second Person's nature or being. This is what is then denied.

26. That is, the more virtuous we are on earth, the higher is the rank of the angels we are given as vassals in heaven.

27. The Lux div. interprets this specifically to mean "take up the life of a beguine."

28. Instead of claws, this might mean "with sharp points on its horns." See Neumann, note to IV 7, 9; N 11 74-75.

29. This entire chapter is obviously modeled on the traditions of the bestiaries (German: Philologus). These were works treating real and fabled animals by listing their (often merely imputed or imagined) characteristics, which were then allegorized in a moral or theological vein.

30. The word in the text is empfangen, which can mean both "to receive" and "to conceive."

31. Schmidt (note 164, p. 379) suggests that the fish is Christ. From early Christian times the fish was a symbol for Christ.

32. Neumann (note to IV 18, 99; N 11 77) explains this clause as referring to the public ceremony during which relics of the saints were held up for veneration.

33. The name in German: Alles Nictze.

34. The Lux div. introduces this chapter with this addition: "The beginning of the order was on fire with glowing divine love and, while it shone in the faultlessness of external purity, it gave forth, as it were, the fragrance of lilies, and it knew nothing of hypocrisy. Clothed in true simplicity, it was bright with beauty."

35. This refers no doubt to the Dominicans as confessors and praises them for being theologically schooled enough to carry out their duties in the confessional knowledgeably and with good judgment.

36. The Lux div, introduces this chapter with the following addition: "I was in the habit of visiting the graves of deceased

pious people and of greeting them as though they were God's household servants."

37. That is, Mechthild.

38. The clarification about the length of time is necessary because the text does not say "a week" but rather "fourteen time periods" (vierzehen stunde).

39. The Lux div. gives the name of the sister: Oda.

40. The word burial in this chapter heading either means something like "lying in state" or rests on a reading in ms E that says that John's body lies and is buried (. and begraben) which Neumann (note to IV 23, 3; N 11 79), following the Lux div., has emended to "lies unburied" (unbegraben)

41. Creation is a literal translation (schoepfnisse). Mechthild seems to be using the phrase "creation of the eternal kingdom" to denote heaven as a place or space with a clear but thin border between it and what is beneath it.

42. The orthodoxy of this statement is questionable. Usually the knowledge that their punishment will come to an end is seen as the decisive difference between those in purgatory and those in hell.

43. See above 111 21.

44. The Lux div. introduces this chapter with the following remarks, which are the basis for the claim that Mechthild had a brother who became a Dominican: "Brother Baldwin, brother by blood of Sister Mechthild, was brought up from childhood in good manners and was instructed in all virtues. In addition, he strove by his own industry to attain learning and was steeped in scholastic training. Finally, because of the merits of his sister, he was received into the Order of Preachers. Here he made such progress in virtue and knowledge that his brothers promoted him to the office of subprior, though against his will. He was so weighed down by this that, though he was young and strong, his bodily strength began to deteriorate."

45. That is, members of a new religious order.

46. That is, members of the order are not to travel alone.

47. In Mechthild's day this would be from November 1 to February 22.

48. Cf.Jn 12:3; Mt 26:7; and Mk 14:3.

49. That is, ordinary Christians should anoint the feet of the members of this new order, but only men should do this anointing because the members of this order are not God.

50. English: I believe in God.

51. The German word meister (master) means primarily a teacher or professor but, as this chapter also seems to imply, someone who wields authority, such as a religious superior.

52. These last two sentences seem to be saying that the founder of this new order, the son of the king of Rome, shall be authorized by the pope to write a rule for the new order, which then receives the pope's approval. Mechthild's prophecy of a new religious order may have been very controversial. It seems to reflect the prophetic writings of the Calabrian abbotJoachim of Fiore (c. 1135-1202), who foretold the appearance of a new and more perfect religious order in the coming new age. Joachim's views on the Trinity were condemned by the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215 and, in a perhaps not unrelated move, the founding of new religious orders was also prohibited.

53. That is, Jesus and his twelve apostles.

54. That is, by Judas. See Mt 26:15. The selling of Jesus is called "blessed," most likely in line with the felix culpa tradition. Adam's fall (culpa) was fortunate (felix) because it resulted in the elevation of the human race by causing the Word to become flesh. The selling of Christ can be seen in this same light.

55. Also in her elaborations on the last days, the Antichrist, and the return of Enoch and Elijah, Mechthild seems to have been greatly influenced by Joachim of Fiore. For more on this, see Schmidt, note 1 81, pp. 382-83; and Bernard McGinn, The Calabrian Abbot: Joachim of Fiore in the History of Western Thought (New York: Macmillan, 1985).

56. Elijah (cf. 2 Kgs 2:11-12) and Enoch (cf. Gn 5:24 and the pseudoepigraphical book of Enoch) were both taken up to heaven (or, for Mechthild, to paradise) without dying. Hence the common belief that they shall come back to earth in the last days.

57. That is, Enoch and Elijah.

Book V

1. Neumann (note to V 1, 24 f.; N 11 83) points out that the Lux div. modifies this passage concerning the angels and omits the names of the two highest ranks, probably because Mechthild's words could cause some concern as to the orthodoxy of her conception of the angels.

2. That is, the angels.

3. Concerning innate and acquired chastity in the soul: The former is no doubt that of Adam and Eve before the fall. This is the more perfect chastity and thus is put on the same level as the highest angels, the Seraphim. Acquired chastity, the best that humans can achieve since the fall, shines into the second highest choir, the Cherubim. On the sources for Mechthild's views on the angels, see note to V I, 27-33; N 11 83-84; and Schmidt, note 184, pp. 384-85.

4. That is, the Seraphim.

5. That is, souls.

6. Augustine's doctrine of original sin and its consequences for human sexuality are the most likely sources for Mechthild's statements about "marriage blood." According to the Bishop of Hippo, since the fall sexual intercourse is evil because it causes disorder in the human person. Passion overwhelms reason. Marriage, however, legitimizes sexual pleasure, which, nevertheless, remains disordering and hence evil in itself.

7. That is, the soul.

8. Kurt Ruh, "Mechthild von Magdeburg and Wichmann von Arnstein," Zeitschrift fur deutsches Altertum and deutsche Literatur 120 (1991), 322-25, has discovered Mechthild's probable source for this unusual image of the soul under Lucifer's tail: the Magdeburg Dominican Wickmann of Arnstein, a contemporary of Mechthild and author of mystical writings.

9. Schmidt (note 157, p. 379) assumes the influence of Heinrich of Halle here because Mechthild so carefully distinguishes filial fear, which is still possible in heaven, from servile fear, which is not.

10. That is, I was following God's plan of redemption in coming to earth.

11. That is, though spiritually dead through mortal sin, they still live on earth and may be saved.

12. Cf.Jn 11:17-44.

13. The scriptural basis for this paragraph is probably Matthew 27:51-53. Schmidt (note 189, p. 385) lists many medieval theologians who were of the opinion that others arose from the grave and ascended into heaven when Christ did.

14. That is, the juice from the apple and the cursed blood.

15. That is, the name one receives upon entering religious life.

16. The Lux div. introduces this chapter with the following addition: "Brother Heinrich, named `of Halle,' lector at Ruppin, having wondered at the sayings and writings of Sister Mechthild, received the following response from her."

17. Cf. Acts 2:3-7

18. Cf. Ex 3:6.

19. This is a reference to the role of young Daniel in saving Susanna from the elders, as related in the Book of Susanna. Cf. especially verses 44-63. The Lux div. concludes this chapter with the following addition: "This learned and good man, the aforementioned lector, collected all the writings of this Mechthild and put them together in one volume and divided it into six parts, as it now appears to those reading it. Sister Mechthild, who survived him, saw his soul in the sight of the Lord in heaven holding this book in his hand and rejoicing with his face radiant. For through the writing down of this book he attained for himself many rewards. Through them he appeared full of glory in the sight of the saints."

20. That is, by being truly sorry for our sins.

21. "Sinner" is feminine in the text and no doubt refers to Mechthild.

22. The words "over all humankind" appear in some manuscripts after `judgment" but are not considered authentic by Neumann (V 22, 7: N 1 172).

23. The following sentence appearing in some manuscripts "That is God's heart; alas for my guilty pain!" is not considered authentic by Neumann (V 22, 46-47; N 1 174).

24. Cf. Lk 1:38. Mechthild phrases Mary's reply to the angel in more courtly fashion than does the biblical text.

25. Cf. Lk 1:46-48.

26. That is, those gifts brought by the three wise men.

27. Lk 2:22-24. Mechthild's concern seems to be: Why did Mary give an offering of two pigeons, the traditional offering of poorer people, and not a lamb, since they were suddenly rich because of the gifts of the three wise men?

28. The Lux div. explains this by adding" not be stoned as adulteresses according to the law. Schmidt (note 207, pp. 387-88) thinks these remarks about virgins would also call to mind for the medieval audience the legend about St. Nicholas: that he gave money to the father of three young sisters and thus saved them from having to become prostitutes.

29. A hunger cloth (hungerlachen or hungertuoch) was a veil or curtain that was hung in front of the altars or in front of the sanctuary during Lent as a symbol of mourning and penance. It was often covered with rich, symbolic embroideries.

30. That is, during the time of the Old Testament.

31. The vertical gold stripe down the middle of the hunger cloth and the horizontal green border encrusted with gems form a cross.

32. Cf.Jn 20:1.

33. That is on Pentecost. Cf. Acts 2:1-4.

34. The mountain is Christ. Cf. 11 21 above. The tree bearing the mountain is the cross.

35. That is, the mountain.

36. That is, by becoming man the Son reconciled humanity to God. Cf. 1 Jn 2:1-2.

37. That is, he was married and belonged to a third order, either Franciscan or, more likely, Dominican. He probably ended his days in a religious house in Magdeburg. Mechthild is surprised to see the crowns of virgins over someone who was not a virgin. Neumann (note to V 28, 7; N 11 103) remarks that the crowns are suspended over his head. He is not actually wearing them, as is Sister Hildegund in 11 20 above.

38. The two prayer titles are in Latin in the text: Miserere mei dens and Pater roster.

39. St. Elizabeth of Hungary (1207-31) was canonized in 1234.

40. St. Dominic (c. 1170-1221) was canonized in 1234.

41. St. Francis (1181/82-1226) was canonized in 1228.

42. St. Peter was a Dominican who worked among the Catharists in Lombardy and Tuscany. He was murdered in 1252 and canonized in 1253.

43. That is, Mechthild.

44. Jutta of Sangerhausen, a noblewoman, after her husband had died on a pilgrimage to Palestine and her children had entered religious life, took the veil and served the poor and lepers. In 1260 she went to Prussia as a hermitess to work for the spread of Christianity. She died in 1264 and was later venerated there as a saint.

45. This sentence stands at the beginning of the preamble to Book I and thus serves as an introduction to the entire FL. See the preamble to Book I.

46. That is, participation in Christ's suffering and death.

47. That is, preserves one in faith and redemption until one attains glory in heaven.

48. This last phrase is in Latin in the text: Per dominum nostrum, jhesum Christum filium tuum.

Book VI

1. See Book III, note 35 above.

2. The text reads "his lord apostles." But Neumann (note to VI 1, 70; N 11 110) thinks lord is not original and suggests replacing it with holy, which I have done.

3. That is, with concern that we do not waste much time on them because they are temporary.

4. The next few lines allude to the often allegorized parable of the Good Samaritan in Luke 10:30-37.

5. The Lux div. identifies this person as "Dietrich, the venerable deacon of the church of Magdeburg."

6. The final phrase is in Latin in the text: per dominum nostrum.

7. That is, the canon in the previous chapter.

8. In the original, boeke (rams) can refer to male sheep, goats, chamois, etc. Given the function of the image of goats in the gospels and in popular tradition, I am assuming that Mechthild is referring to male goats.

9. The Lux div. introduces this chapter with the words: "When she had grown old, Sister Mechthild said:..."

10. This is an indication that Mechthild served at one time as the head of a beguine community.

11. Schmidt (note 245, p. 391) considers this last sentence to be an obvious addition by Heinrich of Halle.

12. The Lux div. interprets this to mean the act of honoring the saints in conjunction with all Christians.

13. Carenae were periods of additional fasting that could be imposed by bishops or abbots for serious sins. Cf. note to VI 10, 4; N 11118.

14. Neumann (note to VI 10, 7-8; N 11 118) assumes that the bracketed words were added later to the text.

15. That is, out of fear of what people might think and say if he left mass early.

16. The chapter heading is clearly incomplete. This rendering translates Neumann's attempt to restore it. Most likely the first part of the chapter has also been lost. The Lux div. introduces the chapter with the following information: "A certain student of good morals, devoted to God, and a blood relative of mine was struck with insanity and the loss of reason with God's consent and in his inscrutable dispensation; and he remained bereft of senses and mind to the very end of his life. I had considered him to be suitable for religious life and intimacy with God. Thus I was inwardly quite disturbed by the course of events. I prayed to God for him." Since such concrete references to people or events are rare in the German text, Neumann (note to VI 11, 1; N 11 118) assumes a missing introductory sentence along the following lines: "I prayed to our Lord for a student who lost his mind and whose nature was dead while he went on living."

17. This first phrase of the quotation (Mt 25:34) is in Latin in the text: Venite, benedicti patris mei. The last part is from Matthew 25:41.

18. That is, the senses refuse to turn inward from the external distractions they are drawn to and thus hinder God's activity in the soul.

19. Neumann (note to VI 13, 18; N 1 220) does not consider this phrase authentic.

20. That is, to spare the body the exhausting intensity of contemplative experiences and raptures that render it useless for external pastoral activities.

21. Concerning Enoch, Elijah, and the last brothers/preachers, see IV 27 and Book IV, note 55 above.

22. For literature on the traditions of God as a mirror, see Schmidt, note 19, p. 349.

23. According to medieval thought, the human soul is what is created in the "image and likeness" of God. Cf. Gn 1:26.

24. The soul of Christ, in saying "he," is referring to the "human" Christ.

25. That is, by becoming human, Christ ennobled human nature.

26. The image of the cross of Christ as the key opening the gates of heaven has a long tradition. See note to VI 16, 44 f.; N 11123.

27. The Lux div. begins this chapter with: "The Lord says:..."

28. Neumann (note to VI 21, 1 f.; N II 125) does not consider the bracketed words to be authentic.

29. That is, the clergy.

30. This probably refers to the higher clergy.

31. See IV 27; VI 15; and Book IV, note 55 above. See also note to VI 21, 2; N 11 125-26.

32. The reigns of the popes around this time were Innocent IV (1243-54), Alexander IV (1254-61), Urban IV (1261-64), Clement IV (1265-68), Gregory X (1271-76), Innocent V (1276), Hadrian V (1276), John XXI (1276-77), and Nicholas III (1277-80). Hence this chapter may have been written during the reign of Nicholas III.

33. This chapter is the same as VII 45. I have followed Neumann in placing it there.

34. This sentence is confusing. The Lux div. renders it thus: "Why, Lord, did you have to suffer such huge torments since in your pure prayer [in the garden of Gethsemane] the precious drops running down to the ground would have been sufficient to make reparation for the whole world." Implication: there was really no need for Christ to suffer more after that.

35. In calling those who do not love "schemers against love" (varer der minne), Mechthild is using the vocabulary of courtly-love poetry. Varerare those at court who are jealous of the happiness the lovers enjoy in loving and who do what they

can to make their love public and thus destroy it.

36. This last sentence, taken from Luke 23:46, is in Latin in the text: in manes tuas commendo spiritism meum.

37. Cf. Mt 25:41.

38. The sense seems to be: If God were to give me the necessary virtue, I would gladly perform the good work connected with it.

39. See I 44 above, in a speech of the soul toward the close of the chapter.

40. And on earth and in purgatory these two things-suffering and bliss-are both continuously present together.

41. For some secondary literature on God as a circle, see Neumann (notes on umbezil and unbegriffenlich to VI 31; N 11 132-33) and Schmidt (note 267, pp. 393-94).

42. That is, in battle against the desires of the flesh.

43. Chapter, as used here, is a regularly held meeting of a religious community, during which part of the rule is usually read and, among other things, matters of religious discipline settled.

44. I have followed the text in keeping the person holding strict chapter with himself masculine to this point. With the introduction of a she, Mechthild most likely wishes to reveal that she has been speaking of herself throughout.

45. Cf. the Song of Solomon, especially 2:10 and 13.

46. This chapter is a response to criticisms against Mechthild: that the experience she describes in 11 4 above is theologically untenable and, by implication, not an authentic experience because she describes John the Baptist, who was never ordained a priest, celebrating mass.

47. Cf.Jn 1:29-34.

48. The words from the gospel of John (1:29 and 36) are in Latin in the text: Ecce agnus dei.

49. This final phrase Burch dine here name dri (for the sake of your three glorious names) bears striking resemblance, especially because of the similarities in unusual word order, to a line in Walther von der Vogelweide's Palastinalied: "durch die sine namen dri" (for the sake of his three names). The purpose of Walther's song is to recruit crusaders to go and free Jerusalem from the infidel. Given the similarity of Mechthild's sentiments, she may well be trying to recall Walther's song to the minds of her audience.

50. The last words are in Latin in the text: Requiescant in pace. Amen.

51. Neumann (note to VI 37, 63; N II 139) comments that, if this chapter was written before Mechthild entered the Cistercian convent at Helfta, "companions" (gaden) refers to the beguines with whom she lived.

52. Another example of Mechthild using "greeting" (gruos) to refer to ecstatic experience. Cf., for example, I 2 above.

53. This you is in the plural (ir).

54. The bracketed words are not considered authentic by Neumann. See note to VI 41, 7: N II 141.

55. These final two chapters are not listed in the table of contents and were probably added later.

56. This chapter, which is not included in the Lux div., is generally considered to have been added by an editor.

57. The final phrase is in Latin in the text: Deo gratias.

1. Cf. Rv 14:4. This chapter draws heavily on images from the Book of Revelation.

2. Neumann (note to VII 1, 93; N 11 143) refers to Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologica, I, q. 35, a. 1 and 2, in connection with Mechthild's calling the humanity of Christ an "intelligible image (begriffenlich bilde) of his eternal Godhead."

3. See Book VI, note 22 above.

4. That is, the blessed.

5. This "he" is confusing. One expects "they," i.e., Father and Son.

6. Ps. 112:1. In Latin in the text: Laudate pueri dominum.

7. I have followed Neumann's punctuation here. Schmidt (p. 273) changes the punctuation and the meaning of the ambiguous iht and comes up with a rendering that is at least equally plausible. Her translation translated: "Alas, wretched ones, as long as we storm around in anger, there is nothing (iht) good about us. We must then return again and again to our heart."

8. A reference to Mechthild'sjoining the Cistercian sisters at the convent in Helfta. There is general agreement that this happened in about 1270 or 1271.

9. In Latin in the text: Te deum laudamus.

10. The chapter room in a religious house (cf. Book VI, note 43 above) is here being used by Mechthild as a symbol for the activities of the conscience.

11. From here through "Glory be to the Father and the Son" the text is in Latin: Adiutorium nostrum in nomine domini. Laudate dominum omnes gentes. Gloriatur etfilius. Regnum mundi. Eructavit cor. Quem vidi. Gloria patri etfilio. These are all responses in the Divine Office sung on various feast days.

12. Mt 5:3. In Latin in the text: Beati pauperes spiritu.

13. This sentence is not contained in the main manuscript tradition. However, Neumann (note to VII 13, 17; N 11 148-49) does not exclude the possibility that it is authentic, especially since it serves nicely as a bridge between what immediately precedes and follows it.

14. That is, the mirror.

15. That is, the hours at which members of a religious community assembled to sing the Divine Office.

16. The first five lines, excluding "Lord Jesus Christ," also introduce V 20 above.

17. That is, before receiving holy communion.

18. This you is in the plural and is no doubt addressed to the sisters of the Cistercian community of Helfta, which Mechthild had joined. Helfta was known for the high level of learning among its members.

19. Cf. 1 Cor 2:9.

20. In Latin in the text: Gloria tibi trinitas!

21. In Latin in the text: Salve regina!

22. The antecedent of "She" is most likely the world. The noun world is feminine in German. Also, Lady World (frouwe welt) occurs frequently in medieval art and literature as a temptress poisoning the soul.

23. Schmidt (note 292, p. 397) sees King Gustav Adolf of Nassau's military campaigns in Saxony and Thuringia as being

the historical events prompting this chapter. These campaigns took place in 1294. This would mean that Mechthild died after 1294. Neumann (1964, 197-99) makes a case for earlier military activities being Mechthild's point of reference and puts Mechthild's death in about 1282.

24. That is, the positive results of war.

25. Neumann (note to VII 33, 11; N II 154) is convinced that the numbering of the spices became confused in transmission. He thinks that Mechthild wished to enumerate five spices that would allude mystically to the five wounds of Christ. The five spices would be: willing suf fering, patient suffering, holy intimacy, perseverance in suffering, and joy in suffering.

26. That is, the seven penitential psalms.

27. Ps 6:1. In Latin in the text: Domine ne in furore.

28. Ps 32:1. In Latin in the text: Beati quorum remissa.

29. Ps 38:1. In Latin in the text: Domine ne in furore.

30. Ps 51:1. In Latin in the text: Miserere mei dens.

31. Ps 102:1. In Latin in the text: Domine, exaudi orationem meam et clamor.

32. Ps 130:1. In Latin in the text: De profundis clamo.

33. It was often the custom in the Middle Ages for a bride to receive a gift from her new husband on the morning after the wedding night. In the Nibelungenlied, for example, Siegfried gives the Nibelungen treasure to Kriemhild as her "morning gift."

34. Ps 143:1. In Latin in the text: Domine, exaudi orationem meam auribus percipe.

35. Schmidt (note 298, p. 400) notes that allegorical use of the convent is frequent in medieval spiritual writing, but that Mechthild's is the first to occur in German and that a clear relationship to a source has not been demonstrated.

36. It is not really clear in the course of the next several lines just what these "four things" are. Also, the noun to which "it(s)" refers in the following three lines is not clear from the original text.

37. CE Rv 14:4.

38. Possible alternate rendering: "That they are here fills me with joy."

39. Schmidt (note 300, p. 400) refers to Psalm 51:5: "Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me" and to the problem of unknowingly becoming involved in guilt, as it is treated by Wolfram of Eschenbach in Parzival and Willehalm. Another medieval line of thought that might provide the background for Mechthild's statement is the Augustinian doctrine of original sin, which often documented its claim of human sinfulness before birth by referring to this psalm verse. For more on this and its consequences for an influential medieval view on human sexuality, see, for example, John T.Noonan, Jr., Contraception. A History of Its Treatment by the Catholic Theologians and Canonists (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1965).

40. That is, to where a person with a pure soul lies dying.

41. The devils bested by the soul respond to their master Satan.

42. Satan's growling and gnashing are his angry response to what his minions have just reported to him.

43. Mechthild is here drawing on medieval secular love poetry, which frequently expressed similar ideas in similar form. One of the best-known such poems in German is:

If all the world were mine
From the sea to the Rhine,
I would renounce it
That the Queen of England
Might lie in my arms.

Translated from Poets of the Minnesang, ed. Olive Sayce (Oxford, 1967), p. 2.

44. Schmidt (note 303, p. 400) sees this mention of forty years as evidence for the view that Mechthild died after 1290, since it is generally agreed that Mechthild started writing in 1250 and her writings are what made her known. Those favoring the time around 1282 as the time of her death could counter that Mechthild knew this clergyman for some time before she began writing and that the harm he caused Mechthild, mentioned later in this chapter, could have come after they have been acquainted for several years. Also, a mere five chapters before this one, at the beginning of VII 36 above, Mechthild says she has been writing for thirty years.

45. That is, if I could still have productive sorrow for my failings, as one can before death but not here in purgatory.

46. This chapter appears twice in ms E, once as VI 22 and here. Cf. Book VI, note 33 above.

47. For these three lines I have adopted Schmidt's (p. 316) punctuation. Neumann (VII 45, 15-17; N 1 291) has no punctuation after the first them, which turns the lines into an anacoluthon.

48. Neumann (note to VII 45, 22; N 11 159) considers this line to be a later addition, and not by Mechthild.

49. Cf.Jn 14:23.

50. Given the problems faced by Mechthild in defending her book against charges that it contained heretical statements, it is not surprising to see her in her later years taking a very clear stand on the question of unorthodox teachings. Here she distances herself from those who claim that the soul can become so holy that it may, as it were, enter the Trinity. (It would be possible to bring such a charge against Mechthild herself, given the vision she describes in 111 9!) According to Neumann (note to VII 47, 18; N 11 160) the final sentence of this chapter takes a position against teachings such as those of the homines perfecti treated by Herbert Grundmann in Religiose Bewegungen im Mittelalter, 2 ed. (Darmstadt, 1961), pp. 402-38 and 524-38.

51. I have translated ane pine as "except suffering," taking Mechthild to be saying here something similar to what she says in VII 46 above about spiritual poverty. Schmidt (p. 318) takes Mechthild to be saying that nothing in this world can console or cheer her without, at the same time, causing her to suffer.

52. Neumann (note to VII 48, 26; N II 160) takes book to mean the already complete ms of Books I-VI. More specifically the reference is to I 3 above.

53. In calling Love of God, her dialogue partner, "dear maiden," Mechthild is responding to her partner's words spoken above-that she wanted to be Mechthild's lady-in-waiting.

54. 1 Jn 4:16. In Latin in the text: Deus caritas est.

55. A troubling sentence. Possible meaning: Mechthild was not able to provide him with the necessary sigh because it was at that very moment being given him by someone else. Cf. Schmidt p. 323, lines 12-13.

56. Cf. Mt 26:39; Mk 14:36; and Lk 22:42.

57. This you is plural.

58. Mechthild places Enoch and Elijah here to await the last days when they shall return to earth. See IV 27 and VI 15 above.

59. Cf. VI 15 above.

60. That is, the souls in purgatory.

61. Mechthild has cast this chapter in the form of a Botenlied or messenger's song, a conventional form in courtly-love poetry in which the speaker addresses a messenger concerning the object of his or her love and asks him to bear the message of love to the beloved one. Mechthild also employs several expressions and/or images of such poetry, such as "sick with love," "recover," "physician" of love, "wounds" of love, etc.

62. In Latin in the text: Inpresepio.

63. Cf. Dt 6:5 and Lk 10:25-28.

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'Cf. "Herz," in Handbuch theologischer Grundbegriffe, ed. Heinrich Fries (Munich, 1962) Vol. I, 668-697, by P.Hofmann and Karl Rahner.

Y See Mechthild von Magdeburg, Das fliefende Licht der Gottheit, Zweite, neubearbeitete Ubersetzung mit Einfuhrung and Kommentar von Margot Schmidt (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt: Froniniann-Holzboog, 1995), note 296, pp. 397-400, especially p. 399.

'Cf. Johannes Stohr, "Neuzeitliche Diskussionen fiber die Einwohnung des dreifaltigen Gottes," Von der Suche each Gott, ed. Margot Schmidt and Fernando Dominguez (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt: Froniann-Holzboog, 1998), 249-82.

4 See 11 25.

'See the first few lines of VII 21.

Cf. Marianne Heinibach, "Der ungelehrte Mund" as Autorittit. Mystische Erfahrung as Quelle kirchlich-prophetischer Rede im Werk Mechthilds von Magdeburg (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt: Fromann-Holzboog, 1989), 74-75.

9 Cf. also Schmidt, note 149, p. 376.

'Cf. Schmidt, note 83, p. 362. Regarding the sources and occurrences of this image, cf. Rudolf von Biberach, Die siben strassen zu got. High Alemannic Translation according to Ms Einsiedeln 278, ed. Margot Schmidt (Florence, 1969), 133* f.

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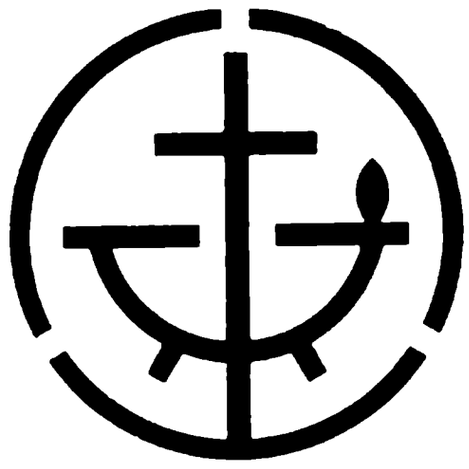

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TRANSLATED BY
MOTHER COLUMBA HART AND JANE BISHOP

INTRODUCED BY
BARBARA J. NEWMAN

PREFACE BY
CAROLINE WALKER BYNUM

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Cover art: MOTHER PLACID DEMPSEY, a Benedictine nun of the Abbey of Regina Laudis in Bethlehem, Connecticut, is also a sculptor, painter, graphics designer and book illustrator. Regarding the cover and inside illustrations she says: "Doing art work for this volume became a unique personal experience in which I was struck by three things. First, I realized there has existed for centuries a body of illustrations of the Visions that are traditionally ascribed to St. Hildegard's 'direct supervision.' Despite their obvious differences in style, which suggest not merely different artists but entirely different historical periods, they have enjoyed a long history of commentaries by various spiritual writers and important scholars, including, in our time, Dr. Carl Jung. Recognizing their unique value in terms of tradition and their own intrinsic aesthetic beauty, I chose to represent them here in all their clarity and forthrightness. In so doing, I came to appreciate that, in a very real sense, they do proceed from her 'direct supervision.' Secondly, I came to understand directness and supervision as the marks of St. Hildegard, who looked upon the mystery of nature and mankind with the radical and comprehensive 'eye' of Faith, that is, through supernatural 'seeing' or, as one may say, through 'Super-Vision,' and this is what I have tried to express on the cover. Thirdly, I realized that her 'Super-Vision' includes the hidden bringing together of many persons to share and creatively carry out that Vision. In this regard I wish to express my debt to her and, through her, to the Abbess and members of my own community, to Sr. Mary Charles, R.S.M., Dr. John Farina, children's book illustrator Mercer Mayer, and to Jeanne Parr."

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MOTHER COLUMBA HART, O.S.B. was graduated from Smith College in 1924 *summa cum laude*, having studied under Eleanor S. Duckett and Howard R. Patch. She remained for the M.A. degree in English and continued graduate work at Radcliffe and Harvard in romance philology, Middle English, and Latin paleography under John L. Lowes, John S. Tatlock, and Charles H. Haskins. She earned a second M.A. at Radcliffe in 1926. After European travel she studied French while living in Paris for two years, and later translated *Ouvrons la Bible* by Roger Poelman (*How to Read the Bible*, New York: Kenedy, 1953, and London: Longmans, 1955). Her first original book, *Mary of the Magnificat*, had come out in 1942 (Sheed & Ward). The work of translating from the Latin *The Exercises of Saint Gertrude* (Newman, 1956) brought to her attention the dearth of information about Gertrude's life and suggested research on thirteenth-century women, especially the Flemish mystics. Thus she discovered Hadewijch, some of whose letters she presented in *The American Benedictine Review* (1962). Her translation from the Latin of William of Saint Thierry's *Exposition on the Song of Songs* was begun at this time and appeared in Cistercian Fathers Series (1970). In 1972 Mother Columba contributed to *The American Benedictine Review* another article on medieval women "*Consecratio Virginum:* Thirteenth-Century Witnesses." In 1980 she brought out a volume in The Classics of Western Spirituality Series, which may well be considered her masterpiece, the translation of *The Complete Works* of Hadewijch.

At 86, Mother Columba has retired from active research for publication and remains a beloved elder and resource person in her Benedictine community of the Abbey of Regina Laudis in Bethlehem, Connecticut, where she has been a member for forty years.

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Author of the Preface

CAROLINE WALKER BYNUM is Professor of History at Columbia University and a MacArthur Fellow. She is the author of a number of scholarly works on medieval spirituality including *Jesus as Mother: Studies in the Spirituality of the High Middle Ages* (University of California Press, 1982) and *Holy Feast and Holy Fast: The Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women* (University of California Press, 1987).

Preface

Until recently the visionary women of the Western European Middle Ages were neglected by scholars. German historians tended to see the two great twelfth-century Rhineland prophets, Hildegard of Bingen and Elizabeth of Schönau, and the mystical group at the convent of Helfta in the thirteenth century as important only insofar as they foreshadowed Protestantism. The intense affective female piety of the early fourteenth century described in the collections of visions and pious biographies known as *Nonnenbücher* made scholars so nervous that they neglected these works altogether except as philological evidence of the development of the German language. English students of mysticism denigrated the female mystics of their own and the continental tradition as "experiential," and judged their works, along with those of such male devotional writers as Richard Rolle, inferior to speculative, neo-Platonic mystical writing. Historians of science and psychology, as well as phenomenologists of religion, repeatedly explained women's visionary experiences as neurosis or disease (migraine, hysteria, anorexia nervosa, and so on). Further, as Peter Dronke has pointed out, there is no major female writer from the Middle Ages whose works modern scholars have not attributed (often with very little evidence) to a man.[1] If I had written this preface in 1950, I might well have argued that the only thing the diverse female writers of the Middle Ages had in common was their neglect by modern scholarship.

All that has changed. Not only has the field of women's history emerged as a branch of research with considerable methodological sophistication, but women's theological writing and piety have received particular emphasis. Two anthologies of medieval women writers in translation have recently appeared, and religious texts predominate. At least two current series are devoted exclusively to women's texts.[2] The plays of Hrotsvitha of Gandersheim and Hildegard of Bingen are now performed by college drama depart-

ments and church groups; several recordings of Hildegard's liturgical songs are on the market; extravagant claims about the effectiveness of women's medicine and midwifery circulate; radical feminists today appropriate from medieval texts insights they characterize as female or feminist and use them to challenge or reform or profoundly reinterpret the modern church. In the 1980s female authorship is often attributed to anonymous texts, sometimes on the shakiest of bases. A German postage stamp in 1979 honored the eight-hundredth anniversary of the death of Hildegard of Bingen; the postwar, apocalyptic German artist, Anselm Kiefer, includes the thirteenth-century beguine and visionary Mechtild of Magdeburg as the only woman in his monumental painting "Germany's Spiritual Heroes."

The recent enthusiasm for visionary women in general and for the immensely talented polymath Hildegard of Bingen in particular raises disturbing interpretative questions. For Hildegard is in no way typical, either as a nun or as a visionary or as a female writer. As Professor Newman notes in her introduction, Hildegard was profoundly different from such later figures as Catherine of Siena and Teresa of Avila, the only women taken seriously as theologians or as mystics by the Catholic church until recently. Nor is Hildegard, who is in any case an extremely difficult writer, made easier to understand by isolating her from her twelfth-century German, monastic context and relocating her in a tradition of female spirituality running from Perpetua (d. 203) to Therese of Lisieux (d. 1897). A Benedictine abbess, Hildegard advocated a monastic life of obedience and communal prayer—not the extravagant and individualistic asceticism of some later medieval women. A proponent of Gregorian reform, Hildegard proselytized for clerical purity and power, and argued that women should not hold priestly office, although she (virtually alone among medieval women) undertook preaching missions with ecclesiastical approval. Authorized to write by God's command (as were many other medieval women), Hildegard dominated her confessors, scribes and illustrators in a way not common with female saints, some of whom (such as Elizabeth of Hungary or Angela of Foligno) were so controlled by their confessor-scribes that it is indeed hard to know whether their piety and even their words represent truly the divine message they heard in the inner recesses of their hearts.[3] Moreover, Hildegard was a prophetic seer whose visions had political content and were based in a physical experience of light and pain. She wrote in Old Testament images of precious stones and noble buildings, of agriculture and organic growth, of courts and war and beautiful garments—images radically different from the more tender, domestic, even sentimental meditations on the Holy Family and the human experience of Jesus common in Rhineland convents of the fourteenth century. A visionary who took her revelations as a text for exegesis, not an experience for re-living, Hildegard was not, technically speaking, a

mystic at all. She wrote not about union but about doctrine, although her attention to bodily phenomena such as sexual desire or menstrual cramps sets her apart from other visionary theologians of the twelfth century (such as Hugh or Richard of St. Victor).

Readers who come to the complex and difficult text presented here equipped with a background in feminist theology or in women's history may be surprised by many things—among them Hildegard's sense of inferiority as a female and her confident self-assertion in castigating the clergy. Readers who approach the *Scivias* with knowledge of later medieval apocalyptic or mystical writing may be puzzled by the virtual absence of nuptial imagery—usually thought, quite incorrectly, to be characteristic of women writers—and by the lack of a spirituality of *imitatio Christi* and self-punishing asceticism. In presenting Hildegard's obscure yet brilliant visions to such readers, it is therefore tempting merely to underline their idiosyncrasy and leave it at that. This would, however, be unwise. The flood of questions raised by recent work on women's piety needs to be addressed, if only by spelling out clearly two issues at stake. First, is there a female spirituality in the period between 1100 and 1517? Second, did medieval women speak with their own voices and out of their own experience, or is their work merely the inscription of the misogynist and patriarchal values of the dominant religious tradition? Although related, these are not the same question.

To ask the first question is really to ask whether there are consistent and identifiable ways in which women's religious concerns, considered across decades, classes and national or linguistic lines, differ from those of men. The question does not, as some have argued, make essentialist assumptions about the "eternal feminine." To be sure, there were biological constraints affecting women's roles in the medieval period—constraints of which Hildegard, with her keen medical curiosity, was well-aware. But no modern theorist would explain women's religious options or opinions as biologically determined. There were, however, institutional and educational constraints not rooted in biology that were constant throughout the later Middle Ages. Women were prohibited from holding priestly office and increasingly from exercizing roles as preachers and spiritual counselors. They were cut off from the new scholastic education of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, yet found encouragement and opportunities to write when vernacular languages and genres emerged in that much-studied shift from oral to written culture.[4] The question of women's piety is therefore in part a question of whether social, educational and institutional limitations were so powerful an influence as to differentiate fundamentally women's insights from men's.

Recent studies of medieval saints have suggested that certain themes such as the religious significance of illness and the need for charismatic authorization do characterize women's religious experience. Analyses of the

structure of women's prose and women's visions also suggest that particular fears shaped women's intellectual efforts, and indeed that the act of writing itself was often for a woman both service to others and audacious self-integration. Some recent scholarship has even argued that gender-related imagery is used differently by males and females, although the best of such work eschews any assumption that women are generally drawn to feminine or men to masculine images. Research on medieval medical texts has established that learned and folkloric traditions shared an emphasis on the threatening physicality of females; some historians would argue that such traditions underlie the extravagant physiological imagery in women's writing as well as the extraordinary bodily miracles such as stigmata, miraculous lactation, and so forth performed by women from the thirteenth century on.[5]

It is clear that this recent research cannot be ignored in a study of Hildegard. Different as she may be from later, more affective female mystics, her *Scivias* nonetheless scintillates with a concern for embodiment—as both glorious and deplorable—that puts her in the company of Mary of Oignies, Angela of Foligno and Catherine of Genoa. Atypical as we may find her moderate Benedictinism, her assumption of quasi-clerical roles and her exegetical rather than experiential stance toward her visions, the act of writing that wrenched her from depression into leadership reminds us of the stunning personal integration and religious creativity achieved by Beatrice of Nazareth, Catherine of Siena and Teresa of Avila in similar acts.

The second question asked in recent decades about women's writing is also complex. Both radical feminists and conservative students of mysticism have queried whether what we have in women's texts from the twelfth to the fifteenth century are women's voices at all. In a culture where official theology was defined by scholastic debate and papal pronouncement, where reception of the eucharist required the recipient to submit to previous scrutiny by a male confessor, where increasingly elaborate rules were devised for "testing" charismatic gifts, which could be adjudged "feigned sanctity," how can we be sure we hear women speaking freely? Can phrases such as Hildegard's repeated assertion of female inferiority really be accepted as women's own, even when penned or dictated by the woman herself?[6]

Some scholars have wished to decide this issue a priori, declaring women's writings either a vague echo of more theoretically powerful works by orthodox males or a species of "false consciousness" that reflects merely patriarchal repression. This position assumes not only that women's courage, serenity, self-sacrifice and loyalty were self-delusion but also that the power to repress is the only effective power in human history. To this a priori assumption scholarly scrutiny of texts can, of course, provide no rebuttal. But recent scholarship not committed to this ideological position has found in Hildegard, as in Catherine of Siena or Julian of Norwich or

even—for all their orientation toward male advisers—Elizabeth of Schönau or Dorothy of Montau, the wellings up of profound female experience. The low-keyed irony with which Hildegard reminded corrupt clerics that God had been forced to choose an inferior mouthpiece because *they* had fallen so low, like the cheeky casuistry with which the fourteenth-century English woman Margery Kempe met the admonition not to preach, have hardly seemed to all recent interpreters an internalizing of misogyny.[7] Nor have all scholars read as repression Hildegard's glorious sense of the power and independence conferred on women by virginity.

It would, however, be misleading to close with general methodological issues raised by the current discussion of female spirituality. Attentive readers will find that Hildegard directs her audience not to a consideration of woman but to a consideration of humankind. She meditates not on the experience of *anima* as *sponsa*, languishing with desire for Christ her bridegroom, but on the place of the human person (*homo*) in a divine plan that marches from creation through Christ's incarnation to last judgment and final redemption. For a lyrical evocation of soul seeking the sensual delights of ecstatic union, one must turn, in the twelfth century, to Cistercian or Carthusian monks. The *homo* of whom Hildegard writes is a lump of mire, although surrounded with jewels (pt III, vision 1). The body this *homo* wears as a garment is crucial to its self and will rise at the last day gendered and intact, but body is useful to *homo* not as a locus of earthly or celestial sensations but as an instrument of self-discipline.

Hildegard's Latin is less beautiful than that of her more affective and evocative Cistercian contemporaries; her concern is more ecclesiological; her vision of the divine economy more historical; her piety is tougher and less individualistic. Readers who expect to be moved or inspired as Bernard of Clairvaux moves and inspires may be initially disappointed. But if one pauses for a moment while reading and looks beyond the elaborate and often confusing details of Hildegard's revelations, one realizes one has been shown the structure of salvation. With Hildegard one does not feel; one sees. Before the eyes of the mind pass such vivid images as the first human being, formed of clay, refusing to pluck the flower of obedience (pt II, vision 1); the great maternal figure *Ecclesia*, with souls going in and out of her womb (pt II, vision 3); the pillar of Christ's humanity, up and down which the virtues climb as on a ladder (pt III, vision 8); the bones of the dead leaping together at the end of time into figures whose very appearance reveals their status as saved or damned (pt III, vision 12); the crystalline beauty of the heavens in eternity, filled with light and song (pt III, vision 13). Hildegard's visions are in fact one vision: a primer and a *summa* of Christian doctrine.

Hildegard spoke to recall the lukewarm and their faithless leaders to God. Her speaking required courage. It also required troubled times and

divine inspiration. Indeed she believed God had called upon a weak woman to rage against evil only because humankind had turned away from heaven and bent its will toward the dust from which it had been created. But rage she did, with confidence and power. It is hard not to see in her parable of the apostles (pt III, vision 7) a description of her own prophetic role:

> And so . . . the Holy Spirit came openly in tongues of fire. . . . And, because the apostles had been taught by the Son, the Holy Spirit bathed them in Its fire, so that with their souls and bodies they spoke in many tongues; and, because their souls ruled their bodies, they cried out so that the whole world was shaken by their voices.
>
> And the Holy Spirit took their human fear from them, so that no dread was in them, and they would never fear human savagery when they spoke the word of God; all such timidity was taken from them, so ardently and so quickly that they became firm and not soft. . . . And then they remembered with perfect understanding all the things they had heard and received from Christ. . . .
>
> And so, going forth, they made their way among the faithless peoples who did not have roots. . . . And to these they announced the words of salvation and of true faith in Christ.

NOTES

1. Peter Dronke, *Women Writers of the Middle Ages: A Critical Study of Texts from Perpetua (+ 203) to Marguerite Porete (+ 1310)* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), ix.

2. *Medieval Women Writers*, ed. Katharina M. Wilson (Athens, GA: The University of Georgia Press, 1984); *Medieval Women's Visionary Literature*, ed. Elizabeth A. Petroff (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986). See also the *Matrologia Latina* series, edited by Margot King and published by Peregrina Publishing Co.; and the projected series *Femina*, to be edited by Jane Chance and published by Focus Publishing.

3. See *Sankt Elisabeth: Fürstin, Dienerin, Heilige: Aufsätze, Dokumentation, Katalog*, ed. Philipps-Universität Marburg (Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 1981); Paul Lachance, *The Spiritual Journey of the Blessed Angela of Foligno According to the Memorial of Frater A.*, Studia Antoniana 29 (Rome: Pontificum Athenaeum Antonianum, 1984).

4. Herbert Grundmann, "Die Frauen und die Literatur im Mittelalter: Ein Beitrag zur Frage nach der Entstehung des Schrifttums in der Volkssprache," *Archiv für Kulturgeschichte* 26 (1936), 129–61. On the shift from orality to scribality, see M. T. Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record: England, 1066–1307* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979); Per Nykrog, "The Rise of Literary Fiction," in *Renaissance and Renewal in the Twelfth Century*, ed. Giles Constable and Robert Benson

(Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982), 593–612; Brian Stock, *The Implications of Literacy: Written Language and Models of Interpretation in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983).

5. See Donald Weinstein and Rudolph Bell, *Saints and Society: The Two Worlds of Western Christendom, 1000–1700* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 234–35; Richard Kieckhefer, *Unquiet Souls: Fourteenth-Century Saints and Their Religious Milieu* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 57–58; Petroff, 28–32 and 37–44; Marie-Christine Pouchelle, *Corps et chirurgie à l'apogée du Moyen Age* (Paris: Flammarion, 1983); Caroline Walker Bynum, " '. . . And Woman His Humanity': Female Imagery in the Religious Writing of the Later Middle Ages," in *Gender and Religion: On the Complexity of Symbols,* ed. Bynum, Harrell and Richman (Boston: Beacon, 1986), 257–88; idem, "The Female Body and Religious Practice in the Later Middle Ages," *Zone* 3–5 (1989), to appear.

6. See *Frauenmystik im Mittelalter,* ed. Peter Dinzelbacher and D. Bauer, Wissenschaftliche Studientagung der Akademie der Diozese Rottenburg-Stuttgart 22.–25. February 1984 in Weingarten (Ostfildern: Schwabenverlag, 1985); Caroline Walker Bynum, *Holy Feast and Holy Fast: The Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 13–30 and 277–96; P. Dinzelbacher, "Zur Interpretation erlebnismystischer Texte des Mittelalters," *Zeitschrift für deutsches Altertum und deutsche Literatur* 117 (1988), 1–23; Ursula Peters, "Frauenliteratur im Mittelalter? Überlegungen zur Trobairitzpoesie, zur Frauenmystik und zur feministischen Literaturbetrachtung," *Germanisch-Romanische Monatschrift,* N.F. 38 (1988), 35–56.

7. Dronke, 149 and 201; Clarissa W. Atkinson, *Mystic and Pilgrim: The Book and the World of Margery Kempe* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1983), 108–9.

Introduction

St. Hildegard (1098–1179), founder and first abbess of the Benedictine community at Bingen, is one of the most fascinating spiritual figures of the twelfth century. The bearer of a unique and elusive visionary charism, she was also a prophet in the Old Testament tradition—the first in a long line of prophetically and politically active women—yet at the same time a representative of the German Benedictine aristocracy in its heyday. Proudly aware of belonging to a social and spiritual elite, she was profoundly humble before God, awed by the audacity of her own mission, and by turns diffident and strident about her gifts.

Measured in purely external terms her achievements are staggering. Although she did not begin to write until her forty-third year, Hildegard was the author of a massive trilogy that combines Christian doctrine and ethics with cosmology; a compendious encyclopedia of medicine and natural science; a correspondence comprising several hundred letters to people in every stratum of society; two saints' lives; several occasional writings; and, not least, a body of exquisite music that includes seventy liturgical songs and the first known morality play. Although other women had written before her, their works had fallen back into silence; the names of Perpetua, Egeria, Baudonivia, Dhuoda and Hrotsvitha were unknown to her. Nor was she aware of her great French contemporary, Heloise. We must not underestimate the courage she needed as the first woman, to the best of her knowledge, to take up wax tablets and stylus in the name of God. Even greater, perhaps, was the daring required to embark on her career as a public preacher of monastic and clerical reform. This mission led her to undertake four prolonged preaching tours, beginning at the age of sixty; she spoke mainly to monastic communities, but on occasion addressed clergy and laity together in the public squares. In the meantime she continued to guide and administer the two nunneries she had founded, the first despite strong opposition from

her abbot. Its daughter house, located in the Rhineland village of Eibingen, is still thriving today.

To her contemporaries Hildegard was "the Sibyl of the Rhine," an oracle they sought out for advice on everything from marital problems and health troubles to the ultimate fate of their souls. Often she gave her advice unsought—most notably to her patron, the emperor Frederick Barbarossa, whom she rebuked fiercely for his role in the German papal schism. Her books enjoyed a modest circulation and a widespread notoriety. By later medieval generations she was remembered primarily as an apocalyptic prophet. Her fiery but enigmatic writings about the Antichrist and the last stages of world history were collected by a Cistercian monk in 1220 and continued to circulate until the Reformation, when she was perversely hailed as a proto-Protestant because she had prophesied the confiscation of ecclesiastical wealth by princes and the dissolution of monasteries.

In our own day the voice that Hildegard had called "a small sound of the trumpet from the living Light" is resounding once more. In Germany she still enjoys a wide popular cult, and the abbey at Eibingen has become a center of scholarship and pilgrimage. Herbalists have rediscovered some of her prescriptions and begun to experiment with their use in modern homeopathic practice. Musicians have performed her liturgical songs and her drama, the *Ordo virtutum*, to great acclaim. To students of spirituality Hildegard remains of compelling interest, not only as a rare feminine voice soaring above the patriarchal choirs, but also as a perfect embodiment of the integrated, holistic approach to God and humanity for which our fragmented era longs. While the movement for creation-centered spirituality has exaggerated certain elements of her teaching and denied its more ascetic and dualistic aspects, it remains true that Hildegard unites vision with doctrine, religion with science, charismatic jubilation with prophetic indignation, and the longing for social order with the quest for social justice in ways that continue to challenge and inspire.

Hildegard's Life and Works

Hildegard's life, which is well-known from her own writings as well as a variety of contemporary documents, presents a mixed image of oppression and privilege.[1] Born into a noble family of Bermersheim near Alzey, she enjoyed the inestimable advantages of wealth, high birth, membership in a large and well-connected family and easy access to the holders of political and ecclesiastical power.[2] At the time of her birth the Cistercian order was in its infancy and the first stirrings of the apostolic poverty movement had barely begun. Benedictine monasticism, especially in Germany, remained an

option for the elite, and many communities had close connections with the houses of their noble founders or patrons. On the other hand, the ethic of world-renouncing asceticism held a strong appeal for these powerful families, so it was not unusual when the daughter of the Count of Sponheim, a woman named Jutta, decided in 1106 to adopt the solitary life of a recluse.

Jutta's family was closely connected with Hildegard's, and her conversion provided an ideal opportunity for Hildegard's parents, Hildebert and Mechthild, to perform a pious deed. They offered their eight-year-old daughter, the last of ten children, to God as a tithe by placing her in Jutta's hermitage.[3] As a handmaid and companion to the recluse, Hildegard was also her pupil: She learned to read the Latin Bible, particularly the Psalms, and to chant the monastic Office. In time, other women joined Jutta and Hildegard, and the hermitage became a nunnery professing the Benedictine Rule. As a teenager Hildegard made her formal profession of virginity. We hear nothing more of her until 1136 when Jutta died and Hildegard was elected abbess in her stead. Five years later she received the prophetic call that eventually led her to compose the *Scivias* and embark on her public mission.

Although the outward circumstances of Hildegard's life were in no way remarkable until that date, her inner life had always been mysterious. In the personal memoirs that form part of her official biography she reports not early mystical longings or a precocious sense of vocation, but rather a peculiar temperament, which doomed her to chronic ill health and, at the same time, gave her a propensity for visions from earliest childhood. She could see things that were invisible to those around her; she foretold the future; and her visual field was filled at all times with a strange luminosity that she later came to call "the reflection of the living Light." In this light she perceived a variety of figures, ranging from human forms to elaborate architectural models, which she was able to interpret with the aid of a "voice from heaven." Finally, on rare occasions she came into contact with a greater brightness, which she called "the living Light" itself; her description of this experience (written at the age of 77) suggests a direct encounter with the divine presence.[4] Initially, however, her visions were merely baffling. Hildegard confided them only to Jutta and to the monk Volmar, her teacher and later her secretary and close friend.

The early genesis of these visions, their connection with the "aerial fires" and other illnesses that plagued Hildegard, and above all, the fact that she experienced visions for forty years before receiving her prophetic call and learning to interpret them as a gift from God, strongly suggest a physiological basis. Charles Singer and, more recently, Oliver Sacks have concluded that the abbess suffered from "scintillating scotoma," a form of migraine.[5] But illness did not prevent her from living an extraordinarily active life and surviving to the ripe age of eighty-one. Moreover, she always

stressed that she received her visions while "fully awake in mind and body" and without any impairment of her normal sense functioning—a description that would exclude any seizures, ecstasies or trance states. It is even clearer that she did not in any way seek to induce the visions. As a Benedictine she practiced and counselled only moderate fasting and avoided mortifications; nor is it reported that she spent long hours in private prayer. Her visionary experience, then, was one of the givens of her physical and psychological make-up. It took decades of painfully acquired self-knowledge—and the authority of an abbatial position—before she was able to understand the visions as a vehicle for divine revelation. Her spirituality thus stands in contrast with that of later mystics who deliberately cultivated visions and other paranormal experiences. Nevertheless, her visions set a seal on the prophetic authority she claimed: without them she would have had neither a message nor an audience. Illness, on the other hand, kept her constantly aware of her human frailty and furnished one of the abiding themes of her spirituality, that of divine power made perfect in weakness.[6]

Hildegard's prophetic call came to her in 1141 in the form of a fiery light that permeated her whole heart and brain and gave her an infused knowledge of all the books of Scripture. In the *Scivias* preface, where she describes this illumination, she is careful to give her exact age at the time as well as the names of all her superiors (the reigning emperor, the archbishop of Mainz and the abbot of St. Disibod). This scrupulous dating follows a literary convention established by the Hebrew prophets and continued by the seer John of Patmos; like them, Hildegard was keenly aware of history and her own historical moment. The illumination, with the subsequent command to "cry out and write," had come to her not because she was any more devout or deserving than others, but because the times were desperate. Unlike modern historians Hildegard did not perceive the mid-twelfth century as a time of spiritual fervor and renewal, but as an "effeminate age" in which the Scriptures were neglected, the clergy "lukewarm and sluggish" and the Christian people ill-informed. Her mission, then, was to do with her prophetic charism what professional clerics had failed to do with their priestly charism: teach, preach, interpret the Scriptures and proclaim the justice of God.

After she overcame her initial hesitation about writing, it took Hildegard ten years to complete the *Scivias* with the editorial help of Volmar and the assistance and moral support of her favorite nun, Richardis von Stade.[7] This decade was marked by numerous crises in her life. Through the agency of Volmar and of her bishop, Henry of Mainz, Hildegard's fame eventually reached the ears of Pope Eugenius III, who happened to be presiding over a synod of bishops at Trier in the winter of 1147–48. Eugenius, a Cistercian, had been a disciple of St. Bernard before his elevation. Not long before the synod of Trier, Hildegard had written to the abbot of Clairvaux to seek

confirmation of her gifts, and Bernard intervened on her behalf with the pope. The upshot was that Eugenius took advantage of his proximity to Hildegard's convent to procure a copy of her unfinished *Scivias*, which he read in public before the assembled bishops and then officially endorsed, sending the seer a letter of apostolic greeting and benediction to continue her work.[8] The importance of this papal seal of approval cannot be overestimated. Not only did it increase Hildegard's confidence and security in the face of continuing self-doubt, but it also authenticated her publicly and protected her from the censure she was bound to attract for violating the deutero-Pauline strictures on female silence and submission.

At about the time of the synod Hildegard received a vision in which she was instructed to leave St. Disibod, the male community to which she and her nuns were attached, and found a new convent on the site of a ruined Carolingian monastery near Bingen. This plan met with vehement objections from her abbot along with many of the nuns, who were loath to leave their comfortable surroundings for a desolate wilderness. Hildegard's desire for independence from the monks—juridical and financial as well as spiritual—embroiled her in prolonged conflict with the abbot of St. Disibod.[9] In addition, some of her daughters refused to move; her beloved Richardis left to become abbess of another monastery, much to Hildegard's chagrin; and her migration exposed her to ridicule from the local nobility, whose goodwill was essential if the new community was to prosper. Nevertheless she persevered, using her family connections to secure the land and a miraculous "charismatic illness" to persuade the abbot that her departure was the will of God. Her new monastic church of St. Rupert was formally consecrated in 1152.

During the 1150s Hildegard devoted herself to securing the welfare of her monastery, the Rupertsberg, with every means at her disposal.[10] She worked to establish monastic discipline by teaching and preaching; supervised construction of the new buildings; obtained gifts and bequests to make her community financially secure; fought for a charter of independence from St. Disibod; and fostered the cult of her new patron, St. Rupert, by writing his *vita*. To instruct her nuns she wrote a commentary on the Athanasian creed, and she enriched their liturgical life with the repertoire of songs that she eventually gathered into her *Symphonia*.[11] To this period also, in all likelihood, belong the final version of her music drama, the *Ordo virtutum* (*Play of Virtues*), and the mysterious *Lingua ignota*, which she seems to have created as a kind of secret language to instil a sense of mystical solidarity among her nuns.[12]

This intense burst of activity directed toward her daughters was complemented by an ever-widening correspondence with the outside world. Hildegard's growing fame brought a constant stream of pilgrims and mira-

cle-seekers, as well as prospective nuns, to the Rupertsberg gates. Most of her correspondents were fellow abbesses, abbots and priests, although there is an impressive sprinkling of secular rulers and prelates and a less prestigious, though perhaps more revealing, selection of letters to ordinary laymen and women. It is difficult to evaluate Hildegard's correspondence in its present state, however, since her secretaries edited freely in order to upgrade the status of her associates and enhance her image as an inspired oracle of God—possibly with a view to imminent canonization. A forthcoming critical edition of her letters will make it possible, for the first time, to assess the actual scope and influence of her correspondence.[13]

According to an autobiographical preface, it was in the same decade of almost unbelievable energy that Hildegard composed her two scientific works. The *Book of Simple Medicine*, also called *Nine Books on the Subtleties of Different Kinds of Creatures*, summarizes the natural science of her age in a logical encyclopedic format. Four books on animals, two on herbs and trees, and three on gems, metals and "elements" combine a wealth of empirical observation with medical notes on the wholesome and poisonous properties of creatures, moral symbolism belonging to the genre of bestiary lore, and magical charms to be used in healing. A companion volume, the *Book of Composite Medicine* or *Causes and Cures*, was apparently never redacted in final form. Along with more or less systematic material on diseases and their treatment, it contains a fascinating miscellany of traditions about Adam and Eve, observations on sexuality and even astrological lore.[14]

It is significant that these works, unlike the *Scivias* and Hildegard's later visionary writings, make no claim to divine inspiration. Neither she nor her secretaries ever made any attempt to disseminate them, nor are they included in the huge manuscript of her collected works, prepared at the Rupertsberg shortly after her death. This omission suggests that Hildegard made a sharp distinction between God's work and her own, yet her creativity and curiosity knew no bounds. The medical works, especially *Causes and Cures*, were probably compiled for her personal use. A tradition of miraculous healings ascribed to her suggests that she practiced medicine informally, like many monastics; on the evidence of these writings, she used both natural and supernatural means.[15] Only in her last written work did she attempt to combine her scientific interests with her prophetic and theological mission.

Around 1158, Hildegard was ready to turn her restless mind in new directions. The Rupertsberg, strengthened and stabilized by two charters from the new archbishop of Mainz, was now well enough established that she could risk prolonged absence for the sake of preaching. Over the next five years she undertook three major tours, despite the burden of illness. Travelling along Germany's great rivers, the Rhine and the Main, she

preached at numerous monasteries and gave fiery apocalyptic sermons in the cathedral towns of Cologne and Trier. Many of these communities subsequently requested transcripts of her sermons, which can be found among her correspondence.[16] This period also saw the composition of a new visionary work, the *Liber vitae meritorum* (*Book of Life's Merits*), which became the second volume of her trilogy. Based on her own experience as a spiritual director, it deals with moral psychology and penance in the context of an overarching christological vision. This little-known work represents a novel synthesis of at least three medieval genres: the *psychomachia* or virtue-vice debate, the penitential and the otherworld vision. It is an important early witness to the developing doctrine of purgatory and represents an interesting compromise between the older medieval concept of virtues and vices as static entities and the newer psychological dynamism favored by the Victorines and Cistercians.[17]

By the time she had completed the *Book of Life's Merits* Hildegard was sixty-five and in constant ill health, but her old age witnessed both the most remarkable literary work and the bitterest conflicts of her long career. Although the abbess could inspire deep loyalty and devotion in her friends, she also had a talent for making enemies. Her sheer force of will, combined with a dazzling array of spiritual and intellectual gifts, a courage hardened by decades of struggle, and a prophetic persona, which she displayed in season and out, made her a formidable opponent; and she did not take defeat easily. When Richardis left her to become abbess of Bassum, Hildegard contested the election and appealed the case all the way to the pope, who ruled against her; she relented only when her young disciple took sick and died at the height of the conflict.[18] The monks of St. Disibod, too, had tasted her wrath when they objected to her plans for independence. But the conflicts of her last years show Hildegard in a more disinterested light, taking considerable risks for the sake of her principles.

The most celebrated of these quarrels set the prophet against the emperor, Frederick Barbarossa.[19] The two had earlier been on excellent terms. Sometime in the mid-1150s Frederick had summoned Hildegard to his palace at Ingelheim to give a prophetic oracle, the contents of which neither party ever disclosed in writing. In 1163 he gave her an imperial charter of protection for the Rupertsberg, guaranteeing valuable liberties. But from an ecclesiastical point of view, Frederick was already schismatic at this time, for in 1159 he had supported an antipope, Victor IV, in opposition to Alexander III. Most of the German bishops had been willing to support Victor, but when he died in 1164 and Frederick appointed a successor instead of seeking reconciliation with the legitimate pope, the prelates were outraged and Hildegard added her prophetic voice to the chorus, calling her imperial patron a madman. She

continued to oppose the emperor when he named a third antipope in 1168, thus refusing to let her loyalties be dictated by political self-interest.[20] Her staunchly orthodox stance is also demonstrated by a polemic she wrote against the Cathars in 1163 at the request of the canons of Mainz.[21]

In the meantime Hildegard had begun work on her final visionary opus, the *Liber divinorum operum* or *Book of Divine Works* (also called *De operatione Dei* or *On the Activity of God*).[22] This work, inspired by an overpowering vision of Caritas or Divine Love, sets forth Hildegard's cosmology and her most mature views of history and eschatology. Like the *Scivias*, it ends with an apocalyptic scenario, which was eagerly scrutinized for centuries to come. The heart of the book, however, lies in a pair of carefully balanced commentaries on the Johannine prologue and the first chapter of Genesis. This construction holds the key to Hildegard's whole theological vision, which revolves around the identity of the Creator with the incarnate Word. Reverent meditation on the cosmos and its proportions, which all have their analogues in the microcosm of the human body, leads to the same eternal center as meditation on history in its divinely ordained stages. Just as the human form is inscribed in the center of the universe in a celebrated illustration of this text, so Christ or incarnate Love is inscribed in the center of time.[23] The consequences of this vision are worked out in detail by means of the ingenious allegories and intricate numerological correlations so dear to Hildegard's age.

Before completing the *Book of Divine Works* the abbess lost her secretary, Volmar, who died in 1173. He was replaced first by Gottfried of St. Disibod, who began to compose her *vita*, and then by the extraordinary Guibert of Gembloux, a Belgian monk.[24] Through hearsay Guibert had become fascinated by Hildegard's visions, and it is to his insatiable curiosity that we owe most of what she recorded about her inner experience. In return for this spiritual favor he rendered her invaluable aid by coming to serve as secretary and provost of the Rupertsberg during her final years. Despite the impatience of his own community, Guibert did not leave Hildegard even in 1178, when her feisty and unyielding temper led to the unexpected consequence of an interdict.[25] The occasion was the burial of a nobleman, at one time excommunicated, in her monastic churchyard. Learning of the incident, the prelates of Mainz demanded that the corpse be exhumed, but Hildegard maintained that the deceased had died in a state of grace and refused to obey even at the price of being excommunicated herself. For six months she and her nuns endured deprivation of Mass, sacraments and their unique liturgical chant. The abbess continued to fight until the interdict was lifted only a few months before her death. At this date the underlying cause of the prelates' antagonism is no longer clear, but Hildegard's resistance stands as a final

testament to her courage and the loyalty of her disciples. The controversy also occasioned one of her most profound and poignant letters, an apologia for music and its role in the spiritual life.[26]

Hildegard's Spirituality

Although Hildegard is frequently classified as a mystic, she may be more precisely identified as a visionary and prophet. Classical definitions of mysticism stress the union of the soul with God and the whole system of ascetic and contemplative disciplines that aim to facilitate that union. But Hildegard, while she certainly had a powerful sense of the divine presence, did not follow the unitive way. "Prayer" to her meant primarily petition and liturgical praise, while "the love of God" meant reverence, loyalty and obedience to his commands. In the rare texts where she portrays herself as a partner in dialogue with God, she is not the enamored bride longing for divine union, as in St. Bernard's *Sermons on the Song of Songs*, but the fragile and woefully inadequate mortal—"ashes of ashes, and filth of filth"—trembling before the great commission she has received. Like Moses "stuttering and slow of speech," and like Isaiah "of unclean lips," she offers the prophet's classic response to a calling she has not chosen, yet cannot do other than obey.

The essentially prophetic character of Hildegard's spirituality explains the startling lack of interest in her own subjectivity. In spite of her unusual inner experiences, she recorded only as much as she had to reveal in order to authenticate her works. Thus only at the beginning and end of each book does she describe its genesis in visions; elsewhere the emphasis rests firmly on the content, and still more on the meaning, of the things seen. Moreover, her autobiographical prefaces and endings tend to focus as much on the seer's disabilities (her femaleness, poor health and lack of education) as they do on her revelations. These disclaimers, far from representing a simple "modesty topos," also serve the aim of authentication; they are meant to persuade readers that, because the author is not "wise according to worldly standards," her weakness and foolishness have been empowered by God alone.[27]

Hildegard's prophetic self-awareness pervades all her writings except for her scientific works, and accounts for many of their stylistic features as well as their characteristically objective or outer-directed teaching. Because she saw herself as the voice of another, not as a speaker in her own right, she often seems disturbingly unaware of the human element in her writings. Not only does she lapse easily from speaking about God in the third person, as preacher, to speaking *for* him in the first person, as prophet; she also claims

direct verbal inspiration for her entire opus and threatens terrible divine vengeance on anyone who dares to add, delete or alter a word. This instrumental view of her activity also required her to deny any education beyond "simple reading," although she was already well-acquainted with the Church Fathers and standard biblical commentaries when she wrote the *Scivias*, and by the end of her life was a woman of remarkably wide culture. Her posture as a simple, unlearned person was not intended to deceive; aside from reinforcing her prophetic persona, it constitutes an implicit critique of the learned clerics whose negligence, she believed, had necessitated her mission.

Hildegard never went beyond her limited and stylized self-disclosures to reveal more of her inner life until she was in her seventies, and even then she did so only at the request of hagiographically inclined admirers. For her first biographer, Gottfried, she wrote or dictated a valuable autobiographical memoir; and for the adoring Guibert she supplied this celebrated and oft-quoted account of her "mode of seeing":

> In this vision my soul, as God would have it, rises up high into the vault of heaven and into the changing sky and spreads itself out among different peoples, although they are far away from me in distant lands and places. And because I see them this way in my soul, I observe them in accord with the shifting of clouds and other created things. I do not hear them with my outward ears, nor do I perceive them by the thoughts of my own heart or by any combination of my five senses, but in my soul alone, while my outward eyes are open. So I have never fallen prey to ecstasy in the visions, but I see them wide awake, day and night. . . . The light that I see thus is not spatial, but it is far, far brighter than a cloud that carries the sun. I can measure neither height, nor length, nor breadth in it; and I call it "the reflection of the living Light." And as the sun, the moon, and the stars appear in water, so writings, sermons, virtues, and certain human actions take form for me and gleam within it.
>
> Now whatever I have seen or learned in this vision remains in my memory for a long time, so that, when I have seen and heard it, I remember; and I see, hear, and know all at once, and as if in an instant I learn what I know. But what I do not see, I do not know, for I am not educated. . . . And the words in this vision are not like words uttered by a human mouth, but like a shimmering flame, or a cloud floating in a clear sky.
>
> Moreover, I can no more recognize the form of this light than I can gaze directly on the sphere of the sun. Sometimes—but not often—I see within this light another light, which I call "the living

> Light." And I cannot describe when and how I see it, but while I see it all sorrow and anguish leave me, so that then I feel like a simple girl instead of an old woman.[28]

This is not the kind of experience that could be taught or learned. Readers might be reminded of Augustine's theory of illumination, which was probably familiar to Hildegard, or of the variant form of Neoplatonic light-mysticism that reached medieval Europe through Pseudo-Dionysius. A still closer parallel can be found in the experiences of Simeon the New Theologian and the Byzantine hesychasts, who sought by means of spiritual exercises to attain purity of heart and thus behold the uncreated light of Mount Tabor. Hildegard could not possibly have known this latter tradition, however; and as we have seen, she made no effort to cultivate or promulgate her special mode of seeing. Nor did she theologize about her visionary experience *per se*.

Aside from the dynamics of prophetic inspiration, Hildegard's spirituality is best understood through the ecclesiastical roles she played: Benedictine abbess, Gregorian reformer and apocalyptic preacher. As mistress of the Rupertsberg, she was indeed a Benedictine to the core. The *Scivias* opens with a vision of two thoroughly monastic virtues, Fear of the Lord and Poverty of Spirit; one has eyes on every side, and the other is inundated with the glory of God, indicating that only the humble possess true vision. Throughout Hildegard's works, but especially in the *Scivias*, the foundational virtues are humility, obedience and discretion, which, like Benedict, she called "the mother of virtues." In governing her community and advising her fellow superiors, she advocated a middle way between laxity and self-indulgence on the one hand and excessive abstinence on the other. She placed a premium on unity, and her teaching is pervaded with classical monastic themes: spiritual warfare, knowledge of good and evil, the conflict between soul and body, the acquisition of virtues, the special merit of chastity. Monks and virgins, in her view, were "new planets" which first appeared in the heavens at Christ's nativity;[29] she never doubted that they formed an elite corps among Christians and, if they persevered in their vows, would receive a special reward.

Although she herself was raised by a recluse, Hildegard was not particularly sympathetic to the eremitic life. A number of abbots and abbesses sought her counsel because they longed to lay down the burden of governing and work out their salvation in a hermit's cell; she always replied that this was a temptation to be resisted.[30] In fact, Hildegard's originality in so many fields should not obscure the fact that she represented a rather old-fashioned type of monasticism. Her reaction to the newer currents is neatly epitomized in her quarrel with the abbess Tengswich of Andernach, sister of the canoni-

cal reformer Richard of Springiersbach.[31] Richard and Tengswich were pioneers in the movement for apostolic poverty, and Tengswich had criticized Hildegard sharply (under the veil of ironic praise) because the abbess of Bingen accepted only noble girls in her convent. What is more, she allowed them to wear jewelry when they received communion. In a spirited reply Hildegard defended the principle of class discrimination: One would not put beasts of different species in the same stall, and even angels had their hierarchy. As for wearing jewels, it was perfectly acceptable for the brides of Christ to dress like noble ladies because, as virgins, they were exempt from the rule of female subordination that required matrons to wear veils and lay aside their elegant attire. This blend of renunciation with privilege continues the long tradition of high-born abbesses, who gave up the titles and secular powers of nobility while retaining its influence, prestige and corporate wealth.

As a reformer Hildegard belongs squarely within the Gregorian camp. In fact, as Jeffrey Russell wrote of Gregory VII himself, her life "is proof that a burning spirit can dwell within a breast committed to order."[32] *Ordo* is indeed a key word in the *Scivias*. Hildegard did not call for radical change of social or ecclesiastical structures; it was the abuse of authority, not the nature of it, that she opposed. Her ideal was a Christendom wherein the secular power would be firmly subordinate to the spiritual, princes and prelates would rule with vigilance and justice, and subjects and layfolk would offer prompt obedience. Yet because her message was largely directed to those in power, and particularly to the ecclesiastical hierarchy, she concerned herself far more with the negligence of clerics and the arrogance of rulers than with the sins of subjects. Three issues that particularly concerned her were clerical celibacy, simony and the subservience of prelates to the secular power—a burning question in Barbarossa's Germany where the bishops were virtually ministers of state. All of these issues, of course, continued the eleventh-century struggle of the reformed papacy against what it perceived as lay encroachments on the dignity of the church.

In addition, Hildegard was zealous for orthodoxy and thus deeply troubled by the hierarchy's failure to offer any effective resistance to the Cathars, who were making numerous converts even as she composed the *Scivias* and had infiltrated the Rhineland by the 1160s. Their alarming success may account for the space she devoted to the sacraments of marriage and the eucharist, which were particularly reviled by these dualistic sectarians. In her most vehement and memorable preaching the abbess highlighted purity of doctrine along with sexual purity, both of which could be symbolized by the powerful image of the virgin Ecclesia. Hildegard not only personified Mother Church in this ancient symbol; in a sense, she impersonated her, making herself a mouthpiece for the pure but continuously imperilled bride

of Christ.[33] In short, she placed her zeal for reform at the service of an essentially clerical vision of the church and a hierarchical vision of society. For her there could be no conflict between the spirit of prophecy and the spirit of order.

Hildegard's apocalyptic preaching must be understood in its proper context.[34] As she was not a radical reformer, neither was she a millenarian; she did not envisage an imminent Second Coming or look forward to a golden age of the Spirit. Rather, her apocalyptic message is closely akin to that of the Old Testament prophets. She shared their perception that divine judgment inevitably follows on human sin, and especially on the sins of rulers. If the princes of the church did not renounce their greed, fornication, oppression and negligence, they would be punished by the loss not only of their wealth and power, but even of the dignity they had signally abused. The perpetrators of this vengeance would be princes and people, not because Hildegard believed that kings were superior to prelates or that laypeople had a right to choose their own priests, but because she saw that the secular power could serve as God's scourge to punish his faithless people, just as the Assyrians of old had been allowed to punish Israel. Apocalyptic imagery coupled with the preaching of reform carries the same message that Jonah brought to the Ninevites: If the preaching is obeyed, it is just possible that the prophesied disasters will be averted.

But there is another dimension to Hildegard's apocalyptic. Like all prophets she was deeply concerned with history, and in both the *Scivias* and the *Liber divinorum operum* she surveyed the course of salvation history from beginning to end, from the creation to the final judgment.[35] In order to understand the present it was necessary to consider the past—the successive dispensations of grace before the birth of Christ—as well as the future, in which his work of salvation would at last be fulfilled. Hildegard's vision of the end, as set forth in *Scivias* III.11–12, entails a grim succession of evils that must come to pass before the judgment. As elaborated in the *Liber divinorum operum*, however, her scenario for the last times represents neither a gradual improvement nor a progressive deterioration in the state of the world. On the contrary, history is now seen as "one thing after another": ages of justice and injustice, each with its own deformations or reforms, would alternate until the coming of Antichrist. Hildegard did not presume to say when he would arrive, but she did frequently speak of her own era as an "effeminate age," which had succeeded the virginal epoch of paradise and the masculine epoch of the apostles and would in turn cede to still worse times. In one passage she even suggested that this effeminate age, signalled by the advent of feminine prophets, began around the time of her own birth.[36] But as a rule, the succession of periods is not dated even in the flexible and teasing manner that is typical of apocalyptic. Later generations could and did interpret the

prophecies as they pleased, inserting themselves into the sequence wherever they chose.[37]

The *Scivias*

The title *Scivias* is short for *Scito vias Domini*, or *Know the Ways of the Lord*. The firstfruits of Hildegard's prophetic labor, this book was ten years in the making (1141–51), and during her lifetime it remained the best-known of all her works. Pope Eugenius III's approval granted it an instant celebrity, which it has retained among modern cognoscenti in large part because of the splendid illuminations that adorn an early manuscript. The *Scivias* resulted directly from Hildegard's prophetic call and was addressed to a largely clerical and monastic audience, more specifically to indolent male theologians: "Unlock for them the enclosure of mysteries which they, timid as they are, conceal in a hidden and fruitless field. Burst forth into a fountain of abundance, and overflow with mystical knowledge, until they who now think you contemptible because of Eve's transgression are stirred up by the flood of your irrigation."[38] The visionary's gender is defiantly flaunted as a challenge to idle and "effeminate" clerics.

For modern readers the initial challenge of the *Scivias* lies in its distinctive style and structure. The text is divided into three books of unequal length, dealing respectively with the orders of creation, redemption and sanctification. The third book contains as many visions as the first two combined. Within each vision, or major structural unit, the organization is complex but uniform. Hildegard always begins with a simple and usually brief description of what she has seen; her visionary experience itself is taken for granted. Occasionally she is addressed by a divine voice or a figure within the vision. At the end of each vision proper, its interpretation is introduced by a formula: "And I heard a voice from heaven, saying . . ." From this point onward the initial vision becomes a "text" to be interpreted phrase by phrase, just as a traditional monastic commentator would gloss a text from Scripture. First the visual phenomena are interpreted allegorically; then more or less elaborate teaching follows, clarifying points of doctrine and morality that have been suggested by the vision.[39] Within each of these doctrinal units, scriptural passages are introduced as proof texts, and these in turn receive allegorical readings. The didactic and exegetical nature of the whole is signalled by the recurrent pedagogical questions, *Quid est hoc?* and *Quomodo?*—"What does this mean?" Finally each unit closes with an admonitory formula that remains constant for all the visions in a particular book, thus lending further structural unity.

The order of visions is carefully arranged to afford multiple perspec-

tives on the system of Christian doctrine. In the division into three books focusing on creation, redemption and sanctification, there is an allusion to the works of the Trinity. The first book explores connections between macrocosm and microcosm, things above and things below, the created world and the fallen world. In the second book, which is dominated by the figure of Ecclesia or Mother Church, Hildegard presents her teaching on the sacraments of redemption: baptism, confirmation, priesthood, penance and the eucharist. She apparently regarded monastic vows as a sacrament too, for they are treated at length. (Marriage, as a sacrament of the original creation, is discussed in Book I.)[40] Book III has a double structure, at once historical and moral. Most of the visions in this part develop the image of a complex allegorical building, the "edifice of salvation," which is upheld by divinity and inhabited by the Virtues. Hildegard's depiction of its walls, pillars and towers traces the successive ages of salvation history from creation through the last judgment, while her visions of the personified Virtues allow her to present a theology of the moral life. The two themes coalesce in the last vision, a symphony of praise for the inhabitants of heaven. Both history and moral struggle are here transcended and consummated.

Read as a visionary text the *Scivias* is unique; read as a compendium of Christian doctrine, it takes its place alongside many similar works of the period. The closest parallel is provided by Hugh of St. Victor's summa, *On the Sacraments of the Christian Faith*, written only a decade before (c. 1134; Hugh died in the year Hildegard began to write).[41] As an early scholastic who was also a noted teacher of contemplation, Hugh bridged the gap between the older monastic theology represented by Hildegard and the newer, more systematic mentality of the schools. In his summa the Victorine theologian used the method of scholastic argument rather than inspired visions, and he claimed only human authority. But a comparison of his table of contents with Hildegard's will show the essential similarity of matter (see below), if not of manner, between the two contemporary works. The twenty-six *Scivias* visions treat subjects closely akin to Hugh's thirty sections. Of the topics covered by Hugh, Hildegard omits only philosophical subjects like causality, predestination and natural law, along with certain "priestly" matters like vestments, masses for the dead and ceremonials for the dedication of a church. On the other hand, she includes an extensive treatment of the virtues, which Hugh omits. If Hildegard had been a male theologian, her *Scivias* would undoubtedly have been considered one of the most important early medieval summas.

The fact of visionary inspiration, of course, gives her work a tone and style quite unlike Hugh's. Where he argues, she asserts; where he speaks in his own person, she speaks *in persona Dei.* Her untutored Latin is often difficult and idiosyncratic, despite the fact that she had Volmar as a copy

INTRODUCTION

On the Sacraments of the Christian Faith by Hugh of St. Victor

Book I [On the Creator and the Dispensation of the Law]

1. On the six days of creation
2. On the primordial causes
3. On the Trinity
4. On the will of God and its signs
5. On the creation of the angels, and on free will
6. On the creation of man
7. On the fall of the first man
8. On the restoration of man
9. On the institution of the sacraments
10. On faith
11. On the natural law
12. On the written law (the Ten Commandments)

Book II [On the Redeemer and the Dispensation of Grace]

1. On the incarnation of the Word
2. On the church and its orders, and on the secular power
3. On the spiritual power, or the ranks of clergy
4. On sacred garments
5. On the dedication of a church
6. On the sacrament of baptism
7. On confirmation
8. On the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ
9. On sacramentals
10. On simony
11. On the sacrament of marriage
12. On vows
13. On vices and evil works
14. On confession
15. On the anointing of the sick
16. On death, hell, and prayers for the dead
17. On the end of the world
18. On the renewing of the world

editor to correct her mistakes in grammar. Occasionally she uses picturesque technical terms of her own devising; for instance, one of her standard phrases for *monk* is *vivens odor vovens iter secretae regenerationis* ("a living fragrance vowing the way of secret regeneration"). A *priest* is a *pigmentarius*, or "perfumer," perhaps with reference to the aromatic chrism of his anointing, and *viriditas* (literally, "the color green") means not only verdure or foliage, but all natural and spiritual life as quickened by the Holy Spirit.

The *Scivias*, then, can be approached from many angles: It is a prophetic proclamation, a book of allegorical visions, an exegetical study, a theological summa. Finally, it may be considered as a multimedia work in which the arts of illumination, music and drama contribute their several beauties to enhance the text and heighten the visionary message.[42] The earliest manuscript to survive until modern times was prepared around 1165 in the Rupertsberg scriptorium and illuminated with thirty-five remarkable miniatures. These paintings were produced at great expense, using costly gold and silver leaf as well as colors, and they are iconographically unique.[43] In style, too, they diverge from contemporary manuscript illumination as strikingly as Hildegard's Latin differs from that of a rhetorically trained twelfth-century humanist. Recent literature has presented the abbess herself as painter, but there is no medieval evidence to support this hypothesis, and if it were true both Hildegard and her biographers would surely have mentioned such a notable achievement. Given the peculiarities of the work, however, it seems likely that the artist (or artists) lacked formal training and worked under the visionary's personal supervision. The painter may have been a gifted Rupertsberg nun, or perhaps a monk from St. Disibod or another monastery closely associated with Hildegard.

Whoever the artist, he or she stayed close to the text of the visions and apparently eschewed the use of models, recombining iconographic motifs in new forms as creatively as Hildegard re-envisioned the familiar themes of Christian doctrine. The paintings are thus far more than illustrations; insofar as possible, they draw the viewer into the numinous world of the visionary's own experience. In this respect they resemble the didactic and meditative diagrams sprinkled through the works of Hugh of St. Victor.[44] The originality of these miniatures becomes even clearer when they are compared with illustrated Hildegard manuscripts prepared outside the Rupertsberg, such as the Heidelberg *Scivias* and the Lucca manuscript of the *Liber divinorum operum*.[45]

Unfortunately the famed Rupertsberg *Scivias* vanished in the bombing of Dresden and has not been seen since 1945. But a photocopy had been providentially made in 1927, and the twentieth-century nuns of Eibingen devoted seven years to the preparation of a hand-copied and hand-painted facsimile on parchment. This manuscript (1927–33), with miniatures painted

by Dame Josepha Knips, is today our only surviving source for the original colors. Although the black-and-white copies reproduced in this volume do not convey the beauty of the originals, they may serve the reader as points of orientation when details of the text are difficult to visualize. Readers must be wary, however; although the correspondence between text and miniature is close, it is not exact, and discrepancies should be noted.

In the last *Scivias* vision Hildegard introduced music to end her work in a triumphant chorus of praise. We know from epistolary evidence that she was already celebrated for her lyrics as early as 1148 and as far away as Paris.[46] The fourteen pieces included in *Scivias* III.13, which were later incorporated in her *Symphonia*, comprise seven antiphons and seven responsories in honor of the Virgin Mary, the angels and the hierarchy of heaven. Although the *Scivias* manuscripts do not supply musical notation, Hildegard's melodies have come down to us in the two extant *Symphonia* manuscripts, and several of these pieces are now available on record.[47] In Hildegard's lifetime they were undoubtedly sung by the Rupertsberg nuns as part of the Divine Office.

Following the songs is a short play, which brings the reader from heaven back to earth, from the Church Triumphant to the Church Militant. It presents the struggle of a soul tempted by the enemy but rescued and strengthened by a choir of Virtues, until it finally attains salvation and sees the devil bound. In this short form the play admirably summarizes the themes of Book III. It was probably not long afterward that Hildegard expanded it into the longer version known as the *Ordo virtutum* and composed its melodies, if indeed she had not already done so.[48] This liturgical drama (also available on record) antedates other known morality plays by about a century and a half.[49] Unlike other moralities, it is set entirely to music, with the exception of the devil's speeches; as the spirit opposed to all harmony, he is incapable of song. While later morality plays, composed in the vernacular, aimed at wide popular appeal and often included humor, Hildegard's Latin drama is thoroughly monastic and aristocratic in character.[50] Its performance at the Rupertsberg may have coincided with the dedication of the nuns' new church in 1152, a year after the *Scivias* was completed.

Synopsis of the Visions

Because of the length of this volume it has unfortunately been impossible to provide detailed annotation. Hence the reader may find it helpful to use these capsule summaries as a *vade mecum* alongside the translation. The synopsis provided below highlights the salient features of symbolism, iconography and doctrine presented by each vision and its accompanying min-

iatures. It may be read either as an overview of the *Scivias* or as an introduction to the individual sections.

Book One: The Creator and Creation

1. *The mountain of God.* Hildegard sees the Lord of the universe enthroned as "angel of great counsel" on an iron-colored mountain, which represents the eternity of his kingdom. The commentary highlights divine majesty vis-à-vis mortal humility, for the two Virtues irradiated by the glory of God are Fear of the Lord and Poverty of Spirit—both images of the seer's own state of mind as she confronts this awesome vision. One Virtue represents the beginning of wisdom, and the other, the first beatitude. Like Isaiah in his vision of the Temple (Is 6:1–8), Hildegard is called and sent by the Lord to proclaim his justice. She is then granted insight into the mystery of human intentions as God sees and judges them.

2. *Creation and the fall.* In highly compressed and allegorical form this vision depicts the fall of Lucifer and his angels (represented as "living lamps" or stars) and the subsequent fall of Adam and Eve. The iconography is unusual and full of arcane significance. Eve, for instance, appears as a shining cloud full of stars because she is the "mother of all living," and her unborn children are meant to replace the fallen angels. Hildegard's commentary on the Genesis narrative largely exonerates Eve and lays the greatest burden of blame on Satan, breaking with the usual tendency to interpret this text in a misogynist vein.[51]

Representation of the first human couple serves as a vehicle for teachings on sexuality and marriage. Hildegard's message here is in complete conformity with mainstream Catholic doctrine. She teaches that marriage is good, but virginity is better; divorce, adultery and fornication are wrong; consanguinity is a bar to marriage; procreation is a natural process designed by God but tainted by original sin; and sexual relations are permissible only when both partners are fertile. In the relations between man and woman she affirms male supremacy yet stresses mutuality, even to the point of misquoting 1 Corinthians 11:9. Where Paul said "Man was not created for woman, but woman for man," Hildegard states that "woman was created for the sake of man, and man for the sake of woman." She adds that there is no reason why a menstruating woman should not attend church, although a bride who has just lost her virginity and a man who has been wounded in battle should abstain.

The vision ends on a note of reassurance. Although Adam and Eve were cast out of paradise, the sinless Redeemer delivered them by means of chastity, humility, charity and other virtues. Likewise, human disobedience

caused the whole creation to rebel, destroying its original harmony, yet God preserved paradise inviolate as a sign of great mercy to come.

3. *The cosmos.* This vision of the cosmic egg, depicted in loving detail by the miniaturist, represents the universe as a symbolic, layered structure in which God sustains powerfully contesting forces in a delicate balance. Moving from the outermost layer inward, Hildegard sees zones of luminous and shadowy fire, representing divine purification and judgment; pure ether, which signifies faith; a watery layer for baptism; and finally the globe made up of four elements. Each of the heavenly bodies also has its allegorical meaning: the solar disk is Christ, sun of justice; the moon is the church, which reflects his light; stars are the works of piety; and so forth. Surprisingly, Hildegard does not develop the creation and birth mythology that the egg shape may suggest to readers; rather, she represents this form—"small at the top, large in the middle and narrowed at the bottom"—as symbolizing the stages of human history. The rest of the allegory also focuses on the mysteries of the incarnation and the church, in keeping with the overall theme of the *Scivias*.

In the *Liber divinorum operum* I.2 Hildegard presents an alternative vision of the universe in the form of a sphere. Her interpretation there correlates its proportions with those of the human body, since a major theme of that book is the correspondence of macrocosm and microcosm. To explain the discrepancies between her two visions she remarks that the egg shape better demonstrates the distinction between the various elements, while the sphere more accurately represents the measurements of the cosmos.[52]

The vision concludes with a long polemic against astrology, magic and divination. The seer argues that heavenly bodies are the servants of God and have no power in themselves for good or evil; people who scrutinize the stars to learn their fate are guilty of pride and fall prey to the devil's seductions. It is difficult to reconcile this polemic with the deterministic lunar astrology set forth in *Causes and Cures*.[53]

4. *Soul and body.* In this three-part vision Hildegard begins with a powerful myth, continues with teaching on human nature and psychology, and closes with a series of moral exhortations. The vision must have been a favorite with the artist, who illustrated it with three separate paintings.

The structure is unusual in that a lengthy myth precedes interpretation of the vision proper. Hildegard introduces a lonely pilgrim soul wandering in the "tabernacle" of her body and lamenting because she has lost her mother, the heavenly Zion. The soul's poignant lament recalls the lamentations of Israel in the wilderness, seeking the promised land and the new tabernacle in

which God dwelt. Attentive readers will hear echoes of Job, Jeremiah and other biblical sufferers. There is also a strong Platonic coloring, for the soul grieves that it is oppressed by the sinful and burdensome flesh; the mother-daughter dynamics may even suggest Demeter and Kore, with the devil cast in the role of Pluto. The myth is illustrated in the right-hand column of the first miniature, reading from bottom to top; here the artist has depicted the soul led captive by demons, tortured on the rack, assaulted by savage beasts, hiding in a cave, scaling a mountain and, at last, given wings to soar up to its heavenly tabernacle, where the devil continues to attack it in vain. This vividly realized *psychomachia* is akin to the *Ordo virtutum*.

The heavenly voice next explains the vision itself, which represents the infusion of the soul into the embryo in its mother's womb. Conception and pregnancy are described by means of the ancient folk analogy of milk curdling into cheese; the quality of the milk or semen determines the strong, weak or bitter character of the product. This vision is illustrated in the left side of the miniature, which shows men and women—the ancestors of the unborn child—carrying bowls of cheese, into which a devil insinuates corruption. There follows a discussion of the natural powers of soul and body: the intellect or moral judgment, the will, the reason and the senses. Soul and body are meant to cooperate harmoniously; the body is not inherently evil, but through the devil's temptations it is a continual source of tribulation to the soul.[54] The second miniature portrays a Christian kneeling in prayer to receive strength against demonic attack.

In a third painting angels and demons struggle for possession of the soul as it passes from the dying person's mouth. This image of the four last things (death and judgment, heaven and hell) corresponds to Hildegard's classic teaching on the Two Ways. Every soul must choose between the sacred East, where the sun of justice rises, and the bitter North, where Satan rules his realm of darkness and cold (Is 14:12–15).

5. *The synagogue.* This brief vision personifies the people of the covenant in the form of a woman, Synagoga, who is the "mother of the incarnation" and thus the mother-in-law of the church. Hildegard is adapting a traditional iconography, which depicted the two women as rivals—Synagoga rejected and blinded because of her unbelief and supplanted in God's favor by Ecclesia, or the Gentile church.[55] The stereotype of the Jews as a literal, carnal people is present in force. But the "true believers" in Israel—Abraham, Moses and the prophets—enjoy a privileged status and are allowed to admire the new bride's beauty from afar. Like many of the figures in Hildegard's visions, Synagoga can be "read" vertically from head to feet as an allegory of successive historical periods. In the end, the seer teaches, the Jews will be converted and "run back with great haste to the way of salva-

tion." This commonplace view, derived from Romans 11, was shared by Bernard of Clairvaux, Honorius and many other contemporaries.

6. *The choirs of angels.* The nine choirs of angels were conventionally ranked, in ascending order, as angels, archangels, virtues, powers, principalities, dominations, thrones, cherubim and seraphim, and arrayed in three clusters of three. Hildegard's text supplies an alternative division into two, five and two so that her nine choirs can provide analogues for human nature. Angels and archangels signify body and soul, the cherubim and seraphim, as always, symbolize the knowledge and love of God, and the five middle orders represent the five senses. Further allegorical details pertain to the incarnation and the life of virtue. From Pseudo-Dionysius Hildegard takes the notion that the celestial hierarchy above mirrors the ecclesiastical hierarchy below. Her vision of the choirs as "armies arrayed like a crown" inspires the artist's brilliant mandala-like image of nine concentric circles ranged about a void to signify the ineffable Presence.[56]

The reason for placing the synagogue and the angels in this section of the *Scivias* is not immediately apparent. But Hildegard may have meant to show that while the synagogue prefigures the work of salvation and the angels assist in it, true redemption could not be accomplished until the advent of Christ and the church—the subject of Book II.

Book Two: The Redeemer and Redemption

1. *The Redeemer.* This initial vision recapitulates important themes of Book I—Hildegard's prophetic call, the creation and the fall of man—but the emphasis has now shifted to the Second Person of the Trinity. Vision I.2 focused on Satan and Eve; this vision concentrates on Christ and Adam. Hildegard first sees an unquenchable fire that is "wholly living and wholly Life," with a sky-blue flame to represent the eternity of the Word. After creating the first human being, the triune God offers him "the sweet precept of obedience" in the shape of a fragrant flower, but Adam fails to pluck it and thereby falls into thick darkness. The forbidden fruit of Genesis is here transmogrified into a blossom that the man is *supposed* to pluck, so that his sin becomes one of omission; thus obedience is seen as a positive good and evil as a privation. This revisionist view expresses Hildegard's idea that the "knowledge of good and evil" is God's gift to humanity rather than the devil's temptation.

Redemption proceeds in gradual stages. First the night of sin is illumined by the shining stars of the patriarchs, then by the prophets, culminating in John the Baptist; finally Christ appears as the radiance of dawn. By his passion and resurrection he delivers Adam, whose fate is contrasted with that

of the unrepentant Satan. In the miniature Adam is represented three times: as the creature fashioned from mud (*adamah* = "red earth"); as the young man who withholds his hand from the flower; and as the old man who has fallen into darkness and "returned to his earth." The artist's vision diverges significantly from the text. He or she has added a central medallion to represent the six days of creation, and the unity of Creator and Redeemer is brilliantly figured in symmetrical spheres of light at the top and bottom of the miniature. A "finger of God" stretches downward from the light to awaken the newly created Adam, while the radiance of the risen Christ flames upward to redeem the fallen Adam.[57]

2. *The Trinity.* Somewhat illogically, this vision of the triune God follows that of the Redeemer, perhaps because the Trinity was first revealed to humankind through the incarnation. Father, Son and Holy Spirit are signified by a radiant light, a sapphire-hued figure and a glowing fire; the exposition stresses the unity and inseparability of the Persons. Hildegard then introduces three similitudes from created things: a stone with its dampness, solidity and kindling power; a flame with its light, heat and color; and a word with its sound, breath and meaning. The analogies of the flame and the word are ancient, but they are developed here in original fashion. It is noteworthy that none of these analogues is gender-specific, and the naming of Father and Son is balanced by a reference to "the embrace of God's maternal love," which is charity.

From the rather abstract language of Hildegard's text the artist has conceived another mandala-image. "Light" and "fire" become concentric circles glimmering with gold and silver leaf, and quivering lines suggest the vitality and energy of the living God.[58]

3. *The church, bride of Christ and mother of the faithful.* This is the first of four visions that center around the figure of Ecclesia and the sacraments. Baptism, the sacrament of her maternity, is represented in striking imagery faithfully reproduced by the artist. Reading the miniature from top to bottom and from right to left, the four panels illustrate successive moments of Hildegard's vision. (a) Ecclesia, the bride of Christ, lovingly embraces his altar. (b) She prepares to give birth to God's children; festive angels prepare their places in heaven. (c) Baptism. Two ancient images, the womb of Mother Church and the net of Peter, are conflated here. Converts or catechumens, represented as "black children," race to enter their mother's womb to be reborn; she gives birth "through her mouth," that is, through the words of blessing and the breath of the Spirit. The luminous disk, familiar from the previous visions, represents invocation of the Trinity. As the newly baptized Christians emerge, they shed their dark skins and are clothed in the "pure

white garments" of initiation. (d) Christ instructs the newly baptized in the Two Ways of sin and justice.

The teaching in this vision emphasizes the majestic and mysterious powers granted to the church as well as the grace of baptism. The church will never be conquered by hell; her secrets transcend comprehension; her crown is the teaching of the apostles, and her heart, the virginity of Mary. Following patristic doctrine Hildegard uses the symbol of Ecclesia's virginity to accentuate her pure faith, inviolate in the face of heresy and schism. But in her capacity as mother, Ecclesia grieves over the sins and rebellions of her children.

Baptism, Hildegard teaches, is analogous to circumcision under the old covenant, but is accessible to people of both sexes and all ages. It opens the kingdom of heaven to believers and remits the sin of Adam. Several brands of Donatism are rejected in passing; for example, baptism does not depend on the holiness of the priest, but on the invocation of the Trinity; infant baptism is acceptable to God; a layman may baptize in case of emergency. The symbolism of rebirth inspires an interesting digression on literal birth, which includes a surprising analogy between a man's motives in procreation and God's motives in creation. But the superior excellence of virginity is reiterated.

4. *Confirmation.* After the faithful are cleansed in baptism, they must receive the Holy Spirit through the sacrament of anointing with holy oil, which is reserved to the bishop. The vision depicts the power of the Spirit as a lofty tower that upholds and strengthens the woman Ecclesia. Her children appear in varying guises to indicate their spiritual and ecclesiastical status; thus, contemplatives are distinguished from lay Christians by the more glorious light on which they fix their gaze. But in each category some are more zealous in devotion, others more vigorous in justice. Hildegard teaches that while the sacraments are necessary for salvation, they are not sufficient; they must be accompanied by repentance and good works.

5. *Three orders in the church.* Ecclesia appears in her glory, clothed in radiant light of many colors: crystal clarity to signify the priesthood, the rosy glow of dawn for virginity, purple for monastic imitation of Christ's passion, and cloudy brightness for the secular life. This vision strongly affirms the principle of hierarchy in the church: spiritual people are to secular as day is to night, and monks rank as high above clergy as archangels do above angels. It is permissible to move from a lower order into a higher, but not to descend from a higher to a lower.

Hildegard treats the priesthood briefly, stressing clerical celibacy and commending the life of regular canons. Her vision of virginity is more

lyrical, characterized by imagery of music, flowers and feminine beauty. Virgins, she says, imitate the example of Christ and John the Baptist; they alone are entitled to sing the new song in paradise [Rv 14:3–4]; they go beyond the letter of the Law to fulfill the counsels of perfection. On the subject of monasticism Hildegard addresses several points of contemporary controversy. Although monks rank higher than priests, they may be ordained and preach if the church has need of them. Since God considers the intention rather than the outward habit of the monk, children should not be offered as oblates without their consent. Renegade monks, on the other hand, must be brought back to the monasteries they have fled. Married couples cannot separate to take monastic vows unless both partners consent.

Although Hildegard's position on oblates and her emphasis on intention are in keeping with the spirit of twelfth-century monastic reform, she expresses a highly critical view of new orders. Praising St. Benedict as a "second Moses," she inveighs against diversity, novelty and singularity and proclaims that God will judge innovators. The faithful monk ought to be "humble and content with what his predecessors instituted for him." This kind of humility is equivalent to conservatism; in her view innovation can spring only from pride.

The last part of the vision elaborates on the unforgivable sin of "blasphemy against the Holy Spirit," which Hildegard defines as despair of God's mercy in the form of either final impenitence or suicide.

6. *Christ's sacrifice and the church.* This vision, by far the longest in the *Scivias*, deals with subjects of burning interest to twelfth-century theologians: the nature of the eucharist and of the priesthood. In the vision proper Hildegard draws on a patristic typology that enjoyed wide diffusion in medieval art. The crucifixion is represented as the wedding of Christ and the church: As Christ hangs on the cross his predestined bride, Ecclesia, descends from heaven and is united with him, receiving his body and blood as her dowry. Whenever Mass is celebrated, Ecclesia, as heavenly archetype of the celebrant, devoutly offers this dowry to the Father and renews her marriage union with the Son.

The numerous doctrinal points in this section can be grouped under six headings: eucharistic theology, liturgical practice, communion, requirements for the priesthood, sexual ethics and penance. Under the first heading Hildegard offers a commentary on the Mass, focusing particularly on the consecration of the gifts. Although she does not use the word *transubstantiation* and its related Aristotelian vocabulary, her teaching is in essence identical with the doctrine later defined by Fourth Lateran and elaborated by Thomas Aquinas. A surprising emphasis falls on the role of the Virgin Birth. The Virgin Annunciate becomes a model for priests, who bring Christ's body

into the world by uttering the words of consecration just as Mary did by uttering her *fiat;* and the wheat of the eucharistic bread is made to symbolize the purity of Christ's virginal flesh. Since original sin is transmitted through the taint of lust, the Redeemer's body and blood must be free from every hint of sexuality in order to cleanse the sinful flesh of mortals.

After treating various points of ritual—fasting before communion, reception in both kinds, the use of traditional words and vestments—Hildegard presents a typology of communicants. The second miniature for this vision illustrates the five types: faithful believers, doubters, the unchaste and lustful, the malicious and envious, the warlike and oppressive. According to the quality of their faith and repentance, Christians may communicate either unto salvation or unto judgment.

In the section on priesthood Hildegard condemns simony (the purchase and sale of ecclesiastical office) and pluralism (the holding of multiple benefices by a single cleric). She also reiterates traditional criteria for the priesthood: a candidate must be adult, male and sound in body. (Women, she says, are "an infirm and weak habitation appointed to bear children," but as virgins they can possess the priesthood vicariously through their bridegroom, Christ.) The bulk of this section is devoted to clerical celibacy. Priests must have no wife except for the church and the justice of God; a married priest is an adulterer and serves the devil. Hildegard answers the objection that priests were married in apostolic times by arguing that God formerly permitted this aberration "because there were so few priests," just as he permitted the patriarchs to marry their female kin because there were so few people. "But now the church is adult and strong, and her ministers are many," so a higher standard of celibacy can be enforced.

The polemic against clerical marriage leads into a long catalogue of sexual sins: cross-dressing, fornication, homosexuality, "unnatural" intercourse, masturbation, bestiality and "nocturnal pollution." This list of prohibitions in turn raises the subject of confession and penance, which is treated more briefly. Confession resurrects sinners from death; it may be heard by a layman in case of emergency; and it is strengthened by almsgiving—especially if the recipients are among the "deserving poor." Hildegard urges priests to use their power of binding and loosing effectively and condemns those who abuse this authority through anger or negligence.

7. *The devil.* Hildegard's placement of this vision is pivotal. The threat of satanic temptation ends this book as the promise of angelic assistance ended Book I, but the vision of the devil bound anticipates the dramatic victory that closes Book III.

The hideous multicolored "worm" or dragon symbolizes the many

kinds of vice and temptation with which the Evil One assaults people. As in Hildegard's previous visions of the church, Christians are divided into categories according to their degrees of faith and justice. Satan assails the "spiritual people" (priests and monastics) in one manner, the secular people in another, while heretics are represented as wholly in his power. Some features of the heresy Hildegard attacks suggest the Cathars; for example, they revile the sacraments and the clergy, feign Catholicism out of fear and lay claim to a pretended sanctity. Other accusations, for instance of devil-worship and obscene sacrifices of human seed, are ancient slanders earlier hurled at Christians and gnostics of the subapostolic age. Satan's power appears to be formidable, even though he is bound firmly by a chain and in the end the saints trample on him.

An interesting feature of the vision is the image of Vanity Fair, possibly inspired by Revelation 13:17 and 18:11–17. This scene is illustrated in the lower panel of the second miniature, where the artist has depicted the sinister merchants in the hats worn by medieval Jews.

Book Three: The Virtues and the History of Salvation

1. *God, Lucifer and humanity.* This vision at first recapitulates I.1: Hildegard sees a figure of God enthroned in majesty and her calling is reaffirmed. The poignant novelty here is an image of newly created humanity: God "held to his breast what looked like black and filthy mire, as big as a human heart, surrounded with precious stones and pearls." The operative theological idea is an old, half-mythical opinion that humanity was created to replace a "tenth choir" of angels who fell with Lucifer. An eloquent miniature represents Hildegard's vision of these angels as shooting stars that are gradually extinguished as they fall, until only cinders remain. But their departing light is not quenched; it returns to the bosom of God, and since Satan fell "without an heir," God treasures his inheritance of light for a new creation. Unlike the angels, human beings are then fashioned with a "vile earthly nature" to preserve them from pride and consequent ruin.

The vision thus supplies one possible answer to a question that must arise among all theists who denigrate the body, namely, why a good God should have created such a "miserable form" in the first place. Despite the wretchedness of human nature, however, the Son of God has assumed it in the incarnation, so that no angel dares to despise it. Moreover, the filthy mire is held firmly to God's heart and adorned with the gems and pearls of sanctity. The vision is meant to inspire humility and gratitude as well as fear of God's justice; the commentary stresses that unlike the fallen angels, human beings can and therefore must repent of their misdeeds.

2. *The edifice of salvation.* This vision sets forth a blueprint of the symbolic building that will be expounded in detail through the remainder of the book. The miniature provides an indispensable diagram, although it depicts a square building where Hildegard describes a rectangular one. Built on the mountain of God, grounded in faith and fear of the Lord, the city or edifice of salvation has a double symbolism representing, on the one hand, the course of salvation history, and on the other, the doctrines and virtues every Christian must believe and acquire to be saved.

The most important wall links the East (represented on top, as is usual in medieval maps) with the North (shown to the left). In the East lies the figurative realm of Christ, in the North that of Satan, and the luminous wall between the two therefore signifies *speculativa scientia,* or the knowledge of good and evil. This is not "speculative knowledge" in the sense of abstract thought, but "reflective knowledge" in the sense of moral judgment (the adjective is from *speculum*, a mirror); this faculty is the cognitive aspect of free will.[59] The remaining three walls are of masonry, which has several meanings: the joined stones denote human flesh and its labors, the Law and the works of justice. Thus moral knowledge must be conjoined with right action for the upbuilding of salvation.

Hildegard gives two interpretations for the points of the compass. In one reading, East and West signify the dawn of salvation and the sunset of the Law, while North and South represent the fall and restoration of Adam. Alternatively, the diagram may be read counterclockwise beginning at the right. The four cornerstones are successive covenants between God and humanity: At the South stands Adam, at the East Noah (the dawn of justice), at the North Abraham and Moses as representatives of the Law (the beginning of war against Satan), and at the West Christ (the revelation of the Trinity).[60] The proportions of the building also receive numerological meanings.

This vision assigns further theological value to the despised body. Again human beings are contrasted with angels: The latter are purer and more luminous, but humans are more valiant and meritorious soldiers of God because they have to do battle against their own nature. In ascetic struggle "they conquer themselves, chastising their bodies, and so know themselves to be in [God's] army."

3. *The tower of anticipation of God's will.* From now on the exploration of the building proceeds counterclockwise, beginning with the northeast wall. Hildegard first examines the "tower of anticipation" of God's perfect will, which was manifested in the incarnation and first prefigured in the Abrahamic covenant of circumcision.[61] Aside from foreshadowing baptism, this covenant is taken primarily as a sign of sexual discipline: The initial

"cutting off" of unchastity leads by stages to the perfect virginity of Christ and Mary.

Within each portion of the building Hildegard sees a group of feminine Virtues appropriate to that particular moment of salvation history. The Virtues occupy an important place in her theology; they are not exclusively human qualities but "brilliant stars given by God, which shine forth in human deeds." The Latin *virtus* means "energy" or "power" as well as "virtue," and Hildegard plays on both senses. In effect, a virtue is a divine quality that becomes an operative force in willing souls and fully incarnates itself in right action; it is a synthesis of grace and moral effort. As Hildegard puts it, the Virtues do not work of their own accord, but with the cooperation of the person who has received them from God. They appear in feminine form in keeping with a long tradition of virtue-vice allegory that goes back to Prudentius, but also because in Hildegard's symbolic theology the feminine represents the sphere of synergy in which divinity and humanity work together for salvation.

The first three Virtues in this tower represent the initial manifestations of the ascetic life: Celestial Love, Discipline and Modesty. There follow two christological Virtues: Mercy (associated with the Virgin Mary and Christ's birth) and Victory (connected with his conquest of Satan). Standing somewhat to the side are Patience, who imitates Christ's passion, and Longing, who clings to a crucifix. Hildegard's allegorical technique further characterizes the Virtues by assigning intricate symbolism to their iconography—colors, garments and attributes.[62] In addition, each Virtue utters a self-defining motto; similar formulas recur in the *Ordo virtutum* where they are set to music.

4. *The pillar of the Word of God.* Near the northern corner stands the pillar of the Word, signifying both the incarnate Word and the written word of Scripture. The latter has not two parts as one would expect, but three: Old Testament, New Testament and commentary, or "the profound and rich wisdom of the principal doctors." Such is the authority that Hildegard, in accord with monastic tradition, assigned to patristic exegesis. The first two sides of this triangular pillar display the saints of the old and new covenants: first, patriarchs and prophets, seen as precursors of Christ, and then apostles, martyrs and other Christian heroes. The third side, representing the exegetes, shows by its shape that wisdom arose from a small beginning, increased in the course of time, but will dwindle again in the last days. At the top of the pillar perches the dove of the Holy Spirit.

The Virtue in this vision is the Knowledge of God, more a divine than a human figure. More awesome in appearance than the other Virtues, she embodies the mystery of God's mercy and judgment in bringing sinners to

grace through the scourge of calamity. Illness and other chastisements may redeem sinners by making them physically incapable of their former vices, which otherwise they would never voluntarily leave. These reluctant Christians are the wedding guests whom Christ has "compelled to come in" (Lk 14:23).

5. *The jealousy of God.* "The Lord is a jealous God and avenging, the Lord is avenging and wrathful; . . . The Lord is slow to anger and of great might, and will by no means clear the guilty" (Na 1:2–3). This grim vision presents the vengeance of God against evil, symbolized by a wrathful crimson face and three silently beating wings. Naturally the head faces north, directing its vigilance against Satan and his kingdom.

In the face of God's jealousy no sin goes unpunished. If it is not avenged by voluntary penance it will exact its price either in earthly suffering or in the torments of purgatory or hell. Though vengeance may appear to strike without warning, God is always just, for human beings have been granted judgment to discern good from evil; ignorance of the Law is no excuse. Hildegard's ethical stance is one of uncompromising self-denial; the choice of good is associated with struggle and anxiety, and that of evil with self-will, desire and pleasure. Certain sins, such as desecration or robbery of a church, simony and withholding of tithes, are singled out as special objects of God's vengeance because they defile the honor of his house.

6. *The stone wall of the old Law.* The northwest wall of the building signifies the Old Testament Law, the period of history between Abraham and Christ, and the political order. Most of the commentary in this vision asserts and defends the principles on which Christian feudal society was based.

The human race, Hildegard maintains, is divided into two unequal orders, the spiritual and the secular, and each of these classes has its proper hierarchy. Among the secular people there are the higher and lower nobility, free men and women and serfs; among the spiritual there are "the excellent and the superior, the obeyers and the enforcers." Hildegard has no doubt that these distinctions were ordained by providence; they "were and are and always will be." Two ideological justifications for hierarchy are set forth: (a) it prevents anarchy, because without rulers people would "kill each other off and perish"; and (b) it teaches by the example of earthly authority how divine authority should be loved and feared. Though the spiritual power is more exalted than the secular, princes as well as prelates represent God's justice and mercy. The "greater" deserve to rule the "lesser" because God has chosen them for their superior abilities—intelligence, integrity, eloquence —just as he chose Jacob to rule over Esau. But usurpation of power, whether

through bribery or simony, violence or black magic, is harshly condemned —despite the same Jacob's example! Subjects ought of course to be obedient; if they suffer persecution from rulers, they can imitate Christ's passion.

Eight Virtues inhabit this section of the building. The first group consists of Abstinence, Liberality and Piety: self-denial is the prerequisite for generosity toward God and neighbor. In the second group Truth, Peace and Beatitude appear, representing three stages in the victory over evil. Slightly apart stand two Virtues embodying God's temporal and eternal gifts: Discretion, associated with secular justice, and Salvation of Souls. The latter manifests herself in two phases: In her "Jewish" period she has a swarthy complexion, dark curls and a multicolored tunic, but after Christ's birth she takes on a luminous white aspect, stripping off all "diversity."

7. *The pillar of the Trinity.* In *Scivias* II.2 Hildegard presented the Trinity as an eternal living reality. Her focus in this vision is on the Trinity as a saving doctrine revealed by Christ at a particular moment of history. Hence the pillar appears at the west corner of the building, symbolizing the prophetic "end of the ages." It is triangular, like the pillar of the Word (III.4), and its three edges are sharp swords cutting off all infidels: heretics, Jews and pagans, symbolized respectively by chaff, broken wings and rotten wood. Hildegard adds a lengthy parable, which she then interprets as an allegory of the apostles' preaching, and supplies some rather cloudy similitudes for the Trinity. As if to defend their obscurity, she stresses that this divine mystery must be humbly accepted and not presumptuously scrutinized.

8. *The pillar of the Savior's humanity.* This important vision depicts the incarnation as the primary locus of the Virtues, that is, the context in which humanity is enabled to collaborate with God. The pillar closely resembles Jacob's ladder, but in place of the angels seen by the patriarch, Hildegard perceives "all the virtues of God ascending and descending." Her imagery is indebted to that of an earlier visionary, Hermas (third century), who in *The Shepherd* had described a host of celestial maidens in the guise of stonemasons working to build up the church.[63] Hildegard's maidens also carry stones, representing "the winged and shining deeds people do . . . to win salvation." These Virtues descend to human beings through the humanity of Christ and return to heaven through his divinity.

The miniature shows the influence of a traditional pictorial motif, the ladder of salvation, whereby Christians climb up from earth to heaven on the rungs of virtue. Based on classic texts like the Benedictine Rule and John Climacus's *Ladder of Perfection*, the image was particularly favored by monks and nuns. Many representations of it show demons on either side of the

ladder, picking off unwary souls with their arrows;[64] Hildegard's image is more positive and depicts supportive Virtues in their place. At the top of the ladder stands the Grace of God, clothed as a bishop to admonish and exhort the faithful.

The seven principal Virtues (proceeding from top to bottom) are Humility, Charity, Fear of God and Obedience on the right, and Faith, Hope and Chastity on the left. Humility is the queen of Virtues, as in the *Ordo virtutum*, but Charity is the most important and has the longest speech. She wears the sapphire blue associated with the Word of God and is assimilated to him as Chastity is to the Virgin Mary. The latter is overshadowed by the dove of the Holy Spirit and appears pregnant with a child named Innocence. In several places the text echoes earlier visions: for example, Fear of the Lord first appeared in I.1, and Hope with her crucifix is very similar to Longing in III.3.

A more perplexing cross-reference points back to I.4, for Hildegard observes that the pillar of the Savior's humanity stands "in the same place" as the radiant diamond-shaped figure she had earlier seen. But that figure was independent of the allegorical building, so Hildegard must be implying that a consistent "inner geometry" persists through all her visions. In both contexts the figure in question signifies the incarnation, but in I.4 Hildegard was discussing the means by which every soul enters its body when it is formed in the womb, while here she stresses the uniqueness of Christ's birth from the Virgin.

The central teaching of the vision concerns synergy, or cooperation with God. Hildegard teaches that God's grace will not forsake even the most hardened sinner, but it is not irresistible; the human will always retains the freedom to choose or reject salvation. To the sinner grace brings first self-knowledge, then repentance, finally hope and amendment of life. The discourse of this Virtue should be compared with earlier teaching on the Knowledge and the Jealousy of God. In a lengthy digression Hildegard draws an analogy between the seven Virtues and the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit resting on Christ [Is 11:2], thus reinforcing the centrality of the God-man.

9. *The tower of the church.* This tower stands at the southern corner of the building and represents the whole history of the church; it is therefore unfinished. But somewhat inconsistently, the seven turrets at its summit, standing for the gifts of the Holy Spirit, are already built. This detail clearly indicates how allegorical significance prevails over the logical coherence of the image. The motifs of the heavenly ladder and the cooperation of Virtues are continued from the previous vision.

Wisdom, God's feminine co-worker in creation, stands atop the "house of seven pillars" described in Proverbs 9:1. As the first of the cardinal virtues,

she precedes Justice, Fortitude and temperance. The last of the four, however, is given not her classical name but the more impressive title of Sanctity—an index of the importance Hildegard ascribed to sobriety and self-denial. Unique among the Virtues, Sanctity has three heads. Two are sexless, but the left one, labelled Self-Sacrifice, is significantly female.

Hildegard's doctrine of the church stresses the role of the apostles and doctors. The faithful, as always, are divided into various categories: some cherish and preserve their baptismal garment, others feel constrained by it but keep on struggling, while still others throw off the garment and return from the church into the world. Worst of all are the simoniacs with their filthy lucre. Continuing her polemic, Hildegard claims that they purchase offices "by means of [their] spiritual father, money—for in that transaction money becomes [their] bishop." But the attack on unjust authority is balanced once again by a call for obedience to the powers that be; they will perish horribly in God's judgment, but the time is not yet.

10. *The Son of Man.* This vision completes the circuit of the building, returning to the eastern corner where the Son of Man is seated on a throne beneath that of the Shining One (God the Father). He exhorts the people of God on self-knowledge, obedience and sexual discipline, reminding the married that coupling is only permissible out of desire for children, and the celibate that mere outer virginity does not suffice for their salvation. True continence is the gift of God and should not be promised hastily or presumptuously. A consecrated virgin should rely on divine strength alone and prepare for a lifetime of ascetic struggle.

Five more Virtues fill up the complement of the city. They are Constancy, Celestial Desire (symbolized by the thirsty hart of Psalm 41), Compunction, Contempt of the World (safely ensconced within the wheel of God's mercy) and Concord (winged like an angel because she prefigures the life of heaven). Christ appears in his human aspect in a rather understated form. Like Ecclesia, he is visible only from the navel upward because his lower parts represent ages of history yet to unfold. Some of these mysteries will be disclosed in the apocalyptic visions that follow.

11. *The last days and the fall of Antichrist.* This is the vision that won Hildegard her greatest celebrity as a prophet. Although she draws on earlier apocalyptic scenarios, notably that of the tenth-century monk Adso,[65] the seer adds powerful imagery of her own. Her three principal themes are (a) the "five ferocious epochs" to come; (b) the career of Antichrist; and (c) the rape and recovery of the church.

The upper left panel of the miniature depicts five beasts that symbolize future epochs of world history: a fiery dog, a yellow lion, a pale horse, a black

pig and a gray wolf. Each of these animals suggests the temperament of villainous rulers to come. In the *Liber divinorum operum*, vision III.10, the description of these eras is considerably expanded, and ages of justice and reformation are posited in between the ages of misrule. All the beasts appear in the North, since they belong to Satan's kingdom; but no term is set to their rule. Hildegard says only that the world is now in its seventh age, "approaching the end of time." This is a conventional view, however, which has nothing to do with her symbolism of the beasts. In the sixth age of the world Christ was incarnate, just as on the sixth day Adam was created. The seventh age is a "sabbath," which may be indefinitely prolonged. One apocalyptic sign, however, is the fact that Hildegard herself prophesies. God has called her because his duly appointed authorities now languish in idleness, and the world order is showing signs of decrepitude.

The approaching Antichrist is represented as a parodic inversion of Christ.[66] Born of a harlot who feigns that she is a virgin, he will be wholly possessed by the devil from his mother's womb and trained by her in the magical arts. Through preaching and false miracles, even the feigned resurrection of the dead, he will make many converts; finally he himself will simulate death and resurrection and promulgate his own scriptures. As Hildegard emphasizes Christ's virginity throughout the *Scivias*, she also stresses the Antichrist's lawless sexuality. Not only is he a child of fornication, but he himself will reject continence and all other forms of self-denial. For a time he will be opposed by the "two witnesses," Enoch and Elijah, whom God is reserving in heaven for the last times, but eventually they will suffer martyrdom for the faith.

The most daring part of the vision concerns the Antichrist's rape and bloody violation of the church, depicted in the lower panel of the miniature. Her private parts now become visible, with the monstrous head of the Antichrist appearing in place of her genitals, for he is both her son and her seducer. As Satan corrupted Eve, so will the son of perdition attempt to corrupt the virgin Ecclesia. But Christ's bride will emerge triumphant, though bruised, bloodied and in large part deceived by his wiles. After enduring persecution and martyrdom, she will be vindicated by her heavenly Bridegroom (upper right panel) and united to him in marriage. Scatology and eschatology merge as the Antichrist, self-exalted on a mountain of excrement, is struck down by a thunderbolt from on high.

12. *The last judgment, the new heaven and the new earth.* At an unspecified time after the fall of Antichrist, the last judgment with its terrors will come to pass and history will have ended. In Hildegard's vision there are no surprises in the judgment: Good and evil are plainly manifest in the forms of

the newly awakened dead. Sentence is passed on the reprobate without appeal, and unbelievers are not even allowed to stand trial, for they are damned in advance. The saints, on the other hand, receive bliss and glory from Christ, who comes in majesty on the clouds of heaven, yet with his wounds still open from the cross.

As the Son of Man sits in judgment, all creation is "shaken by dire convulsions" in which the elements are purged of mortality. Hildegard sees a "black skin" peeled away from them, recalling her image of the newly baptized in II.3. There follows a chillingly Platonic vision of permanence: In the new heaven sun, moon and stars will stand motionless, and on the new earth shall be fire without heat, air without density, a sea without waves. The vision ends on a note of everlasting stasis: "And so there was no night, but day. And it was finished."

13. *Symphony of praise.* This magnificent coda is not really a vision but a concert. The songs Hildegard records in this section do indeed, as she claims, marvelously summarize all the meanings she has presented before. In the first fourteen pieces she offers praise to the Virgin Mary, the choirs of angels and five categories of saints: prophets, apostles, martyrs, confessors and virgins. Each rank of the celestial hierarchy is honored with an antiphon and a responsory, although the liturgical genres of these pieces are not specified here as they are in the *Symphonia* manuscripts.

Heaven is not populated only with saints, but also with repentant sinners. The second part of this section is a lament and prayer of intercession for the fallen. In the final portion a penitent soul's pilgrimage to heaven (earlier presented mythically in I.4) is set forth in dramatic form. The soul slips from well-meaning innocence to impatience when she asks the Virtues for a "kiss of the heart," and they warn instead that she must do battle by their side. At this point the devil intervenes and easily leads her into sin. In contrast to later morality plays, Hildegard is not interested in dramatizing the soul's adventures in evil; instead she presents a verbal contest between the devil and the Virtues to fill the time until the soul's repentance. In the end the Virtues receive the weeping penitent, and led by their queen Humility and celestial Victory, they conquer and bind the devil.[67]

The play is followed by a brief commentary and a tribute to the power of music, anticipating the apologia Hildegard was to write at the end of her life. In liturgical song "words symbolize the body" and the humanity of Christ, she writes, "and the jubilant music indicates the spirit" and the Godhead. An allegorical reading of Psalm 150, in which the different instruments are made to symbolize the varieties of saints, leads into a final affirmation of the prophet's mission and brings the *Scivias* to a close.

INTRODUCTION

Hildegard's Place in the Tradition

Although Hildegard occupies a central place at the crossroads of twelfth-century culture, the question of "sources and influences" has always posed difficulties for students of her work. One reason for the problem has already been addressed: Hildegard's prophetic persona demanded that she present herself as a "simple and unlearned little woman," and her claim to direct visionary inspiration barred appeal to merely human authorities. Thus, although she was undoubtedly well-versed in theological and spiritual writers, she virtually never cited her sources in even the most conventional or formulaic way. In addition, her distinctive literary style makes it difficult to recognize quotations, except for the scriptural texts that she chose to gloss. Since the exegetical tradition in which she worked was both conservative and cumulative, any one of a dozen writers might be cited with equal plausibility as the source for a given doctrine or interpretation. Only in rare cases, such as the seer's debt to the *Shepherd* of Hermas in *Scivias* III.8, or to Adso's treatise *On the Antichrist* in III.11, can we point with confidence to an individual writer.

In general, the most pervasive influences in the *Scivias* are the Bible and its commentaries, the liturgy, the Benedictine Rule and the works of such widely read Church Fathers as Augustine, Jerome, Gregory the Great and Bede.[68] In all of these Hildegard's monastic heritage is evident. She was steeped in the Divine Office with its spirit of formal, communal praise; her idea of heaven (*Scivias* III.13) is a thoroughly Benedictine one, which emphasizes not the vision of God or the mystical union, but the unending liturgy of the saints. She was familiar with the moral as well as the exegetical works of the Fathers, particularly with their teachings on virginity. And if her knowledge of early Christian writings included a moderately obscure author like Hermas, it probably embraced a fair amount of apocryphal literature as well. Attempts to trace her reading in classical authors, including scientific writers, have remained highly conjectural.[69] Unfortunately we have no library catalogue for either the Rupertsberg or the monastery of St. Disibod; even if we had, a list of manuscripts would not take account of the rich oral tradition, so important even in the literate world of the monastery. Some of Hildegard's arcane lore about Adam and Eve, for instance, seems to come from Jewish tradition and may have been acquired firsthand,[70] and much of her medical knowledge was surely gained through oral transmission and experience.

Hildegard probably acquired her knowledge of the Church Fathers from florilegia and earlier medieval adaptations as well as original texts. Among late antique and Carolingian authors she would surely have known Isidore of Seville, Rabanus Maurus, Paschasius Radbertus and the hymnodist

Notker of St. Gall. The Neoplatonic tradition, which strongly colored her cosmology—accounting for affinities with more "avant-garde" authors like Bernard Silvestris and Alan of Lille—may have reached her through John Scotus Eriugena.[71] On the other hand, she might have known this author only indirectly through his twelfth-century popularizer, Honorius Augustodunensis. Among her contemporaries Hildegard stands closest to Honorius himself, a prolific author who apparently spent the latter part of his life in Regensburg,[72] and to Rupert of Deutz, a Benedictine who wrote numerous works of theology and exegesis.[73] We have already noted similarities between the *Scivias* and the work of Hugh of St. Victor. Other reformers, such as Gerhoch of Reichersberg and Godfrey of Admont, furnish useful points of comparison and contrast for Hildegard's ecclesiastical program.[74] And she was undoubtedly familiar with certain writings of Bernard of Clairvaux, the recipient of her first letter, although Cistercian spirituality had only a limited influence on her outlook. While she admired Bernard's personal holiness and shared the order's preoccupation with Caritas, or divine love, the physical and aesthetic austerities of the white monks were foreign to her. Her version of "bridal spirituality" is more indebted to traditional literature on virginity, such as the *Speculum virginum*,[75] than to Cistercian currents.

In sum, Hildegard's opus presents us with a synthesis of classical Benedictine theology, exegetics and spirituality as they stood in the mid-twelfth century, touched but not yet deeply permeated by the new modes of piety that were already changing the face of the church.[76] Yet conservative as she was, nothing she ever wrote can be mistaken for the work of another author. All is charged with the urgency of her prophetic mission, shaped by her powerfully original visionary and poetic gifts, and not least, colored subtly but pervasively by her feminine self-awareness. Hildegard's place in the tradition of women's spirituality is a complex question.[77] While that tradition may be theoretically helpful in understanding her life and work, we must remember that it was a hidden tradition that Hildegard herself did not know; any similarities between her spirituality and that of earlier female writers must result from common solutions to common problems, not conscious or even unconscious influence. With regard to later female writers the case is very different; there we must reckon with Hildegard herself as a significant role model.

Her community at Bingen, unlike the famous convent at Helfta a century later, never became a vital center of feminine spiritual culture. It may be that Hildegard's own presence was too overbearing, or her visionary gift too intimately bound up with her unique psychology and temperament, to inspire imitation. In any case, there was never a "school of Hildegard" as there was, so to speak, a "school of St. Bernard," of St.-Victor, or of Eckhart. Nevertheless the seer did have one unsought "disciple," her younger contemporary

Elisabeth of Schönau.[78] Excited by Hildegard's growing fame, this young Benedictine began to have visions a year after the *Scivias* was published. She visited Hildegard, corresponded with her, honored her as a spiritual mother, named one of her books after the *Scivias* and even adopted the older nun's conception of an "effeminate age" to justify feminine prophecy. Like Hildegard, too, Elisabeth felt herself called to preach reform, write epistles of spiritual counsel and utter apocalyptic warnings. One contemporary chronicler saw the two visionary nuns as partners in a single divine visitation.[79]

Yet a comparison between Hildegard and Elisabeth reveals precisely which elements of the older woman's spirituality belonged to the future and which to the past. As Elisha to Hildegard's Elijah, Elisabeth "inherited" her prophetic spirit along with her gift of visions, her fiery reformist zeal, her role as moral adviser to all who sought (or were subjected willy-nilly to) her advice, and her willingness to intervene in politics—though the two women were not always on the same side.[80] Like Hildegard, Elisabeth was spiritually sensitive and physically frail, prone to continual illness which often accompanied her visions. These shared traits continued to dominate the profile of women's spirituality in the later Middle Ages; we meet them again in Catherine of Siena, Birgitta of Sweden and a host of lesser-known women.

Yet there was much in Hildegard that Elisabeth found less congenial, or at any rate less imitable. The abbess of Bingen's systematic review of Christian doctrine, her Platonism, her scientific and cosmological interests, her deep learning, her idiosyncratic style and brilliant, esoteric symbology, her artistic gifts (expressed not only in her musical and dramatic creations but also in the careful, architectonic structure of her books)—all these remained foreign to the seer of Schönau. In short, it is the complexity, variety and sheer intellectual difficulty of Hildegard's opus that marks her and not Elisabeth as a woman of the twelfth-century Renaissance. Although the two nuns were contemporaries, one senses that Elisabeth would have been equally at home in a community of consecrated women a century later, while Hildegard would have been an anachronism.

What Elisabeth may have found lacking in her spiritual mother, and what she in turn supplied and passed on to later religious women, was precisely her mysticism. In her one finds ecstasies, deliberate cultivation of mystical experience, a highly developed subjectivity and deeply personal (as opposed to communal) relationships with the saints; one also finds a characteristically intimate and mutually dependent relationship with her confessor, so different from Hildegard's clearly dominant position vis-à-vis her secretary Volmar.[81] Even in their approach to their common Benedictine heritage the two nuns differed remarkably. Hildegard translated her private visions into the public medium of liturgical praise, which her whole community

could share; Elisabeth translated her public experience of the liturgy into private mystical conversations with the angels and saints.

My point here is not to make invidious comparisons between the two visionaries, so close and yet so fundamentally different, but rather to show how Hildegard's life and work were received by subsequent generations. In fact, the late medieval public recreated the spiritual mother in the image of her daughter, whose works were copied and read far more widely.[82] Thus Hildegard was long remembered and celebrated as the visionary, prophet and apocalyptic preacher that she was; she was quickly forgotten as the learned writer, monastic theologian and gifted composer that she also was. The Cistercian prior Gebeno of Eberbach kept her prophetic reputation alive by publishing an extremely popular anthology of her apocalyptic prophecies, which he entitled *Speculum futurorum temporum* or *Pentachronon* (1220); this collection proved much more appealing to later medieval tastes than Hildegard's original writings.[83] On Gebeno's authority she was known to the Flemish mystic Hadewijch as "Hildegaert die alle die Visione sach," and cited at length by Lodewijk van Velthem as an anti-fraternal prophet.[84] Somewhat later, as the generic image of a late medieval "holy woman" came to be superimposed on her dimly remembered figure, she was taken for a mystic and ecstatic.

The Christian humanists of the Renaissance took a new kind of interest in Hildegard. Trithemius, abbot of Sponheim (1462–1516), published enthusiastic if dubiously accurate reports of her career,[85] and Jacques Lefèvre d'Etaples printed the first edition of the *Scivias* (1513). But the Reformation contributed two further distortions. Andreas Osiander claimed Hildegard as a Protestant in 1527, because of her prophecies against negligent clergy,[86] and in due time a more "virile age," which she had also prophesied, vented its misogyny by denying her the dignity of authorship altogether, ascribing her works to Volmar or some other pseudonymous male.[87]

The rediscovery and authentication of Hildegard's oeuvre is the work of twentieth-century scholarship, which has gradually chipped away at the falsified, stereotypical image of the female mystic and the a priori notion that a medieval woman could not, and therefore did not, write.[88] But as Hildegard and her work become known to the public through popular as well as scholarly presentations, through concerts and recordings as well as articles and books, new stereotypes arise to replace the old. Just as the later Middle Ages and the Reformation found in Hildegard the role model they needed, so our own era has created the image of Hildegard the feminist, the liberationist, the "creation-centered mystic," the holistic health practitioner, the prophet of ecological justice.[89] This model of sanctity has proven useful and inspiring to many women and men, and it contains a grain (but only a grain)

of historical truth. The image of a saint, however, is always a work of synergy. Hildegard teaches that a virtuous life is the joint creation of God and humanity. By extension, a saintly life is the joint creation of the era that produces the saint and the era that venerates him or her. Those who admire Hildegard's contemporary icon will find it lovingly painted elsewhere. For those who wish to become acquainted with Hildegard the author, this faithful and unabridged translation of the *Scivias* lets her speak for herself.

NOTES

1. The primary source for Hildegard's life is a *vita* by the monks Gottfried of St. Disibod and Dieter of Echternach, begun a few years before her death and completed shortly afterward; it includes autobiographical memoirs supplied by the abbess. *Vita S. Hildegardis*, ed. J.-P. Migne, *Patrologia latina* [PL] 197 (Paris, 1855): 91–130; trans. Anna Silvas, "Saint Hildegard of Bingen and the *Vita S. Hildegardis*," *Tjurunga: An Australasian Benedictine Review*, 29 (1985): 4–25; 30 (1986): 63–73; 31 (1986): 32–41; 32 (1987): 46–59. There are two modern biographies in German: Adelgundis Führkötter, *Hildegard von Bingen* (Salzburg, 1972); and Eduard Gronau, *Hildegard von Bingen, 1098–1179* (Stein-am-Rhein, 1985).

2. On Hildegard's family see Marianna Schrader, *Die Herkunft der hl. Hildegard*, rev. ed. (Mainz, 1981).

3. Guibert of Gembloux, *Hildegardis vita* (fragment), ed. J.-B. Pitra, *Analecta S. Hildegardis*, vol. 8 of *Analecta sacra* (Monte Cassino, 1882): 408.

4. Letter to Guibert of Gembloux "de modo visionis suae," Ep. 2, ed. Pitra: 331–34.

5. Charles Singer, "The Scientific Views and Visions of Saint Hildegard," *Studies in the History and Method of Science* 1 (Oxford, 1917) pp. 1–55; Oliver Sacks, *Migraine: Understanding a Common Disorder* (Berkeley, 1985) pp. 106–8.

6. Barbara Newman, "Divine Power Made Perfect in Weakness: St. Hildegard on the Frail Sex," in *Peaceweavers*, vol. 2 of *Medieval Religious Women*, ed. Lillian T. Shank and John Nichols (Kalamazoo, 1987) pp. 103–22. On this theme in women's spirituality generally see Elizabeth Petroff, ed., *Medieval Women's Visionary Literature* (Oxford, 1986) pp. 32–44.

7. Ildefons Herwegen, "Les collaborateurs de Ste. Hildegarde," *Revue bénédictine* 21 (1904): 192–203, 302–15, 381–403. Recent research has indicated that Volmar's role was limited to copy editor and scribe; he did no significant stylistic revision.

8. Ep. 1, PL 197: 143ab. Cf. Marianna Schrader and Adelgundis Führkötter, *Die Echtheit des Schrifttums der hl. Hildegard von Bingen* (Cologne, 1956) pp. 111–19.

9. See the letter from Hildegard to her daughters, PL 197: 1065b–67a.

10. Maria Brede, "Die Klöster der hl. Hildegard Rupertsberg und Eibingen," in *Hildegard von Bingen, 1179–1979*, ed. Anton Brück (Mainz, 1979) pp. 77–94.

11. Barbara Newman, ed. and trans., *Symphonia armonie celestium revelationum* (Ithaca, 1988).

12. This work is still unedited, but see fragments in Pitra, 496–502, and Wilhelm Grimm, "Wiesbader Glossen," *Zeitschrift für deutsches Alterthum* 6 (1848) pp. 334–40.

13. Lieven Van Acker, "Der Briefwechsel der hl. Hildegard von Bingen: Vorbemerkungen zu einer kritischen Edition," *Revue bénédictine* 98 (1988): 141–68; 99 (1989): 118–54.

14. Irmgard Müller, *Die pflanzlichen Heilmittel bei Hildegard von Bingen* (Salzburg, 1981); Karl-Heinz Reger, *Hildegard-Medizin;* Joan Cadden, "It Takes All Kinds: Sexuality and Gender Differences in Hildegard of Bingen's 'Book of Compound Medicine,' " *Traditio* 40 (1984): 149–74.

15. *Vita*, Bk. III; *Acta inquisitionis de virtutibus et miraculis sanctae Hildegardis*, PL 197: 131–40.

16. See, for example, Ep. 48, PL 197: 244–53 (Cologne) and Ep. 49, PL 197: 254–58 (Trier).

17. Angela Rozumek, *Die sittliche Weltanschauung der hl. Hildegard von Bingen: Eine Darstellung der Ethik des Liber vitae meritorum* (Eichstätt, 1934).

18. Schrader and Führkötter, *Echtheit*, 131–41; Peter Dronke, *Women Writers of the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 1984): 154–59.

19. Heinrich Büttner, "Die Beziehungen der hl. Hildegard zur Kurie, Erzbischof und Kaiser," in *Universitas: Festschrift für Bischof Stohr* 2 (Mainz, 1960).

20. On the schism see M. G. Cheney, "The Recognition of Pope Alexander III: Some Neglected Evidence," *English Historical Review* 84 (1969): 474–97; Robert Somerville, *Pope Alexander III and the Council of Tours (1163): A Study of Ecclesiastical Politics and Institutions in the Twelfth Century* (Berkeley, 1977).

21. "De Catharis," Pitra, 348–51; Raoul Manselli, "Amicizia spirituale ed azione pastorale nella Germania del sec. XII: Ildegarde di Bingen, Elisabetta ed Ecberto di Schönau contro l'eresia catara," *Studi e materiali di storia delle religioni* 38 (1967): fasc. 1–2, 302–13; Gerhard Müller, "Die hl. Hildegard im Kampf mit Häresien ihrer Zeit: Zur Auseinandersetzung mit den Katharern," in Brück, *Hildegard von Bingen*, 171–88.

22. The title *De operatione Dei*, used by Heinrich Schipperges for his German translation, appears in the oldest and best MS. (Ghent, Universiteitsbibliotheek, Cod. 241), but it appears to be a later scribal addition. Contemporary lists of Hildegard's works give the title *Liber divinorum operum.*

23. On this MS. see Anna Masetti and Gigetta dalli Regoli, *Sanctae Hildegardis revelationes, MS. 1942* (Lucca, 1973); Rita Otto, "Zu denen gotischen Miniaturen einer Hildegardhandschrift in Lucca," *Mainzer Zeitschrift* 71–72 (1976/77) pp. 110–26.

24. Albert Derolez, ed., *Guiberti Gemblacensis Epistolae* I, CCCM66 (Turnhout, 1988): 216–57.

25. Epistles 8 and 9, PL 197: 159–61; Dronke, 196–99.

26. Ep. 47, PL 197: 218–21.

27. Barbara Newman, "Hildegard of Bingen: Visions and Validation," *Church History* 54 (1985), pp. 163–75; Christel Meier, "Prophetentum als literarische Existenz: Hildegard von Bingen," in *Deutsche Literatur von Frauen* I, ed. Gisela Brinker-Gabler (Munich, 1988) pp. 76–87.

28. Epistle to Guibert of Gembloux, Pitra, 332–33.

29. Letter to the monks of St. Disibod, Pitra, 354.

30. See Epistles 32, 33, 37, 42, 44, 66, 70, 74, 77, 78, 86, 100, 101, 108, and 112 in PL 197; Sabina Flanagan, "Hildegard of Bingen as Prophet: The Evidence of her Contemporaries," *Tjurunga* 32 (1987): 16–45.

31. Alfred Haverkamp, "Tenxwind von Andernach und Hildegard von Bingen: Zwei 'Weltanschauungen' in der Mitte des 12. Jahrhunderts," in *Institutionen, Kultur und Gesellschaft im Mittelalter: Festschrift für Josef Fleckenstein*, ed. Lutz Fenske, Werner Rösener and Thomas Zotz (Sigmaringen, 1984): 515–48.

32. Jeffrey Russell, *A History of Medieval Christianity: Prophecy and Order* (Arlington Heights, 1968), p. 123.

33. Barbara Newman, *Sister of Wisdom: St. Hildegard's Theology of the Feminine* (Berkeley, 1987), chap. 6.

34. See Charles Czarski, *The Prophecies of St. Hildegard of Bingen*, diss., University of Kentucky, 1983; Kathryn Kerby-Fulton, *The Voice of Honest Indignation: Reformist Apocalypticism and Piers Plowman* (Cambridge, 1989), chap. 1.

35. Elisabeth Gössmann, "Zyklisches und Lineares Geschichtsbewusstsein im Mittelalter: Hildegard von Bingen, Johannes von Salisbury und Andere," in *L'Homme et son univers au moyen âge*, 2 ed. Christian Wénin (Louvain, 1986), pp. 882–92.

36. *Vita* 2.16, PL 197: 102cd. Cf. PL 197: 167b, 185c, 254cd, 1005ab.

37. Cf. Robert Lerner, "Medieval Prophecy and Religious Dissent," *Past & Present* 72 (1976): 3–24.

38. *Scivias* I.1.

39. Christel Meier, "Zwei Modelle von Allegorie im 12. Jahrhundert: Das allegorische Verfahren Hildegards von Bingen und Alans von Lille," in *Formen und Funktionen der Allegorie*, ed. Walter Haug (Stuttgart, 1979), pp. 70–89.

40. The sacramental system was still quite fluid in Hildegard's day, and the notion of seven sacraments not yet universally accepted.

41. Hugh of St. Victor, *On the Sacraments of the Christian Faith* [*De Sacramentis*], trans. Roy Deferrari (Cambridge, MA, 1951).

42. Cf. Heinrich Schipperges, "Das Schöne in der Welt Hildegards von Bingen," *Jahrbuch für Ästhetik und allgemeine Kunstwissenschaft* 4 (1958/59): 83–139.

43. The full-color illustrations are reproduced in the Latin edition of the *Scivias* (CCCM, vols. 43–43a) and in the German translation by Maura Böckeler, *Wisse die Wege* (Salzburg, 8th ed., 1987).

44. Grover Zinn, "Mandala Symbolism and Use in the Mysticism of Hugh of St. Victor," *History of Religions* 12 (1972/73): 317–41.

45. On the miniatures see Josef Schomer, *Die Illustrationen zu dem Visionen der hl. Hildegard als künstlerische Neuschöpfung* (Bonn, 1937); Rita Otto, "Zu einigen Miniaturen einer *Scivias*handschrift des 12. Jahrhunderts," *Mainzer Zeitschrift* 67–68 (1972/73): 128–37; Christel Meier, *Text und Bild im überlieferten Werk Hildegards von Bingen* (Wiesbaden, 1978).

46. Letter of Odo of Soissons, Ep. 127, PL 197: 352a.

47. *A feather on the breath of God:* Sequences and hymns by Abbess Hildegard of Bingen, Gothic Voices (Hyperion A66039); *Geistliche Musik des Mittelalters und der Renaissance*, Instrumentalkreise Helga Weber (TELDEC 66.22387); *Gesänge der hl. Hildegard von Bingen*, Schola der Benediktinerinnenabtei St. Hildegard (Psallite 242/040 479 PET); *Hildegard von Bingen: Symphoniae*, Sequentia (Harmonia Mundi 1C 067-19 9976 1).

48. Peter Dronke, "The Composition of Hildegard of Bingen's *Symphonia*," *Sacris Erudiri* 19 (1969/70): 381–93; "Problemata Hildegardiana," *Mittellateinisches Jahrbuch* 16 (1981): 97–131.

49. Performance edition by Audrey Davidson, *The "Ordo virtutum" of Hildegard of Bingen* (Kalamazoo, 1985); recording by Sequentia, *Hildegard von Bingen: Ordo virtutum* (Harmonia Mundi 20395/96); liner notes include an English translation by Peter Dronke.

50. Robert Potter, "The *Ordo Virtutum:* Ancestor of the English Moralities?" *Comparative Drama* 20 (1986): 201–10.

51. Newman, *Sister of Wisdom*, chap. 3.

52. Kent Kraft, *The Eye Sees More Than the Heart Knows: The Visionary Cosmology of Hildegard of Bingen*, Ph.D. diss. University of Wisconsin, 1977.

53. On the basis of this inconsistency earlier scholars rejected the authenticity of all or part of *Causae et curae:* Hans Liebeschütz, *Das allegorische Weltbild der hl. Hildegard von Bingen* (Leipzig, 1930); Bertha Widmer, *Heilsordnung und Zeitgeschehen in der Mystik Hildegards von Bingen* (Basel, 1955); Heinrich Schipperges, *Heilkunde* (Salzburg, 1957). For more recent views see Dronke, *Women Writers*, 173–79; Newman, *Sister of Wisdom*, chap. 4.

54. Magna Ungrund, *Die metaphysische Anthropologie der hl. Hildegard von Bingen* (Münster, 1938).

55. Charles Singer, "Allegorical Representation of the Synagogue in a Twelfth Century Illuminated Manuscript of Hildegard of Bingen," *Jewish Quarterly Review*, n.s. 5 (1915): 267–88.

56. Heinrich Schipperges, *Die Welt der Engel bei Hildegard von Bingen*, 2d ed. (Salzburg, 1979).

57. On the iconography see Christel Meier, "Zum Verhältnis von Text und Illustration im überlieferten Werk Hildegards von Bingen," in Brück, *Hildegard von Bingen*, 159–69.

58. Heinrich Ostlender, "Dante und Hildegard von Bingen," *Deutsches Dante-Jahrbuch* 27 (1948): 159–70; Ernst Benz, "Die Farbe im Erlebnisbereich der christlichen Vision," *Eranos Jahrbuch* 41 (1972): 273–82; Peter Dronke, "Tradition and Innovation in Medieval Western Colour-Imagery," *Eranos Jahrbuch* 41 (1972): 98–106.

59. Margot Schmidt, "Hildegard von Bingen als Lehrerin des Glaubens: *Speculum* als Symbol des Transzendenten," in Brück, *Hildegard von Bingen*, 95–157.

60. Barbara Maurmann-Bronder, *Die Himmelsrichtungen im Weltbild des Mittelalters: Hildegard von Bingen, Honorius Augustodunensis und andere Autoren* (Munich, 1976).

61. Peter Dronke, "Arbor Caritatis," in *Medieval Studies for J.A.W. Bennett*, ed. P.L. Heyworth (Oxford, 1981), pp. 228–33.

62. Christel Meier, "Die Bedeutung der Farben im Werk Hildegards von Bingen," *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* 6 (1972): 245–355.

63. Hermas, *Pastor, Sources chrétiennes* 53 (Paris, 1958); J.B. Lightfoot, trans., *Excluded Books of the New Testament* (London, 1927), pp. 249–403. See especially Vision III and Similitude IX.

64. Cf. Herrad of Hohenbourg, *Hortus Deliciarum*, reconstructed by Rosalie Green, Michael Evans, et al. (London, 1979): II, 352, Plate 124.

65. Adso of Moutier-en-Der, *De ortu et tempore Antichristi*, ed. D. Verhelst, CCCM 45, trans. John Wright in *The Play of Antichrist* (Toronto, 1967).

66. Cf. Wilhelm Kamlah, *Apokalypse und Geschichtstheologie: Die mittelalterliche Auslegung der Apokalypse vor Joachim von Fiore* (Berlin, 1935); H.D. Rauh, *Das Bild des Antichrist im Mittelalter* (Munich, 1973); Richard Emmerson, *Antichrist in the Middle Ages: A Study of Medieval Apocalypticism, Art, and Literature* (Seattle, 1981).

67. Peter Dronke, "Hildegard of Bingen as Poetess and Dramatist," in *Poetic Individuality in the Middle Ages* (Oxford, 1970), pp. 169–79.

68. The edition of Führkötter and Carlevaris (CCCM, 43–43a) provides meticulous annotation and comprehensive indices of scriptural and liturgical texts, patristic and medieval authors and key words in the *Scivias*.

69. The most ambitious source studies are those of Hans Liebeschütz, *Das allegorische Weltbild der hl. Hildegard von Bingen* (Leipzig, 1930); and Bertha Widmer, *Heilsordnung und Zeitgeschehen in der Mystik Hildegards von Bingen* (Basel, 1955).

Recent writers, with the notable exception of Peter Dronke, have been more skeptical about the extent of Hildegard's classical learning.

70. According to her *Vita* (II.1), Hildegard disputed with Jews and tried to convert them: PL 197: 105b.

71. Heinrich Schipperges notes the affinities but does not believe that either Hildegard or the Chartrian poets were acquainted with the new Arabic learning: "Einflüsse arabischer Medizin auf die Mikrokosmosliteratur des 12. Jahrhunderts," in *Antike und Orient im Mittelalter*, ed. Paul Wilpert (Berlin, 1962), pp. 129–53.

72. Valerie Flint, "The Place and Purpose of the Works of Honorius Augustodunensis," *Revue bénédictine* 87 (1977): 97–127.

73. John Van Engen, *Rupert of Deutz* (Berkeley, 1983).

74. Cf. Wolfgang Beinert, *Die Kirche—Gottes Heil in der Welt: Die Lehre von der Kirche nach den Schriften des Rupert von Deutz, Honorius Augustodunensis und Gerhoch von Reichersberg* (Münster, 1973).

75. On this influential work, which Hildegard certainly knew, see Matthäus Bernards, *Speculum virginum: Geistigkeit und Seelenleben der Frau im Hochmittelalter* (Cologne, 1955); an edition by Jutta Seyfarth is forthcoming in the CCCM series.

76. Friedhelm Jürgensmeier, "St. Hildegard 'Prophetissa Teutonica,'" in Brück, *Hildegard von Bingen*, pp. 273–93.

77. There is much recent work on this subject. For overviews of the tradition see Dronke, *Women Writers;* Petroff, *Medieval Women's Visionary Literature;* Katharina Wilson, ed., *Medieval Women Writers* (Athens, GA, 1984). On Hildegard and the theme of gender see Elisabeth Gössmann, "*Ipsa enim quasi domus sapientiae*: Zur frauenbezogenen Spiritualität Hildegards von Bingen," in *Eine Höhe, über die nichts geht*, ed. Margot Schmidt and Dieter Bauer (Stuttgart, 1986); Caroline Bynum, "'. . . And Woman His Humanity': Female Imagery in the Religious Writing of the Later Middle Ages," in *Gender and Religion: On the Complexity of Symbols*, ed. Caroline Bynum, Paula Richman, and Stevan Harrell (Boston, 1986): 257–88; Newman, *Sister of Wisdom*, chap. 7.

78. Josef Loos, "Hildegard von Bingen und Elisabeth von Schönau," in Brück, *Hildegard von Bingen*, pp. 263–72; Kathryn Kerby-Fulton and Dyan Elliott, "Self-Image and the Visionary Role in Two Letters from the Correspondence of Elizabeth of Schönau and Hildegard of Bingen," *Vox Benedictina* 2 (1985): 204–23; Elisabeth Gössmann, "Das Menschenbild der Hildegard von Bingen und Elisabeth von Schönau . . . ," in *Frauenmystik im Mittelalter*, ed. Peter Dinzelbacher and Dieter Bauer (Ostfildern, 1985), pp. 24–47.

79. *Annales Palidenses* ad 1158, MGH.SS. 16, p. 90.

80. For instance, Elisabeth supported Barbarossa's candidate, Victor IV, in the German papal schism.

81. While Volmar was initially Hildegard's teacher and served as provost of her convent, in the second half of her life she exercised an unmistakable intellectual and spiritual dominance. Elisabeth, on the other hand, subordinated herself humbly to her brother and abbot, Ekbert, whose guidance shaped the course of her visions.

82. About 150 manuscripts of Elisabeth's works survive, as opposed to about three dozen of Hildegard's.

83. The work is unedited except for fragments in Pitra, 483–88.

84. Lodewijk van Velthem, *Voortzetting van den Spiegel Historiael*, Book VII (1316), vol. 3, ed. Herman vander Linden and Willem de Vreese (Brussels, 1938); Ernest McDonnell, *The Beguines and Beghards in Medieval Culture* (New Brunswick, 1954), pp. 292–94. Henry of Langenstein may have been the first to call Hildegard the

"German Sibyl": G. Sommerfeldt, "Die Prophetien der hl. Hildegard von Bingen in einem Schreiben des Magisters Heinrich von Langenstein (1383)," *Historisches Jahrbuch* 30 (1909): 43–61.

85. *Chronicon Hirsaugiense* ad 1149, 1150, 1160, 1180; *Chronicon Sponheimense* ad 1136, 1148–1150, 1179, 1498; *Catalogus illustrium virorum* [sic] *Germaniae,* p. 138; *De scriptoribus ecclesiasticis,* p. 281; all in *Opera historica,* ed. Marquand Freher (Frankfurt, 1601; rpt. 1966).

86. Widmer, *Heilsordnung und Zeitgeschehen,* 260. In 1680 Jerome Baptista, Lord Bishop of Albarazin, published a pamphlet entitled "The Nunns Prophesie, or, The True, Wonderful, & Remarkable Prophesie of St. Hildegard, First Nunn, and then Abess: concerning the Rise & Downfall of those Fire Brands of Europe, the whole Order of Jesuits."

87. Johann Wilhelm Preger, *Geschichte der deutschen Mystik im Mittelalter* I (Leipzig, 1874). J.P. Schmelzeis, in *Das Leben und Wirken der hl. Hildegardis* (Freiburg im Breisgau, 1879), maintained that Hildegard transcribed her Latin writings directly from heaven without understanding a word of them.

88. The epoch-making work was the historical and paleographic study of Marianna Schrader and Adelgundis Führkötter, *Die Echtheit des Schrifttums der hl. Hildegard von Bingen* (Cologne, 1956), together with the studies by Liebeschütz, Widmer, Schipperges and Dronke already cited.

89. This is the image promulgated in the publications of Bear & Company: Gabriele Uhlein, *Meditations With Hildegard of Bingen* (Santa Fe, 1982); Matthew Fox, *Illuminations of Hildegard of Bingen* (Santa Fe, 1985); and translations of the *Scivias* by Bruce Hozeski (Santa Fe, 1986), and of the *Liber divinorum operum* by Robert Cunningham (Santa Fe, 1987).

Translator's Note

Scivias, St. Hildegard's great work of religious genius, is composed of a relatively brief Prologue (Declaration) and three Books, each Book being made up of several Visions. That Hildegard saw each Book as a unit is clear both from the climactic movement of each of her three main parts and from the fact that she employs three closing sentences of a poetic character. By the first of these she concludes all six of the Visions of Book One; by the second, all seven of the Visions of Book Two; and by the third, all thirteen of the Visions of Book Three.

Every Vision contains a varying number of subdivisions, unequal in length, indicated by numbered subtitles. Certain illustrations in the twelfth-century manuscript (reproduced in colors and gold both in Böckeler's German translation and in the Brepols 1978 critical Latin text, and in black and white in this translation) show that Hildegard herself wanted the subdivisions and corresponding subtitles. My translation therefore retains both subdivisions and corresponding subtitles; to save space, I have abridged the more lengthy subtitles.

For each separate Vision Hildegard uses the following literary procedure: First she gives the reader a poetic and obscure account of what she "saw," then she goes on to repeat and develop each sentence or phrase of the preliminary account, disclosing gradually the Vision's deep significance. And yet she never says, "I have outlined all the points, and now I will repeat and develop them." Therefore, for the assistance of the reader, italics are used in each vision both for her initial account and for her repetitions of each sentence or phrase thereof in her subsequent explanation.

Because of the extreme length of *Scivias,* I have reduced explanations, inserted between square brackets, to a minimum. Hildegard's three poetic expressions—"chrism makers" (*pigmentarii*) for "bishops and priests," "living fragrance" (*vivens odor*) for "monk," and "vowing the way of secret regeneration" (*vovens iter secretae regenerationis*) for "making monastic profession"—I translated literally only in the preliminary occurrences, reverting thereafter to the commonplace terms.

Mother Columba Hart, O.S.B.

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

Co-Translator's Note

My contribution to this translation has been in two main areas. First, while remaining faithful to the meaning of the Latin, I have rendered it somewhat less literal to make it read better in English. In Book Three, Vision Thirteen, where Hildegard breaks into poetry to express the songs sung in heaven, I have carried out Mother Columba's decision to do them in poetic rather than prose form in English: I have put them into a very loose pentameter, not because that corresponds to any discernible meter in the original but to reflect Hildegard's poetic intentions.

Second, I have tried to correct a practice in the English of the last few hundred years that is not justified by the Latin. English has tended to translate the Latin *homo*, "human being," by the word *man*, which increasingly in our time is understood to refer exclusively to males. Latin has the word *homo* for "person," and *vir* and *mulier* for "man" and "woman"; because its pronouns agree in gender with the nouns they modify rather than with the beings they express, it is possible to write for long stretches in Latin without any suggestion of an exclusionary "his" or "her," which is unavoidable in English. Hildegard is writing for and about both men and women most of the time in this work and writes of them as "humans"; when she represents God speaking to her, He calls her not "O mulier" but "O homo," "O human being." Consequently, with some slight loss in resonance in the English because we are used to grand rhetoric about "men" and "mankind," I have translated the various forms of *homo* by "person," "humans," "people" or "humanity" wherever possible. It has sometimes been necessary to use a singular, personal collective noun for Humanity, in which case I have used the capitalized "Man"; otherwise, wherever the words "man" and "woman" appear here, they reflect Hildegard's talk of the different situations of *viri* and *mulieres* in the original.

Jane Bishop

HILDEGARD of BINGEN

SCIVIAS

THE SEERESS

Declaration

These Are True Visions Flowing from God

And behold! In the forty-third year of my earthly course, as I was gazing with great fear and trembling attention at a heavenly vision, I saw a great splendor in which resounded a voice from Heaven, saying to me,

"O fragile human, ashes of ashes, and filth of filth! Say and write what you see and hear. But since you are timid in speaking, and simple in expounding, and untaught in writing, speak and write these things not by a human mouth, and not by the understanding of human invention, and not by the requirements of human composition, but as you see and hear them on high in the heavenly places in the wonders of God. Explain these things in such a way that the hearer, receiving the words of his instructor, may expound them in those words, according to that will, vision and instruction. Thus therefore, O human, speak these things that you see and hear. And write them not by yourself or any other human being, but by the will of Him Who knows, sees and disposes all things in the secrets of His mysteries."

And again I heard the voice from Heaven saying to me, "Speak therefore of these wonders, and, being so taught, write them and speak."

It happened that, in the eleven hundred and forty-first year of the Incarnation of the Son of God, Jesus Christ, when I was forty-two years and seven months old, Heaven was opened and a fiery light of exceeding brilliance came and permeated my whole brain, and inflamed my whole heart and my whole breast, not like a burning but like a warming flame, as the sun warms anything its rays touch. And immediately I knew the meaning of the exposition of the Scriptures, namely the Psalter, the Gospel and the other catholic volumes of both the Old and the New Testaments, though I did not have the interpretation of the words of their texts or the division of the syllables or the knowledge of cases or tenses. But I had sensed in myself

wonderfully the power and mystery of secret and admirable visions from my childhood—that is, from the age of five—up to that time, as I do now. This, however, I showed to no one except a few religious persons who were living in the same manner as I; but meanwhile, until the time when God by His grace wished it to be manifested, I concealed it in quiet silence. But the visions I saw I did not perceive in dreams, or sleep, or delirium, or by the eyes of the body, or by the ears of the outer self, or in hidden places; but I received them while awake and seeing with a pure mind and the eyes and ears of the inner self, in open places, as God willed it. How this might be is hard for mortal flesh to understand.

But when I had passed out of childhood and had reached the age of full maturity mentioned above, I heard a voice from Heaven saying, "I am the Living Light, Who illuminates the darkness. The person [Hildegard] whom I have chosen and whom I have miraculously stricken as I willed, I have placed among great wonders, beyond the measure of the ancient people who saw in Me many secrets; but I have laid her low on the earth, that she might not set herself up in arrogance of mind. The world has had in her no joy or lewdness or use in worldly things, for I have withdrawn her from impudent boldness, and she feels fear and is timid in her works. For she suffers in her inmost being and in the veins of her flesh; she is distressed in mind and sense and endures great pain of body, because no security has dwelt in her, but in all her undertakings she has judged herself guilty. For I have closed up the cracks in her heart that her mind may not exalt itself in pride or vainglory, but may feel fear and grief rather than joy and wantonness. Hence in My love she searched in her mind as to where she could find someone who would run in the path of salvation. And she found such a one and loved him [the monk Volmar of Disibodenberg], knowing that he was a faithful man, working like herself on another part of the work that leads to Me. And, holding fast to him, she worked with him in great zeal so that My hidden miracles might be revealed. And she did not seek to exalt herself above herself but with many sighs bowed to him whom she found in the ascent of humility and the intention of good will.

"O human, who receives these things meant to manifest what is hidden not in the disquiet of deception but in the purity of simplicity, write, therefore, the things you see and hear."

But I, though I saw and heard these things, refused to write for a long time through doubt and bad opinion and the diversity of human words, not with stubbornness but in the exercise of humility, until, laid low by the scourge of God, I fell upon a bed of sickness; then, compelled at last by many illnesses, and by the witness of a certain noble maiden of good conduct [the nun Richardis of Stade] and of that man whom I had secretly sought and found, as mentioned above, I set my hand to the writing. While I was doing

it, I sensed, as I mentioned before, the deep profundity of scriptural exposition; and, raising myself from illness by the strength I received, I brought this work to a close—though just barely—in ten years.

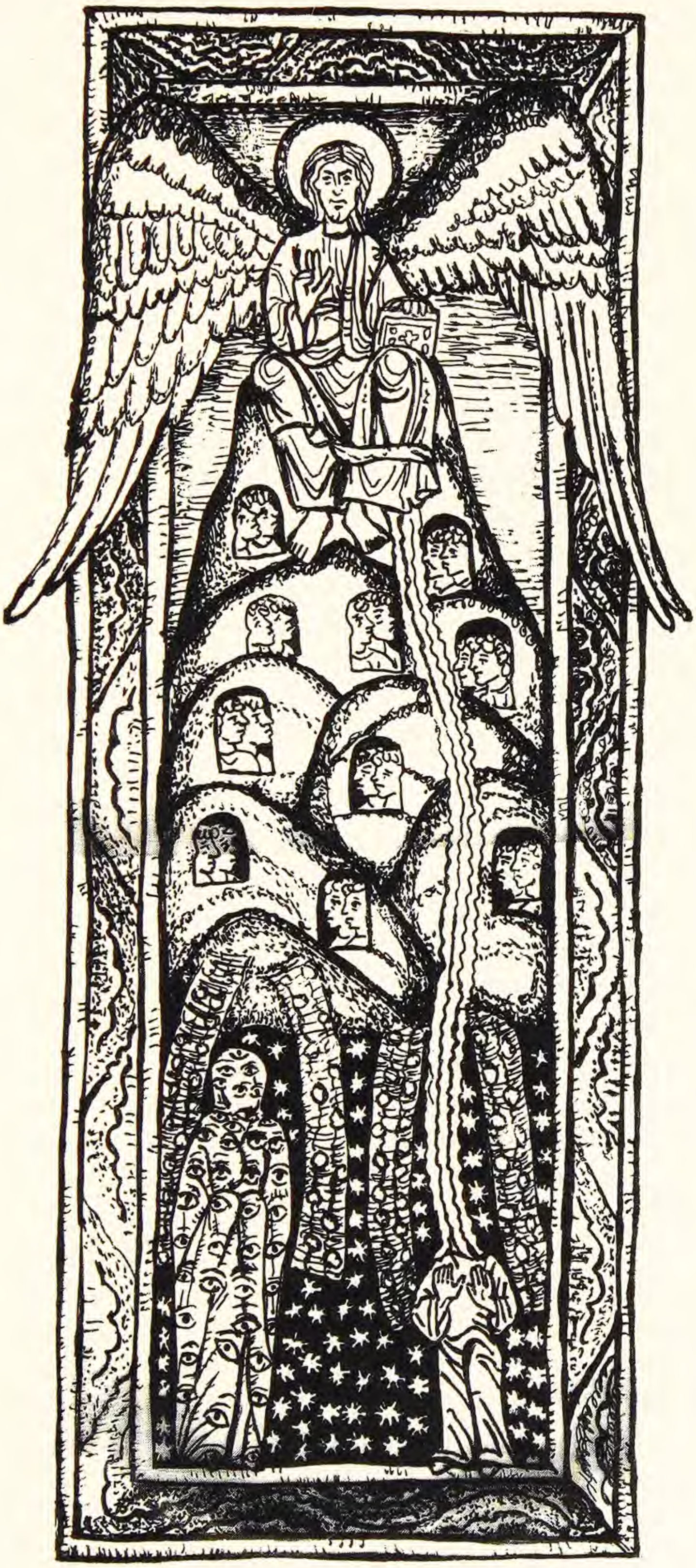
These visions took place and these words were written in the days of Henry, Archbishop of Mainz, and of Conrad, King of the Romans, and of Cuno, Abbot of Disibodenberg, under Pope Eugenius.

And I spoke and wrote these things not by the invention of my heart or that of any other person, but as by the secret mysteries of God I heard and received them in the heavenly places.

And again I heard a voice from Heaven saying to me, "Cry out therefore, and write thus!"

Book One

THE CREATOR AND CREATION



THE ONE ENTHRONED

VISION ONE
God Enthroned Shows Himself to Hildegard

I saw a great mountain the color of iron, and enthroned on it One of such great glory that it blinded my sight. On each side of him there extended a soft shadow, like a wing of wondrous breadth and length. Before him, at the foot of the mountain, stood an image full of eyes on all sides, in which, because of those eyes, I could discern no human form. In front of this image stood another, a child wearing a tunic of subdued color but white shoes, upon whose head such glory descended from the One enthroned upon that mountain that I could not look at its face. But from the One who sat enthroned upon that mountain many living sparks sprang forth, which flew very sweetly around the images. Also, I perceived in this mountain many little windows, in which appeared human heads, some of subdued colors and some white.

And behold, He Who was enthroned upon that mountain cried out in a strong, loud voice saying, "O human, who are fragile dust of the earth and ashes of ashes! Cry out and speak of the origin of pure salvation until those people are instructed, who, though they see the inmost contents of the Scriptures, do not wish to tell them or preach them, because they are lukewarm and sluggish in serving God's justice. Unlock for them the enclosure of mysteries that they, timid as they are, conceal in a hidden and fruitless field. Burst forth into a fountain of abundance and overflow with mystical knowledge, until they who now think you contemptible because of Eve's transgression are stirred up by the flood of your irrigation. For you have received your profound insight not from humans, but from the lofty and tremendous Judge on high, where this calmness will shine strongly with glorious light among the shining ones.

"Arise therefore, cry out and tell what is shown to you by the strong power of God's help, for He Who rules every creature in might and kindness floods those who fear Him and serve Him in sweet love and humility with the glory of heavenly enlightenment and leads those who persevere in the way of justice to the joys of the Eternal Vision."

1 The strength and stability of God's eternal Kingdom

As you see, therefore, *the great mountain the color of iron* symbolizes the strength and stability of the eternal Kingdom of God, which no fluctuation of

mutability can destroy; and *the One enthroned upon it of such great glory that it blinds your sight* is the One in the kingdom of beatitude Who rules the whole world with celestial divinity in the brilliance of unfading serenity, but is incomprehensible to human minds. But that *on each side of him there extends a soft shadow like a wing of wonderful breadth and length* shows that both in admonition and in punishment ineffable justice displays sweet and gentle protection and perseveres in true equity.

2 Concerning fear of the Lord

And before him at the foot of the mountain stands an image full of eyes on all sides. For the Fear of the Lord stands in God's presence with humility and gazes on the Kingdom of God, surrounded by the clarity of a good and just intention, exercising her zeal and stability among humans. And thus *you can discern no human form in her on account of those eyes.* For by the acute sight of her contemplation she counters all forgetfulness of God's justice, which people often feel in their mental tedium, so no inquiry by weak mortals eludes her vigilance.

3 Concerning those who are poor in spirit

And so *before this image appears another image, that of a child, wearing a tunic of subdued color but white shoes.* For when the Fear of the Lord leads, they who are poor in spirit follow; for the Fear of the Lord holds fast in humble devotion to the blessedness of poverty of spirit, which does not seek boasting or elation of heart, but loves simplicity and sobriety of mind, attributing its just works not to itself but to God in pale subjection, wearing, as it were, a tunic of subdued color and faithfully following the serene footsteps of the Son of God. *Upon her head descends such glory from the One enthroned upon that mountain that you cannot look at her face;* because He Who rules every created being imparts the power and strength of this blessedness by the great clarity of His visitation, and weak, mortal thought cannot grasp His purpose, since He Who possesses celestial riches submitted himself humbly to poverty.

4 They who fear God and love poverty of spirit are the guardians of virtues

But *from the One Who is enthroned upon that mountain many living sparks go forth, which fly about those images with great sweetness.* This means that many exceedingly strong virtues come forth from Almighty God, darting fire in divine glory; these ardently embrace and captivate those who truly

fear God and who faithfully love poverty of spirit, surrounding them with their help and protection.

5 The aims of human acts cannot be hidden from God's knowledge

Wherefore *in this mountain you see many little windows, in which appear human heads, some of subdued color and some white.* For in the most high and profound and perspicuous knowledge of God the aims of human acts cannot be concealed or hidden. Most often they display both lukewarmness and purity, since people now slumber in guilt, weary in their hearts and in their deeds, and now awaken and keep watch in honor. Solomon bears witness to this for Me, saying:

6 Solomon on this subject

"The slothful hand has brought about poverty, but the hand of the industrious man prepares riches" [Proverbs 10:4]; which means, a person makes himself weak and poor when he will not work justice, or avoid wickedness, or pay a debt, remaining idle in the face of the wonders of the works of beatitude. But one who does strong works of salvation, running in the way of truth, obtains the upwelling fountain of glory, by which he prepares himself most precious riches on earth and in Heaven.

Therefore, whoever has knowledge in the Holy Spirit and wings of faith, let this one not ignore My admonition but taste it, embrace it and receive it in his soul.

MAN'S FALL

VISION TWO
Creation and the Fall

Then I saw as it were a great multitude of very bright living lamps, which received fiery brilliance and acquired an unclouded splendor. And behold! A pit of great breadth and depth appeared, with a mouth like the mouth of a well, emitting fiery smoke with great stench, from which a loathsome cloud spread out and touched a deceitful, vein-shaped form. And, in a region of brightness, it blew upon a white cloud that had come forth from a beautiful human form and contained within itself many and many stars, and so doing, cast out both the white cloud and the human form from that region. When this was done, a luminous splendor surrounded that region, and all the elements of the world, which before had existed in great calm, were turned to the greatest agitation and displayed horrible terrors. And again I heard Him Who had spoken to me before, saying:

1 No unjust impulse takes the blessed angels from the love and praise of God

No impulse of injustice makes those withdraw in terror who follow God with faithful devotion and burn with worthy love through affection for Him, from the glory of heavenly beatitude; while they who serve God merely in pretence not only fail to advance to greater things but, by just judgment, are cast out from the things they erroneously suppose they possess. This is shown by the *great multitude of very bright living lamps;* they are the vast army of heavenly spirits, shining in the blessed life and living in great beauty and adornment, because when they were created by God they did not grasp at proud exaltation but strongly persisted in divine love. For, *receiving fiery brilliance, they acquired an unclouded splendor,* because when Lucifer and his followers attempted to rebel against the supreme Creator, they, with zeal for God in his and his followers' downfall, clothed themselves in the vigilance of divine love, while the others, not wishing to know God, embraced the torpor of ignorance. In what way? At the fall of the Devil great praise burst forth from these angelic spirits who persevered in rectitude with God, because with keenest sight they knew that God continues immovable, without any change of any mutability in His power, so that no warrior can ever conquer

Him. And thus, burning in His love and persevering in righteousness, they despised all the dust of injustice.

2 Lucifer, for pride in his beauty and power, was cast forth from Heaven

But Lucifer, who because of his pride was cast forth from celestial glory, was so great at the moment of his creation that he felt no defect either in his beauty or in his strength. Hence when he contemplated his beauty, and when he considered in himself the power of his strength, he discovered pride, which promised him that he might begin what he wished, because he could achieve what he had begun. And, seeing a place where he thought he could live, wanting to display his beauty and power there, he spoke thus within himself about God: "I wish to shine there as He does here!" And all his army assented, saying, "What you wish we also wish." And when, elated with pride, he tried to achieve what he had conceived, the jealousy of the Lord, reaching out in fiery blackness, cast him down with all his retinue, so that they were made burning instead of shining and black instead of fair. Why did this happen?

3 God would have been unjust if He had not cast them down

If God had not cast down their presumption, He would have been unjust, since He would have cherished those who wished to divide the wholeness of divinity. But He cast them down and reduced their impiety to nothing, as He removes from the sight of His glory all who try to oppose themselves to Him, as My servant Job shows when he says:

4 Words of Job on this subject

"The lamp of the wicked shall be put out and a deluge shall come upon them; and He shall distribute the sorrows of His wrath. They shall be chaff before the face of the wind, and sparks scattered by the whirlwind" [Job 21:17–18]. This means the flagrant filth of wanton wickedness that emerges from false prosperity, like a distinguishing mark on the carnal will of those who do not fear God but spurn Him in perverse rage, disdaining to know that anyone can conquer them, while in the fire of their ferocity they want to consume whatever they oppose. In the hour of God's vengeance this filth will be trodden underfoot like dirt; and by the supreme judgment these impious ones will be cast down in wrath by all who are under heaven, because they are harmful both to God and to humans. Therefore, since God does not allow them to have what they want, they are scattered everywhere

among people, tormented by pain in the rage of their madness, because they burn to possess what God does not allow them to devour. And since they withdraw in this way from God, they become entirely useless, able to do nothing good for either God or humanity, cut off from the seed of life by the foreseeing eye of God's contemplation. For which reason they are given over to misery, wasting themselves in the flat taste of evil fame, since they do not receive the downpouring rain of the Holy Spirit.

5 On Hell, which in its voracity keeps souls swallowed up

But *the pit of great breadth and depth* that appeared to you is Hell, having within it, as you see, the breadth of vices and the depth of losses. It has a mouth indeed like the mouth of a well, emitting a fiery smoke with great stench, because in its voracity to swallow up souls, it shows them sweetness and gentleness, and with perverse deception leads them to the torments of perdition, where rises a burning fire with black smoke pouring out and a boiling, deadly stench; these dire torments were prepared for the Devil and his followers, who turned away from the Supreme Good, not wishing to know or understand it. Therefore they are outcast from all good, not because they did not know it, but because in their great pride they despised it. What does this mean?

6 In the casting down of the Devil Hell was created

In the casting down of the Devil this exterior darkness, full of all kinds of pains, was created; for these evil spirits, in contrast to the glory that had been prepared for them, were subject to the misery of many punishments, and in contrast to the brightness they had had, endured the thickest darkness. How? When the proud angel raised himself on high like a snake, he received the prison of Hell, because it could not be that anyone should prevail over God. For how could two hearts possibly exist in one breast? Likewise, there could not be two gods in Heaven. But since the Devil and his followers chose proud presumption, therefore he found the pit of Hell prepared for him. So also the people who imitate them in their actions become sharers of their pains, according to their deserts.

7 Gehenna is for the impenitent, other torments for those who can be saved

Some souls, having reached the point of damnation, are rejected from the knowledge of God, and therefore they shall have the pains of Hell without the consolation of deliverance. But some, whom God has not con-

signed to oblivion, experience a higher process and undergo purgation of the sins into which they have fallen, and at last feel the loosing of their bonds and are delivered into rest. How is this? Gehenna is ready for those who have impenitently forgotten God in their hearts, but other torments for those who, though they perform bad works, do not persevere in them to the end, but at last, groaning, look back to God. For this reason let the faithful flee from the Devil and love God, casting away evil works and adorning good works with the beauty of penitence; as My servant Ezekiel, inspired by Me, urges, saying:

8 Words of Ezekiel on this subject

"Be converted, and do penance for all your iniquities; and iniquity shall not be your ruin" [Ezekiel 18:30]. That is to say: O you people! who till now have wallowed in sin, remember your name of Christians, be converted to the way of salvation, and perform all your works in a gush of penitence, who previously had innumerable vices and committed many crimes. Thus as you rise from your evil habits, that iniquity by which you had been soiled will not sink you deep in the ruin of death, since you cast it off in the day of your salvation. Therefore the angels will rejoice over you, because you have abandoned the Devil and run to God, knowing Him better in your good actions than you did when you endured the mockery of the ancient seducer.

9 The Devil's fraud, which deceived Adam through the serpent

That *a loathsome cloud spread out from the pit and touched a deceitful, vein-shaped form* means that from the bottom of perdition the Devil's fraud came forth and invaded the serpent, who already bore within itself the crime of fraudulent intention, in order to deceive humanity. In what way? Because, when the Devil saw Man in paradise, he cried out with great aversion, saying, "Oh! who touches me in the mansion of true beatitude?" And so he knew that he had not yet perfected in any creature the malice he had within himself, but seeing Adam and Eve walk with childlike innocence in the garden of delight, with great wonder he rose up to deceive them through the serpent. Why? Because he understood that the serpent more than any other animal resembled him and was eager to accomplish by its deceitfulness what he could not do openly in his own form. So when he saw Adam and Eve turn away in soul and body from the forbidden tree, he understood that they were obeying a divine precept, and that in the first work they began he could very easily throw them down.

10 Only from Eve's reply did the Devil know the tree was forbidden

For he would not have known that this tree was forbidden them unless he had proved it by guileful questioning and by their answers. Wherefore *in that bright region he blew upon a white cloud, which had come forth from a beautiful human form and contained within itself many and many stars* because, in that place of delight, Eve—whose soul was innocent, for she had been raised out of innocent Adam, bearing in her body the whole multitude of the human race, shining with God's preordination—was invaded by the Devil through the seduction of the serpent for her own downfall. Why was this? Because he knew that the susceptibility of the woman would be more easily conquered than the strength of the man; and he saw that Adam burned so vehemently in his holy love for Eve that if he, the Devil, conquered Eve, Adam would do whatever she said to him. Hence the Devil *cast out both the cloud and the human form from that region* because that ancient seducer cast out Eve and Adam by his deception from the seat of blessedness and thrust them into the darkness of destruction. How? By first misleading Eve, so that she might flatter and caress Adam and thus win his assent, since she more than any other creature could lead Adam to disobedience, having been made from his rib. Thus woman very quickly overthrows man, if he does not hate her and easily accepts her words.

11 What things are to be observed and avoided in marriage

Because a mature woman was given not to a little boy but to a mature man, namely Adam, so now a mature woman must be married to a man when he has reached the full age of fertility, just as due cultivation is given to a tree when it begins to put forth flowers. For Eve was formed from a rib by Adam's ingrafted heat and vigor, and therefore now it is by the strength and heat of a man that a woman receives the semen to bring a child into the world. For the man is the sower, but the woman is the recipient of the seed. Wherefore a wife is under the power of her husband because the strength of the man is to the susceptibility of the woman as the hardness of stone is to the softness of earth.

But the first woman's being formed from man means the joining of wife to husband. And thus it is to be understood: This union must not be vain or done in forgetfulness of God, because He Who brought forth the woman from the man instituted this union honorably and virtuously, forming flesh from flesh. Wherefore, as Adam and Eve were one flesh, so now also a man and woman become one flesh in a union of holy love for the multiplication of

the human race. And therefore there should be perfect love in these two as there was in those first two. For Adam could have blamed his wife because by her advice she brought him death, but nonetheless he did not dismiss her as long as he lived in this world, because he knew she had been given to him by divine power. Therefore, because of perfect love, let a man not leave his wife except for the reason the faithful Church allows. And let them never separate, unless both with one mind want to contemplate My Son, and say with burning love for Him: "We want to renounce the world and follow Him Who suffered for our sake!" But if these two disagree as to whether they should renounce the world for one devotion, then let them by no means separate from each other, since, just as the blood cannot be separated from the flesh as long as the spirit remains in the flesh, so the husband and wife cannot be divided from each other but must walk together in one will.

But if either husband or wife breaks the law by fornication, and it is made public either by themselves or by their priests, they shall undergo the just censure of the spiritual magisterium. For the husband shall complain of the wife, or the wife of the husband, about the sin against their union before the Church and its prelates, according to the justice of God; but not so that the husband or wife can seek another marriage; either they shall stay together in righteous union, or they shall both abstain from such unions, as the discipline of church practice shows. And they shall not tear each other to pieces by viperous rending, but they shall love with pure love, since both man and woman could not exist without having been conceived in such a bond, as My friend Paul witnesses when he says:

12 Words of the apostle on this subject

"As the woman is of the man, so is the man for the woman; but all are from God" [1 Corinthians 11:12]. Which is to say: Woman was created for the sake of man, and man for the sake of woman. As she is from the man, the man is also from her, lest they dissent from each other in the unity of making their children; for they should work as one in one work, as the air and the wind intermingle in their labor. In what way? The air is moved by the wind, and the wind is mingled with the air, so that in their movement all verdant things are subject to their influence. What does this mean? The wife must cooperate with the husband and the husband with the wife in making children. Therefore the greatest crime and wickedest act is to make by fornication a division in the days of creating children, since the husband and wife cut off their own blood from its rightful place, sending it to an alien place. They will certainly incur the deceit of the Devil and the wrath of God, because they have transgressed that bond God ordained for them. Woe to them, therefore, if their sins are not forgiven! But although, as has been shown, the husband

and wife work together in their children, nevertheless the husband and the wife and all other creatures come from the divine disposition and ordination, since God made them according to His will.

13 Why before the Incarnation some men had several wives

Before the Incarnation of My Son, however, certain men among the ancient people had several wives at once, as they wished; they had not yet heard the open prohibition of My Son, Who when He came into the world showed that the right fruit of this union of husband and wife as long as they live is the fruit manifest in the union of Adam and Eve, a union to be exercised not by the will of Man but by the fear of God. For it is better to have this right union, by the arrangement of the prudence of the Church, than to crave fornication; but you humans ignore this, and pursue your lusts not only like humans but like beasts.

But let there be right faith and pure love of the knowledge of God between husband and wife lest their seed be polluted by the Devil's art and divine vengeance strike them because they are biting and tearing each other to pieces and sowing their seed inhumanly with the wantonness of beasts. In such a case jealousy will torture them like a viper, and without the fear of God and without human discipline a defiled excess of seed will be stored up in them, and often, by the just judgment of God, this perversity of theirs will be chastised by having those born of them deprived of limbs and of health in their lives; unless I receive their penitence and show Myself propitious to them. For if any shall call upon Me in penitence for their sins, I will accept their penitence for the love of My Son; for if anyone lifts a finger to Me in penitence, that is, reaches out to Me in penitence and groaning in his heart, saying, "I have sinned, Lord, before You!" My Son, Who is the Priest of priests, will show Me that penitence; for penitence which is offered to priests for the love of My Son obtains the purgation of the sinners. Therefore, people who worthily do penance escape from the jaws of the Devil, who, trying to swallow the hook of divine power, has grievously wounded his jaw; and now, therefore, faithful souls pass out of perdition and arrive at salvation. How?

Because the priests at the altar, invoking My name, will receive the confession of the peoples and show them the remedy of salvation. So, in order to find God propitious, let them not contaminate their seed by various vices, since those who emit their semen in fornication or adultery render their children, born of them thus, unsound. How? Can he who mixes mud or ordure with pure clay make a lasting vessel? Likewise, will he who contaminates his semen in fornication or adultery ever beget strong sons? But many work in different ways in their inmost being, and many of these become

prudent toward the world and toward God. And with these the heavenly Jerusalem is filled; deserting vice and loving virtue, they imitate My Son in chastity and in great works, carrying in their bodies, as much as they are able, His martyrdom.

But when I do not wish a person to have children, I take away the virile power of the semen, that it may not coagulate in the mother's womb; so also I deny the earth the power to bear fruit when by My just judgment I will to do so. But do you wonder, O human, why I let children be born in adultery and similar crimes? My judgment is just. For, since the fall of Adam, I have not found in human seed the justice that should have been in it, for the Devil drove out this justice by the taste of the fruit. Therefore I sent My Son into the world born of a virgin, so that by His blood, in which there was no carnal pollution, He might take away from the Devil those spoils that he had carried off from humanity.

14 No human or angel but only the Son of God could deliver Man

For neither a human being, conceived in sin, nor an angel, who has no covering of flesh, could save Man, wallowing in sins and laboring under the heaviness of the flesh, from the power of the Devil; but only He Who, coming without sin, with a pure and sinless body, delivered him by His Passion. Therefore, though human beings are born in sin, I nevertheless gather them into My heavenly kingdom when they faithfully seek it. For no wickedness can take My elect from me, as Wisdom testifies, saying:

15 Words of Wisdom on this subject

"The souls of the just are in the hand of God; and the torment of death shall not touch them" [Wisdom 3:1]. Which is to say: The souls of those who embrace the path of rectitude with devout affection are aided by the celestial Helper; so that, because of the good works by which in the height of justice they strive for Heaven, the torment of perdition does not break them, for the true Light strengthens them in the fear and love of God. But after Adam and Eve were driven out of the place of delight, they knew in themselves the work of conceiving and bearing children. And falling thus from disobedience into death, when they knew they could sin, they discovered sin's sweetness. And in this way, turning My rightful institution into sinful lust, although they should have known that the commotion in their veins was not for the sweetness of sin but for the love of children, by the Devil's suggestion they changed it to lechery; and, losing the innocence of the act of begetting, they yielded it to sin. This was not accomplished without the Devil's persuasion; for that purpose he sent forth his darts, and it did not come to pass without

his suggestion; as he said, "My strength is in human conception, and therefore humanity is mine!" And, seeing that if Man consented to him he would become a sharer in his punishment, he said again within himself: "All iniquities are against Most Powerful God, since He is certainly not unjust." And that deceiver put this as a great seal on his heart, that Man, who had consented to him of his own accord, could not be taken away from him.

Therefore I took secret counsel within Myself, to send My Son for the redemption of humanity, that Man might be restored to the heavenly Jerusalem. And no iniquity could withstand this counsel, for My Son, coming into the world, gathered unto himself all who, forsaking sin, chose to hear and imitate Him. I am just and righteous, not willing the iniquity that you, O human, embrace when you know you can do evil. For Lucifer and Man each tried at the beginning of their creation to rebel against Me and could not stand firm, but fell away from good and chose evil. But Lucifer laid hold of total evil and rejected all good, and did not taste the good at all, but fell into death. Adam, however, tasted the good when he accepted obedience, but he longed for evil, and in his desire accomplished it by his disobedience to God. Why this happened is not for you, O human, to investigate; mortal cannot know what there was before the creation of the world or what may happen after the last day, but God alone knows this, except insofar as He permits His elect to know it.

But that fornication, which is commonly done by people, is abominable in My sight, for I created male and female from the beginning in integrity and not in wickedness. Therefore those hypocrites who say it is lawful for them to commit fornication, with animal appetites, with whomever they wish, are unworthy of My eyes, because, despising the honor and loftiness of their rationality, they look to the beasts and make themselves like them. Woe to those who live so and persevere in this wickedness!

16 Blood relatives may not be united in marriage

I also do not wish the blood of relatives to be mingled in marriage, where the ardor of family love is not yet weakened, lest there arise shameless love in the relation of consanguinity; but let the blood of different families flow together, which feels no blood relationship burning within it, so that human custom may work there.

17 Example of milk

Milk that is cooked once or twice has not yet lost its flavor, but by the time it is coagulated and cooked the seventh or eighth time, it loses its qualities and does not have a pleasant taste except in case of necessity. And as

one must not have sexual relations with a relative who is one's own spouse, so also one must abhor a sexual relationship with a relative related not to one but to one's spouse; let no human being join in such a coupling, which the Church by its Doctors, who established it in great responsibility and honor, has forbidden.

18 Blood relatives could marry in the Old, but not in the New Testament

Under the Old Testament people married their blood relatives by the precept of the Law, but that was allowed because of their hardheartedness, so that they might be at peace among themselves and charity be strengthened in them; so that these tribes would not break My Covenant by dividing and mixing with the pagans in marriage, until the time came when My Son brought the fullness of charity, changing the joining of relatives in carnal bonds into marriages with different people in bashful modesty. Thus, since the Bride of My Son [the Church] now possesses in holy baptism a bond of My fear and righteous justice, let such joinings of relatives be far from her; for the embraces of a man and woman related by blood would be wickedly enkindled into shameless fornication and ceaseless lust much more than those of unrelated people. I am explaining this by this person [Hildegard], to whom this human operation is unknown; she is receiving this explanation not from human knowledge, but from God. What next?

19 A man should be adult to marry and take only a wife of marriageable age

When a male is at the age of strength, so that his veins are full of blood, then he is fertile in his semen; then let him take in lawfully instituted marriage a woman who is also at the age of heat, that she may modestly receive his seed and bear him children in the path of rectitude.

20 On the avoidance of illicit and lustful pollution

But let not a man emit his semen in excessive lust before the years of his strength; for if he tries to sow his seed in the eagerness of lust before that seed has enough heat to coagulate properly, it is proof that he is sinning at the Devil's suggestion. And when a man is already strong in his desire, let him not exercise his strength in that work as much as he can; because if he thus pays attention to the Devil, he is doing a devilish work, making his body contemptible, which is entirely unlawful. But let the man do as human nature

teaches him, and seek the right way with his wife in the strength of his heat and the vigor of his seed; and let him do this with human knowledge, out of desire for children.

But I do not want this work done during the wife's menses, when she is already suffering the flow of her blood, the opening of the hidden parts of her womb, lest the flow of her blood carry with it the mature seed after its reception, and the seed, thus carried forth, perish; at this time the woman is in pain and in prison, suffering a small portion of the pain of childbirth. I do not remit this time of pain for women, because I gave it to Eve when she conceived sin in the taste of the fruit; but therefore the woman should be cherished in this time with a great and healing tenderness. Let her contain herself in hidden knowledge; she should not, however, restrain herself from going into My temple, but faith allows her to enter in the service of humility for her salvation. But because the Bride of My Son is always whole, a man who has open wounds because the wholeness of his members has been divided by the impact of a blow shall not enter My Temple, except under the fear of great necessity, lest it be violated, as the intact members of Abel, who was a temple of God, were cruelly broken by his brother Cain.

21 A woman shall not enter the temple after birth or defloration by a man

So a woman, too, when she bears offspring, may not enter My Temple except in accordance with the law I give her, because her hidden members have been broken, that the holy sacraments of My Temple may be unviolated by any masculine or feminine pain or pollution; because the most pure Virgin bore My Son, and she was whole without any wound of sin. For the place that is consecrated in honor of my Only-Begotten should be untouched by any corruption of bruise or wound, because My Only-Begotten knew in himself the integrity of the Virgin Birth. Therefore, let a woman who breaks the wholeness of her virginity with a man also refrain from entering My Temple while injured by the bruise of her corruption, until the injury of that wound is healed, in accordance with the sure instruction of church teaching. For when His Bride was wedded to My Son on the wood of the cross, she kept herself hidden until My Son commanded His disciples to teach the truth of the Gospel throughout the whole world; but afterward she arose openly and publicly preached the glory of her Bridegroom in the regeneration of the Spirit and water. So let a virgin who is joined to a husband do the same, namely remain hidden with modest shame until the time which church opinion appoints for her; and when she has given herself over to the love of her husband in her concealment, let her come forth openly.

22 Those who have intercourse with the pregnant are murderers

I do not want that work of man and woman to take place from the time when the root of a little child has already been placed in the woman, lest the development of that little child be polluted by excessive and wasted semen, until her purification after childbirth. After that it may be done again, in rectitude and not in wantonness, for the love of children. Thus the human race may procreate by honest human custom, and not as foolish people babble when they claim it is lawful to satisfy their lust at will, saying, "How can we contain ourselves so cruelly?" O humans, if you pay attention to the Devil, he will incite you to evil and destroy you with his deadly poison; but if you raise your eyes to God, He will help you and make you chaste. Do you not desire chastity in your works rather than lust? The woman is subject to the man in that he sows his seed in her, as he works the earth to make it bear fruit. Does a man work the earth that it may bring forth thorns and thistles? Never, but that it may give worthy fruit. So also this endeavor should be for the love of children and not for the wantonness of lust.

Therefore, O humans, weep and howl to your God, Whom you so often despise in your sinning, when you sow your seed in the worst fornication and thereby become not only fornicators but murderers; for you cast aside the mirror of God and sate your lust at will. Therefore the Devil always incites you to this work, knowing that you desire your lustfulness more than the joy of children. Hear, then, you who are among the towers of the Church! In your fornication do not accuse Me, but consider yourselves; for when you despise Me and run to the Devil you do unlawful things, and therefore you do not wish to be chaste; as My servant Hosea says, speaking of the corrupted people:

23 Hosea on this subject

"They will not set their thoughts to return to their God; for the spirit of fornication is in the midst of them, and they have not known God" [Hosea 5:4]. Which is to say: Evil people who do not know God hide the countenance of their heart, and do not do the various things that would bring it back to true brightness; that is, they do not see with clear eyes the things that are of God, but nurture evil in themselves; for, by the Devil's persuasion, the breath of wanton impurity weakens the virile strength they should have, and they cannot put good faith in God because the Devil turns them away from the life of felicity.

VISION TWO

24 Commendation of chastity

But now I will turn to My most loving sheep who are securely placed in My heart, the seed of chastity. Virginity was made by Me, for My Son was born of a virgin. And therefore virginity is the most beautiful fruit of all the fruits of the valleys, and the greatest of all the persons in the palace of the unfailing King; for it was not subject to the precept of the law, since it brought My Only-Begotten into the world. Therefore, listen, all those who wish to follow My Son, in the innocence of free chastity or in the solitude of mourning widowhood: Virginity unspotted from the beginning is nobler than widowhood oppressed under the yoke of a husband, even though widowhood, after the grief of the loss of a husband, would imitate virginity.

For My Son bore many pains in His body and underwent the death of the cross; therefore you also, in His love, will suffer much anguish when you conquer in yourselves what was sown in the lust of sin by the taste of the fruit. But though you will endure in your seed flowing rivulets from the conflagration of lust, since you cannot be so chaste as to prevent human weakness from appearing in you secretly, you should in that labor imitate the Passion of My Son and resist yourselves; that is, extinguish within yourselves the burning flame of lust and other things of this world, casting out anger, pride, wantonness and other vices of that sort and attaining this victory by a great struggle. These battles are to Me full of great beauty and much fruit, brighter than the sun and sweeter than the love of spices; for when you trample under foot the burning lust within you, you imitate My Only-Begotten in His pains. And when you persevere in this, you will attain much glory for it in the celestial kingdom.

O sweetest flowers! My angels marvel at your struggle, for you escape from death, so as not to be polluted by the poisonous mud of the world; you have a carnal body, but you tread it under foot, and so you will be glorious in their company since you will appear unpolluted in their likeness. Therefore rejoice that you thus persevere, for I am with you when you receive Me faithfully and with joy in your hearts receive My voice; as I show in a secret vision of My beloved John, saying:

25 John on this subject

"Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any shall hear My voice and open the door, I will come in to him and will sup with him, and he with Me" [Apocalypse 3:20]. That is to say: O you who faithfully love Me, your Savior, look and see how, wishing to aid you, I wait at the tabernacle of your heart,

seeing what you have in the self-knowledge of your conscience, and with the breath of your memory I knock at your spirit, that its goodwill may open and grant admission. And if then the faithful heart, which fears Me, hears My knock, I join Myself to him, embracing him and taking with him the unfailing food, since he offers Me that sweet taste, himself, in his good works; therefore he too shall have that food of life in Me, because he loves what brings life to those who desire justice.

26 After Adam was expelled, God closed Paradise in

But, as you see, after Adam and Eve were expelled from Paradise, *a luminous splendor surrounded that region*, since when they went forth from the place of delight because of their transgression, the Power of the Divine Majesty took away every stain of contagion from the place and fortified it with His Glory, so that from then on it would be touched by no encroachment; which also showed that the transgression which had taken place there would one day be abolished by His clemency and mercy.

27 Creation opposed Man because he rebelled against God

And so *all the elements of the world, which before had existed in great calm, were turned to the greatest agitation and displayed horrible terrors*, because when Man chose disobedience, rebelling against God and forsaking tranquillity for disquiet, that Creation, which had been created for the service of humanity, turned against humans in great and various ways so that Man, having lowered himself, might be held in check by it. What does this mean? That Man showed himself a rebel against God in the place of delights, and therefore that Creation, which had been subjected to him in service, now opposed itself to him.

28 On the delightfulness of Paradise

But Paradise is the place of delight, which blooms with the freshness of flowers and grass and the charms of spices, full of fine odors and dowered with the joy of blessed souls, giving invigorating moisture to the dry ground; it supplies strong force to the earth, as the soul gives strength to the body, for Paradise is not darkened by shadow or the perdition of sinners.

29 Why God made Man such that he could sin

Therefore listen and understand me, you who say in your hearts, "What are these things and why?" Oh, why are you so foolish in your hearts, you who have been made in the image and likeness of God? How can such great

glory and honor, which is given to you, exist without testing, as if it were an empty case of nothing? Gold must be tested in the fire, and precious stones, to smooth them, must be polished, and all things of this kind must be diligently scrutinized. Hence, O foolish humans, how can that which was made in the image and likeness of God exist without testing? For Man must be examined more than any other creature, and therefore he must be tested through every other creature. How?

Spirit is to be tested by spirit, flesh by flesh, earth by water, fire by cold, fight by resistance, good by evil, beauty by deformity, poverty by riches, sweetness by bitterness, health by sickness, long by short, hard by soft, height by depth, light by darkness, life by death, Paradise by punishments, the Heavenly Kingdom by Gehenna, earthly things by earthly things and heavenly things by heavenly things. Hence Man is tested by every creature, in Paradise, on earth and in Hell; and then he is placed in Heaven. You see clearly only a few things among many that are hidden from your eyes. So why do you deride what is right, plain and just, and good among all good things in the sight of God? Why do you think these things unjust? God is just, but the human race is unjust in transgressing God's precepts when it claims to be wiser than God.

30 Man should not examine the highest things since he cannot the lowest ones

Now tell me, O human: What do you think you were when you were not yet in soul and body? Truly you do not know how you were created. But now, O human, you wish to investigate Heaven and earth, and to judge of their justice in God's disposition, and to know the highest things though you are not able to examine the lowest; for you do not know how you live in the body, or how you may be divested of the body. He Who created you in the first human foresaw all these things; but that same most gentle Father sent His Only-Begotten to die for the people, to deliver humanity from the power of the Devil.

31 Man now shines brighter in Heaven than before

And thus Man, having been delivered, shines in God, and God in Man; Man, having community in God, has in Heaven more radiant brightness than he had before. This would not have been so if the Son of God had not put on flesh, for if Man had remained in Paradise, the Son of God would not have suffered on the cross. But when Man was deceived by the wily serpent, God was touched by true mercy and ordained that His Only-Begotten would become incarnate in the most pure Virgin. And thus after Man's ruin many

shining virtues were lifted up in Heaven, like humility, the queen of virtues, which flowered in the virgin birth, and other virtues, which lead God's elect to the heavenly places. For when a field with great labor is cultivated, it brings forth much fruit, and the same is shown in the human race, for after humanity's ruin many virtues arose to raise it up again. But you, O humans, oppressed by the heaviness of the flesh, do not see that great glory God's full justice has prepared for you, without stain or unworthiness, so that no one can throw it down. For before the structure of the world was made, God in true justice had foreseen all these things. Therefore, O human, consider this comparison:

32 Man's condition symbolized by a garden, a sheep and a pearl

The master who seeks to set out a garden without being wearied first chooses a suitable site, and then, deciding on a place for each planting, reflects on the fruit of good trees and the utility, taste, fragrance and high esteem of various spices. And so this master, if he is a great philosopher and expert contriver, lays out each of the plantings where he sees that it will be most useful; and then he thinks of enclosing it with great walls, so that none of his enemies can destroy his planting. Then he appoints his experts, who know how to water the garden and who collect its fruit and make from it many fragrant things. Therefore consider well, O human: If that master foresaw that his garden, bringing forth no fruit or any kind of use, was to be destroyed, why would so great a philosopher and contriver have made, planted, watered and fortified it so eagerly and with so much labor?

Hear, therefore, and understand! God, Who is the Sun of Justice, made His splendor rise over the filth that is Man's wickedness; and that splendor shone with great brightness, as that filth stank exceedingly. The sun gleamed forth in its brightness, and the filth putrefied in its foulness; and therefore the sun was embraced by those beholding it with much greater love than if the filth had not been there opposite it. But as foul as the filth is compared to the sun, so evil is Man's wickedness compared to God's justice. Hence justice, being beautiful, must be loved, and iniquity, being foul, must be rejected.

Into this foulness fell a sheep belonging to the master who had planted this garden. But this sheep was separated from its master by its own consent, not by his negligence; afterward the master sought it again with great zeal and justice. Therefore the choir of angels shone with great honor, for the angels saw a human in Heaven. What does this mean?

When the innocent Lamb was suspended on the cross, the elements trembled, because the most noble Son of the Virgin was slain in the body by the hands of murderers; by His death the lost sheep was brought back to the

pastures of life. For the ancient persecutor saw that because of the blood of the innocent Lamb, which the Lamb had poured out in remission of the sins of humanity, he must lose that sheep, and only then first recognized who that Lamb was; previously he had not been able to understand how the Celestial Bread, without a man's semen and without any desire for sin, had become incarnate of the Virgin by the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit.

For that persecutor, when first he was created, raised himself up in the haughtiness of pride, throwing himself into death and expelling Man from the glory of Paradise; but God did not will to resist him by His power, but conquered him by humility through His Son. And because Lucifer derided God's justice, by God's just judgment he was unable to know the incarnation of God's Only-Begotten. For by this hidden decision the lost sheep was brought back to life. Therefore, O rebellious humans, why are you so hard-hearted? God did not will to forsake humanity, but sent His Son for its salvation; thus God crushed the head of pride in the ancient serpent. For when Man was snatched from death, Hell opened its gates, and Satan cried, "Alas, alas, who will help me?" And the Devil's whole band was torn with great agitation, marvelling that there was a power so great they and their prince could not resist it, since they saw the souls of the faithful being taken away from them. Thus Man was lifted up above the heavens because through the Son of God God appeared in Man and Man in God. Likewise, that master who lost the sheep but brought it so gloriously back to life had, like that sheep, a precious pearl that slipped from him and fell into the mud. But he, not allowing it to lie in the dirt, mercifully drew it forth and purified it of the filth in which it had lain, as gold is purified in the furnace, and restored it to its former honor with even greater glory. For God created Man, but the latter at the Devil's instigation fell into death, from which the Son of God saved him by His blood and brought him gloriously to the glory of Heaven. And how? By humility and charity.

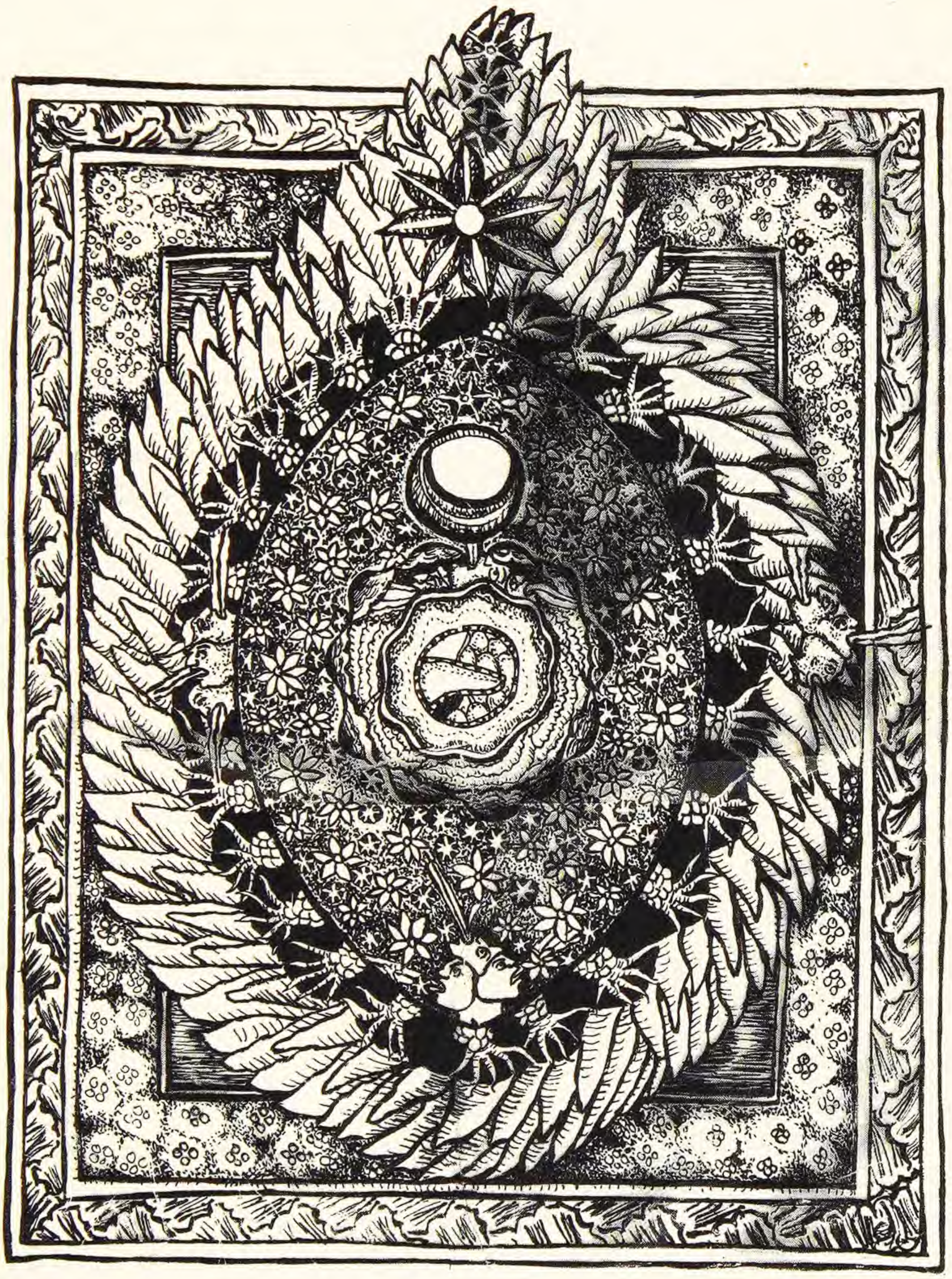
33 Commendation of humility and charity above all other virtues

For humility caused the Son of God to be born of the Virgin, in whom was found humility, not eager embraces or beauty of flesh or earthly riches or gold ornaments or earthly honors. But the Son of God lay in a manger, because His Mother was a poor maiden. Humility always groans, weeps and destroys all offenses, for this is its work. So let anyone who wishes to conquer the Devil arm himself with humility, since Lucifer fervently flees it and hides in its presence like a snake in a hole; for wherever it finds him, it quickly snaps him like a fragile thread.

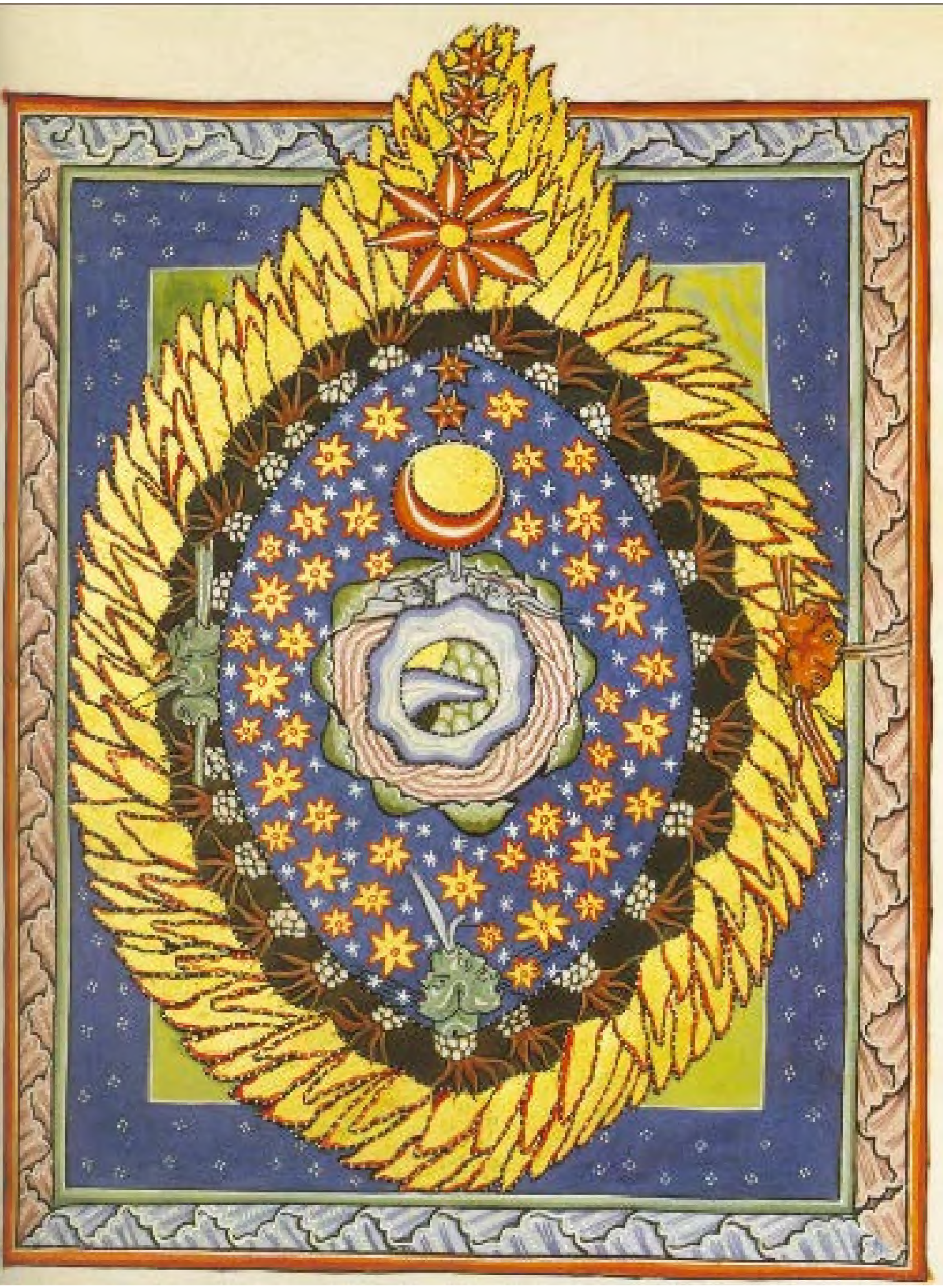
And charity took the Only-Begotten of God, who was in the bosom of the Father in Heaven, and placed Him in the womb of a mother on earth, for

it does not spurn sinners or publicans but seeks to save all. Therefore it often brings forth a fountain of tears from the eyes of the faithful, thus softening hardness of heart. In this, humility and charity are brighter than the other virtues, since humility and charity are like a soul and body that possess stronger powers than the other powers of soul and bodily members. How? Humility is like the soul and charity like the body, and they cannot be separated from each other but work together, just as soul and body cannot be disjoined but work together as long as a person lives in the body. And as the various members of the body are subject, according to their powers, to the soul and to the body, so also the other virtues cooperate, according to their justice, with humility and charity. And therefore, O humans, for the glory of God and for your salvation, pursue humility and charity; armed with them, you shall not fear the Devil's snares but shall have everlasting life.

Therefore whoever has knowledge in the Holy Spirit and wings of faith, let this one not ignore My admonition, but taste it, embrace it and receive it in his soul.



THE UNIVERSE



VISION THREE
The Universe and Its Symbolism

After this I saw a vast instrument, round and shadowed, in the shape of an egg, small at the top, large in the middle and narrowed at the bottom; outside it, surrounding its circumference, there was bright fire with, as it were, a shadowy zone under it. And in that fire there was a globe of sparkling flame so great that the whole instrument was illuminated by it, over which three little torches were arranged in such a way that by their fire they held up the globe lest it fall. And that globe at times raised itself up, so that much fire flew to it and thereby its flames lasted longer; and sometimes sank downward and great cold came to it, so that its flames were more quickly subdued. But from the fire that surrounded the instrument issued a blast with whirlwinds, and from the zone beneath it rushed forth another blast with its own whirlwinds, which diffused themselves hither and thither throughout the instrument. In that zone, too, there was a dark fire of such great horror that I could not look at it, whose force shook the whole zone, full of thunder, tempest and exceedingly sharp stones both large and small. And while it made its thunders heard, the bright fire and the winds and the air were in commotion, so that lightning preceded those thunders; for the fire felt within itself the turbulence of the thunder.

But beneath that zone was purest ether, with no zone beneath it, and in it I saw a globe of white fire and great magnitude over which two little torches were placed, holding that globe so that it would not exceed the measure of its course. And in that ether were scattered many bright spheres, into which the white globe from time to time poured itself out and emitted its brightness, and then moved back under the globe of red fire and renewed its flames from it, and then again sent them out into those spheres. And from that ether too a blast came forth with its whirlwinds, which spread itself everywhere throughout the instrument.

And beneath that ether I saw watery air with a white zone beneath it, which diffused itself here and there and imparted moisture to the whole instrument. And when it suddenly contracted it sent forth sudden rain with great noise, and when it gently spread out it gave a pleasant and softly falling rain. But from it too came a blast with its whirlwinds, which spread itself throughout the aforementioned instrument.

And in the midst of these elements was a sandy globe of great magnitude, which these elements had so surrounded that it could not waver in any direction.

BOOK ONE

But as these elements and these blasts contended with each other, by their strength they made it move a little.

And I saw between the North and the East a great mountain, which to the North had great darkness and to the East had great light, but in such a way that the light could not reach the darkness, nor the darkness the light.

And again I heard the voice from Heaven, saying to me:

1 The visible and temporal is a manifestation of the invisible and eternal

God, Who made all things by His will, created them so that His Name would be known and glorified, showing in them not just the things that are visible and temporal, but also the things that are invisible and eternal. Which is demonstrated by this vision you are perceiving.

2 The firmament in the likeness of an egg and what it signifies

For this *vast instrument, round and shadowy, in the shape of an egg, small at the top, large in the middle and narrowed at the bottom,* faithfully shows Omnipotent God, incomprehensible in His majesty and inestimable in His mysteries and the hope of all the faithful; for humanity at first was rude and rough and simple in its actions, but later was enlarged through the Old and New Testaments, and finally at the end of the world is destined to be beset with many tribulations.

3 On the bright fire and the shadowy zone

Outside it, surrounding its circumference, there is bright fire with, as it were, a shadowy zone under it. This shows that God consumes by the fire of His vengeance all those who are outside the true faith, and those who remain within the Catholic faith He purifies by the fire of His consolation; thus He throws down the darkness of devilish perversity, as He did also when the Devil wanted to oppose himself to God though God had created him, and so fell defeated into perdition.

4 On the placement of the sun and the three stars

And in that fire there is a globe of sparkling flame, so great that the whole instrument is illuminated by it, which in the splendour of its brightness shows that within God the Father is His ineffable Only-Begotten, the sun of justice with the brilliance of burning charity, of such great glory that every creature is illumined by the brightness of His light; *over which three little torches are*

arranged in such a way that by their fire they hold up the globe lest it fall; that is, [the Trinity] shows how by its arrangement the Son of God, leaving the angels in the heavenly places, descended to earth and showed humans, who exist in soul and body, heavenly things, so that, glorifying Him by serving Him, they reject all harmful error, and magnify Him as the true Son of God incarnate through the true Virgin, when the angel foretold Him and when humans, living in soul and body, with faithful joy received Him.

5 On the ascent of the sun and what it signifies

Therefore *the globe sometimes raises itself up, so that much fire flies to it and therefore its flames last longer.* This means that when the time came that the Only-Begotten of God was to become incarnate for the redemption and uplifting of the human race by the will of the Father, the Holy Spirit by the power of the Father brought celestial mysteries wonderfully to pass in the Blessed Virgin; so that when the Son of God too in virginal chastity showed marvellous splendor and made virginity fruitful, virginity became glorious; for the longed-for Incarnation was brought to pass in the noble Virgin.

6 On the descent of the sun and what it signifies

So, indeed, *sometimes it sinks downwards and great cold comes to it, so that its flames are more quickly subdued.* This shows that the Only-Begotten of God, born of a virgin and hence inclined to be merciful to human poverty, incurred many miseries and sustained great physical anguish; but after He had shown Himself to the world in a bodily shape, He passed from the world and returned to the Father, while His disciples stood by, as it is written:

7 Words from the Acts of the Apostles

"While they looked on He was lifted up, and a cloud received Him" [Acts 1:19]. Which is to say: When the children of the Church had received the Son of God in the interior knowledge of their hearts, the sanctity of His body was lifted up into the power of His Divinity, and in a mystical miracle the cloud of secret mystery received Him, hiding Him from mortal eyes, and the blasts of the winds showed themselves His servants.

8 On the first wind and its whirlwinds

But, as you see, *from the fire that surrounds the instrument issues a blast with whirlwinds,* which shows that from Almighty God, Who fills the whole

world with His power, truth rushes forth and spreads with words of justice, which truly demonstrate to humanity the same living and true God.

9 On the second wind and its whirlwinds

But from the zone beneath it rushes forth another blast with its own whirlwinds because the rage of the Devil, knowing God and fearing Him, sends out the worst dishonor and the most evil utterances, *which diffuse themselves hither and thither throughout the instrument,* since in the world useful and useless rumors spread themselves abroad in many ways among the peoples.

10 On the dark fire and the thunder and the sharp stones

In this zone also there is a dark fire of such horror that you cannot look at it. This means that the ancient betrayer's most evil and most vile snares vomit forth blackest murder with such great passion that the human intellect cannot fathom its insanity; *whose force shakes the whole zone,* because murder includes in its horror all diabolical malignities. In the first man born hatred boiled up out of anger and led to fratricide, *full of thunder, tempest and exceedingly sharp stones large and small,* for murder is full of avarice, and drunkenness and extreme hardness of heart, which run riot relentlessly both in great murders and in minor vices. *While it makes its thunders heard, the bright fire and the winds and the air are all in commotion,* because when murder cries out in its eagerness to shed blood, it arouses the justice of Heaven and an outburst of flying rumors and an increased disposition to vengeance on the part of right judgment; *so that lightning precedes those thunders, for the fire feels in itself the turbulence of the thunder,* for the manifestation of divine scrutiny exceeds and suppresses evil, since the Divine Majesty, before the sound of that insanity manifests itself in public, foresees it with that watchful eye to which all things are naked.

11 The purest ether and the placement of the moon and two stars

But beneath that zone is purest ether, with no zone beneath it; for beneath the snares of the ancient betrayer shines most serene faith, with no uncertainty or infidelity hiding in it, since it is not founded by itself but dependent on Christ; *and in it you see a globe of white fire and great magnitude,* which is a true symbol of the unconquered Church, which, as you can see, asserts in faith innocent brightness and great honor; *over which two little torches are placed, holding that globe so that it does not exceed the measure of its course,* which signifies that the two Testaments given from Heaven, the Old and the

New, connect it to the divine rules of the celestial mysteries, holding the Church back from rushing into a variety of different practices, for both the Old and the New Testaments show it the blessedness of the supernal heritage.

12 The placement of the other stars and what it signifies

And therefore *in that ether are scattered many bright spheres, into which the white globe from time to time pours itself out and emits its brightness;* for in the purity of faith many splendid works of piety are done by which the Church, though it may suffer words of disdain, passes on the beauty of its miracles. Though plunged in sorrow, it still marvels at the brightness of the works done by the perfected through others; and therefore, *it moves back under the globe of red fire and renews its flames from it, and then again sends them out into those spheres;* for, moving in contrition back under the protection of the Only-Begotten of God, and receiving from Him the pardon of divine consolation, it again shows the love of heavenly things in blessed works.

13 The third wind and its whirlwinds and what they signify

Therefore also *from the ether a blast comes forth with its whirlwinds, which spreads itself everywhere throughout the instrument;* for from the unity of faith there comes forth to help humanity a strong tradition of true and perfect statements, which swiftly penetrate to the ends of the earth.

14 The watery air and the white zone and what they signify

And beneath that ether you see watery air with a white zone beneath it, which diffuses itself here and there and imparts moisture to the whole instrument; for thus, under the faith possessed by the ancient and the modern fathers, baptism in the Church for the salvation of believers is truly shown to you, which, founded on blessed innocence and stability, propagates itself everywhere by divine inspiration and brings to the whole world the overflowing waters of salvation for believers. *When this zone suddenly contracts, it sends forth sudden rain with great noise, and when it gently spreads out it gives a pleasant and softly falling rain;* for sometimes baptism is presented by the apostles of truth with all their enthusiasm of preaching and depth of mind, and so manifests itself to the astonishment of humans with a rapid abundance of words and a flood of preaching; and sometimes that same baptism is presented by those preachers with sweet moderation, so that it reaches the people for whom it is meant discreetly by a gentle watering.

15 On the fourth wind and its whirlwinds

Therefore *from that air too comes a blast with its whirlwinds that spreads itself throughout the aforementioned instrument;* for when the flood of baptism brings salvation to believers, a true report of the words of forcible sermons goes forth and pervades the whole world with its manifest blessedness, so that the people, forsaking infidelity and seeking after the Catholic faith, openly declare it.

16 On the sandy globe of the earth and what it signifies

And in the midst of these elements is a sandy globe of great magnitude, which these elements have so surrounded that it cannot waver in any direction. This openly shows that, of all the strengths of God's creation, Man's is most profound, made in a wondrous way with great glory from the dust of the earth and so entangled with the strengths of the rest of creation that he can never be separated from them; for the elements of the world, created for Man's service, wait on him, and Man, enthroned as it were in their midst, by divine disposition presides over them, as David says, inspired by Me:

17 Words of David on this subject

"Thou hast crowned him with glory and worship, and given him dominion over all the works of Thy hands" [Psalms 8:6–7]. Which is to say: You, O God, Who have marvellously made all things, have crowned Man with the gold and purple crown of intellect and with the sublime garment of visible beauty, thus placing him like a prince above the height of Your perfect works, which You have distributed justly and rightly among Your creatures. Before all Your other creatures You have conferred on Man great and wonderful dignities.

18 On the movement of the earth and what it signifies

But, as you see, *as these elements and these blasts contend with each other, by their strength they make the globe move a little;* for at certain times the report of the Creator's miracles comes to all of God's creation, so that miracle is piled on miracle in a great thunder of words; and then Man, struck by the greatness of these miracles, feels the impact on his mind and body, and in these wondrous deeds considers with astonishment his own weakness and frailty.

VISION THREE

19 The great mountain between the North and the East

And you see between the North and the East a great mountain, which to the North has great darkness and to the East has great light. This shows Man's great choice between devilish impiety and divine goodness, evil deception giving the many miseries of damnation to the reprobate, and salvation giving the great happiness of redemption to the elect; *but in such a way that the light cannot reach the darkness, nor the darkness the light;* for the works of light do not come down among the works of darkness, and the works of darkness do not ascend to the works of light; though the Devil often tries to obscure the latter through evil people, like pagans, heretics and false prophets, and those whom they try to attract to themselves by fallacious deception. How? Because they want to know what it is not for them to know, imitating the one who panted to be like the Most High. And because they follow him, by their own will he shows them a lie as the truth. Hence they are not with Me, and I am not with them; for they do not walk in My ways, but love strange paths, seeking out the false things a foolish creature shows them about future events. And in their perverse seeking this is what they wish to have, despising Me and rejecting My saints, who love Me with a sincere heart.

20 Those who perversely examine the future by means of creatures

But these people who obstinately tempt Me by perverse art, examining creatures that were made for their service and asking them to show them things their wilfulness wishes to know—can they, by practicing this art, lengthen or shorten the time their Creator has given them to live? They cannot, by a day or by an hour. Or can they postpone what God has predetermined? In no way. O wretches! Do I not sometimes permit creatures to show you what will happen? They can show you these signs because they fear Me, God, as a servant can sometimes display the power of his master, and as the ox, the ass and other animals show the will of their masters when they faithfully do their bidding. O fools! When you consign Me to forgetfulness, neither looking to Me nor adoring Me, but looking to a creature subject to you for what it portends and shows, then you are obstinately casting Me aside, worshipping the frail creature instead of your Creator. Therefore I say to you: O human, why do you worship that creature, which cannot console you or help you and which cannot make you prosper in happiness, though it is affirmed that they can by astrologers, teachers of death and followers of pagan unbelief, who say the stars give life to you humans and determine all your actions? O wretches, Who made the stars?

But at times, with My permission, the stars by certain signs do manifest themselves to humanity, as My Son shows in His Gospel, where He says:

21 Words of the Gospel

"There shall be signs in the sun and the moon and the stars" [Luke 21:35]. Which is to say: By the light of these lights service is rendered to humanity, and in their revolutions the times of times are displayed. So in the latest times, by My permission lamentable and dangerous epochs will be foretold in them, so that the radiance of the sun and the splendor of the moon and the brightness of the stars will be dimmed, that human hearts may be stirred up to action. Thus also by My will the Incarnation of My Son was shown by a star. But no human being has a star of his own, which determines his life, as a foolish and erring people tries to assert; all stars are at the service of all people. That star only shone more brightly than all other stars because My Only-Begotten, unlike all other humans, was born without sin from a virgin birth. But that star gave My Son no aid, except in faithfully announcing His Incarnation to the people; for all stars and other creatures, fearing Me, fulfil My command, but do not have any knowledge of anything about any creature. For creatures fulfil My commands when it pleases Me, in the same way as when a minter, making a coin, strikes it with the requisite form; then that coin displays the form stamped on it, but has no power to know when the minter may decide to impress another form on it, for neither in the long nor in the short run does it understand the form it has. What does this mean?

O human, if a stone lay before you on which, if you looked carefully, you could read what was going to happen to you, then in your mistaken thoughts, saddened by your misfortune or elated by your prosperity, you would say, "Alas, [ach] I shall die!" or "O joy, [wach] I shall live!" or "Alas, what misfortune," or "O joy, what prosperity is mine!" Now what would that stone have conferred on you? Would it have taken away or given you anything? It could not be either against you or for you.

And likewise neither stars nor fire nor birds nor any other creatures of this kind can either harm you or help you by your examining them. But if, rejecting Me, you trust in a creature made for your service, I also in My just judgment will cast you out of My sight, taking from you the felicity of My kingdom. For I do not want you to scrutinize stars or fire or birds or other creatures for signs of future events; and if you persist in scrutinizing them, your eyes are obnoxious to Me, and I will cast you out like the lost angel, who deserted the truth and threw himself into damnation.

O human! When the stars and the other creatures were made, where were you? Did you give God advice about their arrangement? But the pre-

sumption of such scrutiny arose in the first of all dissensions, when Man forgot God to such an extent that he arrogantly inspected one kind of creature after another and sought in them signs of future events. And thus, indeed, the error arose about Baal, because people who were deceived worshipped the creature of God instead of God, to which the Devil's mockery incited them, because they were mindful of the creature rather than the Creator and desired to know what they were not meant to know.

22 How the Devil mocks humanity by the art of magic

Therefore, worse things than this appeared, for humans through the Devil began to be crazy for magic arts, so that now they see and hear the Devil, and he speaks to them deceitfully and shows them one sort of creature in their scrutiny as if it were another. It is not My will to say how the first seducers were taught by the Devil, so that now those who seek him see and hear him; but they are very guilty in this wickedness of theirs, for they deny Me, their God, and imitate the ancient seducer. O human! I have sought you by the blood of My Son, not in malicious iniquity but in great justice; but you forsake Me, the true God, and imitate him who is a liar. I am justice and truth; and therefore I admonish you by faith and exhort you by love and recapture you by penitence, so that, though you are bloody in the pollutions of sinners, you may yet rise from your fall into ruin. But if you despise Me, understand the comparison in this parable; which says:

23 Parable on this subject

A certain lord who had many servants under him gave each of them a full set of warlike arms, saying, "Be upright and useful, and renounce tardiness and indolence." But while they were marching with him, these servants saw beside the road a certain impostor, inventor of evil arts; and some of them, being deceived, said, "We wish to learn this man's arts!" And, casting away their arms, they ran to him. The others said to them, "What are you doing, imitating this impostor and provoking our lord to anger?" And they answered, "How does this harm our lord?" But their lord said to them, "O wicked servants! Why have you thrown away the arms I gave you? And why is it dearer to you to love this vanity than to serve me, your lord, whose servants you are? Go, then, follow this impostor as you desire, for you do not wish to serve me, and see how his folly will profit you." And he cast them out. Which is to say:

This lord is Almighty God, ruling all peoples with His power, Who has armed every person with intellect, commanding him to be active and vigilant in the exercise of virtue, and rid himself of perverseness and negligence. But

as people are going along the way of truth, disposed to walk in the divine commands, they are met by many temptations; for the Devil, the seducer of the whole world and the wicked contriver of many vices, waits for them not in the way of truth but in deceptive ambushes. Therefore, certain of them, who love injustice more than right, are seduced by the Devil and are more eager to imitate the vices of the ancient seducer than to embrace the virtues of God. And that intellect, which they ought to have used for the divine commandments, they twist to the vices of earthly iniquity and submit themselves to the Devil. The Doctors, as their companions, cite to them often the sacred Scriptures, reproaching them for their deeds and loudly asking why they follow the Devil's illusions and bring down divine vengeance on themselves. But they almost always deride these admonitions, claiming that they sin in few things and do not offend God by pride at all. Therefore, when they persevere in that obduracy, they receive the divine sentence; for these servants of iniquity are asked why they suffocated their God-given intellect and why they preferred the deceptions of the ancient seducer to loving their Creator, Whom they should actively have served. Thus they too are despised for devilish illusions according to their works, since they refused to serve God, and they are forced to consider what their wicked seduction has profited them since, thus cast out, they incur damnation, because they have disregarded the divine precepts and tried to follow the Devil rather than God.

For I do not will that humans should despise Me, when they ought to know Me in faith; for if they reject Me to examine a creature subject to them, thus imitating the ancient seducer, then I permit them to achieve the desires of their hearts both as to the creature and as to the Devil; and thus they learn by experience how much the creature they have adored will profit them, and what the Devil whom they have followed will give them.

24 Humans go out of the world whenever their salvation and use is complete

And, O foolish humans, why do you scrutinize a creature about the length of your life? For none of you can either know or avoid or get through the period of his life except as I decide he will live; for, O human, when your salvation is complete in both worldly and spiritual matters, you will leave the present world and pass on to that which has no end. For when a person has such fortitude that he burns for Me more ardently than other people, and, aware of the earthly dregs of stinking sin, is active in avoiding the snares of the ancient serpent, I do not take his spirit from his body before his fruits have fully ripened with sweetest fragrance. But if I find one who is of such frailty that in pain of his body and terror of the evil lurker he is too delicate to

bear My yoke, I take him away from this world before his soul, wasting away in weakness, begins to dry up. For I know all things. But I want to caution the human race with all possible justice, so that no person can excuse himself: When I strike them with a sentence of death as if they were about to die, when in fact they are to live for a long time yet, I warn and exhort people to do justice. For no one can have or make for himself any time unless I see usefulness in him and by My will allow him to live; as indeed Job testifies, when he says:

25 Words of Job on this subject

"You have appointed his bounds, which cannot be passed" [Job 14:5]. Which is to say: You Who are above all and foresee all before it comes to pass have indeed established in the secret of Your majesty the bounds of human life, so that they cannot be exceeded by humans either by knowledge, by prudence or by understanding, for any reason, in infancy, youth or old age, except according to Your secret providence, which willed to make Man for the glory of Your Name.

26 Words of God on this subject

I, O human, knew you before the foundation of the world. Nevertheless, I will to consider your days in your works and judge of their usefulness, and diligently and sharply examine your deeds. But if I suddenly withdraw anyone from this life, the usefulness of his life is complete; and if his life were extended longer, it would not keep on in freshness bearing good fruits but, tainted by the faith of the flesh, would only give off smoke like the empty sound of words and not attain to Me in the inmost depth of its heart. Therefore I do not grant him a prolongation of this life, but withdraw him from this world before he falls into the apathy of this infertility. But to you, O human, I say: Why do you despise Me? Did I not send My prophets to you, and give My Son on the wood of the cross for your salvation, and choose My apostles to show you the way of truth through the Gospel? So, having all good things through Me, you cannot excuse yourself. And why then do you put Me off?

27 God will no longer tolerate auguries from creatures

But I will no longer tolerate this perverse error, your seeking signs for your actions in the stars or fire or birds or any other creatures; all those who by the Devil's persuasion first fell into this error despised God and threw down His precepts, for which they themselves are despised. But I shine

above every creature in the glory of My Divinity, and My miracles are manifested to you in My saints; so I wish you not to practice this error of augury any more, but to look toward Me.

28 Concerning human foolishness and stubbornness

O fool! Who am I? None other than the Supreme Good. Therefore I grant you all good things when you diligently seek Me. And whom do you believe Me to be? I am God, above all things and in all things, but you want to treat Me as a serf who fears his lord. How? You want Me to do your will, while you despise My precepts. God is not thus. What does this mean? He does not remember a beginning nor fear an end. The heavens contemplate Me and resound with My praises and obey Me in that justice by which I established them. The sun, moon and stars appear among the clouds of heaven on their proper course, and the blasts of the wind and the rain move through the air as is appointed for them, and all do the bidding of their Creator. But you, O human, do not fulfil My precepts, but follow your own will, as if for you the law's justice were neither established nor manifested. And although you are but ashes, you are in such a state of contumacy that the justice of My law does not suffice for you, though it is plowed and cultivated in the body and blood of My Son and well trodden out by My saints of the Old and New Testaments alike.

29 Analogy of the goat, the hart and the wolf

But in your great foolishness you wish to lay hold of Me, threatening Me and saying, "If God wants me to be just and good, why does He not make me righteous?" Wishing to catch Me like this is as if a wanton goat wished to catch a hart; it would be thrown back and pierced by the hart's strong horns. So, when you try to behave wantonly and play with Me, I too will crush you in My just judgment by the precepts of the law as if by My horns. These trumpets resound in your ears, but you do not follow them; you run off after the wolf, which you think you have so mastered that it cannot hurt you. But the wolf will devour you, saying, "This sheep strayed from the road and did not want to follow its shepherd but ran after me; therefore I will to have it, for it chose me and forsook its shepherd." O human, God is just; so everything He does in heaven and earth is justly ordained.

30 Analogy of the physician

I am the great Physician of all diseases and act like a doctor who sees a sick man who longs to be cured. What does this mean? If the illness is slight, he cures it easily, but if it is serious, he says to the sick person, "I require

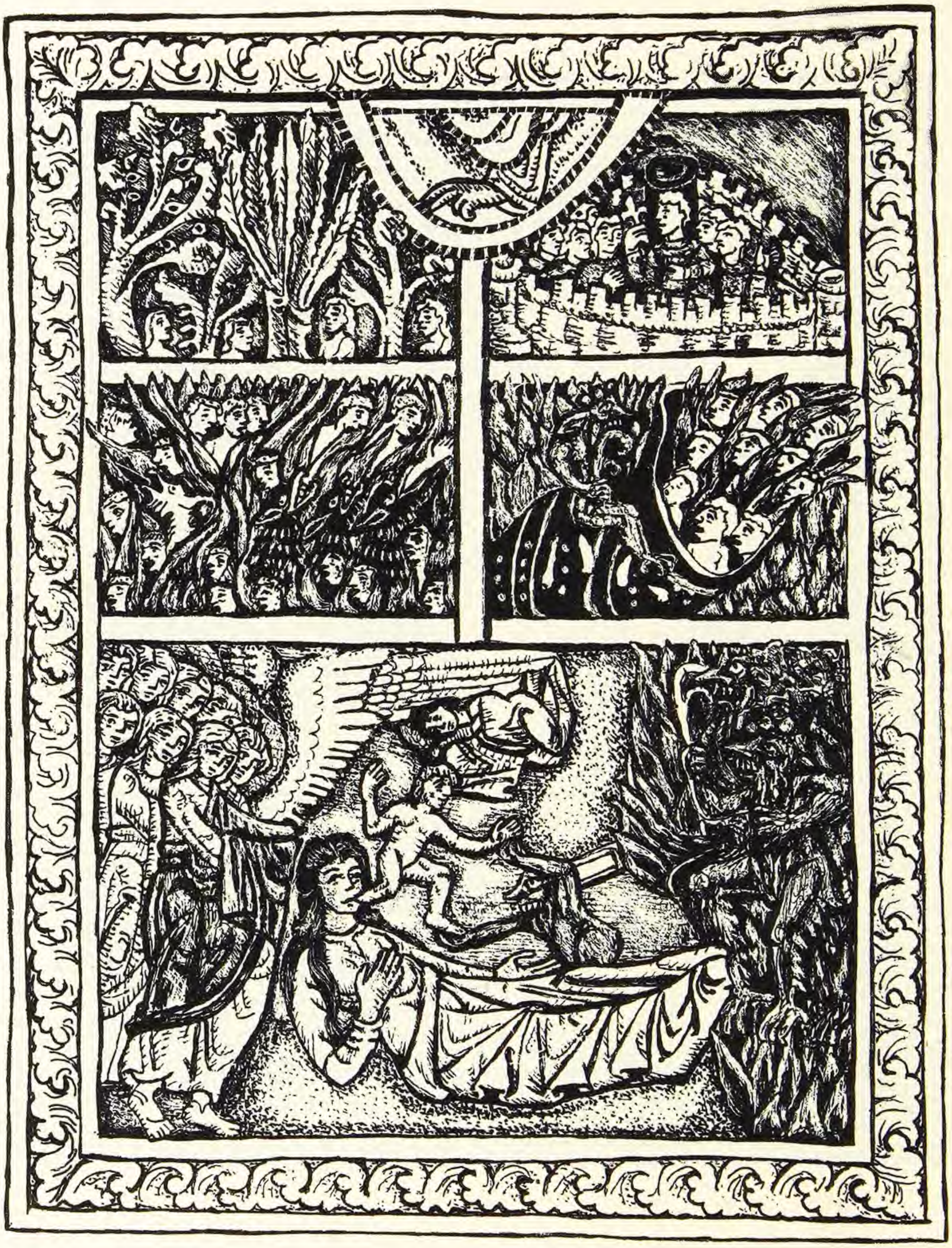
silver and gold from you. If you will give them to me, I will help you." I too, O human, do this. Lesser sins I wipe away in people's groans and tears and good resolutions, but for graver faults I say, O human, apply yourself to penitence and amendment, and I will show you My mercy, and give you eternal life. You shall not scrutinize the stars and other creatures about future events, or adore the Devil, or invoke him or ask him anything. For if you seek to know more than you ought to know, you will be deceived by the ancient seducer. The first man sought more than he should have sought, and was deceived by him and went to perdition. But the Devil did not foresee the redemption of Man, when the Son of Man slew death and broke Hell asunder. The Devil at first conquered Man through the woman; but God at last crushed the Devil through the woman who bore the Son of God, who wondrously brought the works of the Devil to naught; as My beloved John testifies, saying:

31 Words of John

"For this reason the Son of God appeared, that He might destroy the works of the Devil" [1 John 3:8]. What does this mean? The great brightness, the Son of God, appeared for the health and salvation of humanity, taking on the poverty of a human body, but shining like a burning star amid shadowy clouds. He was placed on the wine-press, where wine was to be pressed out without the dregs of fermentation, because He the cornerstone fell upon the press and made such wine that it gave forth the greatest odor of sweetness. He, shining as a glorious human being amid the human race, without any admixture of polluted blood, trod with His warlike foot upon the head of the ancient serpent; He destroyed all the darts of his iniquity, full of rage and lust as they were, and made him utterly contemptible.

Therefore, whoever has knowledge in the Holy Spirit and wings of faith, let this one not ignore My admonition, but taste it, embrace it and receive it in his soul.

BODY AND SOUL



THE SOUL AND HER TABERNACLE

VISION FOUR
Soul and Body

Then I saw a most great and serene splendor, flaming, as it were, with many eyes, with four corners pointing toward the four parts of the world, which was manifest to me in the greatest mystery to show me the secret of the Supernal Creator; and in it appeared another splendor like the dawn, containing in itself a brightness of purple lightning. And behold! I saw on the earth people carrying milk in earthen vessels and making cheeses from it; and one part was thick, and from it strong cheeses were made; and one part was thin, and from it weak cheeses were curdled; and one part was mixed with corruption, and from it bitter cheeses were formed. And I saw the image of a woman who had a perfect human form in her womb. And behold! By the secret design of the Supernal Creator that form moved with vital motion, so that a fiery globe that had no human lineaments possessed the heart of that form and touched its brain and spread itself through all its members.

But then this human form, in this way vivified, came forth from the woman's womb and changed its color according to the movement the globe made in that form.

And I saw that many whirlwinds assailed one of these globes in a body and bowed it down to the ground; but, gaining back its strength and bravely raising itself up, it resisted them boldly and said with a groan:

1 Lament of the soul returning by God's grace from the path of error to Zion

"A pilgrim, where am I? In the shadow of death. And in what path am I journeying? In the path of error. And what consolation do I have? That which pilgrims have. For I should have had a tabernacle adorned with five square gems more brilliant than the sun and stars, for the sun and stars that set would not have shone in it, but the glory of angels; the topaz would have been its foundation and all the gems its structure, its staircases made of crystal and its courtyards paved with gold. For I should have been a companion of the angels, for I am a living breath, which God placed in dry mud; thus I should have known and felt God. But alas! When my tabernacle saw that it could turn its eyes into all the ways, it turned its attention toward the

BOOK ONE

North; ach, ach! and there I was captured and robbed of my sight and the joy of knowledge, and my garment all torn. And so, driven from my inheritance, I was led into a strange place without beauty or honor, and there subjected to the worst slavery. Those who had taken me struck me and made me eat with swine and, sending me into a desert place, gave me bitter herbs dipped in honey to eat. Then, placing me on the rack, they afflicted me with many tortures. And stripping me of my garments and dealing me many wounds, they sent me out to be hunted, and got the worst poisonous creatures, scorpions and asps and other vermin, to hunt and capture me; and these spewed out their poison all over me so that I was made helpless. Therefore they mocked me, saying, 'Where is your honor now?' Ach, and I trembled all over and with a great groan of woe said silently to myself, 'Oh, where am I? Ach, from whence did I come here? And what comforter shall I seek in this captivity? How shall I break these chains? Oh, what eye can look on my wounds? and what nose can bear their noisome stench? and what hands will anoint them with oil? Ach, who will have mercy on my affliction?

" 'May Heaven graciously hear my cry, and earth tremble at my grief, and every living thing incline with pity toward my captivity. For the bitterest sorrow oppresses me, who am a pilgrim without comfort and without help. Oh, who will console me, since even my mother has abandoned me when I strayed from the path of salvation? Who will help me but God? But when I remember you, O mother Zion, in whom I should have dwelt, I see the bitter slavery to which I am subjected. And when I have called to memory the music of all sorts that dwells in you, I feel my wounds. And when I remember the joy and gladness of your glory, I am horrified by the poisons that pollute them. Oh, where shall I turn? and where shall I flee? My sorrows are without number; for if I continue in these evils, I shall become the companion of those whom I knew to my shame in the land of Babylon. And where are you, O mother Zion? Woe is me that I so unluckily drew back from you; if I had not known you, I would sorrow more lightly! But now I will flee from these evil comrades, for wicked Babylon has put me in a leaden dish and crushed me with heavy bludgeons so that I hardly breathe. And when I pour out my tears and groans to you, O my mother, wicked Babylon sends forth such a noise and roar of sounding waters that you cannot hear my voice. So with great care I will seek the narrow ways by which to escape my evil comrades and my unhappy captivity.'

"And when I had said these things, I went away by a narrow path and hid myself from sight of the North in a small cave, bitterly weeping for the loss of my mother, and also for all my sorrows and all my wounds. And so many tears did I shed, weeping and weeping, that my tears soaked all the pain and all the bruises of my wounds.

VISION FOUR

"And behold! A most sweet fragrance touched my nostrils, like a gentle breath exhaled by my mother. Oh, what groans and tears I poured forth then, when I felt the presence of that small consolation! And in my joy I uttered such cries and shed such tears that the very mountain in whose cave I had hidden myself was shaken by it. And I said, 'O mother, O mother Zion, what will become of me? And where is your noble daughter now? Oh, how long, how long have I been deprived of your maternal sweetness, in which with many delights you gently brought me up!' And I delighted in these tears as if I saw my mother.

"But my enemies, hearing these cries of mine, said, 'Where is she, whom up to now we kept with us as we liked, so that she completely carried out our will? Look how she is calling upon the dwellers in Heaven. Let us therefore use all our arts and guard her with such great zeal and care that she cannot escape us, for before she was completely subject to us. If we do this, she will follow us again.'

"But I came secretly out of the cave in which I had hidden and tried to go up to such a height that my enemies would be unable to find me. They, however, set in my way a sea of such raging heat that I could not pass over it. There was, indeed, a bridge, but so small and narrow a one that I could not cross by it. And on the shore of that sea appeared a mountain range so high that I could not make my way across it. And I said, 'Oh, wretched woman that I am, what shall I do now? For a little while just now I felt the sweetness of my mother's presence, and I thought she was trying to call me to her; but ach! is she now leaving me again? Ach! where shall I turn? For if I return to my former captivity, my enemies will deride me more than before, because I tearfully cried out to my mother and for a little while felt her gentle sweetness, but now I am forsaken by her again.'

"But because of that sweetness which my mother had lately sent me, I was for the first time filled with such strength that I turned to the East and resumed my way along the narrow path. But the paths were so hedged in by thorns and thistles and such obstacles that I could scarcely take a step. However, with great labor and sweat I struggled through them at last, so worn out by my travail that I could scarcely breathe.

"Thus, at last, I attained with the utmost fatigue to the summit of the mountain in which I had hidden before and turned downward to the valley into which I had to descend; and behold! there in my way were asps, scorpions, serpents and other like crawling things, all hissing at me. Terrified I uttered the loudest of shrieks, crying, 'O mother, where are you? I would suffer less if I had not lately felt the sweetness of your presence; for I am falling again into the captivity in which I lay just now. Where now is your help?' And then I heard my mother's voice, saying to me:

2 On the wings of the soul

" 'O daughter, run! For the Most Powerful Giver whom no one can resist has given you wings to fly with. Therefore fly swiftly over all these obstacles!' And I, comforted with great consolation, took wing and passed swiftly over all those poisonous and deadly things.

3 On the tabernacle it entered

"And I came to a tabernacle, whose interior was all of the strongest steel. And, going in, I did works of brightness where I had previously done works of darkness. And in that tabernacle I placed at the north a column of unpolished steel, on which I hung fans made of diverse feathers, which moved to and fro. And, finding manna, I ate it. At the east I built a bulwark of square stones and, lighting a fire within it, drank wine mixed with myrrh and unfermented grape juice. At the south I built a tower of square stones, in which I hung up red shields and placed trumpets of ivory in its windows. And in the middle of this tower I poured out honey and mixed it with other spices to make a precious unguent, from which a great fragrance poured forth to fill the whole tabernacle. But at the west I built nothing, for that side was turned toward the world.

"And while I was absorbed in this work, my enemies seized their quivers and attacked my tabernacle with their arrows, but I was so absorbed in the work I was doing that I did not notice their madness until the gates of the tabernacle were full of arrows. But none of the arrows could penetrate the door or the steel lining of the tabernacle, so that I also could not be injured by them. When they saw this, they sent a tremendous flood of water to wash away both me and my tabernacle, but their malice accomplished nothing. Wherefore I boldly mocked them, saying, 'The architect who built this tabernacle was wiser and stronger than you. Collect your arrows and put them down, for from now on they cannot make your will triumph over me. See, what wounds have they given me? With great pain and labor I have waged many wars against you, and you tried to put me to death, but you could not; for I was protected by the strongest armor and brandished sharp swords against you and thus vigorously defended myself from you. Retreat, therefore, retreat, for you will have me no longer.' "

4 Lament of the soul while resisting the Devil's whirlwinds with God's help

But I, fragile and untaught, saw that many whirlwinds rushed upon another of these globes and tried to throw it down, but could not; for it resisted

strongly and gave them no room to rage. It nonetheless spoke with lamentation, saying: "I am a poor little thing, but I have a great duty. Oh, what am I? and what is the theme of my outcry? I am the living breath in a human being, placed in a tabernacle of marrow, veins, bones and flesh, giving it vitality and supporting its every movement. But alas! Its sensibility gives rise to filth, licentiousness and wantonness of conduct and every kind of vice. Ach! Oh, how great is the groaning of my complaint! For when the works of my tabernacle prosper, the Devil's persuasion meets me and ensnares me, and uplifts me in haughty pride, so that I say, 'I want to act according to the joys of earthly fertility.' For inside my tabernacle I understand all works, but I am so impeded by its ardent desires that before I can discern my proper work I see dire wounds in me. Oh, what a cry I let out! and I say, 'O God, did You not create me? Look how vile earth oppresses me!' And I start to run away. How is this? When my tabernacle knows carnal desire, then, because I take pleasure in its carnal acts, I myself fulfill those acts. But reason, which along with knowledge lives in me, shows me that I was created by God. And by reason I remember that Adam, when he had transgressed God's command, was afraid and hid himself. So I too am afraid and hide myself from the face of God when I sense that my works in my tabernacle are contrary to God. But when I think above all of the leaden scale of sin, I condemn all those works that burn with carnal desire.

5 On the whirlwinds engendered by the Devil's persuasion

"Alas for me, a pilgrim! How can I survive among these dangers? And what happens when the Devil's persuasion invades me, saying, 'Is a thing good which you do not know and cannot see and cannot do?' and again, 'Why forsake what you do know and do understand and can do?' What shall I do then? Full of sorrow, I will answer, 'Ach miserable me! for harmful poisons were instilled into me through Adam, when he disobeyed God and was cast out into the world and joined his tabernacle to carnal things. For in the taste of the fruit he knew by disobedience, a harmful sweetness poured itself into his blood and flesh, producing the corruption of vice. And therefore I feel the sin of the flesh in me, and intoxicated by this sin, I neglect the Most Pure God. But I must not follow the taste my tabernacle has in it. For since Adam was pure and honest when God created him and he first appeared, I fear God, knowing that I too was created pure and honest. But now, through the evil habits of vice, I dwell in disquietude. Oh, in all these ways I am a pilgrim!

"Therefore the whirlwinds tell me lies in many voices, which rise up within me, saying, 'Who are you? and what are you doing? and what are these battles you are fighting? You are indeed unhappy, for you do not know

whether your work is good or bad. Where will you go? and who will save you? and what are these errors that are driving you to madness? Are you doing what delights you? Are you escaping what distresses you? Oh, what will you do when you know this and are ignorant of that? For what delights you is not lawful for you, and what distresses you God's precept compels you to do. And how do you know whether these things are so? It would be better for you if you did not exist!' And after these whirlwinds have risen up thus within me, I begin to tread another path that is hard for my flesh to bear, for I begin to practice righteousness. But then I doubt as to whether or not the Holy Spirit has given this to me, and I say, 'This is useless.' And I wish to fly above the clouds. How? I wish to fly above my faculties and start things I cannot finish. But when I try to do these things, I only stir up great sadness in myself, so that I do no works, either on the heights of sanctity or on the plains of good will; but I bear within me the disquietude of doubt, desperation, sadness and oppression in all things. And when the Devil's persuasion disturbs me then, oh, how great a calamity overtakes me! For I am overcome in my unhappiness by all the evils that are or can be in blame, malediction, mortification of body and soul and shameful words against the purity, healing and loftiness that are in God. And then wickedness suggests to me that all the felicity and all the good which is in Man as well as God will be to me harmful and oppressive, offering me death rather than life. Ach! How unhappy is this struggle, which forces me from labor to labor, from sorrow to sorrow, from discord to discord, depriving me of all happiness.

6 From what cause these errors come into being

"But from whence does the evil of these errors come into being? From this: that the ancient serpent has within himself astuteness and deceptive cunning and the deadly poison of iniquity. For by his astuteness he infuses me with stubbornness in sinning and withdraws my intellect from the fear of God, so that I am not afraid to sin, and say, 'Who is God? I do not know who God is.' And by his deceptive cunning he instils obduracy into me, so that I am hardened in evil. And by the deadly poison of iniquity he takes spiritual joy away from me, so that I can rejoice neither in Man nor in God, and thus incites me to despairing doubt, so that I do not know whether or not I can be saved. Oh, what are these tabernacles that they should suffer so much danger from the deception of the Devil?

"But when, by God's gift, I remember that God created me, then in the midst of these oppressions I give this answer to the Devil's tempting: 'I will not yield to the frail clay, but furiously wage war!' How? When my tabernacle tries to do works of unrighteousness, I will tread upon marrow, blood and flesh in the wisdom of patience, the way the strong lion defends itself and the

serpent fleeing a mortal blow hides itself in its hole. For I must not let myself be struck by the Devil's arrows or practice the pleasures of the flesh. How?

7 How anger, hatred and pride are restrained

"When anger tries to burn up my tabernacle, I will look to the goodness of God, Whom anger never touched; and thus I will be sweeter than the air, which in its gentleness moistens the earth, and have spiritual joy because virtues are beginning to show themselves in me. And thus I will feel God's goodness.

"And when hatred tries to darken me, I will look to the mercy and the martyrdom of the Son of God, and so restrain my flesh, and in faithful memory receive the sweet fragrance of the roses that spring from thorns. And so I will acknowledge my Redeemer.

"And when pride tries to build in me a tower of vanity without foundation on the rock, and to erect in me the loftiness that wants no one to be like itself but always to be taller than the rest—oh, who will help me then, when the ancient serpent who fell into death by wishing to be above everyone is trying to cast me down? Then I say with grief, 'Where is my King and my God? What good can I do without God? None.' But then I look to God Who gave me life, and I run to the Most Blessed Virgin who trod underfoot the pride of the ancient abyss, and thus I am made a strong stone of God's edifice; and that rapacious wolf, who choked on the divine hook, from now on cannot conquer me. And thus in God's sublimity I know the sweetest good, which is humility, and feel the sweetness of the unfailing balsam and rejoice in the delightfulness of God as if I were amid the fragrance of all perfumes. And thus I ward off the other vices by the impregnable shield of humility."

8 Lament of a soul that with fear goes forth from its tabernacle

But then I, poor creature, saw that another of the globes freed itself from the lineaments of the form it was in and untied all its bonds, and with a groan drew itself out of them, and broke away lamenting from its abode. And it said, "I will go forth from my tabernacle. But, miserable and full of grief as I am, where shall I go? I shall go through dreadful and fearsome paths to the judgment where I shall be judged! There I will show the works that I have performed in my tabernacle, and there I will be requited according to my merits. Oh, what great fear, and oh, how much anguish will be there for me!" *And when it had thus freed itself, there came certain spirits, some of light and some of darkness, who had been its life's companions according to its behavior in its abode, and who waited for its release so that they could lead it away with them.* And I

heard a living voice saying to them, "Let her be led from place to place according to her works."

And again I heard a voice from Heaven saying to me, "The Blessed and Ineffable Trinity showed itself to the world when the Father sent into the world his Only-Begotten, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin, so that humans, born so diversely and bound by so many sins, should be brought back by Him to the way of truth; and thus those who, when released from their ties to the heavy body, carry good and holy works with them might gain the joys of the celestial inheritance."

9 God's knowledge is clouded by no obscurity

That you, O human, may grasp this more profoundly and show it more clearly, *you see a most great and serene splendor, flaming, as it were, with many eyes, with four corners pointing toward the four parts of the world.* This signifies the knowledge of God, great in its mysteries and pure in its manifestations, radiant with the most profound clarity, which extends its all-piercing gaze in fourfold firmness to the four corners of the earth. There this knowledge most clearly foresees those who will be rejected as well as those who will be gathered in; this shows the mystery of the Celestial Majesty, which, as you see, is presented to you in this image of great loftiness and profundity. *In it appears another splendor like the dawn, containing in itself a brightness of purple lightning;* for the knowledge of God also indicates that the Only-Begotten of the Father, taking flesh from the Virgin, hastened to shed His blood in the purity of faith for the salvation of humanity, while in the same knowledge of God the good and the evil are made known, for it is clouded by no obscurity of any kind. But you, O human, are saying, "What is Man to do, when God knows in advance everything Man is going to do?" And I, O human, say this to you:

10 In the beauty of God's justice no injustice can be found

O fool! In the wickedness of your heart you are imitating the one who first refused the way of truth and opposed it with a lie, because he wished to make himself like the Supreme Goodness. Who can obscure the Beginning and the End, Who is, was and will remain? And what are you, who are a spark among ashes? And what did you know when you were nothing? But you, with your lamentable beginning and miserable end, speak against the thing you do not know and should not know, the indescribable beauty of God's justice, in which no suspicion of injustice is found, or has been found, or will be found. O fool, for whom do you take the father of wickedness whom you imitate? What does this mean? When pride swells up within you,

you want to be raised above the stars and the other creatures and the angels, who fulfil God's precepts in all things. But you shall fall, as the one fell who opposed a lie to the truth. For he loved the lie, and therefore, entangled in death, he fell into the abyss. Therefore, O human, pay attention. If you do not contemplate the charity with which God freed you, and if you pay no heed to the number of good things God constantly gives you, and if you do not consider how, when you fall into many sins and love death rather than life, He calls you back from death; nonetheless, when you finally remember the Scriptures and the doctrines the faithful fathers of antiquity set before you, telling you to avoid evil and do good, then if you say from your inmost heart, "I have sinned gravely, wherefore I must return with due penitence to my Father who created me," your Father will receive you lovingly and place you in His bosom and clasp you in sweet embraces. But now you disdain to know that blessedness, which God sets before you, and you refuse to hear or to do God's justice. If it were possible to do, would you not reprimand God's justice as unjust rather than true? For that reason, if you had not been redeemed by the blood of the Son of God, you would be lying lost in perdition. But God's judgment is true and just. Wherefore, O human, what advantage will it give you if in My judgment you destroy yourself? In the choir of the angels and in My chosen vineyard resounds the praise of those who laud Me and say, "Glory to You, Lord!"; and, because they are just, they do not contradict My judgment. But what did it profit the Devil to oppose Me? He, seeing that his brightness was great, tried to exalt himself above all, so that a countless band of proud spirits joined with him; all of whom the Divine Power cast down with him in the zeal of Its rectitude. And so also are cast down all who persevere in evil and seek to avert God's justice, laboring to pervert the Supreme Good into perverse wickedness. So God never established anything unjust, but in the equity of His goodness He ordained all that is right.

II On idols, and that they must be forsaken

But when the race of people to whom Adam and Eve had narrated how they were made by God and how they had been expelled from Paradise passed away, those people arose in the wantonness of vanity who in their unfaithfulness abandoned God, making themselves idols into which the Devil entered and mocked them. Others who followed them in perversity worshipped God's creature rather than the Creator Himself, and thought things that were not alive could determine their lives. So let all who are still foul with this infidelity forsake their stupidity and be converted in faith to Him Who broke the Devil's snares, laying aside old ignorance and embracing new life, as My servant Ezekiel exhorts, saying,

12 The prophet Ezekiel on this subject

"Cast away from you all your transgressions in which you have transgressed, and make for yourselves a new heart and a new spirit" [Ezekiel 18:31]. Which is to say: O you who want to persevere in rectitude under the Sun in Whose paths go the blessed sheep, cast out of your heart's knowledge inquiry into those secret things that in the highest wisdom are useless. By them you sought to fly to a vain height but were plunged into a deep pit, in which dwells no honor but only that horrible desire that does not know God. And when you do this, for your salvation go in the way of truth, where you will find in your heart the newness of the sparkling heavens, and where you will have in your spirit the newness of living breath.

13 On the inequality of human seed and the diversity of people made from it

You see also on the earth people carrying milk in earthen vessels and making cheese from it; these are the people in the world, both men and women, who have in their bodies human seed, from which the various races of people are procreated. *One part is thick, and from it strong cheeses are made;* for that strong semen, which is usefully and well matured and tempered, produces energetic people, to whom brilliant spiritual and bodily gifts are given by their great and noble ancestors, making them flourish in prudence, discretion and usefulness in their works before God and Man, and the Devil finds no place in them. *And one part is thin, and from it weak cheeses are curdled;* for this semen, imperfectly matured and tempered in a weak season, produces weak people, who are for the most part foolish, languid and useless in their works in the sight of God and the world, not actively seeking God. But also *one part is mixed with corruption, and from it bitter cheeses are formed;* for that semen is basely emitted in weakness and confusion and mixed uselessly, and it produces misshapen people, who often have bitterness, adversity and oppression of heart and are thus unable to raise their minds to higher things. Many of them nonetheless become useful; though they suffer many tempests and troubles in their hearts and in their actions, they come out victors. For if they were left in peace and quiet, they would become languid and useless, and therefore God forces them and leads them to the path of salvation, as it is written:

14 Words of Moses on this subject

"I will kill, and I will make live; I will strike, and I will heal; and there is none who can deliver out of My hand" [Deuteronomy 32:39]. Which is to

say: I Who Am, having neither beginning nor end, slay in their deeds wicked people who, steeped in vice by the Devil's filth, are deceived by the diabolic pits into sowing unhappy births. Oh, how crafty is the bite of the viper, which so poisons them that death tries to enter into them! Therefore I deprive them of prosperity in this world, where they are slain by many calamities that they cannot overcome but which by just judgment are always with them. But I, Who am thrown down by no darkness, also cause these people to live wonderfully elsewhere, when I draw the spirit that lives in them upward from the earth, so that it may not perish within them. I also afflict with wounds of weakness in their life's labor those who try in their pride of mind to rise to an absurd height, thinking that no one can cast them down; but I Who am present everywhere also sometimes raise them to true health, so that they will not be destroyed by vanity amid deceitful dangers. And in all these things there is no human or other creature who can subvert these works of Mine by any cunning or fierceness of his, for there is no one who can resist My will and justice.

15 Why stunted and deformed infants are born

And often, as you see, when male and female unite in forgetfulness of Me and in the mockery of the Devil, those who are born are found to be stunted so that their parents, who transgressed My precepts, may feel anguish at having these children and so return to Me in penitence. Often also I let these strange births take place among people for My glory and that of My saints, so that when those who are thus deformed are restored to health by the help of My elect, My name may be more ardently glorified among people. But those who bind themselves by an agreement to seek the glory of virginity ascend like the dawn to the secret places of Heaven, since for the sake of My Son's love they deprive themselves of the delights of the body.

16 An infant is vivified in the womb and confirmed by a soul on leaving it

And you see the image of a woman who has a perfect human form in her womb. This means that after a woman has conceived by human semen, an infant with all its members whole is formed in the secret chamber of her womb. And behold! *By the secret design of the Supernal Creator that form moves with vital motion;* for, by God's secret and hidden command and will, fitly and rightly at the divinely appointed time the infant in the maternal womb receives a spirit, and shows by the movements of its body that it lives, just as the earth opens and brings forth the flowers of its use when the dew falls on it. *So that a fiery globe which has no human lineaments possesses the*

heart of that form; that is, the soul, burning with a fire of profound knowledge, which discerns whatever is within the circle of its understanding, and, without the form of human members, since it is not corporeal or transitory like a human body, gives strength to the heart and rules the whole body as its foundation, as the firmament of Heaven contains the lower regions and touches the higher. *And it also touches the person's brain;* for in its powers it knows not only earthly but also heavenly things, since it wisely knows God; *and it spreads itself through all the person's members;* for it gives vitality to the marrow and veins and members of the whole body, as the tree from its root gives sap and greenness to all the branches. *But then this human form, in this way vivified, comes forth from the woman's womb, and changes its color according to the movement the globe makes in that form;* which is to say that after the person has received the vital spirit in the maternal womb and is born and begins his actions, his merits will be according to the works his soul does with the body, for he will put on brightness from the good ones and darkness from the evil ones.

17 How the soul shows its powers according to the powers of the body

The soul now shows its powers according to the powers of the body, so that in a person's infancy it produces simplicity, in his youth strength, and in adulthood, when all the person's veins are full, it shows its strongest powers in wisdom; as the tree in its first shoots is tender and then shows that it can bear fruit, and finally, in its full utility, bears it. But then in human old age, when the marrow and veins start to incline to weakness, the soul's powers are gentler, as if from a weariness at human knowledge; as when winter approaches the sap of the tree diminishes in the branches and the leaves, and the tree in its old age begins to bend.

18 A person has three paths within himself

But a person has within himself three paths. What are they? The soul, the body and the senses; and all human life is led in these. How? The soul vivifies the body and conveys the breath of life to the senses; the body draws the soul to itself and opens the senses; and the senses touch the soul and draw the body. For the soul gives life to the body as fire gives light to darkness, with two principal powers like two arms, intellect and will; the soul has arms not so as to move itself, but so as to show itself in these powers as the sun shows itself by its brilliance. Therefore, O human, who are not just a bundle of marrow, pay attention to scriptural knowledge!

VISION FOUR

19 On the intellect

The intellect is joined to the soul like an arm to the body. For as the arm, joined to the hand with its fingers, branches out from the body, so the intellect, working with the other powers of the soul, by which it understands human actions, most certainly proceeds from the soul. For before all the other powers of the soul it understands whatever is in human works, whether good or evil, so that through it, as through a teacher, everything is understood; for it sifts things as wheat is purified of any foreign matter, inquiring whether they are useful or useless, lovable or hateful, pertinent to life or death. Thus, as food without salt is tasteless, the other powers of the soul without intellect are insipid and undiscerning. But the intellect is also to the soul as the shoulder is to the body, the very core of the other powers of the soul; as the bodily shoulder is strong, so it understands the divinity and the humanity in God, which is the joint of the arm, and it has true faith in its work, which is the joint of the hand, with which it chooses among the various works wisely as if with fingers. But it does not work in the same way as the other powers of the soul. What does this mean?

20 On the will

The will activates the work, and the mind receives it, and the reason produces it. But the intellect understands the work, knowing good and evil, just as the angels, who have intellect, love good and despise evil. And where the heart is in the body, there the intellect is in the soul, exercising its power in that part of the soul as the will does in another part. How? Because the will has great power in the soul. How? The soul stands in a corner of the house, that is, by the prop of the heart, like a man who stands in a corner of his house, so that looking through the whole house he may command all its contents, lifting his right arm to point out what is useful in the house and turning to the East. Thus the soul should do, looking along the streets of the body toward the rising sun. Thus it puts its will, like a right arm, as the support of the veins and marrow and the movement of the whole body; for the will does every work, whether it be good or bad.

21 Analogy of fire and bread

For the will is like a fire, baking each deed as if in a furnace. Bread is baked so that people may be nourished by it and be able to live. So too the will is the strength of the whole work, for it starts by kneading it and when it is firm adds the yeast and pounds it severely; and, thus preparing the work in

contemplation as if it were bread, it bakes it in perfection by the full action of its ardor, and so makes a greater food for humans in the work they do than in the bread they eat. A person stops eating from time to time, but the work of his will goes on in him till his soul leaves his body. And in whatever differing circumstances the work is performed, whether in infancy, youth, adulthood or bent old age, it always progresses in the will and in the will comes to perfection.

22 How in the will's tabernacle all powers are activated and come together

But the will has in the human breast a tabernacle, the mind, upon which the intellect and that same will and a sort of force of the soul all breathe in strength. And all these are activated and come together in the same tabernacle. How? If anger arises, gall is produced and brings the anger to its height by filling the tabernacle with smoke. If wicked delight rises up, the flame of lust touches its structure, and so the wantonness that pertains to that sin is elevated and in that tabernacle united with it. But there is another, lovely kind of joy, which is kindled in that tabernacle by the Holy Spirit, and the rejoicing soul receives it faithfully and perfects good works in the desire of Heaven. And there is a kind of sadness that engenders in the tabernacle, out of those humors that surround the gall, the sloth which produces disdain, obduracy and stubbornness in people and depresses the soul, unless the grace of God comes quickly to rescue it.

But since in that tabernacle there occur contrary conditions, it is often disturbed by hatred and other deadly emotions, which kill the soul and try to lay it waste in perdition. But when the will wills, it can move the implements in the tabernacle and in its burning ardor dispose of them, whether they are good or evil. But if these implements please the will, it bakes its food there and offers it to people to enjoy. So in that tabernacle a great throng of good and evil things arises, like an army gathered in some place of assembly; when the commander of an army arrives, if the army pleases him he accepts it, but if it displeases him he orders it to disband. The will does the same. How? If good or evil arises in the breast, the will either carries it out or ignores it.

23 On the reason

But both in the intellect and in the will reason stands forth as the loud sound of the soul, which makes known every work of God or Man. For sound carries words on high, as the wind lifts the eagle so that it can fly. Thus the soul utters the sound of reason in the hearing and the understanding of humanity, that its powers may be understood and its every work brought

to perfection. But the body is the tabernacle and support of all the powers of the soul, since the soul resides in the body and works with the body, and the body with it, whether for good or for evil.

24 On the senses

It is the senses on which the interior powers of the soul depend, so that these powers are known through them by the fruits of each work. The senses are subject to these powers, since they guide them to the work, but the senses do not impose work on the powers, for they are their shadow and do what pleases them. The exterior human being awakens with senses in the womb of his mother before he is born, but the other powers of the soul still remain in hiding. What is this? The dawn announces the daylight; just so the human senses manifest the reason and all the powers of the soul. And as on the two commandments of God hang all the Law and the prophets, so also on the soul and its powers depend the human senses. What does this mean?

The Law is ordained for human salvation, and the prophets show forth the hidden things of God; so also human senses protect a person from harmful things and lay bare the soul's interior. For the soul emanates the senses. How? It vivifies a person's face and glorifies him with sight, hearing, taste, smell and touch, so that by this touch he becomes watchful in all things. For the senses are the sign of all the powers of the soul, as the body is the vessel of the soul. What does this mean? A person is recognized by his face, sees with his eyes, hears with his ears, opens his mouth to speak, feels with his hands, walks with his feet; and so the senses are to a person as precious stones and as a rich treasure sealed in a vase. But as the treasure within is known when the vase is seen, so also the powers of the soul are inferred by the senses.

25 That the soul is the mistress and the flesh the handmaid

The soul is the mistress, the flesh the handmaid. How? The soul rules the body by vivifying it, and the body is ruled by this vivification, for if the soul did not vivify the body it would fall apart and decay. But when a person does an evil deed and the soul knows it, it is as bitter for the soul as poison is for the body when it knowingly takes it. But the soul rejoices in a sweet deed as the body delights in sweet food. And the soul flows through the body like sap through a tree. What does this mean? By the sap, the tree grows green and produces flowers and then fruit. And how is this fruit matured? By the air's tempering. How? The sun warms it, the rain waters it, and thus by the tempering of the air it is perfected. What does this mean? The mercy of God's grace, like the sun, will illumine the person, the breath of the Holy

Spirit, like the rain, will water him, and so discernment, like the tempering of the air, will lead him to the perfection of good fruits.

26 Analogy of a tree to the soul

The soul in the body is like sap in a tree, and the soul's powers are like the form of the tree. How? The intellect in the soul is like the greenery of the tree's branches and leaves, the will like its flowers, the mind like its bursting firstfruits, the reason like the perfected mature fruit, and the senses like its size and shape. And so a person's body is strengthened and sustained by the soul. Hence, O human, understand what you are in your soul, you who lay aside your good intellect and try to liken yourself to the brutes.

27 The soul inclined to sin leaves it when stung with remorse

But you, O human who are seeing these things, consider also that *many whirlwinds assail one of these globes in a body and bow it down to the ground.* This means that as long as a person lives in soul and body, his soul is disturbed by many invisible temptations, which incline it to sins of earthly desire through the pleasure of the flesh. *But that globe, gaining back its strength and bravely raising itself up, resists them boldly;* because when the faithful and careful person sins, by God's gift he is often stung with remorse and forsakes his sin; placing his hope in God, he rejects the Devil's lies and faithfully seeks his Creator, as the faithful soul truly showed when it lamented its miseries as above.

28 The soul tempted by the Devil evades his darts by celestial inspiration

And you see that *many whirlwinds rush upon another of these globes and try to throw it down, but cannot.* This means that the Devil assails this soul with many snares, trying to draw it into many sins and crimes, but cannot by his illusions prevail over it; *for it resists strongly and gives them no room to rage;* that is, fortifying itself with celestial inspiration, it drives away the darts of lying deception and hastens back to its Savior, as it declared in the words of its complaint quoted above.

29 The soul that forsakes its body awaits its sentence with great fear

And, as you see, *another of the globes frees itself from the lineaments of the form it is in and unties all its bonds.* This means that the soul, forsaking the members of its bodily dwelling, breaks its relationship with them when the

time comes for the body's dissolution. *And with a groan it draws itself out of them and breaks away lamenting from its abode;* for, taking itself out of the body with anguish, it tremblingly allows its habitation to fall, dreading the imminent tribunal of the Celestial Judge, at which it will perceive by God's just judgment the merits of its works, as it too shows in its complaint already quoted. That is why, *when it has thus freed itself, there come certain spirits, some of light and some of darkness, who have been its life's companions according to its behavior in its abode;* because in that dissolution, when a person's soul forsakes its habitation, by God's just and true ordinance both good and evil angelic spirits are present who have observed its deeds done in the body by means of the body. *They wait for its release so that they can lead it away with them;* for they await the sentence of the Just Judge on that soul when it is separated from the body, so when it leaves the body they lead it where the Celestial Judge will judge it on the merits of its deeds, as has been faithfully demonstrated, O human, to you.

30 Words of God to humanity, that they should obey the divine precepts

Therefore, O My dearest children, open your eyes and ears and obey My precepts! Why do you despise your Father, Who has delivered you from death? The choirs of angels sing, "You are just, O Lord!" [Psalm 118:137], because God's justice has no flaw in it; for God delivered Man not by power but by mercy, when He sent His Son into the world to redeem him. No smear of dung soils the sun; and likewise no wickedness of injustice can touch God. But you, O human, with reflective knowledge consider good and evil. What are you when you soil yourself with many desires of the flesh? and what are you when the brightest gems of the virtues shine in you? The first angel despised good and desired evil; therefore he received it, dying into eternal perdition and being entombed in death for rejecting the good. But the good angels condemned evil and loved good, seeing the fall of the Devil, who wanted to overthrow the truth and set up a lie. Thus they burned with love of God and firmly based themselves on all that is good, so that they wanted nothing but what pleased God, never ceasing to praise Him. The first man also knew God and loved Him in simplicity and, receiving His precepts, set himself to obey; but then he inclined toward evil and committed disobedience. For when the Devil suggested evil to him, he forsook good and perpetrated evil, and hence he was cast out of Paradise. Therefore, evil must be thrown down into the perdition of death, and good embraced in love of life.

But you, O human, when you consider good and evil, are standing, as it were, where two roads branch off. If you despise the darkness of evil and

want to see Him Whose creature you are, and Whom you acknowledged in holy baptism where the old sin of Adam was nullified in you; and if you say, "I want to fly from the Devil and his works and follow the true God and His precepts"; then think how you have been taught to turn away from evil and do good, and how the Heavenly Father did not spare His Only-Begotten but sent Him for your deliverance; and pray to God to help you. And He, hearing you, will say, "These eyes are pleasing to me!" And if you then cast off weariness and run courageously in God's commands, He will always hear the cry of your prayers. Therefore you should subdue your flesh and subjugate it to the rule of the soul. But you say, "I have in my flesh so many great burdens that I cannot conquer myself; but since God is good, He will make me good. How can I subdue my flesh, being human? God is good; He will perfect all good things in me. For when it pleases Him, He can make me good."

But I say to you: If God is good, why do you put such little value on knowing His goodness, which gave His Son over to deliver you by many sorrows and labors from death? When you say that you cannot do good works, you speak in unjust wickedness. For you have eyes to see with, ears to hear with, a heart to think with, hands to work with and feet to walk with, so that with your body you can stand up and lie down, sleep and wake, eat and fast. Thus God created you. Therefore, resist the desires of your flesh, and God will help you. For when you set yourself against the Devil like a strong warrior against his enemy, God delights in your struggle, wanting you to invoke Him in every hour, in all your troubles, constantly. But when you do not try to subdue your flesh, you make it feast with vice and sin, for you free it from the bridle of the fear of the Lord, with which you should be curbing it lest it go to perdition.

At such a time you are looking to the Devil, as he himself looked to wickedness when he fell into death. And, rejoicing in your perdition, he says, "Here is a person who is like us!" And then he falls on you and instils into you at his will his death-shadowed ways. But God knows what good you are capable of. For the Law is laid down for you according to what you can perform. God wishes from the beginning to the end of the world to take pleasure in His elect, that they may be faithfully crowned, adorned with the brightness of virtue. How shall this be? Let Man resist the pleasure of the flesh, lest he be caught up in the delights of the world; and let him not live securely, as if he could remain in the house he inhabits; for he is a pilgrim, whose Father awaits him if he chooses to return to Him in the place where he knows He is. Therefore, O human, if you turn your eyes to the two roads, good and evil, then you will learn, for you will understand both great things and small. How? Through faith you know the One God, in His divinity and humanity; and in evil you see the Devil's works. And when you know the just and the unjust roads, I will question you: "Which road do you wish to travel

on?" If you wish to travel in good paths, and if you faithfully hear My words, pray to God assiduously and sincerely to help you and not abandon you, since your flesh is fragile; and bow your head in humility, and shake off and quickly cast away from you such of your works as are evil.

God requires this of you. For what if someone were to offer you gold and lead, and say "Stretch out your hand for whichever you want"? You would eagerly seize the gold and leave the lead, for you love gold better than lead. So too you should prefer the country of Heaven to the downward slope of sin. But if you have fallen into sin, quickly rise by confession and pure penitence, before death lays claim to you. For your Father wants you to cry out, weep and ask for help so as not to remain in the squalor of sin. For if you have been wounded, you seek a physician lest you die. Does not God often send people troubles, so that they will more intently invoke Him? But you, O human, say "I cannot do good works!" I say you can. And you say "How?" And I say, "By thought and action." And you answer, "I lack decision." And I answer, "Learn to fight against yourself!" And you say, "I cannot fight against myself unless God helps me." Hear then how you can fight against yourself. When evil rises up in you and you do not know how to get rid of it, then, touched by My grace, which reaches you in the paths of your inner vision, at once cry out, pray, confess and weep so that God will help you, and remove evil from you, and grant you strength in good. For this good is yours by the knowledge that lets you understand God by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. If you were someone's workman, oh, how often you would have to do what your body found difficult! Would you not bear many trials for the sake of your earthly wages? Then why do you not serve God, Who gave you both soul and body, for the sake of heavenly wages? For if you wanted to possess a temporal object, oh, how you would labor that you might have it quickly!

But now it wearies you to seek what has no end. As the ox is roused by the goad, so you should exert yourself in body for fear of the Lord; if you do, God will not cast you out. If some tyrant were to capture you, you would at once turn to anyone who could help you, and beg him, pray him and promise him your property if he would come to your aid. Do this also, O human, when iniquity captures you; turn to God, beg, pray and promise Him your reformation, and He will help you. But you, O human, are blind when you need to see, deaf when you need to hear and senseless when you need to defend yourself, since the intellect and the five bodily senses God gave you are no more to you than filth and emptiness. Do you not have intellect and knowledge? The Kingdom of God can be bought, but not acquired in jest. Hear therefore, O humanity, and do not despise entry into the heavenly Jerusalem, or touch death, or deny God and acknowledge the Devil, or increase in sins and diminish in good deeds. You do not wish to hear God,

when you refuse to walk in His precepts, and you run to the Devil, when you seek to gratify the pleasure of your flesh. Recover therefore and be strengthened, for it is necessary for you.

So let the faithful person recognize his pain and seek a physician before he falls dead. If he considers his pain and seeks a physician, the latter when found will show him the bitter medicine that can save him; that is, the bitter words by which he must be tested to see whether his penitence comes from the root of his heart or only from his unstable breath. And when he has tested this, he will give him the wine of penitence, with which to wash away the pus from his wounds, and the oil of mercy, with which to anoint the wounds to heal them. Then he will enjoin him to be careful of his health, saying, "See that you keep taking this medicine carefully and regularly, and do not tire of it, for your wounds are serious." There are many who accept penance for their sins only with difficulty; but, though with much effort, they nonetheless carry it out for fear of death. But I give them My hand, and change their bitterness into sweetness, so that they may fulfil tranquilly that penance they began with such difficulty. But he who neglects repentance for his sins, saying it is hard for him to chastise his body, will be wretched, for he does not want to look at himself, or seek a physician, or have his wounds healed, but hides the dreadful wound in himself and covers over death with false appearances to conceal it. Thus he is averse to tasting penance, unwilling to look to the oil of mercy or seek the consolation of redemption; and so he will go into death, since he has loved death and not sought the Kingdom of God.

Therefore, O ye faithful, run in God's precepts lest the damnation of death seize upon you. Imitate the new Adam and cast off the old. For to him who runs, the Kingdom of God is open, but to him who lies on the ground it is closed. But miserable are they who worship the Devil, not knowing God. How? Because they do not adore one God in Trinity and do not seek to know the Trinity in Unity. So let the one who wishes to be saved be unwavering in the true Catholic faith. What is this?

31 On the Catholic faith

He who denies the Son does not worship the Father, and he who does not know the Father does not love the Son, and he who rejects the Holy Spirit has neither the Father nor the Son, and he who does not adore the Father and the Son does not receive the Holy Spirit. Therefore the Unity must be understood in the Trinity, and the Trinity in the Unity. O human, can you be alive without a heart and without blood? Even so it must not be believed that the Father is without the Son or the Holy Spirit, or the Son without the Father and the Holy Spirit, or the Holy Spirit without Them. For the redemption of humanity the Father sent the Son into the world and

then took Him back to Himself, the way a person sends out the thoughts of his heart and then recalls them to himself. Wherefore Isaiah speaks of the salvific mission of God's Only-Begotten by the will of the Celestial Majesty, saying:

32 Words of Isaiah

"The Lord sent a word unto Jacob, and it has lighted upon Israel" [Isaiah 9:8]. Which is to say: The Lord, that is the Supernal Father, sent the Word by Whom all things were made, that is God's Only-Begotten, Who was in divinity in the Father's heart forever without any beginning, into Jacob through the mouths of the prophets; and they faithfully foretold that the same Son of God would come into the world for human salvation, so that people forewarned and strengthened by them could overthrow the Devil and wisely reject his crafty deceptions. And the same Word lighted upon Israel when the Only-Begotten of God came into the high fecundity of the Virgin, into which no man had penetrated but which had inviolably kept its flower, so that He, born of the Virgin, might lead back those who were erroneously blind to the light of truth into the true way.

Therefore whoever has knowledge in the Holy Spirit and wings of faith, let this one not ignore My admonition, but taste it, embrace it and receive it in his soul.

EVADING THE DEVIL'S DARTS

THE SYNAGOGUE

VISION FIVE
The Synagogue

After this, I saw the image of a woman, pale from her head to her navel and black from her navel to her feet; her feet were red, and around her feet was a cloud of purest whiteness. She had no eyes, and had put her hands in her armpits; she stood next to the altar that is before the eyes of God, but she did not touch it. And in her heart stood Abraham, and in her breast Moses, and in her womb the rest of the prophets, each displaying his symbols and admiring the beauty of the Church. She was of great size, like the tower of a city, and had on her head a circlet like the dawn. And again I heard the voice from Heaven saying to me: "On the people of the Old Testament God placed the austerity of the Law in enjoining circumcision on Abraham; which He then turned into sweet Grace when He gave His Son to those who believed in the truth of the Gospel, and anointed with the oil of mercy those who had been wounded by the yoke of the Law."

1 The Synagogue is the mother of the Incarnation of the Son of God

Therefore *you see the image of a woman, pale from her head to her navel;* she is the Synagogue, which is the mother of the Incarnation of the Son of God. From the time her children began to be born until their full strength she foresaw in the shadows the secrets of God, but did not fully reveal them. For she was not the glowing dawn who speaks openly, but gazed on the latter from afar with great admiration and alluded to her thus in the Song of Songs:

2 Words of Solomon

"Who is this who comes up from the desert, flowing with delights and leaning upon her beloved?" [Song of Solomon 3:6, 8:5]. Which is to say: "Who is this new Bride, who with many good works comes up through the deserts of the pagans, who reject God's lawful precepts and adore idols, and ascends to heavenly desires, abounding in the delights of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, panting with great zeal and leaning on her spouse, the Son of God?" For it is she who blooms with the resplendent virtues given her by the Son of

God and flows with brooks of Scripture. And the same Synagogue, lost in admiration of the children of this new Bride, speaks thus by My servant the prophet Isaiah:

3 Words of Isaiah the prophet

"Who are these who fly like clouds, and like doves to their windows?" [Isaiah 60:8] That is to say: Who are these who, withdrawing themselves in mind from earthly and fleshly desires, fly full of desire and devotion to heavenly things, and with the simplicity of doves and without the bitterness of gall fortify their senses and with the great ardor of virtue seek the protection of that firm rock that is the Only-Begotten of God? For these are they who in supernal love tread underfoot earthly kingdoms and seek heavenly ones. The Synagogue therefore was marvelling at the Church, for she knew herself not to be adorned with those virtues she foresaw in her; for the Church is surrounded by angelic guardians to keep the Devil from harming her and casting her down, while the Synagogue, deserted by God, lies in vice.

4 On the varying color of the Synagogue

That is why *you see her black from her navel to her feet*, for from the time of her fullest strength to the end of her time she was soiled by deviation from the Law and by transgression of the heritage of her fathers, for she disregarded the divine precepts in many ways and followed the pleasures of the flesh. *Her feet are red, and around her feet is a cloud of purest whiteness;* for at the end of her time she killed the Prophet of Prophets and therefore slipped and fell down herself, while at the same time a most clear and acute faith arose in the minds of believers; for as the Synagogue ended, the Church arose, when after the death of the Son of God the apostolic doctrine spread throughout the world.

5 Her blindness, and why the prophets stand within her

That image *has no eyes, and has put her hands in her armpits;* for the Synagogue did not look on the true light, since she held the Only-Begotten of God in despite, and she conceals the works of justice under the apathy of her laziness, remaining in her torpor and negligently hiding them as if they did not exist. *She stands next to the altar that is before the eyes of God, but she does not touch it;* for she did in fact know superficially the Law of God, which she received by divine precept and divine visitation, but she did not plumb its depths, for she shrank from it rather than loved it, neglecting the sacrifice and the incense of devout prayers to God.

VISION FIVE

And in her heart stands Abraham; for he was the beginning of circumcision in the Synagogue; *and in her breast Moses;* for he brought the divine Law into human hearts; *and in her womb the rest of the prophets;* that is, they stand in that tradition that was given them by God as observers of the divine precepts; *each displaying his symbols and admiring the beauty of the Church;* for they displayed the miracles of their prophecies by marvelous symbols and with great wonder waited for the noble beauty of the new Bride.

6 That she is as great as a tower and has a circlet like the dawn

The Synagogue *is of great size like the tower of a city,* because she received the greatness of the divine laws and so foreshadowed the bulwarks and defenses of the noble and chosen City. *And she has on her head a circlet like the dawn,* because she prefigured in her rising the miracle of God's Only-Begotten and foreshadowed the bright virtues and mysteries that followed. For she was crowned, as it were, early in the morning, when she received the divine precepts, following Adam, who at first accepted God's commands, but afterward by his transgressions fell into death. So also did the Jews, who originally submitted to the divine Law, but then in their unbelief rejected the Son of God. But as humanity in the last days will be snatched from the perdition of death by the death of God's Only-Begotten, so too the Synagogue, stirred up by divine clemency, will before the last day abandon her unbelief and truly attain to the knowledge of God. How is this? Does not the dawn rise before the sun? But the dawn recedes, and the sun's brightness remains. How is this? The Old Testament receded, and the truth of the Gospel remains; for what the early people observed in the flesh in legal rites, the new people of the New Testament practice in the spirit, and what the former showed in the flesh, the latter perfect in the spirit. For circumcision has not passed away, because it has been transformed into baptism; as the older race was marked in one member, the newer race is marked in all its members. Hence the old precepts have not passed away but are transformed into better ones; and in the last times the Synagogue will also transform itself faithfully into the Church. For, O Synagogue, when you were wandering in many iniquities, polluting yourself with Baal and the others, shamefully breaking the custom of the Law and lying naked in your sins, I did what My servant Ezekiel tells of, when he says:

7 Words of Ezekiel

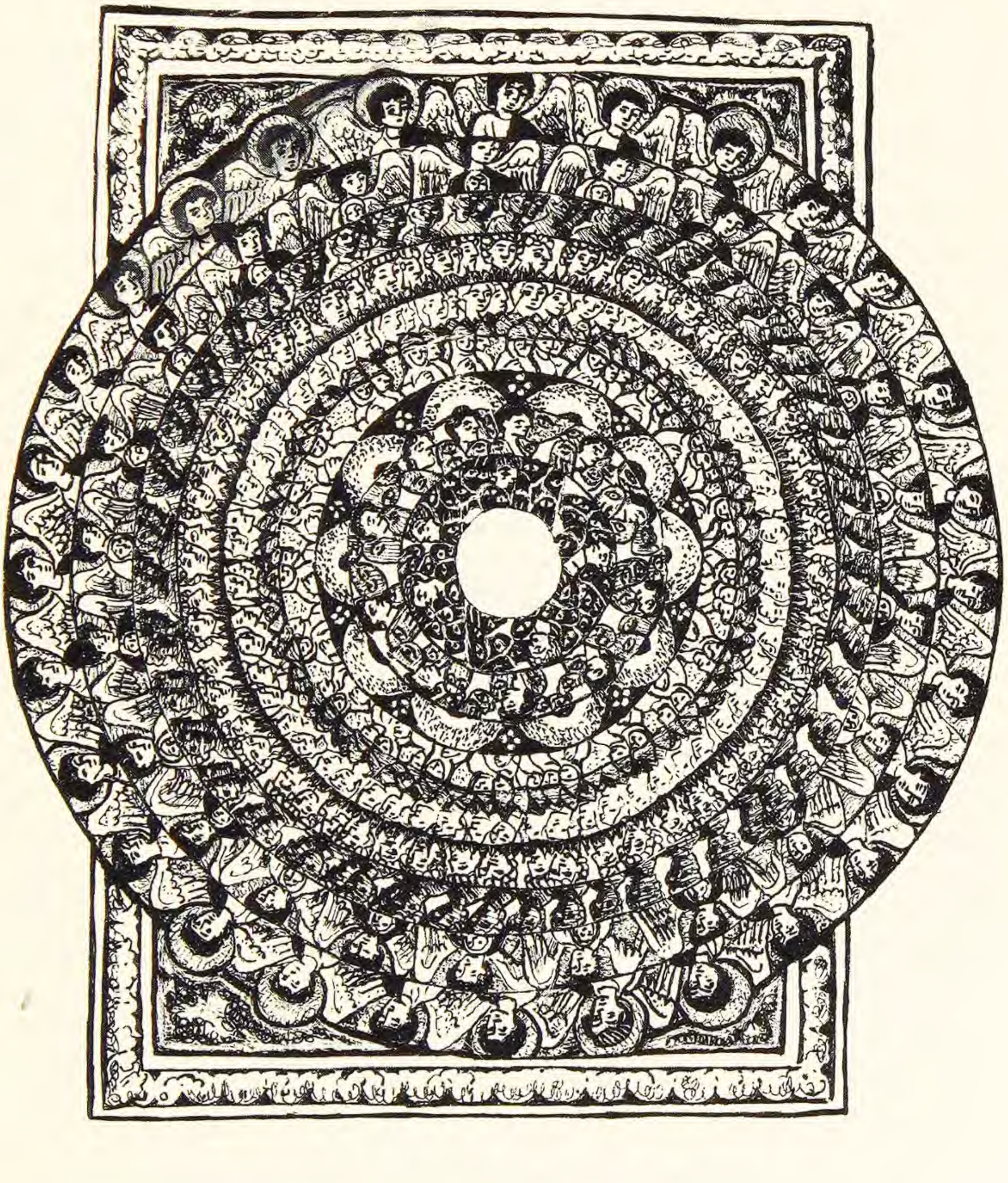
"I spread my garment over you and covered your shame; and I swore to you, and I entered into a covenant with you" [Ezekiel 16:8]. Which is to say: I, the Son of the Most High, in the will of My Father have spread My

Incarnation over you, O Synagogue, to save you, taking away your sins, which you have committed in many times of forgetfulness; I have promised you the remedy of salvation, showing you the ways of My covenant for it when I made known to you by apostolic doctrine the true faith, so that you might obey my precepts as a wife ought to submit to the power of her husband. For I have taken from you the harshness of the exterior Law and given you the sweetness of spiritual doctrine and in it shown you all My mysteries in Myself; but you have deserted Me, Who am just, and allied with the Devil.

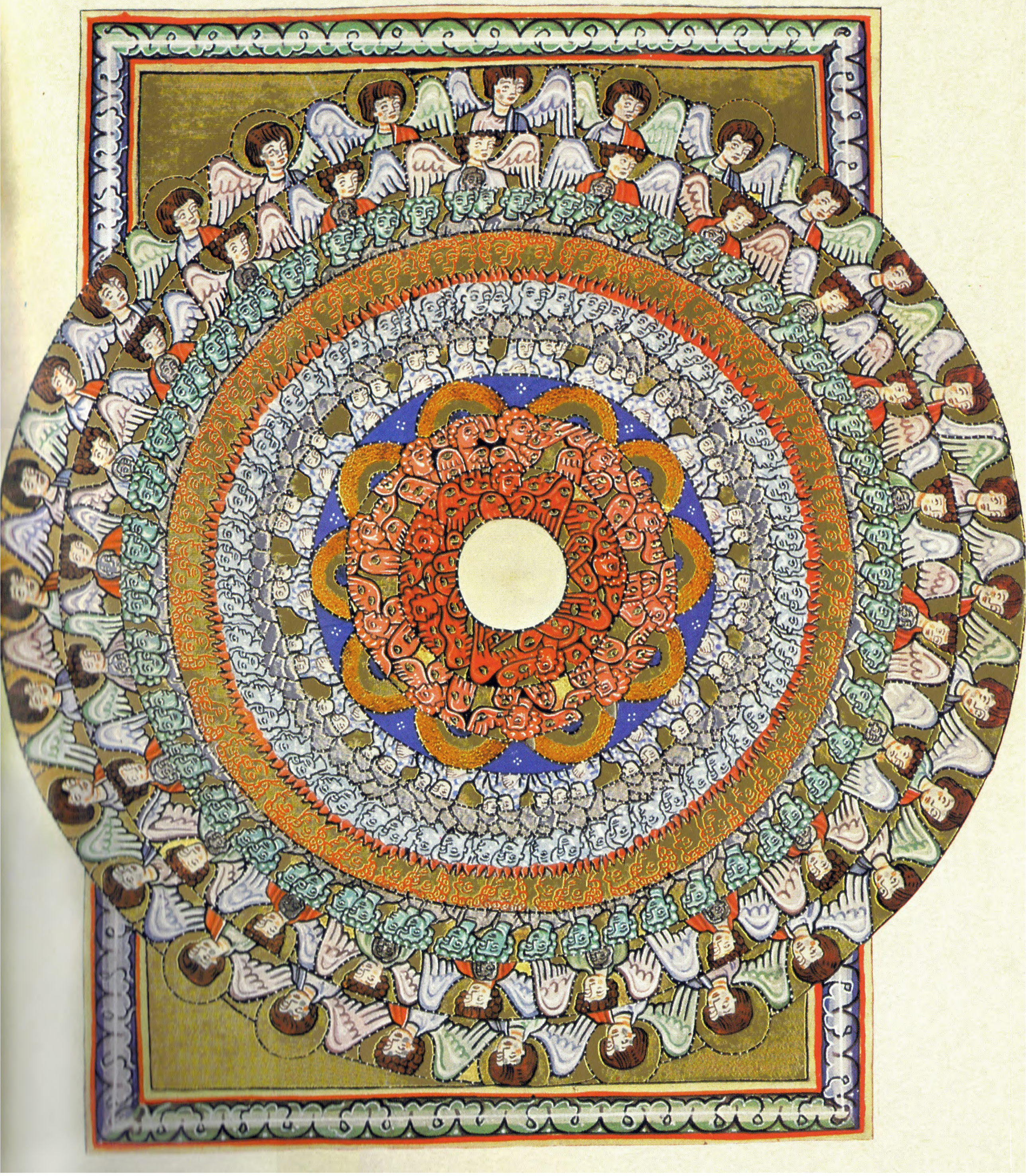
8 Analogy of Samson, Saul and David

But, O human, understand that Samson's wife left him, and so he was deprived of his eyesight, and the Synagogue likewise forsook the Son of God, spurning Him stubbornly and rejecting His doctrine. But later, when his hair grew again, as the Church of God was strengthened the Son of God in His might overthrew the Synagogue and deprived her children, who were crushed by God's jealousy by means of pagans who did not know God. For she had undergone many errors of confusion and discord, and polluted herself by wicked transgressions. But as David at last called back the wife he had first married, but who had polluted herself with another man, so also the Son of God at the end of time will call back the Synagogue, which had first been joined to Him in His Incarnation but had rejected the grace of baptism and followed the Devil, and she will forsake the errors of unbelief and return to the light of truth. For the Devil drew the Synagogue away in her blindness, and gave her over to error and unbelief; and he will not cease to do this until the coming of the son of perdition. But the latter will fall in the exaltation of his pride as Saul fell, slain on Mount Gilboa, after driving David out of his land; as the son of iniquity will try to drive out My Son in His elect. But My Son, when the Antichrist has been cast out, will call back the Synagogue to the true faith, as David took back his first wife after the death of Saul; for at the end of time the people will see the one who deceived them conquered and run back with great haste to the way of salvation. For it was not fitting for the truth of the Gospel to precede the shadow of the Law, as it is fitting that fleshly things should precede and spiritual things should follow; the servant announces his master's coming, and the master does not go before the servant to serve him. So too the Synagogue went before as a foreshadowing sign, and the Church came after in the light of truth.

Therefore whoever has knowledge in the Holy Spirit and wings of faith, let this one not ignore My admonition, but taste it, embrace it and receive it in his soul.



THE CHOIRS OF ANGELS



VISION SIX
The Choirs of Angels

Then I saw in the secret places in the heights of Heaven two armies of heavenly spirits who shone with great brightness. Those in one of the armies had on their breasts wings, with forms like human forms in front of them, on which human features showed as if in clear water. Those in the second army also had wings on their breasts, which displayed forms like human forms, in which the image of the Son of Man shone as if in a mirror. And I could see no other form either in these or in the others. These armies were arrayed in the shape of a crown around five other armies. Those in the first of these five armies seemed as if they had human forms that shone with great splendor from the shoulders down. Those in the second shone with such great brightness that I could not look at them. Those in the third had the appearance of white marble and heads like human heads, over which torches were burning, and from the shoulders down they were surrounded by an iron-gray cloud. Those in the fourth had forms like human forms and feet like human feet, and wore helmets on their heads, and marble tunics. And those in the fifth had nothing human in their appearance, and shone red like the dawn. And I saw no other form in them.

But these armies were also arrayed like a crown around two others. Those in the first of these other armies seemed to be full of eyes and wings, and in each eye appeared a mirror and in each mirror a human form, and they raised their wings to a celestial height. And those in the second burned like fire, and had many wings, in which they showed as if in a mirror all the Church ranks arrayed in order. And I saw no other shape either in these or in the others. And all these armies were singing with marvellous voices all kinds of music about the wonders that God works in blessed souls, and by this God was magnificently glorified.

And I heard the voice from Heaven, saying to me:

1 God wonderfully formed and ordered His creation

Almighty and Ineffable God, Who was before all ages and had no beginning and will not cease to be when all ages are ended, marvellously by His will created every creature and marvellously by His will set it in its place. How? He destined some creatures to stay on the earth, but others to inhabit the celestial regions. He also set in place the blessed angels, both for human

salvation and for the honor of His name. How? By assigning some to help humans in their need, and others to manifest to people the judgements of His secrets.

Therefore *you see in the secret places in the heights of Heaven two armies of heavenly spirits who shine with great brightness;* thus, as is shown to you in the height of secret places that the bodily eye cannot penetrate but the inner sight can see, these two armies indicate that the human body and soul should serve God, since they are going to have the brightness of eternal blessedness with the citizens of Heaven.

2 On the appearance of the angels and its meaning

And those in one of the armies have on their breasts wings, with forms like human forms in front of them, on which human features show as if in clear water. These are the angels, who spread the desires in the depths of their minds like wings; not that they have wings like birds, but that in their desires they are quick to accomplish God's will, the way a person's thoughts speed swiftly; and by their forms they display in themselves the beauty of reason, by which God closely examines human deeds; for as a servant who hears his master's words carries them out according to his will, so the angels pay attention to God's will for humans and show Him human actions in themselves.

3 On the appearance of the archangels and its meaning

And so those in the second army also have wings on their breasts, which display forms like human forms, in which the image of the Son of Man shines as if in a mirror. These are the archangels, who contemplate God's will in the desires of their intellect and display in themselves the beauty of reason; they magnify the Incarnate Word of God in the purest way, because, knowing God's secret decrees, they have often prefigured the mysteries of the Incarnation of the Son of God. *And you can see no other form either in these or in the others;* for in both the angels and the archangels there are many secret mysteries that the human intellect, weighed down by the mortal body, cannot understand. *But these armies are arrayed in the shape of a crown around five other armies.* This shows that the human body and soul must, by virtue of their strength, contain the five human senses, purify them by the five wounds of My Son, and lead them to the righteousness of governance from within.

4 On the appearance of the Virtues and its meaning

And so *those in the first of these five armies seem as if they have human forms that shine with great splendor from the shoulders down.* These are the

VISION SIX

Virtues, which spring up in the hearts of believers and in ardent charity build in them a lofty tower, which is their works; so that in their reason they show the deeds of the elect, and in their strength bring them to a good end with a great glory of blessedness. How? The elect, whose inner understanding is clear, cast away all their wickedness of evil, being enlightened by these Virtues in the enlightenment of My will, and fight vigorously against the snares of the Devil; and these Virtues unceasingly show to Me their Creator these struggles against the Devil's throng. For people have within themselves struggles of confession and of denial. How? Because this one confesses Me, and that one denies Me. And in this struggle the question is: Is there a God or not? And the answer comes from the Holy Spirit Who dwells in the person: God is, and created you, and also redeemed you.

But as long as this question and answer are in a person, the power of God will not be absent from him, for this question and answer carries with it penitence. But when this question is not in a person, neither is the answer of the Holy Spirit, for such a person drives out God's gift from himself and, without the question that leads to penitence, throws himself upon death. And the Virtues display to God the battles of these wars, for they are the seal that shows God the intention that worships or denies Him.

5 On the appearance of the Powers and its meaning

Those in the second army shine with such great brightness that you cannot look at them. These are the Powers, and this means that no weak, mortal sinner can understand the serenity and beauty of the power of God or attain a likeness to it, for God's power is unfailing.

6 On the appearance of the Principalities and its meaning

Those in the third have the appearance of white marble and heads like human heads, over which torches are burning, and from the shoulders down they are surrounded by an iron-gray cloud. These are the Principalities, and they show that those who by God's gift are rulers of people in this world must assume the true strength of justice, lest they fall into the weakness of instability. They should contemplate their Head, Who is Christ the Son of God, and direct their government according to His will for human needs, and seek the grace of the Holy Spirit in the ardor of truth, that until their end they may continue firm and unshaken in the strength of equity.

7 On the appearance of the Dominations and its meaning

Those in the fourth have forms like human forms and feet like human feet, and wear helmets on their heads, and marble tunics. These are the Domina-

tions; they show that He Who is the Lord of all has raised human reason, which had lain polluted in the dust of humanity, from earth to Heaven, when He sent to earth His Son and His Son in His righteousness trod underfoot the ancient seducer; and thus the faithful should faithfully imitate Him, Who is their Head, placing their hope in Heaven and fortifying themselves with the strong desire of good works.

8 On the appearance of the Thrones and its meaning

And those in the fifth have nothing human in their appearance and shine red like the dawn. These are the Thrones, showing that when for human salvation the Only-Begotten of God, He Who was uninfected by human sin, put on a human body, Divinity bent down to humanity; for He, being conceived by the Holy Spirit in the dawn, which is to say in the Blessed Virgin, received flesh with no spot of uncleanness whatsoever. *And you see no other form in them,* for there are many mysteries of the celestial secrets that human frailty cannot understand. *But these armies are also arrayed like a crown around two others.* This means that the faithful who direct their body's five senses to celestial things, knowing that they have been redeemed through the five wounds of the Son of God, attain with every turn and working of their mind, because they ignore the heart's pleasure and put their hope in inward things, to love of God and their neighbor.

9 On the appearance of the Cherubim and its meaning

Therefore, *those in the first of these other armies seem to be full of eyes and wings, and in each eye appears a mirror and in each mirror a human form, and they raise their wings to a celestial height.* These are the Cherubim, who signify knowledge of God, by which they see the mysteries of the celestial secrets and fulfil their desires according to God's will. Thus, possessing in the depth of their knowledge the purest clarity, they miraculously foresee all those who know the true God and direct their hearts' desires, like wings on which nobly and justly to arise, to Him Who is above all; and, instead of lusting after the transitory, love the eternal, as they show by the high-mindedness of their desires.

10 On the appearance of the Seraphim and its meaning

And those in the second army burn like fire, and have many wings, in which they show as if in a mirror all the Church ranks arrayed in order. These are the Seraphim, and this means that just as they burn for love of God and have the greatest desire to contemplate Him, they also by their desires display with

shining purity the ranks, both secular and spiritual, which flourish in the mysteries of the Church, for the secrets of God show wondrously in them. Therefore all who, loving sincerity with a pure heart, seek eternal life, should ardently love God and embrace Him with all their will, that they may attain to the joys of those they faithfully imitate.

But you see no other shape either in these or in the others. This is to say that there are many secrets of the blessed spirits that are not to be shown to humans, for as long as they are mortal they cannot discern perfectly the things that are eternal.

11 All these armies sing of the miracles God does in blessed souls

But all these armies, as you hear, are singing with marvellous voices all kinds of music about the wonders that God works in blessed souls, by which God is magnificently glorified. For spirits blessed in the power of God make known in the heavenly places by indescribable sounds their great joy in the works of wonder that God perfects in His saints; by which the latter gloriously magnify God, seeking Him in the depth of sanctity and rejoicing in the joy of salvation; as My servant David, the observer of celestial secrets, testifies when he says:

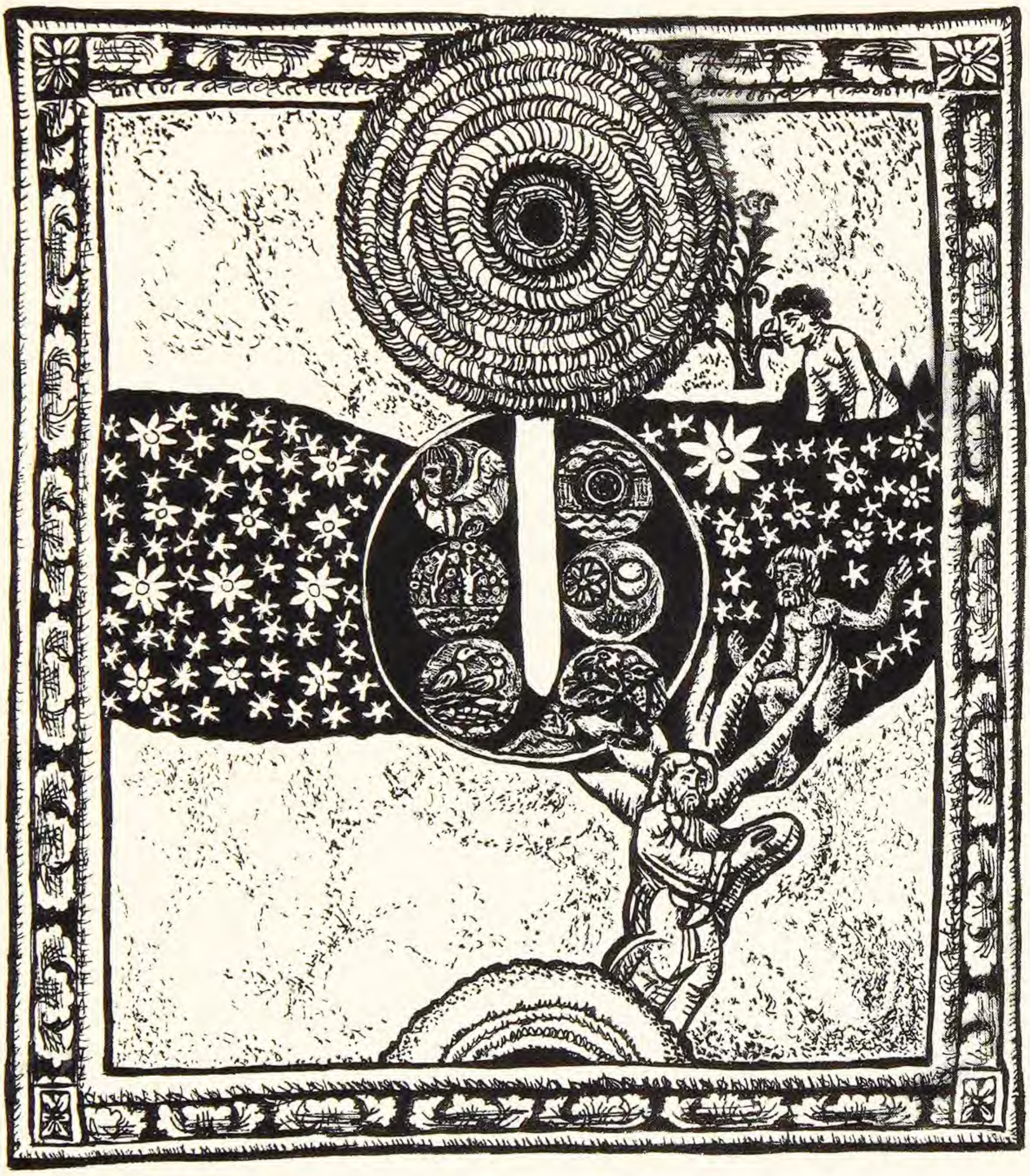
12 The Psalmist on this subject

"The voice of rejoicing and of salvation in the tabernacles of the just" [Psalm 117:15]. Which is to say: The song of the gladness and joy of those who tread the flesh underfoot and lift up the spirit is known, with unfailing salvation, in the dwellings of those who reject injustice and do the works of justice; they might do evil at the Devil's temptation, but by divine inspiration they do good. What does this mean? Man often has inappropriate exultation at committing an improperly desired sin; but in that state he does not have salvation, for he has gone against the divine command. He, however, who strongly does the good he ardently desires shall dance in the true exultation of the joy of salvation, for while in the body he yet loves the mansion of those who run in the way of truth and turn aside from lying error.

Therefore, whoever has knowledge in the Holy Spirit and wings of faith, let this one not ignore My admonition, but taste it, embrace it and receive it in his soul.

Book Two

THE REDEEMER AND REDEMPTION



THE REDEEMER

VISION ONE
The Redeemer

And I, a person not glowing with the strength of strong lions or taught by their inspiration, but a tender and fragile rib imbued with a mystical breath, saw a blazing fire, incomprehensible, inextinguishable, wholly living and wholly Life, with a flame in it the color of the sky, which burned ardently with a gentle breath, and which was as inseparably within the blazing fire as the viscera are within a human being. And I saw that the flame sparked and blazed up. And behold! The atmosphere suddenly rose up in a dark sphere of great magnitude, and that flame hovered over it and gave it one blow after another, which struck sparks from it, until that atmosphere was perfected and so Heaven and earth stood fully formed and resplendent. Then the same flame was in that fire, and that burning extended itself to a little clod of mud which lay at the bottom of the atmosphere, and warmed it so that it was made flesh and blood, and blew upon it until it rose up a living human. When this was done, the blazing fire, by means of that flame which burned ardently with a gentle breath, offered to the human a white flower, which hung in that flame as dew hangs on the grass. Its scent came to the human's nostrils, but he did not taste it with his mouth or touch it with his hands, and thus he turned away and fell into the thickest darkness, out of which he could not pull himself. And that darkness grew and expanded more and more in the atmosphere. But then three great stars, crowding together in their brilliance, appeared in the darkness, and then many others, both small and large, shining with great splendor, and then a gigantic star, radiant with wonderful brightness, which shot its rays toward the flame. And in the earth too appeared a radiance like the dawn, into which the flame was miraculously absorbed without being separated from the blazing fire. And thus in the radiance of that dawn the Supreme Will was enkindled.

And as I was trying to ponder this enkindling of the Will more carefully, I was stopped by a secret seal on this vision, and I heard the voice from on high saying to me, "You may not see anything further regarding this mystery unless it is granted you by a miracle of faith."

And I saw a serene Man coming forth from this radiant dawn, Who poured out His brightness into the darkness; and it drove Him back with great force, so

BOOK TWO

that He poured out the redness of blood and the whiteness of pallor into it, and struck the darkness such a strong blow that the person who was lying in it was touched by Him, took on a shining appearance and walked out of it upright. And so the serene Man Who had come out of that dawn shone more brightly than human tongue can tell, and made His way into the greatest height of inestimable glory, where He radiated in the plenitude of wonderful fruitfulness and fragrance. And I heard the voice saying to me from the aforementioned living fire: "O you who are wretched earth and, as a woman, untaught in all learning of earthly teachers and unable to read literature with philosophical understanding, you are nonetheless touched by My light, which kindles in you an inner fire like a burning sun; cry out and relate and write these My mysteries that you see and hear in mystical visions. So do not be timid, but say those things you understand in the Spirit as I speak them through you; so that those who should have shown My people righteousness, but who in their perversity refuse to speak openly of the justice they know, unwilling to abstain from the evil desires that cling to them like their masters and make them fly from the face of the Lord and blush to speak the truth, may be ashamed. Therefore, O diffident mind, who are taught inwardly by mystical inspiration, though because of Eve's transgression you are trodden on by the masculine sex, speak of that fiery work this sure vision has shown you."

The Living God, then, Who created all things through His Word, by the Word's Incarnation brought back the miserable human who had sunk himself in darkness to certain salvation. What does this mean?

1 On God's omnipotence

This blazing fire that you see symbolizes the Omnipotent and Living God, Who in His most glorious serenity was never darkened by any iniquity; *incomprehensible*, because He cannot be divided by any division or known as He is by any part of any of His creatures' knowledge; *inextinguishable*, because He is that Fullness that no limit ever touched; *wholly living*, for there is nothing that is hidden from Him or that He does not know; *and wholly Life*, for everything that lives takes its life from Him, as Job shows, inspired by Me, when he says:

2 Words of Job on this subject

"Who is ignorant that the hand of the Lord has made all these things? In His hand is the soul of every living thing and the spirit of all human flesh" [Job 12:9–10]. What does this mean? No creature is so dull of nature as not to know what changes in the things that make it fruitful cause it to attain its full growth. The sky holds light, light air, and air the birds; the earth nourishes

plants, plants fruit and fruit animals; which all testify that they were put there by a strong hand, the supreme power of the Ruler of All, Who in His strength has provided so for them all that nothing is lacking to them for their use. And in the omnipotence of the same Maker is the motion of all living things that seek the earth for earthly things like the animals and are not inspired by God with reason, as well as the awakening of those who dwell in human flesh and have reason, discernment and wisdom. How?

The soul goes about in earthly affairs, laboring through many changes as fleshly behavior demands. But the spirit raises itself in two ways: sighing, groaning and desiring God; and choosing among options in various matters as if by some rule, for the soul has discernment in reason. Hence Man contains in himself the likeness of heaven and earth. In what way? He has a circle, which contains his clarity, breath and reason, as the sky has its lights, air and birds; and he has a receptacle containing humidity, germination and birth, as the earth contains fertility, fruition and animals. What is this? O human, you are wholly in every creature, and you forget your Creator; you are subject to Him as was ordained, and you go against His commands?

3 That the Word was and is indivisibly and eternally in the Father

You see that *that fire has a flame in it the color of the sky, which burns ardently with a gentle breath, and which is as inseparably within the blazing fire as the viscera are within a human being;* which is to say that before any creatures were made the Infinite Word was indivisibly in the Father; Which in course of time was to become incarnate in the ardor of charity, miraculously and without the stain or weight of sin, by the Holy Spirit's sweet freshness in the dawn of blessed virginity. But after He assumed flesh, the Word also remained inseparably in the Father; for as a person does not exist without the vital movements within his viscera, so the only Word of the Father could in no way be separated from Him.

4 Why the Son of God is called the Word

And why is He called the Word? Because, just as a word of command uttered by an instructor among local and transitory human dust is understood by people who know and foresee the reason he gave it, so also the power of the Father is known among the creatures of the world, who perceive and understand in Him the source of their creation, through the Word Who is independent of place and imperishable in His inextinguishable eternal life; and as the power and honor of a human being are known by his official words, so the holiness and goodness of the Father shines through the Supreme Word.

5 By the power of the Word of God every creature was raised up

And you see that *the flame sparks and blazes up*. This is to say that when every creature was raised through Him, the Word of God showed His power like a flash of flame; and when He became incarnate in the dawn and purity of virginity, it was as if He blazed up, so that from Him trickled every virtue of the knowledge of God, and Man lived again in the salvation of his soul.

6 God's incomprehensible power made the world and the different species

And the atmosphere suddenly rises up in a dark sphere of great magnitude. This is the material of Creation while still formless and imperfect, not yet full of creatures; it is a sphere, for it is under the incomprehensible power of God, which is never absent from it, and by the Supernal Will it rises up in God's great power in the twinkling of an eye. *And that flame hovers over it like a workman and gives it one blow after another, which strike sparks from it, until that atmosphere is perfected and so Heaven and earth stand fully formed and resplendent.* For the Supernal Word, Who excels every creature, showed that they all are subject to Him and draw their strength from His power, when He brought forth from the universe the different kinds of creatures, shining in their miraculous awakening, as a smith makes forms out of bronze; until each creature was radiant with the loveliness of perfection, beautiful in the fullness of their arrangement in higher and lower ranks, the higher made radiant by the lower and the lower by the higher.

7 After the other creatures Man was created from earthly mud

But then the same flame that is in that fire and that burning extends itself to a little clod of mud, which lies at the bottom of the atmosphere; this is to say that after the other creatures were created, the Word of God, in the strong will of the Father and supernal love, considered the poor fragile matter from which the weak frailty of the human race, both bad and good, was to be produced, now lying in heavy unconsciousness and not yet roused by the breath of life; *and warms it so that it is made flesh and blood,* that is, poured fresh warmth into it, for the earth is the fleshly material of humans, and nourished it with moisture, as a mother gives milk to her children; *and blows upon it until it rises up a living human,* for He aroused it by supernal power and miraculously raised up a human being with intelligence of body and mind.

8 Adam accepted obedience, but by the Devil's counsel did not obey

When this is done, the blazing fire, by means of that flame which burns ardently with a gentle breath, offers to the human a white flower, which hangs in that flame as dew hangs on the grass. For, after Adam was created, the Father in His lucid serenity gave to Adam through His Word in the Holy Spirit the sweet precept of obedience, which in fresh fruitfulness hung upon the Word; for the sweet odor of sanctity trickled from the Father in the Holy Spirit through the Word and brought forth fruit in greatest abundance, as the dew falling on the grass makes it grow. *Its scent comes to the human's nostrils, but he does not taste it with his mouth or touch it with his hands;* for he tried to know the wisdom of the Law with his intelligence, as if with his nose, but did not perfectly digest it by putting it in his mouth, or fulfil it in full blessedness by the work of his hands. *And thus he turns away and falls into the thickest darkness, out of which he cannot pull himself.* For, by the Devil's counsel, he turned his back on the divine command and sank into the gaping mouth of death, so that he did not seek God either by faith or by works; and therefore, weighed down by sin, he could not rise to true knowledge of God, until He came Who obeyed His Father sinlessly and fully.

And that darkness grows and expands more and more in the atmosphere; for the power of death in the world was constantly increased by the spread of wickedness, and human knowledge entangled itself in many vices in the horror of bursting and stinking sin.

9 Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and the other prophets drove back the darkness

But then three great stars, crowding together in their brilliance, appear in the darkness, and then many others, both small and large, shining with great splendor. These are the three great luminaries Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, symbolizing the Heavenly Trinity, embracing one another both by their works of faith and by their relationship in the flesh, and by their signs driving back the darkness in the world; and, following them, the many other prophets both minor and major, radiant with many wonders.

10 The prophet John, glittering with miracles, foretold the Son of God

And then a gigantic star appears, radiant with wonderful brightness, which shoots its rays toward the flame. This is the greatest prophet, John the Baptist, who glittered with miracles in his faithful and serene deeds, and pointed out

by their means the true Word, the true Son of God; for he did not yield to wickedness, but vigorously and forcefully cast it out by works of justice.

11 At the Incarnation of the Word of God the great counsel was seen

And in the earth too appears a radiance like the dawn, into which the flame is miraculously absorbed, without being separated from the blazing fire. This is to say that God set a great splendor of light in the place where He would bring forth His Word and, fully willing it, sent Him there, yet not so as to be divided from Him; but He gave that profitable fruit and brought Him forth as a great fountain, so that every faithful throat could drink and never more be dry. *And thus in the radiance of that dawn the Supreme Will is enkindled;* for in the bright and roseate serenity was seen the fruitfulness of the great and venerable counsel, so that all the forerunners marvelled at it with bright joy.

12 Humans must not scrutinize God's secrets beyond what He wishes to show

But you, O human, who seek in the way of humans to know more fully the loftiness of this counsel, are opposed by a concealing barrier; for you must not search into the secrets of God beyond those things the Divine Majesty wills to be revealed for love of those who trust in Him.

13 Christ by His death brought back His elect to their inheritance

And you see a serene Man coming forth from this radiant dawn, Who pours out His brightness into the darkness; and it drives Him back with great force, so that He pours out the redness of blood and the whiteness of pallor into it, and strikes the darkness such a strong blow that the person who is lying in it is touched by Him, takes on a shining appearance and walks out of it upright. This is the Word of God, imperishably incarnate in the purity of unstained virginity and born without pain, and yet not separated from the Father. How? While the Son of God was being born in the world from a mother, He was still in Heaven in the Father; and at this the angels suddenly trembled and sang the sweetest praises of rejoicing. And, living in the world without stain of sin, He sent out into the darkness of unbelief His clear and blessed teachings and salvation; but, rejected by the unbelieving people and led to His Passion, He poured out His beautiful blood and knew in His body the darkness of death. And thus conquering the Devil, he delivered from Hell his elect, who were held prostrate there, and by His redeeming touch brought them back to the inheritance they had lost in Adam. As they were returning to their inheri-

tance timbrels and harps and all kinds of music burst forth, because Man, who had lain in perdition but now stood upright in blessedness, had been freed by heavenly power and escaped from death, as through My servant Hosea I have stated thus:

14 Words of Hosea on this subject

"The iniquity of Ephraim is bound up; his sin is hidden. The sorrows of a woman in labor shall come upon him; he is an unwise son; for now he shall not stand in the contrition of the sons. I will deliver them out of the hand of death, from death I will redeem them. I will be your death, O Death; I will be your destruction, O Hell!" [Hosea 13:12–14]. What does this mean? The Devil's perverse iniquity is bound by heavy fetters, since he does not deserve that God's zeal should release him; for he has never rightfully acknowledged Him as do those who faithfully fear Him. For the Devil always raises himself against God, saying, "I am God!"; and he always goes astray over the Blessed One of the Lord, opposing the name of Christians because of Him. Thus his malice is so ingrained that his sin, cruelly committed in filthy pride, can never deserve by any reparation to be covered by salvation. Therefore he will be in perpetual pain, as a woman in labor is afflicted by despair when she doubts she can survive the opening of her womb. For this misery will remain with him, that he is forsaken by beatitude because the wisdom of the sons flees from him, and he does not come to himself, as that man came to himself who returned to his father from his wickedness.

Thus he will never stand trusting in that action by which the children of salvation in the Heavenly Son crush death in its hardened iniquity, which the cunning serpent brought forth when he suggested deceit to the guileless first man. But since those children despise the poison of that unclean advice and look to their salvation, I will deliver them from slavery to idols; for idols are by their deceptiveness in the power of perdition, and for them the unfaithful forsake the honor of their Creator, entangling themselves in the Devil's snare and doing his works at his will.

And so I will redeem the souls of those who love and worship Me, the Holy and the Just, from the pain of Hell; for no one can be released from the Devil's fetters, which bind him with bitterest death by his transgression of God's precepts, except by the redemption of Him Who will redeem His elect with His own blood. This is how I will slay you, O Death, with utter destruction, for I will take from you the thing you think to live by, and you will be called a useless corpse; at the height of your strength you will lie prostrate, as a corpse without the soul lies prostrate awaiting decay. For when the happy souls are mercifully raised up to celestial bliss through the

new Man, Who will not be a party to poisonous deception, the fountain of living water will drown you. Thus also to your confusion I will be your destruction, O Hell!, when My strong power will take from you your ill-gotten spoils, so that you too, justly despoiled, will never again appear whole and laden with riches, but will lie prostrate and confounded forever, bearing wounds and decay.

15 The Son of God rising from the dead showed Man the way from death to life

And, as you see, *the serene Man Who has come out of that dawn shines more brightly than human tongue can tell,* which shows that the noble body of the Son of God, born of the sweet Virgin and three days in the tomb (to confirm that there are three Persons in one Divinity), was touched by the glory of the Father, received the Spirit and rose again to serene immortality, which no one can explain by thought or word. And the Father showed Him with His open wounds to the celestial choirs, saying, "This is My beloved Son, Whom I sent to die for the people." And so joy unmeasurable by the human mind arose in them, for criminal forgetfulness of God was brought low, and human reason, which had lain prostrate under the Devil's persuasion, was uplifted to the knowledge of God; for the way to truth was shown to Man by the Supreme Beatitude, and in it he was led from death to life.

16 The risen Christ appeared frequently to His disciples

But just as the children of Israel, after being liberated from Egypt, wandered in the desert for forty years before coming into the land flowing with milk and honey, so too the Son of God, rising from the dead, showed Himself for forty days to His disciples and the blessed women who wept and had a great desire to see Him. This He did to encourage them, lest they should waver in faith and say, "We did not see Him, so we cannot believe that He is our salvation!" He showed Himself to them frequently, to strengthen them that they might not fall.

17 When Christ ascended to the Father His Bride was given many ornaments

And He makes His way into the greatest height of inestimable glory, where he radiates in the plenitude of wonderful fruitfulness and fragrance. This is to say that the Son of God ascended to the Father, Who with the Son and the Holy Spirit is the height of lofty and excelling joy and gladness unspeakable;

where that same Son gloriously appears to His faithful in the abundance of sanctity and blessedness, so that they believe with pure and simple hearts that He is true God and Man. And then indeed the new Bride of the Lamb was set up with many ornaments, for she had to be ornamented with every kind of virtue for the mighty struggle of all the faithful people, who are to fight against the crafty serpent.

But let the one who sees with watchful eyes and hears with attentive ears welcome with a kiss My mystical words, which proceed from Me Who am life.

THE TRINITY IN THE UNITY

VISION TWO
The Trinity

Then I saw a bright light, and in this light the figure of a man the color of a sapphire, which was all blazing with a gentle glowing fire. And that bright light bathed the whole of the glowing fire, and the glowing fire bathed the bright light; and the bright light and the glowing fire poured over the whole human figure, so that the three were one light in one power of potential. And again I heard the living Light, saying to me:

1 On the perception of God's mysteries

This is the perception of God's mysteries, whereby it can be distinctly perceived and understood what is that Fullness, Whose origin was never seen, and in Which that lofty strength never fails that founded all the sources of strength. For if the Lord were empty of His own vitality, what then would have been His deeds? And therefore in the whole work it is perceived Who the Maker is.

2 On the Three Persons

Therefore you see *a bright light*, which without any flaw of illusion, deficiency or deception designates the Father; *and in this light the figure of a man the color of a sapphire*, which without any flaw of obstinacy, envy or iniquity designates the Son, Who was begotten of the Father in Divinity before time began, and then within time was incarnate in the world in Humanity; *which is all blazing with a gentle glowing fire*, which fire without any flaw of aridity, mortality or darkness designates the Holy Spirit, by Whom the Only-Begotten of God was conceived in the flesh and born of the Virgin within time and poured the true light into the world. *And that bright light bathes the whole of the glowing fire, and the glowing fire bathes the bright light; and the bright light and the glowing fire pour over the whole human figure, so that the three are one light in one power of potential.* And this means that the Father, Who is Justice, is not without the Son or the Holy Spirit; and the Holy Spirit, Who kindles the hearts of the faithful, is not without the Father or the Son; and the Son, Who is the plenitude of fruition, is not without the Father or the Holy Spirit. They are inseparable in Divine Majesty, for the

BOOK TWO

Father is not without the Son, nor the Son without the Father, nor the Father and the Son without the Holy Spirit, nor the Holy Spirit without Them. Thus these three Persons are one God in the one and perfect divinity of majesty, and the unity of Their divinity is unbreakable; the Divinity cannot be rent asunder, for it remains inviolable without change. But the Father is declared through the Son, the Son through Creation, and the Holy Spirit through the Son incarnate. How? It is the Father Who begot the Son before the ages; the Son through Whom all things were made by the Father when creatures were created; and the Holy Spirit Who, in the likeness of a dove, appeared at the baptism of the Son of God before the end of time.

3 People must not forget to invoke the One God in Three Persons

Hence let no person ever forget to invoke Me, the sole God, in these Three Persons, because for this reason I have made Them known to Man, that he may burn more ardently in My love; since it was for love of him that I sent My Son into the world, as My beloved John testifies, saying:

4 John on the charity of God

"By this the charity of God has appeared toward us: that God has sent His Only-Begotten Son into the world, that we may live by Him. In this is charity, not that we have loved God, but that He has loved us, and sent His Son to be a propitiation for our sins" [1 John 4:9–10]. What does this mean? That because God loved us, another salvation arose than that we had had in the beginning, when we were heirs of innocence and holiness; for the Supernal Father showed His charity in our dangers, though we deserved punishment, in sending by supernal power His Holy Word alone into the darkness of the world for the people's sake. There the Word perfected all good things, and by His gentleness brought back to life those who had been cast out because of their unclean sins and could not return to their lost holiness. What does this mean?

That through this fountain of life came the embrace of God's maternal love, which has nourished us unto life and is our help in perils, and is the deepest and sweetest charity and prepares us for penitence. How?

God has mercifully remembered His great work and His precious pearl, Man, whom He formed from the mud of the earth and into whom He breathed the breath of life. How? By devising the life of penitence, which will never fail in efficacy. For through his proud suasion the cunning serpent deceived Man, but God cast him into penitence, which calls for the humility the Devil did not know and could not practise; for he knew not how to rise up to the right way.

VISION TWO

Hence this salvation of charity did not spring from us, and we were ignorant and incapable of loving God for our salvation; but He Himself, the Creator and Lord of all, so loved His people that for their salvation He sent His Son, the Prince and Savior of the faithful, Who washed and dried our wounds. And He exuded the sweetest balm, from which flow all good things for salvation. Therefore, O human, you must understand that no misfortune or change can touch God. For the Father is the Father, the Son is the Son, and the Holy Spirit is the Holy Spirit, and these Three Persons are indivisible in the Unity of the Divinity. How?

5 On the three qualities of a stone

There are three qualities in a stone and three in a flame and three in a word. How? In the stone is cool dampness and solidity to the touch and sparkling fire. It has cool dampness that it may not be dissolved or broken; solidity to the touch that it may make up habitations and defenses; and sparkling fire that it may be heated and consolidated into hardness. Now this cool dampness signifies the Father, Who never withers and Whose power never ends; and this solidity of touch designates the Son, Who was born of the Virgin and could be touched and known; and the sparkling fire signifies the Holy Spirit, Who enkindles and enlightens the hearts of the faithful. What does this mean?

As a person who in the body often touches the cool dampness of stone falls sick and grows weak, so one who in his unsteady thoughts rashly tries to contemplate the Father loses his faith. And as people build their dwellings and defend themselves against their enemies by handling the solidity of stone, so too the ~~Son of God~~, Who is the true cornerstone, is the dwelling of the faithful people and their protector from evil spirits. And as sparkling fire gives light to dark places by burning what it touches, so also the Holy Spirit drives out unbelief and consumes the blight of iniquity.

And as these three qualities are in one stone, so the true Trinity is in the true Unity.

6 On the three qualities in a flame

Again, as the flame of a fire has three qualities, so there is one God in three Persons. How? A flame is made up of brilliant light and red power and fiery heat. It has brilliant light that it may shine, and red power that it may endure, and fiery heat that it may burn. Therefore, by the brilliant light understand the Father, Who with paternal love opens His brightness to His faithful; and by the red power, which is in the flame that it may be strong, understand the Son, Who took on a body born from a Virgin, in which His

divine wonders were shown; and by the fiery heat understand the Holy Spirit, Who burns ardently in the minds of the faithful. But there is no flame seen where there is neither brilliant light nor red power nor fiery heat; and thus also where neither the Father nor the Son nor the Holy Spirit is known God is not properly worshipped.

Therefore as these three qualities are found in one flame, so Three Persons must be understood in the Unity of the Divinity.

7 On the three causes of human words

And as three causes for the production of words are seen, so the Trinity in the Unity of the Divinity is to be inferred. How? In a word there is sound, force and breath. It has sound that it may be heard, meaning that it may be understood, and breath that it may be pronounced. In the sound, then, observe the Father, Who manifests all things with ineffable power; in the meaning, the Son, Who was miraculously begotten of the Father; and in the breath, the Holy Spirit, Who sweetly burns in Them. But where no sound is heard, no meaning is used and no breath is lifted, there no word will be understood; so also the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are not divided from one another, but do Their works together.

So as there are these three causes for one word, the celestial Trinity is likewise in the celestial Unity. So as in a stone there exists and there operates no cool dampness without solidity to the touch and sparkling fire, or solidity to the touch without cool dampness and sparkling fire, or sparkling fire without cool dampness and solidity to the touch; and as in a flame there exists and there operates no brilliant light without red power and fiery heat, or red power without brilliant light and fiery heat, or fiery heat without brilliant light and red power; and as in a word there exists and there operates no sound without meaning and breath, or meaning without sound and breath, or breath without sound and meaning, but all keep indivisibly together to operate; so also these Three Persons of the true Trinity live inseparably in the majesty of the Divinity ~~and are not divided~~ from each other.

Thus, O human, understand the One God in Three Persons. In the foolishness of your mind you think that God is so powerless that He cannot truly live in three Persons, but only exist weakly in one. What does this mean? God is, in three Persons, the true God, the First and the Last.

8 On the unity of essence

But the Father is not without the Son, or the Son without the Father, or the Father and the Son without the Holy Spirit, or the Holy Spirit without Them; for these three Persons are inseparable in the Unity of the Divinity.

How? A word sounds from a person's mouth, but the mouth does not sound without a word, nor does the word sound without life. Where does the word stay? In the person. And from whence does it go forth? From the person. And how? Because the person is living. Thus the Son is in the Father, Whom the Father sent into the dark world for human salvation, conceived in the Virgin by the Holy Spirit. As the Son is the Only-Begotten in the Divinity, He is the only-begotten in virginity; as he is the Only One of the Father, He is the only-born of the Mother; as the Father begot Him before time began, the Virgin Mother bore the same Only One within time, and after childbirth remained a virgin.

Therefore, O human, in these Three Persons recognize your God, Who created you in the power of His Divinity and redeemed you from damnation. And do not forget your Creator, as Solomon urges you when he writes:

9 Words of Solomon

"Remember your Creator in the days of your youth, before the time of affliction comes, and the years draw nigh of which you shall say: They please me not." [Ecclesiastes 12:1] What does this mean? With your mental powers remember Him Who created you when, in the days of your false confidence, you think it is possible for you to walk according to your own desires, and raise yourself on high to throw yourself into the abyss, and stand in prosperity to fall into calamity. For the force of life in you always strives to perfect itself, until the time when it is complete. How? From birth a child grows up to full stature and remains an adult, leaving the mental license that is in foolish behavior and thinking carefully about how to manage his affairs, as he did not do in the foolishness of childhood. So let the person of faith do too. Let him leave childish behavior and grow up to fullness of virtue and persevere in its strength, leaving the pride of his desire, which pants after foolish vice; but let him with anxious care meditate what may be useful for him, though before he stooped childishly to childish ways.

Therefore, O human, embrace your God in the daylight of your strength, before the hour comes for the purgation of your works, when all things will be manifest and nothing will be overlooked, when the times come that will be complete and will never end; about which times your humanity murmurs a little, saying, "These changes do not please me, for I do not understand whether they will give me good fortune or calamity." For the human mind always wavers on this subject, since when it does good works it is anxious about whether or not they will please God, and when it does bad ones it is afraid to lose forgiveness and salvation.

But let the one who sees with watchful eyes and hears with attentive ears welcome with a kiss My mystical words, which proceed from Me Who am life.

MOTHER CHURCH

me oportet
ecce pa
ecce Rex
Rex Regum
Respice dum sermones: ymaginem
tem. & alter ad aquilonem.

VISION THREE
The Church, Bride of Christ and Mother of the Faithful

After this I saw the image of a woman as large as a great city, with a wonderful crown on her head and arms from which a splendor hung like sleeves, shining from Heaven to earth. Her womb was pierced like a net with many openings, with a huge multitude of people running in and out. She had no legs or feet, but stood balanced on her womb in front of the altar that stands before the eyes of God, embracing it with her outstretched hands and gazing sharply with her eyes throughout all of Heaven. I could not make out her attire, except that she was arrayed in great splendor and gleamed with lucid serenity, and on her breast shone a red glow like the dawn; and I heard a sound of all kinds of music singing about her, "Like the dawn, greatly sparkling."

And that image spreads out its splendor like a garment, saying, "I must conceive and give birth!" And at once, like lightning, there hastened to her a multitude of angels, making steps and seats within her for people, by whom the image was to be perfected.

Then I saw black children moving in the air near the ground like fishes in water, and they entered the womb of the image through the openings that pierced it. But she groaned, drawing them upward to her head, and they went out by her mouth, while she remained untouched. And behold, that serene light with the figure of a man in it, blazing with a glowing fire, which I had seen in my previous vision, again appeared to me, and stripped the black skin off each of them and threw it away; and it clothed each of them in a pure white garment and opened to them the serene light, saying to them one by one:

"Cast off the old injustice, and put on the new sanctity. For the gate of your inheritance is unlocked for you. Consider, therefore, how you have been taught, that you may know your Father Whom you have confessed. I have received you, and you have confessed Me. Now, therefore, behold the two paths, one to the East and the other to the North. If you will diligently contemplate Me with your inner vision, as in faith you have been taught, I will receive you into My kingdom. And if you love Me rightly, I will do whatever you shall wish. But if you despise Me and turn away from Me, looking backward and not seeking to know or understand Me, Who am recalling you by pure penitence though you are filthy with sin, and if you run back to the Devil as to your father, then perdition will take you; for you will

be judged according to your works, since when I gave you the good you did not choose to know Me."

But the children who had passed through the womb of the image walked in the splendor that surrounded her. And she, benignly gazing on them, said in a sad voice, "These children of mine will return again to dust. I conceive and bear many who oppress me, their mother, by heretical, schismatic and useless battles, by robberies and murders, by adultery and fornication, and by many such errors. Many of these rise again in true penitence to eternal life, but many fall in false obduracy to eternal death."

And again I heard the voice from Heaven saying to me: "The great edifice of living souls, which is constructed in Heaven from living stones, is adorned with the immense beauty of its children's virtues, encircling them as a great city encircles its immense throngs of people, or as a wide net does a multitude of fishes; and however much the work of the faithful thrives in the Christian name, by so much does it blossom with celestial virtues."

1 The building of the Church, who redeems her children by Spirit and water

Wherefore now *you see the image of a woman as large as a great city;* this designates the Bride of My Son, who always bears her children by regeneration in the Spirit and in water, for the strong Warrior founded her on a wide base of virtue, that she might hold and perfect the great crowd of His elect; and no enemy can conquer or storm her. She expels unbelief and expands belief, by which it should be understood that in the mortal world each of the faithful is an example to his neighbor, and so they do great works of virtue in Heaven. And when the just, one by one, shall come to join the children of light, the good they have worked will appear in them, which cannot be seen here among mortal ashes, concealed as it is by the shadow of trouble.

2 The Church in her origin was adorned by apostles and martyrs

She has a wonderful crown on her head; for at her origin, when she was raised up by the blood of the Lamb, she was fittingly adorned with apostles and martyrs, and thus betrothed with true betrothal to My Son, since in His blood she faithfully formed herself into a firm edifice of holy souls.

3 The Church is adorned by the priesthood and almsgiving

And from her arms a splendor hangs like sleeves, shining from Heaven to earth. This is the work of power done by priests, who with purity of heart and hands and in the strength of good works offer the holiest of sacrifices

upon the holy altar in the sacrament of the body and blood of their Savior. And the most glorious of their works is to show mercy, always offering generous help for every grief and distributing alms to the poor with a gentle heart while saying with their whole soul, "This is not my property, but that of Him Who created me." And this work, inspired by God, is before His eyes in Heaven, when by the teaching of the Church it is done among the faithful on earth.

4 On the maternal kindness of the Church

Her womb is pierced like a net with many openings, with a huge multitude of people running in and out; that is, she displays her maternal kindness, which is so clever at capturing faithful souls by diverse goads of virtue, and in which the trusting peoples devoutly lead their lives by the faith of their true belief. But He Who casts the net to capture the fishes is My Son, the Bridegroom of His beloved Church, whom He betrothed to Himself in His blood to repair the fall of lost humanity.

5 The Church, not yet perfected, will be brought to perfection near the end

She does not yet have legs or feet, for she has not yet been brought to the full strength of her constancy or the full purity of her fulfillment; for when the son of perdition comes to delude the world she will suffer fiery and bloody anguish in all her members from his cruel wickedness. By this calamity, with bleeding wounds, she will be brought to perfection; then let her run swiftly into the heavenly Jerusalem, where she will sweetly rise anew as a bride in the blood of My Son, entering into life with ardor in the joy of her offspring.

6 How the Church devoutly offers up her children in purity

But she stands balanced on her womb in front of the altar that stands before the eyes of God, embracing it with her outstretched hands; for she is always pregnant and procreating children of hers by the true ablution, and offering them devoutly to God by the purest prayers of the saints and the sweet fragrance of chosen virtues both hidden and manifest; which are plain to the clear understanding of the mind's eye when all stain of falsity and all noises of human praise are removed, as incense is purged of a noxious stench that corrupts its smell. This good work is in God's sight the sweetest sacrifice, at which the Church constantly labors, striving with her whole desire for heavenly things in bringing virtues to fruition, and by increase of such fruit

thirtyfold, sixtyfold and a hundredfold building the high tower of the celestial walls.

7 No wickedness of devilish art can obscure the Church

And she gazes sharply with her eyes throughout all of Heaven; for her purpose, which she devoutly keeps to in the heavenly places, can be obscured by no wickedness: no persuasion of devilish art, nor error of a wavering people, nor storms over the various countries in which madmen tear themselves to pieces in the fury of their unbelief.

8 The human mind cannot fully understand the secrets of the Church

You cannot make out her attire, which is to say that the human intellect, weighed down by fragile weakness, cannot fully understand her secrets; *except that she is arrayed in great splendor and gleams with lucid serenity,* for the True Sun shines everywhere around her by the bright inspiration of the Holy Spirit and her most becoming adornments of virtue.

9 On the virginity of Mary

And on her breast shines a red glow like the dawn; for the virginity of the Most Blessed Virgin when she brought forth the Son of God glows with the most ardent devotion in the hearts of the faithful. *And you hear a sound of all kinds of music singing about her, "Like the dawn, greatly sparkling";* for, as you are now given to understand, ~~all believers~~ should join with their whole wills in celebrating the virginity of ~~that spotless Virgin in~~ the Church.

10 On the expansion of the sacrament of the true Trinity

And that image spreads out its splendor like a garment, saying that she has to conceive and give birth, which means that in the Church the sacrament of ~~the true~~ Trinity will more widely expand, for it is her garment in which to shelter the faithful peoples, through whom she grows by the building up of the living stones, who are washed white in the pure font; thus she herself affirms that it is necessary to salvation that she conceive children in blessing and bring them forth in cleansing, by regeneration in the Spirit and water.

11 The ministry of angels is at hand for each of the faithful

And at once, like lightning, there hasten to her a multitude of angels, making steps and seats within her for people, by whom the image is to be perfected;

because for each of the faithful there is at hand a fearsome and desirable ministry of blessed spirits; they are building stairs of faith and seats of sovereign quiet for those faithful souls, in whom that happy mother, the Church, will attain to her full beauty.

12 Those regenerated by the Church their mother in the faith of the Trinity

Then you see black children moving in the air near the ground like fishes in water, and they enter the womb of the image through the openings that pierce it. This signifies the blackness of those foolish people who are not yet washed in the bath of salvation, but love earthly things and run about doing them, building their dwelling on their unsteadiness; they come at last to the mother of holiness, contemplate the dignity of her secrets and receive her blessing, by which they are snatched from the Devil and restored to God. Thus they enter the confines of the churchly order in which the faithful person is blessed by salvation, when he says within himself, "I believe in God," and the rest of the articles of faith.

But she groans, drawing them upward to her head, and they go out by her mouth, while she remains untouched. For this blessed mother sighs inwardly when baptism is celebrated by the sacred anointing of the Holy Spirit, because the person is renewed by the true circumcision of the Spirit and water, and thus offered to the Supreme Beatitude Who is the Head of all, and made a member of Christ, regenerated unto salvation by invocation of the Holy Trinity. But in this that mother suffers no hurt, for she will remain forever in the wholeness of virginity, which is the Catholic faith; for she arose in the blood of the true Lamb, her intimate Bridegroom, Who was born of the untouched Virgin without any corruption of integrity. So too that Bride will remain untouched, so that no schism can corrupt her.

She will often, however, be bothered by the wicked, but with the help of her Bridegroom she will always most strongly defend herself, like a virgin who is often assailed by the cravings of desire through the Devil's art and the arguments of men, but pours out her prayers to God and is forcibly liberated from their temptations and her virginity preserved. So also the Church resists her wicked corrupters, the heretical errors of Christians, Jews and pagans, who infest her and try to corrupt her virginity, which is the Catholic faith. She resists them strongly, lest she be corrupted, for she was and is and will remain a virgin; the true faith which is her virginity keeps its wholeness against all error, so that her honor as a chaste virgin remains uncorrupted by any touch of lust in the modesty of her body.

And thus the Church is the virginal mother of all Christians, since by the mystery of the Holy Spirit she conceives and bears them, offering them

to God so that they are called the children of God. And as the Holy Spirit overshadowed the Blessed Mother, so that she miraculously conceived and painlessly bore the Son of God and yet remained a virgin, so does the Holy Spirit illumine the Church, happy mother of believers, so that without any corruption she conceives and bears children naturally, yet remains a virgin. How is this?

13 Analogy of the balsam, onyx and diamond

As balsam oozes from a tree, and powerful medicines pour from an onyx vessel in which they are stored, and bright light streams without impediment from a diamond, so the Son of God, unopposed by corruption, was born of the Virgin; and so too the Church, His Bride, brings forth her children without being opposed by error, yet remains a virgin in the integrity of her faith.

14 The Trinity in baptism takes away black sins and confers a white garment

And you see how *that serene light with the figure of a man in it, blazing with a glowing fire, which you saw in your previous vision, again appears to you.* This means that the true Trinity in the true Unity is again shown to you to confirm your faith, as you saw it in that previous exceedingly true vision, with the serene Father and His sweet Son who was in divinity before all time in the Father, conceived within time in the flesh by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin. For in holy baptism Heaven opens and that Blessed Trinity appears to the baptized, so that the faithful person may receive the knowledge of how to worship the One God in the true Trinity, Which truly appeared in the first sacrament of baptism.

And it strips the black skin off each of them and throws it away; and it clothes each of them in a pure white garment and opens to them the serene light, speaking to them one by one words of blessed admonition. For the Divine Power, looking into human hearts, mercifully takes from them the crimes of their unbelief by the washing of baptism, and throws those crimes out of the Way, Which is Christ; for in Christ there is no death, but life through pure confession and the washing away of sins. Through Him each of them is clothed in the purity of salvation, and through Him the brightness of the blessed inheritance, from which the first human being was expelled, is opened to them. And each of the faithful is admonished by words of truth that he should lay aside the old ways of iniquity and accept the new gift of grace for salvation.

VISION THREE

And the children who have passed through the womb of the image walk in the splendor that surrounds her; which means that they, who through the font of sacred baptism have the Church as their happy mother, should remain in and keep to the divine law by which that mother is illuminated and adorned, for if they renounce it by infidelity they will again be stained by the sins from which they had been cleansed.

15 On the Church's lament over the error of her children

So she, benignly gazing on them, says in a sad voice that these children of hers will return again to dust. For this blessed mother, loving them with deepest love and feeling their pain in the depths of her viscera, laments that they whom she brought forth in the washing of regeneration and who were made pure in the heavenly places have longed again for earthly things and become filthy with sin. How? Because many who outwardly receive the faith inwardly oppose it by various vices and tread the way of error instead of the way of truth. Many of them recover from this falsity, but many persist in wickedness; their mother shows this by her words quoted above.

16 Two signs are given to people with which to defend themselves

Two signs of the law for those who were signed were handed down and are known to humanity: circumcision among the ancient fathers, and baptism among the new doctors. By these people are guided like an ox by its yoke; for, though the ox is corrected by the goad, it would still make a crooked furrow if it were not bound to the yoke. Likewise, people would not go forward in My ways if they were not bound to the yoke of their signs.

17 Analogy of the young man

This would be as if a young man were to start off on a journey and his father were to say to him, "Go the right way," but not give him a sword or any weapons of war with which to defend himself. What would happen then? He would flee naked, neither daring nor able to defend himself from the danger that stands in his way and hinders his journey; and he would hide himself, not being signed with the fearsome armor that would have defended him. So would My people be naked if they were not baptized; but now they are fearsome to their enemies who see them signed with the anointing of baptism, by which they resist all who try to destroy them, whether it be a human throng or a devilish army.

18 Why the twofold law was not given to Adam

But the twofold law was not given to Adam. Why? I gave him a law about the tree when he regarded Me in the innocence of his heart. But he spurned Me and agreed with the cunning serpent, and that was so dangerous that no mortal eye will be able to see Me as long as it remains in this transitory world. And because Adam transgressed My precept, he and his race were without a law until the time that prefigured the nobility of My Son.

19 The ancient serpent was fought by Noah and Abraham and bound by the Church

But the warning of the Holy Spirit appeared in Noah as the human race was on the verge of perishing, when I raised the ark above the Flood. For before the ages I foresaw that this evil race, which had completely polluted itself with black wickedness, would have to be replaced by a new stock. For after the death of Adam, his progeny went astray, not knowing that I am God, saying, "Who is God? Who is God?" And then every evil arose in their midst, so that the ancient serpent slithered among them with unhampered power, persuading them to do all his will. He was then free from bondage in fetters, for before the Flood the warning of the Holy Spirit did not strike him; but I threatened him in Noah, from whom the new stock arose, for I so instructed My people that they could never forget the teaching.

Thus the warning of the Holy Spirit first threatened him in Noah, but then circumcision in Abraham struck him in the jaw; and at last the Church bound him in the last days, until the world passes away on the final day. I permitted the Devil to exercise his power in the world before the Flood because of the ancient contest in which he conquered Adam, until he had filled his belly with the carcass of all iniquity; and I allowed this because My judgment is just. Therefore I raised up the towering mass of the Flood and slew the sinners, but in My mystery preserved Noah, whom Satan could not despoil, because by My will he stayed above the Flood. And in the Flood I symbolized the righteous offspring, My Son, announcing to the new age that He Who would silently come into the world and make known the Holy Trinity was truly to be worshipped. How?

20 On the three wings and what they signify

He displayed three wings, which symbolize the Holy Trinity; for which you, O Synagogue, shall deny Me and an alien people shall receive Me, and for which you, O Abraham, shall be magnified. O Abraham, you are encircled

with circumcision, you are walled round by the ancient covenant, and you are adorned with the dawn of the Church's sun. I gave circumcision to you and your race until the coming of My Son, who openly forgave the sins of humanity; but with Him the physical circumcision of the flesh of the foreskin came to an end, and in the sanctification of the washing of My Son, the true font of baptism poured forth.

21 Men who were uncircumcised in the time of circumcision were transgressors

But those of your race who in the time of circumcision were not circumcised when they were told to be, whether they were of lesser or greater age, transgressed the terms of My covenant; except women, on whom circumcision is not enjoined. For a woman is not to be circumcised, since the maternal tabernacle is hidden within her body and cannot be touched except as flesh embraces flesh; and also she is under the power of a husband like a servant under his master.

22 Adam's creation had three causes and so does a man who begets children

For a man has three causes for his act: desire, potency and zeal. His desire enkindles his potency, and thus in both the man and his work there is zeal to complete the work and burning will. In the same way there were three causes at work in the creation of Adam: God's will formed Man by means of His power and perfected Him in great loving-kindness in His own image and likeness. So in God's will note a parallel with a man's desire, and in God's power, a man's potency, and in the loving-kindness of God's will and power the zeal of the man's desire and potency.

In this way the human race is begotten by men on women, as God made humanity from the mud of the earth; and as the earth in its freshness is constituted to bring forth from seeds the fruits of the field, so women are to bring forth children in the waters of birth. What does this mean?

A woman from time to time becomes aware of moisture in her, which diffuses itself through her in the fluid of fertility with heat. Otherwise she would not willingly receive her husband, but refuse him and not consent to his will or procreate children. For if she did not have the fluid of fertility with heat, she would remain fruitless like dry ground, which does not yield itself to any fruitful use. But this fluid of fertility is not always inflamed into the ardor of desire in a woman, unless she has previously been touched by a man and so knows the passion of the ardor of desire; for desire in her is not as strong and burning as in a man, who is as strong as a lion in his desire for

the deed of begetting. He, therefore, has the strength of the desire and the deed, and a woman's business is only to submit to the command of his will; she is then occupied with the procreation of her offspring until she brings them into the world.

23 A woman who is a virgin for the love of God is by God greatly ornamented

But she who desires My Son and wants to keep her virginity for His love is greatly ornamented in His nuptial chamber, for she sets at naught the burning she endures for the sake of His love, but perseveres in chastity, choosing not to be consumed by the fire of ardent lust; and in her spiritual marriage she despises [the idea of] a fleshly husband, and renounces the thought of one to strive with her whole desire after My Son. O dearest seeds, O flowers sweeter and more exquisite than any perfumes, whose soft fragility rises like the dawn to betrothal with My Son, loving Him dearly with chaste love; she is His bride and He is her Bridegroom, for this race of virgins loves Him dearly and is to be adorned in the Heavenly Kingdom with glorious ornaments! But what else?

24 A man who refuses marriage for love of God is a consort of the Son of God

And when the strength of a man refuses to lead a consort in marriage, so that the man for love of My Son controls himself in the vigor of his nature, whose fulfillment is the begetting of children, but he restrains his body so as not to fulfil the desires of the flesh; that this man conquers himself in this manner is extremely pleasing to Me. Therefore I make him too a consort of My Son and place Him like a calm mirror before his face, because he resists the Devil, who drew the human race to himself by filthy and wicked infidelity. To save humanity from this snare I sent My Son into the world, born of the sweet Virgin without any stain of sin; and that innocent Lamb brought and consecrated the font of salvation, abolishing in it the foreskin of the ancient sin. What is this?

This bitter foreskin is the crime of Adam's transgression, and My Son took it away, entering the font of salvation Himself and nobly setting apart the Christian multitude, that the ancient serpent who deceived humanity might in that same washing be drowned. How? The Son fulfilled the Father's terms, and took His inheritance. What does this mean? The race of Adam was driven for his transgression out of the place of delight, but in the baptism of salvation was recalled to life by My Son. How? He Himself spoke the words of blessing over the unbelievers who resisted My precepts, so that,

terrified, they would seek pardon in a spirit of contrition, which My servant Isaiah testifies as I told him to, saying:

25 Words of Isaiah the prophet

"And the children of those who afflicted you shall come and bow down to you, and all who slandered you shall worship your footsteps" [Isaiah 60:14]. What does this mean? O You Who are celestial Peace and the purest Sun! By You shall burst forth the living root, which is regeneration by the Spirit and water, and those who had lain prostrate under the heaviest curse in the filth of horrible impurity shall come eagerly to acknowledge You; and thus bowed down, they will rise at last to truth and justice. How?

They will suck the maternal sweetness of the true faith, not knowing it by sight but grasping it by faithful belief. And who are they? Those who sprang in sin from a race that never saw You in Your burning charity but persistently afflicted and oppressed You as if You were not their destined ruler; but who came to their senses and most sweetly loved You.

And so when they come to follow the true faith they will accept You as King, and adore You as Lord and run swiftly in the holy paths You have shown them; they will gaze on You always with uplifted hands and keep constant vigil before You by good works, never growing weary of seeing You by faith; and all this will be done by those who formerly tore You without shame or reverence, and divided You in hatred and envy; but now they will embrace You ardently in the mirror of faith. What does this mean?

26 Heaven was closed to Man by Adam's fault until the Son of God came

The fall of Adam closed Heaven through My wrath; for Man spurned Me and listened to the cunning serpent, and therefore all the glory of Paradise was closed to him. This closure lasted until the coming of My noble Son, Who by My will entered the flowing Jordan, where My voice resounded mercifully when I said that He was My beloved Son in Whom I was well pleased. I willed this so that at the end of time I might redeem humanity through My Son, Who cleaves to Me in brightest warmth of love as the comb to the honey; therefore I sent Him into the font, which symbolizes Me the Fountain of living water, so that He Himself Who is the fountain of salvation might raise up those souls whom the Holy Spirit by water would redeem from sin and from eternal death. Wherefore the Holy Spirit appeared there too, for through Him remission of sins is given to the faithful; that is, in the mystical secret when My Only-Begotten was pointed out by the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove, which bird is of simple and honest

behavior, and likewise the Holy Spirit is simple unfailing justice and goodness above all good. And this was fitting, for My Son was born of the Virgin without any stain of sin, and in baptism a person who is born with sin from a man and a woman is splendidly and gloriously born again without sin, as My Son says to Nicodemus in the Gospel:

27 Words of the Gospel

"Truly, truly I say to you, unless a man is born again of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven" [John 3:5]. What does this mean? With firmest certainty and not with wavering doubt, I say to you who are born of filth that Man, risen out of burning heat and wrapped in a poisonous form, will be confounded by his apathy unless in the true joy of a new child he is born again from the water of sanctification and the spirit of illumination. How? Because Man, who overflows like water with the spirit of his enlivening, will not be able to enter into salvation as an heir to the Kingdom of his Creator unless he is purified by the true regeneration, as water cleans the dirty and spirit gives life to the inanimate; for he is guilty of the sin of the first parent, who was fraudulently deceived by the Devil. How?

As the thief who wishes to steal the King's most noble and precious possession sneaks in furtively, so the deceptive idea crept in by the maw of the Devil, by which he wickedly stole the beloved jewel of holy innocence and chastity in which dwelt the Holy Spirit; so it must now be cleansed by the holy ablution. For the death-bearing heat, which comes out of transgression of Almighty God's commands and is kindled by lust in the curdling of desire, must now be drowned in Him, Who never grudgingly hides His wonders, but generously shows them forth in infinite mercy.

28 Words of God in exhortation

Hear My Son, therefore, in this plan of regeneration, which is the revelation of My Kingdom; and learn from Him, that you may fulfil My precepts. Do this and so please Me, and beware lest the ancient serpent seduce you; and if you keep to your baptism, which was commanded for you in the name of the Blessed Trinity, you shall not die. And as often as you fall, rise again with greater penitence, in accordance with My mercy on your sins.

O you My dearest children, know the goodness of your Father Who by Himself has delivered you from the jaws of the Devil through pure confession and true pardon and given you all the good things with which to labor to possess the celestial Jerusalem, which you lost by crafty deception; for no one can seek out his lost inheritance except by the sweat of his labor. But you can easily receive supernal blessedness, your just inheritance, by a simple

rule. For the Holy Spirit, as was said before, expels Satan's power from Man in baptism, sanctifying him as a new person in regeneration, so that he can receive his lost joys. Therefore, let anyone who desires to be saved not refuse to be regenerated for the purgation of his sins.

29 In circumcision one member was circumcised, but all members are in baptism

For to the men of the race of Abraham I gave circumcision in one member, but in My Son I commanded all men and women of all people to be circumcised in all their members. How? The circumcision of baptism sprang from the baptism of My Son, and so it shall remain till the last day, and then its sanctity will abide for eternity and know no end. And those who are thus circumcised in the washing of baptism will truly be saved, if they faithfully keep this washing by just works; for I will receive any person, whether of lesser or of greater age, who will keep My covenant, which he has made with Me, believing in Me and confessing the true Trinity either by himself or by those who speak for him, as an infant or a person unable to speak asks by another's mouth. And I will not destroy him in eternity, like one who refuses to receive this font and the works of faith, as is written in the Gospel in the teaching of My Son:

30 Words of the Gospel

"He who believes and is baptized shall be saved; but he who does not believe shall be condemned" [Mark 16:16]. What does this mean? A person who sees by his knowledge, which is his inner eye, what is hidden from his outer sight and does not doubt it, most certainly believes; and this is faith. For what a person perceives outwardly, he knows outwardly, and what he sees inwardly, he understands inwardly. Therefore, when human knowledge ardently perceives in the mirror of life the incomprehensible Divinity the outer eye cannot see, the lusts of the flesh are thrown to the ground and trampled on.

Thus the spirit of that person sighs for true loftiness and feels the regeneration brought by the Son of Man, He Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, whose mother did not receive him from the flesh of a man, but from the mystery of the Father of all. And when He sweetly came He showed in water the pure and living mirror that makes Man live in regeneration. For as Man was born in the flesh when divine power created him in the form of Adam, so the Holy Spirit revives the life of the soul by the pouring out of water; It receives into Itself the spirit of the person, restoring him to life, as he is first brought into life on a wave of blood when he comes out

of the vessel of the body. And just as a human form is then lovingly formed and called human, so now the soul of the person is vivified in water before the eyes of God, so that God knows that he is an inheritor of life.

Wherefore he who receives the font of salvation and the covenant of justice finds life in salvation, because he has faithfully believed. But he who does not will to believe is dead, for he does not have the breath of the Spirit with which to fly in the heights of Heaven, but gropes his way by touch with blinded eyes, and in the darkened knowledge of the flesh is not truly alive; for he lacks the vital teaching God has breathed into one who against the will of his flesh ascends on high. That person, then, will be condemned to the death of unbelief, because he did not have the washing of salvation. For I have not excluded any age or race from this salvation, but through My Son I have mercifully instituted this calling for all people.

31 God receives in baptism both sexes at all ages

For in whatever hour and of whatever sex or age a person may be, male or female, infant or decrepit, when he comes to baptism with loving devotion I will receive him with My merciful help. And I do not refuse the washing of baptism to an infant, as certain false deceivers declare who lyingly say I reject such an offering; as in the Old Testament I did not spurn the circumcision of an infant, though he did not request it with his own voice or receive it of his own will, but his parents supplied it for him.

So now in the new grace I do not reject the baptism of an infant, although he does not ask it by speech or by consent; his parents do this for him.

32 In honor of the Trinity there must be three present at the font

But if he wants to attain salvation, he should then in all justice fulfil the faithful promise that those who stood with him at the sacred font made for him. In honor of the Holy Trinity these ought to be three people, the priest who pours the water on him and the two who give the words of faith for him. But those who are thus joined to the baptized in the washing of baptism cannot enter into marriage relations with him, for they are joined to him by spiritual relationship. In the baptism of My Son, I the Father thundered, which the priest re-enacts when he gives the benediction for the washing; and the Holy Spirit was seen in the form of a gentle animal, whose place is held by the man who speaks to and teaches the person to be baptized in simplicity of heart; and My Son was present to be baptized in the flesh, which is symbolized by the woman who stands by in the sweetness of a

nurturer in the place of the sweet Incarnation of My Only-Begotten. And what then?

33 Analogy of a baby

And as a baby is nourished in its body by milk and the food another grinds up for it, so also a baptized person must observe from his inmost heart the doctrine and the faith given to him in his baptism. But if the baby does not suck at its mother's breast or take the food ground up for it, it will die at once; and so also if a baptized person does not receive the nurturing of his most loving mother, the Church, or retain the words his faithful teachers proposed to him at baptism, he will not escape a cruel death for his soul, for he has refused his soul's salvation and the sweetness of eternal life. And as, when the baby cannot chew its bodily food with its teeth, someone else grinds it up for it to swallow lest it should die, so too in baptism, since it lacks words to confess Me, of necessity there are spiritual helpers there for it, who provide it with the food of life, namely the Catholic faith, lest it fall into the snare of perpetual death. How?

A master gives his orders to his servant in a commanding voice, and the latter carries them out in anxiety and fear; likewise a mother teaches her daughter charity, and the latter fulfils her words in obedience; and in the same way, let those who have vowed the faith offer the words of salvation at the proper time to the baptized person, that he may carry them out with faithful devotion for the love of Heaven.

34 In baptism all sins are remitted

No matter how grave are the sins with which a person is burdened, if he enters into holy baptism in the name of the sacred Trinity I truly efface all the crimes of his wickedness; as in an infant, when he is washed in the bath of regeneration, I truly take away the old sin of Adam. But do not marvel, O human, that in the font of baptism a person is justified of all his sins and mercifully relieved of their weight. For the innocent Lamb, who entered the font of baptism without any stain of sin, mercifully removes the evil of human sins in baptism by the great mystery of His Incarnation. But I perceive and scrutinize all things most keenly both in this world and in eternity, where there is no bodily death and all things are manifest. What does this mean?

Gehenna is tested by the works of death and eternal life by the works that pertain to life. How? Death is tested by death, for when a man dies by God's just judgment in his sins, without penitence and without mercy be-

cause he did not ask for it, his death is received into the deathliness of Hell. And Life is tested by life, so that good works shine in Heaven, for they are ruled by eternal life.

So also they who are baptized in the font of blessing are tested by the holiness of the second regeneration. And I am invoked by the benediction of the priest, so that My ears are attentive to the words of faith, even if he who invokes me is in the grasp of sin.

35 Even if a priest is a sinner, God accepts a baptism from him

For even if a priest is a sinner, I nonetheless accept the office of baptism from him, if he performs it faithfully by the invocation of My Name. His iniquity will condemn him if he perseveres in it without penitence. But I do not refuse to receive from him the celebration of baptism when he invokes Me with the words of faith. Why is this?

36 Analogy of the rich man

If a rich man has a steward who dispenses his goods justly to his dependents and so faithfully fulfils his duties, yet that steward is guilty in another deed, his master will not disdain to accept his duties from him; but he will say to him nonetheless, "Servant wicked in your deeds!" He will be indignant at him in his mind, but he will not disdain to accept from him the duties he performs with justice. So I too, Who have many stewards, do not refuse to receive My sacrament from a priest who is duly anointed and remains faithful to his duties, though he must be blamed for his other deeds; I judge him My enemy from his other unjust acts, but I do not disdain to receive from him what is Mine.

37 In a case of necessity, any person of faith may baptize

But if some person who is scheduled to be baptized thinks his separation from the body is near and asks for baptism, and a priest cannot be found to baptize him, if anyone pours the water on him with the invocation of the Triune Majesty, he is baptized; and he will receive the remission of his sins and the grace of heavenly blessedness through this pouring, for he has been washed in the Catholic faith, and this baptism cannot be changed.

But in this invocation no Person of the Three ineffable Persons can be omitted; for if due to unbelief one of Them is not invoked, the truth is not conferred by salvation but falsehood has caused deception. The invocation of the ineffable Trinity must not be lacking, for the Trinity was not lacking at the pure baptism of My Son, but there declared Its marvels wonderfully

through Itself. Therefore, let those who want to be saved receive the regeneration of life unto salvation, and not neglect to receive it lest they perish; for, as an aborted fetus is rejected and perishes without the heat of life, and does not remain in its mother's womb either to be formed or to be quickened, so they who have nothing to do with the sacraments of the Church, the mother of all sanctity, either in mind or in deeds are in danger of death without the consolation of the Holy Spirit.

This let all peoples hear and understand who wish to enter the Kingdom of God in the regeneration of the Spirit and water, according to what is given to them in the holy Scriptures through the gift of the Holy Spirit.

But let the one who sees with watchful eyes and hears with attentive ears welcome with a kiss My mystical words, which proceed from Me Who am life.

CONFIRMATION

VISION FOUR
Confirmation

And then I saw the image of an immense round tower, all made of a single white stone, with three windows in its summit from which shone so much brilliance that even the roof of the tower, which was constructed like a cone, showed very clearly in its light. These windows were adorned all round with beautiful emeralds. And the tower stood directly in back of the image of the woman described in the previous vision, just as a tower is placed in the wall of a city, so that because of its strength the image could not fall.

And I saw those children who, as mentioned before, had passed through the womb of that image, shining with great brightness; some of them were adorned with gold color from their foreheads to their feet, but others lacked that color and had only the brightness. And some of these children were looking at a pure and brilliant splendor, but the rest at a turbulent red flash located in the East. Of those who were meditating on the pure and brilliant splendor, some had clear eyes and strong feet and were marching forward vigorously in the womb of the image; but others had weak eyes and crippled feet and were blown here and there by the wind. These, however, had a staff in their hands, and they flew in front of the image and touched it at times, though languidly. Still others had calm eyes but weak feet, and they moved back and forth in the air before the image; and others had weak eyes and strong feet, but they walked before the image languidly. But of the ones who were contemplating the turbulent red flash, some were well-ornamented and advanced into the image with vigor; but others tore themselves away from her and attacked her and broke her established rules. Among these, some by the fruit of penitence humbly returned to her, but others by obstinacy and neglect remained in the elation of the way of death. And again I heard the voice from Heaven saying to me:

1 Each baptized person should be anointed and confirmed by a bishop

After the illumination of baptism, which rose with the Sun of Justice Who sanctified the world by His own washing, the new Bride of the Lamb was adorned and confirmed in the fire of the ardor of the Holy Spirit for the

perfection of her beauty. So also each of the faithful who is regenerated by the Spirit and water should be decorated and confirmed by a bishop's anointing, so that he will be strengthened in all his members toward achieving beatitude and find himself most perfectly adorned with the full fruits of highest justice.

Therefore, *this tower that you see* represents the flaming forth of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, which the Father sent into the world for love of His Son, to enkindle the hearts of His disciples with fiery tongues and make them stronger in the name of the Holy and True Trinity. Before the coming upon them of the Holy Spirit in fire, they were sitting shut up in their house, protecting their bodies, for they were timid about speaking of God's justice and feeble in facing their enemies' persecutions. Because they had seen My Son in the flesh, their inner vision was unopened and they loved Him in the flesh, and thus did not yet see the bright teaching that afterward, when they were made strong in the Holy Spirit, they spread abroad in the world. But by Its coming they were so confirmed that they did not shrink from any penalty, but bravely endured it. And this is the strength of that tower, which strengthened the Church so much that the insane fury of the Devil can never overcome it.

2 Confirmation confers the immense sweetness of the Holy Spirit

You see the tower as immense and round, all made of a single white stone. This means that the sweetness of the Holy Spirit is boundless and swift to encompass all creatures in grace, and no corruption can take away the fullness of its just integrity. Its path is a torrent, and streams of sanctity flow from it in its bright power, with never a stain of dirt in them; for the Holy Spirit Itself is a burning and shining serenity, which cannot be nullified, and which enkindles ardent virtue so as to put all darkness to flight.

3 In confirmation the Trinity manifests itself by verdant virtues

It has three windows in its summit from which shine so much brilliance that even the roof of the tower, which is constructed like a cone, shows very clearly in its light; for the ineffable Trinity is manifested in the outpouring of the gifts of the power of the Holy Spirit. And from the blessed Trinity so much clarity of justice emanates through the teaching of the apostles that in it the great power of Divinity, which in the height of its omnipotent majesty is incomprehensible, is shown more clearly to mortal creatures, that is, humans. But it can be grasped only as much as possible for the faith of a believing and faithful person.

Hence these windows are adorned all round with beautiful emeralds; for the

VISION FOUR

Trinity is declared openly throughout the world by the verdant virtues and tribulations of the apostles, which are never greeted with arid apathy. How? Because it is known how ravening wolves sought to tear apart the apostles for their faith in the truth, and these various calamities strengthened them for the struggle, so that by fighting they constructed the Church and strengthened her with strong virtues to build up the faith and adorned her with many brilliancies. And because the Church, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, has been so strengthened by them, she desires and asks that her children also be adorned in this anointing by the Holy Spirit, Which penetrated the hearts of the faithful in that high and mystical mercy when by the will of God the Father It came into the world in fiery tongues. Therefore, the person who was baptized with the baptism of salvation must also be confirmed by the anointing of that excellent Teacher, as the Church is confirmed on the firm rock.

4 How the Church, fortified by the Holy Spirit, can never fall into error

Hence the tower stands directly in back of the image of the woman described in the previous vision, just as a tower is placed in the wall of a city, so that because of its strength the image cannot fall. For the Holy Spirit has worked marvels in the exceeding strength of Him Who is the true Bridegroom of the Church, and It shows the Church to be so strong in her defenses that, because of the fortitude she derives from Its fiery gift, she can never be thrown down by any error of wickedness. Under heavenly protection she will always rejoice, without spot or wrinkle, in the love of her Bridegroom, because My Only-Begotten was conceived nobly by the Holy Spirit and born without stain of the Virgin, as I said to Moses:

5 Words of Moses on this subject

"Behold, He said, there is a place with Me, and you shall stand upon the rock. And when My glory shall pass by, I will set you in a hole of the rock and protect you with My right hand, until I pass. And I will take away My hand, and you shall see My back parts" [Exodus 33:21–23]. What does this mean? The miracle is at hand that will be fulfilled in My will. But first you will fight with harsh legal precepts whose force is in their outward significance and where you will not find the sweetness and gentleness that will be revealed in My Son. And this harshness of the Law, which by My command you will write down, will stand in hard and stony hearts until you and your followers have shown all the glory that is to be rendered to Me until the coming of My Son. And when this is fulfilled in the Law you are writing, I

will be glorified, and I will place you inside the pierced rock. How? I will place you in the hardness of the Law, appointing you to be over it as master of the old times, which will be pierced by My Son, when I send Him into the world at the right time and He expounds it farther than you have in His mystical words. So His strength will protect you, for He will bring words more acute than yours; and He will open the Law's commands that are now closed until He returns to Me. What does this mean?

He, taking on a body from the Virgin, will in that body give words of salvation to the world until in it He passes through death. Then I will take away My hand, when I lift Him up to Me above the stars and lay bare all His mysteries through the Holy Spirit; and thus you will see His Incarnation as a person is seen from the back and not the front, seeing Him when incarnate but not grasping His Divinity. For your children will see him when he returns to Me, more than they understood Him when He lived visibly among them.

6 The baptized are adorned when they are anointed by the bishop

And you see those children who, as mentioned before, had passed through the womb of that image, shining with great brightness. These are they who in the innocence of a clean and pure heart have gained a mother, the Church, in the font of regeneration, as was shown to you before, and are children of light, for their sins are washed away. *Some of them are adorned with gold color from their foreheads to their feet;* for from their beginning in good works to their end in sanctity, they are adorned with the shining gifts of the Holy Spirit by their anointing with chrism in the true faith at the hand of the bishop. How? Just as gold is adorned by having precious stones set into it, so baptism is adorned with the chrism given to those baptized in faith by the hand of the bishop, as it is written:

7 Words of the Book of Kings on this subject

"The King went over the brook of Cedron, and all the people marched toward the way of the olive trees, which led to the desert" [2 Kings 15:23]. What does this mean? The Son of the Virgin, who rules the whole world like an earthly king, left the people behind and went into the flowing waters of the blessed washing, which by the teaching of the Holy Spirit shows the way of salvation to one of strong desire. What does this mean? Christ left death and crossed over to life, revealing supreme beatitude in the regeneration by the Spirit and water, which are the great ornaments of the celestial Jerusalem, which never ends. Therefore all the people who believed in Him, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, went by the anointing with oil to the way that

had been hidden; and they looked out over the desert of Adam's sin, which bore no trace of the beauty of God's just inheritance, and considered whether or not that way led back to salvation. For the wound of the first man's sin required that he be anointed by the office of the priest; this was not required for the Son of the Virgin, since He was wholly conceived in sanctity and His mother's womb was not wounded or corrupted but remained whole.

But whatever is weakened and confounded by the wounds of the Devil's advice must be strengthened and adorned by the anointing of oil, that the gaping bloody wound of fleshly desire may be wiped clean.

8 Those baptized but not confirmed have light but not adornment

But others, as you see, lack that color and have only the brightness. For, having been cleansed only by the ablution of baptism, they lack the anointing with chrism by the bishop, which is the sign of the ardent Holy Spirit. What does this mean? The anointing with the gifts of the Holy Spirit by confirmation is the special ability of the episcopal office, which is to be done among the faithful after the regeneration of the Spirit and water, to found the believer upon a firm rock. How? My Son received baptism in His body and thus sanctified it by His flesh, which was not divided, for He alone is the Son of the Virgin, and therefore is called the Son of Man, but the Virgin did not conceive him by a man but gave birth to him with unbroken virginity. After the affliction of His Passion and the glory of His Resurrection, in that same flesh He entered Heaven and returned to Me; and then the Holy Spirit illuminated the world in fiery ardor, confirming all justice in the hearts of His disciples and revealing to them what had before been hidden. How?

The Holy Spirit enkindled their hearts as the sun, beginning to appear from around a cloud, shows its burning heat by its shining light. What does this mean? Love of My Son was secretly burning in their minds, and thus the fire of the Holy Spirit passed through them and showed the bright sunlight of their teaching. For this is the testimony the Holy Spirit gave to the Church, that death cannot resist the justice of God.

9 Confirmation should be conferred by bishops alone

Therefore, O children of Truth, hear and understand the confirmation of the Holy Spirit, which He offers you in the sweet unction of His teaching, being Himself the master of all anointing. This anointing, therefore, in honor of the Holy Spirit should be conferred only by the bishop. For every ecclesiastical order is instituted in the Holy Spirit, and therefore this anointing is of the Holy Spirit.

Therefore, a person who has received the mystery of regeneration unto life has not taken possession of the fullness of churchly ornaments unless he is anointed in this way, as the Church is adorned by the glorious Holy Spirit. And as the Church is perfected by the gifts of the Holy Spirit, a believer ought to be confirmed by the anointing of the bishop, who is the reverend master in the honor of the Holy Spirit; for the Holy Spirit by Its fire brings forth and kindles sure doctrine in the Christian people.

10 The one confirmed may not marry those who held his hands

Hence those who stood by the one anointed in this unction by the Holy Spirit may not enter into earthly conjugal relations with that person, to whom they are joined in the Holy Spirit. What does this mean? Faith brings a person to this anointing, and the one who then holds his hands symbolizes faith, which does not seek the things of the flesh but always goes toward the things of the spirit. For My eye sees a person as he will be when he comes to Me in his deeds.

11 One who returns to the Devil after baptism is condemned unless he repents

But if, O human, you forsake Me after baptism and return to the Devil, by My just judgment you shall be condemned for it, since I gave you the great gift of intellect and showed you My mercy in the font of baptism. For all who ask for My mercy in baptism will find it freely, for the sake of My Son Who came into the world and endured many labors in the body; therefore, O human, you should patiently endure the conflicts of your soul and body, and for My Son's sake I will receive you.

And no one must be turned away from the washing of baptism if he faithfully seeks it in My name, for I receive a person ardently at whatever time he seeks Me. But if his works thereafter are wicked, they condemn him to death. Therefore, O human, be cleansed in the regeneration of salvation and be anointed in the unction of holiness, and flee death and seek life. For the Church, mother of the faithful, prays constantly that her children may escape death and find life. How? God gave her a voice to supplicate for her children until the full number of them enter the tabernacle of the celestial city. And she has such a voice to tell Me Who am before all ages always to see and think of My Only-Begotten's Incarnation, so that for love of Him I may spare her children, whom she received in the regeneration of the Spirit and water. For unless they are saved they cannot enter the heavenly kingdom.

12 Three ways in which the Church resounds like a trumpet

Therefore she cries out, "Fear the Father, love the Son, burn in the Holy Spirit!" How? This cry is given to her by Me the Father in the Son through the Holy Spirit; it is the voice resounding in her like a trumpet in a city. And she speaks in her children no other way than this. Therefore, Omnipotent God is reminded by His Son to spare human sins, which by their penitence can be forgiven without their damnation, because the Son of God took on humanity without sin. Because God is just and the splendor of Heaven is not touched by any unclean stain, He was not clothed with polluted flesh conceived by the seed of sin; and how should Man, stained with immense foulness, enter the Kingdom of Heaven unless through My Son, incarnate without uncleanness? He receives sinners who are purified by penitence; and who could do this except God? Hence the Church too turns back to her children and cherishes them with maternal love.

13 On the many differences among the baptized

And you see that *some of these children are looking at a pure and brilliant splendor, but the rest at a turbulent red flash located in the East*. This means that among the children of the Church, whom she procreates by the power of God in the innocence of her incorruption, some direct their attention to spiritual purity and shine with serene virtue, treading earthly things underfoot for love of the true Sun; but others have bodily senses that different vices throw into disorder, yet they too burn for the true faith and aspire to eternity for the supernal reward. *Of those who are meditating on the pure and brilliant splendor, some have clear eyes and strong feet and are marching forward vigorously in the womb of the image;* for when they pursue celestial things they fix their just thoughts on God's commandments and direct their footsteps toward the good end, and thus walk in the close embrace of their mother's love, lessening their devotion neither in temporary nor in eternal things.

But others have weak eyes and crippled feet, for they do not hold to a clear purpose nor a strong performance in the work of perfection. Therefore *they are blown here and there by the wind*, for they are thrown into unstable conduct by various prideful temptations.

But these have a staff in their hands, and they fly in front of the image and touch it at times, though languidly; for they place obstinate confidence in their works, show themselves to the Church of God with empty pomp, and fatuously attend to her from time to time for reasons of worldly prudence. But when by this false pretense they appear wise in the sight of humans, before God they appear as vainglorious fools.

BOOK TWO

Still others have calm eyes but weak feet, and they move back and forth in the air before the image; the divine commands are known to them through their insight in contemplation, but they are lame in the feet of fulfillment, and thus they appear before the Bride of Christ in restless instability. Seeking wisdom in the dark, and thinking they have it before it has really taken hold on their minds, they derive no power from it.

Others have weak eyes and strong feet, but they walk before the image languidly; for they hold onto a mild inclination toward good works, when they should be advancing more vigorously in deeds of justice, but they do not go in the ways of the Church, for they fix their minds on earthly things more than heavenly. Therefore they are foolish before God, for they wish to grasp by worldly prudence what they cannot attain.

But of the ones who contemplate the turbulent red flash, some are well-ornamented and advance into the image with vigor; for these, though they possess earthly things, carry their beautiful works nonetheless into the very heart of the Church; they do not disdain to set the foot of righteousness in the divine law, but obey God's commandments, and receive strangers, clothe the naked and feed the hungry. Oh, how happy they are, since thus they receive God, and He Himself dwells with them!

But others tear themselves away from her and attack her and break her established rules. They abandon the maternal womb and the sweet nourishment of the Church and trouble her with many errors, and with different oppressions tear to pieces her laws, which God established. *Among these, some by the fruit of penitence humbly return to her;* for their grave offenses they inflict grave punishments on themselves by doing worthy penance for the restoration of life. *But others by obstinacy and neglect remain in the elation of the way of death;* for they reject life and receive the judgment of death for their hard hearts and contumacious folly. As Ezekiel says in his mystical vision:

14 Words of Ezekiel

"The King shall mourn, and the prince shall be clothed with sorrow, and the hands of the people of the land shall be troubled. I will do to them according to their way, and I will judge them according to their judgments, and they shall know that I am the Lord" [Ezekiel 7:27]. What does this mean? The soul in which Reason is king, feeling the pleasure of sin at hand, assents to it mournfully because it knows the evil of it. How? Because its reason, wisdom and knowledge are inspired by God; and thus, though the body consents, it finds the evil shameful, knowing that it is not good.

Therefore, when it is polluted with many crimes by the acts of the flesh, it heaves deep sighs and yearns for God. And when in the breath of pride the

sinful deed is done, the body is clothed with confusion like an unworthy prince, having exercised its sovereignty in uncleanness; for as a person grieves when clothed in vile garments, so also he is sad when a shameful reputation originates, to his confusion, in himself. Therefore the bad deeds of those prostrate in their evils on the ground will be confounded by heavenly commands, for such do not have the garments of salvation, which is beatitude with God; and evil confusion will possess those who lack this happiness. And so I will deal with them in the road of iniquity in which they stand, honoring the path of sin and putting no justice into their hearts though warned by the Holy Spirit; I will grant them no mercy, because they do not know the good or fear Me, but disdain Me, the Creator of all, with raging wickedness, and do whatever they like.

Therefore I will judge them according to their own judgments, which are the works they desire and do; I will give them no rewards of happiness, but set the punishment of damnation in their way, since they show Me no honor; and they shall know that no one can free them from it except Me, the Lord of all.

But let the one who sees with watchful eyes and hears with attentive ears welcome with a kiss My mystical words, which proceed from Me Who am life.

THE MYSTICAL BODY

VISION FIVE
The Three Orders in the Church

After this I saw that a splendor white as snow and translucent as crystal had shone around the image of that woman from the top of her head to her throat. And from her throat to her navel another splendor, red in color, had encircled her, glowing like the dawn from her throat to her breasts and shining from her breasts to her navel mixed with purple and blue. And where it glowed like the dawn, its brightness shone forth as high as the secret places of Heaven; and in this brightness appeared a most beautiful image of a maiden, with bare head and black hair, wearing a red tunic, which flowed down about her feet.

And I heard the voice from Heaven saying, "This is the blossom of the celestial Zion, the mother and flower of roses and lilies of the valley. O blossom, when in your time you are strengthened, you shall bring forth a most renowned posterity."

And around that maiden I saw standing a great crowd of people, brighter than the sun, all wonderfully adorned with gold and gems. Some of these had their heads veiled in white, adorned with a gold circlet; and above them, as if sculpted on the veils, was the likeness of the glorious and ineffable Trinity as it was represented to me earlier, and on their foreheads the Lamb of God, and on their necks a human figure, and on the right ear cherubim, and on the left ear the other kinds of angels; and from the likeness of the glorious and supernal Trinity golden rays extended to these other images. And among these people there were some who had miters on their heads and pallia of the episcopal office around their shoulders.

And again I heard the voice from on high, saying, "These are the daughters of Zion, and with them the harps of the harpers and all sorts of musical instruments, and the voice of all gladness, and the joy of joys."

But beneath that splendor, which glowed like the dawn, I saw between Heaven and earth a thick darkness appear, the horror of which exceeded what human tongue can utter.

And again I heard the voice from Heaven saying, "If the Son of God had not suffered on the cross, this darkness would mean that no person could attain celestial glory."

And where the splendor shone, which was mixed with purple and blue, it encircled the woman's image with strong ardor. But another splendor, like a white cloud, decently enveloped that image from the navel down, to the point at

which it had not yet grown further. And these three splendors around that image shone afar, showing that within her many steps and ladders were well and properly placed.

And when I saw these things, I was seized with extreme trembling; my strength failed me, and I fell to the ground, unable to speak. And behold! A great splendor touched me like a hand, and I recovered my strength and voice. And from that splendor again I heard a voice, saying;

"These are great mysteries. For consider the sun and the moon and the stars. I formed the sun to give light by day, and the moon and stars to give light by night. The sun symbolizes My Son, Who went forth from My heart and illuminated the world when in the latest times He was born of the Virgin, as the sun goes forth and lights the world when it rises at the end of the night. And the moon symbolizes the Church, betrothed to My Son in true and celestial betrothal. And as the moon is so made that it always increases and decreases, but does not burn of itself unless it is kindled by the light of the sun, so too the Church has a cycle of movement: her children sometimes rise in increase of virtues and sometimes decline by inconstant behavior or harm by outside forces. For she is often assailed in her mysteries by ravening wolves, that is to say malicious people, whether bad Christians or Jews or pagans; and she is not fired to endurance by herself, but lit up by Me through My Son to persevere in good. But the stars, which differ from each other in the brightness of their glory, symbolize the people in the differing religious orders of the Church."

1 Apostles and their followers, the priests, surround the Church with teaching

Thus you see that *a splendor white as snow and translucent as crystal shines around the image of that woman from the top of her head to her throat.* For the Church, who is the incorrupt Bride, is surrounded by apostolic teaching, which reveals the pure Incarnation of Him Who descended from Heaven into the Virgin's womb and Who is the strong and clear mirror of all the faithful. And this teaching, which shines so brightly around the Church, constantly surrounded her from the start, from the time she first began to be built until she attained the strength to swallow the food of life. How?

The apostolic teaching shone around the head of the Church when the apostles first began to build her up by their preaching; moving through different places, they collected workers who would strengthen her in the Catholic faith and make themselves into priests and bishops and all the ecclesiastical orders, to establish faithfully the rights of men and women who married and all other such institutions. Therefore, the chrism-makers [bishops and priests] conform to that teaching; they are like the priests of the

Testament of the Law, who were appointed to nourish the multitudes with inner food under the law of circumcision. Hence also the apostles chose those orders with which, by heavenly inspiration, they adorned the Church. What does this mean?

That their followers, who took their places, faithfully traverse streets and farms and cities and other places, regions and lands, carrying the health-giving chrisms and announcing the divine law to the people. For they are fathers and stewards, carefully chosen to make church rules known to the people by their teaching and to distribute to them the food of life; and therefore they must show themselves such in their lives that My sheep will not be offended by their works, but walk uprightly after them. For they have this office that they may openly serve the bread of life to the people, and for each one individually set in order the duties of faith; therefore they must so restrain themselves as not to desire carnal union, since they must give the spiritual food to believers and offer to God the spotless sacrifice prefigured in innocent Abel. For of him it is written:

2 Example of Abel

"Abel also offered of the firstlings of his flock, and of their fat." [Genesis 4:4] What does this mean? That at the beginning of time there shone forth in him, who was innocent in his life, a blessed and kingly manifestation, which by God's gift touched not earth but Heaven. How? Because Abel in his integrity offered to God the purpose and the full service of his will, resolving in his heart to offer Him the first increase of his substance and successfully doing so, thus honoring the Supreme Father and showing Him proper reverence.

So, as Abel was in charge of his flock, pasturing and guarding it and with simple devotion offering its increase and its fatty nourishment to God, let the aforementioned chrism-makers, who are set over the children of the Church, who are the sheep of Christ, pasture them according to His plan, faithfully nourish them by their words, teaching them the church rules, and protect them forcefully from the snares of the ancient waylayer, and offer gifts from some of them, with sincere reflection, to the Observer of all. How?

If they cannot make them perfect in all respects, let them nonetheless offer to God some fruit that comes from them: first, like the increase of the firstborn of the flock, their good intentions, and then, like the sweet fruit of its fatlings, the perfect work of activity in their will. But why did Abel worship God so devoutly? The fact is that the wholeness of his chastity impelled him to such great devotion.

3 The ministers of the Church must keep their chastity

Therefore let those who are appointed by consecration to offer to God the sacred sacrifice approach His altar in the sweetness of chastity. For if they themselves are authors of corruption, how can they offer to others wounded by corruption the hand of salutary healing? And so, that they may be able to give others health-giving remedies with confidence, I will them to imitate My Son most forcefully in love of chastity. But if they should fall, let them hasten to rise immediately by penitence and flee as if naked from the shamefulness of sin; let them seek the wholesome remedy and faithfully follow Abel, whose sacrifice was acceptable to God.

4 Those who live in obedience when unsupervised gain an eternal reward

But those churchmen who enclose themselves in a cloister of obedience and behave according to the ordinances of their superiors, which the latter made by My inspiration, even though they do not have bishops carefully watching over them and do not bear the burden of their anxiety, gain for themselves with those bishops the celestial reward in the city of the chosen, because they subject themselves to their superiors for the sake of eternal reward alone.

5 On the noble and joyous state of perfect virginity

But you see that from her throat to her navel another splendor, red in color, encircles her. This means that after the teaching of the apostles had so invigorated the Church that she could truly discern the saving food and make it the source of her interior strength, there arose the noblest perfection of churchly religion, which tasted heavenly sweetness with burning ardor and stringently restrained itself in order to gird itself with secret power; rejecting the union of human coupling, it avoided the division caused by the bitterness of the flesh. How?

That splendor glows like the dawn from her throat to her breasts; for this perfection arose from the taste of the excitement of miracles and extended in virginal gladness to the sweet nourishment of churchly religion. *And it shines from her breasts to her navel mixed with purple and blue;* for she fortified herself for the stringency of inner chastity by the noblest training, namely by imitating the Passion of My Son to gain the celestial love He guarded in His heart. Therefore, *where it glows like the dawn, its brightness shines forth as high as the secret places of Heaven;* for the perfection that flowers in the state of

virginity directs its strength not downward toward earthly things, but miraculously upward to what is in Heaven.

6 On the image of the maiden

In this brightness appears a most beautiful image of a maiden, with bare head and black hair. This is serene Virginity, innocent of all foulness of human lust. Her mind is unbound by any shackle of corruption, but is not yet perfectly able to bar troubled and dark thoughts from the minds of her children, as long as they are in the world; but she forcefully resists and opposes such thoughts.

Therefore *she wears a red tunic, which flows down about her feet;* for she perseveres toward the goal of widest and most blessed perfection by the sweat of her labor in virtuous works, surrounded with the variety of virtues and imitating Him Who is the plenitude of sanctity. She is also, as is shown you in this hidden and supernal light, the noble daughter of the celestial Jerusalem, the glory and honor of those who have shed their blood for love of virginity or in radiant humility preserved their virginity for the sake of Christ and died sweetly in peace. For she was betrothed to the Son of Almighty God, the King of all, and bore Him a noble brood, the elect choir of virgins, when she was strengthened in the peace of the Church.

7 The throng that stands around that maiden

And around that maiden you see standing a great crowd of people, brighter than the sun, all wonderfully adorned with gold and gems. This is to say that noble Virginity is surrounded and ardently embraced by a wonderful crowd of virgins. They all shine before God more brightly than the sun does on the earth; for they have conquered themselves and bravely trodden death underfoot in the glorious works they have humbly performed for Christ, and so are adorned beautifully with the highest wisdom. *Some of them have their heads veiled in white, adorned with a gold circlet;* for, shining in the glory of virginity, they indicate that those who seek its rank should veil their minds from harmful heat all around, and grasp the purity of innocence which is adorned with the beautiful splendor of chastity.

Above them, as if sculpted on the veils, is the likeness of the glorious and ineffable Trinity as it was represented to you earlier; which shows that these people's minds firmly and strongly uphold the honor of the celestial and glorious Trinity, Which was truly shown you before in a mystery, by their knowledge of love and steadfast chastity.

On their foreheads is the Lamb of God, and on their necks a human figure,

and on the right ear cherubim, and on the left ear the other kinds of angels; which declares that in their reverent chastity they will imitate the mildness of the Son of God, laying aside stiffnecked wantonness and knowing themselves to be frail humans. In prosperity they will listen to and embrace true and unfailing knowledge; at the approach of adversity they will listen for angelic aid. So *from the likeness of the glorious and supernal Trinity golden rays extend to these other images*, for the ineffable Trinity unceasingly works the miracles of Its profound wisdom among the faithful who seek virtue and flee the seductions of the Devil.

And among these people there are some who have miters on their heads and pallia of the episcopal office around their shoulders. For among those who flourish in the honor of virginity there are some in the celestial city who ably held the rank of the ancient fathers and the glory of higher offices in the world, yet did not lose the ornament of virginity. Hence, as you hear, all those who in their desire kept their integrity for the sake of celestial love are called "daughters of Zion" in the celestial habitations; for in their love of virginity they imitated My Son, Who is the flower of virginity. Therefore the sounding echoes of the blessed spirits and the outpouring of voices and the winged decorations of happy minds and the golden vision of shining stones and jewels are all with them. How? Because the Son of God grants them this, that a sound goes forth from the Throne in which the whole choir of virgins joins in singing with great desire and harmonizing in the new song, as John, the beloved virgin, testifies, saying:

8 Words of John

"And they sang, as it were, a new song before the throne, and before the four living creatures and the ancients" [Revelation 14:3]. What does this mean? In those faithful ones who embrace chastity for a good purpose and preserve their virginity unstained for love of God, good will bursts forth wonderfully in praise of their Creator. How? In the dawn-light of virginity, which always surrounds the Son of God, steadfast praise is hidden; no worldly office and no tie of the law can resist it, and it sings in the voice of exultation a celestial song to the glory of God. How?

That song, which was not heard before the Only-Begotten of God, the true flower of virginity, returned in the body from earth to Heaven and sat again on the right hand of the Father, has a swift course and makes itself heard wonderfully in new liberty. And, since new customs, which have not been seen before, are regarded with amazement when they are seen, this new and unheard-of mystery resounded in Heaven in honor of virginity, before the majesty of God (for God could do this) and before the four wheels that rolled into the four corners of the earth bearing the truth of justice and the

humanity of the Savior like the living creatures in the new Law, and before those ancients who were imbued with the Holy Spirit and showed the path of righteousness to the people under the old Law. Why is this? Because God by the new grace softened the rigor of the old institution.

9 Virginity offered to God must be carefully preserved

But since virginity is so glorious before God, those who have offered it to God of their own will must carefully preserve it; for this holy purpose, undertaken with great devotion to virginity, must be faithfully kept. So let those who have undertaken this mystery take care not to fall back. For when they offer themselves to God, not joined by any bond of marriage or burdened by any secular business but spurning carnal coupling and desiring to cleave to the glorious innocence of the innocent Lamb, they are beloved imitators of My Son.

So a man who decides in his mind not to join himself to any rib, but wants to persevere in the modesty of virginity for love of My Son, will become his companion, if he perseveres in the works of chastity; for he has offered these holy gifts to My Son for the glory of a heavenly reward by the vow of a most sacred pact of churchly religion.

But if he then breaks this pact because of an evil stinging of his flesh and commits adultery, he reduces his liberty to servitude, for by his shameful pleasure he has wickedly brought low his head when he ought to have chastely imitated My Son; and he has uttered a lie, vowing to live chastely and not fulfilling it. Therefore, if he perseveres in his rash fault he will undergo the strict judgment of the Just Judge, for no shame or lie can appear in celestial glory.

But if before his death the man does penance for his guilt with bitter tears, My Son's flowing blood will receive him, since he abhors his sin; but this does not place him back among his companions who shine with the glory of integrity, for he has deserted their society, casting away the liberty of his pact and reducing it to the slavery of sin.

10 She who breaks the vow of virginity will be not a lady but a handmaid

And a maiden who of her own will is betrothed in holiness to My Son is becomingly received by Him, for He wishes to have her united with Him in companionship. How? That she may embrace Him with chaste love, and He may love her in secret; for to Him she is always lovable, since she seeks Him rather than an earthly bridegroom. But if she then transgresses this pact, she is polluted in the sight of those who are in celestial joy; and if she perseveres

in this rashness, by just judgment she will be deprived of heavenly glory. But if she repents, she will be received as a handmaid and not as a lady, since she has deserted her royal betrothal and loved another more than Him she should have loved. And let him who seduced and violated her, if he wants to atone for his guilt, repent as if he had broken open Heaven; only thus will he escape the condemnation of death, for he rashly violated a heavenly betrothal. What does this mean?

11 Illustration of this issue

If some great ruler had a bride exceedingly dear to him, who was adulterously corrupted by a servant of his servants, what would that lord do? He would certainly send his army to destroy him in greatest wrath, since this man had struck him to the very viscera. But if this servant, fearing the army, should beg his master to intercede for him, and fall at his feet with tears to ask him to spare him, then that king would suffer him to live because of his own goodness and the other's petition, and restore him to the society of his fellow-servants. But he would not reward him like his close and familiar friends, even though he did show him the favor he deserved among his fellow-servants of the same rank. So it will be for one who seduces and violates a bride of the eternal King. For that King, issuing His judgments in righteous zeal, will send him to perdition, because in this deed he disregarded Him and held Him in scorn.

But if the wretch, looking forward in fear to that day of wrath, humbly begs God's elect to ask pardon for him from the Lord and tearfully contemplates the Humanity of his Savior until he is absolved from sin by His grace, then the King, mindful of the blood that was shed for the redemption of the human race, and for love of the citizens of Heaven, will save him from his guilt and from the power of the Devil and accord him the salvation of the blessed so that he will not go to perdition. But He will not adorn him in the dance of the royal wedding, at which the other friends of God will rejoice with those sacred virgins who in celestial betrothal are dedicated to My Son; just as He will not crown with the rank of virginity one who has lost the modesty of virginity, even though He grants him with His other elect joy in the celestial city and an inestimable reward.

12 The great difference between celestial desire and earthly lust

But beneath that splendor, which glows like the dawn, you see between Heaven and earth a thick darkness appear, the horror of which exceeds what human tongue can utter. This is to say that under the glory of virginity, the fall of our first parent openly stands between the spiritual and the carnal

intellect; and that fall was the darkest shadow of unfaithfulness, so that no person could expound its terror. Why?

Because in the Incarnation of the Son of God, born of the Virgin, celestial desire was supreme and earthly lust was lacking; so Adam's transgression was miraculously remade into salvation by the blood of the Son of God; not earlier, since no other but the Only-Begotten of God, sent into the world by the Father, could cancel that transgression and permit entry into Heaven. Therefore, as you hear in this vision, unless the Son of God had shed His blood for human salvation, that transgression would have weighed Man down so much that he could not have attained to the joy of the citizens of Heaven.

13 On monks who enter into monastic profession

And where the splendor shines, which is mixed with purple and blue, it encircles the woman's image with strong ardor. This symbolizes the perfection of those who imitate the Passion of My Son in the ardor of their love and strongly adorn the Church with their self-restraint. How? Because they are the high building of the growing treasury of the divine counsel. For when the Church was invigorated and grew stronger, to increase her beauty there came forth a living fragrance [monks], vowing the way of secret regeneration [making monastic profession]. What does this mean? That there then arose the wonderful order, which attained to My Son in the beauty of His example; for as My Son came into the world separated from the common people, so this army lives in the world separated from the rest of the people. This people first arose in the desert and in hiding, as balsam sweetly oozes from the tree, and then grew into a great multitude, as the tree extends its branches. And I blessed and sanctified this people, for they are to Me the lovely flowers, roses and lilies, which grow in the fields without human labor; for no law constrains these people to desire such a narrow way, but they undertake it of their own will without any legal command, as I inspire them, and do more than they are told to. Therefore, they gain a very great reward from Me, as is written in the Gospel, where the Samaritan brought that wounded man to an inn:

14 Words of the Gospel

"And the next day he took out two pence and gave them to the innkeeper, and said, 'Take care of him, and whatever you spend over and above this, I will repay you when I return' " [Luke 10:35]. What does this mean? On the first day of salvation, that is, when the miraculously incarnate Son of God was abiding in the world in His body and until His resurrection, He per-

formed in His Humanity many marvellous works, by which He wholesomely brought the wounded man to true remedies. But the next day, that is, after His resurrection, when all the mysteries of truth had been openly given to the Church, He figuratively offered the New and Old Testaments as a sure proof of eternal life and a sweet food for the believing people.

And He gave these writings by His grace to the pastors of the Church, who keep His flock; and He said to them with sweet admonition, "Use churchly rules to look after the company of Christians redeemed in My blood, which I have entrusted to you, taking care that they do not err or lack in what pertains to life. But whatever you may add in your goodwill to what I have ordered you to keep, doing more than is commanded of you, I your Leader and Savior, who now leave the world and ascend to the Father but will return to judge the world and establish it forever, with no wearing away through the passage of time, will then repay you for your labor and your goodwill, with added fruits. And I will say to you 'O faithful and righteous servant, who has ministered faithfully!' Whoever willingly adds more than the Law commanded him will receive a twofold reward; for I hold him glorious in My name, since he has loved Me greatly." And I say:

15 The orders of virgins and monks are not found in the precepts of the Law

Neither the race of virgins nor this singularly devoted order, nor those who imitate them, such as desert hermits, are commanded by the Law; as the prophets too were not appointed by people under the laws of the flesh, for they arose imbued only by My inspiration. But they do more than was commanded them, which priests and those pertaining to their order do not, for these things were commanded by Abraham and Moses in the Old Testament, and the apostles took them from the Law, set them up in My will by the Holy Spirit and handed them on to be kept by the Church. And the same apostolic teaching was set forth in the Gospel by My Son, when His disciples were sent out to spread abroad the words of truth to the whole world.

What then? As the apostles announced the way of salvation to the people, the bright dawn of the daughters of Zion arose in the love of My Son, that is, the dawn of those who strongly repressed their flesh and harshly mortified their evil desires. And as this chaste virginity followed My Son in ardent love, that singularly devoted order greatly pleasing to Me also imitated His Incarnation. These are My true temples, where I am worshipped as if by choirs of angels; they bear in their bodies the Passion and death and burial of my Only-Begotten, not in that they die by the sword or other human terrors, but in that they imitate My Son by renouncing the will of their own flesh, separating themselves from all worldly things and ornaments in which the

world rejoices. Which is written in the Gospel about John, the lamp of the world:

16 Example of John the Baptist

"And the same John had a garment of camel's hair and a leathern girdle about his loins" [Matthew 3:4]. What does this mean? Divine grace had woken miraculous abstinence in him, and by that grace he had a defense of his virtue, for in his mind he had despised honor and earthly riches, and in his body he had tamed the wanton urges through the restraints that, to mortify vice, he had put on the pleasures of the flesh. For, advancing through hard and rough ways and trampling down earthly lust, he built greater towers of virtue than his predecessors. How?

Because, vigorously performing many works of virtue, he ardently loved chastity and showed the way of healing to those who devotedly sought it. Therefore, all monks who make profession should follow John in his way of life, who shone by his lofty works of blessed virtue amid the great darkness of the world; they should flee from the meaningless expanse of worldly things, restrain their wandering minds and so force their bodies to renounce evil desire. Thus they will outshine by more excellent means those who before their time walked simply in the way of the Lord and made their simple habitations; they will take the steep and narrow path by firmly treading underfoot those things that are the pleasures of the world. How? Because, despising themselves and subjecting their bodies to the service of Christ in the work of the virtues, they will shun wantonness by austere behavior and so shine brightly for others by their good examples. For they faithfully imitate the angelic choir. How? By renouncing worldly things; for, as the angels do not seek or long for the things of earth, these people follow them miraculously in despising all fleeting things.

17 Monks for the needs of the Church may take Church offices

So as My Son brings the message of the healthful sacraments, and is the Priest of priests and the Prophet of prophets and the builder of blessed towers, if a necessity arises a monk who is firmly rooted and competent for it may be a messenger and priest, prophet and counselor of the Church. He is not to be kept away from these offices, as long as his sight is clear and he does not slumber at his churchly duty but attends to his teaching; he must only reject being occupied by secular business and its contagion. For neither angels nor priests nor prophets will hide God's justice, but will make it known in truth from His precepts; as in the Gospel it is written again of John, whose austerity they follow, that he was not a reed shaken in the wind.

BOOK TWO

18 Words of the Gospel concerning John

"And all the country of Judea went out to him, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins" [Mark 1:5]. What does this mean? They, whose hearts had been struck by fear of death and love of life, went out with sighs and groans from the pleasures of vice to him who had the divine grace to do everything for them, by means of simple confession from their devoted wills and visions of peace. How? Because John, the forerunner of the Truth, conveyed to them both bitterness and sweetness. Therefore they entreated from his rectitude an outpouring of penance, so that, by avoiding evil deeds and doing good ones and confessing their crimes, they might deserve to reach Him Who would confer on them true salvation in the light of the New Testament instead of the remedy in the shadow of the Old. And just as John taught those who came to him and baptized them in the river after receiving their words of repentance in honor of the Savior to come, so now, in the name of the Savior Who has come and brought salvation to the faithful, let those who add shining works to the testimony of sanctification not neglect to do so. Inspired by the Holy Spirit, let them reach new heights of austerity in renouncing worldly things, following the model they adopted when they listened to that testimony and put on the new man through the regeneration of the Spirit and water, rejecting the service of the Devil. And, when necessity impels, let them offer the hand of assistance to those who ask, admonishing, uplifting and healing; and if they have worthily attained an office by churchly promotion, let them faithfully imitate their Forerunner, so as truly to complete in the new light what he showed in the shadow.

For the monks are the girdle of the Church and strongly encircle her, since they are concerned with My Son's Incarnation and also exercise the function of the angels; that is, they do not cease at any hour to sing melodiously or pray in compunction, with the freshness of remorse and not with the useless dry dust of noisy cries, and they do not seek to handle worldly things but examine themselves thoroughly with charity and humility.

Oh, these are My strong and loving people, for in them I contemplate the sufferings that My Son underwent in the flesh; and they die His death, when they forsake their own will and submit to obedience for the sake of eternal life, walking in the commands of their superiors.

19 The monks' unique garment symbolizes Christ's Incarnation and burial

Therefore their garment is unlike that of other people, for it symbolizes the incorrupt Incarnation of My Son, which is completely different from the

procreation of other people. For the command of the Law concerning men and women did not touch the Incarnation, in the same way that no written law obliges these people to their strictness of life; though one who undertakes it with a vow by his own will for the love of God should persevere in it, lest he recoil and fall, like Lucifer who forsook light and went into darkness.

And this garment flies with wings of subtlety like the glitter of supernal spirits, and points to the Incarnation and burial of My Son; for one who gives himself up to strictest obedience has on his garment the sign of My Son's Incarnation, and one who renounces secular business for the works of justice has on his garment the sign of My Son's burial. Hence one who by purity of will is clothed in this garment is uplifted by a heathful remedy.

And therefore, let one who receives it with blessings and the invocation of the Holy Spirit not renounce it; for he who despises it in persistent and evil rejection will be with the one who spurned the order of angels and was entombed in death. What does this mean? These people are not spurred on by any precept of the Law to their strictness of life, but have undertaken to observe My pact of their own will and thus make My Church illustrious by the holiness of their ways. How? This order rose after the apostles' preaching as the sun rises after the first light of day. What does this mean?

20 Benedict, who is a second Moses, made this order a separate way

The first light of day designates the faithful words of the apostolic teaching; the dawn, the beginning of this way of life, which following that teaching first came about in solitude and in caves; but the sun symbolizes the separate and well-disposed way I then brought about through My servant Benedict, whom I passed by in burning fire, teaching him to honor the Incarnation of My Son in the garment of his way of life, and imitate His Passion in the abnegation of his will. For Benedict is like a second Moses, lying in the cleft of the rock and tormenting and repressing his body with great harshness for the love of life, as the first Moses wrote on the stone tablets at My command and gave the Jews a Law that was harsh and hard. But as My Son penetrated that same Law with the sweetness of the Gospel, so also My servant Benedict by the sweetness of the Holy Spirit's inspiration made the plan of this order a separate and level path, which before him was an exceedingly hard way of life. And he gathered together by it large numbers for his order, as My Son, through the sweetness of His fragrance, gathered to Himself the Christian people.

And so then the Holy Spirit spoke in the hearts of His elect who sighed for life, telling them that as in the washing of baptism the crimes of the peoples are washed away, so they themselves should renounce the pomps of the world as a sign of the Passion of My Son. How? Because in holy baptism

a person is converted from the power of the Devil and rejects his old stains of sin, and thus these too should reject earthly business by the sign of their garment, which is also an angelic sign. How? Because by My will they are appointed protectors of the people.

21 For Church necessities a proven monk may receive priesthood

For this reason, those of them who are found proven in their holy way of life may be established as pastors of My Church, as the angels, who are touched by no stain from earthly affairs, are the guardians of My people. For, as the angels hold before God a twofold rank, so the people of this religious order live in a twofold life. How? The angels in the heavenly places serve God without interruption, and on earth continually protect people from the snares of the Devil. So these people imitate the angelic order when they despise earthly things and serve God daily, and also defend all other people from evil spirits day and night by their prayers. Therefore, if My Church does not have a fitting pastor, let the people of this religious order come to her aid, crying out and weeping; and let the one among them who is found proven defend her with vigorous zeal, receiving priesthood too if necessary.

22 No one should undertake this order without being very closely examined

But no one should undertake the religious life of this order suddenly and as if just waking from a dream, but let him first be tested with close examination as to the self-control of his mind, and whether he can persevere in this purpose; for if he were to undertake it by his own will in the pact of blessing and later in perverse error renounce it and impenitently mock Me, he would perish miserably in the condemnation of death. Therefore, O my dearest children, who are so scattered by opposition, rise up quickly in humility and charity, and manfully and unanimously consent to your holy purpose.

23 Secular people who keep God's laws greatly adorn the Church

But, as you see, another splendor, like a white cloud, decently envelops that image from the navel down, to the point at which it has not yet grown further. This is the secular life, which with pure and calm purpose surrounds the Church with reverence and renders her just assistance, from the fullness of her growing strength until the point past which she has not yet developed in her children. How? Because what lies closest to the navel is the womb, from which the whole human race is procreated. Therefore this refers to the

secular people in the Church, through whom she must be brought to the full number of her orders, for here are gathered kings and dukes, princes and rulers, and their subjects, rich and poor, and the destitute living among the others. And by all these the Church is exceedingly adorned, for when lay-people faithfully observe the Law of God, which is laid down for them, they beautify the Church greatly; when they obey their superiors with sincere humility and devotion, and chastise their bodies for God's love by alms and vigils and continence and widowhood and other good works that are of God, they embrace God with many embraces. Therefore they who keep the law appointed for them by My will are most lovable to Me.

24 Married people cannot become monastics unless both agree to do it

If any layperson desires to renounce worldly things to bear the yoke of My liberty, let him come to Me quickly, unless he is in the bonds of a fleshly union. This tie he may not rashly loose unless his consort wills it. How? Husband may not leave wife and wife may not leave husband for this purpose unless it is the will of both, and they both decide either to remain in the world or to separate from the world; for it cannot be that a whole person can remain well if one foot remains with his body and the other is cut off from it. So it is not fitting for a husband to worship the world while his wife deserts the world, or for a wife to reside in the world while her husband flees the world, if they wish to have glory in celestial life; for if this is done indiscreetly and foolishly, it will be called a robbery rather than an offering. So let those who are legally joined in a fleshly union live together with one mind, and not foolishly separate from each other without a dispensation or declaration from Church authority, as is written again in the Gospel:

25 Words of the Gospel

"What therefore God has joined together, let not Man put asunder" [Matthew 19:6]. What does this mean? God, creating the human race, took flesh out of flesh and joined them in a union, and thus established that this connection must not hastily be broken. How? Because in the union of man and woman flesh will be united to flesh and blood to blood by a legal ceremony, so that they cannot be divided from each other in foolish haste, unless both dissolve the bond for a just cause or a rightful devotion; for God in His secret wisdom graciously formed this union of male and female for the propagation of people. And because He so rightly constituted this union, foolish human desire should not cause a breach between the two parts, and

neither part should take the dowry of its blood to an alien place; for, as God commanded that people should not slay each other, He also commanded that they should not divert their blood from its rightful place by cruel fornication.

Therefore, let people repress the ardor of their longing and not transmit their flame to an alien fire. For if an ardent will takes hold of the will of another and stirs it up to fervent lust for a stronger or weaker reason, the two will coalesce into one by the first person's mental desire and the other's consent to be embraced by it. For the sight of the outer eye makes the inner heat burst into flame. And even if the one body does not sin with the other, the living will still makes them burn, so that all their viscera are shaken by their feelings. Therefore, let the outer person be guarded with such caution that the inner person may never be wounded by carelessness.

26 These orders consolidate the Church in their ranks and degrees

And you see that *these three splendors around that image shine afar;* which is to say that these three institutions surround and consolidate the blessed Church in a wondrous way in honor of the heavenly Trinity, causing her to burst forth with buds and spread out with blessed verdure. Therefore *they show that within her many steps and ladders are well and properly placed.* These are the various orders of laypeople and religious, in which the Church by good habits and the practice of virtue guides her children, educated in sweet reverence, to Heaven. How? When they spurn earthly things and love celestial ones. What does this mean? When they faithfully fulfil in divine love the precepts instituted for them.

27 Each order must avoid diversity, singularity and novelty in way of life

But as in three Persons there is one God, so in these three orders there is one Church, founded by Him Who has planted all good things. For whatever He has not planted will not be able to stand. And thus those institutions He has not instituted will fall into great errors. How? Those institutions that in haughty pride seek to ascend and do not wish to be subject to those higher than they were not planted by God. And this happens when a lesser order strives to raise itself above a greater one, which was constituted by My will on the ancient counsel of the first Fathers; and when it tries in its madness to appear more important by distinctive signs in its vestments; as if the order of angels tried to raise itself above the order of archangels. What would this mean? That they were nil and useless, since with vain ideas they tried to divide the orders duly constituted by God. But this should not be.

So it is not fitting that I should be invoked by those who, with a mania

for diversity, always wish for a new purpose, and who, not knowing their own minds, leave the well-trodden path and the well-plowed ground of the early Fathers, who were inspired by the Holy Spirit. Many of these, in the greatness of their pride, forsake the established ordinances that the Church has from the early Fathers, and make schisms in their various institutions. And they wish in their wanderings to be called fruitful trees, but they cannot even be called empty reeds, as is shown by the beloved John, who writes about those who wither in apathy and are cut off:

28 Words of John

"I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I would you were cold or hot! But because you are lukewarm and neither cold nor hot, I will spew you out of my mouth" [Revelation 3:15–16]. What does this mean? O fools, who are shamefully withering up inside, I Who am the Knower of Secrets see with the eye of knowledge the works of your desires; you have not fled utterly from the works of the fire of the fiery Enlightener, and yet you have not renounced the works that produce the ice of frigid stiffness. How? You are not entirely given over to works of cold evil, and you are not entirely burning for good deeds, but you waver toward each in the instability of your mind, like a lukewarm wind; and you do not think either about the deserved punishments of evil or about the worthy rewards of good. How? Because you look into such a deep abyss that you cannot find its bottom, but you also give your attention to such a high mountain that you cannot scale its summit.

Oh, how much better it would be for you to know yourself as an unprofitable servant and a sinner, rather than remaining in lukewarmness and hardly glancing at what is right. For if you were separated from good actions you would know yourself to be a sinner, and if you withdrew yourself from evil works you would have some hope of life. But now you are like a lukewarm wind, which gives neither moisture nor heat to the fruits. For you are one who begins, but not one who finishes; you touch the beginning of good, but you never feed on its perfection, like the wind that blows around a person's mouth and not the food that reaches his stomach. Which is more precious, an empty noise or a finished work? Of course a finished work is more acceptable than an empty noise.

Work, then, in the silence of humility, and do not puff yourself up with pride; for anyone who forsakes the holy society of My docile and loving servants, and undertakes with eager boasting a work he disdains to complete with sweet mildness, will be counted as nothing.

But if you begin in rectitude to try to penetrate the meaning of My words, which offer food to the faithful, but are then sluggish in them and

show no sweetness of justice to those you encounter, and so fall to worse things, I will begin to cast you out by that same meaning of My words for your lukewarm negligence. For you show no savor of sweetness in doing your works and do not pant after the blessed reception of inner gifts. And, being so cast out, you will be trodden underfoot, like food that is so insipid in taste that a person spits it out of his mouth before it can reach his stomach. But what now?

The wind blows, and its noise resounds, but it puts forth no flower from its roots nor reproduces itself. For they, who should be under My yoke, are willful and undisciplined. What does this mean? They neglect the right path and make themselves useless tabernacles. For such people, who are sluggish inside and have no fervor for justice, neither burn for the laws set up for them nor follow the way of life of their fathers before them; but each of them nurtures some singularity in himself and lays down laws for himself according to his own will, and so in wavering thoughts and inflated pride raises himself up to fly. And, since they do not keep to the righteous pact of their fathers, they are always new and unskilled, and they wander here and there in great instability, following their own will.

29 Analogy of a craftsman

Therefore I compare them to stupid craftsmen who are building a large building, yet do not follow the wisdom of previous craftsmen who are well-trained in the use of their tools and knowledgeable about how to plan and raise a building; but they carelessly and foolishly trust in themselves, wanting to excel others in wisdom, and build their buildings such that they will be shaken by storms and thrown down by the winds. For they will not be built on rock, but on sand.

And thus do those who trust to themselves in their pride and seek to seem wiser than the early Fathers; they do not want to walk according to their covenant, but lay down shaky laws for themselves at their own will, and thus, leaning not on Christ but on their own unstable conduct, they are often stirred up to sin by the temptations of the Devil.

30 The institution of his predecessors suffices for one who is humble

Therefore, lest the breath of the Holy Spirit, which suffused the early Fathers, be expelled by these people's swelling pride, I desire the faithful person to be humble and content with what his predecessors instituted for him. For if he should vainly will more than he ought humbly to seek, he

might later grow lukewarm and draw back from it and be shamefully confounded, as it is written in the Gospel:

31 Words of the Gospel on this subject

"When you are invited to a wedding, do not take the first place, lest one more honorable than you should be invited, and he that invited you both should come and say to you, 'Give this man place'; and you with shame must go and take the last place" [Luke 14:8–9]. What does this mean? When you are told by divine inspiration that because of your faithful labors you are summoned to that holy tabernacle that flourishes in a bridal way of life, unceasingly rejoicing with purity and honor and holiness in the virginal branch and in the blessed Mother the Church, with no sadness of corruption or confusion or degradation of the bud or the flower, then curb your mind in humility and do not uplift it in pride. How?

When for love of God you free your body from earthly affairs, you will grow as a beautiful flower, blossoming and never withering in the heavenly Jerusalem with the Son of God, in Whom are all ornaments for souls; for the old person produces all human abominations, but the new builds all the holiness of virtue. So when you have come to such holiness, blush to imitate the ancient serpent, who cast himself out of the place of beatitude because he was hungry for vainglory. What does this mean? If you see anyone better adorned than you, do not in eagerness of mind ascend above him, saying, "I want to be above him or like him!" If you exalt yourself so, are you a faithful servant, since you are provoking the Lord to anger by opposing yourself to Him? But if you see that someone has stronger resources than you, and out of envy disparage him, you are not walking in the plain road but going by trackless ways.

So be eager to serve God in humility and do not give yourself up madly to pride; and do not exalt yourself in vain pretense over one who, if assessed justly, shines with a greater desire of eternal life than you burn with yourself, and who for his heavenly ardor is invited to the height of blessedness by Him Who loves all lovers of truth. For if you do, He Who by His inspiration summoned you to the service of humility and the other to the gift of charity may come with the eye of knowledge and judge you with His righteous judgment, saying, "You lifted yourself up in eager pride to a place for which you are not fit; leave your vainglory and submit in duty, and give this beloved one of mine the place of honor you so rashly seized!" And what will become of you then?

If you are overthrown in this way, in anguish of grief and sadness you will begin to feel extreme dejection and abhor yourself as contemptible; for

the Protector of souls will take from you the honor you usurped when you opposed yourself to Him and tried to seize what was not yours to have. So what you wanted will be taken from you, and what you did not want will be given to you. And so also when a lesser order exalts itself over a greater one it will be suppressed, overthrown by My just judgment, for I do not wish that pride to be anything but thrown down and confounded. For if a handmaid exalts herself above her mistress, she will be despised the more by all who see her, for she tried to become what she should not have desired.

32 The Gospel on those who make laws after their own hearts

Therefore, those who make laws for themselves according to their own hearts, not seeking My will, fail rather than go forward, as My Son testifies in the Gospel, saying, "Every plant which My Heavenly Father has not planted will be rooted up" [Matthew 15:13]. What does this mean? That every offshoot of the knowledge of heart, mind or conduct will be destroyed if, arising out of the fecundity of human nature, it is so sown in a person that he burns to unite himself with a willful desire; and if it is then changed into mental pride or carnal wantonness or overflowing pollution or self-excuse for sin or changeful actions that rush up and down without examining whether they are useful or useless. It will be destroyed by just judgment, for truly My Father in Heaven, who dwells in justice, has not planted this plant; it will be uprooted and wither, because it thrives not on the dew of Heaven but on the moisture of the flesh. How? Because the person has done the deed in foolish knowledge, wishing not to contemplate the justice and will of his Creator but to look to the one who tirelessly spins the wheel of his body.

For what seems good to people who have not fixed their eye sharply on God will prove ruinous unless it is warmed by the breath of the Holy Spirit, for it will have changed into vainglory. For when vain people are afflicted by boredom, they will often revert to vainglory, sometimes uplifting themselves to pride, pretense and jealousy of spirit, and sometimes tearing themselves to pieces in annoyance, disdain and opposition to institutions that came from Me; and also discouraging each other from doing good things, which spring not from apathetic boredom but from the ardor of desire to make daily progress.

For what flows from Me is a sweet and delightful taste to the soul; it goes forward in perseverance and does not look back in indecision. Therefore, blessed is the one who, confiding in Me, puts his hope and the beginning and end of his works not in himself but in Me. He who does these things shall not fall; but he who tries to stand without Me will go to ruin. And who does the latter? Those who vainglorously embrace novelty and, bored with My precepts, trust in themselves. But though an old garment is vexa-

tious to human minds, I in My gifts must not be spurned, for in their simplicity they are always new, and the older they are the more precious they are.

Hence those things people devise themselves without My inspiration in the vanity of their habits will melt away amid their vain exertions. And though these things in human eyes may sometimes seem to last, I reject them from My sight and hold them as nothing, as it is written in the Gospel:

33 Further words of the Gospel

"Let them alone, for they are blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch" [Matthew 15:14]. What does this mean? Allow perverse livers to dissipate themselves in perversity, for they refuse to correct themselves by righteousness of works. And because in their own estimation they call themselves just, when in their actions they are vain, they become blind from their very qualities, disdaining to walk in the way of justice and proposing to those who follow them in bad deeds the way of iniquity instead of truth. So they who have not the right vision of justice think they are just when they are unjust, and when they show the path of false justice to people ignorant of the road of true doctrine, they fall into the ditch of despair, because neither they nor their followers know where they are going.

34 God casts down some innovators and leaves others whom He will judge later

And in these cases I sometimes in My wrath cast down innovations in the sight of humanity; but in My foreseeing vision I silently tolerate others in human sight for a while, which I will nonetheless do justice on in future by the weighing of My just judgment. Therefore, let one who is faithful yearn to ascend to the height of virtue, not to descend to the depths of worldliness. How?

35 One may go from a lower to a higher degree but not from higher to lower

One who is in a lower degree can ascend to a higher, but one who is in a higher degree should not descend to a lower. What does this mean? Counts can rise to be dukes, and dukes can rise to be kings, but it is not fitting that kings should descend to be dukes or dukes stoop to be counts. For if kings subjected themselves to dukes and dukes submitted to counts, all the people would shout, "Wach!" and hold them in derision.

BOOK TWO

Thus laypeople can enter the order of priests and bishops, and these clerics can join those who have taken vows as monks; but it is not fitting that vowed monks should go over to the order of clerics, or that clerics should rush back to the laity. And if monks go to be clerics, or clerics return to the laity, the souls of the just will say of them, "Alas, alas, alas!" and they will be rejected in My sight unless they turn to fitting penance; for if a higher rank falls upon a lower one, both will be destroyed.

So will it be for those who leave the right path and go backward. For if one has put on My Son, what other son His equal could he put on? None, and truly none. But rejoice in your Father; for often I find the greater people in the lower ranks and the lesser in the higher, since pride falls and humility ascends.

36 Example of souls and angels

Therefore have peace and charity and humility among you, as the souls of the just have with the angels and the angels with the archangels. For the souls of the just do not envy the office of the angels, and the angels are not angry at the glory of the archangels. Why is this? Archangels point out the greatest things in the greatest times of necessity, and the angels announce lesser things in the normal course of events, while the faithful people humbly obey. Therefore, let each fulfil his office faithfully. How?

Let those who are vowed monks, like the archangels, renew their powerful assistance whenever there is a great occasion of necessity in the Church; and let those who have the office of clerics, like the angels, do their business in the daily life of their institution; and let people who want to attain to supreme beatitude faithfully receive their words. How?

37 Monks symbolize grain, clerics fruit and laypeople meat

Because they who are vowed monks are like grain, which is the strong, dry food of humans; so this people of Mine is bitter and harsh to the taste of the world. And the clerics are like fruits, sweet to the taste, and show themselves sweet to people by the usefulness of their office. And the common laypeople are like meat, but meat comes partly from chaste birds; thus those who live in the world according to the flesh have children, but among them are found followers of chastity, such as widows and the continent, who fly to heavenly desires by their appetite for virtue.

38 These three churchly institutions take two separate paths

But these churchly ranks live in two ways. How? Of spiritual and secular people. How? Like day and night. What does this mean? Spiritual

people are like the day, and secular people are like the night, since they live in temporal human life. What does this mean? Day holds the sun's brightness and the serenity of the shining sky; this symbolizes the fact that the spiritual kind includes both the order of vowed monks and the order of clerics. Night holds the light of moon and stars and the blackness of the dark; this means that secular people include among themselves both just people, who shine in their works, and sinners weighed down by the darkness of their sins. But let one who forsakes the night of the seculars and is converted for love of life to the day of the spirituals be constant in this action; for if he goes backward, he will be compared to old Adam who transgressed the command of life and was driven out into the calamities of the world.

Therefore, let no one hasten to leave the world and boldly enter into My covenant of his own will until he is thoroughly examined and tested; for I do not want one who has seized the robe of My Son to let it go. For is it fitting that one who has clothed himself with His Incarnation and received His cross into his hands should renounce his Lord? By no means. Therefore listen to this.

39 To renounce the sign of religious life will mean harsh judgment

A person who has willingly confessed in his heart and vowed in his soul's devotion to bear My yoke and renounce worldly things, and then with ardent heart and desirous soul and just purpose received the sign of the religious life, must remain in it, for if he renounces it and scorns the resulting evil he will be strictly judged. Why is this? Because he has spurned Him Whose sign he has received and then trampled on, just as the Jews spurned Him when in the madness of unbelief they afflicted Him on the cross. And, as the Jews did not fear that wicked deed, so this one does not fear to reject that same Passion in rejecting his vow. For what a person promises he must fulfil, as David testifies, saying:

40 Words of David on this subject

"I will go into Your house with burnt offerings; I will pay You my vows, which my lips have uttered" [Psalm 65:13–14]. What does this mean? By resolving to do good and just deeds, I will go, O my God, into the order that You in Your holiness have given, leaving the couch of pleasure in ardent desire, for nothing is sweeter to me than to pursue You, the Creator of all. And therefore I will pay you my vows, which my mouth uttered together with my soul. For I wish to perfect what I promised You, the Just Judge, in my ardent desire: to direct my actions toward You, against Whom I have foolishly transgressed. And I desire to hasten back to You, to avoid evil deeds

and do good ones; for the reason and the intellect that burn in me seek to aspire in true penitence toward You, the Living God, rather than to imitate the Devil by deceitful contrariety.

Therefore, O human, when you thus offer Me your heart, think on how you may wisely accomplish this. For My eye sees most sharply what human will tells me; and whatever is Mine, I will most strictly require.

Why then, O foolish and more than foolish, do you take on yourselves such great burdens, as if you thought it easy to set aside the will of the flesh? According to the law My commands have given you, you are not obliged to leave the world unless you first train yourselves by so many labors that you are able to bridle the carnal desires in you.

41 Those who take the sign of religion for the wrong reason are like Balaam

But you are like a lukewarm wind, for vainglory blows upon your minds; and so after some adversity you say, "I want not to work any more in the world, but speedily to flee it. Why should I wear myself out in vain labor like this?" And when you say these things to yourself, you think it will turn out as you expect. But many seek Me with a vacillating mind, so that they are marked only outwardly with the sign of religious life, not seeking Me with pure eyes or looking simply about them with true doctrine to see how to escape the Devil who seeks to devour them; as the dove, seeing reflected in pure water the bird that seeks to seize her, takes to flight. But these people do not flee from the Devil when they see him coming in doctrinal writings; but in sudden stupefaction, born of the blindness of their minds, they blow toward Me like a lukewarm wind.

For some undertake the religious life renouncing not their own will but only their secular clothes, because they have experienced misery and poverty instead of riches in the world; they leave the world because they cannot have it as they wish. Others are foolish and simple about the world and, being unable to guide themselves, are contemptible to people; so they flee from the world because they are mocked by it. Others labor greatly under the calamities of sickness and bodily weakness, and so leave the world not for My sake but to remedy these afflictions more easily. Yet others suffer such great anguish and oppression from the temporal lords to whom they are subject that they withdraw from the world for fear of them, not so as to obey My precepts but only so that those lords can no longer have power over them.

So all these come to the religious life not for the sake of celestial love but for the sake of the earthly troubles they have, not knowing whether I am salted with wisdom or insipid, sweet or bitter, a dweller in Heaven or on

earth. What does this mean? They do not look for the spice or the sweetness of the Scriptures, or consider how I dwell in the hearts of those who seek celestial things. And since, neglecting to fear Me and advancing according to their own wills, they will not examine these things, they are alien to Me and fugitives.

Therefore I do not count them as having left the world and come to Me; but they are guilty of fearing the servant and despising the master; for they follow earthly business and do not fear Me, and thus they are counted afraid of the least important and reckless of the most important things. Therefore, they become like Balaam, who, seeing the Israelite people beautiful in their tents, longed with a false longing to join with them, saying:

42 Example of Balaam

"Let my soul die the death of the just, and my last hour be like theirs" [Numbers 23:10]. What does this mean? When a person is stirred up in his soul to begin deeds of justice, then with mounting desire he sighs and longs for them, saying, "I, a wretch entangled in many sins and bonds, yearn to have my soul reject carnal desires and leave behind all malice of wickedness, and, by that contrition which makes the just despise themselves, abide in the dwelling place of good works. How? That in my good deeds my end may be like that of the ones who do God's justice, so that the result of My good works may equal the beginning of their just purpose." But if the person who says these things is then, when his sighing is over, tempted by evil spirits and conquered by carnal desire so that he returns to iniquity, he does what Balaam did when he was deceived by the wickedness of his greed. How? Because at first he wanted to curse My people, and I opposed him both by My angel and by his ass; and by My zeal I led him to bless My people with the blessing of the words I placed in his mouth and to desire to be made like to My people Israel in his death. But afterward, touched by the spirit of dissension, he returned to his first separation and scattered that people for a deathly reward by the fornication of his counsel, as he promised when he said:

"But yet, going to my people, I will give counsel what your people shall do to this people in the latter days" [Numbers 24:14]. What does this mean? Just this: When I turn back to the path of desires related to the pleasures of the flesh, I will begin again those lusts I had previously known. How? Because I know what I am in my flesh and serve it fittingly; and I know well the motives that always act upon it. "So, O human, to you who burn for these delights I, the Devil, show in my secret mind incentives for your desires; and by my delightful suggestions I so enkindle your ardor that

through knowledge of the ancient joys of earth, which flower in your heart, you will extinguish that burning desire which previously impelled you toward holy works, first stopping them and at last leaving them as if you had never known them."

Therefore, O human, just as Balaam stooped to wrong desires after first looking upward with righteous longing, so do those who seek Me feignedly. For when they see those who have truly renounced the world go forward sincerely and persevere laudably and truthfully in strict and blessed ways of life, they call them beautiful and sweet, and on sudden impulse undertake their life and want to be like them. But after they have joined themselves to them, as Balaam looked to the Israelite people, they are often recalled to carnal desires, by which they were dominated before, by the various villainies they had in their hearts while still in the world. And when they are thus entangled, they contaminate My chosen flock with poison and hostility, shaking them with storms and scattering them with their wicked counsel. For when they deceitfully withdrew from the world, they did not call upon Me in their prayers to help them or ask Me to test their bodies to see if they could persevere in their purpose. So I leave them to find out how much their own will can help them when they trust in themselves.

Oh, how foolish and fruitless are their lives, for they are not provided with the written Law of God or the fruitfulness of His word; and so they did not consider what to do when they entered on the strict way, as good earth considers when it brings forth useful fruit. So let them listen: O human, only today you were a fiery furnace, burning fiercely in your flesh with carnal desires; and who gave you such a great respite that you could escape the great fire of your passion?

43 One who takes the sign of religion foolishly and ends badly is ruined

Truly one who wishes to undertake these things should examine with his inner eyes how to begin them through Me and by My help perfect them; for if he begins them foolishly and fails to fulfil them he may go to ruin, like the ancient enemy, who, confiding in himself, was cast out by the wrath of My zeal. So shall they also be cast out who, considering neither Me nor themselves, clothe themselves with the Passion of My Son in unthinking and hasty pride, and afterward find it too much for them and renounce it in disgust. Therefore, let those who submit themselves to the Passion take heed how they love it, as Jeremiah the prophet, inspired by the Holy Spirit, urges, saying:

44 Words of Jeremiah

"O all you that pass by the way, attend and see if there is any sorrow like to my sorrow! For He has made a vintage of me, as the Lord spoke in the day of His fierce anger" [Lamentations 1:12]. What does this mean? O all you who have deserted vices, rejecting the worldly and imitating the spiritual, and so are passing by the Way that is Life and Truth, which is I, the Son of God: Attend when you begin good works, lest when you start to imitate My Passion you forget My sorrow; and take care, for the sake of perfect justice, that the sorrow you impose on yourselves for My sake is like My sorrow. How?

By persevering unfailingly to a good end in these miseries you bear for My sake, as I also persevered in My sorrow in My purpose of dying for you; for I was oppressed and trampled in the Passion of the cross, as a grape of the vine is crushed in the winepress, that you might eat My Body and drink My Blood. The Ruler of Heaven and earth foresaw this with His all-seeing eye in the beginning, when Adam forsook life and accepted death; My Heavenly Father foresaw that in the latter days He would conquer the ancient seducer and deliver the human race with celestial aid, through Me his Son, incarnate of the Virgin to oppose the Devil with the great strength of justice. Therefore let the person, of whatever age or sex he is, who clothes himself with the Passion of Christ take care to retain it firmly, lest if he renounce it by an error of neglect he may later be unable to find it when he wants to have it.

45 Children may enter the holy way of life only with their informed consent

Therefore also, let people who want to subject their children to that Passion in humility of life not do it with imprudent and inconsiderate haste, but examine the matter with wise discretion and not force them to do without their consent what the people themselves could not bear. How?

If you offer your child to Me when discerning intellect is not in him, but all his understanding lies undeveloped, and that offering is against his will because you have not sought his consent to it, you have not acted rightly; you have offered a ram. How? If someone offers a ram at My altar without binding its horns strongly with ropes, the ram will certainly run away. So also if a father or mother offer their child, who is the ram, to My service, but do not honor his will, which is his horns, by assiduous care or supplication or entreaty or diligent exhortation, which are the ropes that bind him, since by all these the child should be brought to consent in good will; not having been

proved by these tests, he will certainly run away, physically or mentally, unless God guards him by miracle.

And if you, O human, confine that child with such great strictness of bodily discipline that he cannot free himself from the pressure of his will's repugnance, he will come before Me arid and fruitless in body and soul because of the captivity unjustly inflicted on him without his consent. Then I will say to you, O human who has bound him:

46 Example of the field

I had a green field in My power. Did I give it to you, O human, that you might make it put forth whatever fruit you wished? And if you sow sand in it, can you make it grow into fruit? No. For you do not give the dew, or send forth the rain, or confer fresh moisture, or draw warmth out of the burning sun, all of which are necessary to produce good fruit. So too, you can sow a word in human ears, but into his heart, which is My field, you cannot pour the dew of compunction, or the rain of tears, or the moisture of devotion, or the warmth of the Holy Spirit, through all of which the fruit of holiness must grow.

And how did you dare so rashly to touch one dedicated and sanctified to Me in baptism, that without his will you handed him over to bear My yoke in strict captivity; so that he became neither dry nor green, not dying to the world or living to the world? Why have you so oppressed him that he can do neither? If I comfort him by miracle so that he may remain in the spiritual life, that is not for humans to look into; for I want his parents not to sin in his oblation, offering him to Me without his will.

But if anyone, father or mother, wishes to offer their child to My service, let them say before presenting him, "I promise God that I will keep my child with skillful care until he reaches the age of reason, entreating, beseeching and exhorting him to go permanently into God's service. And if he says yes, I will speedily offer him to the service of God; but if he does not consent, may I be guiltless in the sight of God's Majesty."

And if the parents of the child have brought him up in this way until the age of reason, and if then the child turns away and will not give his consent, then they have shown their devotion in him as far as they could and must not offer him against his will or force him to enter that servitude which they themselves do not want to bear or perform.

47 Those who maliciously turn others from following God commit sacrilege

But one who wishes with a devoted mind to be subject to Me should be strongly exhorted to do it and is not to be drawn back from his good

intention by the envy of any spiteful soul. For if anyone deflects from his purpose one who desired to follow Me, he commits sacrilege, since he breaks My covenant in the other's mind. And therefore he will render account in the just judgment if he remains firm in this evil, since he turned away one who wished to serve Me, which he should not have done, as it is written:

48 Words of Moses

"Anything that is devoted to the Lord, whether it be man, or beast, or field, shall not be sold, neither may it be redeemed" [Leviticus 27:28]. What does this mean? When a person's longing soul, in its full knowledge, touches his good sense with the conviction that he should do a certain thing, his will accepts it and says, "This is fitting for the honor of God." And so the person promises the thing to God with good devotion and just reverence, and offers himself to Him by a kiss of the heart, that is by the will of his desire. Therefore, the thing has been offered to God as the dowry of holiness. How? Because God, seeing the person's will working in him, accepts this will by a ring of sanctification, as a husband undertakes by a betrothal ring to keep his bride in a pact of alliance that means that from now on he will never forsake her.

Hence when God has accepted this will from the manly strength of a person who forces himself to leave what he has and give what he possesses more to God than to himself, that bond of consecration must remain, and he must not forsake his devotion. Why? Because his wisdom has known it and his good sense has understood it and his will has built it up in God's honor; so whether it is a person who has offered himself to God, or an animal, owned by a person, which is offered to God, or a field bringing forth fruit, which was consecrated to God, it must not be given for a high price or held for a low profit lest God's honor be counted a trifling matter.

49 One who begins God's service and then rejects it must be recalled to it

But even as no one must be forced against his will to turn from the secular way to the spiritual path, so too one who undertook My service with devoted will and then despised and rejected it must be recalled by just judgment to resume it. How? If he has upright guides and spiritual masters full of My zeal, they should call him back to My service. In doing this, let them first soothe him by supplication, exhortation and caressing speech, and then proceed to correct him by blows, cold, hunger and similar punishments, so that these miseries will warn him by recalling to his mind the pains of

Hell; and, fearing them, he may cast from him the filthiness of his soul and be recalled to the path he had deserted. As is written of these things in the Gospel:

50 Words of the Gospel

"Go out into the highways and byways, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled" [Luke 14:23]. What does this mean? You who are a spiritual shepherd and a just guide and an upright master, leave your original habits, which you got from your first parents, and enter the strait and narrow way of unyielding precepts, written by men sure of themselves in the design of the Holy Spirit. And consider most sharply in My zeal those who, living under these precepts and your rule, undertook or vowed, by their own will and not by the undue urging of another, to observe the holy purpose of My covenant, but then esteemed it lightly and yearned to go back to their old vices. And, by sweet and bitter reproofs, compel them to enter into church discipline, that the house I have dowered may be filled, both with those who have been strongly reproved and with those who have been sweetly admonished. For some must be called to life by various punishments, and others by various blandishments. How?

As the righteous shepherd anxiously seeks his lost sheep, so must spiritual masters seek with great diligence their underlings who go astray through vice, and force them by their cleverness to return to the house of justice from which they went out or wished to go out, that the Church may be filled with sheep, some bitterly reproved and some gently exhorted, to be brought to the heavenly pastures.

51 The undisciplined who refuse correction must be expelled to save the rest

But if any are so stubborn as to refuse to correct themselves, either by bodily punishment inflicted on them in My zeal by their superiors, or for fear of Me Who am the God Who does not wish iniquity, or for love of the blood poured out by My Son Who suffered for them; and if these labor to pollute with their filth My faithful friends who are moving quickly in My ways, then these friends of Mine must expel them like wolves, lest they contaminate the flock, which My friend Paul urges, saying:

52 Words of the Apostle

"Put away the evil one from among you" [1 Corinthians 5:13]. What does this mean? You who are at the height of governing yet remain in humble

subjection, expel this evil one from among you; for he despises fear of Me and opposes Me, the Creator of Heaven and earth. Expel him from among you with such force that he may never fix a root in your consciousness or set his foot in your company, lest the sweet unguents of your good works become worthless. But if any of these shall wish to return in penitence and shall seek Me his Creator with a pure heart, I will receive him even if he comes at the end of his course, for I judge all things justly.

53 Feigned converts are deceived, sincere converts received by God

But if someone hides and reserves the treasure of his heart, saying, "Until I feel myself about to die I will not turn away from secular affairs," and so defers his conversion until his last gasp; and then, when he can no longer breathe and despairs of longer life, tries to renounce the world; he deceives his soul, for his conversion is deceptive, made in jest and taken as a jest. But if one is close to death and renounces the world with his whole heart, for his sins and for love of Me, and desires to serve Me ardently as long as he lives, I will truly accept his devotion with all the choirs of angels and grant him the glory of life. For though a person may be involved in great crimes, when he faces up to his sins and weeps bitterly over his offenses, and does this simply because he has provoked Me to wrath, I will raise him up from death to salvation and not deny him the celestial inheritance, as the psalmist David testifies in My Spirit, saying:

54 Words of David

"In what day soever I shall call upon you, behold! I know You are my God" [Psalm 35:10]. What does this mean? In whatever day of my life divine grace shall illumine my mind with celestial brightness as I lie in the dark, so that in bitter remorse for my sins and with a heavy and wounded heart I call upon You, Who grant to all who call on You with a pure heart the remedy of Your loving kindness, by this visitation I know that You Who mercifully bring all these things to pass are my God. What does this mean? When by Your grace You Who can do it shall lead me to know You as my God in works of justice, and humble myself for my deeds of wickedness; then You will receive me, for I sincerely seek you and tearfully cry out after you and know You in renewal of soul, and I exhaust my body in true penitence and know it to be of no worth.

When a person performs his penance thus, he will find the remedy for his sins. How? Because he knows Me to be his God. How? Because he has forsaken his sins, and therefore he will see with the eye of penitence that those things he did before in his evil desire were vain.

BOOK TWO

55 Blasphemers against the Holy Spirit and suicides are rejected by God

Let no one therefore neglect to seek the remedy of penitence. If one neglects penitence when he is sound of body, let him nonetheless be eager to seek it in his last moments, and I will receive him into salvation; for however great the stain of sin is, by pure penitence it is washed away for the sake of My Son. But this is not true of anyone who has impenitently uttered blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, and anyone who has obdurately flung his own body into death; these two things are like one. And in the glory of eternal life I will not acknowledge these people, as it is written in the Gospel:

56 Words of the Gospel

"Every sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven to people; but the spirit of blasphemy shall not be forgiven" [Matthew 12:31, misquoted]. What does this mean? Every sin committed as an excess of the flesh, or in lust or bitterness or such vices, or blasphemy, which is the worship of idols, where the true God is not known and a false image is adored, or the invocation of demons, where the true God is known but in human perversity the Devil is called upon; all these things are forgiven people who are truly repentant and, stung by tears from their inmost hearts, faithfully seek the true God Who grants His mercy to all who call upon Him. For though people who do these things go gravely astray in sin, if they do not utterly renounce God, Who reigns in the heavens in sovereignty and power, they will seek and find His helping hand.

But if they persevere in their infidelity, so that they never recover from their wickedness but deny God with firm heart and consenting soul; if they say to themselves, "What is this that is called God? For there is no God in any mercy or truth Who could want or have power to help me," and therefore remain impenitent because they do not believe that they can be cleansed of sin or saved; then they are blasphemers of God. And if they persist in this, they cannot receive pardon for the blasphemy because of the wickedness of their obduracy, for they so stifle the understanding of their hearts that they cannot aspire upward. For they regard as nonexistent the One by Whose mercy they must be saved, as the psalmist David asserts, saying:

57 Words of David

"The fool has said in his heart, 'There is no God' " [Psalm 13:1]. What does this mean? In his foolish utterance he who lacks wisdom and understanding has denied God in his heart, unable to know Him. How? Because he

did not want to know or understand the true God, saying to himself, "What is God? God does not exist. And what then am I? I do not know what I am!" He who says these things is a fool, for he has not the true wisdom by which God is known. But anyone who has really known God, reigning in power, is wise even if a sinner. Hence anyone who has despair of God's mercy fixed in his heart, saying, "God is nothing; I know Him not because He has not known me, and I deny Him because He has denied me;" such a one will not rise again to life or inherit joy, for since he regards the Creator as nothing, all creatures will desert him.

And one who despairs because of his sins and believes that their great weight makes it impossible for him to be saved is faithless; he shall not attain to life, for he contradicts the One Who gives life to all. But if any of these is led by penitence and truly seeks Me, he shall find Me, for I reject no one who comes to me with a sincere heart.

58 Anyone who resists blasphemous despair is quickly helped by God

And if the blackest tempests of blasphemy and despair fall on anyone, and he does not consent to them in his heart or his will or any perverted taste but struggles against them in great torment; then if he perseveres in the fight and strongly resists, I will quickly help him. And let him not doubt because he must struggle, for I say he is a strong warrior against the greatest of storms, and I will help him most speedily and hold him as a friend; for, patiently enduring, he has nobly conquered great misfortunes for love of Me.

59 One who separates his body and soul, which God has joined, is damned

But just as one who does not choose to know Me, the true God, in faith or hope, does not rise again to life, as has been said; so one who throws himself into bodily death, not waiting for the separation I appoint for everyone but dividing himself without hope of mercy, will fall into perdition, for he has killed the thing with which he should have done penance. For one who separates from a person what I have placed in the person incurs great guilt, as My Son shows in the Gospel, saying:

60 Words of the Gospel

"You have heard that it was said of old, 'You shall not kill. And whoever shall kill will be in danger of the judgment' " [Matthew 5:21]. What does this mean? You who want to stand upon the rock, note that the voice that comes

from the Root of all reason tells you that Scripture, interpreted for you by the finger of God, forbade your ancient predecessors to divide in a person what divine arrangement united in him. What does this mean? That He Who forbade Adam the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, saying, "In whatever day you eat of it, you shall die the death" [Genesis 2:17], also said to Adam's race through Moses, "You shall not kill" [Exodus 20:13]; so you shall not destroy what is made in the image of God. And, just as Adam in transgressing God's command deprived himself and his progeny of the life of salvation, so also the person who destroys God's creation in human form cuts off from his soul and body faithful generations of works of salvation; and, thus incurring the judicial sentence, goes into the exile of misery.

Therefore one who has made such a cruel separation in a person casts himself into calamity. He has separated what is Mine, for I placed body and soul together in humans, and who is he to dare to separate them? And if one who kills another is weighed down with immense sin, what will he be who gives himself to death and lays in the dust the thing with which he should have wiped out his crimes?

For one who kills himself imitates that lost angel who found wickedness in the beginning and gave himself to damnation by killing himself. How? By envying God, Who has no beginning and no end and Who rules all things that are in Heaven and on earth. And as the Devil in his pride chose not to look at Me when he cast himself into perdition, so the person who violently cuts himself asunder does not deign to know Me, and so falls into death, like the other who brought perdition on himself. For before he fell he tried to uplift his iniquity on the wings of the wind and to fly in the heavenly places like a bird flying in the air; and in this presumption he cast himself down from beatitude to misfortune.

But I formed Man from earth to ascend from lower to higher things, and to begin and perfect good works and thus build the splendid virtues needed for hard tasks. Therefore let Man, who has both a body and a soul, not kill himself when he can do good works and repent, lest he reach that place where he can have neither work nor penitence, like the Devil who killed himself and was cast into Hell.

But let the one who sees with watchful eyes and hears with attentive ears welcome with a kiss My mystical words, which proceed from Me Who am life.

CHRIST'S SACRIFICE AND THE CHURCH

fiat ei latus et fluat.

THE FOOD OF LIFE

VISION SIX
Christ's Sacrifice and the Church

And after these things I saw the Son of God hanging on the cross, and the aforementioned image of a woman coming forth like a bright radiance from the ancient counsel. By divine power she was led to Him, and raised herself upward so that she was sprinkled by the blood from His side; and thus, by the will of the Heavenly Father, she was joined with Him in happy betrothal and nobly dowered with His body and blood.

And I heard the voice from Heaven saying to Him: "May she, O Son, be your Bride for the restoration of My people; may she be a mother to them, regenerating souls through the salvation of the Spirit and water."

And as that image grew in strength, I saw an altar, which she frequently approached, and there each time looked devotedly at her dowry and modestly showed it to the Heavenly Father and His angels. Hence when a priest clad in sacred vestments approached that altar to celebrate the divine mysteries, I saw that a great calm light was brought to it from Heaven by angels and shone around the altar until the sacred rite was ended and the priest had withdrawn from it. And when the Gospel of peace had been recited and the offering to be consecrated had been placed upon the altar, and the priest sang the praise of Almighty God, "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts," which began the mystery of the sacred rites, Heaven was suddenly opened and a fiery and inestimable brilliance descended over that offering and irradiated it completely with light, as the sun illumines anything its rays shine through. And, thus illuminating it, the brilliance bore it on high into the secret places of Heaven and then replaced it on the altar, as a person draws in a breath and lets it out again; and thus the offering was made true flesh and true blood, although in human sight it looked like bread and wine.

And while I looked at these things, suddenly there appeared before my eyes as if in a mirror the symbols of the Nativity, Passion and burial, Resurrection and Ascension of our Savior, God's Only-Begotten, as they had happened to the Son of God while He was on earth. But when the priest sang the song of the innocent Lamb, "O Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world," and prepared to take the Holy Communion himself, the fiery brilliance withdrew into Heaven; and as it closed I heard the voice from thence saying, "Eat and drink the body and blood of My Son to wipe out Eve's transgression, so that you may be restored to the noble inheritance." And as other people approached the priest to receive the

BOOK TWO

sacrament, I noticed five modes of being in them. For some were bright of body and fiery of soul, and others seemed pale of body and shadowed of soul; some were hairy of body and seemed dirty in soul, because it was pervaded with unclean human pollution; others were surrounded in body by sharp thorns and leprous of soul; and others appeared bloody of body and foul as a decayed corpse in soul. And all these received the same sacraments; and as they did, some were bathed in fiery brilliance, but the others were overshadowed by a dark cloud.

And when these mysteries were finished, as the priest withdrew from the altar the calm light from Heaven, which, as said, had shone round the whole altar, was drawn up again into the secret places of Heaven. And again I heard the voice from the supernal heavens, saying to me:

1 The Church was joined to Christ in His Passion and dowered with His blood

When Jesus Christ, the true Son of God, hung on the tree of His Passion, the Church, joined to Him in the secret mysteries of Heaven, was dowered with His crimson blood; as she herself shows when she often approaches the altar and reclaims her wedding gift, carefully noting with what degree of devotion her children receive it when they come to the divine mysteries. Therefore *you see the Son of God hanging on the cross, and the aforementioned image of a woman coming forth like a bright radiance from the ancient counsel; and by divine power she is led to Him.* For when the innocent Lamb was lifted up on the altar of the cross for human salvation, the Church suddenly appeared in Heaven by a profound mystery, in purity of faith and all the other virtues; and by the Supreme Majesty she was joined to the Only-Begotten of God. What does this mean? That when blood flowed from the wounded side of My Son, at once salvation of souls came into being; for the glory from which the Devil and his followers were driven out was given to humanity when My Only-Begotten suffered temporal death on the cross, despoiled Hell and led the faithful souls to Heaven. Therefore, in His disciples and their sincere followers faith began to increase and strengthen, so that they became heirs of the celestial Kingdom. Hence that image *raises herself upward so that she is sprinkled by the blood from His side; and thus, by the will of the Heavenly Father, she is joined with Him in happy betrothal.* For when the strength of the Passion of the Son of God flows burningly forth and rises to the height of the celestial mysteries, as the perfume of spices diffuses itself upward, the Church, fortified by that strength in the pure heirs of the eternal Kingdom, is faithfully joined by the high Father's decision to the Only-Begotten of God. How? As a bride, subjected to her bridegroom in her offering of subordination and obedience, receives from him a gift of fertility and a pact of love for procreating children, and educates them as to

their inheritance. So too the Church, joined to the Son of God in the exercise of humility and charity, receives from Him the regeneration of the Spirit and water to save souls and restore life, and sends those souls to Heaven.

Therefore *she is nobly dowered with His body and blood;* for the Only-Begotten of God conferred His body and blood in surpassing glory on His faithful, who are the Church and her children, that through Him they may have life in the celestial city. How?

2 God conquered the ancient serpent by His Son's humility, not His power

By giving His body and blood to sanctify those who believe; and so the Heavenly Father delivered Him up to the Passion for the redemption of the peoples and conquered the ancient serpent through Him in humility and justice. He did not want His Son to conquer by His power and strength, for God is just and does not will iniquity, as the Psalmist declares, saying:

3 Words of the Psalmist

"Blessed is the man who has not walked in the counsel of the ungodly, or stood in the way of sinners, or sat in the seat of the pernicious" [Psalm 1:1]. What does this mean?

God is the Father of all the bliss and happiness of His creatures and shows many and various signs in them; and the Incarnation of His Son dripped with the sweet taste of delight, for in Him the heavenly virtues built many mansions through which humanity can return to the supernal Kingdom, which is darkened by no shadow of death. And thus the strongest powers of virtue were shown to be in the Heavenly Father, for it was He through His Only-Begotten who slew death and broke Hell; and on the last day He will make the world anew and better.

Therefore, He has not, through any wavering of His heart, wandered away into the paths of the evil spirits, who forsook the truth and seized on the lie. How? They wanted to use the lie to divide the truth. How? By trying to overthrow the Ancient of Days, Who was before days and hours began; and by yearning to make a partner for Him of the ancient serpent, who before time began was not. But that could not and should not be, for there is one God. And therefore the Devil is a liar, for he withdrew from God and forsook life to find death. And so, indeed, God did not stand in the path that sinners walk; He condemned Adam's choice and did not love his sin, but when he was seduced by the Devil He drove him from Paradise. And He did not reign in any seat of wicked power, as does the whole human race, which is bound up with death and sits in its shadow because it arrogantly deserted

the truth. What does this mean? That God did not oppose either devilish presumption or human disrespect by His power or cast them out by His strength. Why? If there were two fighters, one stronger than the other, surely the stronger would show the weaker how much more he was capable of, conquering and confounding him and not yielding to him in any way. But God did not act thus; He resisted the work of iniquity by supreme goodness, sending into the world His Son, Who in His body brought back His lost sheep to Heaven with great humility. How? The blood that came forth from His body appeared in Heaven as soon as it flowed from His open wounds, pleading that the salvation of souls should be granted. How? Every creature who lives in the Son of God shows that through His Passion and death lost humanity was restored to life. How? Because the Only-Begotten of God, Who is life, offered Himself for His Passion on the altar of the cross for the redemption of the human race; and, as you have truly heard proclaimed by the voice from Heaven, in that place He chose the Church as His Bride, to be a mother to the believing peoples to restore salvation and by spiritual regeneration send them without stain to the celestial realms.

4 The growing Church offers her dowry to God and shows Him the sacraments

But as that image grows in strength, you see an altar, which she frequently approaches, and there each time looks devotedly at her dowry and modestly shows it to the Heavenly Father and His angels. For when the Church, as mentioned, suddenly increased in strong and blessed virtues, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit the mystical altars were sanctified by the deep longings of the faithful, as is clearly shown to you. And the Church, with steady purpose, turns her footsteps there by example and devotedly offers her dowry, which is the body and blood of the Son of God, to the Creator of all in humble obedience, in the presence of those living and burning lights who are the citizens of Heaven. Why is this? Because as the flesh of My Only-Begotten came into being in the pure womb of the Virgin Mary, and then was delivered up for human salvation, so now His flesh, augmented by the incorrupt purity of the Church, is often given to sanctify the faithful.

5 Analogy of gold

For, as the goldsmith first unites his gold by melting it in the fire, and then divides it when it is united, so I, the Father, first glorify the body and blood of My Son by the sanctification of the Holy Spirit when it is offered, and then, when it is glorified, distribute it to the faithful for their salvation.

6 When the priest approaches the altar, the angels bring a brightness there

Hence *when a priest clad in sacred vestments approaches that altar to celebrate the divine mysteries, you see that a great calm light is brought to it from Heaven by angels.* For when he who has the charge of souls is girded with the sacred cincture and approaches the life-giving table to immolate the innocent Lamb, at once the great light of the heavenly inheritance drives away the darkness, shining with the help of celestial spirits from the secret places of Heaven. And it completely illumines the plan of sanctification, for here is the food of the soul by which believers are saved. How? Because the Church in the voice of the priest seeks her dowry, which is the body and the poured-out blood of My Son, in order to be fit for blessed childbearing in saving souls; for when that precious blood was poured out she was increased by a great multitude of peoples. And so then I, Who am the unfailing Light, illumine the place of that consecration with My holiness, to the honor of the body and blood of My Only-Begotten.

7 In the sacrament of the altar God remembers His Son's Passion

For when the priest begins to invoke me on the sanctified altar, and I consider that My Son offered Me bread and wine at the supper of death just before leaving the world; then I see that My Son did this in the hour of His death, as he was about to perish on the wood of the cross, so that when the blessed offering of the holy sacrifice is offered to Me by a priest I might always have His Passion in My sight, never blotting it from My sharp vision. For He too offered Me bread and wine in the outpouring of His blood, when He cast down death and raised up humanity.

8 Why in the sacrament bread, wine and water are offered

But because He Who went into and came out of the cloister of virginal purity was not of human nature but of divine power, the flesh of My Only-Begotten can be produced by consecration from wheaten bread and His blood from grape wine mixed with water, as I have shown through My faithful servant the prophet Joel, saying:

9 Words of Joel

"And the floors shall be filled with wheat, and the presses shall overflow with wine and oil. And I will restore to you the years that the locust and the

canker-worm and the rust and the caterpillar have eaten, My great host which I sent upon you; and you shall eat in plenty and shall be filled, and praise the name of your God, Who has dealt wondrously with you; and My people shall not be confounded forever" [Joel 2:24–26]. What does this mean? Through the miraculous arrangement of God the floors of the faith of the believing Church will be filled with all good things. For I will make the grain of the wheat into the body of My Son, though for their true salvation, to call My faithful back to their rightful land, I will also make adversities abound, through which for My name's sake they will crush the desires of their flesh. And likewise I will transform the juice of the grape for them into the blood of My Only-Begotten and give them the oil of mercy. How?

I will restore to you in another form, changed into salvation for you, that time consumed by the locust of forgetfulness in ignorant unbelief in a round of vanities, when villianies first arose among the children of Adam; they forgot the fruitfulness of My justice, as a person forgets his necessary food after he has put it in his stomach, and in their impiety they tore apart My justice as the locust gnaws the fruit. How? When the locust of negligence with slothful mind destroys the utility of good fruit, the canker-worm of foulness also wraps itself around it in filth; for people like this wrap themselves in the filth of idolatry and other schisms, and probings into diabolism, and magical arts, and the search for auguries in the Creator's creatures as to future happenings in human life, and vile deeds of murder and fornication, and feed on them as the canker-worm feeds on mud. How? Wherever the canker-worm of shame cherishes the stench of filth, the rust of bitterness will consume the metal of shining faith; and these people, opposing God's justice, labor to obscure it, as rust is wont to take away the beauty of metals. How?

Where the rust of biting speech stains the brilliance of good deeds, there also the caterpillar of harmful actions will rob the flourishing green crops of their usefulness; for these people cast away in wicked malice such noble virtues as simplicity, chastity and virtuous constancy, illumined by the Holy Spirit in fresh beatitude, and try to destroy them as the caterpillar destroys the crops. But in all these things My exceeding strength is declared, which in its great power conquered the opposition of the Devil when I sent it among you for your salvation. How?

I the Father sent My Son into the world, physically born of the Virgin, that through Him I might redeem you from the perdition of death; so that I might dwell in you and you in Me, since My own Son underwent the Passion and gave you His flesh to eat and His blood to drink. Hence you shall eat this sacrament devotedly for your salvation and feed blessedly upon it; and thus, through the oil of My mercy, the hunger of your souls' perdition shall be satisfied. For My Son brought you penitence as a medicine for your wounds,

and My Son's Bride was adorned with all justice and truth. And therefore you shall faithfully praise My name; for I am one God in true Trinity, and I govern you and display My wonders in you, miraculously snatching you from the power of the Devil. And therefore, My people, whom I have brought forth so wonderfully from the jaws of Hell, shall not be confounded by death in the eternity that is to come.

10 God does not leave the priest until he has completed the mystery

And you see that *the calm light shines around the altar until the sacred rite is ended and the priest has withdrawn from it*. For that light is an eternal sight, and shows itself by miracle with great brightness until the mysteries of this hallowed office are finished and the dispenser of the sacred rites, having completed them, withdraws from the holy spot. Why is this? Because it is fitting that the Divine Majesty manifest Its power most fully in these blessed rites, and because as long as a person remains within these things that belong to God, God's help will never leave him.

11 When the mystery of the sacrament begins, an unknown light shines on it

And when the Gospel of peace has been recited and the offering to be consecrated has been placed upon the altar, and the priest sings the praise of Almighty God, "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts," which begins the mystery of the sacred rites, Heaven is suddenly opened and a fiery and inestimable brilliance descends over that offering. For when the fresh and living breath of the royal kiss has been given, and the fruit of noble life, which is to be sanctified and purified, has been put as a stone into God's wall, and the messenger of truth utters the sweet sound of the threefold invocation of the Lord of Hosts in praise of the Creator of all and thus begins the mystery of the shining dawn, the Incarnation of the Son of God in the Virgin; then suddenly the glorious tabernacle opens on the mystery of the sacrament, and an inconceivably calm and lofty brilliance shines down. *And it irradiates* [*the offering*] *completely with light, as the sun illumines anything its rays shine through;* in the power of the Father the holy heat so strikes the sparkling circle of that oblation that the radiant splendor wholly enters into the thing it falls upon. What does this mean?

The Bride of My Son offers the gift of bread and wine on My altar with a most devoted purpose. How? To remind Me in faithful memory by the hand of the priest that in this same oblation I delivered up the body and blood of My Son. How? Because the sufferings of My Only-Begotten are seen perpetually in the secret places of Heaven; and thus that oblation is united to

My Son in My ardent heat in a profoundly miraculous way and becomes most truly His body and blood. And thence the Church is quickened with blessed strength.

12 The divine light bears the oblation on high and makes it flesh and blood

For, thus illuminating it, as was said, the brilliance invisibly bears it on high into the secret places of Heaven; for that fiery brilliance, which streams through and illumines the sacrament, bears it upward with invisible power to those places mortal eye cannot see. *And then it replaces it on the altar,* for with gracious condescension it sweetly puts it back upon the table of sanctification; as a person draws in a breath and lets it out again, when by the wonderful arrangement of God he draws into himself the breath that makes him quicken and live, and then, also that he may live, expels it. *And thus the offering is made true flesh and true blood, although in human sight it looks like bread and wine;* for God is truthful and without illusion, and His sacrament also is firmly fixed on high where no one can throw it down, and is true flesh and blood without deception. For, just as a soul truly exists within flesh and blood while a person is alive in body, so too this mystery exists within bread and wine when it is worshipped in the true celebration and appears before people. And as the blind human eye cannot fully see God, so too a person cannot physically perceive these mysteries; as a person sees another's body but not his soul, so also a person can see the bread and wine but not the sacraments. Why is this?

The calm light that shone over the body of the Son of God when He was buried in the tomb, and raised Him to life again from the sleep of death, also shines on the altar over the sacrament of the body and blood of God's Only-Begotten, covering it from human sight so that people cannot see its holiness except as bread and wine, the form in which the oblation is placed on the altar. In just this way the Divinity that was in the Son of God was so concealed from people by His Humanity that they could see him only as a human being, living with them as a human being even though He was without sin. What does this mean?

I, Who created all things, benignly accept the oblation when it is offered to Me by the Church at the hand of the priest; for as Divinity displayed its wonders in the womb of the Virgin, it shows its secrets also in this oblation. How? Because here are manifested the body and blood of the Son of God. How?

13 Analogy of ointment and sapphire

That oblation, by the power of God, is invisibly borne on high and brought back again in an instant, and so warmed by the heat of the Divine Majesty that it becomes the body and blood of God's Only-Begotten. People do not perceive this mystery with their bodily senses; it is as if someone encased a precious unguent in simple bread and dropped a sapphire into wine, and I then changed them into a sweet taste, so that in your mouth, O human, you could not taste the unguent in the bread or the sapphire in the wine, but only the sweetness—as My Son is sweet and mild. What does this mean? The unguent symbolizes My Son, born of the Virgin, Who was anointed with precious ointment. How? He was clothed with holy humanity, which is a precious unguent, pouring so sweetly over the deadly wounds of humans that when they turn back to Him they will no longer putrefy or stink with Adam's perdition. And the sapphire symbolizes the Divinity in My Son, Who is the Cornerstone; He is meek and humble, for he did not grow from the root of human flesh begotten by a man and a woman, but was miraculously incarnate by My fire in the sweet Virgin, and therefore his body and blood are sweet and delightful for believers to take in.

14 Why humans cannot take this spiritual gift in visible form

But you, O human, cannot take this spiritual gift visibly, as if eating visible flesh and drinking visible blood; for you are filth of filth. But, as the living spirit in you is invisible, so also the living sacrament in that oblation is invisible and must be received invisibly by you. For, as the body of My Son came about in the womb of the Virgin, so now the body of My Only-Begotten arises from the sanctification of the altar. What does this mean? The human soul, which is invisible, invisibly receives the sacrament, which exists invisibly in that oblation, while the human body, which is visible, visibly receives the oblation that visibly embodies that sacrament. But the two are one, just as Christ is God and Man, and the rational soul and the mortal flesh make up one human being; and so a person who contemplates Me in right faith receives the sacrament faithfully to make him holy. What does this mean?

My Son was miraculously born from the most pure Virgin, whose body was untouched and never burned in the sweetness of lust, for the virginal vessel in which I willed My Only-Begotten to be incarnate was the purest possible. Thus I did not permit this sweet Virgin's vessel to melt in fiery ardor, since in it My Son miraculously took on a human body.

15 Offered by a faithful priest the oblation becomes Christ's body and blood

But the Blessed Virgin heard true words of consolation from the angel in secret, and believed; she uplifted the sighs of her soul and said, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to your word" [Luke 1:38]. Thus she conceived the Only-Begotten of God. This indicates that the priest who is performing this office must invoke with his words Almighty God, faithfully believing in Him, offering Him in devotion of heart a pure oblation and speaking the words of salvation in the service of humility; then the Supernal Majesty will receive this oblation and transmute it with miraculous power into the body and blood of the Holy Redeemer. How? As My Son miraculously received humanity in the Virgin, so now this oblation miraculously becomes His body and blood on the altar. Therefore this sacrament is wholly perfect, being invisible and visible, as My Only-Begotten is wholly perfect, Who is invisible as to His Divinity and visible on earth as to His Humanity.

16 Analogy of a chick and a butterfly

For as a chick emerges from an egg, or a butterfly springs from a cocoon, and the living creature flies away while the thing it came from remains, so also in this oblation the truth that My Son's body and blood are there must be held by faith, though the oblation appears to human sight as bread and wine.

17 In the sacrament of the altar Christ's mysteries appear as in a mirror

And therefore, *while you are looking at these things, suddenly there appear before your eyes as if in a mirror the symbols of the Nativity, Passion and burial, Resurrection and Ascension of our Savior, God's Only-Begotten, as they happened to the Son of God while He was on earth.* For, as you see in a true vision, the mysteries of Him Who came to earth to save humanity—His birth from the Virgin, suffering on the cross, burial in the tomb, rising again from the dead and ascension into Heaven—shine brightly in the sacrament of the altar, since when God's Only-Begotten lived for a time among people in the world, these things happened to Him in His body by the will of the Father for the redemption of the human race. What does this mean? Before My eyes it is manifest that My Son suffered in the world for the love of humanity, for the Nativity, Passion, burial, Resurrection and Ascension of My Son slew the death of the human race. Hence these mysteries shine before Me in the

heavenly places; for I have not forgotten them, but they will appear before Me in great brightness like the dawn until the end of the world. What does this mean?

18 When the Lord's Prayer is said Christ's Passion will move God to mercy

Until the world ends I will see in that Passion all who will believe in it or reject it. For it will always shine before me, as long as people are obliged to recite what My Son taught His disciples to say in praying to God: "And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors" [Matthew 6:12]. What does this mean? You Who have all things in Your power, look upon the outpouring of the blood that was shed for the human race, and forgive us, who are children of transgression, the debts we should have paid you but have not because of the baseness of our hearts. What does this mean?

We have not fulfilled what we promised in baptism, for we have transgressed Your precepts and thrown away our innocence, just as Adam in paradise disobeyed you and spoiled the garment of innocence. But because You are kind, do not punish us according to our wickedness, but forgive us our transgression according to Your loving-kindness; as we also who are transgressors, although we have much malice in us, for fear and love of our Savior forgive those who wrong us for the injuries they have done us. How? There are those who should love us because we are human, but instead trouble us, failing to love You and ignoring Your precepts. But we do not persecute them, as they deserve for their malice toward us; we contemplate Your just judgment and do not swiftly avenge ourselves on them, so that You too, O God, Who are just and good, may be gracious to us.

Hear, then, O human! As long as you need help, and as long as you can succor others, My Son's Passion will appear before Me in mercy, and His body and blood will be consecrated on the altar to be received by believers for their salvation and the purgation of their crimes. For when My Only-Begotten was in the world in the body, His body was physically sustained by wheat and wine; and therefore His body and blood is now consecrated on the altar in the oblation of wheat and wine, that the faithful may be refreshed in soul and body. For My Son miraculously redeemed humanity from Adam's perdition and now mercifully absolves people from the daily evil into which they often lapse. For whatever My Son suffered physically in His body for the redemption of humanity appears when the oblation is consecrated; and My will is not to hide this, for I draw His elect on high to the heavenly places, that through them His body may be perfected in its predestined members.

19 The oblation never appears as flesh except by miracle in great necessity

Thus I miraculously show all these mysteries in that oblation, since when it is placed upon the altar the oblation becomes the body and blood of My Son; but it appears in human eyes to be bread and wine, for human frailty is so delicate that people would shudder at receiving bleeding flesh and trickling blood. For, as long as a person is mortal, he cannot contemplate Divinity. And therefore the mystery that is the whole of Divinity is for humans covered with obscurity, and they perceive it invisibly; namely, that My Only-Begotten, being immortal, dies no more. And so, O human, I give you His body and blood in the oblation of bread and wine, so that by true faith you may perceive by that which is visible that which is invisible. And by divine power you receive this sacrament with true certainty, yet so that it is not visible to you, except in cases of great necessity; it has sometimes been shown to My elect at times when they were in great affliction. And I do all these things to be loving and helpful to humanity. But, though every creature is subject to My precepts, you, O human, are always rebellious against Me; so you are blind and deaf. Yet you cannot rebel against Me. Do I not do what I will without your seeing it? You do not see with your physical eyes or hear with your physical ears how I send a human soul into the body and how I take it out of the body; but your soul will understand Me when it has left its mortal body. And so also I give the body of My Son to be eaten and His blood to be drunk, and I do this by My power, O human, without your seeing it.

20 As the song of the Lamb is sung the faithful communicate for their good

Therefore, as you see, *when the priest sings the song of the innocent Lamb, "O Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world," and prepares to take the Holy Communion himself, the fiery brilliance withdraws into Heaven;* for as that minister announces the praise of Him Who in His mild innocence bore the wickedness of humanity, and opens his inmost heart and his outward devotion to these mysteries, the unconquered serenity that is here showing its power withdraws itself into the supernal secret. *And as Heaven closes, you hear the voice from thence saying* that believing and faithful people should eat and drink with true devotion the body and blood of their Savior, Who for them suffered temporal death, to wash away the contamination our first parents brought into the world when they transgressed God's precept; so that those people, cleansed from this transgression, may be faithfully restored to the rightful inheritance that by obstinacy they had lost.

For, as the Only-Begotten of God gave His body and blood to His

disciples at the Supper, so now on the altar He gives His flesh and His blood to His faithful ones, donating it for human use, as a person does when he has finished the work he wanted to do. For the Son of God, fulfilling the precepts of His Father, offered Himself for people's salvation and gave His body and blood to be eaten and drunk for their sanctification, as the Bridegroom declares to his friends in the Song of Songs, saying:

21 Words of Solomon in the Song of Songs

"Eat, my friends; drink, and be inebriated, my dearly beloved!" [Song of Songs 5:1]. What does this mean? Eat in faith, you who through holy baptism have come to My friendship; for the spilled blood of My Son has purged you from Adam's fall, and as you chew the true medicine in the body of My Only-Begotten, the repeated deeds of crime and injustice you have done will be mercifully wiped out for you. And also drink in hope from this Vine, which has brought you out of eternal punishment; receive the cup of salvation, that you may firmly and strongly believe in that grace by which you have been redeemed, for you are bathed in the blood that was shed for you. And be inebriated with love, you who are so dear to Me, and flow with brooks of Scripture so that you will know best how to break away from carnal desires; and then I will awake in you splendid virtues pleasing to Me and give you the blood of My Only-Begotten. He Himself gave this sacrament to His disciples, as is written in the Gospel:

22 The meaning of the Lord's words to His disciples about this mystery

"And while they were at supper, Jesus took bread, and when He had blessed it, He broke it and gave it to His disciples, saying, 'Take and eat: This is My body.' And He took the chalice, and when He had given thanks He gave it to His disciples, saying, 'Drink of this, all of you. This is My blood of the New Testament, which will be shed for many for the forgiveness of sins. And I say to you: I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I shall drink it with you new in the Kingdom of My Father'" [Matthew 26:26–29]. What does this mean?

When the Son of God celebrated with His disciples that consummation by which He was to pass out of the world, no longer, as before, living among the events of the world but enduring the Passion of the cross in accordance with His Father's will, with supreme devotion He took the bread in remembrance of His body for human salvation. With all His longing He reminded His Father how He came forth from Him and wanted to return to Him, and prayed Him to consider whether it was possible, because of the weakness of

His flesh, for the chalice He was to drink to pass from Him; but this was not to happen. And therefore He blessed that bread in remembrance of the sweat of His body; for in the anguish of His Passion, as He submitted to His Father's command and was willing to die on the cross, He gave His body and blood to His disciples, so that they would not forget His example.

And he broke it for them; for that Passion was hard for His body to bear. But nonetheless He obeyed His Father and conquered cruel death by the death of His body; and so He showed that His body and blood were also to be given to believers in Him in the mystery of the oblation.

And He gave it to His disciples for true salvation, that they too might do such things in His name as He was doing for love of them; thus He was saying in a gentle voice, "You who humbly wish to follow Me, take with ardent love this example I leave you, My Passion and My works I have done at My Father's command, when He sent Me to teach and to manifest His Kingdom; and eat faithfully what I give you, for it is My body." What does this mean? "Eat My body, for you must imitate My works in your spirits and your flesh, whenever the Holy Spirit inspires them in your hearts, as a person swallows the food he is sending to his stomach; as you and all who wish to keep My precepts should follow Me in My works, so too you should eat My body."

And then the Son of God, taking for salvation the saving cup, gave thanks to His Father; for when the blood poured out from His side, grace was given to believers that was so strong that it conquered the ancient serpent, delivered lost humanity and strengthened the whole Church in faith. How? The Savior in the sweetness of His love gave His precious example to all His faithful, summoning them with gentle inspiration by saying, "Drink with confidence from this saving cup, all you who desire to follow Me faithfully, that for love of Me you may chastise your bodies by privation and restrain your blood by toil, and deny yourselves to strengthen the Church; even as I submitted Myself to the Passion, and shed My blood for your redemption, not thinking of the tenderness of My flesh but thirsting for your salvation. For this blood, which is shed for you, is not that blood of the Old Testament, which was shed in shadow, but My blood of the New Testament, which was given for the salvation of the peoples. How? I Who am the Only-born of My mother, the Son of the most pure Virgin, shed My blood on the cross to redeem people who contemplate Me by faith. And as I then gave it for the deliverance of the human race, so now I give it on the altar for humanity, to cleanse those who faithfully receive it.

"For in the Supper of My Passion I gave you My body and My blood to be eaten and drunk; and so now you may do the same on the altar in memory of Me. Therefore I unfold the truth and say to you, my faithful followers: I will not again drink this cup of anguish in this oppression I now suffer from

the Jews until that day when I rise from the dead and Death is overthrown, and I bring in the day of salvation. Then I will drink with you the cup of your redemption and show you who are Mine your new reason for rejoicing: that the perdition of the ancient crime is taken away, and the Kingdom is opened to you that My Father has prepared for those who love Him. What does this mean? That by My death, which I suffered on the cross, you will know the salvation of souls; and when I ascend after My Resurrection, you will receive the Spirit, the Comforter, and you will newly understand true doctrine. And then for My name's sake you will endure many tribulations, and I will endure them with you; not because I will suffer any miseries in the body after this, as I did when I was in the world in the body, but because you will endure them in My name. Therefore I will endure them with you, since you are in Me and I am in you."

And thus, as was said, you who faithfully believe in Me shall receive the body and blood of My Son to wipe out your sins, so that, gladdened by this sacrament, you may attain supernal strength, as My servant David exclaims by My burning will, saying:

23 Words of David

"The earth shall be filled with the fruit of your works, bringing forth grass for cattle and green crops for the service of people, that you may bring forth bread out of the earth, and wine may rejoice the human heart; that faces may be gladdened with oil, and bread strengthen the human heart" [Psalm 103:13–15]. What does this mean?

O God, Whose magnificence is above everyone, by the faith that is the fruit of virtue in Your wisdom, and by which You are truly known, Man shall be filled; one who adheres to faith shall end the hunger of unbelief by taking the way of justice, though he had not known the truth before and had fainted from a dearth of rectitude. Now he will fulfil his mind's contrition by doing good works and offer to the simple, knowing their weakness, an example of humility. He will grow and flourish in virtue and show in abundant security a fertility of true righteousness, by which he will serve those who now long for earthly things. For he will labor to be useful to them, and by his services of support and defense lead faithful souls to heavenly joys, as do all who in their strength and protectiveness firmly defend those whom they are set to guard. And these works prevail in people by Your will, O God, so that when they are adorned with these virtues You may miraculously give them, out of the fruit of the pure fertility of the earth, the body of Your Son; as Your Only-Begotten, coming in the body out of the womb of virginal chastity, mercifully gave the bread of life to those who believe in Him.

And You perform a further miracle: that the blood of Your Only-Be-

gotten, which was shed for the salvation of souls, gladdens the internal strength of people, their souls, by remitting their sins. How? Because, as once the body of Your Son was offered on the cross for the redemption of the human race, so now his flesh and blood are consecrated on the altar for the salvation of those who believe. And when this is miraculously accomplished in Your will, then this sacrament will gladden the face, which is to say the Church, sprinkling it with the oil of mercy. For those who believe and embrace mercy with joyous faith appear beautiful in the eyes of the Lord; and when the Salvation of the world hung on the cross and mercifully delivered humanity from the snare of the Devil, He also generously freed people from the bonds of sin, that they might faithfully believe in God with joyful and sincere hearts and never cease with devoted ardor to help the wretched.

And the faithful should burn in this love, so that the bread that offers life to its tasters may strengthen the minds of those who are wavering in inconstancy; and thus the purpose of their hearts may not decline to evil, but ascend in strength to that which is life.

24 This cleansing sacrament is to be worshipped by all up to the last

This bread is the flesh of My Son, which is obscured by no shadow of sin and clouded by no stain of iniquity, so that they who receive it are bathed with heavenly light in soul and body and cleansed by faith from their inner uncleanness. And therefore let there be no doubt about this most sacred flesh; for He Who formed the first man neither from flesh nor from bone is certainly able to produce the sacrament in this way. Therefore, O virginal Origin, You arise, grow, spread out and produce a great branch with many shoots from which to build the heavenly Jerusalem, beginning not in a man's semen but in a mystical breath. You are bound by no stain of sin at Your beginning, but developed in miraculous virtue, for You arose in an unplowed field, a flower so excellent that it will never wither from any accident of mortality, but in full freshness will last forever. Wherefore this sacrament of Your body and blood must be worshipped in the Church in a true service, until the last person to be saved by the mystery appears at the end of the world. For it comes from the secret mind of God to bring salvation to believers, as David testifies, saying:

25 Further words of David

"And He commanded the clouds from above, and opened the doors of Heaven, and rained down manna upon them to eat, and gave them the bread

of Heaven. Man ate the bread of angels; He sent them provisions in abundance" [Psalm 77:23–25]. What does this mean?

From the heights of Heaven the Celestial Father showed this to the patriarchs and prophets in the power of His glory and in the secrets of His mysteries to prepare human minds; for in the Holy Spirit they truly foretold His Son, and in the precepts of the Law, the blood of goats and other demonstrations they miraculously foreshadowed Him to the people. And thus, opening the sweetness and affection of His heart in mildness and burning charity, He sent them His Son, that through Him they might be refreshed from the hunger of unbelief and fed on heavenly things that would satisfy their faith and give them the fullness of happiness and beatitude. And so, when the Supreme Father sent those blessed refreshments in abundance of spiritual joy, through the humanity of the Son of God Man received that bread with whose sweetness the angels of Heaven who contemplate God can never be sated. And therefore let the faithful faithfully listen:

O you faithful people, who are the fruits of the Church! Listen and understand your souls' remedy, by which you are not children of the Devil but heirs of the celestial Kingdom; and consider how I, the mild and benign Father, have surrounded you with the manifold happiness of your salvation. Pay heed therefore to the goodness of your Father, by Whom the thing that will save you has been arranged, for though you are vile ashes the Humanity of My Son still implores for your salvation. How? My Son was born of the incorrupt Virgin, who knew nothing of any pain, but remained in the fresh purity of her integrity, like grass that flourishes in verdant glory when the dew falls on it from Heaven.

26 Why bread is offered in the sacrament of the altar

And because it was from the pure Virgin that My Son took on flesh without sin, it is fitting that His flesh should now be made from that fruit which is without the sap of bitterness. How? The grain of wheat is the strongest and best of all the fruits there are; it has in its stalk no sap or pith like other trees, but its stem rises to a spike that leads to the fruit, and it never produces bitter juice either in heat or in cold, but yields dry flour. So too the flesh of My Son was dry, with no filth of the human pollution that produces the human race through the lustful embraces of a man and a woman. Not so was My Only-Begotten born, for He came forth in verdant integrity as the stalk brings forth the clustered grains of wheat. For as a stalk of wheat, flourishing without pith, produces dry grain at the end of its pure spike, so too the Blessed Virgin, conceiving without male power, brought forth her most holy Son in simple innocence. He drew from His mother no sap of sin,

because she conceived Him without the pith of a man; as the stalk gives no sap to the grain, because it flourishes not by the pith of a tree but by the sun and rain and gentle breeze. So the pure Virgin brought forth her Only-Begotten in sweet chastity, not because of a man but because she was overshadowed by the power of the Most High and imbued by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

Therefore, though the Virgin herself originated in the will of a man and a woman, she did not thus bring forth her Son, but without the will of a man bore in her wholeness Him Who came from Heaven, true God and purest Man. As she bore Him in her virginity to be pure and stainless, now the bread that is truly consecrated as His flesh and is pure in its integrity should be received by the faithful in purity of heart and without any element of contradiction. This I predicted to the children of Israel, as by My will it is written:

27 Words of Moses

"Remember this day in which you came forth out of Egypt, and out of the house of bondage; with a strong hand has the Lord brought you forth out of this place, so look that you eat no leavened bread" [Exodus 13:3]. What does this mean?

You who wish to be imitators of My Son, turn your eyes from death to life and keep in mind the salvation of that Day which is My Son, Who trampled death and gave life, so that you went forth from the wretched exile of perdition; you threw off the thick darkness of infidelity and tore yourselves away from the house of the Devil, to whom Adam's transgression had given you. Turn your eyes from earthly to heavenly actions, for by divine power I the Lord have led you out of evil; I Who rule over all with such strength that no obstacle can stand against My might, but I sharply penetrate all things. So through My Son I have snatched you from the place where you shamefully lay in your wickedness, serving death by your infidelity instead of doing good works.

And now that you are freed in My Only-Begotten from that oppression, go from strength to strength and take care not to admit into your consciences the infidelity, which does not strengthen but bitterly weighs down your heart. What does this mean? Do not follow the arts of the Devil or the other fictions people devise for themselves, corrupted by philosophers, pagans and heretics; but imitate My Son as a mirror of faith, Who delivered you from the prison of Hell when He gave Himself for you to the suffering of the cross. And, that you may more carefully follow in His steps, strengthen your hearts with the celestial bread, and so with faithful devotion receive His

body. For he came from Heaven and was born of the sweet and pure Virgin, and, by suffering for you on the cross, gave you His very self; so that now you may receive the sweet and pure bread, which is His body, consecrated on the altar by divine invocation, without any bitterness but with sincere affection, and thus escape from humanity's inner hunger and attain to the banquet of eternal beatitude.

28 Why wine is offered in the sacrifice of the altar

And in the wine that comes from the vine I also will show wonders, making it by the same invocation the sacrament of His blood. What does this mean?

The blood of My Son flowed from His side as the grape drips from the vine. And as the grape is trodden by feet and is crushed in the winepress, and sweet strong wine flows out to strengthen human blood, so too when My Only-Begotten in the sweat of His agony was bruised by blows and scourges, and pressed to the wood of the cross, noble and precious blood issued from His wounds and sprinkled the believing peoples with life-giving freedom. And the grape is unlike other fruits, which can be eaten out of hard shells, while people usually suck grapes rather than eat them; so too My Son was different from all other people in the matter of sin. For they are weighed down by wickedness and subjected to passions, while My Only-Begotten, miraculously born of the chaste Virgin, lacked all contamination of sin. Therefore, and because the grape is so delicate in texture, I will that wine should be consecrated as the blood of My Son.

For as wine flows out of the vine, so My Son went forth from My heart; and My Only-Begotten too was the true Vine, and many branches went forth from Him, for in Him the faithful have been planted who through His Incarnation are fruitful in good works. And as that liquor comes out of the sweetest and strongest fruit of the vine, all merciful and true justice appears out of the Incarnation of My Son, and all who faithfully seek Him find these virtues in Him. How? Those who faithfully cleave to Him are made by Him green and fruitful, so that they bring forth noble fruits of virtue; as He too, being sweet and mild, brought forth precious offshoots in holiness and justice and cleansed those who believed in Him from every stain of infidelity, as is written of Him in the Song of Songs:

29 Words of the Song of Songs

"A cluster of grapes of Cyprus is my beloved to me in the vineyards of Engedi" [Song of Songs 1:13]. What does this mean?

BOOK TWO

The Son of God, Who saved me the exile by His Passion, also mercifully gave me in His Resurrection the cup of life. How? As a cluster of grapes of Cyprus has in itself a strong fullness of drink, so too the excellence that is in God's Only-Begotten has in itself an unfailing magnitude, so that the Son of God will never be exhausted, but will always give the drink of life to those who thirst. For He is the Savior of Life. And we, who formerly fell short, now are strengthened by the manifestation and the knowledge of the true holiness of good works; and through Him we eat the food of life and go on through knowledge of God to life. In the Old Testament we endured great hunger and were unable to rise to salvation, for it was shadowed and did not show the full explanation but displayed many different meanings. But now we are satisfied, for we drink in Him the saving cup, tasting Who God is in true faith; Whom we cannot see with the outer and carnal vision, but Whom we have within by spiritual understanding, as strong wine shows its power in people's veins, though the people do not feel it but only know that it is within them.

And so the Bridegroom of souls is the cluster of grapes of Cyprus, Whose fruit will not fail. How? A blind man who has come in through the door asks for his sight. How? The person who did not have the vision of faith attains to faith and enters by the squeezing of the winepress into the dew of the blood of Christ. How? Just as we have life in our souls through His commands, so too we receive cleansing in our bodies through His gift; for we were born in Adam's transgression and are unclean, but in Christ's blood we are sanctified. Hence the betrothed soul says of Him in the Holy Spirit, "My Beloved, Who is sweet and lovable to my heart, is to me like strong wine in the full sanctification of His blood. For though I am unclean in that I am planted in flesh, as a vineyard lies in thorns when it is as yet uncultivated, He, the Fountain of Salvation, mercifully washes sinners clean of their stains and gloriously sanctifies them in His secret mysteries. As He came sweetly forth from the heart of His Father, He now sweetly displays His blood as wine; and as He was miraculously born of the Virgin, so His body is miraculously manifested in bread, for He is the cluster of grapes that will never suffer defect or loss."

And by the will of the Father He is trodden on the altar as if in the winepress, so that Man, who cannot subsist by himself, may not fall in his frailty and weakness. For as human blood is replenished by drinking, humanity is sanctified by the blood of the Son of God. And as people must refresh themselves by drinking lest their blood without watering dry up, so wine must not be lacking for consecration as the blood of the Son of God, but in the sacrament of that mystery will always be upon the altar.

30 Why water must be present with the wine in the sacrament

But note clearly also, O human, that in this consecration water must be mixed with the wine, because blood and water issued from My Son's side; His Divinity is understood by the wine, and His Humanity is seen in the water. And thus, since there is both Divinity and Humanity in Him, there must be water and wine in that consecration; for as the wine symbolizes His Divinity, the water indicates His Humanity, which is pure and clean without the admixture of the blood of a man. For My Only-Begotten, the fountain of living water, when He came into the world for human salvation cleansed people by the regeneration of the Spirit and water from the ancient sin of Adam and transported them to Heaven, as it is written:

31 Words of Wisdom

"I, like a river channel and like an aqueduct, came forth from Paradise" [Ecclesiastes 24:41]. What does this mean? God strengthened Man with the faculty of reason and gave him many mystical gifts; breathing the breath of life into him, by reason he exalted him. But then he was seduced and was falling into death; so I, the Son of God, came to free him, flowing forth in the beauty of the stream of abiding charity and issuing in an outpouring of true and unfailing purity. I came forth from the secret place of celestial delight so that humanity, which was perishing because of its guilt, might be mercifully snatched from perdition. How? By pouring out for its sake in the agony of the Passion the unoffending blood of supreme innocence. How? When Adam transgressed and was expelled from Paradise, because he was guilty his blood was driven to overflow with anguish, and in that anguish was diluted and mixed with watery sweat. And thus water is present in human blood through sweating.

Therefore, O human, as the Only-Begotten of God began to be distressed in His body, when He willed to suffer for the human race, His blood came forth in drops of sweat; and later, when He hung on the cross, water flowed with blood from the wound in His side. And therefore, in the sacrament where the mystery of His Passion is celebrated, water must be present with the wine, because water and blood flowed from the wound in the Son of God's side. But in that sacrifice the wine must be more abundant than the water; for blood surpasses the liquid that dilutes it, just as milk exceeds the watery substance that moistens it. So let those who celebrate this mystery do so in the way that was shown them, as the people exhort who speak by My inspiration in the words of Wisdom, as it is written:

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32 More from the Book of Wisdom

"Come, eat My bread, and drink the wine that I have mixed for you" [Proverbs 9:5]. What does this mean? You who wish to lay aside folly, come out of that ignorance which makes you disdain God, and that defilement which sent you into exile, and return into the pure place that is yours, shown to you in the mirror of faith in the fountain of living water; and with gentle devotion eat My bread, not sown in the field by a man or given growth by the earth, but issuing from God and remaining in Him. For as bread is eaten but earth is trampled, so the Son of God Who is the Living Bread excels the children of humanity; for the Son of God is steadfast in the power of His Divinity, while the children of humanity are unbalanced due to the weakness of their flesh. The Son of God, while physically in the world, did not have in His flesh any weak tendency to sin; for as a fire which bakes bread dries it and leaves no soft moisture in it, so the Only-Begotten of God, conceived by the mighty fire of the Holy Spirit and born of the chaste Virgin, had no contamination of sin in His body. And as bread nourishes people, the Son of God nourishes believers in faith, for He is the strong fruit that shall never fail.

Therefore, O ye faithful who eat this bread, drink also with pure purpose this wine, which is devoid of every uncleanness and which never enters that state of futility in which corruption devours noble innocence and turns it to poison.

33 Adam began with pure blood but his sin turned it to impure filth

When he was created, the first man was pure in this respect: He was not divided within himşelf but was pure in flesh and blood. But after he committed his transgression, he was ruined, and always after that poured out his blood in stinking and unclean adultery. For he had cast away his innocent honor, and therefore his blood lost its red color and was perverted in the act of conception into the liquid of pollution. In that liquid there is no form, until blood is engendered again; that blood takes on a new form, and after its beginning lies dormant, until it comes to its full strength and is secretly quickened to sensation. And then clean flesh and blood appear again, purified from poison, until it is struck by harmful heat, which produces the scum of uncleanness. But the Son of God was pure in respect to all these things: He had clean flesh and blood and was never touched by harmful heat, so that He remained in a holy and honorable state of verdant chastity, never profaned by contamination. But when He was in the agony of the Passion, He poured out water with the blood from His side; for blood is not poured out without water, but their proportions are such that the blood thickens the water rather than the water diluting the blood.

34 Those who take Christ's body and blood are most sweetly vivified

Therefore, you who wish devoutly to worship God because you love salvation, receive this cup of sanctification; I have so tempered it for you with mild forgiveness that you will never feel harsh punishment. For in the supernal Son there is both Divinity and Humanity, and through His Passion you are delivered from death and quickened by His body and blood, so as to have a part in the eternal habitation. But I, Who am the Beginning and the End, again say to you, O human, that My noble Son is the flower of roses and lilies of the valley, born of the chaste Virgin who brought Him forth in wholeness, and that birth was such as to appease Me for the wickedness of the first parents of the human race, who by their transgression provoked Me to wrath.

Therefore, when I see My Son's body and blood daily consecrated on the altar in My name, and you, O human, being sanctified by that sacrament, eating His flesh and drinking His blood, I always contemplate that birth. For when the priest does his office as is appointed him, invoking Me in sacred words, I am there in power, just as I was there when My Only-Begotten, without discord or stain, became incarnate. Thus His body was pure and sweet and all-holy; and they who now faithfully receive His flesh and blood will be so sweetly enlivened that they will never be despised or rejected. As it is written in the Song of Songs:

35 Words of Solomon

"Who shall give you to me for my brother, sucking the breasts of my mother, that I may find you out of doors and kiss you, and no one will despise me?" [Song of Songs 8:1] What does this mean? With groans and devotion and with sure faith the people of the Church say, "Who will be merciful and give me, a miserable human in tribulation, You, the Bridegroom of the Church?—You, Whom I name my brother because of Your Incarnation, and Who sucks the mercy and truth that nourish humanity from the Divinity, which is my mother in my creation, giving me life and growth?" What does this mean? "The nourishments of the Church too are full of Your grace, for You Who are the Living Bread and the fountain of living water make her fully abound in the sacrament of Your body and blood. And this You do that I may surely find You out of doors, knowing that You are the Son of God in Heaven but seeing You as a man on earth, for my mortal eyes cannot perceive You in Divinity; and that I may find You in the bread and wine of the divine mystery, the sacrament without deception or artifice. And thus I may kiss You, for You were incarnate for my salvation, and You now make me a

sharer in Your body and blood; no creature that is subject to You and follows Your precepts can despise me now for being a rebel against Your commands and opposing You, for You came into the world for my sake and have given me Yourself."

36 At the priest's invocation at the altar the sacrament is perfected

Now therefore, O human, as you see, when the sacrifice has been offered at the altar and the priest begins to invoke Me in those words appointed for him by the Holy Spirit, verily I say to you that I am there in My burning heat, and with full will I perfect that sacrament. How? To effect this mystery I extend over this offering My ardent charity at the moment when the priest invokes Me and remembers that My Son blessed bread and wine in the agony of His Passion as the sacrament of His body and blood, giving them to His disciples that they might do the same for the salvation of the people. Truly I say to you that there will never be an invocation over such an offering in remembrance of My Only-Begotten without the mystery of His body and blood being perfected in it; though the carnal eye cannot see it, as long as it is mortal dust, except by the perception of humble and devoted faith. How? As a bird sees that an egg has been laid in its nest; it eagerly flies to cover it and nurtures it with its warmth until the chick emerges; and then the shell remains, and the chick flies away. What does this mean?

When the offering of bread and wine has been laid on the altar and dedicated to My name in memory of My Son, I the Almighty miraculously illumine it with My power and glory and transform it into the body and blood of My Only-Begotten. How? By the same miracle through which My Son took on a body from the Virgin, the consecrated oblation becomes His flesh and blood. How? As when My Son lived in the world with people, He was also with Me in Heaven; and so now, living with Me in Heaven, He also remains with people in earth. But this is a spiritual and not a physical phenomenon.

37 God exercises the power of His will in every creature as He wishes

I the Father am present to every creature and withdraw Myself from none; but you, O human, do withdraw yourself from creatures. For instance, when you look into water, your face appears in it, but your reflection can exercise none of your powers, and when you turn away you no longer appear in the water. But I do not appear to creatures thus changeably; I am present to them in a true manifestation, never withdrawing My power from them but doing in them by the strength of My will whatever I please. And so too I truly

display My majesty in the sacrament of the body and blood of My Son, and wondrously perform My miracles there from the beginning of the priest's secret words until the time when that mystery is received by the people.

38 The Mass may be said from the first to the ninth hour as necessary

And this priestly office may be done for the faithful from the first to the ninth hour of the day, according to the time made necessary by the habits of the people; for Adam arose in the morning and was seduced in the ninth hour, and the Passion of My Son began at daybreak and was completed in the ninth hour, when He expired on the cross and overcame Death by His death. And the Church stood by My Only-Begotten in that place and received her wedding gifts; and these must now be celebrated by the children of the Church.

39 All must communicate fasting except in danger of death

But this office of sacrifice is to be celebrated by the priests with empty stomachs and not in repletion, lest the digestion of the food destroy spiritual desire; spiritual feasting should precede physical refection, thus honoring the spirit and reviving the body. For this sacrament is to be received with spiritual desire, not with carnal greed, and therefore it should be taken fasting and not after a meal except in an emergency, if a person is thought to be about to leave the world. My Son gave His body and blood to His disciples around the end of the day and brought them the morning of true life; and at the end of the world, death will pass away from temporal humanity, and the elect will shine like the sun in My Kingdom.

40 God raised fallen Man and not the Devil because Man was tempted

Thus My Only-Begotten in His Resurrection drew the souls of the just out of Hell and restored the human race to eternal life, which the reprobate angels lost when without temptation by another they chose death; for they were seduced by no other tempter but themselves, since they had in themselves no taste of sin as a human has in his weak body. Therefore, Man, who was physically weak and seduced by a tempter, was restored to life by the Uplifter; but the Devil, who had not been hampered by a body, was left in his perversity. And Man was given true and salutary refreshment in receiving the body and blood of My Son; invisibly revived in soul by this sacrament, he can arise and manfully resist his invisible adversary.

BOOK TWO

41 In this sacrament not quantity but holiness must be considered

But let those who receive this sacrament in greater or lesser quantity understand that the receivers of more and of less have received the same amount of power, for the sacrament consists not in quantity but in holiness. It saves those who receive according to their faith, as is written of the manna:

42 Analogy of the manna

"And the children of Israel did so and gathered, some more and some less. And they measured by the measure of an omer, and the one who gathered more had nothing over, and the one who gathered less did not lack; but each had gathered according to what he could eat" [Exodus 16:17–18]. What does this mean? The children of election, who ardently desire to see God, long for the supernal sacrament as has been commanded them, and as their teachers instruct them they gather it in their hearts. And in their souls they scrutinize it as they have learned to do; but in their secret hearts one person has more devotion and another a lesser resolve, and in their thoughts they measure by the measure of what they feel in their souls. They determine how much faith in God they have, which is not divided but remains whole, and think about the degree and kind of devotion with which they receive the body and blood of their Redeemer. So this sacrament will not be holier for the one who receives more of it, or of lesser effect for one who receives less of it; but it will illumine the recipient according to his faith. Therefore, O human, it need not be taken in great quantity, for our mighty God is present as much in a small offering of this mystery as in a great one; so let those who receive it take care only that they have God, the Three and One, in their hearts with firm and perfect faith. And let each of the faithful collect the powers of his soul with sincere and righteous heart, as his capacity for faith permits, and beware of searching into Divinity more exaltedly or profoundly than his senses or thought can grasp, but do it soberly as the Holy Spirit teaches; let him be subject to the fear of the Lord, since Man is only poor ashes.

43 What is on the altar is the true body and blood of Christ

But do not doubt, O foolish people, that this sacrament which is thus manifested to you is the body and blood of My Son. Remember from what I created the flesh and blood of Adam—from earthly mud. How, then, does it seem to you: Is it easier for Me to make the flesh and blood of My Son from this oblation, or to make Man from the mud of the ground? A man pours forth semen from his blood, and a woman receives it; what else do they add?

VISION SIX

Nothing at all toward the formation or the body of the little baby; and who then forms the person in its flesh and bones and marrow and its beautiful face but I, the Father of all? But the father and mother have no power to make or create the little baby, except to send forth their blood in burning lust; after that they have no role in forming it. Can you see how it is done, when you cannot perceive the methods?

But you say, O human, "I do not see that this oblation is flesh and blood the way I see that a person is body and blood." To which I answer: You saw My Son in His body and blood when He was mortal on earth, as He is now immortal in Heaven; so you cannot see Him now with bodily eyes. Nor can you see how His flesh and blood are consecrated on the altar in a sacrament that exists for the glory not of a priest but of My Only-Begotten, Who did the office in the Supper with His disciples. As long as you are mortals, you cannot see Me in My glory; and so also with your physical eyes you cannot physically see the flesh and blood of My Son, because you cannot perceive that which is invisible, but with your mortal gaze can take in only that which is visible.

44 In the sacrament three things must be offered in honor of the Trinity

This sacrament must be offered to Me in three forms. What? Bread, wine and water, for the honor of the Trinity. If any of these three is lacking, the Trinity is not truly worshipped, for the Father is understood by the wine, the Son by the bread, and the Holy Spirit by the water. Thus one who offers wine without bread or water worships the Father but denies the Son and Holy Spirit; one who gives bread without wine or water holds the Son but casts away the Father and Holy Spirit; and one who uses water without wine or bread heeds the Holy Spirit but refuses the Father and the Son. One who gives wine and bread without water holds the Father and the Son but casts away the Holy Spirit; one who offers wine and water without bread worships the Father and the Holy Spirit but denies the Son; and one who uses bread and water without wine heeds the Son and the Holy Spirit but denies the Father. Therefore, let no division take place in this sacrament, as I, remaining undivided in Three Persons, am One Indivisible God; in the same way that thought, will and deed are in one human being, and without them that person is not.

45 A priest who neglects, refuses or forgets to offer these must be punished

But if there is a defect in the sacrifice, so that either bread or wine or water is left out of it, truly the one by whose neglect it happened will be

liable to grave punishment. If it is done knowingly in negligent apathy, or faithlessly because of doubting unbelief, I will cast the guilty one out of My sight unless he comes to himself and punishes himself with severe penitence. And if it happens unknowingly through forgetful neglect, the guilty one will be answerable to Me for his fault and subject to penance, because he was not acute enough in ensuring that everything pertaining to My sacrifice was there. For when My Son hung upon the cross, nothing that pertained to salvation was lacking there, since He brought salvation to humanity by the outpouring of His blood; and so nothing must be absent in the celebration of His mystery. For this sacrament is the all-holiest sanctification, and so this flesh and this blood must be received with all faith and devotion.

46 How the body and blood of Christ should be distributed to the people

But let not anyone who receives this sacred flesh refuse to take the blood of the mystery too; for My Son is pure above all things and a mirror of virtue, and so His noble blood must be received. An exception is made if the recipient is weak in mind, and the priest fears the danger of spilling; in that case the recipient is given the treatment accorded to the simplicity of children, to whom bread is given and wine is denied. So let the sacrosanct flesh be granted to such a person, but the flowing blood be withheld, lest a greater danger arise from giving it; for the holy flesh is united with the blood and the blood with the flesh in one sanctity. But if the person has enough discernment to keep the mystery safe, when the sacred flesh is given him to eat let him also be given the blood of that flesh to drink.

47 The priest must use the vestments and words instituted by the Fathers

Let the priest who celebrates this sacrament take care to be clothed in those vestments that the early Fathers, instructed by the Holy Spirit, appointed to be worn at this office; and let him take great care to speak those words which the Holy Spirit gave those Fathers for the celebration of the mystery, and not omit anything from them, or go beyond the example of My Son when He took bread and the chalice and gave them to His disciples to eat and drink. One who unknowingly does something wrong in forgetful neglect as to vestments or words pertaining to this office must be corrected by a severe and salutary penance; but if he seeks My mercy he shall find it, for he did not perpetrate the transgression voluntarily in malice of heart. But if one

transgresses knowingly in these sacramental rites, either from mental apathy or from wickedness of heart, I will be offended, and say to him:

48 Words of the Lord to the negligent priest

"You wicked servant, why were you not rightly clothed in the priestly vestment, when your great early teachers instituted it for you in the Holy Spirit, and your spiritual office has the same meaning as the ministry of My angels to Me? And why have you ignored the form of words your fathers bequeathed to you in the Holy Spirit for the consecration of the body and blood of My Son and the salvation and glory of the human race?" And thus he who is guilty of such a charge must answer for it to Me, unless he punishes himself by inflicting on himself a severe penance.

49 The priest who offers the sacrament must take it himself

And let not a priest who offers this feast at My altar withdraw from it fasting himself, but let him receive his soul's refreshment in the body and blood of My Son. If he knows himself to be weighed down by grave burdens and unworthy of the feast, let him not presume to approach My table or touch My Son unwashed from the filth of his sins; as those people contaminated the table and the glory of the king's birthday who cruelly cut off the head of the shining light [John the Baptist]. Let the contaminated man therefore show the nature of his sickness to the High Priest, My Son, and accuse himself before another priest who is mortal; the latter will give him the remedy of comfort and penance, and so, purified at last, he may return to his office.

50 The priest at the altar must use the words instituted

But I, the Father of all, will that the secret order of sacred words by which the priest invokes Me at the altar must not be inflated and long, but as the ancient teachers rightly ordained it who taught how to address Me by the Holy Spirit. It should not be multiplied by foolish wisdom, but kept in simplicity of heart, for I delight not in long speech but in the purity of heart of those who seek Me devoutly and embrace Me willingly in burning charity. Everywhere else I give My grace to My elect by the exchange of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, but here in this sacrament I show Myself wholly: My Son in Me, and I in Him, and the Holy Spirit in Us, and We in Him, One in Divinity, as the body and soul and powers of anyone make up one living

person. Therefore, let anyone who approaches this sacrament take care not to come in such a state as to offend the glory of Divinity.

51 On the five states of those who communicate

But you, O human, as other people approach the priest to receive the sacrament, notice five modes of being in them. For those who wish to receive the divine mystery from their priest should cleanse the five senses of their body from the dregs of their sins and worthily and laudably keep themselves from furtive uncleanness, that they may healthfully receive the sacrament.

52 Those who are bright of body and fiery of soul

Therefore, of those you see approaching this sacrament, *some are bright of body and fiery of soul.* For these are clear in faith about the sacrament and do not doubt that it is the true body and the true blood of My Son. And so, perceiving this by faith, they are strengthened and made holy in body, and because they are sanctified by this mystery they will appear in this same body in Heaven after the resurrection of the dead; and their souls are transformed and enkindled by the fiery gift of the Holy Spirit, so that, flooded with enlightenment, they reject earthly things and long for heavenly ones. How? As a fire is stirred to a blaze by the wind, they are inspired by this sacrament to burn with celestial love.

53 Those who are pale of body and shadowed in soul

But others seem pale of body and shadowed of soul. For these are weak in faith and do not firmly believe in this sacrament, but find it as hard to understand wisdom as a child whose deeds are done in foolishness. They hear outwardly with the hearing of the ear and perceive with sluggish hearts what is said to them about the sacrament, and would gladly embrace it in perfect faith; but because of the doubt that is in them they cannot understand the great holiness it has. Therefore too their inner being is plunged in darkness, for they cannot lift their minds to that perfection; conceived in sin, they are too borne down by the weight of bodily weakness to be perfect in belief, though their spirit may consent to it, and they would gladly have understanding of faith if their apathy of heart would let them.

And indeed those who are not yet weighed down in their deeds by grave burdens of sin should consent to the Spirit, even as it were unwillingly; for the soul is not yet destroyed by sin in such a case, and still has power to subject the body to its will. For the body and the soul fight with each other; the soul seeks to dominate the body, since the desire for sin in the flesh goes

against its wishes, and the body disdains the righteousness that is the desire of the life-loving soul. What does this mean? What is dead longs for what is dead, and what is living desires what is living. How? The flesh loves sin, and the soul loves justice, and so they oppose each other and rarely agree. But as a child is fed and satisfied without working or understanding, so these people are revived by the sacrament almost in ignorance; for they do not madly or wickedly scorn it, but only embrace it with simple minds.

54 Those who seem hairy in body and dirty in soul

Some are hairy of body and seem dirty in soul, because they are pervaded with unclean human pollution; for they are evil and unchaste in flesh, shamelessly polluting themselves with the ordure of vice, and contaminating their souls with the stains of filthy human sin as a swine rolls its body in the mud. And because they do not fear to approach the sacrament of the body and blood of My Son unwashed after staining themselves with these vices, they must be cleansed from their presumption by a severe scrutiny. But when they are thus purged, I do not deny them My mercy, because I see worthy penitence arising in their minds.

55 Those surrounded in body by sharp thorns and leprous of soul

But others are surrounded in body by sharp thorns and leprous of soul. For these are surrounded in their hearts by anger, hate and envy, and by these thorns of iniquity they drive out of themselves gentleness, sweetness and charity; and, desiring evil and abandoning good, and troubling other people with mockery and invective, they make their souls as impure as if covered with terrible sores. And those who approach the divine mystery in such a state gravely injure themselves; but nevertheless, if they then bitterly punish themselves and seek My grace by repentance, I turn My eyes toward them.

56 Those bloody in body and foul as a decayed corpse in soul

And others appear bloody of body and foul as a decayed corpse in soul. For they make divisions among people with bloody hand and render their souls foul with the putrefying corruption of cruel wickedness; they have no thought of fearing Me, but in their cruelty reject the part I placed in Man. And if they do not fear to receive the body and blood of My Son while defiled by this contamination, they destroy themselves with severe wounds, for they presume to touch the sacrament in their uncleanness. But the fountain of salvation will still flow for them if they take care to wash themselves from this wickedness of theirs by worthy penitence.

57 Those who take the sacrament with pure faith and with wavering mind

And all these receive the same sacraments; and as they do, some are bathed in fiery brilliance, but the others are overshadowed by a dark cloud. For as believers approach to take the mystery of My Son's body and blood, those who are radiant with good deeds and receive it with devout mind and pure faith are illumined by the gift of the Holy Spirit for the salvation of body and soul; while those who eat it wallowing in bad deeds with contrary hearts and wavering minds bring on themselves the darkness of misfortune to their outer and inner detriment, because they have rashly presumed to unite themselves to sanctity while impure. For one who is so rebellious and stubborn that he does not fear to pollute himself, either by fornicating with himself by touching and pleasuring his own body, or by doubly fornicating in producing seed with a man or a woman, or by tearing himself with anger, hatred or envy of other people, or by staining himself with the blood of others in acts of murder, and who then presumes to approach the body and blood of My Son unpurified and uncorrected, without being purged by confession or rectified by penance, that one by his misdeed knowingly and consciously enters the fire of judgment. How? He will be tried as to his presumption and his sin like gold in a furnace, and no dust of that presumption will be left in him by which he approached the communion of the innocent Lamb polluted and uncorrected. For, as was said, whoever shall approach the holiness of My Son's body and blood unwashed and thus receive the sacrament will receive it to his own condemnation. How? As My most loving Paul says:

58 Words of the Apostle

"Therefore whoever shall eat this bread or drink this chalice of the Lord unworthily shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. Let a person test himself, and then let him eat of that bread and drink of that chalice. For he who eats and drinks unworthily eats and drinks judgment on himself, not discerning the body of the Lord. Therefore are there many infirm and weak among you, and many sleep" [1 Corinthians 11:27–30]. What does this mean?

Truly I say to you, anyone who, being unworthy and foul with sin, eats the bread of life or receives the cup of salvation, which is the sacrament of Him Who is the Lord of Heaven and earth, shall feel himself at fault for it. How? Because he receives the body and blood of the Lord, the Savior of the world, snarling and dying; inclined to evil and polluted with uncleanness, he

forgets the fear of the Lord and approaches the palace of healing redemption in a state of contamination. And so he commits murder there. How? By treating the sacrament presumptuously, concealing his crimes without cleansing or washing them by penance; and so with many wounds he tears himself to pieces.

Therefore I say to him: "O most miserable and most bitter one! How did you dare to cast your Lord, Whom the citizens of Heaven always long to see, into such a lake of misery? You will be tried in body and soul by bitter penance; and if you do not correct your guilt, you will still be found wanting after the resurrection of the dead." And so let anyone who wants to purge himself examine himself faithfully, and in that devout self-knowledge partake of the bread of sanctity and taste of the cup of sweetness, and so escape from the hunger of his soul's weakness and attain to the unfailing nourishment. For one who mistreats this sacrament and receives it unworthily, without purging himself from the filth of iniquity, passes on himself a sentence of vengeance for eating and drinking it unpurged; he cannot injure or obscure the mystery by his presumption, but he condemns himself. And when you presume to approach the sacrament when foul with vice, there are many infirm in your company, those who choose not to seek medicine for their souls in that holiness but impose on themselves bitter infirmity, receiving those sacraments to judgment; as well as other weak people, who are so infirm in God's law that they refuse to know Who He is Whom they are so unworthily receiving. What does this mean? They do not want to think how they should fear and worship their Lord, or how they should punish with bitter penance their flesh, which they have nourished on vice. And since they are so negligent, many of them fall asleep in forgetful neglect, not knowing or wishing to know how they should be lamenting their sins, as a sleeping person does not know or understand the state of his body.

Therefore, O human, if you receive the body and blood of My Son unwashed, not self-purified by confession or penance, in the terrible day of inquiry you will be tried for your presumption about your filthy sins, as new wine when it ferments throws off and is purged of the impurities in it.

59 The sacrament must be treated carefully by priest and people

This sacrament must be treated and guarded with great care and solicitude both by the priest and by the people, so that it does not fall to the ground by accident. For if due to apathetic neglect it falls to the ground, I in My wrath will avenge that arrogance either on the ground or on the person, unless that person punishes himself by penance and bitter blows; for flesh and blood must make restitution to flesh and blood. How? Human flesh and

blood shall groan in that person because the flesh and blood of My Son have been carelessly treated by that person, as the earth quaked and people were shaken by fear when My Son gave up His spirit on the cross.

60 The mystical secrets of the Lord's body and blood must not be looked into

But if you, O human, say to yourself in your vacillating heart, "How did the oblation on the altar become the body and blood of God's Son?" I will answer you: Why, O human, do you ask this, and for what purpose do you inquire about it? Do I require you to know it? Why do you peer into My secrets about the body and blood of My Son? You should not seek out these things, but only keep them diligently and accept them in fear and veneration. Do not pause at this mystery any longer, for you must not tempt Me so rashly. What are these things to you? Only seek after Me by sure faith. For when I look into all your faith, I do not ask you to know what is the nature of the body and blood of My Son, or how this mystery is consecrated on the altar. And who asks you, O human, to stand in fire and not feel its burning? No one. So do not rashly peer into My secrets, lest you be wounded thereby. But if in your devout mind you wish to seek them, do so in diligent prayer and weeping and fasting, as your early Fathers certainly sought and often found them. And when you have thus sought and found, you will give what is left to the Holy Spirit.

But let those who approach those sacraments come not by devious paths but by the right way, lest they be cast out from them and suffer ruin in soul. How?

61 Churchmen who go in by wrong ways imitate the Devil, Baal and crucifiers

The evil deceiver who wrongly usurps the chair of the episcopal office without being elected or properly anointed, and the wicked robber who expels his pastor by the whispers of his henchmen and violently invades his throne, will either undergo grave expiation by their own will or incur serious condemnation by My wrath. For they are in the worst possible state of bitterness, imitating the one who wanted the highest honor for himself and was cast out of glorious happiness into death, and following Baal, who so deluded himself that he wrongly named himself a god and was given over to destruction. And if in their lying and presumptuous wickedness they pretend to confer My holy orders, those who receive from them ordure rather than orders are accounted in My sight no more than those who are jestingly appointed by children in their games to be laughed at by people. As this kind

of thing is nonsense among people, so what these intruders pretend to do in their deceit is mockery to Me.

Thus their edifice is wicked and cannot stand, for it is a void. And if they appeared to set up anything in My temple in holy orders, it must be abolished, for it has no righteousness and is thus worthless. Let them, therefore, turn back from their temerity, lest they share the punishment of him who sought more than he should have and was thrown from the summit into the abyss. And the butcher who insanely approaches My altar without the anointing of the priestly office, as if I were as great an impostor as he is a jester, and rashly touches the table consecrated to My name to offer the sacred oblation without having the qualifications, does not fear to wound My Son with dire torment. How? As the unbeliever assails God with his incredulity, and the madman in his insanity runs into burning fire, so this one, not knowing that I am God or feeling My burning fire, casts off his fear of Me and does not love My mercy; but, with unanointed lips, he dismembers those words My Only-Begotten gave His bride when He dowered her with His body and blood, and thus wounds My Son. And it will be said to this rash attacker: "Who touches My Son, so arrogant and unanointed?"

But he who thus approaches My altar and presumes to invoke My Son with the secret words tries to wound Him not because he can put him to any pain, but because he fearlessly and presumptuously touches Him. If he persists without penitence in this contempt, he will stand in the place of punishment among those who causelessly wounded My Son. Lest he feel these torments, then, let him adopt as his own the lamentation of affliction and never again presume to approach the ministry of My altar. And let those who hold some church office that involves serving under a priest never presume to usurp his ministry unjustly, for if they wrongfully claim that righteousness for themselves, they may justly be judged unformed and rough and rejected for the construction of the edifice of the Church. For I will that My ministers shall be pure in My sight, without deceit and without stain. How? They should be duly chosen to approach My altar, and once there they should serve Me without impurity. How?

62 Priests should observe chastity like the apostles

Let them not look to an earthly marriage, for they have chosen a spiritual one. How? By entering upon My service. And if any of them suffers from the burning lust of the flesh, let him subdue his body with abstinence and fasting and chastise himself with cold and scourging. And if after all he defiles himself with a woman, let him fly from that contamination as from a burning fire or a deadly poison and cleanse his wounds with bitter penance; for I wish to be served in chastity. How? Because My Son was the height of

chastity, and He represented in Himself all ecclesiastical ranks. How? Those that serve, proclaim, preach and offer. How? He touched service in His circumcision, proclaimed by His prophecies, preached Himself to humanity, and at last offered Himself as a living sacrifice on the altar of the cross. And He gave Himself as a burnt-offering in chastity; so let those who seek to offer a burnt-offering to Him on the altar imitate His chastity.

They must not only guard chastity in others but preserve it in themselves. How? As a priest should keep himself from contamination with a woman, let him also keep himself from himself; let him take care not to arouse defilement in himself by the touch of his hands, so that the clamor of lust may not make a sinful tumult within him. For the crime of Adam, which brought death to Man, aroused his senses to fornication; so let people restrain their flesh so as not to undergo a shameful death. How? My Son conquered death and gave them life; and since He assumed flesh in the integrity of virginal chastity, those who desire to serve Him ought also to be chaste, as is written in the divine command:

63 Words of Moses on this subject

"Be ready against the third day, and come not near your wives" [Exodus 19:15]. What does this mean? You who wish to serve God alone, be prepared with willing hearts for the day of His serenity, when the holy and ineffable Trinity will truly appear and show Its wonders in a great miracle. And if you wish to be worthy to draw near to Him, take care not to join in carnal unions of physical love, so as not to mingle your blood with blood that is deemed weaker. You, O My priests and other ministers, who fight under a spiritual name, beware of this, for the apostles to whom you have succeeded did not divide themselves between opposites or leave you such an example.

64 A priest should not have two marriages

For I do not want priests to have two unions, one of spiritual and one of carnal desire; the priest should be married to the justice of God, and treat it as his wife, with which to nourish and teach the rest of the people as a father brings up and teaches his children. How is it appropriate for a priest to maintain in the right proportions two different and opposing marriages? How? One carnal and the other spiritual.

65 How the Devil may be the priest of bad priests

The priest is the pastor and father of the people who have physical marriages; so if he has one to the same extent, who will be his priest? No

other priest could be his superior, since all priests are ministers of a single office, except the Devil, who is appropriate as his priest because he has imitated the Devil in hiding poison under honey. How? As the Devil hides evil under good, so do such priests, who love their own dishonor better than chastity, try to hide a carnal union under a spiritual marriage, like poison under honey. But, since My Son is wholly chaste, those who touch His body and blood on the altar should also love chastity, as it is written:

66 Words of the Law on this subject

"A priest shall not take to wife a harlot or a base prostitute or a woman repudiated by her husband; for he is sacred to his God and offers the bread of God" [Leviticus 21:7–8]. What does this mean? Let one who is appointed to offer sacrifice to God not love the Devil, the common author of all filth and wickedness, or degrade his senses in such a way that when he tries to bear My yoke he will instead have to follow the will of his flesh, contrary to the justice of God and the examples of the ancient saints; lest he come by bad deeds to the impurity that was spurned by those ancient fathers, who knew it to proceed from the breath of the ancient serpent. Let him therefore leave this filth and become a lover of the righteousness of God; for he is sacred to God in holiness, and thus removed from carnal desire and the deeds that bring children into the world. And so, sober and unpolluted, he may offer that bread which is placed on the table of consecration for human salvation. What does this mean? That sacrifice, which is the life of the living and the refreshment of souls and the mirror of all the virtues, which shine in holy innocence through chastity, is free from every stain; and therefore those who offer the sacrifice should be free of filthy pollution and hold themselves back from feasts and drunkenness, jesting and laughing, and light and undisciplined behavior. Let them be held in the reverence that becomes successors of the ancient fathers who set them up and in the dignity proper to their honorable patrons. So let them not live doubly in two roles, and walk at the same time in the secular and the spiritual way; for it is hard to serve two masters at once, as My Son testifies in the Gospel, saying:

67 Words of the Gospel on this subject

"No one can serve two masters" [Matthew 6:24]. What does this mean? No one who is clothed in mortal flesh can offer two masters similar and equal service, because of the weakness of his senses and his body. What does this mean? He cannot serve at once the Lord of Righteousness and the lord of injustice. Why? Because righteousness casts out injustice, and injustice as-

sails righteousness. And so too a priest cannot at once and with equal devotion have the handmaid and the mistress, carnal marriage and spiritual companionship, for these two cannot exist side by side in perfection; for the carnal assails the spiritual, and the spiritual bears down the carnal. Thus My friend Paul, knowing this to be so, shows My will when he says:

68 Words of the Apostle on this subject

"A bishop therefore should be blameless, the husband of one wife" [1 Timothy 3:2]. What does this mean? One who is superior to others in a spiritual office must regulate his life so that no scandal of offense or reproach will be found in it. How? A priest should not have two roles and be at the same time the husband of a physical wife and of a spiritual spouse; but he should be the husband of one wife, namely the holy Church, which is one in My Son because she arose as one Church in Him. But though the Church is one, she has many husbands, entering into marriage with the priests of My Son who are daily in His service; yet she remains an intact virgin, for in her the faith is uncorrupted. And therefore Paul, My vessel, did not say she was the wife of one husband; for she is joined in marriage to all those priests who will arise in My Only-Begotten till the last day, when the immortal and unfailing nuptials will take place. And those who minister to the altar under the priests are also husbands of the same wife, as Paul said, offering My faithful doctrine to humanity:

69 Again Paul on this subject

"Let deacons be the husbands of one wife, who rule well their children and their houses" [1 Timothy 3:12]. What does this mean? Let those who render service to the priests and assist them be the husbands of one wife by faithful marriage. And who is this wife? The chaste Bride who can be injured by no corruption, as a woman is corrupted when she loses the flower and innocence of virginity, which she had at the beginning of her marriage when not yet corrupted by her husband. So let these bridegrooms live so faithfully with this righteous wife as to offer good examples of virtue to those regenerated by their help in the Spirit and water; let them live to labor in their office, which lies within the rampart of the Church, with faithful care, as a secular man devotes his care to maintaining his children and his house.

For My friend Paul displays that Bride to the priests and the other ministers of My altar so that they will choose her as their wife and not seek a carnal spouse. For neither Paul nor My Son's other disciples nor the rest of the Fathers who were their followers ever served as an example to them that they should take a carnal spouse and desert the spiritual wife, who had been

their first choice. For a priest who is so stubborn in sin that he does the will of his flesh and illicitly takes a wife commits adultery; for he deserts his true wife, the Church, who was betrothed to him by his spiritual office, and as his will pleases unchastely marries another. It may be difficult for him to restrain his ardor, but let him restrain himself from these desires for the sake of heavenly love, as My Son shows in the Gospel, saying:

70 The three kinds of eunuchs

"There are eunuchs who were born so from their mothers' wombs; and there are eunuchs who were made so by other people; and there are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the Kingdom of Heaven's sake. He that can receive this, let him receive it" [Matthew 19:12]. What does this mean? There are some men who have come forth from their mothers' wombs with a bodily coldness or impotence, which makes them unable to have wives; and so they will receive no reward for this continence, except in suffering no penalties for the deeds of sin they did not do. And there are some men who are maimed in body by the will of others, and so cannot give pleasure to their flesh in the deeds of marriage; but they also do not deserve praise for containing themselves, for although they cannot do the burning deed they often burn with wickedness in their wills. And there are other men, those who take the spiritual way, who deprive themselves of what their bodies might easily accomplish, because they scorn and reject carnal bonds for the glory of the celestial inheritance; and these shall have the greatest praise and the blessed reward.

And My priests and all who do service to My altar should imitate these last with all their hearts, that they may receive the crown of continence amid the rapture of celestial joy. So if a person can follow this example in his heart, desiring beatitude enough to conquer the body and cast out carnal desire, let him with ardent devotion repress his flesh and abandon the idea of carnal union; and so he will capture heavenly companionship.

71 He who cannot contain himself must not become a priest or minister

But he who cannot contain himself, and burns with carnal desire, should not become a priest or any other kind of minister for the sake of pride or avarice, lest he then fall into carnal delights and so sustain great damage. For those who approach My altar as ministers shall keep their bodies from contamination with women, and never for any reason enter into marriage, but voluntarily keep themselves chaste in My righteous service. If they are otherwise, they should avoid the holy service of My altar.

72 Why the primitive Church let married men become priests but does not now

It is true that certain people who had previously subjected themselves to the world were at one time allowed to minister. But these were people who had received the carnal yoke before and not after entering My service; and afterward they cast off this yoke, and then the Holy Spirit by His miracles brought about in them praise and celebration. This was granted as an unusual measure at the beginning of the Church's rise, because there were so few priests; but now the Church is adult and strong, and her ministers are many. This is like Church opinion on another prohibition of the same sort: At the beginning of the world it was granted to men to marry women most closely related to them, because there were so few people, whereas now that people are so multiplied it is forbidden. For the shapeless and rough stones are customarily laid in the foundation of a building, and afterward the beautiful and well-formed stones are chosen for the walls. And so in the Church's infancy the priests who were available were installed in office, but now the whole complement can be obtained among the spiritual people who are fitted for the priesthood, not being occupied with the secular burden of earthly bonds. For it is not fitting that the father of a family, following the rules for earthly marriage, should be called as My messenger in the priesthood. Therefore hear this comparison:

73 Analogy of the king

A certain very powerful king gathered a small army and carefully observed its performance. Seeing that it was untrained in an army's business, he chose out of it some men of the common people whom he perceived as suitable for leadership, and set them over the army, for the offspring of the nobles had not yet matured. But later, when the army was larger and there were adult noblemen in it, the king set that army in order and promoted dukes and counts from the nobler classes to command it, as justice required. What does this mean?

The King of Heaven, Whose power is over all, started the Church by gathering a little army of believers. Scrutinizing it most closely, He saw that it was as yet infirm and weak with regard to suffering in body for His name; so He set Peter over it to bind and loose, who had been one of those who had lived an earthly life. And after Peter, He cleansed others who had imbibed the taste of the earthly and been stained by temporal things, and set them up in the office of judgment and mercy; for He knew that, having embraced the Catholic faith, they were wise and faithful both in caring for souls and in sustaining bodies. For the glowing dawn that burns up human contagions in

the fire of love for chastity had not yet diffused its flowers of sweetness widely among people. But now the churchly race has been multiplied and widely disseminated through the whole length of the world, and the glory of the Church's honor has been nobly strengthened; and so the supernal King has benignly and fittingly bestowed both secular and spiritual gifts on people, and chosen those who most honorably preserved their sobriety and chastity by Church law and God's justice to be priests and other ministers of the divine offices.

Wherefore, O human, many spiritual people have now arisen who want to fight the world and the Devil, and who hasten to approach My altar in chastity and bodily restraint; and so I will that My priests should appear in My sight uncontaminated by earthly marriage. For in the Old Testament priests were commanded to keep themselves from contamination with women when they approached My altar; and in the New Testament that command was brought to full perfection for My priests, so that whereas the ancient priests observed chastity for an hour, these new ones will fulfil it from the beginning of their boyhood to the end of their old age. And as I refused to receive the sacrifice from the ancients when polluted by connection with women, much more do I want My Son to be handled by the new priests only in a state of chastity.

74 Immature and unconsecrated men must not receive churches

Let no one who is immature and unconsecrated receive a church; and let him not presume to seek several churches. For if one who is young in years and without priestly consecration dares to take a church or, having one, tries to subjugate several, he is a transgressor against justice and a destroyer of strict judgment; he is like one who dares to commit fornication before the lawful time and without lawful marriage, or who has a legitimate wife but hastens to defile himself in adultery with other women.

75 Priests should be elected by Christian people from the good and healthy

Priests of wise thoughts and manly minds are to be chosen from every people that calls itself Christian, such that they will come to My service in right order with proper anointing and willing mind. Those who are crippled in any of their members should not approach the office of My altar, for in the Kingdom of Heaven there will be no trace of disabilities in human souls; and therefore I do not want anyone defective in limb to stand at My altar. But these will not be separated from the Kingdom of Heaven because they are weak in body and defective in members, as long as their souls are healthy and

they seek Me in the purity of good works. I do not wish, however, that they should take part in the ministry of My altar, but that they should humbly fulfil their virtue in good works.

76 Women should not approach the office of the altar

So too those of female sex should not approach the office of My altar; for they are an infirm and weak habitation, appointed to bear children and diligently nurture them. A woman conceives a child not by herself but through a man, as the ground is plowed not by itself but by a farmer. Therefore, just as the earth cannot plow itself, a woman must not be a priest and do the work of consecrating the body and blood of My Son; though she can sing the praise of her Creator, as the earth can receive rain to water its fruits. And as the earth brings forth all fruits, so in Woman the fruit of all good works is perfected. How? Because she can receive the High Priest as Bridegroom. How? A virgin betrothed to My Son will receive Him as Bridegroom, for she has shut her body away from a physical husband; and in her Bridegroom she has the priesthood and all the ministry of My altar, and with Him possesses all its riches. And a widow too can be called a bride of My Son when she rejects a physical husband and flees beneath the wings of My Son's protection. And as a bridegroom loves his bride with exceeding love, so does My Son sweetly embrace His brides, who for love of chastity eagerly run to Him.

77 Men and women should not wear each other's clothes except in necessity

A man should never put on feminine dress or a woman use male attire, so that their roles may remain distinct, the man displaying manly strength and the woman womanly weakness; for this was so ordered by Me when the human race began. Unless a man's life or a woman's chastity is in danger; in such an hour a man may change his dress for a woman's or a woman for a man's, if they do it humbly in fear of death. And when they seek My mercy for this deed they shall find it, because they did it not in boldness but in danger of their safety. But as a woman should not wear a man's clothes, she should also not approach the office of My altar, for she should not take on a masculine role either in her hair or in her attire.

78 God will judge all perpetrators of fornication, sodomy and bestiality

Let those who approach My altar appear in My sight in chastity, as also should those who desire to receive the sacrament of the body and blood of

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My Son, lest they should fall into ruin. For many are found among both spiritual and secular people who not only pollute themselves in fornication with women but also assume a heavy burden of condemnation by contaminating themselves in perverted forms. How? A man who sins with another man as if with a woman sins bitterly against God and against the union with which God united male and female. Hence both in God's sight are polluted, black and wanton, horrible and harmful to God and humanity, and guilty of death; for they go against their Creator and His creature, which is in them. How?

God united man and woman, thus joining the strong to the weak, that each might sustain the other. But these perverted adulterers change their virile strength into perverse weakness, rejecting the proper male and female roles, and in their wickedness they shamefully follow Satan, who in his pride sought to split and divide Him Who is indivisible. They create in themselves by their wicked deeds a strange and perverse adultery, and so appear polluted and shameful in My sight.

And a man who sins with a woman by this same method of perverted fornication is a voracious wolf of wickedness. How? A person would seem perverted and harmful to other people if he threw away beautiful clean food and ate the ordure that comes out of the body in digestion; and these are in My sight equally unworthy and unclean, since they forsake the proper way of uniting with a woman and seek in her an alien sin. And a woman who takes up devilish ways and plays a male role in coupling with another woman is most vile in My sight, and so is she who subjects herself to such a one in this evil deed. For they should have been ashamed of their passion, and instead they impudently usurped a right that was not theirs. And, having put themselves into alien ways, they are to Me transformed and contemptible.

And men who touch their own genital organ and emit their semen seriously imperil their souls, for they excite themselves to distraction; they appear to Me as impure animals devouring their own whelps, for they wickedly produce their semen only for abusive pollution. And women who imitate them in this unchaste touching, and excite themselves to bodily convulsions by provoking their burning lust, are extremely guilty, for they pollute themselves with uncleanness when they should be keeping themselves in chastity. Hence both women and men who elicit their own seed by touching themselves in the body do a filthy deed and inflict ulcers and wounds on their souls; for they will not keep themselves in a state of chastity for love of Me. What does this mean? When a person feels himself disturbed by bodily stimulation, let him run to the refuge of continence, and seize the shield of chastity, and thus defend himself from uncleanness. How? Let him cast out the tares from the wheat, which is to say, let him separate the clamor of lust from the sweetness of chastity.

And whoever thus casts out of himself the taste for lust is very sweet and lovable to Me. But, O humans, you cast away chastity and love lust when you fornicate not only with other people but even with animals; thus you send your seed not into what lives but into what is dead, and you forsake what is equal to you and desire what is subject to you and serves you. Therefore the elements cry out against you, saying, "Alas, alas! our rulers join with us in the mingling of their seed!" And thus they show their grief at My anger against your deeds. Why then do you, knowing yourselves human, convert your intelligence into bestial stupidity? Did I create you to join with animals? Never. And when you unite with them, the guilt of the most bitter crimes falls upon you, because you scorn the plan I made for the joining of male and female. For whoever transforms himself by his deeds into a depraved follower of his own desires, and pours out his semen with an animal, brings on himself great ruin, as Satan cast himself down by his perversity when he tried to be like God.

Therefore, all you who contaminate yourselves with perverted pollutions, resist your desires; chastise your bodies, and give yourselves over to true and bitter penance with weeping and fasting and torture of your flesh and severe blows, lest you send yourselves impenitent into an excess of cruel guilt.

79 Pollution that occurs in sleep

I want men not only to keep themselves clean of impurity while awake, but also to purify themselves properly from the pollution that happens to them in sleep. For if the semen of a man who sleeps and dreams is stirred up unawares, I do not want him to approach the sacramental office of My altar in that condition of ardent heat; he should first calm that ardor in himself, as it is written:

80 Words of Moses on this subject

"If any man among you is defiled in a dream by night, he shall go forth out of the camp, and not return until he washes himself with water in the evening, and then he shall return into the camp after sunset" [Deuteronomy 13:10–11]. What does this mean? If among the laborers in My service there is anyone who is defiled in a dream while he sleeps at night, he should separate himself from the company of those who serve My altar and not presume to join in the mystery until his injurious heat has passed and he has cleansed himself from the fire of his lust in the bath of penance, with confession and compunction of heart. And after that penance has done its work and illumined his heart, let him return in love of chastity among those who faithfully

defend themselves against impurity, and worthily and honorably approach that sacrament, which is wholly in sanctity.

81 One who burns strongly should not add flame to his fire

But one who burns strongly in lust either asleep or awake should take care not to add flame to his fire. How? Let him not inflame himself by those foods that stir up lust. He should humbly abstain from the flesh of animals that come forth from their mothers naked and without covering, that is, beasts; for there is a fire of heat in them that is not as great in the flesh of birds, which are not born uncovered but as an egg covered with a shell, and therefore have less inflammatory power. And he should also abstain from excessive wine, lest by too much drinking his veins become filled with noxious blood and wickedly heated with ardent fire.

82 One who is weighed down by vices should seek God's mercy in confession

But if anyone labors under too great a number of these tendencies and is not able to resist them by himself, let him with devoted purpose seek Me and humbly uncover to Me the wounds of his heart. How? Let him lay bare these wounds to Me by making a humble confession to a priest. And why this? Because true confession is a second resurrection. How? The human race was slain by the fall of the old Adam; the new Adam by His death raised it up. And so the resurrection of souls arose in the death of the new Adam. And so a person should confess his sins, as the old Adam did not; for he concealed his transgression instead of confessing it. How? He did not confess it by repenting, but concealed it by accusing the woman. Hence confession was instituted, to raise people up after they fall. And so anyone who confesses his sins to a priest for love of Me rises again from death to life; as the woman who purged herself from her impurity with tears at the banquet in the presence of My Son was snatched away from uncleanness.

83 The remedy of purgation was long prefigured in the ancient fathers

This remedy of purgation was long prefigured in the ancient fathers. How? Before the Law the patriarchs and prophets were the consolation of humanity; under the Law the high priests and the ordinary priests were its instruction; and then the apostles came and brought true righteousness in My Son, so that many people hastened to them and devoutly implored their help. And thus from the time of Adam to the time of the apostles there were always

some who by celestial inspiration consoled and instructed people and helped them in their miseries. And the apostles also showed people, by their preaching and many miracles, that Man had fallen by the Devil's tempting into death and could never rise again by himself, but was snatched from death by My Son. How? By His being in the world and performing many labors in the body, and at last being nailed to the cross for the world's redemption.

So faithful people, to gain salvation, should follow this pattern with their priests. How? They should seek the help of My Son, because when they repeat the ancient crime of Adam after baptism they cannot rise from their fall by themselves. And therefore they should seek counsel as if from the patriarchs and prophets, and derive instruction as if from the high priests and the ordinary priests, and accept help as if from the apostles, laying bare their wounds and displaying their sins truly and purely. How?

They should confess their sins to the priest, who is the minister of My Son, with devoted heart and mouth. And then the priest will give them a remedy of penance and bury their sins in the death of My Only-Begotten. And then they will rise again to life and glorify the Resurrection of My Son.

84 One who refuses to confess his sin deceives himself

But one who refuses to lay bare the wounds of sin, and follows his own wishes by trying to cure them himself in silence without the help of another, is deceiving himself. For he wishes to be his own priest, but without the help of another he cannot rise; as Man did not rise up and stand by himself but was saved by My Son. Hence let one who desires to be saved never despair of confessing his sins, even at the end of his life.

85 A dying man without a priest may confess to another person or to God only

And if someone in the hour of death seeks a remedy for his wounds of sin but does not have a priest near to whom to confess them, let him show them to any other person who is there at the time; or, if he is dying so suddenly that there is no one there, let him lay them open to Me with his heart's utmost affection, while he is still in the body with which he did them, and I will regard the devotion of his heart and not reject his penitence.

86 No one should despair at the weight of his sins

Therefore, let no one despair because of the weight of his iniquity; for if he despairs of My mercy, he shall not rise again to life. One who struggles

with despair and at last reduces it to nothing has delivered himself; he has been strong, and manfully conquered. But one whose mind is so inflamed that he does not seek the remedy of salvation is not to be helped; for when he could have found Me, he refused to seek Me. And so, let each person not neglect himself while he has time, but seek the refuge of pure confession, as My Son commanded the leper in the Gospel, saying:

87 Words of the Gospel

"Go, show yourself to the priest, and offer your gift, which Moses commanded for a testimony to them" [Matthew 8:4]. What does this mean? You who are foul with sins and want to cleanse yourself of them, go with good intention and show them to the priest, My minister, by pure confession; and offer with devout heart the gift of true penitence, which by God's will was foreshadowed by the man who was removed by divine power from the many floods of earthly iniquity. And thus those who formerly saw you befouled with evil deeds may now testify that you are purged from them by bitter penitence as in the furnace of trial. But, O human, if a sinner conceals his deeds in his secret heart, who will be a witness to his penitence? No one. Therefore let each person manifest his sins, that he may have a witness to his penitence.

88 Sins should be blotted out by alms and by bodily satisfaction

And let one who desires to practice penitence for his sins turn to alms as a source of help. How? When a person's weak body falters in the work of penitence, his alms will hasten to help him. And because it is hard for a person to practice penitence with just and proper harshness, let him take alms as his mother, so as to accomplish with her what is so laborious for his body. For a mother does not cease to help her child in time of need, even when he has been brought up already; and so too alms give aid to a weak body when a person is penitent, even if he seems to be strong in doing penance and punishing his body. So let a person punish in his body the evil works he has done in his body through the lust of the flesh, so as to wash away from his body by bitter penance the deeds that were dear and sweet to his flesh. For bitter penance, with its helpmeet alms, heals in people the deadly wounds of sin. How? A person represses himself by castigation, but he can refresh himself by alms. How? Because alms represent My mercy. How? When a faithful person helps the poor with his substance for love of Me, he keeps My commandments, because he devotes his mercy to the needy for the honor of My name; just as I do not withdraw My grace from those who seek me in

purity of heart. And whoever helps the poor in this way, refreshing them with alms for mercy's sake, is exceedingly lovable to Me, for he has a merciful heart; which fulfils what is written:

89 Words of the Book of Wisdom

"Place your treasure in the commandments of the Most High, and your alms shall bring you more profit than gold" [Ecclesiastes 29:14]. What does this mean?

Think justly and rightly, and take some of your material wealth, which you hold in your bosom and embrace in your heart; as the One Who is above all people commands, divide it, for God has ordered you to turn aside from evil and do good. Let your heart's good will overflow, so that you will not be among the lost sheep; sanctify yourself before God by giving of your substance to refresh those in want, and God will give you His mercy in your misery. And if you do this, the compassion you have on one without treasure will be worth more to you than if you could ascend a high mountain and in your pride possess its gold. How? Because it is better for you to give a little to the little ones in humility than to possess and enjoy the kingdom of the world; if you did the latter, God's reward of mercy could never be yours because of the weight of your pride, for you would not have had pity for the poor in your heart.

90 The elements of the world are the pit of human pleasures

Hence the elements are the pit of human pleasures, as they show by their ways. How? By bringing God's vengeance upon those who are sinning. Therefore, O human, renounce the empty avarice which will wreck you, for your true inheritance is eternal life; leave evil and do good, and so renounce harsh malevolence. And, to follow the way of mercy, give of your substance to the poor, and thereby imitate God Who is merciful.

91 One who gives or receives alms must not do so in vain

Therefore, O human, no liar can deny that you who thus help the poor are fulfilling My will. How?

You should give your alms to the poor as I mete out My grace to you. But let not those who receive alms take them vainly or avariciously. What does this mean? There are many who love laziness and do not want to labor with their bodies to feed themselves, or to do good works with their spirits to help their souls; they are like the beasts, who understand justice neither

with their souls nor with their bodies. And if they persevere in this, without correction and without penitence for their apathetic wickedness, they are unworthy in My sight. But there are also many who suffer bodily necessity and receive alms in fear of Me, and pray and work for those who weigh out mercy to them, and avoid filthy and evil deeds. And among these are many from whom I have withdrawn earthly riches in order to give them celestial wealth.

92 Seekers of poverty, riches and honor are rewarded by their intention

Those who gladly suffer poverty for My name's sake are extremely lovable to Me; but those who are greedy and would gladly possess earthly riches but cannot lose the reward of this labor. And one who seeks riches in order to satisfy not his greed but My will has a good intention, and I will reward him with honor. One who desires the power of an office for his own boastful pride and not for the glory of My name is to Me like a putrid corpse; but one who seeks it desiring from it not his pride but My honor will be glorious in My kingdom. And so priests should take on the office of spiritual government not for their own sakes but for Mine, that they may rule more surely and devoutly over My people. How?

93 Priests should admonish the people about confession

They should teach, admonish, exhort and urge My people to keep the law of God worthily and fittingly. And pastors should always be thinking this over; and they should warn and exhort the people not to continue in their sins without confession and without penitence, but to tread evil deeds underfoot and do good ones. And if the people do not obey their priests when they so admonish, the people will incur the guilt and the priests will not be blamed for negligence.

94 Priests who do not use their office's authority are not priests but wolves

But if priests do not show the people the authority of their office, they are not priests but ravenous wolves, for they hold their office by robbery as a wolf cruelly snatches a sheep, doing their own will instead of caring for the sheep. And, because they live perversely, they are afraid to teach true doctrine to the people; they consent to iniquity as to a lord, for they harbor

carnal desires, and they close the door of their heart to a helper as if to a stranger; for justice is of God.

95 The elements wail to God at the iniquity of priests and Heaven notes it

Therefore, O ye pastors, wail and lament your crimes, which proclaim your iniquity in dire tones, so that the very elements hear their clamor and join in their wailing before My presence. How do you dare to do your office and touch your Lord with bloody hands, in perverse filth and adulterous wickedness? By your uncleanness you shake the foundations of the earth. How? Because you do not fear to touch your Lord while foul with such crimes, I bring great griefs and oppressions upon the earth; and so I avenge the flesh and blood of My Son, for in this horror you not only cruelly shake the earth but by your filth contaminate Heaven. How?

When you touch your Lord in the stench of uncleanness, as a swine tramples pearls into the mire, the heavens receive your iniquity and shower upon the earth the sentence of My judgment. You should have gone before the people in true justice and with divine law, shining for them with good works, so that when they followed you they would avoid tripping on any stumbling-block; and instead you stain My people with greater iniquity than that with which they stain themselves, giving them a bad and evil example. You should have been a shining jewel, by whose light they could have perceived and entered the path of rectitude; but your example is death to them, and they can find no measure in your iniquity. How can you be their shepherd when you seduce them so? And how will you answer for them, when you cannot give an answer for yourselves? Therefore weep and howl, before Death carries you off. For why do you not consider your own honor, which is given you for the sake of other people? What does this mean?

96 Priests have the power of binding and loosing

That you, rather than others, have received in My Son the keys of Heaven; which are righteous decisions of just judgment made in the knowledge of the Scriptures, as long as you consider rightly what it is you should bind. What does this mean?

When people stubbornly oppose themselves to My Law, you must inspire them with fear of My judgment. And if they do not then correct themselves, extend over them your power of binding. How? You will bind these rebels in My words with a clear voice, and show them the power of the

binding; for their stubbornness they are bound in My sight, as My Son showed to the Church's first pastor, saying:

97 Words of the Gospel

"I will give you the keys of the kingdom of Heaven. And whatsoever you shall bind on earth, it will be bound also in Heaven; and whatsoever you shall loose on earth, it will be loosed also in Heaven" [Matthew 16:19]. What does this mean? I, Who have all power in Heaven and earth, by My grace give to you, My devout imitators, those judgments that touch the dignity of the Kingdom of Heaven. As you see people sin on earth, you will bind the wicked deed on earth with just judgment, and it will be entangled in its wickedness and bound in Heaven; it will be separated and driven out from Heaven, for in the heavenly mansions there is no freedom and no place for iniquity. But after I withdraw a person's soul from his body, you will not extend your judgment over him, for that judgment is Mine. Likewise, if a transgressor is penitent, you will loose on earth the chain you fastened on him in his rebellion, and it will be loosed in the secret places of Heaven, for God does not reject the groans of a devout heart. But after the person's death you will pray for his soul, but you cannot then absolve it from being bound.

98 No one is to be bound without a grievous fault

But, O priests, who have received this power thus from My Son, you shall not in anger of heart bind any person in My words unless he has committed a grievous fault; you will consider most carefully before you bind anyone. You will use My words of ecclesiastical censure to separate from My church anyone who cannot be restrained by shame before other people, or by fear of Me, or by your prayers and precepts, but seeks to persevere in his iniquity. But you shall not bind an innocent person; for when you bind such a one you bind yourselves in bonds of dire guilt.

99 One who is bound when innocent must ask to be loosed for God's honor

And if anyone has been bound while innocent, contrary to right, he must ask to be loosed for the honor of My Name; yet humbly and submissively, for if he is stubborn he might incur the guilt of pride. But this is the purpose of that binding: that one who perversely refuses to obey Me or the precepts of his superiors may be separated by My word from celestial things. Thus Adam, when he disobeyed Me, was by My command cast out of Paradise.

And until he repents and obeys, he shall not be received into the company of the faithful; as the human race was recalled to the celestial country by the martyrdom of My obedient Son.

100 Rebels who refuse to return to Christ and ask mercy imitate the Devil

But one who rebels and refuses to return to Christ in humility, and continues in this arrogance, will join the company of those who keep a stone for a heart and remain in infidelity; and such people refuse to know the glory of the Church's beatitude. For one who is so obdurate that in his wickedness he will seek no mercy imitates the ancient serpent, who, when he deceived the first man in Paradise, was saying within himself:

101 Words of the Devil

"I was thrown out of Heaven when I tried to fight with my angels against the army of the Most High; I could not resist Him, and He conquered me. But now I have found Man on earth, and I will avenge myself mightily by working my wrath on him. For I will accomplish in Man on earth that which I tried to do in Heaven, and make myself like the Most High. And if God is just, that power will not be taken from me, for Man will consent to me and disobey God."

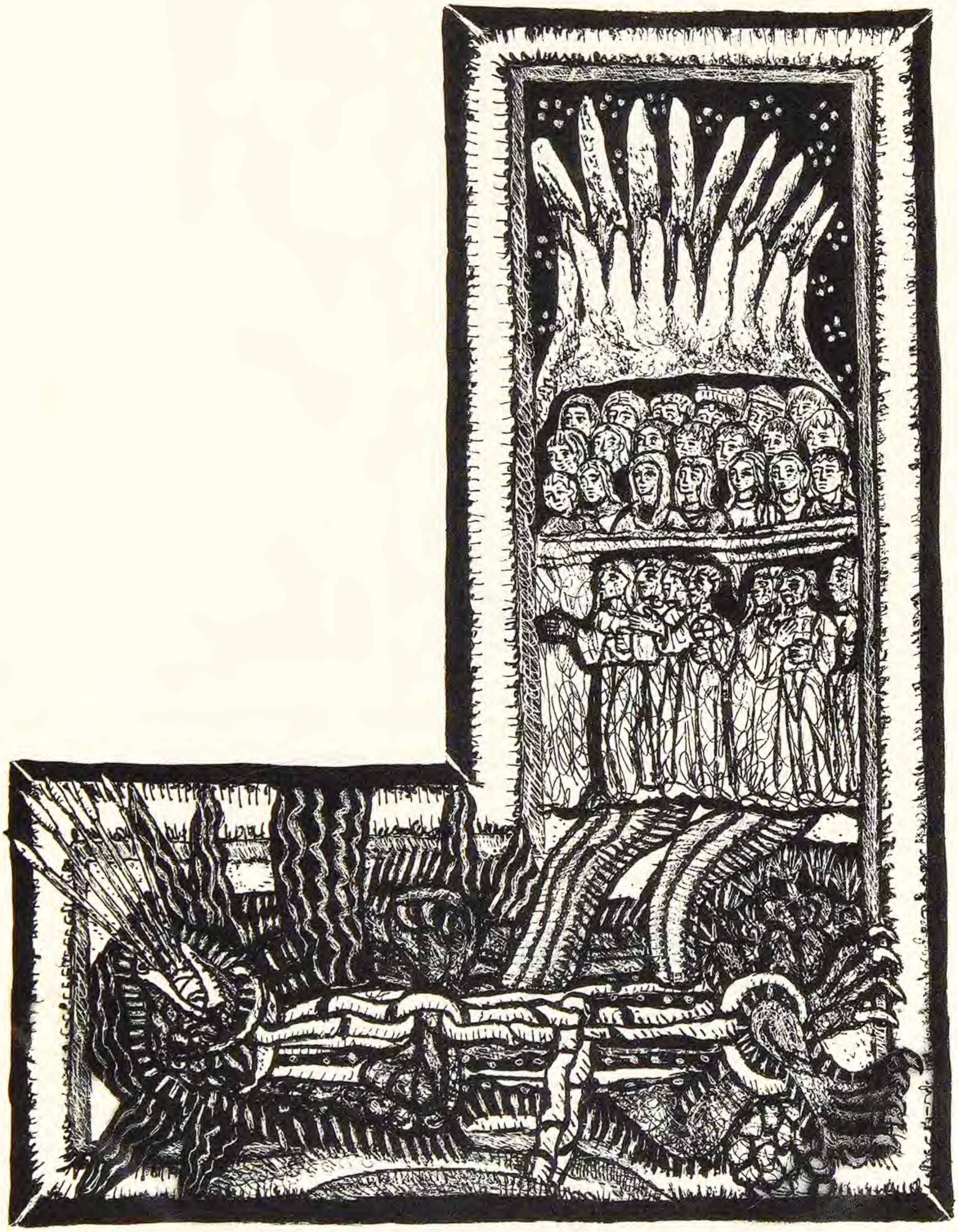
Saying these things to himself, the Devil arrayed all his arts against Man, and Man withdrew from God and adhered to the Devil; and the Devil bound him so closely to himself that Man worshipped him instead of God and denied God, his Creator.

102 By the Son of God's Incarnation humanity was led out of the darkness

But when humanity was lying in a great darkness of infidelity and could not raise itself, I sent My Son for its salvation, miraculously incarnate of the Virgin, true God and true man. What does this mean? That His Divinity truly came forth from Me, the Father, and His Humanity truly took flesh from the Virgin Mother. What does this mean? O human, you are soft and delicate of body, but hard and inflexible in your incredulity. For a stone can be smoothed for a building, but you are unwilling to be soothed by the faith. Yet listen. As a person who has a beautiful jewel in a box puts it in a metal setting to show it to people, so I, Who had My Son in My heart, willed him

to be incarnate of the Virgin to save the lives of those who believe. But if I had given Him a physical father, who would He be then? Not My Son, but My servant; and that could not be. He, born of the Virgin, ate, drank, lay down to sleep and experienced bodily miseries, but He never felt the taste of sin in His flesh, for He had assumed flesh not through a lie but through truth. What does this mean? Other people, because of Adam and Eve's transgression, are born from the taste of delight, which is to say through a lie and not the truth. But My Son did not originate so, but was born in sanctity from the most chaste Virgin to redeem humanity. For like cannot loose like from a chain; a greater one must come who can save him. What does this mean? That no person born in sin could deliver sinful humanity from the perdition of death. Therefore My Son came, without sin; He conquered death and mercifully delivered humanity therefrom.

But let the one who sees with watchful eyes and hears with attentive ears welcome with a kiss My mystical words, which proceed from Me Who am life.



THE DEVIL BOUND

III. De sagittis oris eius. & de fumo pectoris. & de humore lumborū q̄d significent.

XX. De turbine umbilici. & de ⁊mundicia ranarū uentris ei⁹ quid significet.

I. XX Quod diabolus stultos homines ⁊ cet. nec p̄ uniquā incredulitatē exagitat. uerū ēē putantes q⁹d ipse eis fallacit̄ demonstrat.

II. XX Quod heretici uitandi & ab ecclia eiciendi sunt. qui diabolum p̄ dō colunt. & sunt ulcera diaboli & p̄currens germen filii p̄dicionis.

III. XX Quod aduersorū dī contēpnentes. gr̄ā dī deserit. querentib⁹ aut̄ misericordiā subuenit.

IIII. XX Verba salomonis de eodem.

V. XXI Q⁹d ueri cultores dī qui toto animo terrena conculcant. antiquū serpentem forti contritione deiciūt.

THE TEMPTER

VISION SEVEN
The Devil

Then I saw a burning light, as large and as high as a mountain, divided at its summit as if into many tongues. And there stood in the presence of this light a multitude of white-clad people, before whom what seemed like a screen of translucent crystal had been placed, reaching from their breasts to their feet. And before that multitude, as if in a road, there lay on its back a monster shaped like a worm, wondrously large and long, which aroused an indescribable sense of horror and rage. On its left stood a kind of market-place, which displayed human wealth and worldly delights and various sorts of merchandise; and some people were running through it very fast and not buying anything, while others were walking slowly and stopping both to sell and to buy. Now that worm was black and bristly, covered with ulcers and pustules, and it was divided into five sections from the head down through the belly to its feet, like stripes. One was green, one white, one red, one yellow and one black; and they were full of deadly poison. But its head had been so crushed that the left side of its jawbone was dislocated. Its eyes were bloody on the surface and burning within; its ears were round and bristly; its nose and mouth were those of a viper, its hands human, its feet a viper's feet, and its tail short and horrible. And around its neck a chain was riveted, which also bound its hands and feet; and this chain was firmly fastened to a rock in the abyss, confining it so that it could not move about as its wicked will desired. Many flames came forth from its mouth, dividing into four parts: One part ascended to the clouds, another breathed forth among secular people, another among spiritual people, and the last descended into the abyss.

And the flame that sought the clouds was opposing the people who wanted to get to Heaven. And I saw three groups of these. One was close to the clouds, one in the middle space between the clouds and the earth, and one moved along near the earth; and all were shouting repeatedly, "Let us get to Heaven!" But they were whirled hither and thither by that flame; some did not waver, some barely kept their balance, and some fell to the earth but then rose again and started toward Heaven. The flame that breathed forth among secular people burned some of them so that they were hideously blackened, and others it transfixed so that it could move them anywhere it wanted. Some escaped from the flame and moved toward those who sought Heaven, reiterating shouts of "O you faithful, give us help!" But others remained transfixed. Meanwhile, the flame that breathed forth among spiritual people concealed them in obscurity; but I saw them in six

categories. For some of them were cruelly injured by the flame's fury; but when it could not injure one of them, it burningly breathed on them the deadly poison that flowed from the worm's head to its feet, either green or white or red or yellow or black. But the flame that sought the abyss contained in itself diverse torments for those who had worshipped Satan in place of God, not washed by the font of baptism or knowing the light of truth and faith.

And I saw sharp arrows whistling loudly from its mouth, and black smoke exhaling from its breast, and a burning fluid boiling up from its loins, and a hot whirlwind blowing from its navel, and the uncleanness of frogs issuing from its bowels; all of which affected human beings with grave disquiet. And the hideous and foul-smelling vapor that came out of it infected many people with its own perversity. But behold, a great multitude of people came, shining brightly; they forcefully trod the worm underfoot and severely tormented it, but could not be injured by its flames or its poison. And I heard again the voice from Heaven, saying to me:

1 God strengthens the faithful so that the Devil cannot conquer them

God, Who disposes all things justly and rightly, calls His faithful people to the glory of the celestial inheritance; but the ancient deceiver lurks in ambush and tries to hinder them by using all his wicked arts against them. But he is conquered by them and is confounded as his presumption deserves, for they possess the celestial country, and he suffers the horrors of Hell.

Therefore, *you see a burning light, as large and as high as a mountain, divided at its summit as if into many tongues.* This is the justice of God, which burns in the faith of believers, displaying the greatness of His power, sanctity and glory, and wonderfully declaring in that glory the diverse gifts of the Holy Spirit.

2 The multitude of the faithful and the divine law displayed before them

And there stand in the presence of this light a multitude of white-clad people, a cohort of people in the presence of God's justice, shining with faith and well and honorably constituted in good works. *Before them what seems like a screen of translucent crystal has been placed, reaching from their breasts to their feet;* for, from their decision to do good actions to their completion, they have before their eyes the strong and splendid sight of the divine law. And thus they are so strengthened in these actions that no cunning or deception of false persuasion can conquer them.

3 The deceptions of the Devil lie in the path humans take in this world

And before that multitude, as if in a road, there lies on its back a monster shaped like a worm, wondrously large and long. This means that the ancient serpent is well-known to humanity in the course of the pilgrimage of the good and the bad through the world, not in that visible form but in its inner meaning. Its mouth is gaping upward in order to pull down by deception those who are tending toward the celestial regions; but it is lying down, because the Son of God destroyed so much of its strength that it cannot stand up. *And it arouses an indescribable sense of horror and rage;* for the mental capacity of mortal humans is insufficient to understand the manifold variations of its poisonous fury and malicious exertions.

4 The Devil offers fraudulent riches and delights, and some buy them

On its left stands a kind of marketplace, which displays human wealth and worldly delights and various sorts of merchandise. For the left hand of the destroyer signifies death, and there is seen a marketplace composed of Death's evil works: pride and vainglory in corruptible riches, licentiousness and lust for transitory pleasures, and trafficking in all kinds of earthly desires. Thus those who would be terrified by the horror of the Devil if they met it openly are deceived by these things; they are lightly offered persuasions to vice as a merchant displays his diverse wares to people, and delighted by the display so that they buy what is offered. So the Devil offers humanity his lying arts; and those who desire them buy them. How? They throw away a good conscience as if selling it, and they collect deadly wounds in their souls as if buying them.

5 The strong resist the Devil's offers, the apathetic consent to them

And some people are running through it very fast and not buying anything; they know God, and so they carry the treasure of good will and the sweet spices of virtue and eagerly accumulate more of them, and quickly pass by the pleasures of the world and the filth of the Devil, obeying God's commands and despising the sweetness of their flesh. *But others are walking slowly and stopping both to sell and to buy;* they are slow to do good works and apathetic of heart, and so they smother their own desire for Heaven as if selling it, and nurture the pleasures of their flesh as if buying them.

Therefore, the former will receive the reward of good works, and the latter will suffer the punishment of iniquity, as Ezekiel shows, saying:

6 Words of Ezekiel on this subject

"The justice of the just shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him" [Ezekiel 18:20]. What does this mean? The shining works of the pure person bathe him in sanctity and surround him like a thousand eyes that see into the heights and the depths; as the Holy Spirit inspires him, they bear him aloft to great honor and leave his wrong desires behind for dead, as a bird is borne aloft in the air by its wings whenever it pleases. But the person who faithlessly follows the wickedness of the savage viper who hisses at Heaven, covering the pearl with mud and raging at the Most Beautiful among all the beautiful, is degraded by its snakelike poison; he is cut off from the noble work of God's hands, from all honor and from the beatitude of the celestial vision, and exiled from the Living Fruit and the root of the Just Tree.

7 The Devil labors to deceive the five senses of humanity

But you see that *that worm is black and bristly, covered with ulcers and pustules.* This shows that the ancient serpent is full of the darkness of black betrayal, and the bristles of concealed deception, and the ulcers of impure pollution, and the pustules of repressed fury. *And it is divided into five sections from the head down through the belly to its feet, like stripes;* for from the time of his first deception when he tried to put himself forward until the final time when his madness will end, he does not cease to inspire the five human senses with the desire for vices. Simulating a deceitful rectitude, he draws people to the downward slopes of his unclean arts. *One is green, one white, one red, one yellow, and one black; and they are full of deadly poison.* The green indicates worldly melancholy; the white, improper irreverence; the red, deceptive glory; the yellow, biting envy; and the black, shameful deceit, with all other perversities that bring death to the souls of those who consent to them.

8 The Devil's pride was overthrown by the Incarnation

But its head has been so crushed that the left side of its jawbone is dislocated. This means that his pride was so overthrown by the Son of God that even the enmity of Death is already destroyed and cannot exert its full strength of bitterness.

9 What the eyes and ears and nostrils of the serpent signify

Its eyes are bloody on the surface and burning within; because his wicked intent outwardly inflicts harm on human bodies and inwardly drives a fiery

dart into their souls. *Its ears are round and bristly;* for the bristles of his arts pierce a person all around, so that if he finds anything that is his in that person, he may quickly throw him down. *Its nose and mouth are those of a viper;* for he shows people unbridled and vile behavior, through which, transfixing them with many vices, he may cruelly slay them.

10 Its hands and feet and tail and what they signify

Its hands are human, for he practices his arts in human deeds; *its feet a viper's feet,* because he ceaselessly ambushes people when they are journeying and inflicts devilish lacerations on them; *and its tail short and horrible,* for it signifies his power in the short but most evil time of the son of perdition, whose desire to run wild exceeds his power to do it.

11 The might of God has broken the Devil's strength to do what he wants

And around its neck a chain is riveted, which also binds its hands and feet; which is to say that the strength of the Devil was so broken and crushed by the power of Almighty God that he cannot freely work his evil and accost humans in the way. *And this chain is firmly fastened to a rock in the abyss, confining it so that it cannot move about as its wicked will desires;* for the power of God abides unfailingly and immovably for eternity, and by saving souls oppresses the Devil so forcibly that he is not able by inner or outer means to take away redemption from the faithful, or keep them from that place of joy from which he perversely exiled himself.

12 The Devil sends his fire to lead astray all kinds of people on earth

Many flames come forth from its mouth, dividing into four parts. This means that in his rapacious voracity he sends forth in cruel flames the terrible and manifold evil of his wicked counsels; he breathes it into all four corners of the world, that the people there may follow him.

One part ascends to the clouds; for the sharpness of the Devil's breath drags down those who with all their mind's longing seek Heaven. *Another breathes forth among secular people;* for its many forms deceive those who live among earthly affairs. *And another among spiritual people;* for its pretence infects those who labor in spiritual disciplines. *And the last descends into the abyss;* for its persuasions put the faithless who consent to it into the torments of Hell. For they have walked the way of falsity and deception and left the way of rectitude, and they have not shown the reverence due to the true God, as David testifies, saying:

13 Words of David

"Destruction and unhappiness in their ways, and the way of peace they have not known; there is no fear of God before their eyes" [Psalm 13:5]. What does this mean?

People who expel God from their hearts by their wicked and damnable deeds are overwhelmed by His innocent and mighty works, which arise in the pure living Fountain, as a great rain submerges an object so that it is no longer visible. And so they are not formidable in the sight of God, for misery is in their ways wherever they go, and most unhappy companionship, and the food of death. How? They taste and eat what is evil. Hence in their deeds they do not know the way that ascends in the sunlight, and do not taste in honor or in love the sweetness of God; they cast away their fear of Him as if it were fear of another person, desiring neither to see Him nor to look Him in the face.

14 The Devil assails spiritual and secular people in many ways

Hence you also see that *the flame that seeks the clouds is opposing the people who want to get to Heaven.* For when that wicked flame feels that the minds of the faithful are tending upward, it rages against them most cruelly with its arts, so that they may not come to the celestial places to which they aspire.

15 The three groups of these people

And you see three groups of these; for they do not cease to worship the true and ineffable Trinity, although greatly fatigued by their struggles. *One is close to the clouds;* these are fighting most strongly against the Devil and raising their thoughts from earthly deeds to heavenly things as a cloud floats above the earth. *And one is in the middle space between the clouds and the earth.* These people control themselves moderately well, but their whole mind is not set on heavenly things nor their whole desire on earthly ones; they take a middle way, seeking inner qualities but not refusing outer ones. *And one moves along near the earth;* for these people have not perfectly renounced the transitory but cling a little to passing things, and so have great labor and suffer much fatigue. But, with the help of Heaven, they are all victors; for *all are shouting repeatedly, "Let us get to Heaven!"* And so the former and the latter people, with sighs of desire, exhort themselves to move toward the secret places of Heaven, even though tired out by the arts of the ancient serpent. *But they are whirled hither and thither by that flame,* being driven to various actions by the wind of the Devil's temptation. *Some do not waver,* for they are exceedingly

strong fighters and manfully defend themselves from these illusions. *Some barely keep their balance*, for they keep their feet in the path of rectitude and persevere in God's commandments, but are worn out by their labors and can scarcely conquer the Devil's arts; and *some fall to the earth but then rise again and start toward Heaven*, for they fall into different ways of vice but are then raised up by penitence and place their hope in God and good works.

16 The temptations of secular people

Now *the flame that breathes forth among secular people burns some of them so that they are hideously blackened.* This is to say that the flame of evil deception aims itself at those who pursue worldly affairs and subjects some of them to its perversity; it stains them with dark and iniquitous vices, so that they despise the brightness of the true faith. Thus they slay themselves by a bitter death, and fall to the ground and there do evil deeds. *And others it transfixes so that it can move them anywhere it wants;* for it dominates them by its wickedness and bends them to all the vices of its own depravity, seducing them into the embrace of worldly pleasure, so that according to their desires they have different ways in their speech, hair, clothing, gait and other such things. Therefore they become confused and neglect the justice of God, breaking the law and failing to circumcise their minds; they seek excess in lust and do not observe the times of the Law God constituted for them. And as the sea is stirred into turbulence by the wind, they are stirred into diverse vices by the breath of the ancient dragon. *Some of these escape from the flame and move toward those who seek Heaven, reiterating shouts of "O you faithful, give us help!"* For they withdraw themselves from shameful and harmful companionship and imitate those who fix their mind on celestial things, desiring with heart and voice their solicitude and help. *But others remain transfixed,* continuing to be ensnared in evil actions by their various vices.

17 The six ways of temptation of the spiritual

But the flame that breathes forth among spiritual people conceals them in obscurity. This means that the breath of the Devil's persuasion, when it flames toward those who should be assenting totally to the Spirit, beclouds them with the perversity of its vices, so that they long for the flesh more than for the Spirit.

And you see them in six categories; for the ancient enemy strives to pervert both their five exterior senses and the sixth inner one, the devotion of the heart. *Some of them are cruelly injured by the flame's fury;* for the Devil unlooses his arts on them and inspires them with carnal desires and pleasures, and so enkindles them to lust and unclean pollution. *But when it cannot injure*

one of them, it burningly breathes on them the deadly poison that flows from the worm's head to its feet, either green or white or red or yellow or black. How? When they refuse the delights of pollution, he pours into them the sprouting green of mundane sadness, so oppressing them that they have no strength for spiritual or worldly matters; or he sends against them the empty whiteness of vicious irreverence, so that they do not hide their shame before God or Man; or he displays to them the bright red of earthly glory, giving them bitterness and anxiety of heart; or he puts into them the dull yellow of contempt for their neighbor, and thus they become whisperers and hypocrites; or he imposes on them the horrid blackness of feigned justice, through which their hearts are wretchedly darkened.

All these are deadly plagues; they have proceeded from the destroyer from the beginning of his time of deception, and will do so until the end of time, when his madness will end in the world. And through them he injures and burns people up with vices.

18 Concerning the unbaptized

But the flame that seeks the abyss contains in itself diverse torments for those who have worshipped Satan in place of God, not washed by the font of baptism or knowing the light of truth and faith. This is to say that the fire that accompanies perdition inflicts dire and bitter torments on those souls who were not washed clean in the font of salvation and did not see the brightness of the celestial inheritance or the faith instituted by the Church, and who continue to venerate the lurker in ambush who tries to kill human souls, rather than the One Who granted humanity life and salvation.

19 What is meant by his mouth's arrows, breast's smoke and loins' fluid

And you see sharp arrows whistling loudly from its mouth; these are the terrible and evil thrusts of the Devil's rage, which issue forth in madness and iniquity; *and black smoke exhaling from its breast,* which is the outpouring of his malicious impulses of hideous wrath and envy; *and a burning fluid boiling up from its loins,* which is the effusion of his uncleanness in ardent lust.

20 What is meant by his navel's whirlwind and bowels' uncleanness of frogs

And a hot whirlwind is blowing from its navel, which is the suffocating wind of fornication that proceeds from his voracity to dominate; *and the uncleanness of frogs issuing from its bowels,* which is the fetid excrement of his

obduracy in desperation and his perverse concentration on it. For the ancient waylayer hopes to subjugate those who follow him completely to his will. *And all of these things affect human beings with grave disquiet;* for such perversities bring those who fix their hope in the earthly and not the heavenly, and so most miserably become involved with them, into extreme ruin.

21 The Devil makes the foolish believe what he falsely shows them

And the hideous and foul-smelling vapor that comes out of it infects many people with its own perversity. This means that the black wrong of a fetid conscience proceeds from the Devil and disturbs the foolish with wicked unbelief. How?

From the time of the beheading of John the Baptist, who declared that the Son of God is the One Who heals the wounds of sin, most evil error arose, whereby the Devil seduces different people by different false images; so that they think that what he shows them, each according to his understanding, is true. And many are deceived thus, because their faith is constantly weak and wavering.

But you, O My children, if you wish to live justly and devoutly, fly from this most wicked error, lest death catch you in your unbelief.

22 Heretics who worship the Devil for God must be avoided and excommunicated

And fly from those who linger in caves and are cloistered supporters of the Devil. Woe to them, woe to them who remain thus! They are the Devil's very viscera, and the advance guard of the son of perdition.

Therefore, O you My beloved children, avoid them with all devotion and with all the strength of your souls and bodies. For the ancient serpent feeds and clothes them by his arts, and they worship him as God and trust in his false deceptions. They are wicked murderers, killing those who join them in simplicity before they can turn back from their error; and they are wicked fornicators upon themselves, destroying their semen in an act of murder and offering it to the Devil. And they also invade My Church with their schisms in the fulness of vice; in their shameful plots they wickedly scoff at baptism, and the sacrament of My Son's body and blood, and the other institutions of the Church. Because they are afraid of My people, they do not openly resist these institutions of Mine, but in their hearts and their deeds they hold them as nothing. By devilish illusion, they pretend to have sanctity; but they are deceived by the Devil, for if he were to show himself to them openly they would understand him and flee him. By his arts he shows them things he pretends are good and holy, and thus deludes them. O woe to those who persevere in this death!

But because the Devil knows he has only a short time for his error, he is now hastening to perfect infidelity in his members: you, you evil deceivers, who labor to subvert the Catholic faith. You are wavering and soft, and thus cannot avoid the poisonous arrows of human corruption, which you employ as you wish against the Law. And after you pour out your lust in the poisonous seed of fornication, you pretend to pray and falsely assume an air of sanctity, which is more unworthy in My eyes than the stinking mire.

And thus for certain the punishment of all the schisms shall fall upon you: The one that arose in Horeb when the Jewish people made a graven image and played before it in devilish mockery, as some wantonly do to this very day; and the one about Baal, in which many perished; and the one about fornications, where the Midianites did shameful deeds; and all the others. For you have part in all of them by your evil actions; but you are worse than the earlier people, because you perceive the true law of God but stubbornly abandon it.

But, O you who desire to be saved and have received baptism and form the holy mountain of God, resist Satan, and do not descend from the height of your salvation.

23 God's grace forsakes His despisers but mercifully helps His seekers

The Devil ceaselessly sets his snares against a person who is so hard-hearted as to despise God's help in resisting him; for then he sees a blackness of iniquity rising up in that person, bringing such bitterness into his whole body that its strength dries up. Hence, when a person begins to contemplate his evil and so crushes himself in despair, deeming it impossible for him to avoid evil and do good, the Devil sees this and says, "Behold a person who is like us, denying his God and turning to follow us. Let us hasten and run swiftly to him, urging him by our arts so that he cannot escape us. For to leave God and follow us is what he wants."

But a person who is assailed by these evils through the Devil's agency, and polluted by murder, adultery, voracity, drunkenness and excess of all vices, will fall into death if he continues in them impenitent; while one who resists the Devil and withdraws repenting from these vices will rise again to life. For if a person follows the longing of his flesh and neglects the good desires of his spirit, the Maker of this globe says of him, "He despises Me and sinfully loves his flesh, and rejects the knowledge that he should turn away from perdition. And therefore he must be cast out." But if a person loves the virtuous ardor of his spirit and rejects the pleasure of his flesh, the Creator of the world says of him, "He looks toward Me and does not nourish his body on filth, and desires the knowledge of how to avoid death. And

therefore help will be given him." How? As Solomon says, in accordance with My will:

24 Words of Solomon

"Evil pursues sinners; and to the just good shall be repaid" [Proverbs 13:21]. What does this mean? Those who fall into error and slide into ruin are invaded on all sides by deadly sickness; and so they do not wisely regard what is true, but carelessly abandon it. And, because they reject God and choose the Devil, they are not worthy to look at God or take any pleasure in God or other people, and the evil they do brings them much adversity. But in good people, right sense and just thoughts erect a tall building; they receive in their bosom the inheritance of the Father, for they long for the celestial light. For they are not among the deceivers in the derisive marketplace, where this or that is sold without regard for its value, but in God they possess that which is true.

25 True worshippers of God crush the ancient serpent

But you see that *a great multitude of people come, shining brightly; they forcefully tread the worm underfoot and severely torment it.* This is to say that those who are born into human misery, but who constitute the faithful army of believers, hasten to attain their desire for Heaven by the faith of baptism and blessed virtues, which are beautiful adornments; and by their deeds they cast down the ancient seducer. They are virgins, martyrs and all other kinds of worshippers of God, who in full knowledge tread worldly things underfoot and desire the heavenly; and they surround the Devil and crush him with force, weakening him with dire suffering. But *they cannot be injured by its flames or its poison;* for they are protected by God with such strength and constancy that neither the open flame nor the hidden persuasion of the Devil's wickedness can touch them. For they forsake all vain fictions, and with great strength in virtue hold fast to sanctity.

But let the one who sees with watchful eyes and hears with attentive ears welcome with a kiss My mystical words, which proceed from Me Who am life. Amen.

Book Three

THE HISTORY OF SALVATION SYMBOLIZED BY A BUILDING

THE ONE SITTING UPON THE THRONE

THE FALLEN STARS

VISION ONE
God and Man

And I, a person taken up from among other people—though unworthy to be called a human, since I have transgressed God's law and have been unjust when I should have been just, except that by God's grace I am His creature and will be saved—I looked toward the East. And there *I saw a single block of stone, immeasurably broad and high and the color of iron, with a white cloud above it; and above the cloud a royal throne, round in shape, on which One was sitting, living and shining and marvellous in His glory, and so bright that I could not behold Him clearly. He held to His breast what looked like black and filthy mire, as big as a human heart, surrounded with precious stones and pearls.*

And from this Shining One seated upon the throne extended a great circle colored gold like the dawn, whose width I could not take in; it circled about from the East to the North and to the West and to the South, and back toward the East to the Shining One, and had no end. And that circle was so high above the earth that I could not apprehend it; and it shone with a terrifying radiance the color of stone, steel and fire, which extended everywhere, from the heights of Heaven to the depth of the abyss, so that I could see no end to it.

And then I saw a great star, splendid and beautiful, come forth from the One seated on the throne. And with that star came a great multitude of shining sparks, which followed the star toward the South, looking on the One seated on the throne like a stranger; they turned away from Him and stared toward the North instead of contemplating Him. But, in the very act of turning away their gaze, they were all extinguished and were changed into black cinders.

And behold, a whirlwind arose from those cinders, which drove them away from the South, behind the One sitting on the throne, and carried them to the North, where they were precipitated into the abyss and vanished from my sight. But when they were extinguished, I saw the light, which was taken from them, immediately return to Him Who sat on the throne.

And I heard the One Who sat on the throne saying to me, "Write what you see and hear." And, from the inner knowledge of that vision, I replied, "I beseech you, my Lord, give me understanding, that by my account I may be able to make known these mystical things; forsake me not, but strengthen me by the daylight of Your justice, in which Your Son was manifested. Grant me to make known the divine counsel, which was ordained of old, as I can and

should: how You willed Your Son to become incarnate and become a human being within Time; which You willed before all creation in Your rectitude and the fire of the Dove, the Holy Spirit, so that Your Son might rise from a Virgin in the splendid beauty of the sun and be clothed with true humanity, a man's form assumed for Man's sake."

And I heard Him say to me, "Oh, how beautiful are your eyes, which tell of divinity when the divine counsel dawns in them!" And again I answered from the inner knowledge of the vision, "To my own inner soul I seem as filthy ashes of ashes and transitory dust, trembling like a feather in the dark. But do not blot me out from the land of the living, for I labor at this vision with great toil. When I think of the worthlessness of my foolish bodily senses, I deem myself the least and lowest of creatures; I am not worthy to be called a human being, for I am exceedingly afraid and do not dare to recount Your mysteries. O good and kind Father, teach me what to say according to Your will! O reverend Father, sweet and full of grace, do not forsake me, but keep me in Your mercy!"

And again I heard the same One saying to me, "Now speak, as you have been taught! Though you are ashes, I will that you speak. Speak of the revelation of the bread, which is the Son of God, Who is life in the fire of love; Who raises up everyone dead in soul and body, forgives all repented sins in His serene clarity, and awakens holiness in a person and sets it growing. Thus God, the magnificent, glorious and incomprehensible, gave Him as a great intercessor by sending Him into the purity of the Virgin, who had no corruptible weakness in her virginity. No pollution of the flesh should or could have been in the mind of the Virgin; for when the Son of God came in silence into the dawn, which was the humble maiden, Death, the slayer and destroyer of the human race, was deceived without knowing it as if in a dream. Death went on securely, not realizing what life that sweet Virgin bore, for her virginity had been hidden from it. And that Virgin was poor in worldly goods, for the Divine Majesty willed to have her so. Now write about the true knowledge of the Creator in His goodness."

1 The faithful should venerate the magnitude of the fear of the Lord

God, Who created all things and appointed humanity to that glory from which the lost angel and his followers were cast out, should be worshipped and feared by every creature of His with the greatest honor and awe; for it is just that His creatures should worship the Creator of all things and faithfully adore God above all beings. This is symbolized by that stone that you see. For in this mystery it represents the magnitude of the fear of God, which should always arise and live in the hearts of the faithful with purest purpose.

You see it as *a single block of stone, immeasurably broad and high and the*

color of iron; this shows how firmly the fear of God must be held. For God is to be dreaded by every creature with single-heartedness, so that they know He is the one true God, without Whom is no one and like Whom there is no one. *It has immense breadth,* because He is incomprehensible; *and height,* because Divinity is above all else and the highest pitch of any creature's senses cannot understand or attain to it. *Its iron color* means that it is burdensome and hard for human minds to fear God; for this is a heavy burden for soft and fragile dust, and the human creature rebels against it.

2 Every soul that wisely fears God becomes by faith God's throne

The white cloud above that stone is the clear wisdom of the human mind; and *the royal throne above the cloud, round in shape,* is the strong faith of the Christian people. In it, God is faithfully recognized; for wherever the fear of the Lord takes root, human wisdom will also appear, and then God's help will set faith above it, and prepare His rest in it. For when God is feared, He is understood by faith with the help of human wisdom, and these will touch Him as a seat touches its owner. And in them God prepares a seat for Himself, supreme above all else; for neither power nor force can comprehend Him, but He resides in single-minded and pure faith, One above all things.

3 God's mystery is incomprehensible unless He gives faith to do so

And One is sitting on that throne, living and shining and marvellous in His glory, and so bright that you cannot behold Him clearly. He holds to His breast what looks like black and filthy mire, as big as a human heart, surrounded with precious stones and pearls. This is the Living God, Who reigns over all things, shining in goodness and wondrous in His works. The deep mystery of His immense glory can never be perfectly contemplated by anyone, unless faith allows that person to comprehend and bear Him, as a seat contains and surrounds its owner. As the seat is subject to its owner and cannot rise and throw him off, so faith has no proud desire to look upon God, but only touches Him in intimate devotion.

4 In the Father's wisdom the perfection of the elect is revealed

And to His breast, that is in the wisdom of His mystery, for love of His Son He holds that poor, weak, infirm mire that is Man: black in the blackness of sins and filthy in the filthiness of the flesh, but the size of a human heart, which is the breadth of the profound wisdom with which God created Man.

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For He has looked upon those who are saving their souls through penitence, and no matter how in their persistent weakness they have sinned against Him, they will come to Him at last. They are surrounded by ornaments, those great ones who rise up among them: martyrs and holy virgins like precious stones, and innocent and penitent children of redemption like pearls; so that by them the mire is surpassingly adorned, and the virtues, which so gloriously shine in God, shine also in the human body. For He Who put breath and life in Man was scrutinizing Himself. How?

Because He foreknew and decided in advance that His Son would be incarnate to bring redemption; therefore, every stain of sin must be washed away from His body. And so too He knows the souls which, after many and great sins while they are still in the body, will end by being justified; which, after their several errors will walk in God's justice, will be steadfast in Him and shake off their forgetfulness, turning from the vices that wounded them in the earthly places where they fell into sin. And He will also take note of the fact that many peoples have arisen from their erring ways and were brought back from the deadly stench of sin, though they were walking covered with wounds and most dreadful sores; but many will arise who have been wounded so severely by the bitter and harsh pains of sin that their crimes are beyond measure and their evil habits are ingrained, and they are too ill even to summon the energy to do their deadly works, murder and adultery and all the other evils.

5 Example from the Gospel

O wretches! Do they not approach like pilgrims from a far-off land? As the Scripture says in the Gospel, the younger son said, "I will arise and go to my father and say to him, 'Father, I have sinned against Heaven and before you, and am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me as one of your hired servants' " [Luke 15:18]. This is to say: A person who, admonished by the Holy Spirit, comes to himself after a fall into sin says, "I want to rise up from the unendurable sins whose heavy guilt I can no longer bear. I will retrace my steps in memory, lamenting and sorrowing over my sins, until I come to my Father, Who is my Father because He created me. And I will say to him, 'Father, I have sinned against Heaven, wronging the celestial work that is myself; You formed me by Your will, and touched me in creating me, so that I should be only celestial in my deeds, but I have belittled myself by shameful actions. And I have sinned before You, because I have forsaken the humanity of my nature. How? By my many abominations.

" 'Therefore, I am guilty both of losing myself and insulting You, and am not worthy to be called Your son; for in the wickedness of my heart I have led Your creature in me in a path You did not appoint for me. But now,

let me be as Your servant, redeemed at the price of Your Son's blood. You gave Him at a price so great that not even death can ever repay it; but that price allows penitence to arise from Your Son's Passion, and so sets sinners free. I have lost my rightful inheritance as a child of Adam, for he, who was created a son in justice, was stripped of that joyful glory; but now the blood of Your Son and penitence have redeemed the sins of humanity.' "

And thus all should speak who have repeated Adam's fall but then return through penitence and attain to salvation. They should remember the many warnings they have heard told from the Scriptures about the suffering and the blood of their Redeemer, and recall with lamentation how they have transgressed the rules of keeping God's word instead of receiving them with longing. For they neglected His law, which was set up for them to keep when the commandments were instituted, and refused to think about what things they should have done and left undone for fear of the Lord. But they come to the truth nonetheless, remembering what they heard and learned from God; even though they previously were blinded, not desiring to know His justice and avoiding whatever would set that justice they despised above their sins; even though they turned their back on God's word and rejected His law.

Many of these will be superabundant in good things; they will not find it sufficient to feast in the house of the Lord, to celebrate His Divine Office and work His justice to the fullest, but will always be weeping and woefully remembering the evils they did when they cherished unlawful works and ignored the deeds God's law allowed.

6 The meaning of the mire on the breast and why the angels may not spurn Man

This is the filthy mire that you see on the breast of the loving Father. How? The Son of God went forth from the Father's heart and entered into the world; He is surrounded by the people who believe, and by their decision to believe in Him hold to Him. And therefore they also appear on the breast of the gentle Father; and thus neither angel nor any other creature may spurn a human being, since the incarnate Son of the Most High God has human form in Himself. For the blessed choir of angels would regard Man as unworthy, for he stinks of vice and sin, while those heavenly angels themselves are invulnerable and free from any deed of injustice; except that they continually see the face of the Father, and love in the Son what is loved by the Father. What is this? That the Son of God was born as a human. For I, the Father, established My Son, born of the Virgin, for the salvation and restoration of humanity, as My servant, the prophet Isaiah, says to you:

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7 Words of Isaiah

"He shall feed His flock like a shepherd, He shall gather up the lambs with His arm and raise them to His bosom; and He shall carry those who are with young" [Isaiah 40:11]. Which is to say: As a shepherd feeds his flock, so My Son, the Good Shepherd, feeds the flock of His redeemed. How? He feeds it by His law, which He planted through Me. Because My Son is human, He will extend His power like His arm, and gather together the lambs, who by the innocence of baptism, which strips from them the old man and his works, are innocent of Adam's sin; and by His virtues and His law He will take them up into His bosom. How? By lifting them above the height of the heavens and making them members of Himself.

Therefore the human form is to be seen in the inmost nature of the Deity, where neither angels nor any other creatures appear; because My Only-Begotten, to redeem the human race, assumed human form in the flesh of a Virgin. And He will carry in His heart those who are with young. How? My Son carries human beings in His blood, and saves them by His five wounds, for whatever sins they have committed by means of their five senses are washed away by supreme justice when they repent; and He carries them so because He was incarnate, and suffered wounds on the cross, and died and was buried, and rose again from the dead.

And He has stretched out His hand to them and drawn them back to Himself. How? When He assumed humanity for them, though they thought they were lost when Adam fell. For My Only-Begotten conquered death, and it could no longer triumph over them; and so He knew them in the power of His glory, and knew that they were to come to Him by the purgation of penance.

And you see them appear in the bosom of the Father. This means that the Son of Man is perfected with all His members in the secret heart of His Father. How? Because when the world reaches its end, the elect of Christ, who are His members, are to be perfected. O how beautiful is He! As the Psalmist says:

8 Words of David

"Beautiful of form above the children of men" [Psalm 44:3]. This is to say: In Him shines forth beauty beyond beauty, the noblest form free from any spot of sin, without a splash of human corruption, and lacking all desire for the sinful works demanded by fleshly human weakness. None of these ever touched this Man. And the body of the Son of Man was born more purely than other people, for the stainless Virgin bore her Son in ignorance

of sin, and thus ignorant of the sorrow of childbirth. How? She never felt any stubborn urge to sin, and therefore the pains of childbirth were unknown to her; but the wholeness of her body rejoiced within her. Oh, how beautiful then His body!

But let the people know that His bodily beauty was no greater than the profound wisdom that established His human form; for the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, one God in Three Persons, does not delight in the beauty of the flesh but in the humility with which the Son of God clothed Himself in humanity. And in His form there were no exterior blemishes. Sometimes an ordinary person is given by God an ugly appearance as bodies go, as when his limbs are distorted and misshapen and he is a cripple. This is not because nature so forms human bodies, but because of God's judgment; a strong nature is expressed in a proper form, and a weak one in various deformities. But the latter was not the case with My Son.

Humans, I say, are widely divergent in bodily form; they can be black, ugly, polluted, leprous, dropsical and full of defects; they can also be persuaded by devilish art into becoming inflamed with sorcery, stupid, blind to the good things of the Lord or forgetful of what they should praise and what they should blame. For they should do the works of justice, but they do the works of evil and omit the good, despising the cross and the martyrdom of their Lord. But God the Father contemplates this work of mire with the purpose of His goodness, as a father looks at his children when he hugs them to his breast. And, because He is God, He has the love of a tender father for his children. For so great is His heart's inmost love for people that He sent His Son to the cross, like a meek lamb that is carried to the slaughter. And so the Son brought back the lost sheep, bearing them on His shoulder by assuming humanity; which caused Him great sufferings, for He deigned to die for His flock.

But among these people there are many surrounded by ornaments and adorned pricelessly with virtue. They are the martyrs, the virgins, the innocents and the penitents, as I said before, and those who have obeyed their masters, and those who accuse themselves of their sins and tirelessly strive to punish themselves for them, denying the self in them. And who or where these elect are must not be stated; for the numbers of them all have been reckoned.

Does anyone think it possible to see into the deep wisdom of the Most High and into the discernment of His knowledge, and count the number of those who are to be saved? His judgments are incomprehensible to all people. Your task is to run; for the kingdom of God is prepared for you. For as great as is the zeal of the faithful, washed in baptism and known in faith, to fulfil God's justice, so great also shall be their reward.

BOOK THREE

9 The Father does, ordains and perfects all His works through His Son

But you see that *from the One seated upon the throne extends a great circle colored gold like the dawn, whose width you cannot take in.* This means that from the Almighty Father there extends a supremely strong power and action, whose might encircles all things; and He works it through His Son, Who is always with Him in the majesty of Divinity, ordaining and perfecting all His works through Him before all worlds and in the world from its start. His Son glows with the brilliant beauty of the dawn; for He was incarnate in the wisest Virgin, whom the dawn signifies, by the hand of God Which is the Holy Spirit, in Whom also each work of the Father is done. You can never comprehend the full extent of His glory, for no creature has, will have or should have a standard of goodness or power with which to measure His power or His deeds; God's power is inestimable and incomprehensible, and His works are invincible and marvellous.

10 On the revolving circle

And that circle wheels about from the East to the North and to the West and to the South, and back toward the East to the One on the throne, and has no end. This is to say that God's power and His work encircle and include every creature. How? All creatures arose in the will of the Father, Who is One God with the Son and the Holy Spirit, and all feel Him in His power. How? They all feel Him in their creation: He wheels around from the East, the origin of all justice, to the North, where the Devil is confounded, to the West, where the darkness of death tries to extinguish the light of life but the light conquers it and rises again, and to the South, where the ardor of God's justice burns in the hearts of the faithful; and so back to the rising of justice as to the East. What does this mean?

When in God's foreordained time His work shall have been completed in the people of this world, then the circuit of the world will have been made, and the perfection of time and the last day will arrive; and then each work of God, seated in His throne without end, will shine resplendent in His elect. For God is perfect in His power and His work, Who was and is and ever shall be, and His Divinity had no beginning; so that it is not that He will have been, but that He is.

11 God's power is greater than Man can know, and why the angels praise Him

And that circle is so high above the earth that you cannot apprehend it. This is to say that the Supreme Power is so far exalted above the lives of all

creatures and above the sense and intellect of Man, and so incomprehensible in and above all, that no creature's senses can grasp it, except to realize that this Power is much higher than it can know. And therefore the angels sing to God in praise; for they see Him in His power and glory, but they also cannot understand or sense Him completely, and they can never have enough of His magnitude or His beauty.

12 God is manifest justice, true and just without alteration

But that *it shines with a terrifying radiance the color of stone, steel and fire;* this means that the divine power radiates formidable and severe virtue against iniquity that is dissimulated, impenitent or unpunished. This strength is like steel, because God's manifest justice yields nothing to weak injustice; whereas dust, as the saying goes, is unjust and does not please God. His justice, like steel, strengthens all other justice, which is weaker than it as iron is weaker than steel. And this strength is like fire; for He Himself is the Fire of Judgment, burning up all sin and injustice, which refused to bow down before Him and seek His mercy.

And God is like the rock in Man; for He is true and just without any alteration, as stone cannot be changed into softness. He is like steel, piercing everything with His all-penetrating gaze, never changing but remaining God of all things. And he is also like fire, because He inflames and enkindles and illuminates all things without changing over time; for He is God.

13 God's strength, justice and judgment have no boundary Man can sense

And you see that *this radiance extends everywhere, from the heights of Heaven to the depth of the abyss, so that you can see no end to it.* This is to say that the strength of God's power and work, His justice and His upright judgment are everywhere, and neither in the heights of Heaven nor in the depths of the abyss is there any boundary to them that human senses can comprehend.

14 Why and how the first angel and his followers fell

Then you see a great star, splendid and beautiful, come forth from the One seated on the throne, and with that star come a great multitude of shining sparks. For, by the command of the Almighty Father, the angel Lucifer, who now is Satan, came forth from his beginnings adorned with great glory and clothed with brightness and beauty; and with him came all the lesser lights that were his followers, who then shone with brightness but now are extinguished in

darkness. But he was inclined toward evil and did not look on Me the Perfect One; he trusted in himself and thought he could begin anything he wished and finish anything he began. Thus the great honor he owed to the One on the throne, Who was his creator, he gave to himself, and so descended into sin.

But all the sparks that follow the star toward the South look on the One seated on the throne like a stranger; they turn away from Him and stare toward the North instead of contemplating Him. This is to say that Lucifer and all his company, who were miraculously created by the ardent goodness of God, had a secret sin, which was that their pride disdained the One Who reigns in Heaven. All of them, formed at the beginning of Creation, tasted the impiety that leads to perdition, and contemplated God not in order to know His goodness but in order to exalt themselves above Him as if He were a stranger; in their open elation they turned away from knowledge of Him in His glory and hastened toward their fall. *But, in the very act of turning away their gaze, they are all extinguished and are changed into black cinders.* Which is to say that as soon as they disdained to know God, the splendid brilliance with which the divine power had clothed them was extinguished in Lucifer himself and all the followers of his malice; as he destroyed in himself the inner beauty that was his consciousness of good, and gave himself over to impiety, he was erased from eternal glory and fell into eternal loss. Therefore they were all changed into black cinders; stripped of their bright splendor along with their leader, the Devil, they were smothered in darkness and deprived of the glory of beautitude, like a dead coal without its smoldering spark.

Then a whirlwind arises from those cinders, which drives them away from the South, behind the One sitting on the throne, and carries them to the North, where they are precipitated into the abyss and vanish from your sight. This is to say that when these angels of iniquity tried to prevail over God and oppress Him with their pride, the wind of impiety that arose in them was belched forth in bitter perdition, and blew them backward from the South, which means from goodness, into the North, which means into forgetfulness of God the Ruler of all. Thus when they tried to exalt themselves in pride, they were confounded and met their downfall, and were precipitated by their pride into the abyss of eternal death, which is their doom, never again to be seen in brightness. Even so did I tell the noonday forest, which should ardently have borne the fruit of justice and did not, by My servant Ezekiel:

15 Words of Ezekiel

"Behold, I will kindle a fire in you and will burn in you every green tree and every dry tree. The flame of the fire shall not be quenched; and every

face shall be burned in it, from the south to the north. And all flesh shall see that it is I the Lord Who have kindled it; and it shall not be quenched" [Ezekiel 20:47–48]. Which is to say: O fool, who raised yourself up in pride against Me! I Who have neither beginning nor end will bring this to pass: In My zeal I will kindle in you the fire of My wrath, and burn up all your vigor with which you tried to begin a work, trusting in your false energy more than in Me, and choosing to act as your pride dictated on your own foolish wisdom. And I will burn up in you all your dryness, that aridity which belongs to your sin and that of the other lost ones, and in which you tempt humanity, which is ashes, to sin; and this temptation will not bring you back salvation, but will become in you eternal fire. There is no reward of salvation for you or those who follow your example. And that fire of punishment shall not be quenched or abate its tortures, but will burn up that headlong pride in which you looked upon the face of honor and tried to seize it for yourself. And thus were you ejected from all your glory; you rose in the South in clear and ardent light, but you set in the darkness of the North, which is to say in Hell.

And everyone shall see this and know Gehenna, both the elect and the reprobate. The elect will know Gehenna because they have escaped it, and the reprobate because they will remain in it and be punished; knowing that it is the place that I the Lord Almighty have kindled in retribution for your crimes, O Devil, and it will not be extinguished by your evil deeds or those of your followers. So the sin of diabolical pride has cast Satan and his angels into the outer darkness of eternal torment, without any comfort from light; so that there is no place for them in the eternal light, and you, O frail human, cannot see them there any longer. As Ezekiel, imbued with My Spirit, says with mystical significance to the King of Tyre:

"All who see you among the nations will be astonished at you; you are brought to naught, and you shall not be forevermore" [Ezekiel 28:19]. Which is to say: All the upright of heart, O Devil, will be astounded at your filthiness, seeing you drunken with the vices of the nations who embrace you and transgress the laws of God and wither away; for you pollute with temptation God's temple, which is Man. And so, through your pride you are brought to naught and fall from the glory of salvation; for you have no honor and no felicity, and no glory shall be yours in the eternity of Heaven; you are lost from them forever, without end.

16 The glory lost by the Devil and the others was saved by the Father

But when they are extinguished, you see the light that was taken from them immediately return to Him Who sits on the throne. This is to say that

when the Devil, because of his pride and obstinacy, lost his exceeding brilliance (for Lucifer was of purer light than all the other angels), and when the seeds of death entered into him and all his followers, that brilliance returned to God the Father to be kept in His secret heart; for the glory of that splendor was not allowed to go for nothing, but God kept it as a light for another of His creations.

For God, Who commanded one variety of His creatures to arise without flesh yet bright in splendor, namely the Devil and all his company, kept this splendor for the mire that He formed into Man, who arose covered with a vile earthly nature, that he might not exalt himself into the likeness of God. For the one created in bright splendor, and not clothed in a miserable form as humans are, could not sustain his self-exaltation; there is only one Eternal God, without beginning or end. And thus comparing oneself to God is the wickedest of all crimes.

And so I, the God of Heaven, kept the illustrious light, which departed from the Devil because of his crime, and hid it within Myself until I gave it to the mire of the earth, which I had formed in My image and likeness; as does a human being when his son dies and his inheritance cannot pass to children of his. When he has no children to inherit, a father holds the inheritance and plans to give it to children yet unborn, and when they are born from him he gives it to them.

17 The Devil fell without leaving an heir, but fallen Man had one

For the Devil fell without leaving an heir, which is to say without the intention of doing good works; he never accomplished or began anything good, and therefore another received his inheritance. This other also fell, but did have an heir, which was the beginning of obedience; and he received this inheritance with devotion, even though he could not complete the work that went with it. But then God's grace completed that work in the Incarnation of the Savior of the nations, and restored the good inheritance. So Man receives his inheritance in Christ, because he did not reject God's commandments when they were first given; whereas the Devil did not want to serve the Creator for good, but to vaunt his own pride, and so was deprived of the glory and perished in perdition.

18 Example of Goliath and David

As Goliath rose up despising David, so the Devil rose up presuming upon himself and wanting to be like the Most High. And as Goliath was unaware of David's strength and despised him as nothing, so the Devil's towering pride despised the humility of the Son of God's humanity, when

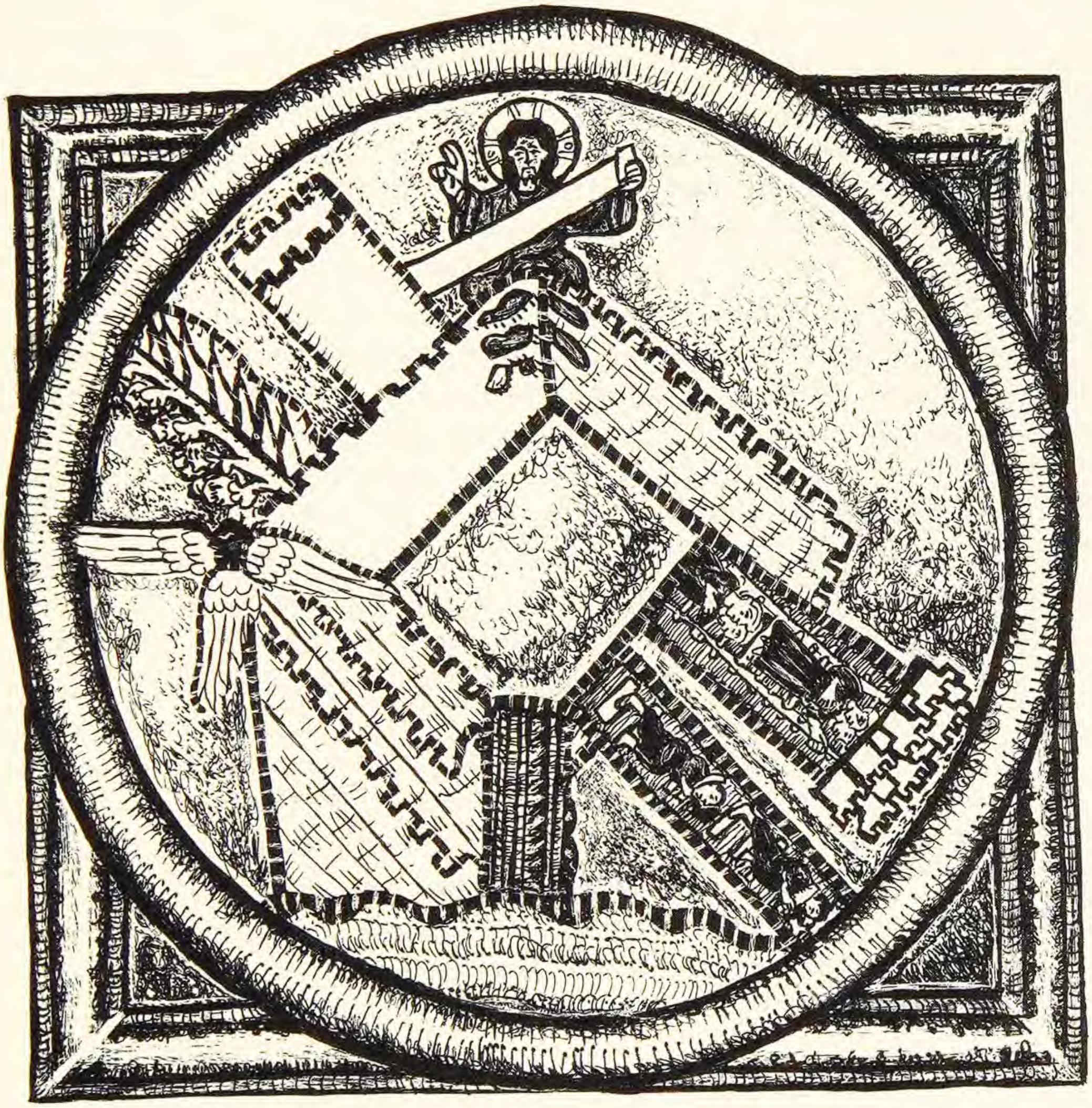
VISION ONE

He was born into the world and sought not His own glory but in all things the glory of the Father. How? The Devil did not seek to imitate this example and submit himself to his Creator as the Son of God submitted Himself to His Father. But David, with the secret strength given to him by God, cut off Goliath's head, as is written by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit:

"And David, taking the head of the Philistine, carried it into Jerusalem; but his arms he placed in his own tent" [1 Kings 17:54]. This is to say: My Son took the spoils and booty of the Devil with His great power and deprived the ancient serpent of his head. Where? In the womb of the Virgin, who crushed that head. Through whom? Through her Son. What is this crushing? The holy humility, which appears both in the Mother and in the Son, and struck at the origin of pride, which is the head of the Devil. And so, in His humility My Son in the body carried that head into the holy Church, which is the vision of peace, and showed it that the pride of the Devil had been slain. The strong arms are the Devil's stubborn vices, by which he had overcome the human race and made them worship him as God; for he had terrified them by his vices as people are terrified by arms. But My Son broke them and placed them in His tent; that is, in the Passion of His body while He suffered on the cross.

So now He lets the battle continue among the tents, which are the bodies of His chosen members, that they may divide with Him the Devil's arms. How? As He conquered the Devil in His Passion, they too may conquer him by restraining themselves from their desires and not being in harmony with his vices. And, to extend the metaphor, as the glory of Goliath was given to David, so the glory that was taken from the first angel was given by Me to Adam and his race, which confesses Me and keeps My precepts, after the Devil's pride was destroyed.

But let the one who has ears sharp to hear inner meanings ardently love My reflection and pant after My words, and inscribe them in his soul and conscience.



THE BUILDING OF SALVATION

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VISION TWO
The Edifice of Salvation

Then I saw, within the circumference of the circle, which extended from the One seated on the throne, a great mountain, joined at its root to that immense block of stone above which were the cloud and the throne with its Occupant; so that the stone was continued on to a great height and the mountain was extended down to a wide base.

And on that mountain stood a four-sided building, formed in the likeness of a four-walled city; it was placed at an angle, so that one of its corners faced the East, one faced the West, one the North and one the South. The building had one wall around it, but made of two materials: One was a shining light like the light of the sky, and the other was stones joined together. These two materials met at the east and north corners, so that the shining part of the wall went uninterruptedly from the east corner to the north corner, and the stone part went from the north corner around the west and south corners and ended in the east corner. But that part of the wall was interrupted in two places, on the west side and on the south side.

This building was a hundred cubits long and fifty cubits wide, so that the two side walls were of equal length and the front and back walls were of equal length. But the four walls were equal in height except for the bulwarks, which were somewhat taller.

And between the building and the light of the circle, which extended from the height to the abyss, at the top of the east corner there was only a palm's breadth; but at the north and west and south corners, the breadth of separation between the building and the light was so great that I could not grasp its extent.

And as I was marvelling, the One seated on the throne again said to me:

1 Faith rose in the circumcision of Abraham and climaxed in the Incarnation

Faith appeared faintly in the saints of the Old Testament, who did that justice which was constructed on high in the goodness of the Father. But at the Incarnation of the Son of God, it burst into burning light by the open manifestation of ardent deeds; for the Son of God did not desire transitory things, and taught by example that they should be trampled underfoot and

only celestial things loved. The early patriarchs did not flee or separate themselves from the world, for it had not yet been shown them that they should forsake all things; but they worshipped God with simple faith and humble devotion.

Therefore, *you see within the circumference of the circle, which extends from the One seated on the throne, a great mountain, joined at its root to that immense block of stone above which are the cloud and the throne with its Occupant; so that the stone is continued on to a great height and the mountain is extended down to a wide base.* This is to say that the mountain, which signifies faith, stands within the mighty and strongly built power of the Supreme Father; this faith, great in virtue, first appeared in the circumcision of Abraham and progressed until the coming of the Supreme God's Son. Since the ancient serpent was ruined, this faith has been inspired in people by the Holy Spirit; faithfully working in the Father, they can believe that God is almighty, Who could conquer so great an enemy, and uplifted by this belief, they can attain to that glory from which the Devil was cast out for his pride.

2 Faith and fear of the Lord are joined to one another

And this mountain is rooted in that immense stone, which holds the mystery of the fear of the Lord; for faith is connected to constant fear of the Lord, and fear of the Lord to the strength of faith. This is because the Son was sent from the Father to be born of the Virgin, and from the Son came forth true faith, which was the first foundation of the good works that fear of the Lord brings forth with all the virtues, whose height touches God. And so, in the wise minds of the faithful, God Who reigns over all things is faithfully worshipped. How? Because fear of the Lord, with its sharp contemplative sight, penetrates the secrets of Heaven; for fear is the beginning of a just intention, and when that flowers into sanctity by good works, it joins with blessed faith and reaches God in full perfection.

3 The faithful build good works on faith in all four corners of the earth

And on that mountain stands a four-sided building, formed in the likeness of a four-walled city; which is to say that the goodness of the Father builds good works on faith. Gathering multitudes of the faithful from the four corners of the earth, he draws them to celestial things and fortifies them in constancy of virtue; then the Heavenly Father graciously places them in His bosom, which is to say in His inner power and His mystical counsel, in four categories of faith. How?

4 On the four categories

I Who am the Most High ordained in My work the first category of people, the race of Adam; which race, after his death, went on weakened by great discord until the second arose. This was at the coming of Noah, when the Flood took place; in which, by the Ark, I foretold the mysteries of My Son. But in the time of Noah, by My commands I showed the shining part of the wall of the building; by drowning sinners in the flood, I implied to people that they should flee death and seek life, and thus opened to them the knowledge of the choice between the two ways. What does this mean?

A person flourishes and thrives in the living life, which is the soul, and in it he contemplates and sees two ways, good and evil; either way is open to him, so that while he is in the body he can do good or evil with soul and body, starting with his mental choice and perfecting his will in his deeds. And so, in Noah, by My command there was shown the knowledge of the choice between the two ways, and a sharp warning to spurn evil and love good. And, with the decree of circumcision, this anticipation of God's will leads to the third category, in which Abraham and Moses were united in circumcision and the Law. Circumcision and the Law continued until the fourth category, the time of the Holy Trinity, when the Old Testament was openly fulfilled in the Son of God. And so, through the Son of God an inner shoot arose in the Church; He was born and suffered for human salvation, rose again and returned to the Father, and so restored that corner of the wall that had been obscured and weakened by Adam's fall, building it up again with saved human souls.

5 People must go forward humbly and wisely flee the Devil's snares

But the fact that *the building is placed at an angle* means that Man, who is the work of God, is too weak to go forward by conquering the Devil by force, without fear of sin or bodily harm; he must humbly avoid the Devil and wisely flee his snares, and faithfully unite himself to good works. Thus he will be established on the Son of God, Who sits in the corner and is the Cornerstone, and thus join himself to the work of human salvation.

6 The four corners of the building and what they mean

But one of its corners faces the East, one faces the West, one the North and one the South. This means the following. The Son of God was born of the Virgin and suffered in the flesh that justice might arise and humanity be restored to life with all justice; and that is the eastern corner. From it arose the salvation of souls when in His Son God fulfilled justice; which was

prefigured from the time of Abel till the coming of the Son Himself, and in Him was ended the physical observance of the laws in the Old Testament. Then came the salvation of faithful people by their faith, which in the last times the Son of God Who was sent by the Father brought into the world, which is the western corner. In Abraham and in Moses justice raised itself against the Devil, and they foreshadowed the promised grace through which Man was saved, though the Devil had deceived him and slain him like a robber in Adam's fall, which is the northern corner. And the wretched and fatal fall of the human race was at last through heavenly grace nobly and beautifully restored, and the ardent work of God and man bore full fruit, which is the southern corner.

7 Another meaning for the corners

The southern corner also means that the first man, Adam, was created by God. But the knowledge of the choice of the two roads does not come from this corner; which means that from Adam on the human race was disorderly and did not worship God in wisdom by eager service to the Law, but did its own will in great evil. It did not glow with knowledge of God or true beatitude, but lay in death; but what the Father willed to do with the human race lay hidden only in His heart. The eastern corner designates Noah, in whom justice began to show itself; thus there was openly manifested and foreshadowed the knowledge of sanctity that would later be perfected in the Son of God. And because in the Son of God, Who is the true Orient, every kind of justice began, and for the sake of His sanctity and honor, first truly declared in Noah, the building should always be named starting from the east.

The northern corner also means Abraham and Moses, who, working against Satan, surrounded that knowledge as if with precious stones and roofed it in with the golden roof of God's manifest justice, which was circumcision and the Law. For, before circumcision and the Law, justice was naked and without deeds.

And the fourth, the western corner, also means the true Trinity, which showed Itself when the Savior was baptized; and He returned to Heaven with all his work to save souls, and built there the true holy city Jerusalem.

8 God gives people fortifications and defenses of their good works

The building has one wall around it, but made of two materials: One is a shining light like the light of the sky, and the other is stones joined together.

These two materials meet at the east and north corners. This is to say that the goodness of the Father gives people unbroken security, in the form of a fortification and defense of their good works; and thus, surrounded and strengthened by them, people may forsake the lusts of the flesh and fly to the One God Who is their protection.

The wall is of two materials. The first is the knowledge of the choice of the two roads, which is given to people when they speculate and think clearly with their minds, to make them circumspect in all their affairs; and the second is earthy human flesh, for people were created by God to do active deeds.

9 On the reflective knowledge

And the knowledge shines as brightly as daylight, because through it people know and judge their actions, and the human mind that is carefully considering itself is radiant. For this beautiful knowledge appears in people like a white cloud, and passes through human minds as swiftly as the cloud moves through the air; and it shines like daylight, because when God graciously does His most splendid work in humans and they avoid evil, the good they accomplish is as bright in them as the day.

And every human deed proceeds from this knowledge. How? Each person can have two ways. How? With his sensibilities he knows good and evil; and when he moves away from evil by doing good he imitates God, Who works good in Himself, Who is just and knows no injustice. But when he does evil, the wily Devil entangles him in sins, for the Devil seeks iniquity and flees sanctity, and will not rest until he holds the person bound by evil deeds. But if the person breaks free of evil and does good, the Supreme Goodness will receive him; for he has conquered himself for the love of God, Who handed over his Son for him to the death of the cross.

This knowledge is reflective because it is like a mirror; for as a person sees his face in a mirror and discerns beauty or blemishes, so too in the finished deeds he ponders within himself, he can knowingly discern good and evil. For this discernment is part of the reason with which God inspired Man when He breathed life and soul into his body. The life of animals is deficient, because it is not rational; the human soul is never deficient, but because of its rationality it will live forever. And so a person contemplating good and evil knows whether a deed is wicked or good; he was formed by the grace of God and given reason at the beginning of creation, and in the choice of baptism and the salvation of souls in the New Testament he is restored by that same grace. As My most loving Paul says about this election of grace:

BOOK THREE

10 Words of Paul

"There is a remnant saved according to the election of grace. And if by grace, it is not by works; otherwise grace is no longer grace" [Romans 11:5–6]. This is to say: The remnant, who are not inside the snare of death, shall not stoop to the Devil's example, for they were openly saved when God sent His Son to become incarnate; and this is the election of grace, manifested for human salvation. How?

The grace of God created Man, but by evil works he fell. Then the election of grace was shown in the chosen vessel; for the Son of God was born from the Virgin, and it was not possible for Him to lapse. For if a person makes something useful for himself and it is taken away from him by someone else, he will get himself something even more useful that no one will take, and be content with it. And this is the way the grace of God acted. It made Adam, the first man, and the Devil drew him away from innocent deeds; but then grace brought the fullness of good works and the salvation of souls through the Son of God. But if the grace of God was the cause of salvation, then it was not caused by the merit of any human deeds. How?

There was no justice in Adam's deeds; therefore, humanity would never have returned to salvation by the merit of its works, except that it was restored by grace through the works of the just Son, Who was obedient to His Father, and cleansed by baptism, which the Son of God gave to humanity along with good works. So in this work the grace of God collaborates with humanity, and humanity with it. And therefore the grace of God goes with this work, and the work has arisen from grace.

But if salvation arose from human merit, and righteous human deeds stemmed from the people themselves and not the grace of God, grace would no longer be grace. How? Because then Man would stem from himself and not from God, and no creature would give thanks to God, and the grace of God would be nothing. But as it is, the grace of God has given people the support of reason, that they may work justice in the knowledge of good and evil; and by this knowledge they can seek the good and cast away evil, and so know life and death and choose which one to stay with. As Solomon says in his knowledge of wisdom:

11 Words of Solomon

"He has set before you water and fire; stretch forth your hand to whichever you will" [Ecclesiasticus 15:17]. This is to say: When the soul awakens God gives it a great and acute power, the knowledge of evil and good, which are water and fire. For as water overflows and conceals in its

depths deadly creatures and useless things, so a person overflows with evil deeds and conceals them lest he be discovered. And as fire burns and leaves no impurity unconsumed, or as a craftsman purifies jewelry by fire to remove its rust, so too does good purify a person, melting the rust of wickedness off him. Now water and fire are inimical, extinguishing or evaporating each other. And so too does a person: He kills good by evil, or evil by good, and either way he silently hides his desires within himself and turns them over in his mind.

12 On the working of the two motives

And while he is mulling over these desires, the person's will makes its choice of the way he wants to go, and he stretches out his hand to it and moves along it by his deeds. He does good work by God's help through grace, and he does evil by the Devil's craft and his artful temptations; and the person himself observes his deeds by the exercise of his reason. With this reason he contemplates good and evil, and the desire rises in him to choose between the two ways, good and evil, according to his will. What does this mean?

The person has the choice in that his mind's desires reflect different things to him like a mirror, and he says to himself, "If only I could do this or that!" He has not yet done them in actuality, but he has thought about them. So he stands at the fork of two roads, with knowledge of the motives of good or evil; and as he desires so at last he does, and travels upward or downward.

13 Righteous institutions arose in Abraham and Moses

And the other part of the wall, as you see, is like stones joined together; which symbolizes the human race, but also designates the righteous institutions that came from the minds of people like Abraham, Moses and the others, who were the preliminary offshoots of the Law of God and all its just additions up to the end of time. How? God works in Man and through Man; thus He sent His Son to save humanity at the end of the time of the Law, working in a sinless human body. And He took the foundation of faith on Himself, and carried the whole human race with Him, even the first man who was cast out of Paradise for transgressing justice. And He achieved this wondrous deed for humanity through His Law, in which He embraced all Christians; and they make up this building in the goodness of the Father, because Man will live in the celestial Jerusalem.

BOOK THREE

14 Reflective knowledge began in Noah but iniquity reigned uninterrupted

So the two kinds of wall join each other on the east and on the north. For reflective knowledge and human labor join together to end the injustice in which the human race was entangled when it forgot God. From Adam arose the raging injustice of the world before the flood; and because of that world's iniquity, the injustice was drowned with the people in the flood of waters. And then reflective knowledge first appeared, by My inspiration, in Noah's knowledge of good as in the east corner, as was foretold. But though God's admonition flourished in Noah, bold and greedy evil arose again and marched triumphantly to the North. And the iniquity of division from God was not trodden underfoot until Abraham, in whom, as in the north corner, it was choked off and the penetrating light of God's justice arose.

And truly the shining part of the wall goes uninterruptedly from the east corner to the north corner. This is to say that reflective knowledge to fortify human minds first appeared in the east corner, that is, in the days of Noah. Before Noah, iniquity sought to do all it could to mock God, and so people followed their own lusts instead of loving to worship God; and the first descendants of Adam were completely devoured by the Devil, because the knowledge was hidden from them, until in Noah that knowledge was displayed openly. This had been foreshadowed even when the Devil was confident that the whole human race was in his power. But iniquity went on as far as the north corner, that is, until the coming of Abraham and Moses; for before them, iniquity still reigned almost supreme, not yet interrupted or defeated by the established justice of God's Law, since circumcision and the Law had not yet been given. But by these fathers the Devil began to be confounded, where previously he had reigned confidently in the world; in the words of Paul, My light-giving vessel of election:

15 Words of Paul

"Death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who had not sinned in the same way as Adam, who was a type of Him Who was to come" [Romans 5:14]. Which is to say: Death reigned, with no competitors or conquerors, from the time of Adam to the time of Moses. How? Before Moses the severity and dignity of the Law had not yet been given, except the small preview of it in the circumcision Abraham accomplished at God's command; and so deathly vice went from error to error as it pleased. But then, by God's will, there arose the strong soldier Moses, and he prepared stout weapons of justice, which destroyed the worship of death by means of the Law, which contained in itself the complete salvation of souls, because it

foreshadowed the Son of God. Death indeed even ruled the innocent, who were simple and moderate and did not repeat in their actions the deeds of Adam. And Adam was a type of Him Who was to come. How? God created Adam just and innocent of all thought or deed of sin; and so too the Son of God was born of the Virgin Mary, with no stains of sin.

16 Righteousness is shown in Abraham and Moses, justice in the Incarnation

But you see that *the stone part goes from the north corner around the west and south corners and ends in the east corner.* This means that the righteous works of humans, with which God fortified them, came forth from the north corner, which is to say from the circumcision of Abraham and the Law of Moses and the justice they inspired in people. They continued to the west corner, where open justice arose in the Incarnation of the Son of God; went on from there to the south corner, where through baptism and the other just works of the new-chosen Bride of the Son of God ardent deeds were enkindled to restore Adam to salvation; and at last returned to the east corner, to end restored to the Supreme Father. How? The Supreme Father in His mystery ordained every work of justice that would bring the first, fallen man back into salvation by a return to God. How? Man had fallen, and so I arose in mercy and sent My Son to restore salvation to souls, as My servant the psalmist David shows, saying:

17 Words of David

"His will is in the law of the Lord, and on that law he shall meditate day and night" [Psalm 1:2]. Which is to say that the will of the Father to save is contained in the law of justice His Only-Begotten showed to the world: Who is One God with the Father and the Holy Spirit and rules the whole globe. And He, the Son of the Father, was incarnate and seen as a visible Man, and in the flesh was uplifted above all creatures. How? The Son of God was begotten of His Father before all worlds and later, in the last times, born into the world of a mother; but while He was not yet incarnate He remained invisible within the Father as the will is invisible in a person before it is shown in a deed, and then later appeared visibly in the flesh for human salvation.

So the Almighty Father meditates with His Son upon an act of justice to counter the original fall of Adam. Where? In the love of His Son, Who was before time began in the Father in the glory of divinity, and then became miraculously incarnate at the appointed epoch of the world, when the Father sent Him from His heart into the world as the High Priest of all justice.

Therefore the Son embodied the law of justice, as He received it from the Father when Christian law was made.

And on that law, which the Father willed to establish and make through His Son, He meditates by day. How? He Himself is the Day; and in that Day, before He made any transitory creature and while no darkness or iniquity existed in any creation of His, He meditated on His Son's law.

And also by night. How? Because when evil arose in His creatures, which is like the darkness of night in angels and people, the Father continued to meditate, and will do so until the last day, as long as His ineffable works shall last; He shows and reveals the law of His Son when in Him He perfects all the good deeds that are to be perfected in Man.

18 Christ's members and the Church still lack the perfection they will have

But you see that *the stone part of the wall is interrupted in two places, on the west side and on the south side.* This is to say that the work of the human race to fortify its defenses is still unfinished in two areas. The members of the Son of God, His chosen, remain imperfect, which is to say that the west side is interrupted, since from there the Son of God was sent in these last times into the world. And the Church is also still imperfect in virtue, not as she will be set up and established in the celestial Jerusalem, so that the south side is interrupted, for the Church will be perfected in Heaven.

19 The number ten, diminished by Adam, is multiplied again by Christ

This building is a hundred cubits long, which means that the mystical number ten was diminished by humanity when it transgressed, but was restored by My Son and multiplied by ten to a hundred, as virtues were multiplied in the salvation of souls. And from the hundred, again multiplied by the ten, there will come the perfect number one thousand, referring to the virtues that will completely destroy the thousand arts of the Devil, which now seduce the whole flock of Almighty God's lovely sheep. What does this mean?

I, the Omnipotent, in the beginning made lights that burned and lived, shining in splendor, some of which stood fast in My love, but some despised Me their Creator and fell. But it did not befit Me, the Creator, to discard what I had made as useless and ruined. How? A part of the angelic creation grew proud of the good the Creator gave it that it might know Him, and decided that it could take on false glory and be like its Creator; and so it fell

into death. Then God foresaw that what had fallen in this lost group could be more firmly restored in another. How? He created Man from the mud of the earth, living in soul and body, to attain to that glory from which the apostate Devil and his followers were cast out. Man is thus exceedingly dear to God, Who made him truly in His own image and likeness; he was to exercise all the virtues in the perfection of holiness, as indeed God formed all creatures to do, and to work in humble obedience to do acts of virtue, and so to fulfil the function of praise among the more glorious orders of angels. And thus, in this height of blessedness he was to augment the praise of the heavenly spirits who praise God with assiduous devotion, and so fill up the place left empty by the lost angel who fell in his presumption.

And so Man symbolizes the full number ten, perfecting these things by the power of God. But in this figure ten is multiplied to a hundred. For Man was seduced by the Devil and fell away from God; but at last he was admonished by divine mercy and inspiration, began to acknowledge God in the law and prophecy of the Old Testament, and then attained more insight by the sanctity and the means of constancy in virtue given by the Church.

And so, starting with Abel, Man began to practice all the virtues, and will continue to perfect them until the day of the last just person; and this is why the length of the building is the number one hundred, which God shows to humanity in a mystical figure that it may not despair if it falls back into iniquity, but rise above it and vigorously do the work of God. For anyone who falls into sin but then rises from it again will be stronger than he was before, as God gave greater and stronger virtues to humanity by sending His Son into the world to raise up the prostrate human race than it had had before.

And therefore people work more strongly in soul and body than if they had no difficulty in doing it, since they struggle against themselves in many perils; and, waging these fierce wars together with the Lord God Who fights faithfully for them, they conquer themselves, chastising their bodies, and so know themselves to be in His army. But an angel, lacking the hardships of an earthly body, is a soldier of Heaven only in its harmonious, lucid and pure constancy in seeing God; while a human, handicapped by the filth of his body, is a strong, glorious and holy soldier in the work of restoration, which he does in soul and body for the sake of God. And so by the number one hundred of his present labor he attains to the one thousand of future repayment; on the last day he will receive his full and eternal reward, and rejoice in soul and body without end in the celestial habitations. And so the diminished ten is recovered through My Son, Who was born of the Virgin and suffered on the cross, and brought back humanity to the realms of Heaven. As My Son says in the Gospel:

BOOK THREE

20 Words of the Gospel

"What woman who has ten coins, if she loses one of them, does not light a candle, and sweep the house until she finds it? And when she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbors, and says, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my coin that was lost' " [Luke 15:8–9]. Which is to say: The Holy Divinity had ten coins, namely ten orders of the heavenly hierarchy, including the chosen angels and Man. It lost one coin when Man fell into death by following the Devil's temptations instead of the divine precepts. Hence the Divinity kindled a burning lamp, namely Christ, Who was true God and true Man and the splendid Sun of Justice; and with Him He swept the house, namely the Jewish people, and searched the Law for all the meaning of salvation, and established a new sanctification, and found His coin, Man, whom He had lost. Then He called together His friends, namely earthly deeds of justice, and His neighbors, namely spiritual virtues, and said, "Rejoice with Me in praise and joy, and build the celestial Jerusalem with living stones, for I have found Man, who had perished by the deception of the Devil!"

21 The five wounds of Christ wipe out human sins

And you see that *the building is fifty cubits wide,* which is to say that the whole breadth of the vices of humanity, which should have built on and revered the work of God but instead followed its own lusts, is mercifully wiped out and forgiven by the five wounds that My Son suffered on the cross. So the wounds of His hands obliterated the deed of disobedience done by the hands of Adam and Eve, and the wounds of His feet cleared the path of exile for humanity to return, and the wound of His side, from which sprang the Church, wiped out the sin of Eve and Adam after Eve was made from Adam's side. And therefore My Son was nailed to the tree, to abolish what had been done through the tree that occasioned sin; and therefore He drank vinegar and gall, to take away the taste of the harmful fruit.

22 The Holy Spirit made Man's five senses able to know good and evil

The wall is five cubits high, which refers to the virtue of divine knowledge of the Scriptures, which imbue Man's five senses for the sake of the work of God. The Holy Spirit breathed on them for people's good; for with the five senses people can regard the height of Divinity, and discern both good and evil.

23 Soul and body must work to avoid evil and do good in all circumstances

Thus *the two side walls are of equal length;* for, contained within the edifice of God's goodness, people must work with great constancy with the two side walls of soul and body flanking them. How? To avoid evil and do good. How? The profound and incomprehensible power of God created Man to worship God with all his strength and all his might and with all the devotion of his intelligent reason; and it is right that the Creator of all things should, before and above everything, be worshipped worthily as God.

24 The mind must have the wisdom and discernment to know God

Therefore *the front and back walls are of equal length;* for in the work of God wisdom and discretion are like two walls, with wisdom as the higher part and discretion as the lower. And God imbues the whole of the human mind with these, an equitable and just gift, that the mind may know Him.

25 People should gain devout faith from considering the four elements

But *the four walls are equal in height, except for the bulwarks, which are somewhat taller.* This is to say that Man, living as he does among the four elements, should hold high the Catholic faith with constant devotion and veneration through the goodness of the Father; he should worship the Son with the Father and the Holy Spirit, as the Son does all Their works in Them. How? Every work that the Son of God has done and is doing, He perfects through the goodness of the Father in the Holy Spirit. What does this mean? According to the will of the Father, the Son in His great goodness redeemed humanity through His Incarnation; for the Father ordained that the Son should be born of the Virgin, conceived by the Holy Spirit, and assume humanity for love of Man to bring him back to restored life. Therefore Man has a part in God, and can enter into salvation with Him, if he has the true Catholic faith and knows the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit as the one true God.

26 The faithful person ascends from virtue to virtue

The bulwarks are much higher. How? Because when a person regards the height of goodness in his mind, he then builds a high wall of faith by virtue of the work of God. Then he ascends above that rational faith, which

shows him God in the power of His Divinity, and on it he builds bulwarks of virtue higher than the wall. How? He finds that it is not enough to have faith in God, and so builds virtues that rise higher; and so he grows, like a flourishing palm tree, from virtue to virtue, and by these virtues his righteous faith is exalted and adorned as bulwarks do a city.

27 The Father sent His Son into the world to do His will and redeem Man

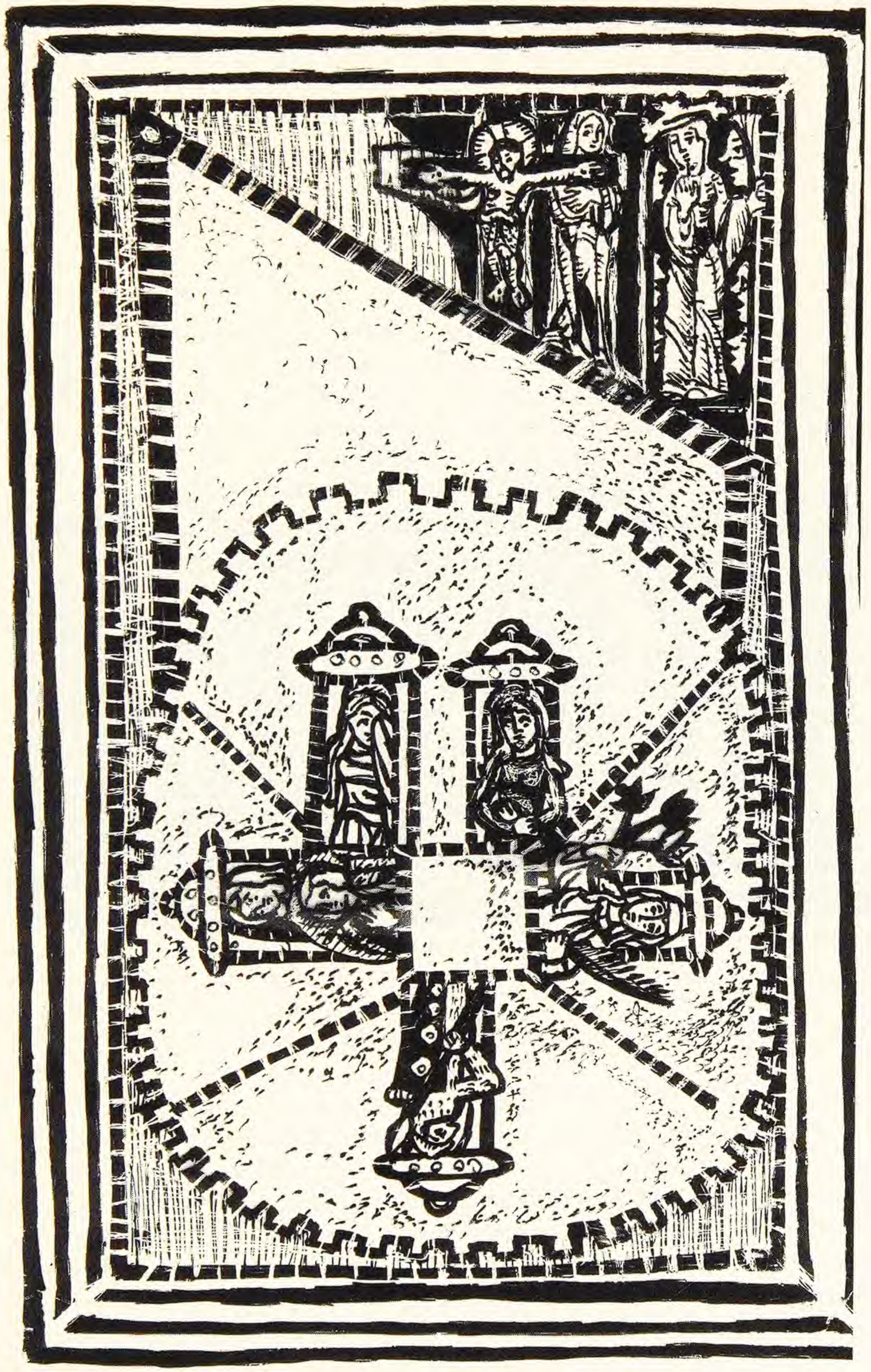
And between the building and the light of the circle, which extends from the height to the abyss, at the top of the east corner there is only a palm's breadth. This is the width of the heavenly secrets that lie between the work of the Son of God when He lived in the world and did divine works, here shown as a building, and the power of the Father, which expands in mighty splendor into the places below and the places above. He sent His Son into the world to be the capstone of the corner that faces east, made up of the justice first prefigured in Noah and perfected in the Incarnation of the Son. Thus these secrets were, so to speak, just a hand's breadth wide, the distance from the thumb to the little finger of the flat hand; and that was the time ordained in the heart of the Father when He willed to send His Son. He sent Him with a strong hand, and surrounded Him with all the joints of His fingers, which are His works in the Holy Spirit, that He might accomplish the will of His Father and suffer upon the cross for the wretched and contemptible disobedience with which the Devil inspired the first man. To redeem that man from that sin God's mercy bent down to earth, and the incomprehensible height of divinity was contained in the humanity of the Son of God.

28 The defeat of evil and the goals of justice are secrets of God's will

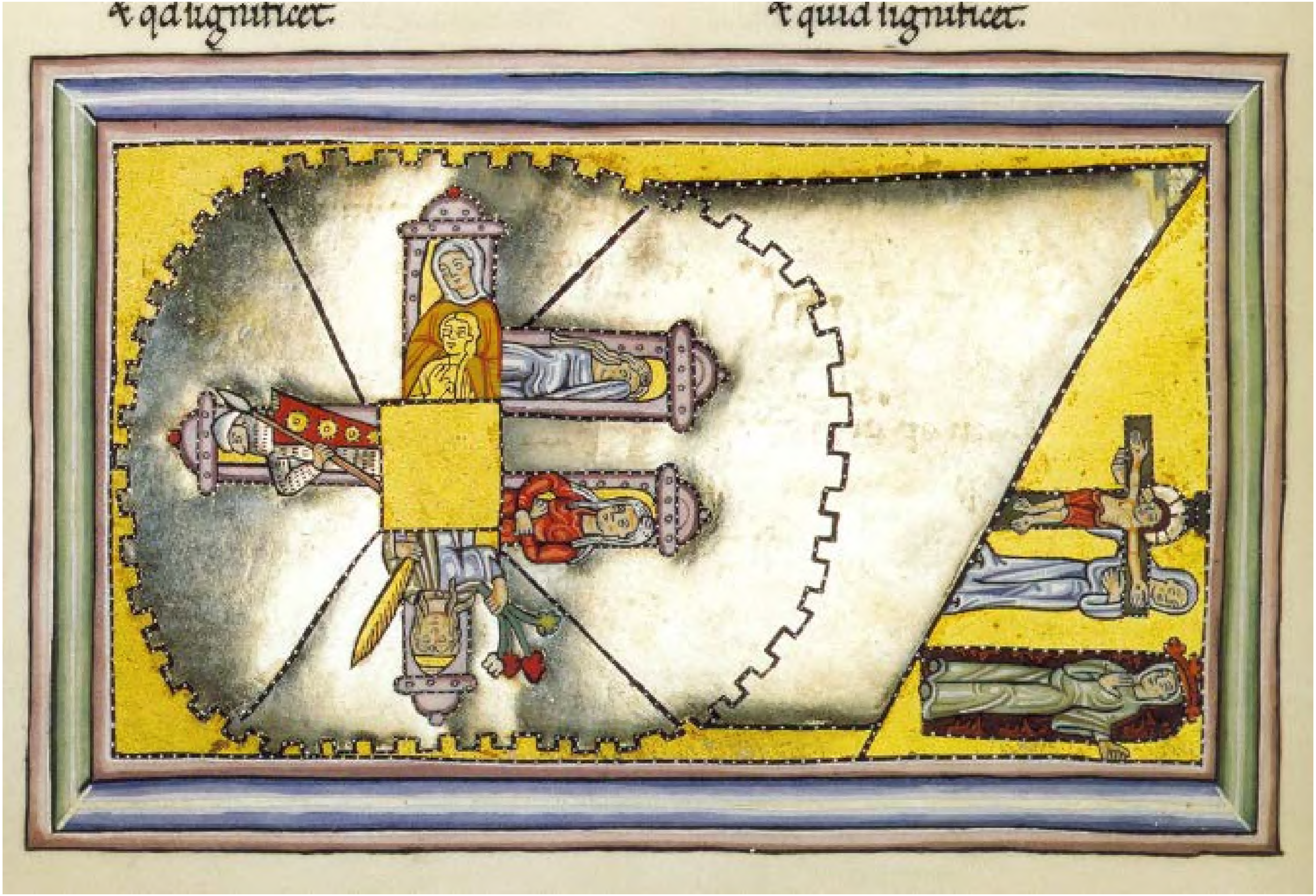
But at the north and west and south corners the breadth of separation between the building and the light is so great that you cannot grasp its extent. This is to say that no one weighed down by a mortal body can understand the elation of evil in the heart of the Devil in the North; or its consummation in active creatures in the West of fallen Man; or the beginning or end of the supernal justice, which is the ardent South. Nor can such a one see how these things are worked out and differentiated between the deeds of all peoples and the power of My knowledge. Both the elect and the reprobate are subjected to a just scrutiny and examined most diligently and strictly on their [obedience] to My precepts; and all should trust in Me to feed them in all their needs. But all these things are so hidden in My secret counsels that human

senses and understanding can never take in or understand the extent of their profundity, except as far as is granted by My permission.

But let the one who has ears sharp to hear inner meanings ardently love My reflection and pant after My words, and inscribe them in his soul and conscience.



TOWER OF GOD'S ANTICIPATING WILL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FIVE VIRTUES

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VISION THREE
The Tower of Anticipation of God's Will

After this I looked, and behold! In the middle of the shining part of the building's outer wall there stood an iron-colored tower, which was built out from the outer side. It was four cubits wide and seven cubits high. In it I saw five figures standing separately, each in its own arch with a conical turret above it. The first of these faced the East, the second the Northeast, the third the North, and the fourth the pillar of the Word of God at whose foot was the patriarch Abraham; and the fifth faced the tower of the Church and the people who were hastening here and there in the building.

And the five figures resembled each other in being dressed in silk garments and white shoes, except the fifth, who was armored at all points. The second and third were bareheaded, with loose white hair, and wore no cloak; the first, third and fourth wore white tunics; and this was all the difference between them.

The first figure wore on her head a bishop's miter, and had loose white hair; and she wore a white pallium, whose two borders were adorned on the inside with embroidered purple. In her right hand she held lilies and other flowers, and in her left hand a palm. And she said, "O sweet life, O sweet embrace of eternal life, O blessed happiness, in which consist the eternal rewards! For You are always in true delight, and so I can never be filled or sated with the inner joy that is in my God."

And the second was clothed in a purple tunic, and stood like a youth who has not yet attained adulthood but is very serious. And she said, "Neither the dreadful foe who is the Devil nor the hostility of humans nor this world shall frighten me, who stand in the discipline of God and am constantly in His sight."

The third covered her face with the white sleeve that clothed her right arm, and said, "O filth and uncleanness of this world! Hide yourselves and flee from my eyes, for my Beloved was born of the Virgin Mary."

The fourth had her head veiled in womanly fashion with a white veil, and was hung about with a yellow cloak. On her breast was a picture of Jesus Christ, and around it was written, "Through the depths of the mercy of our God, in which the Dayspring from on high has visited us" [*Luke 1:78*]. And she said, "I stretch out my hands always to pilgrims, and the needy, and the poor and weak, and those who groan."

But the fifth was armed and arrayed with a helmet on her head, and a

breastplate and greaves, and iron gloves; a shield hung from her left shoulder; she was girded with a sword and she held a spear in her right hand. And under her feet a lion lay, its mouth open and its tongue hanging out, and some people also stood; some were blowing trumpets, some fooling with instruments used in shows, and some playing different games. And that figure trampled the lion under her feet, and at the same time pierced these people with the spear she held in her right hand. And she said, "I conquer the strong Devil, and you also, Hate and Envy and Filth, with your deceptive jesters."

And inside the building I saw two other figures standing opposite this tower. The first stood on the floor of the building, in a niche of fiery splendor whose inside was painted with pictures of various evil spirits and which was across from the tower. The other figure stood next to this niche but was outside it and had no niche of its own. Both figures looked sometimes at the tower and sometimes at the people who were entering and leaving the building. These figures were also dressed in silk garments and veiled in women's fashion in white head-coverings, and wore no cloaks but had on white shoes.

And the first of these had on her head a three-sided crown, of a glowing red like a hyacinth, and was clad in a white tunic, with green embroideries in all the folds. And she said, "I conquer in the East with the mighty Son of God, Who went forth from the Father and came into the world to redeem humanity, and afterward died in great suffering on the cross, rose from the dead, ascended into Heaven and returned to the Father. Therefore I shall not be confounded, but will flee from the miseries and pains of this world."

And the second was clad in a white tunic, which was slightly tinged with color; and on her right arm she carried a cross with the image of the Savior, over which she bent her head. And she said, "This child bore many sorrows in this world, and therefore I will weep and know sorrow always for the sake of eternal joy, into which the good sheep will be led by the Son of God."

And I saw that all these figures were uttering their individual speeches through the mystery of God, to admonish humans. And again the One sitting on the throne, Who was showing me all these things, said to me,

1 The divine virtues put forth by the Law bear fruit in the Gospel

By the strength and constancy of God's will, the divine virtues sprang up gradually in the Old Testament; but to those who revered them almost in ignorance, they did not yet taste completely sweet and delightful. For then, the Law was seen only in austerity, sharply correcting the delinquent; but afterward, these virtues by the grace of God brought forth much fruit in the new Law, showing the hungry the sweetest, strongest and most perfect food, the love of celestial things. Previous to this, as was said, certain hidden

things were a sign of what was to come; and so this miraculous vision appropriately shows.

For *this tower you see standing in the middle of the shining part of the building's outer wall* is the image of the anticipation of God's will, shown in many different ways and meanings in the circumcision; so that by the sign of circumcision God displayed the Law, and by the Law the grace of the Gospel. For by the faith manifested in Abraham, there arose in him also the circumcision, a true prefiguration of the mystery; beginning in him, the divine power built up strong virtues, as it were in the middle of the road of the knowledge of the two ways, defended by the goodness of the Supreme Father. And these virtues were by God's will destined to appear openly; they foreshadowed His will before He displayed it manifestly in His deeds.

It is iron-colored, and built out from the outer side. This is God's justice, strong and invincible, which first showed itself outwardly in reflective knowledge by means of the circumcision, which was apparent in the outer flesh. And it is established with the blessed virtues among the spiritual things of that spiritual wall that God built within people.

2 Virtues are brought about in people by God's will

The tower is four cubits wide; for these virtues, by God's will, are brought about in people by placing them in the world of the four elements, from which, while they are in the body, they get physical nourishment. *It is seven cubits high;* for there were seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, which are so firm and tall that the tower raised itself on them until, after the Incarnation of My Son, which was prefigured in the circumcision of the Old Testament, the Church came forth from it.

3 On the states of Heavenly Love, Discipline, Modesty, Mercy and Victory

In it you see five figures standing separately, each in its own arch with a conical turret above it. This is to say that in this tower, that is in the strength of the circumcision, there are five strong virtues; not that any virtue is a living form in itself, but a brilliant star given by God that shines forth in human deeds. For humanity is perfected by virtues, which are the deeds of people working in God.

Hence these five virtues stand in this tower in the likeness of a person's five senses. They seized with great zeal upon the circumcision, and cut it off from all iniquity, as the five human senses are circumcised in the Church by baptism. But they do not work in a person by themselves, for the person

works with them and they with the person; just as the person's five senses do not work by themselves, but the person with them and they with the person, to bear fruit together. And so each of them works hard, as much as it can, and thus has a turreted apex of authority, the surpassing dignity of virtuous constancy.

The first of these faces the East; for this virtue looked forward with sobs of love to the Son of God whenever He was to come, and spoke openly about the eternal life the circumcision was hiding.

The second looks to the Northeast; for this figure divided her attention between the East and the North, regarding God in the East with great discipline, but also disdaining the behavior of the people in the North, who manifested undisciplined licentiousness and did not regard God or His Law with worthy reverence.

The third faces the North; for she destroys unlawful fornication with great strength, despising it and shielding herself from it by the Law.

The fourth looks toward the pillar of the Word of God at whose foot is the patriarch Abraham; for she cleaves to the Incarnation of the Son of God, touching it through the beginning Abraham made, that miraculous foreshadowing of the ram caught in the thornbush.

And the fifth faces the tower of the Church and the people who are hastening here and there in the building; for this image rises up victorious, and destroys every injustice that originated in Adam. She looks to the strength of the Church to help her conquer the vices of the Devil; she shows herself to the people who are hastening to and fro in the Church and all behaving differently, inspiring them to be the flock of God's justice and worship Him with reverent zeal.

4 Their dress and what it signifies

And *the five figures resemble each other,* which is to say that they worship God in human deeds with equal devotion. *Each of them is dressed in silk garments;* for each of these virtues is sweet and delightful, never weighing people down or constraining them, but softly instilling into their minds the sweetness of the heavenly kingdom as balm distils from a bush, with no crusted filth of injustice. And *they are shod in white shoes,* for they follow My justice in righteousness and celestial purity, trampling down surrender to the Devil and stamping out his traces in human beings.

But *the fifth virtue is armored at all points;* for she looks to the Church, where the fiercest wars are waged against the Devil's vice; she extends her victory everywhere in it, wearing the priceless armor, which is God's invincible strength; and this strength slays all injustice and confounds the deceit of the Devil.

The second and third are bareheaded, with loose white hair. This means that, for love of Me, they avoid assuming burdens of labor or wealth or lust; bareheaded, which is to say with a clear conscience, they open to Me all their secret mind. They cast away all confusion and license of the desires of the flesh; and the first sign of this is their white hair, which symbolizes the purity of the mind that desires good works. *And they wear no cloak;* for they reject the customs of the pagans and the lust and filth of the Devil, and abandon all secular cares, because the wisdom of the world is foolishness with God.

The first, third and fourth wear white tunics. This means they hold fast to innocence, which prefigures with sweet chastity the Incarnation of My Son, Who withdrew humanity from death and clothed it with life in salvation. *And this is all the difference between them;* for each gets her strength from the Holy Spirit, but they use different paths of the soul to attain their one desire in God. And so by them the celestial Jerusalem will be perfectly built, for these virtues are the deeds people do to reach God.

5 On Celestial Love's dress and what it means

Therefore *the first figure* signifies Celestial Love, for this love must exist in people before anything else. She *wears on her head a bishop's miter, and has loose white hair;* for this virtue was crowned in the High Priest Jesus Christ, but also in the high priests of the Old Testament and in those who called to the Son of God, "Would that You would rend the heavens and come down!" [Isaiah 64:1]. She stands without a woman's head-covering, so that her hair flows free and its whiteness is seen; and by this hair she prefigures the freeing of the priesthood from the ties of marriage through the advent of My Son. For His priests should, for the sake of salvation, imitate Him in chastity; they should always hold to the perfect heavenly love and shake off the evil actions of sin-stained humanity, and thus form the clear, white part of God's spiritual gift.

And she wears a white pallium, whose two borders are adorned on the inside with embroidered purple. This is to say that the grace of God surrounds her in gentle purity, its boundaries of protection fortified and adorned with the beautiful ornaments of charity. For divine grace will extend to every good deed, which is made up of two parts, God's love and the doer's.

And in her right hand she holds lilies and other flowers, which means that for her good works she has the reward of the lilies of eternal life and light and holiness. These are her companions, who have joined themselves to her by heavenly love.

And in her left hand she carries a palm, which has grown out of the secret place of blessed virtue in remembrance of death; and with it she can stop

death as if by rolling stones in its path. And this she declares in the words, already quoted, that she speaks to the children of God.

6 On Discipline's dress and what it means

And the second represents Discipline; for after the love of the celestial life has arisen, carnal lusts must be restrained by the discipline of contrition. She *is clothed in a purple tunic*, for she is surrounded by My Law and the mortification of human flesh, and the purple garment is the example of My Son, Who was born of the Virgin in charity and gave it every means of working.

She stands like a youth who has not yet attained adulthood but is very serious. For Discipline is always full of childlike fear, the fear of a child under restraint who respects his schoolmaster. I, the Almighty, am the Master of discipline; in Me she appears not as an adult, for she does not try to wield power to do her own will, but faithfully and reverently fears. And she shows this in her words, quoted above.

7 On Modesty's dress and what it means

The third represents Modesty, for modesty appears after discipline to blush and drive away sin. Therefore she *covers her face with the white sleeve that clothes her right arm;* for she protects her inner conscience, which is, as it were, the face of her soul, by flying from fornication and the Devil's pollution. She defends herself with the white garment of innocence and chastity, on the right hand of which is the salvation coming from her deeds. For contempt and utter rejection of the filth of Satan is entwined strongly round her conscience, as she declares in the words of her admonition quoted above.

8 On Mercy

And *the fourth* signifies Mercy; for after modesty appears the virtue of mercy to help the needy. In the heart of the Father is true mercy of His grace, which He ordained in His eternal counsel and mercifully showed to Abraham in the circumcision. For He led him forth from his land and commanded that he and his race be circumcised, and showed him great wonders in the true Trinity; and through this He symbolically foreshadowed His Son, and foreshadowed mercy to Abraham in the sacrifice of Isaac.

And she *has her head veiled in womanly fashion with a white veil*, which is the roof and foundation of salvation, inasmuch as one who has mercy can bring back lost souls to the pure protection of the holy veil from out of the exile of death. It makes souls white and people radiant to be covered with

God's mercy; and so those who disdained God while they were in sin will find Him shining on them like a gentle sunbeam when Mercy is brought to them from Heaven. And so Mercy, in the figure of a woman, is a fruitful mother of souls saved from perdition. For as a woman covers her head, so Mercy averts the death of souls; and as women are sweeter than men, so Mercy is sweeter than the rabid insanity of crime in a sinner before his heart is visited by God. And the virtue of Mercy also appears in feminine form because, when one virginal body was enclosed by womanly chastity, sweetest Mercy arose in the womb of Mary; Mercy had always dwelt in the Father, but now the Father showed her as visible through the Holy Spirit in the Virgin's womb.

She is hung about with a yellow cloak; for she is surrounded by the shining sun, the sign of My Son, Who shines on the world from Heaven as the sun's splendor shines on the earth. For My Son is the true Sun, lighting up the world by the sanctification of the Church.

And on her breast she has a picture of My Only-Begotten, which means that I put My Son on the breast of Mercy when I sent Him into the womb of the Virgin Mary.

And therefore, *around it is written, "Through the depths of the mercy of our God, in which the Dayspring from on high has visited us"* [Luke 1:78]. What does this mean? That everywhere My power extends, the secret of what is on the breast of Mercy shows that My Son is the true Mercy. How? As it was foretold in the words of My servant Zacharias in the Gospel, for it was he who said, "Through the depths of the mercy of our God, in which the Dayspring from on high has visited us." Which is to say that salvation comes from the depths of the Father's mercy; for it was hidden in His heart, as the viscera are hidden in a person, that His Son was to be incarnate and God visit humanity at the end of times. How? In the celestial bread, which is His Son, born in the flesh of the Virgin Mary and come forth from the heart of the Father on high to offer the greatest mercy to those who seek Him, as that virtue tells the children of God in her words quoted above.

9 On Victory's dress and what it means

And *the fifth figure* foreshadows Victory; for after the mercy I showed by the circumcision when I willed to send My Son into the world, the same circumcision gave rise to victory, which then went on with increasing strength till the coming of My Son, and goes on with Him until the last day. For in My Son I defeated the ancient serpent, which had exalted itself over His head and bound the human race by a thousand evil deeds like a chain. My Son triumphed over those evil deeds with all the arms of war that, like flowers of virtue, arose in His Incarnation. What does this mean? That after

mercy arises victory in people too, as soon as they conquer themselves and their harmful vices. How? Among the five virtues the first is celestial love, which consists in a person knowing and loving God above all things. Then the person, because of his faith, is bound by the law of discipline; and from there he goes on to repress his tendency to sin through good and righteous modesty. And so by these three powers the person will attain a just heart, and be able to see the next thing, the suffering of his neighbor; and then he will provide all necessities for him as for himself.

And with these three powers the person soon becomes a strong soldier, perfected in mind by imitating My Son, the true Samaritan, in mercy. And then he wins victory over the power of the Devil with the arms of virtue; he conquers himself and governs his neighbor, and by these virtues slays all evil, rejecting the pride that drove Adam from Paradise.

And this fifth virtue *is armed with a helmet on her head;* for Man in the fullness of celestial desire should long for God, Who is the Head of all things, and so attain eternal salvation. *She is arrayed with a breastplate;* this is so that Man may resist the Devil by justly restraining the will of his carnal desires. For he has become subject to God in true fear and trembling, faithfully dreading His stern judgment, as the psalmist David says, instructed by Me:

"Your lightnings lit up the world; the earth shook and trembled" [Psalm 76:19]. This is to say: Your wonders and secrets, O Lord of all, shone forth and miraculously appeared. How? Like lightning, which is partly seen and partly concealed, just as Your mysteries are sometimes understood but sometimes unknown. For throughout the whole world, wondrously created by Your will, there is no race to which the name of Your glory and the power of Your majesty will not come; they will come miraculously by different paths with remarkable signs, even to those whom the light of faith and truth has not yet illumined for their salvation. Therefore, people will turn, shaken by sighs, away from their own will; they will forsake their lusts, trembling at the judgment of Heaven. Formerly Man forgot himself and walked in earthly deeds; but now he will be wise and come to himself.

This virtue *is also arrayed with greaves,* so that when she sees the right path she can leave the paths of death by way of chastisement of the body. And *she has iron gloves,* so that through mental circumcision and right faith she may escape the works of the Devil, believe in God and so evade the snares of the cruel enemy. *A shield hangs from her left shoulder;* for the left is the side of the Devil's combat with Man, and so she is surrounded there with the grace of God's mighty precepts. Man by these is surrounded and defended with such strong faith that the Devil cannot corrupt him by temptations, and he will not succumb to the Devil's vices as long as God's protection circles his

shoulders; for God's grace binds the high and strong soul to Himself with the bond of love of God and neighbor.

And *she is girded with a sword,* because people must keep themselves in the austere power of God's words by chastising their bodies and cutting away iniquity both from themselves and from others. *And she holds a spear in her right hand;* which is to say that a person who trusts in God may attack and overcome the Devil's filth with the great peace of the Lord. And this is true justice in the evil combat of Devil against Man, which the latter can hardly win without the help of God.

And under her feet a lion lies, its mouth open; this is the Devil, laid low by Victory at the foot of the righteous path of life and truth as he was gaping with bitter cruelty to swallow the human race. *Its tongue is hanging out,* which represents his plan wickedly to devour the whole race of people descended from Adam.

And some people also stand under her feet. These people, brought to a standstill by her fighting force, are the flutes of the Devil, who are supple that evil may be played upon them. And she, acting righteously in God's zeal, justly strikes them, because their many and various perverse tricks aid and serve the Devil.

Some of them are blowing trumpets. For they are drunk with the sound of evil, and rave in the exaltation of a burning mind; in great pride they hate God's justice, race upon race. *Some are fooling with instruments used in shows;* for they try to deceive with the Devil's fantastic illusions, and stubbornly hold to their twisted pride and envy God's discipline. *And others are playing different games;* they are caught in the perverse filth of vice not by the choice of their own will, as they suppose, but by the snares of the Devil.

And that figure tramples the lion and all these people under her feet; for with great zeal and divine justice she crushes all these vanities of human art and diabolical persuasion. *And at the same time she pierces them with the spear she holds in her right hand;* for, with the confidence and daring she derives from God, she pierces, conquers and wounds all these uncleannesses. For by God they are mocked and judged as naught, as she says in the words of admonition previously seen.

10 On Patience and Longing and what they mean

And inside the building you see two other figures standing opposite this tower. This is to say that in the work the Heavenly Father did through His Son, which showed clearly and visibly the One prefigured in the circumcision, two other virtues sprang up. One of these was to see the example of Christ and how to follow in His steps, and the other was to anticipate with

fortitude and reverence the will of God; and they are the fruit that was foreshadowed in the circumcision.

The first of these stands on the floor of the building, in a niche of fiery splendor whose inside is painted with pictures of various evil spirits and which is across from the tower. For this virtue is perfected amid earthly things and treads them underfoot in the goodness of the Father, when it follows the example of the Son of God and passes beyond the desires of the flesh. How? By great endurance it bypasses the worldly misery, depicted in this niche, which is the might of secular power, fierce and terrible in its detaining pride. The Devil's company follows it, and the Devil himself draws to his will the inner desires of the souls of the secular, who love carnal things; and the niche, in its earthly power, often opposes itself to justice and resists the true testament built on God. But Patience is victorious, and in good people conquers everything with the help of God, no matter how they are opposed and exhausted by the snares of the evil spirits.

The other figure stands next to this niche but is outside it and has no niche of its own. For after the first virtue patiently conquers the power of arrogance, even though it inflicts pains on her, the second one surpasses this power, for it arises outside the range of the pains dealt out by arrogance and escapes its rage. Longing stands next to Patience, in remembrance of the griefs from which she took her origin; but she is outside all niches, for she is free from the power of this world and openly carries the cross of Christ.

Both figures are looking sometimes at the tower; which is to say that the work prefigured in God's provident will is completed in them, and so they regard its roots in the circumcision of the Old Testament. They are greater than their start in the circumcision, because the radiant deed excels the beginning of the thought. *And sometimes they are looking at the people who are entering and leaving the building.* This means that they are admonishing in the Holy Spirit both those who are treading the path of justice toward God and those who are entering the orbit of the Devil's crimes and leaving the just path; and they are telling the latter to imitate them in good.

11 Their dress and what it means

These figures *are also dressed in silk garments;* for they possess great sweetness, so that people may not groan under a heavy weight of labor when persecuted. *They are veiled in women's fashion in white head-coverings;* for people should justly be subject to God as their Head, and wrap Him around their minds in pure love, and embrace Him in joy and gladness, as a wife holds her husband according to God's ordinance in fearful and loving honor.

They wear no cloaks; for they lack all care for secular things, but lean only toward the things which are eternal in God and the life to come. *But they*

have on white shoes; for they shine in the path of justice by the purity of faith in human minds, so that people may follow their steps and their example.

12 On Patience's dress in particular and what it means

The first figure designates Patience, who arose in the horn of Abraham, which is to say in the time his obedience to God began; and this, with his circumcision, was the first sound of obedience that had occurred after the fall of Adam. It preceded the work of obedience in the true Word, which is in the Son of God, as sound precedes a word; and it came in the North, the side facing the wicked deeds and turbulence of the ancient serpent. And she *has on her head a three-sided crown, of a glowing red like a hyacinth;* for she was first crowned through the faith in the Holy Trinity of the faithful people, who despise their flesh and do not hesitate to shed their blood for the love of God and the true faith. For the Son of God appeared in the flesh to conquer death with the redness of His blood, and it adorned the Church like the glowing red beauty of the noble hyacinth.

She is clad in a white tunic, with green embroideries in all the folds. For she has clothed herself in the garment of God's work in the whiteness of perpetual light, whose folds are embroidered with the sorrows and laments of one who says, "Oh, when shall I come to the sight of the true Light?" And this desire is suffered happily in the present life by thinking of what it foreshadows: The very adversities and calamities of the faithful adorn their souls with greenness, and their suffering them in patience for the sake of God embellishes them. Which, indeed, this virtue declares, in her words already quoted.

13 On Longing's dress in particular and what it means

And *the other figure* represents Longing. For after patience in adversity, there arises among My elect the longing for the remembered life, springing from My admonition that I sent My Son from My heart because of the longing of My people. For My people of both the Old and the New Testaments had and have this remembrance of mind, which ornaments its longing with groans, for it is true compunction of heart.

And so she also stands in the North quarter, to repulse the dissolute uncleanness of the Devil's snares. And she *is clad in a white tunic, which is slightly tinged with color;* for the purity of faith surrounds her with good works, but nonetheless she is pale and troubled, because her faith always sighs and sobs for eternal felicity. *On her right arm she carries a cross with the image of the Savior, over which she bends her head;* which is to say that with her right hand, the hand that strongly does her noble task, she embraces My

Son's Passion. She longs for Him, and bends over Him with her whole desire and intent, imitating Him in suffering and grief; as she shows in the words of her exhortation, already quoted.

And so you see that *all these figures are uttering their individual speeches through the mystery of God, to admonish humans;* for in all the virtues, God's tenderness sweetly instructs the minds of the peoples and exhorts them to put aside evil and raise themselves up to good.

But let the one who has ears sharp to hear inner meanings ardently love My reflection and pant after My words, and inscribe them in his soul and conscience.

PILLAR OF THE WORD OF GOD

THE VIRTUE OF KNOWLEDGE OF GOD

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Et deinde ult̄
p̄dicta turri
p̄cursui uolum
tarii dis; cubi
to uno infra
angulum qui
respicit adsep
tentrionē. uidi quasi colūpnā caliber
coloris p̄fatę lucidę parti muri eid̄
edificii ex̄tius appositam. ualde t̄ri
bilem aspectu. tantaq; magnitudi
nis ac altitudinis. ut īmensum euis
nullom̄ discernere possem. Et eadē
colūpna trei angulos habebat abimo
usq; ad sūmum quasi gladiū acutos.
quorū prim̄ respiciebat adorientē.
sed's aut̄ adseptentrionē. & tertius
ad meridiē. ex̄tius ipsi edificio aliq̄n
tulum ꝓximus. Ex angulo aut̄ qui
respiciebat ad orient̄ p̄cedebant
rami aradicę usq; ad cacumē eius.
uxta cui' radicē uidi īprimo ramo
abraham sedentē. īsecdo ū moysen. &
īiō iosue. ac deinde reliquos patri
archas & pphas. ita ut singulos in
singulis ramis ordinate sedentes. sectm
temp' quo uihoc scō sibimet succedere
rant. qui se oīm̄ quertebant ad angu
lum eidem colūpnę. qui respiciebat
ad septentrionē. admirantes ea quę in
ipu futura uiderunt īipsa. ꝛ; inter
hos duos angulos. unū scilicet ver
gentē ad orientē & alīum ad septen
trionē. erat ante faciem ipsorū patri
charū & pphārū. eadem colūpna ab i
mo usq; ad sūmū. quasi tornatilis &
rotunda. plenaq; rugarū. ut de ar
boris cortice solet germē pullulare.
A secdo ū angulo respicientē ad septen
trionē. exiuit splendor mure claritā
tis. se extendentis & reflectentis ad
angulum qui respiciebat ad meri
diē. Et ineodē splendore ītam mag
nam latitudinē se diffundentē. ꝙspexi

VISION FOUR
The Pillar of the Word of God

And then, beyond the tower of anticipation of God's will, one cubit past the corner that faces the North, attached to the outside of the shining part of the main wall of the building, I saw a pillar the color of steel, most dreadful to behold, and so big and tall that I could not form an idea of its measurements. And the pillar was divided from bottom to top into three sides, with edges sharp as a sword; the first edge faced the East, the second the North and the third the South, and the latter was somewhat merged with the outside wall of the building.

From the edge that faced the East, branches grew out from the root to the summit. At the root I saw Abraham sitting on the first branch; then Moses on the second; then Joshua on the third; and then the rest of the patriarchs and prophets, one above the other on each branch, sitting in the order in which they succeeded each other in time. They were all looking toward the edge of the pillar that faced the North, marvelling at the things they could see with spiritual vision going on there in the future.

But between the two edges, the one facing the East and the one facing the North, the side of the pillar to which those patriarchs and prophets turned their faces was from bottom to top as round as if turned in a lathe, and wrinkled like the bark of a tree that puts forth shoots.

And from the second edge, facing the North, there went forth a marvellously bright radiance, which shone and reflected as far as the edge that faced the South. And in the radiance which was so widely diffused, I saw apostles, martyrs, confessors and virgins and many other saints, walking in great joy.

And the third edge, facing the South, was broad and wide in the middle, but thinner and narrower at the bottom and top, like a bow drawn and ready to shoot arrows. And at the top of the pillar I saw a light so bright that human tongue cannot describe it; and in this light appeared a dove, with a gold ray coming out of its mouth, which shed brilliant light on the pillar.

And as I looked at this, I heard from Heaven a terrifying voice, rebuking me and saying, "What you see is divine!" And at this voice I trembled so much that I dared not look there any longer.

Then I saw inside the building a figure standing on the pavement facing this pillar, looking sometimes at it and sometimes at the people who were going to and fro in the building. And that figure was so bright and glorious that I could not

look at her face or her garments for the splendor with which she shone; I saw only that, like the other virtues, she appeared in human form.

And around her I saw a beautiful multitude, with the appearance and wings of angels, standing in great veneration, for they both feared and loved her. And before her face I saw another multitude, with the appearance of human beings, in dark clothes; and they stood immobile with fear.

And the figure looked upon the people who came in from the world and in the building put on a new garment; and she said to each of them, "Consider the garment you have put on, and do not forget your Creator Who made you." And as I wondered at these things, the One seated on the throne spoke to me again.

1 The austerity of the Law was sweetened by the Incarnation of the Word

The Word of God, by Whom all things were made, was Himself begotten before time in the heart of the Father; but afterward, near the end of time, as the Old Testament saints had predicted, He became incarnate of the Virgin. And, assuming humanity, He did not forsake Deity; but, being one and true God with the Father and the Holy Spirit, he sweetened the world with His sweetness and illumined it with the brilliance of His glory.

Hence, *the pillar you see beyond the tower of anticipation of God's will* designates the ineffable mystery of the Word of God; for in that true Word, the Son of God, all the justice of the New and Old Testaments is fulfilled. This justice was opened to believers for their salvation by divine inspiration, when the Son of the Supreme Father deigned to become incarnate of the sweet Virgin; and the virtues showed themselves to be powerful in the anticipation of God's will, which was the beginning of the circumcision. Then the mystery of the Word of God was also declared in strict justice by the voice of the patriarchs and prophets, who foretold that He would be manifest in justice and godly deeds and great severity, doing the justice of God and leaving no injustice free to evade the commands of the Law.

2 The patriarchs in a mystery showed that the Law was near

And you see that the pillar *is standing one cubit past the corner that faces the North;* which symbolizes in human terms how very near the patriarchs who announced the strict justice of the Word of God were in their meaning to the Law, thus resisting the Devil in the North.

3 No pride can resist the strength of God

The pillar *is the color of steel, and attached to the outside of the shining part of the main wall of the building;* for the power of the Word of God is

unconquered and unconquerable, and no one can resist Him by vain rebellion or vile pride. And so the Old Testament fathers were united with the reflective knowledge, as it were, on the outside, by their bulwarks and deeds of justice; but they were not yet imbued with the fiery perfection of the work that arose in the Son of God, and which they but foreshadowed outwardly in their words.

4 God's justice is dreadful and exceeds every creature in height

It is most dreadful to behold; for the justice in the Word of God is fearful to humans, who know only the impious judgment of unjust judges judging according to their own whims. *It is so big and tall that you cannot form an idea of its measurements;* for the Word, Who is the Son of God, exceeds all creatures in paternal majesty by the magnitude of His glory and the height of His divinity, and no human in a corruptible body can fully understand Him.

5 The Word of God has three divisions: Law, Grace and exposition of scripture

And the pillar *is divided from bottom to top into three sides, with edges sharp as a sword;* which is to say that the strength of the Word of God as prefigured in the Old Testament and declared in the New, circling and turning in grace, showed in the Holy Spirit three points of division. These were the old Law, the new Grace, and the exposition of the faithful doctors; and by these the holy person does what is just from the beginning, starting with the good and moving upward to end with the perfect. For all that is just was, is and will be forever in the simple Deity, which is in all things; and no power can stand firm in malice, if He wills to conquer it by the glory of His loving kindness.

6 The knowledge of Law, the work of the Gospel and the wisdom of the doctors

The first edge faces the East, which signifies the start of the knowledge of God through the divine Law, before the perfect day of justice. *The second looks to the North,* for after this good and chosen work was started there came the gospel of My Son and the other precepts of Me, the Father, which rose up against the North where injustice originated. *And the third faces the South, and is somewhat merged with the outside wall of the building.* This is to say that when the works of justice had been confirmed, there came the profound and rich wisdom of the principal doctors, who through the fire of the Holy Spirit

made known what was obscure in the Law and the prophets, and showed their fruition in the Gospels. Thus they made these things fruitful to the understanding; they touched on the outward content of the Scriptures in the work of the Father's goodness, and sweetly ruminated on their mystical significance.

7 God worked from the beginning of the Law to the manifestation of His Son

And from the edge which faces the East, branches grow out from the root to the summit. This is to say that when God first became known through the just Law, branches appeared on that eastern edge, which was the time of the patriarchs and prophets. For this sharp-edged pillar of Divinity carries on the work from its root, which is the good beginning in the minds of the elect, to its summit, which is the manifestation of the Son of Man, Who is all justice.

And therefore, *at the root you see Abraham sitting on the first branch;* for the time of inspiration by God began with Abraham, when he obeyed God and with a tranquil mind departed from his country. *Then Moses on the second;* for after this, God inspired Moses to plant the Law, and so foreshadow the Son of the Most High. *Then Joshua on the third;* for he afterward had the spirit of the Lord in him in order to strengthen the custom of the Law as God commanded.

And then you see *the rest of the patriarchs and prophets, one above the other on each branch, sitting in the order in which they succeeded each other in time;* for God inspired each patriarch and prophet in his own time to nurture his particular shoot toward the height of His commands, and all in their day reposed on the disposition and order of the justice He showed them, faithful and obedient to the divine majesty as it showed itself in their times.

8 The patriarchs and prophets marvelled at the Incarnation

They are all looking toward the edge of the pillar that faces the North, marvelling at the things they can see with spiritual vision going on there in the future. For they were all alerted in their souls by the Holy Spirit, and so turned and saw how the Gospel doctrine repulsed the Devil by the strength of the Son of God. They spoke of His Incarnation, and marvelled at how He came from the heart of the Father and the womb of a virgin and showed Himself with great wonders both by Himself and by His followers, who wonderfully imitated Him in new grace and trod the transitory underfoot, greatly thirsting for the joys of the eternal.

9 The Word of God was hidden by prevision in the souls of the elect of old

But between the two edges, the one facing the East and the one facing the North, the side of the pillar to which those patriarchs and prophets are turning their faces is from bottom to top as round as if turned in a lathe, and wrinkled like the bark of a tree that puts forth shoots. This is to say that between the two edges, which are the manifest knowledge of Me and the teachings of My Son, the One Word, which is My Son, was hidden as a foreshadowing image in the souls of the ancient fathers who abided in My laws, from the first chosen one until the last holy one. Thus they were decorated all around with mystical ornaments, for He carefully arranged and polished all His chosen instruments and showed Himself to them all with swift grace. He was loving to them all, as is prefigured in the wrinkles of the circumcision, which was the shadow of things to come; for it contained, hidden in the austerity of the Law, the apposite meaning of the most righteous offshoot, the high and holy Incarnation.

10 The words of the Son go from and return to the Father through the doctors

And from the second edge, facing the North, there goes forth a marvellously bright radiance, which shines and reflects as far as the edge that faces the South. This is to say that from the second edge, which is the New Testament and stands opposed to the Devil, there issue the words of My Son, which come forth from Me and return to Me. For when the sun, which is My Son, stands forth in the flesh, the light of the holy Gospel shines in His preaching, and pours itself out from Him and His disciples as fruits of blessing, and then returns into the fountain of salvation, where it reaches the guides, those who profoundly search into the words of the Old and New Testaments. And they show how wisdom is raised up in that Sun, Who enlightens the world and burns like noonday in His elect.

11 The apostles, martyrs and other elect were made so by Christ's teaching

And in the radiance, which is so widely diffused, you see apostles, martyrs, confessors and virgins and many other saints, walking in great joy. For in the clear light in which My Son preached and spread the truth there have grown up apostles who announce that true light, and martyrs who faithfully shed

their blood like strong soldiers, and confessors who officiate after My Son, and virgins who follow the Supernal Branch, and all My other elect, who rejoice in the fountain of happiness and the font of salvation, baptized by the Holy Spirit and ardently going from virtue to virtue.

12 Gospel knowledge was limited, is now broad and will grow weak at the end

And the third edge, facing the South, is broad and wide in the middle, but thinner and narrower at the bottom and top, like a bow drawn and ready to shoot arrows. This is to say that, as the Gospel was spread, the wisdom of the saints broadened; they burned in the Holy Spirit, seeking It in depth so as to find through It the deepening of their understanding of the Word of God, strengthened by the faith of the Christian people. And so the sense of the Scriptures that went forth from the mouth of the holy doctors broadened too; they searched the depths of the Scriptures' astringency and made it known to the many who learned from them, and thus they too enlarged their senses by knowing more of the wisdom and knowledge of the divine writings. At the beginning of the Church's institution—as it were, at the bottom of the edge—this knowledge was narrower and less studied, for the people did not yet embrace it with the love they gave it afterward. And at the end of time—as it were, at the edge's summit—the studies of many will grow cold; divine wisdom will not be lovable to them as deeds are lovable, but they will hide their knowledge and keep it for themselves, as if they had no obligation to do good works. For they will know it only on the outside, as in a dream.

13 People must begin good works timidly, continue strongly and finish humbly.

And therefore *the edge is widest and sharpest in the middle.* For the austere works of the worship of God were denuded of their Old Testament darkness and grew from their narrow beginning to their middle, which consists of the strongest virtues and the loftiest zeal. For the people were then swifter against iniquity, wounding the Devil with words from God and casting out and trampling down all his vices with the great austerity of God's justice. But then the people forgot themselves and declined, and as the end of the world drew near lived in a narrower fervor for the Holy Spirit. So, as a bow is stretched tight by the bowstring in time of war, a person must rise up against vice in body and soul, more constricted at each end and broader in the middle; so that the beginning and the end of his work may be circumspect with fear and humility, while its middle is strong and constant, sending forth by the gift of the Holy Spirit the darts of good deeds against the ambushes of

the Devil. For when a person begins to do good, his strength is fragile; then when he continues to work good he grows stronger, because the Holy Spirit has poured Itself out in him; but since that power cannot come often, at the end of his good work he will be less in strength again because of the weakness of the flesh. And so the bow should always be bent for defense against the vices of the Devil.

14 God shows people the mysteries of the Son of God by foreshadowing

But at the top of the pillar you see a light so bright that human tongue cannot describe it. This is to say that the Heavenly Father, in His highest and deepest mysteries, made known the mystery of His Son, Who shines in His Father with glorious light, in which there appears all the justice of the giving of the Law and the New Testament. And the latter *is of such clarity and brilliance of wisdom that it is not possible for any earthly person to express it in words*, as long as he is in corruptible flesh.

And in this light appears a dove, with a gold ray coming out of its mouth, which sheds brilliant light on the pillar; for in the heart of the radiant Father, in the brilliance of the light of the Son of God, burns the Holy Spirit, Who comes from on high and declares the mysteries of the Son of the Most High to redeem the people seduced by the ancient serpent. And so the Holy Spirit inspires all the commandments and all the new testimonies, giving before the Incarnation of the Lord the law of His glorious mysteries, and then showing the same glory in the Incarnation itself. And the Spirit's inspiration is a golden splendor and a high and excellent illumination, and by this outpouring It makes known, as was said, the mystical secrets of God's Only-Begotten to the ancient heralds who showed the Son of God through types and marvelled at His coming from the Father and His miraculously arising in the dawn of the perpetual Virgin. And thus the Spirit in Its power fused the Old Testament and the Gospels into one spiritual seed, from which grew all justice.

And so you cannot contemplate the divine glory because of the immense power of Divinity; no mortal can see it except those to whom I will to foreshadow it. Therefore take care not to presume rashly to look at what is divine, as the trembling that seizes you shows.

15 The virtue of the knowledge of God

And you see inside the building a figure standing on the pavement facing this pillar. This is to say that a virtue shows itself within the work of God the Father, which declares the mystery of the Word of God, for it has revealed

all the justice in the city of the Omnipotent to the people of the Old and New Testaments. She is standing on the pavement, which is to say above all earthly things in the work of the loving Father, for everything in earth and heaven are foreseen by Him.

And she looks sometimes at the pillar and sometimes at the people who are going to and fro in the building. This is to say that she is contemplating in the Word of God the mystery put forth by His power, and also the people who are working in the Father's goodness, and which of them are succeeding or not succeeding in the work, for she knows the nature of each one at will.

And *this image* signifies the knowledge of God; for she oversees all people and all things in heaven and earth. And she *is so bright and glorious that you cannot look at her face or her garments for the splendor with which she shines.* For she is terrible with the terror of the avenging lightning, and gentle with the goodness of the bright sun; and both her terror and her gentleness are incomprehensible to humans, the terror of divine brilliance in her face and the brightness of her beauty in her garments, as the sun cannot be looked at in its burning face or its beautiful clothing of rays. But she is with everyone and in everyone, and so beautiful is her secret that no person can know the sweetness with which she sustains people, and spares them in inscrutable mercy; spares even the hardest stone, which is a hard and incorrigible person who never wants to turn aside from evil, until it can be penetrated no farther.

But, like the other virtues, she appears in human form. For God in the power of His goodness profoundly imbued Man with reason and knowledge and intellect, that he might dearly love Him and devotedly worship Him and spurn the illusions of demons, and adore Him above all Who gave him such high honor.

16 The angels that surround her and why they are winged

And around her you see a beautiful multitude, with the appearance and wings of angels, standing in great veneration, for they both fear and love her. Which is to say that all the blessed and excellent spirits in the heavenly ministry worship the Knowledge of God with inexpressibly pure praise, as humans cannot worthily do while they are in mortal bodies. These spirits embrace God in their ardor, for they are living light; and they are winged, not in the sense that they have wings like the flying creatures, but in the sense that they circle burningly in their spheres through the power of God, as if they were winged. And so they adore Me the true God, and persevere in proper fear and true subjection, knowing My judgments and burning in My love; for they behold My face forever, and desire and will nothing but those things they see are pleasing to My penetrating vision.

VISION FOUR

17 On the human beings who are called "compelled sheep"

And before her face you see another multitude, with the appearance of human beings, in dark clothes; and they stand immobile with fear. These are people who live in the Knowledge of God. How? That person whom God foresees will belong to Him stands in great honor in His sight, but one who chooses to stay in perdition rather than in God is lost. Those people you see in this multitude are called "compelled sheep"; they have a human form because of their human deeds, and dark clothes because they have done sinful works in doubt, but they fear the judgment of God with a stringent fear. They are called "compelled sheep" because I compel them by many means to come to life and be snatched from death through My Son's blood. Thus "compelled sheep" are those people who are compelled by Me against their will, by many tribulations and sorrows, to leave their iniquities. These they gladly embraced in the desire of their flesh and the flower of their youth as long as they held to the world, wanting to retain the heat of lust until the fire of the flesh departed from them in cold age; but I forced them all in different ways, according to what I saw in them, to cease from their sins.

18 God constrains some gently, some by a strong lash, some by extreme pain

Some of these, in whom desire for the world does not burn so fiercely, I force with a lighter rather than a heavier scourge; for I do not perceive in them the great bitterness I see in others, since when they feel My correction they renounce the pomps of the world and hastily leave their own will and come to Me. Others I correct with heavier blows, since they so burn and yearn for the sins of their vicious flesh that they would not be fit for the Kingdom unless I forcibly compelled them. And My knowledge sees and knows these, and constrains them in proportion to their bodily excesses.

And others, again, I conquer by the greatest and sharpest misery of mind and body; for they are so rebellious and so extreme in their carnal pleasures that if they were not constrained by the heaviest calamity the wantonness of their flesh would lead them to unceasing crime. These never turn to God while their wills prosper; some fall into desperation through timidity of mind, but others are mocked by prideful ambition, and the former allow despair to trample them underfoot, while the latter cannot contain themselves for the overabundance of their spirits. So, when those who belong to Me resist Me by their deeds, I force them as My knowledge of them directs; and so, through the physical and spiritual calamities they suffer, they are

compelled to come to Me and be saved. Thus Pharaoh, having been greatly terrified, finally made the Israelites go forth from his land, as it is written:

19 Example of Pharaoh, Moses and Aaron

"And Pharaoh, calling Moses and Aaron by night, said, 'Rise up, go forth from my people, both you and the children of Israel. Go, sacrifice to the Lord as you say. Take your flocks and your herds as you asked, and as you depart bless me' " [Exodus 12:31–32]. Which is to say: The heavy and burdensome crimes inseparable from this world weigh people down with sorrows and miseries; they say in their hearts, "Alas, alas! Whither shall we flee?" Then these sorrows clash and drive the people away from them, and the people hasten to withdraw; for their bodies are shriveling up from the weight of the scourge in the hand of God, and they cannot live with joy amid the pleasures of the world. For God claims them, calling the just by the many calamities of the dark deeds of the night of sin.

Hence Pharaoh, which is to say the vices of the Devil, amid the clamor of grief and misery calls Moses, which means those people whom God constrains by the keenest spiritual or physical sorrows, and Aaron, that is those people whom He compels by lighter adversities and calls out of the night of evil deeds; and the vices say from amid the oppression of human pleasure, "Arise from your carnal habits, and go forth from the ancient dwelling place you had with us; separate yourselves from the common people whom we possess and who worship us. Separate yourselves from the secular affairs to which we gladly cling, you who were terrified by us when you were our prisoners; and take the children of God with you, who see and acknowledge Him.

"Go therefore by another way; leave us, and offer yourselves to God by means of those invincible fights in which you say you have conquered us by your will. In the newness of mind you now seek, assume the gentleness of the sheep, which prevents you from acting with us because you choose the sorrows of following the Lamb; and assume the victorious arms of the strength of herds, which we cannot resist and which have conquered us. Separate yourselves from us, as you wished when you fiercely fought us; go to the country you long for in your minds, embrace the new life that takes you from us, and bless and praise God for that battle by which you have torn yourselves away from worldly matters and cares."

20 How God, scrutinizing people, chastises and consoles them

And I, Almighty God, in compelling these sheep to come over to Me, strengthen My pillars, which are the strong heirs to Heaven, on a foundation

of chastisement. I chastise them according to the degree of wickedness by which they are assailed and implicated in the sin of Adam; for if I do not confirm them by My grace, they cannot stand. Some, who are not weighed down by a very great burden of vice, I punish more lightly; for if I were to correct them with a sharper blow, their spirits would entirely fail and they would fall into desperation. For they are not bound by the force of the great whirlwind of the Devil's temptations.

But others, who in the battle with the Devil are burdened with a greater weight and have savage ways and excessive lusts, I constrain harshly with heavy sufferings, so that they will not withdraw from My covenant; for they belong to it, and wish with all their hearts to lay hold on Me and observe My precepts. But if I chastised these as lightly as the first, they would count My corrections as nothing; for they are assailed by the ancient's serpent's most heavy attack.

And there are also certain people whom I do not know, exiles from the heavenly country, for they completely abandon Me, seducing themselves in the greed of their thoughts with devouring rage. These do not seek Me or desire to know Me, but choke off their good desires; and so they ask no help from Me, but greedily feast on their own goods and please themselves in carnal lusts.

Now some of these latter express their will in excesses and pleasures of the flesh, but do not live in hatred and envy; they are simply engulfed in sweet joys and carnal delights. To these I give the fruits of the earth in prosperity, and do not let them lack and be poor; for they were created by Me, and they do not devour My people with malice. And so what they choose is given to them.

But others are fierce and bitter, full of gall and hatred and envy, rendering evil for evil and suffering no injury to be inflicted on them; and if these obtain worldly honor and riches, they destroy the heavenly virtues in others, and do not let them grow. And so from these I take fruits and riches, and throw them into great miseries, so that they cannot do as much evil as they would want to; for, if they could, they would do the works of the Devil.

And so by a just measure I mark out the ways of good and bad people, and weigh their wills according to what My eye sees of their desires, as Wisdom testifies through Solomon, saying:

21 Words of the Wisdom of Solomon

"All human ways are open to His eyes; the Lord is the weigher of spirits" [Proverbs 16:2]. Which is to say: To the sight of Almighty God all roads are open that the living human mind can choose in the present state of its wisdom; for each person possesses the knowledge of fruitful utility and of

vain foolishness. Thus God sees all things, and nothing is hidden from His divine sight; He knows and observes all things, and so He can deal rightly with each and every case. How? He is the weigher of spirits; He treats them tenderly with sweet caresses and peace, or He chastises them with the tribulations of misery and sorrow that they may be conformed to the right measure. They cannot escape Him by running or fleeing, unless He so wills it in accordance with their merits; for they are weighed, both in this world and in the world to come, by the way in which they worshipped God.

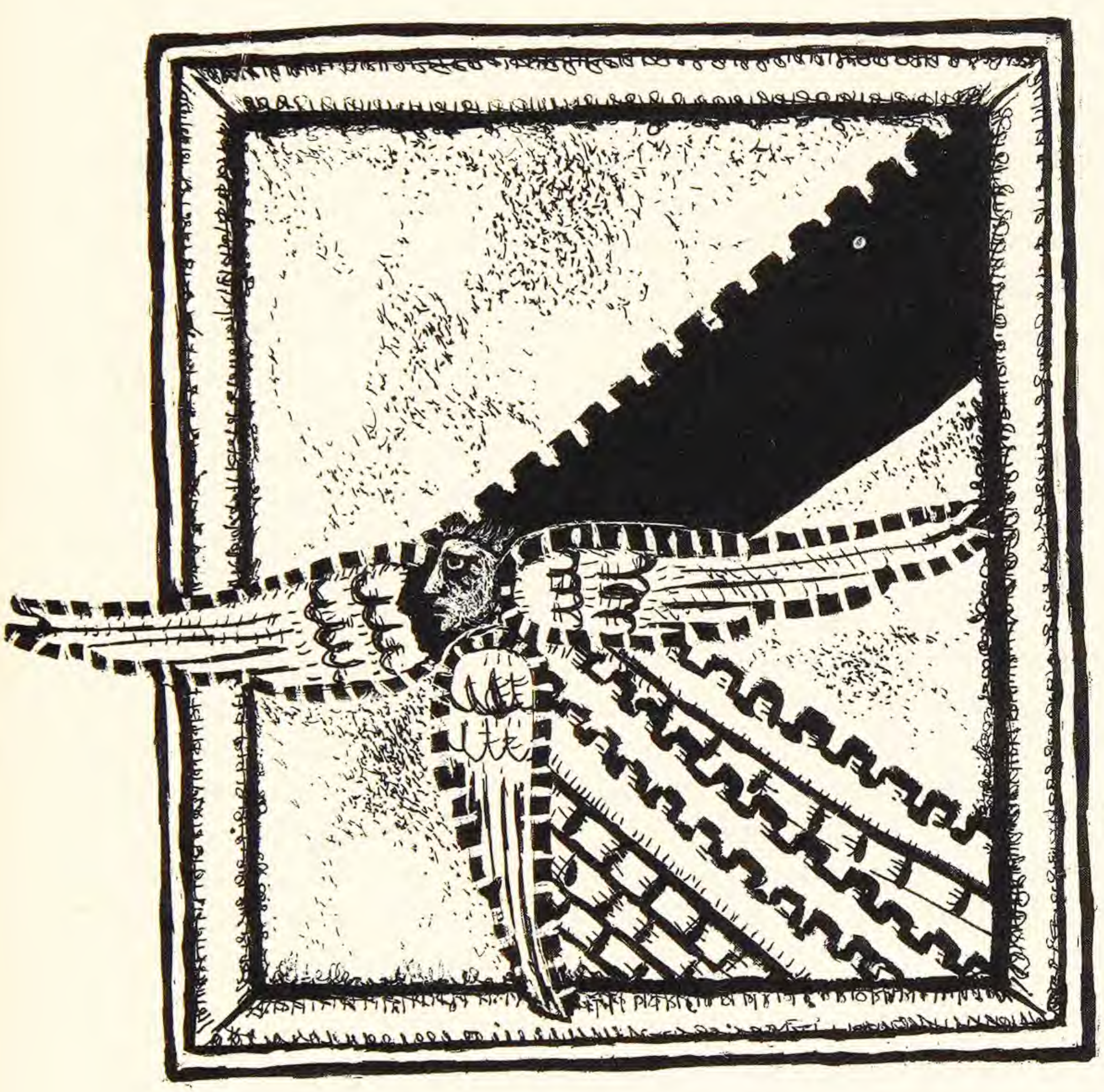
And so these spirits are weighed justly, and a person's mind is uplifted to higher things or sunk to lower things exactly as far as God's just judgment requires. No soul has enough power to fight against God, Who resists their attempts; for He judges all things most righteously, and opposes them with His irresistible justice, so that they can do no more than He permits.

And as the leaden counterweight weighs money correctly, so God in His equal scales counterbalances the good and the bad with obstacles, so that they can never escape the equity of His judgment; and the good receive for their merits the glory and joy of life, and the bad the pain and grief of death, according to what God's vision sees in them.

22 How the Knowledge of God scrutinizes those clothed in a new garment

And the figure looks upon the people who come in from the world and in the building put on a new garment. This is to say that the Knowledge of God knows those who leave the wickedness of infidelity and, by the power of God's work, put on the new self in baptism for the sake of eternal life. And she warns them not to turn backward and go toward the Devil, or, if they do thus stray, that they should return to God their Creator, as she says to each of them in the words of her admonition quoted above.

But let the one who has ears sharp to hear inner meanings ardently love My reflection and pant after My words, and inscribe them in his soul and conscience.



THE ZEAL OF GOD

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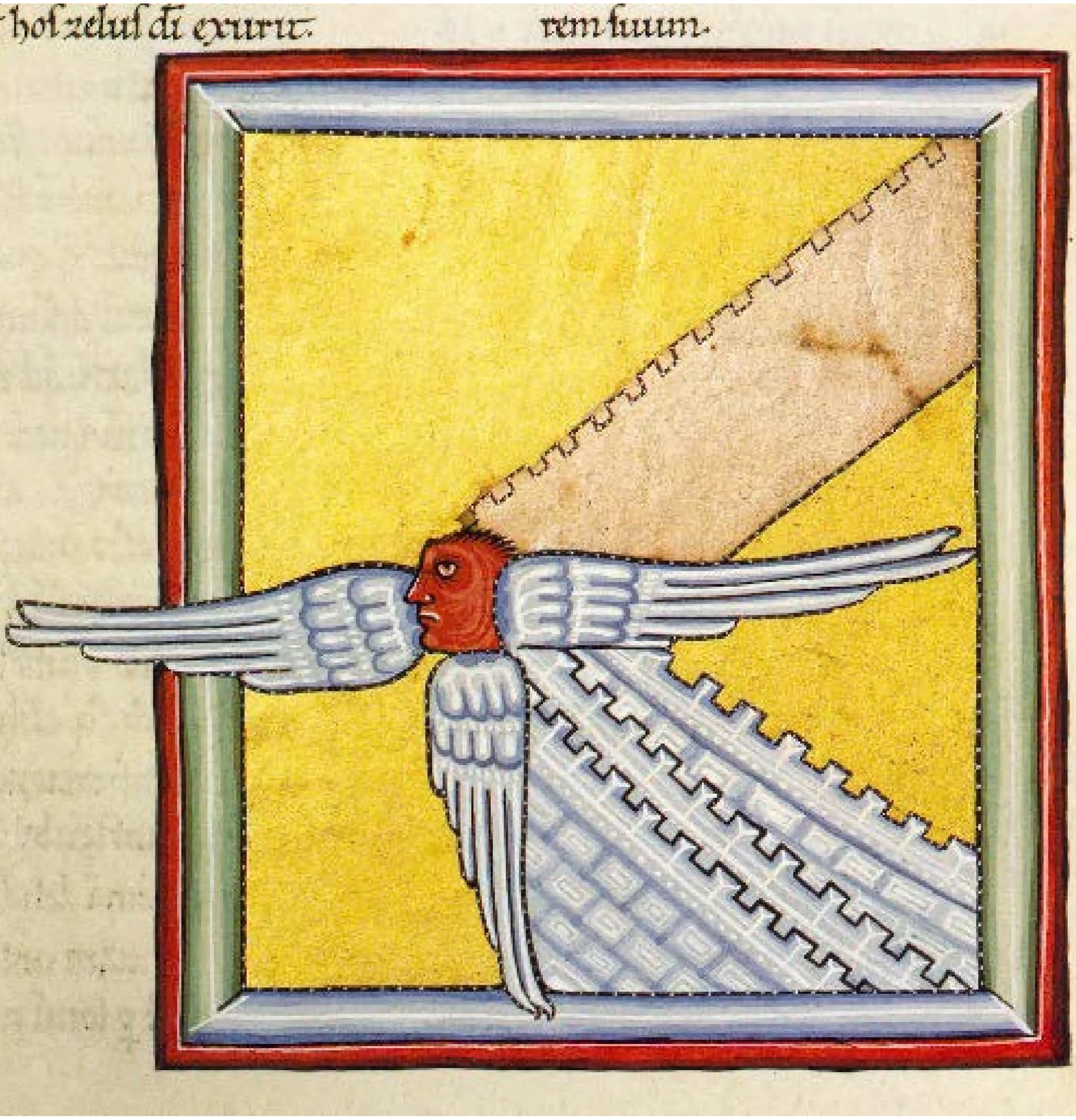


VISION FIVE
The Jealousy of God

After this, I looked, and behold! In the north corner, where the building's two kinds of wall joined, there appeared a head of marvellous form, planted firmly by the neck at the outside of the corner, at the same height from the ground that the wall itself rose to in that corner and no higher, so that the top of the head just equalled the summit of the wall. And this head was fiery in color, sparkling like a fiery flame; and it had a terrible human face, which looked in great anger toward the North.

From the neck down I saw nothing of this figure's body, for the rest of it was hidden by its pressing into the corner. But I saw its head, a bare human head. It was not covered by hair like a man's or by a veil like a woman's; but it was more manly than womanly, and very terrible to see.

It had three wings of wondrous breadth and length, white like a cloud; they were not raised, but extended straight out from each other so that the head was slightly higher than they were. The first rose from the right side of the jaw, and stretched toward the Northeast; the second and middle one pointed from the throat to the North, and the third stretched from the left side of the jaw toward the West. Sometimes these wings moved, very terribly, and struck these regions, but after a while ceased striking. And I did not hear the head uttering any words; it only remained motionless in body and struck with its wings from time to time in the places toward which they extended. And again I heard the One Who sat on the throne, saying to me:

1 The form of the Jealousy of God and what it does

God worked His jealousy very severely on the people of the Old Law; but toward those of the New, for love of His Son, He was mild and sweet. This is not because He overlooked and carelessly dismissed the sins of those who transgressed, but because He was mercifully awaiting the true inner penitence of the pure heart; and at the same time He refused to tolerate the iniquity of the hardened, but punished them with just judgment.

Therefore, *the head that you see in the north corner, where the building's two kinds of wall join,* symbolizes the Jealousy of the Lord, which punishes that inflexible iniquity that desires no curing. This jealousy was prefigured in

the symbols of the patriarchs and prophets, and arose openly in the mystery of the Word of God.

So too the Jealousy of God is in the form of a head; for, of all the fear it inspires, it is known best for the severity of its vengeance, as a person is known by his face. And it flames out against the North because it is most swift and sharp in God to slay the Devil and all evil. For in Abraham and in Moses the defense of those who labor, which is to say the knowledge of the two choices, the ways of good and evil, is joined to the human race in the work of God; for in all things, through the goodness of the Father, Man must work strongly against the Devil in the knowledge of good and evil.

But the Jealousy of the Lord avenges sin, the choice expressed in the deeds of people who do not observe God's precepts; for this work is not deserving of remission. Where does this happen? Where there is no acknowledgment of God and therefore no fear of God or Man. And when a heart is thus hardened and deadened by the filth of iniquity, which fears neither the judgment of God nor the countenance of Man, the Jealousy of the Lord confounds it by just judgment and throws it down by vengeance in the Law of God. How?

2 God examines sins to punish or pardon in a person's body and soul

When the commandments were established, it was jealousy that, by righteous judgment, removed the injustice whenever there was transgression of the Law. In the Old Testament injustice was wiped out by a severe reprisal upon the outer person, in whom transgression of the Law caused bodily sores; after the grace of the Gospel, jealousy works through penance; and, after a person's death, it will work in the pains and torments of Hell. For I so examine human iniquities, conceived and brought forth and twisted by the doers of deeds, that I avenge them either physically in the person's body or in the pains of the world to come; or else the person himself will purge them through penance and remission while he is still living with the soul and body that performed them. As My servant Job says, speaking in My Spirit:

3 Words of Job on this subject

"I change my face, and I am twisted with sorrow. I feared all my works, knowing that You do not spare the offender. But if I am wicked, why have I labored in vain?" [Job 9:27–29]. This is to say: I will change my interior aspect. How? I will overthrow the thing I am: changeable, overcome by the blood in my veins, at one time full of delight and at another time anger and at another time unbearable sadness. For I look into myself as one who sees a delightful face, when I gladly pursue these things. But against my will I will

change this, and turn myself to good works. And when I do so, I am tortured as by a scourge, for I am forcing myself and tearing myself away from my familiar face, which is my will toward perverse delights; I am joining myself to meditation, and in my good conscience attaining the vision of God, Who cannot be reached by the lusts of the flesh. And, because of these two choices, I fear all my works. How?

When I do a good work, I fear that it is not perfect before God; for I do not see it clearly, but as in a glass darkly. Sometimes I know it in the spirit, but sometimes I do not know it because of being weighed down by the body. But when I do an evil work, my spirit's conscience is in confusion, for I know within me that those who knowingly sin are not spared; that is, when a person understands that his deed is contrary to God, he must be purged either by a penalty in the body, or by penance, or by punishment through tortures in the life to come. And so a transgressor is not spared if he does not repent; he is not given the power to sin in order to use it, and if he does he must be chastised either here or hereafter.

Therefore, if I am so wicked and obstinate that I do not want to give in and turn from my own things, which are my sins; and if I am so weak that I cannot face the great struggle against myself; and if I am always contrary to God in my motives, conceived in sin and desiring to work iniquity and not fearing the Lord's judgment on me; why am I forced to labor in vain, often opposing the evil in myself through my knowledge of God? For I am not so weak that I do not know good from evil. Thus if I drive out my understanding and say, "I do not know God," I am a liar; for the knowledge of my debt to God convicts me when I start to do wickedness. But when I oppose evil with a good conscience I do not labor in vain; for I am the work of God, and so I turn to Him and receive the good reward.

4 Sinners can receive grace by penance or suffer future punishment

Therefore, I Who am the Lord of all things say again that it is needful that each person pay for his sins, either by groaning sorrow or by contrite penitence or by a proper punishment, in this world or the world to come. How? Those who fear their sins and repent in sorrow deserve to rise by God's grace from the sins to their purgation; and when they are not fully purged in this world, they will have purgation unto life in the world to come.

But those who are so hardhearted that they do not wish to acknowledge their sins or repent them in fear and sorrow, but continue to defy God by their wickedness, are not purged of their sins either in this life or in the life to come, but will suffer pains without the consolation of purgation unto life. For they were created by Me with rational minds, yet did not give the proper reply to disobedience. How?

BOOK THREE

5 Human reason can counter evil with good or good with evil

Human reason can understand two ways to the knowledge of good and evil, and choose two replies, also good and evil. How? Good replies to evil when by God's help it resists it; but evil replies to good when with the Devil's help it attacks it. Those who live in goodness answer evil by refraining from it and taking no pleasure in their own delight. But those who live in evil answer good by not withdrawing from bad deeds; they feast on their own lusts and refuse to answer evil's challenge. How?

6 Man is called two ways, one leading to life and the other to death

Each person has in himself two callings, the desire of fruit and the lust for vice. How? By the desire of fruit he is called toward life, and by the lust for vice he is called toward death. In the desire of fruit a person wishes to do good, and says to himself, "Do good works!" And this is the reply to evil, to avoid it and bring forth useful fruit. But in the lust for vice, a person wants to do evil, and says to himself, "Do the work of your own pleasure!" And this is the reply to good, the refusal to resist iniquity and the delight in attaining to vice, whereby the person despises Me and by not honoring Me treats Me as an impostor. And because he turns away from good, and puts himself into no sorrow or affliction through fear of Me, such a one turns celestial things to scorn, as, enlightened by Me, the psalmist David says:

7 Words of the Psalmist

"They have set their mouth against Heaven, and their tongue has passed over the earth" [Psalm 72:9]. This is to say: Many people are foolish in understanding and unwilling to admit the infinite fear of the Lord. They cast away the good desires they should have for Me and the knowledge of the true God, and refuse assent to the good knowledge that assists people to perform good works in God; and they embrace bitterness and contradict the good, and so despoil themselves and steal from themselves the good treasures, laying up for themselves instead a treasure of multiple iniquities.

And in those iniquities they apply their twisted minds to celestial works, and, opening their mouths in an evil way, destroy those works in rage and mockery, saying in their hearts, "We can do the works of our own will as lawfully as those that are called celestial; for those were established without our knowledge by the people of the Old Testament according to their own pleasure." And thus they mock the words and institutions of the Old Testament fathers, which were established by Me in heavenly works.

And so, tasting wicked deeds as if with their tongues, they excite and

surpass themselves in the greatest possible audacity; they boldly fulfil their own wills and have no desire to restrain their bodies from vice. And so, without their minds working, they are, as it were, rolled on the ground by the desires of their flesh, which are the seductions of the Devil.

8 God's wondrous judgments were seen in the Old Testament to make Him feared

So you see this head *of marvellous form*, which is to say that in the Jealousy of the Lord are marvels and wondrous divine judgments, such as no person weighed down by sins can know.

It is planted firmly by the neck at the outside of the corner; this means that, as was shown through Abraham and Moses in the Old Testament, My jealousy against the Devil is plain to the sight of the peoples in reflective knowledge and in human deeds, that they may fear Me and stand face to face with My terror. And My justice faces the North to threaten Satan's cruel iniquity.

9 God's rectitude in judging is not moved by deceitful or adulatory words

It remains immovable, for God cannot be moved, or His righteous judgment of unatoned sins softened, by deceitful or adulatory words. And so it renders to each person who does not observe the precepts of the Law the punishments he deserves for the evil deeds that have sunk him in filth; it is set up by God to establish laws for humans according to their works, and with its excelling strength, like the strength of its neck, it resists the Devil and his followers and opposes itself to their injustice.

10 Supernal vengeance does not exceed the gravity of the deed it punishes

It is at the same height from the ground that the wall itself rises to in that corner; for God, in His supreme avenging justice, towers above all earthly things, and His vengeance exactly matches human deeds, as shown by the Law in the foreshadowing of Abraham and Moses. For divine judgment is as high as any mystical speculation or deed of the people, to throw down their ignorance if they refuse to know God.

But it is no higher, so that the top of the head just equals the summit of the wall. For heavenly vengeance does not surpass human deeds, or punish their evil more than is deserved; it only judges all things equitably and righteously

in excelling justice. This the psalmist David knows in the Spirit, when he says:

11 Words of David

"I have known, O Lord, that Your judgments are equity, and in Your truth you have humbled me" [Psalm 118:75]. This is to say: By Your goodness, O Lord, I have experienced in myself that you do not judge the knowing or the ignorant in Your power or Your anger more than they deserve; for you have not slain me for my sins, or taken the power to act from my soul or body.

For I do good to my adversaries, but I do evil in the desires of my flesh; and therefore You reward the good and judge the evil. But You judge only as is equitable and just. How? If You were harshly inflexible about the nature of human deeds, it would not be equity of judgment. But if You carelessly neglected spurring us to penance, and did not try to purge our iniquities, then, O just God, you would be condoning and encouraging injustice. Death, indeed, was a most bitter judgment for the sin of Adam; but now You recall Man to life by the grace restored in penitence, and this would be impossible for anyone but You, Who are God.

And this purgation unto life in grace is Your just and equitable judgment, for Your judgments are meted out in right measure for each case. All that You do is in the truth, and so You never wrongfully exceed the measure; for both excess and deficiency in justice are wrongful. And You use Your power sparingly and in mercy, never slaying anyone just because Your glorious power can do so, but rather choosing to spare by penitence. Therefore I have humbled myself on account of Your mercy, giving glory to Your name; and I am troubled over what my faults deserve in Your judgment.

12 God sees every injustice, and no human can understand His judgment

And you see that this head *is fiery in color, sparkling like a fiery flame;* this is because God's Jealousy is a fierce obstacle to evil, glowing red in the powerful fire of His vengeance. And *it has a terrible human face;* for the eyes of the Lord see all injustices face to face, and no guilt of crime is unsearched by His terrible gaze. He examines all by His just judgment, and turns a human face toward the acting of carnal desires because it is human actions that are thus monstrous and horrifying.

And *it looks in great anger toward the North;* for God in His vengeance scorns all evil that rises from the temptation of the Devil. *And from the neck down you see nothing of this figure's body, for the rest of it is hidden by its*

pressing into the corner; which is to say that the righteous judgments with which the Jealousy of God scatters the evil works of the wicked cannot be fully seen by any human sense, for they are hidden and covered by the corner of reflective knowledge and human deeds. Thus they cannot be seen or understood by investigation, except sometimes when something is shown to be a case of God's judgment, which appears as a human face according to His will. And so in such a vengeance there is nothing automatic, except that people always receive just judgment according to their sins; for their crimes, as was said before, are not left unexamined, but are probed by the Jealousy of the Lord.

13 The Jealousy of God, justly judging human acts, is awful to all creatures

And you see its head, *a bare human head;* which is to say that the Jealousy of the Lord is not subject to mortality but is bare of all weakness, justly judging human acts. *It is not covered by hair like a man's or by a veil like a woman's;* for it feels no masculine anxiety about being conquered by one superior in strength, nor has it any feminine weakness as of a timid mind afraid that it cannot conquer its opponents.

But it is more manly than womanly; for the mighty power of God resembles manly virility more than it does soft womanly weakness. *And it is very terrible to see;* for jealousy is terrible and fearsome to all creatures when they feel its vengeance in their case.

14 The Holy Trinity judges all people rightly according to their intentions

It has three wings of wondrous breadth and length, white like a cloud. This symbolizes the expansion of the ineffable power of the Holy Trinity. No one can comprehend the extent of Its glory and the limits of Its power as It shines with the immense sweetness and brightness of Divinity; in Its righteous vengeance it subdues all human minds, as they flit hither and thither diffusely like clouds.

These wings *are not raised, but extend straight out from each other so that the head is slightly higher than they are.* For the vengeance of the Lord is not puffed up by any arrogance, but adapts itself to each case according to its merits; and so it stretches forth within the boundaries of righteousness in the just judgment of its correction, and God's potential strength, like the head of His vengeance, exceeds it in power. And so those human deeds, which the true Trinity does not let go unexamined, are not punished or crushed as severely as that power could if it willed.

BOOK THREE

15 God's Jealousy beats the Devil by Christ and the elect, and in Antichrist

The first wing rises from the right side of the jaw, and stretches toward the Northeast; for God in His just judgment conquered the Devil and all evil first by His Son, Who is at His right hand for salvation. *The second and middle one points from the throat to the North;* for after salvation was wrought by the Son of God, in the middle times when the faith was already strengthened and its sweetness tasted by the elect, God put the roaring enemy to flight by their means, and snatched them from his jaws. *And the third stretches from the left side of the jaw toward the West;* for Satan, having been put to flight by the elect of God, will be completely crushed and consigned to the perdition on God's left hand, in the person of the son of perdition, when the world approaches the end of its days.

Sometimes these wings move, very terribly, and strike these regions; for the Jealousy of the Lord is moved to vengeance by its terrible and formidable judging of every creature. It exercises its judgments and strikes wherever in their justice it pleases the Divine Majesty. For where fear and love and honor of God are held in faith and reverence, God shows Himself mild and gentle and does not exercise His vengeance; but He chastises terribly those who are hard and rebellious.

16 The hardened who despise God and Man's warnings are lost

And therefore, the first wing of My vengeance strikes and casts into the abyss of perdition those people, hardened more than stones, who ignore their inner faculties and despise My justice; they look to their own intellects, and consent to carnal desire and diabolical temptation rather than seeking true justice. They refuse to turn away from their iniquity by their own decision, or by My admonitions, or by human exhortations; and so they outrage the spirit of their own knowledge, for they seek and perform the injustice of the Devil instead of My justice. They pour, so to speak, melted lead into their hearts, which is to say dissolute desires of evil decadence; and so they make them as hard as iron in forgetfulness of God, and are themselves hardened like iron, and then they spare no one in their wickedness for the sake of God or Man.

17 The elements complain of the hardness of the impenitent, who are punished

And against them the elements and all creation cry out and complain that vile and short-lived human nature is so rebellious against God while they

themselves are doing God's will with fear and reverence. And so they are loud and terrible on the subject of Man. How? It is not that the elements cry out with a voice or complain in the words of rational creatures; but that they cry out according to their nature with noisy sounds, and complain by inspiring fear with their terrors. So God's just judgment moves them and the rest of creation to react to humanity, which is ever rebellious; while the elements themselves never go against or swerve from what the Divine Power commands them to do. And so these hardened people cruelly imitate Satan, who in the hardness of his iniquity refused to be subject to God his Creator; and therefore he perished from all beatitude, and those who follow him will perish with him.

18 God brings the punishment of past villains on conscious sinners

And the middle wing of My Jealousy strikes people who rave and the presumptuous and evil deeds that they knowingly and rashly commit. The first such deed cried out in the blood of Abel, whom his brother hated because he was dear to God for offering his substance. Another was Pharaoh's, who was warned by My miraculous deeds and terrified by fear of Me, and so let My people Israel go; but then, in his madness, he tried to bring them back, and therefore My Jealousy swallowed him up. Another arose among that same people of Mine; though they knew Me and saw My miraculous deeds, they adored the idol in Horeb, and therefore the crown fell from their head. And the law of God on the two stone tablets was corrupted by them and others like them, and therefore they fell from their glory and happiness, and My vengeance fell on them. For My servant Moses, in jealousy for Me, meted out punishment to this contrary people who opposed Me so often; he sternly told My chosen that every man should kill his brother and friend and neighbor. And later, he forcefully ordered the judges of that same people to kill their neighbors who were initiated into the rites of Belphegor; and so I avenged Myself, and the iniquity that fought against Me was slain.

19 God's Justice, developing from Abel to Christ, is avenged by His Jealousy

And when God's Justice had first arisen in Abel, in all these evil and perverse generations many other elect were found; they collected and honored My smallest precepts like true children of Israel, and among them rose sorrow and longing for the humanity of My Son. And when My Son appeared, born of the Virgin, all the justice of the Law was baked and salted and became pleasing food for all the people who believed in Me when the apostles showed them the truth. And so, in all those generations, My Jealousy

has avenged and will avenge My Justice upon its conscious transgressors; for God was and is and will be, and His Justice, which scours off all the rust of injustice, will not end until all tribes and peoples cease to be.

20 The Jealousy of God will cast down all who harm the Church or its property

Therefore, in My Jealousy, I remove and cast out the iniquity of anyone who, like a dog, despises the Church, which flowers in Me, and of anyone who in insane wickedness destroys a place consecrated to Me or any rights which properly belong to My temple. For these rights were instituted by foreshadowing by My servant Jacob, as the Scripture narrates:

21 Jacob's action prefigured the dedication of churches

"And Jacob, arising in the morning, took the stone he had laid under his head, and set it up as a marker, pouring oil upon the top of it. And he called the name of the city Bethel" [Genesis 28:18–19]. That is to say: Jacob arose in the morning, because he got up as a timely lover of true Justice in the newly constituted Temple. On it he conferred a befitting name, since from it was to arise the most upright of temples, the Virgin Mary, from whom the Sun of Justice would shine forth. And he took the stone, which prefigured an altar, which he had placed under his Head, which is Christ, and sanctified it in the name of Him Who is the true rock, and, having sanctified it, named it. For every sanctification of an altar is under the power of Almighty God, the Head of all the faithful. And he set it up as a marker of the Book of Life, to mark out and prefigure the odor of the heavenly Jerusalem; for as in the heavenly Jerusalem Christ is the Head of His members, so every sanctified altar is the most excelling part of the temple, for oil was poured over it to symbolize the chrism, which is the grace of Almighty God outpoured in holy baptism. And he called that holy place the house and temple of God, which is the name of the city of the heavenly Jerusalem, the living temple of the Living God.

22 A sealed stone legitimizes Communion even without a temple around it

Therefore, by this example and foreshadowing, when a temple is planned in My name, a stone must be erected; for the temple itself is signified by a stone, since I am the firm rock of all justice and Christian law. And wherever the body of My Son is to be sacrificed, there must be a sanctified place where a stone is sealed with My Name, even if by some impossible

chance there cannot be a temple there. For I am the strength of truth, and My servant Jacob erected his stone in foreshadowing, as was said, of My Son becoming incarnate of his race.

23 The work of the people should justify the building of a temple

Such a temple, dedicated to Me, should not lack the activity which was the reason for its being put up, but be associated with the work of the people who minister to it; for the celestial Jerusalem, whose Head is Christ, does not lack His justice, but is always mindful of the works of her children whom she will receive in God. How? They are to withdraw from the service of the Devil, restrain themselves from the desires their flesh craves, and for love of the heavenly cut off their own natures and afflict themselves against their own interests. Thus they should not use all they possess, but withhold some and offer it to God in His honor, as My exemplary servant Jacob appointed tithes of all his substance. For, as again it is written, he said:

24 How and why Jacob gave a tenth of all his possessions

"Of all things that You shall give me, I will offer a tenth to You" [Genesis 28:22]. Which is to say: Of all that You give me, I will offer the tenth part to You, because this is Your law; first I will tithe my soul, O my God, and cut away my own will from it, offering You Your own justice against myself, and then I will tithe all the goods I have on earth. What does this mean? That every faithful person who is numbered in the tenth order of the citizens of Heaven should give My temple the tenth of his substance, to reflect the redemption by which he is counted in that tenth order of those numbered in God's knowledge; for they live in and belong to the true temple, that of the celestial Jerusalem.

25 Woe to destroyers, defilers, despisers and cheaters of churches

But those who forget their fear of Me and in insane wickedness destroy temples dedicated in My name, or defile that dedication originated by Jacob by polluting holy places with murderous blood or the impure seed of adultery or fornication, or when offering the supernal sacrifice ignore the Old Testament fathers and neglect to do it in the presence of a sealed stone like Jacob's, or fail to give the tithes or the property to My temples that I justly decreed: O woe to those wretches! O woe to those wretches! O woe to those wretched people who so shamefully misguide themselves and so perversely before My face neglect My institutions, translated out of the old Law! For the new Law was brought forth out of the Old Testament by My Son in the

mercy of grace, and all the justice of the Law and the prophets was increased in My Son, since all the signs the ancient fathers uttered secretly in obscurity were in Him shown clearly in total justice.

26 Those who share church property with the wicked are thrown down by God

Those who divide the property of the Church with dogs and swine and other beasts, which is to say with evil people, shall be cast down by the Jealousy of God from the highest to the lowest degree. As for those who despise and disdain the food of life derived from both Testaments, treading it underfoot like mud and using it for their own purposes, I will also despise them and their posterity, casting them down from the highest to the lowest and from riches to poverty in the vengeance of My Jealousy.

27 How God's vengeance strikes both believers and unbelievers

The third wing of My vengeance strikes both believers and unbelievers in their wicked and unjust works. It strikes believers who do not use their will to do good and just works; who clearly see the faith and know God's justice, but nonetheless sit in the gloom of evil deeds, foolishly long for the darkness of iniquity, and perversely will to give themselves to madness. But God does not let them do their will, for He cuts it off from them by His vengeance as long as they forget Him and cover themselves in obscurity and freely avoid Him.

But it strikes unbelievers in their unbelief, so that even their iniquity is taken from them by the retribution of vengeance, and they cannot do the evil they would gladly do. And so the malicious Devil, conquered by the blessedness of the fruitful souls who shine before God's eyes, wants in his wickedness to draw the faithless into the darkness of death; but he has no hold on them greater than their deeds warrant.

28 How fearfully God's vengeance consumes those who gain power by injustice

And there is another kind of people on earth who are rich in a spirit of intelligence; since their minds are illumined they are wise enough to remember God if they would. But because of their intelligence they presumptuously seek to know wisdom for themselves and do whatever they want with it; and so they mingle justice with iniquity. But they are fools in their

wisdom, for they think of themselves as completely able to possess and lay hold of and acquire their full wishes, whatever they are.

But as they are seeking to lift their wings in power in the provinces and the cities and the other places and things they are busy governing, and wilfully ignoring the fact that God watches and measures what they do, they are dismissed and cast out from before God's eyes; for they judged with wicked and unjust judgments, and did not make the wise choice of fearing the Lord.

And so, through this My Jealousy, they will become a great lamentation, and speak tearfully before all people, who will see and hear the day when their iniquity is judged. Some of them will go on living in great misery and deprivation, and some will die a terrible death with diverse sufferings. By such a variety of fates, My Jealousy punishes and consumes all injustice, for it is repugnant to Me.

29 God's Jealousy does not loudly warn, but firmly and justly judges

But you do not hear the head uttering any words; it only remains motionless in body and strikes with its wings from time to time in the places toward which they extend, as was mentioned. This is to say that in the Jealousy of the Lord there is no clamorous voice of warning raised in its pride, but a motionless persistence in strength and righteous judgment. It punishes the mad deeds that merit its vengeance, deeds done without fear of the Lord; it confounds and crushes them to the full extent of its justice, as was shown to you, O human, in this most true vision. And because God is just, it is needful to examine all injustice by the standard of His justice; for God Himself knows well the capacity of Man's knowledge to scrutinize all things.

30 Man's knowledge is like a mirror reflecting the desire for good or evil

For knowledge in Man is like a mirror in which lies latent his desire to do good or evil. And each person, standing between these two choices, inclines himself by his will toward the one he desires. The person who turns toward the good and with God's help embraces it in works of faith will be praised and blessedly rewarded, for he has spurned evil and chosen good. But the one who turns toward evil, and absorbs its nature into himself by the perverse conduct suggested by the Devil, will wretchedly undergo a just retribution, for he has neglected good and done evil. Therefore, one who submits himself to God in devotion and humility will faithfully work out his salvation, which comes from the Supreme Good; his soul will be joyfully

filled with inner holiness, for he is serving his Creator in well-disposed and ordinate single-heartedness. How?

31 Compunction leads to fear and fear to trembling, and they work justice

Compunction, which is the beginning of anguish, causes fear; fear produces trembling; and by these three a person should do what is just. How? The person feels compunction, and therefore begins to be in anguish, for by the gift of the Holy Spirit his reason tells him to; it means that he cannot refuse to know God, and his knowledge of God causes fear in him so that he respects the things that are of God. And if he knows God and desires these things, the fiery grace of Christ strikes him and tells him to tremble and be terrified in his conscience; and then he may faithfully work God's justice.

32 The first root of human choice and the fiery grace of Christ

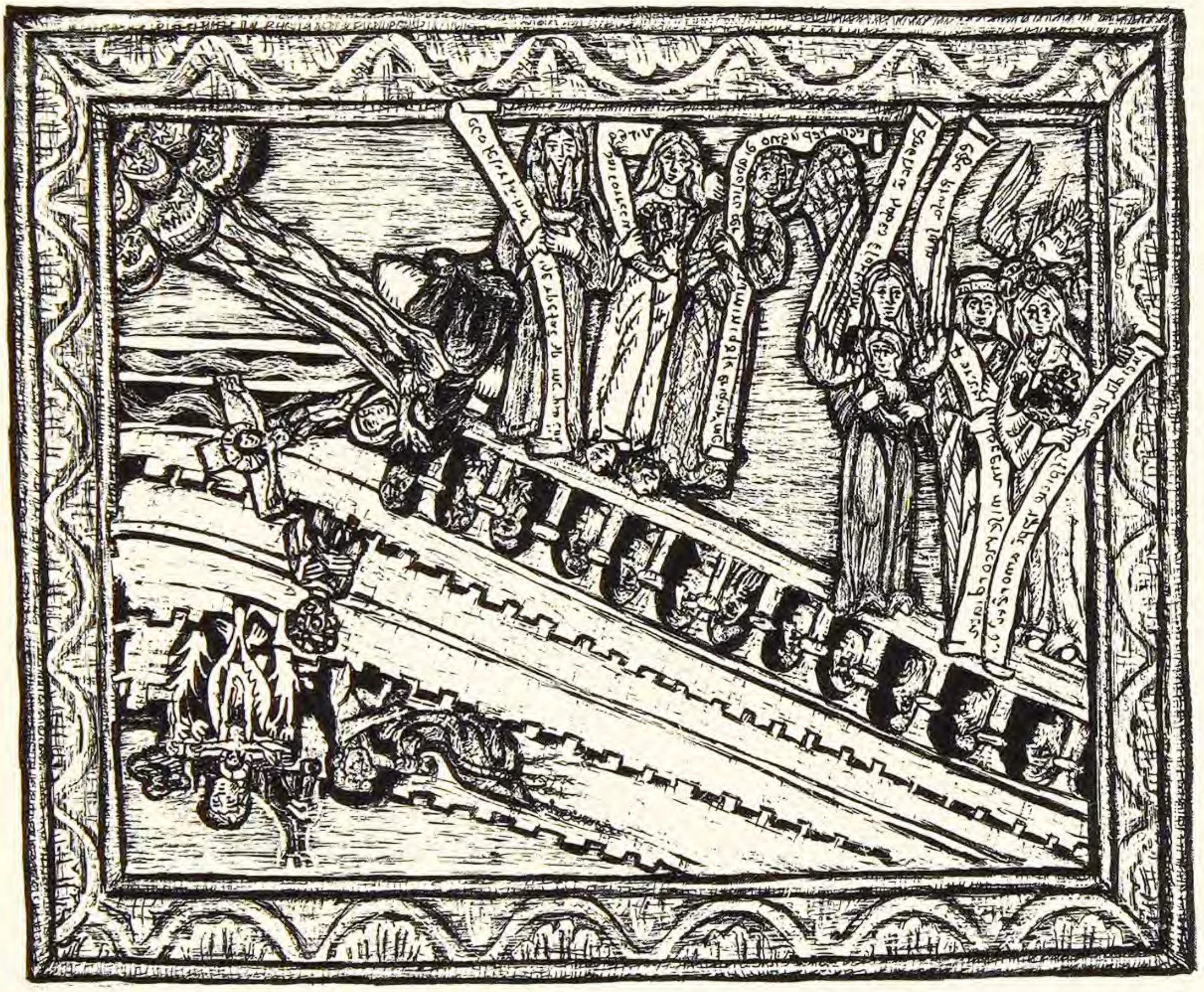
Now, therefore, O human, understand and learn. From whence do these things come? What does this mean? It is God Who works in you what is good. How? He has so constituted you that, when you act with wisdom and discretion, you feel Him in your reason. For the irrational animal does all its deeds without intellect or wisdom, without discretion or shame; it does not know God, being irrational, though it feels Him, being His creature. But the rational animal, which is Man, has intellect and wisdom, discretion and shame, and does rational deeds, which is the first root fixed by God's grace in every person given life and soul. These powers flourish where there is reason, for all of them make people know God, so that they may choose what is just. Therefore, the deed that a person embraces in his Savior, the Son of God through Whom the Father does His works in the Holy Spirit, is productive and perfect and prosperous; and the fiery grace of Christ Jesus calls this to the person's mind and kindles his enthusiasm anew.

33 No sinner may murmur against his Creator

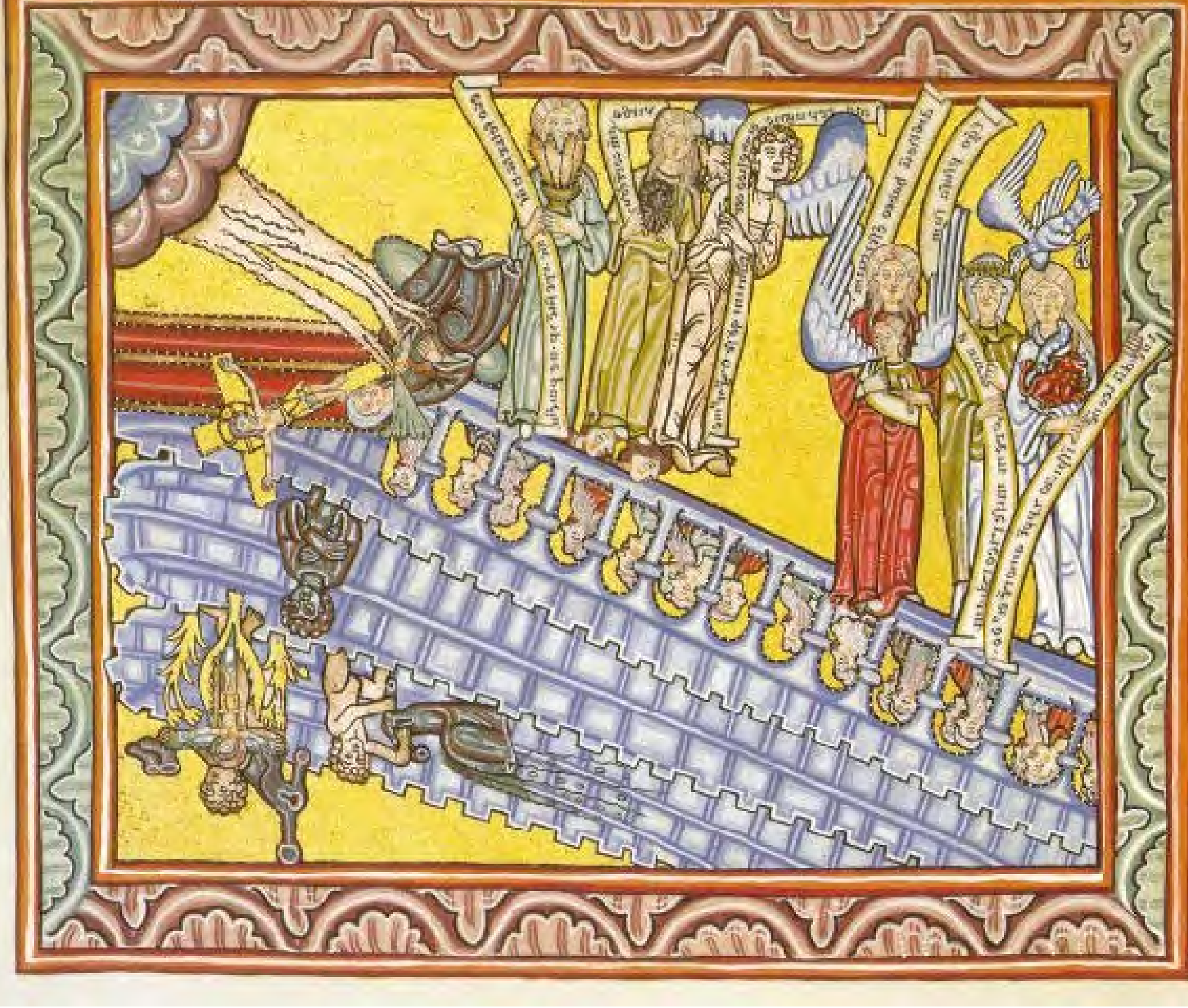
Therefore let each person perform works of justice in the joy of the Holy Spirit, and not hesitate and perversely murmur; let him not say that he lacks anything, when he has the first root placed in him by God's gift and the fiery grace of the Holy Spirit, which touches that root by admonition. For if he were thus to fall into perversity, his reprehensible urge would bring him into anguish; his interior root would be diminished, and he would fall farther into compulsion. And then he would truly murmur to himself, "Alas, alas! What have I done, not being able to discern my works in God?" So let him

also go forward without the burden of unbelief; let him not distrust God in his works, but avoid evil deeds and thus be safe from tearful lamentation.

But let the one who has ears sharp to hear inner meanings ardently love My reflection and pant after My words, and inscribe them in his soul and conscience.



THE TRIPLE WALL



VISION SIX
The Stone Wall of the Old Law

And after this I saw the wall of the aforementioned building, which ran between the north and west corners, and its inner side was all arched like a chancel, except that it was not open like chancel arches but unbroken, and each arch had the picture of a human being in it. And on the outer side of this wall I saw two smaller walls, extending from the north to the west corner, and joined to these corners at each end like a vault. The height of these two lesser walls was three cubits. The distance between the inner, arched wall and the middle one was one cubit; between the middle one and the outer one it was one palm, and that a child's.

And inside the building I saw six figures standing on its pavement before the arched wall: three were grouped together before the wall near the north corner, and three were together at the end of the wall that looked to the West. And they were all looking at the pictures in the arches of the wall.

And at that same end of the wall I saw another figure within the building, sitting on a stone resting on the pavement for a seat, and leaning against the wall to her right, but turning her face toward the pillar of the true Trinity. And at the same end I saw another figure, standing on the wall above the first, also turning toward the pillar of the true Trinity.

And in these figures I saw the following resemblances. The last two were clothed in silk garments and white shoes, as were the first six; except that the right-hand figure in the group of three standing at the end of the wall was so pure and bright that I could not discern any detail about her because of her great splendor, and that the one who was standing on the wall was wearing black shoes. And none of these wore a cloak except the middle one of the three who stood at the beginning of the wall; she was wearing a cloak.

And two of these same three, the ones to the right and the left of the middle one, and two of the other three, the middle and the left figures, did not have women's veils on their heads, but stood with bare heads and white hair. But the middle one of the first three and the one who sat on the stone next to the wall had white head-veils in the manner of women. And the middle and the right-hand ones of the second three were clothed in white tunics. And I saw the following differences between them:

The figure who stood in the middle of the three first ones had a yellow circlet like a crown on her head, with this inscription carved on the right side: "Always

burn!" And I saw that a dove was flying at the right side of this figure and breathing out this writing from its beak. And that figure was saying:

1 Words of Abstinence

"I am poured forth from inner compassion, from which springs the river of mercy, which never tries to hide money or precious stones or pearls from the poor and needy under any pretense, for they do not have the necessities of life and thus are weeping. I will console them and forever refresh their poverty for the love of the sweet and mild Son of God, Who distributes His goods in the souls of the just, and heals the wounds of their sins because of their penitence."

And the second figure, standing at her right, had a lion on her breast that gave off light like a mirror; and hanging from her neck to her breast on a twisted, flexible rod was a pale-colored serpent. And she said:

2 Words of Liberality

"I contemplate the light-giving Lion, and I give for the sake of His love. I flee from the fiery serpent, but I love the serpent hanging from the rod."

And the third figure, on the left, was clad in a tunic of hyacinth red. On her breast was the picture of an angel, a wing out on either side, so that its right wing stretched to the figure's right shoulder and its left wing to her left shoulder. And this figure said:

3 Words of Piety

"My companionship is with angels, and I do not choose to walk with dissembling hypocrites, for I feast with the just."

Now the figure who stood in the middle of the three second ones was dressed in a yellow tunic. Above her right shoulder hovered a dove of exceeding whiteness, breathing into her right ear. On her breast was the picture of a monstrous and shapeless human head; beneath her feet lay the likenesses of people trodden down and crushed by her. In her hands she held a document, fully unrolled; on one side, the side that faced Heaven, there were seven lines of writing. I tried to read it, but could not. And she said:

4 Words of Truth

"I choose to be the rod and scourge of bitter correction against that liar who is the son of the Devil; for the Devil is the persecutor of the ineffable justice of God. Hence I oppose him and trouble him; I am never found in his

mouth, and I spit him out of my mouth like a deadly poison, for with all his cunning he has never found me. He is to me the worst and most troublesome of all evils, since all evil originated from him. Therefore, I cast him out and tread him underfoot in the lovable justice of God, which I love unceasingly and without end, and support and lead. For on me the whole edifice of God's virtues, which build on high, is stabilized and will stand. O God, Who art strongest and noblest, hearken!"

The second figure, on her right, had an angelic face and wings capable of flying stretched out to each side. But she was in human form, like the other virtues. And she said:

5 Words of Peace

"I rebuff the attacks of the Devil, which come against me saying, 'I will not suffer tribulation, but I will rid myself of all my adversaries. I am not willing to fear any. Whom should I fear?' But those who utter this evil speech are cast out through me; for I have been appointed always to be glad and rejoice in all good things. For the Lord Jesus abates and consoles all pain, He Who bore pain in His own body.

"And, because He is the restorer of justice, I choose to unite myself to Him and sustain Him always, free of hatred and envy and all evils. And I also choose to present a joyful face to Your justice, O God."

And the third figure, on the left, was clothed in a white tunic, picked out with green; she had in her hands a small vase, pale and shining, which gave off bright light like lightning, and this light shone on the face and neck of the figure. And she said:

6 Words of Beatitude

"I am happy. For the Lord Jesus adorns me and makes me beautiful and white, because I have flown from the deadly counsel of the Devil, which always reverts to misery, seeking by evil deeds what God rejects. I fly from this Satan, I reject him, and I hold him as an enemy forever, for I desire that Lover Whom I may fervently embrace and joyfully possess in and above all things."

Now the figure who sat on the stone at this end of the wall was clothed in a black tunic. On her right shoulder she bore a small cross with the image of Jesus Christ, which turned hither and thither. And as from the clouds there shone on her breast a wondrously bright light, divided into many rays as is the splendor of the sun when it shines through an object's many small openings. In her right hand she held a small branch like a fan, from the top of which three twigs had wonderfully sprouted forth into flower. And in her bosom she carried some

minute stones, jewels of all kinds, which she looked at very carefully and diligently as a merchant looks over his goods. And she said:

7 Words of Discretion

"I am the mother of virtues, and I have God's justice in all things. In spiritual war and in secular tumult, within my conscience I always wait upon my God. I do not condemn, I do not trample, I do not spurn kings and dukes and counts and the other secular ruling powers who were ordained by the Ruler of all things. How were it lawful for ashes to spurn ashes? The crucified Son of God turns Himself to all people, admonishing them by His justice and mercy; and I choose to submit to each of His ordinances and institutes according to His will."

And the figure that stood on the wall at the same end was bareheaded, with curly black hair and a swarthy face. She was dressed in a tunic of many different colors. And I saw that she took off the tunic and her shoes, and stood naked; and suddenly her hair and her face gleamed newly white, like a newborn baby, and her whole body shone like light. And then I saw on her breast a splendid cross with the image of Christ Jesus; it was depicted above a little bush with two flowers on it, a lily and a rose, which reached upward toward the cross. And I saw her vigorously beat the tunic and shoes she had taken off, so that a great deal of dust flew out of them. And she said:

8 Words of Salvation

"I take off the Old Testament, and I put on the noble Son of God with His justice in holiness and truth. And thus I am restored to my good deeds and stripped of my vices. Therefore, O my God, I beseech you, 'Do not remember the sins of my youth and my ignorance, and take not revenge on my sins' " [Psalm 24:7, Tobias 3:3].

And as I looked attentively on these things, the One seated on the throne again spoke to me:

9 No Christian should refuse to submit to government, prefigured of old

Let none of the faithful who humbly wish to obey God hesitate to submit to human institutions of government. For through the Holy Spirit the authority of the Church has been ordained for the use of the people while they live; and it was prefigured in the people of the Old Testament that human government is included in churchly authority and should be kept faithfully and firmly.

VISION SIX

Hence *you see the wall of the aforementioned building, which runs between the north and west corners, and its inner side is all arched like a chancel, except that it is not open like chancel arches but unbroken.* This symbolizes the time from Abraham and Moses, who resisted the Devil, as it were, in the northern corner, until the open declaration of the true Trinity in the true and Catholic faith, when the Son of God was sent into the world by God the Father in the last days and set forth His doctrine in abundance, as it were, in the western corner. In that period the wall, which is to say the Israelite people, was set up in the law of God's justice, which built the building of the goodness of the Almighty Father. That is, in the Old Testament the Israelite people were curbed and united, and after the harshness displayed by the Jealousy of God because of the deeds of the early rulers, the reign of the new dignities was foreshadowed.

For the Old Testament extended till the time of the New, and from it sprang the greater precepts of the law of the New Testament. Thus from the lesser the greater was born, the greater and broader new doctrine from the lesser doctrine of the old commands; for the Old Testament was only the foundation, laid down that the profoundest wisdom of all might be built on it, the wisdom manifested in the Incarnation of the Son of God. So the old wisdom lasted from the law of circumcision to the new rule of baptism, which was adorned with greater commands.

10 The Incarnation made clear by the grace of the Spirit what the Law hid

And the wall, which is to say the Jewish people in their inner understanding by which the human soul knows God, was all arched, which is to say surrounded on all sides by their predecessors' wisdom which proclaimed the commands of the Law of God, and walled in and protected by that wisdom, as lesser people are wont to be guided by greater ones. This is the meaning of the structure of the chancel, which is to say the foreshadowing in a type by the Holy Spirit. For, by the Incarnation of the Son of God, Who manifested the archways of His mercy as a refuge to all who ask, the Spirit elucidated the difficult writings.

But the wall was not opened by the Doorkeeper, that is to say the Holy Spirit, Who laid bare the spiritual meaning of the old Law; the archways of mercy were opened in the flesh of the Son of the Most High when He was made manifest, but the old wall remains closed in the harsh precepts of the Law, even though that Law was later made clear through the Holy Spirit in the Fountain of Living Water.

11 A person invested with a government dignity represents God

And each arch has the picture of a human being in it. For as these pictures show human images, so a person in a triumphal arch, which is to say a government dignity, stands in the place of God. How? Because, by the grace of God, profound and excelling wisdom is placed in the mouth of human reason, and so a human being, in the name of God, can exercise an office of instruction as a representative of the justice and mercy of the Most High Himself.

12 A spiritual office is the greater, one which rules the people is lesser

And on the outer side of this wall you see two smaller walls; which is to say that in outward affairs there is an intermittent establishment of greater and lesser people set up by God's authority like two walls. The outer one is people of high birth who by My ordinance have the might of secular power; the middle one is the lesser people who live under the power of both spiritual and secular persons, and thus are between the arches of the inner wall, which is spiritual government, and the outer wall, which, as said, is secular power. And so there are two walls outside the circumference of the inner arched wall; for secular persons in earthly affairs have more outward than inward qualities. And yet they are part of My appointed order. How?

13 The outer authority is an allegory of the inner

Through outward things the inner ones are understood; and so, when people see from the visible and exalted dignity of one in power how he should be feared and honored and loved, they should also understand by the same insight how the invisible and most high God is to be dreaded and worshipped and loved above all things. For by outward and secular dominion people are taught about the inward and spiritual power of the Divine Majesty, which is so concealed and hidden from humanity that no fleshly eye can see it unless faith grasps it. So God is invisible to mortal creatures; but at least through visible authority people can learn to fear and worship the Most High, Who established it. How?

14 Why God lets one kind of person excel and another be subject

God's inspiration gave the human mind, by means of its reason, a sense that great persons should rule the people and be feared and honored by them.

For God has allowed one kind of person to rule and another to be subject so that people would be divided into groups and so would not kill each other off and perish; or because if the example were not given by fearing and honoring human beings, the people would be lazy, and not know how to acknowledge God.

Therefore, the Holy Spirit led the people to the inner spiritual law, which could rule them inwardly and outwardly until the Fountain sprang up and flowed forth in the world in the fullness of justice to rule both body and soul. So secular powers are set up to order earthly things, that the body may seek refreshment and not faint; and spiritual authority is established that the soul might long for celestial things and aspire to the service of God. And so both these things are established by My order, as Isaac said to his son Jacob:

15 Words of Isaac to Jacob

"Be the lord of your brethren, and let your mother's children bow down before you" [Genesis 27:29]. Which is to say, be the lord of your brothers, powerful over them in honors and triumphs, blessed by the benedictions given me by God; and let all the children of your mother's children bow down before you, subject to you because of your exceeding blessing. For out of you shall come forth the great race from which will arise the man most strong and mighty, whom his brothers shall persecute and drive away. But he will escape them like a lion in his strength and rule them with most excellent rule. And he will restrain them in the name of his power, and never dwindle into a mere appendage like a tail; his brothers will become the tail.

And thus too I, the Heavenly Father, said to My incarnate Son, "Be the Lord of all who are born of human seed, who were created by Me through You. For You were born miraculously of a virgin, not conceived by the seed of a man; You went forth from Me as a flaming fire, and appeared on earth as a true man, but the seal of the untouched and chaste Virgin remained closed.

"You, therefore, in the supernal light of divinity, are the Lord of those who by Your Incarnation as a man are Your brothers. And so let the children of the mother of Your Incarnation bow down and be subject to You, and all people born of humanity serve You in loving devotion."

And since the Son of God is thus Lord of all creatures, by the will of the Father and the touch of the Holy Spirit He also established the order of the different powers in the world. How? Thus: There was excess and vaunting because no people honored any other people, and everyone was doing as he pleased; and this would have continued if God, in His infinite wisdom, had not done away with it. Therefore, He made distinctions between one people and another. He made the lesser subject to the greater in the service of

obedience, and made the greater help and serve the lesser with intelligence and devotion; just as it was granted to Jacob by his father, inspired by the Holy Spirit, to be lord of his brothers.

16 This means that there are three orders: rulers, free people and servants

And by his being made lord, it was shown that in secular affairs there is a kind of person who is to rule over others' freedom. They honor him for his authority, and thus he spares them and does not oppress them by claiming service from them, but cherishes them with fraternal love. But when it says they are made to bow before him, it symbolizes the services due from those who are released from the bonds of servants, but remain children of the flesh with fleshly cares.

But later, Jacob stole the lordship from his brother through his father's blessing. He then gained heavenly renown by the stone he set up as a sign, and the tithes he vowed to give, as was said; and so he symbolizes each protagonist in the spiritual army. For every faithful person must ascend from the lowest rank to the highest; that is, he must learn from the secular power the higher authority and clearer light of the spiritual life. For in the latter is fulfilled the office of ruler by the way of the immaculate Lamb, Who has lifted Man on high in the plenitude and goodness of justice, raising him up from the snares of the wicked robber who laid him low.

17 How secular and spiritual people are each divided into four categories

And hence the two ways of life, concerned with earthly and with heavenly things, are divided into four parts each. And God gave Man the great power of reason that, inspired by the Holy Spirit, he might know these parts in himself by the pattern of the four elements. And thus he adds variety to the two ways, which I do not spurn or reject; for he who in My name multiplies what is less is worthy of reward and not of rejection. And these four parts pertain as much to the secular as to the spiritual life. For in secular affairs there are lesser and greater nobles, servants and followers; and in spiritual matters there are the excellent and the superior, the obeyers and the enforcers.

18 No one may seize, steal or buy either a spiritual or a secular office

And I do not will that these offices, which I established, should be seized or stolen or put up for sale; I want them given for reasonable cause, that those

who receive them may be useful to God and humanity. But there are poisonous scorpions who ignore My justice, and in the deadly venom of their avarice and their pride usurp these positions; and this not just in secular but also in spiritual offices.

The usurping of secular offices, in which the earthly confronts the earthly, will be harshly judged in the wrath of the Jealousy of God; but the usurping of spiritual ones is more serious and more punishable. For secular people are flesh of flesh in outward things, but spiritual people are inwardly joined to the Spirit. Secular people indeed, though occupied with outer things and earthly cares, should seek to be guided by the inner Spirit in their duties; but spiritual people are within the ranks of religion and must scorn earthly things and rest fully in the heart of the Almighty Father, and so they have a much greater obligation to be ardent in imitating the priesthood of the Son. For as the Son went forth from the heart of His Father, so the Father in His Son set up people to be His officials, arrayed in their high rank to serve the Church and be united to God in good works. How?

19 Those worthy of office are intelligent, moral, eloquent and modest

There are those who have compunction and well-searched hearts and mature minds, and all else that is good to Me. They have good consciences, so that they do not seek office wickedly by conflict, or try to obtain it by devilish arts, or buy it with money or with secular power, or seek it for the sake of fleeting words of human praise. Rather, they receive it in humility by My true choice and the election of the people. And these are My most dear and proved guardians, and My surest friends.

20 Those who flee God and seize office devilishly will be punished later

But there are those who go backward and get power in the dark, not caring how; they snatch the celestial mysteries by craft, by secular and earthly means. And such people fly from My face and in bitterness slay their own souls; they deride Me and deny Me, and kick against My will. How?

By despising Me; they do not desire to attain to office through Me, or raise their inner heart's vision to Me and say, "Does this please God or not?" But each of them says within himself, "Even if this is bad in God's sight, I will accept it; I will trust in the Lord, and at some point while I still live I will repent." And thus they get the authority without Me, the Living God, and never ask Me for it or trust to attaining it by My will; in their impatience

they flee before My face, snatching at office and running aground from the sea of My mercy.

These people therefore are not inside the heart of the Supreme Father; they are outside, wandering in the region of the North, which rules them in these matters. They choose not to seek Me, the Creator of all, but to seek their own will and hold it in place of God, and follow it and abandon Me. They do not wish to know Me, nor I them; their desires prompt them to do what they wish. And, because they refuse to fear Me, I choose not to stop them at once by the terror of My wrath; and so their deeds will be held against them on that day when they can no longer prevail. If I let them go in this life, they will have to answer in the fearful Last Judgment for what they have done; for they had knowledge of Me in faith, yet chose to ignore Me in the deeds they did.

21 By the ordination of Providence, these human distinctions exist forever

But you see that *the two lesser walls extend from the north to the west corner.* This is to say that when the greater and lesser orders of people were established, from the time of Abraham and Moses as in the North to the manifestation of the Catholic faith of the true Trinity taught by My Son as in the West, the distinction between people and their rulers was set up in My Law. And this was the germ and the prototype of the people of the New Testament, shown in advance and lasting till the time My Son by My Zeal was born in the flesh. So these distinctions were and are and always will be, between people of inner and outer life, spiritual and secular people, and greater and lesser people.

They are joined to these corners at each end like a vault; for the peoples are united in honor and teaching to the Old Testament at the beginning and the New Testament at the end. And it is like a vault because, by the workings of divine Providence, they are well and worthily conformed to the structure of the heavenly Jerusalem.

22 There are three kinds of secular people, greater and lesser

The height of these two lesser walls is three cubits, which indicates that when the two secular conditions are rightfully upheld, there are three divisions between the people: the rulers, those who are free from bonds of servitude, and the common people who are subject to their governors.

VISION SIX

23 Spiritual rulers should excel in unity of faith

And so *the distance between the inner, arched wall and the middle one is one cubit;* for that is the distance between the dignity of those high in spiritual authority and those who hold the lesser titles of earthly government, appointed in the unity of faith according to God's will to hold in check those subject to them.

24 The secular rulers and the people must have innocent and loving relations

And between the middle one and the outer one it is one palm, and that a child's; for between the lesser power of the secular government and the servitude of its subjects there must be thoughtful justice, and the two must touch each other with the hands of their joint labor in the single-minded and simple devotion of childlike innocence.

25 In the work of God, six virtues prefigure all the others

And inside the building you see six figures standing on its pavement before the arched wall. This is to say that when God works goodness six virtues appear, which prefigure all the other virtues, as in six days God created His creatures. These virtues stand before the wall as a preview of things to come; they stand before the Israelite people, who were bridled by the divine law and walled about by the authority and defense of their forerunners, and they tread underfoot the pavement of earthly cares, which forms the floor of the Supreme Father's building, to signify that the army of Christians through them can fight the Devil.

26 The positions of these six virtues and the other two

Therefore, *three are grouped together before the wall near the north corner;* for when the Old Testament was begun by Abraham and Moses to oppose the Devil, the holy and inseparable Trinity, in the power of Its majesty, was symbolized by divers secret figures.

And *three are together at the end of the wall that looks to the West;* for when the Son of God was born in the flesh at the end of the time of the Law to redeem the people who looked to the West, the Trinity, which reigns in the Unity of the Divinity, was preached openly by name.

And they are all looking at the pictures in the arches of the wall; for all with

equal devotion look to the authority of God's decrees for humanity, designated by His power in the law of the Old and the New Testament, and ponder how those decrees may be perfected in them.

But at that same end of the wall you see another figure within the building, sitting on a stone resting on the pavement for a seat. This is to say that, when the old law of the Old Testament was laid by and the new faith in the true Trinity was begun, and God established all the constant virtues of the Church, this virtue also appeared to do His work and will work through Him in humans until the end of the world.

And therefore she sits on the strongest of rocks, which is to say on God's only Son; for He is the seat and the repose of all the faithful who despise the transitory and with pure faith believe in Him.

And she leans against the wall to her right; for she rightfully reposes on the hope that this people, both the greater and the lesser, who by God's disposition have been placed under authority, may honor her in their works.

But she turns her face toward the pillar of the true Trinity; for she directs her intention toward that Trinity in everything, with sharpest vision and mental powers, as all who worship God must contemplate Him in their deeds, diligently and ceaselessly, as the eternal Trinity inviolably in Three Persons.

But at the same end you see another figure, standing on the wall above the first. This is to say that when the shadows of the old Law were transmuted by the faith of the Holy Trinity into the true light of justice, this virtue was elevated by the authority of rulers and the faithful people to the higher place, the desire for heavenly salvation. She stands there fighting against vice, upright in the Son of God, for she had her origin from Him, and she shall remain with Him in the heavenly Jerusalem when the world has ended.

And she also turns toward the pillar of the true Trinity; for it is in her strength derived from the holy and ineffable Trinity that she brings back souls to their true country.

27 On the virtues' clothing and what it means

And in these figures you see certain resemblances, for the virtues are of one mind though diverse in the gifts of God. *The first six and the last two are clothed in silk garments,* which are the sweet works the worshippers of God offer to Him in divine law and true justice; *and white shoes,* which are their eagerness to follow in purity the example of good human actions.

But *the right-hand figure in the group of three standing at the end of the wall is so pure and bright that you cannot discern any detail about her because of her great splendor.* For this virtue, by the gift of the Holy Trinity, rose up in the true strength of salvation at the end of the ancient severity; so she is

completely translucent and pure, devoid of all devilish impurities and shining with the joy of human gladness, and she has in the heavenly places such abundance of glory and honor that no excercise of reason by any mortal can comprehend her incomparable harmony, unless God wills to reveal it.

And the one who is standing on the wall is wearing black shoes; for, before My Son's Incarnation, the sign and footprint of death were in all people both of the higher dignity and of the lesser.

And none of these wears a cloak, which means that they have cast off care for the things of Earth and the outer garments of the Law's commands, and are inwardly contemplating true justice. *But the middle one of the three who stands at the beginning of the wall is wearing a cloak,* for she did her work under God's protection at the beginning of the period of severity. But she is surrounded by the love of God and hides in it her heavenly treasure, rejecting the desire for carnal things.

And two of these same three, the ones to the right and the left of the middle one, and two of the other three, the middle and the left figures, do not have women's veils on their heads, but stand with bare heads and white hair. For Law and Prophecy, which came forth from the power of the Supernal Majesty, displayed in their strength life and death, followed the twofold ways of love and in their inner wisdom were constant against adversity and rejoiced in sweet divinity; and in their Head, Who is Christ My Son, they were faithfully freed from subjection to pain or the noose of death. Their hair is bright with the purity of virginity, for the Divinity greatly loved the virginal nature in the Virgin Mary.

But the middle one of the first three and the one who sits on the stone next to the wall have white head-veils in the manner of women; which is to say that in the height of Heaven and in the constancy of blessed repose they are pleasantly and sweetly bound by the strong bond of subjection. They venerate God, the Head of all the faithful, with a pure and loving devotion, as with sincere love a wife should venerate her husband.

And the middle and the right-hand ones of the second three are clothed in white tunics; for their shining and pure works go forth among people by the power of the Divine Majesty in sweetest beatitude, ordained by the law of the Lord to Whom they are united.

But you also see differences between them; which is to say that, although they worship God in concord, He has given them different powers.

28 Abstinence and her appearance

Therefore, *the figure who stands in the middle of the three first ones* symbolizes Abstinence; for she, in the fight, is like a city and a foundation and an ornament to the virtues near her. By her grave conduct she keeps

herself from sin, and having no wantonness in herself she scrutinizes and reproves all childish wrongdoing. She appears like a mother in the midst of those virtues, which showed the glory of the Trinity at the beginning of the time of the Law in the Old Testament.

And *she has a yellow circlet like a crown on her head, with this inscription carved on the right side: "Always burn!"* For she was crowned by the Supreme Head with the yellow ray of the brilliant sun, the Son of God. In His brightness she exists totally, desiring no one but Him; and indeed, He always inflames her from the direction of salvation, which is the right.

And thus, as you see, *a dove is flying at the right side of this figure, and breathing out the writing from its beak.* For the right hand of heavenly bounty gives the gift of true simplicity, which is the Holy Spirit, and It enkindles all good things in Abstinence by divine inspiration, for the purpose of saving souls; and so this virtue shows in the words of her admonition, already quoted.

29 Liberality and her appearance

Now *the second figure, standing at her right,* symbolizes Liberality; she is of childlike simplicity, with no over-subtlety or hardheartedness with respect to human suffering. Together with Abstinence she withdraws herself from all harshness and takes the right path to God; for when Abstinence decides on a work, Liberality begins to carry it out.

She has a lion on her breast, which gives off light like a mirror; which is My Son Christ Jesus, the mighty lion, enclosed in her heart like a tender and wonderful mirror of affection.

And hanging from her neck to her breast on a twisted, flexible rod is a pale-colored serpent. This symbolizes the fact that My wise Son bent His neck, which is to say His patience, to bear the pale agony of the body and the twisting of His pains when He was raised on the cross to heal all wounds. Liberality impresses this upon her heart with heavenly love and causes it to be contemplated in human minds; and so she says in the words of her already quoted declaration.

30 Piety and her appearance

And *the third figure, on the left,* manifests Piety, who never cherishes hatred or envy of human happiness, but always rejoices at and embraces human good fortune. By her freshness and her outpouring of generosity, Abstinence is able to resist the Devil, who whispers to her from the left. For in the struggle for the banner, Piety is the full work of Abstinence, and always is the victor.

VISION SIX

Hence *she is clad in a tunic of hyacinth red;* for her splendid work surrounds her, yet in her beautiful patience she hides bloody injuries beneath it, suffering all of them according to My Son's example in His Passion. *On her breast is the picture of an angel, a wing out on either side.* This means that each person should imitate the angels in his mind by loving each of God's ordinances, and lift himself up into flight on one wing and on two, which is to say by the One God and by twofold virtue; meeting the good and the bad on both sides, not unduly exalted by the good or prostrated by the bad. He should gaze on God in purity of heart, and therefore rise upward and not cast himself down to earth.

And therefore *its right wing stretches to the figure's right shoulder;* for on the right, the side of salvation, human happiness comes to the help of Piety, because My Son brought back Man to his true country. And *its left wing stretches to her left shoulder;* for on the left, the side of the Devil's snares, a faithful person casts off the work of darkness by extending his wing for a flight upward to the refuge of My Son. And thus he is strong against all adversity and imitates the life of the just, as this virtue declares in her already quoted words.

31 Truth and her appearance

The figure who stands in the middle of the three second ones depicts Truth; for in every case, after Abstinence and the virtues that cleave to it have been established, Truth arises. The other figures stand by her because she is their tower and their strong protector; she is at the heart of the virtues that prefigure the Holy Trinity when Jewish custom sets and true faith rises.

Above her right shoulder hovers a dove of exceeding whiteness, breathing into her right ear. This signifies the amazing power of the Holy Spirit, Who appears at the upper right, the direction of the blessed restoration through the Incarnation of the Son of God; Its touch breathes into her right ear, which is to say into the hearts of believers, that they may understand the divine power of God.

On her breast is the picture of a monstrous and shapeless human head; which is to say that God allows the hearts of His elect to be troubled by the miseries and persecutions of rulers, just as His Son chose to suffer at the hands of the chief priests. And, because God is in the hearts of the faithful, they should suffer persecution patiently for the love of God; and, because death arose from the fall of the Devil, they must sustain many struggles and sufferings, often hard and adverse for the body, against the Devil's villainies. For something clings to Man that the ancient serpent always pursues. What is this? The lust of the flesh, which can be ensnared from ambush by that malignant enemy.

BOOK THREE

And beneath her feet lie the likenesses of people trodden down and crushed by her. This is to say that the lies of the Devil, which reside in human deeds, are reduced to naught under the feet of Truth. She loves the edifice of the Church, where all the virtues shine clearly to be tested by her; before all ages she was hiding invisibly in the heart of the Father, but at the end of time she appeared visibly in the true flesh of the Son of God.

And therefore *in her hands she holds a document fully unrolled, and on the side that faces Heaven there are seven lines of writing.* For in all works of Truth, by God's grace a pattern is unrolled of the law established for the Christian people; and it should be observed with open worship on the side turned toward heavenly desire, and feared on the side of carnal lusts. And it contains the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, the unassailable bulwark against the Devil's snares of death. *And you try to read it, but cannot.* For though Man yearns to know the mysteries and secrets of God's gifts, it is not possible for him to understand or grasp God's will in His wonders as long as he is burdened with a mortal body. But let Man embrace and truly comprehend those mysteries by faithfully following God's precepts, as this virtue says in her words already quoted.

32 Peace and her appearance

The second figure, on her right, symbolizes Peace, which has the heavenly mark and the company of angels. For she puts forth buds in the full fruitfulness of Truth. Truth is surrounded by marvellous gifts of Heaven, which come from the right, the side of salvation, and so, through the Son of God, she brings Peace. How? As it is written in the angelic song: "Glory be to God on high, and on earth peace to people of good will" [Luke 2:14]. Which is to say: Because the Son of God was miraculously incarnate, humanity shines forth in the Most high God and God in humanity. And therefore God is worthy to be praised and glorified in Heaven by His whole creation. And so will there also be on earth the peace of salvation to those who receive the will of the Father with devotion and faith; for the peace of good will is the will of all the goodness of the Father, His Son, Who is God and Man at once.

And how is He peace? He is the Peace of humans, and defends them from the snares of the ancient serpent. That serpent was the first false one, and lost the light of life and was cast down into darkness; and then the true Peace, which is the true Son of God, brought light to people, so that they became partakers of the Kingdom of God and stood in the blessed place that the Devil had lost.

So, as you see, this virtue *has an angelic face;* for she flies from all evil, and beholds God, as it were, face to face with holy mind and angelic desire. Hence too *she has wings capable of flying stretched out to each side;* for, faced

with either tranquillity or trouble, she flies upward to God. She does not deal in terror or bitterness, but remains calm and harmonious; by the joint effort of her two wings she embraces the one God, and persists only in serenity, which is not shaken by changeful tempests either in good or in evil case.

And she is in human form, like the other virtues. For she shines miraculously through the Son of God, and all the other human virtues are made true in her. For she never seeks contention or dispute, but always leniency; and so she opposes the attacks of the Devil, as is manifested in the words of her discourse above.

33 Beatitude and her appearance

And the third figure, on the left, depicts Beatitude, yearning for eternal life. By her faithfulness and quiet gentleness Truth can oppose on her left hand all the craft of the serpent's temptations, which deceive the person who consents to him. For Beatitude is the unconquered serenity of true glory, and fears no miseries in death. Therefore *she is clothed in a white tunic, picked out with green;* for she is surrounded by faithful works, which are bright with celestial desire and fresh with the freshness of the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

She has in her hands a small vase, pale and shining; which is to say that her deeds depict the way Man apprehends God by faith in a small container, the interior of his contrite heart. It is pale with the weakness of human flesh, because faith must be held to even in this mortal life where misery is always with humanity. Therefore *it gives off bright light like lightning, and this light shines on the face and neck of the figure.* For knowledge of eternal light is diffused by both fear and love of God, which reaches from a person's inner heart to his face, which is to say it makes him begin righteous deeds that show his good intent. And then it shines on the neck, which means that the completed work includes strength, and through Beatitude shines before God more brilliantly than the sun, as this virtue declares in her speech quoted above.

34 Discretion and her appearance

But *the figure who sits on the stone at this end of the wall* denotes Discretion. For when the Old Testament observances were fulfilled, she appeared in Christ; she is the wise sifter of all things, holding what should be held and cutting off what should be cut off, as the wheat is separated from the tares.

And *she is clothed in a black tunic;* for she is surrounded by mortification of the flesh, and has cast off all vain levity. And *on her right shoulder she bears a small cross with the image of Jesus Christ;* which is to say that, when Almighty God gave His Son to be miraculously incarnate and humbly suffer,

this virtue was firmly rooted in the power of God's strength, which is the right. Discretion united with His love when she was manifested by Him, and through her all justice is decided. And as God determines the stature that best befits Man, Discretion's office is to imitate Him; that is, she fulfils her works in the Giver, His crucified Son, and exists in both His states, divinity and humanity.

It turns hither and thither; for in the sign of the holy cross Discretion moves unceasingly in a round among good and bad people. *And as from the clouds there shines on her breast a wondrously bright light;* which is to say that from God's mercy, the brightest cloud above, divine love is instilled and enkindled in human minds, waking discretion and enlightenment in them.

Therefore, *this light is divided into many rays as is the splendor of the sun when it shines through an object's many small openings.* For the Holy Spirit, with heavenly power, emits diverse rays, which are gifts to humans; and these rays, more brilliant than the sun, diffuse and penetrate the recesses of humility in the clear vision of faithful souls. And thus It enlightens their minds and senses, that they may gain a deep understanding in everything of what they should rightly do in God.

In her right hand she holds a small branch like a fan; which is to say that Discretion, on the right side, which is the side of salvation, contemplates her work in humans through the gifts of the Holy Spirit. These humans are in the flesh, which is fragile like wood; but the flesh has in it her sign, and so by God's help drives away the Devil's temptations, which come like a cloud of flies. Thus Discretion is not dissipated in them by vanities. *And so from the top of this wood three twigs have wonderfully sprouted forth into flower,* that the faithful may believe above all that the Holy Trinity perpetually flowers in wonder and gloriously reigns in the Unity of the Divinity. Thus they must not rashly contemplate the celestial secrets in themselves, but dispose all their actions well and rightly through the power of Discretion, as God disposes His works justly and with discretion in all His creatures.

And in her bosom she carries some minute stones, jewels of all kinds, which she looks at very carefully and diligently as a merchant looks over his goods. This is to say that in the bosom of the human mind she encloses everything that is apt and suitable, that its most minute thoughts and deeds may be jewels of virtue. And with cautious and diligent scrutiny she seeks all God-ordained justice, and influences all human hearts with a sharp awareness of the reward of their work, the recompense from God, which indeed she herself says, as mentioned above.

35 Salvation and her appearance

And *the figure that stands on the wall at the same end* signifies the Salvation of souls, which appeared in the authority of the new grace when

the old severity had set. Thus Discretion is the foundation, and Salvation appears above her, who arose in the Son of God when He was born of the Virgin for human salvation. She *is bareheaded, with curly black hair.* For she is bare of subjection or servitude, and remains free in status, because she openly cleaves to the Son of God, Who mercifully raised her up; but her hair is black, because among the Jewish people Salvation was obscured, not shining in true brightness but existing in great diversity of observance, like curls in hair.

She also has a swarthy face; for before the Incarnation of the Son of God, she was in the shadow of death, and seemed not to hope for the happiness of eternal salvation. Therefore, too, *she is dressed in a tunic of many different colors;* for among the people of the Old Testament she was surrounded by many works, including many vices.

But you see that *she takes off the tunic and her shoes, and stands naked.* This is to say that when death was banished by the Passion of My Son, and when the Holy Spirit came and the sound and words of the apostles were heard in the world, Salvation awoke; she spurned evil works and rejected wrong paths and stripped herself bare of the Devil's power. And thus she spoke within herself: "O you most shameful Devil! You would never leave me, except that I am redeemed in the blood of the Lamb. For you wanted to keep me in the pit of Hell, but now by God's grace I am delivered."

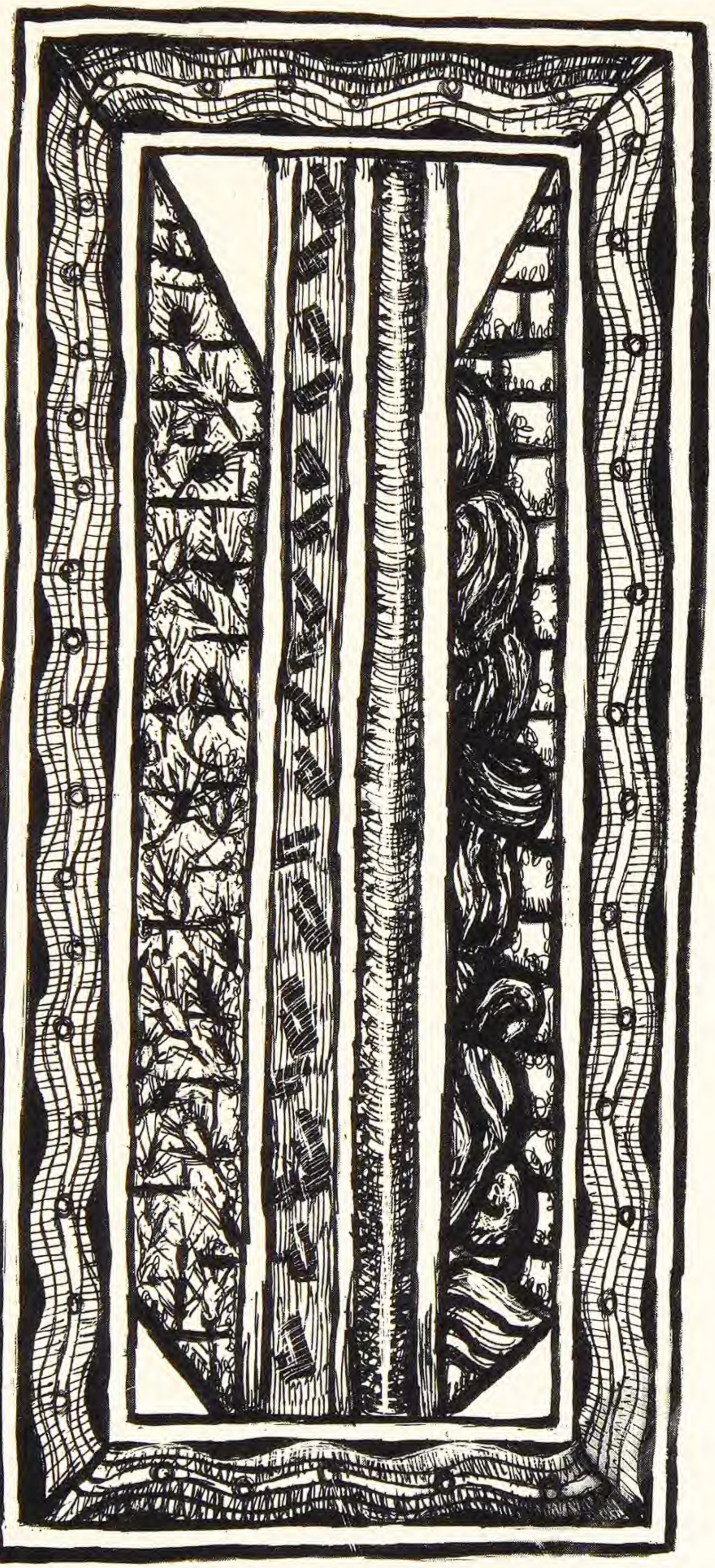
And thus *suddenly her hair and her face gleam newly white, like a newborn baby.* For after the Incarnation of My Son, the people represented by her hair increased, well-enlightened in the inner face of their souls. They grasped true and splendid justice and sought eternal happiness, trusting in life's brightness and the liberation of the faithful members who adhere to Christ the Head; and so they are saved in celestial life through regeneration and the innocence of childhood. *And her whole body shines like light;* for she in all her members, the faithful people subject to her through My Son, was made pure in dovelike simplicity and bright in the lucent beauty of the justice of God.

But *you see on her breast a splendid cross with the image of Christ Jesus, which is depicted above a little bush with two flowers on it, a lily and a rose, which reach upward toward the cross.* This is to say that in the Passion of Jesus, this virtue became the strong heart of the believing people. For the Savior Jesus, by His martyrdom and the steps of His righteous example, cast down and broke the tree of Adam's death and perdition, against which the two Testaments had also fought, the Old in white and the New in red. By God's will, then, and in the lofty understanding of the spirit, they turned from the perdition of death to the Passion of that noble and loving Redeemer and all His justice.

So *you see her vigorously beat the tunic and shoes she has taken off, so that a great deal of dust flies out of them.* For Salvation shows, in new and righteous

human deeds, that the tunic of early custom and old vice is removed and the evil example of Adam's transgression beaten out of it. She brings these things to naught by vigorous scrutiny, and despises and rejects the dust of vainglory and other sins, as she makes known about herself in the words given above.

But let the one who has ears sharp to hear inner meanings ardently love My reflection and pant after My words, and inscribe them in his soul and conscience.



PILLAR OF THE TRINITY

xi. Verba de libro regū adeandē reos.

VISION SEVEN
The Pillar of the Trinity

Then I saw in the west corner of the building a wondrous, secret and supremely strong pillar, purple-black in color. It was so placed in the corner that it protruded both inside and outside the building. And it was so great in extent that neither its size nor its height was clear to my understanding; I only saw that it was miraculously even and without roughnesses.

The outside part had three steel-colored edges, which stood out like sharp sword-edges from the bottom to the top. One of these faced Southwest, where a great deal of dry straw lay cut and scattered by it; another faced Northwest, where a lot of little wings had been cut off by it and had fallen; and the middle edge faced West, where lay many decaying branches that it had cut away. All of these had been cut off by those edges for their temerity.

And again, the One Who sat on the throne and showed me all these things said to me, "To you I explain these mystical and miraculous unknown gifts in all their fullness, and grant you to speak of them and show them; for, O human, they appear to you clearly in the true light. This I do to enkindle the fiery hearts of the faithful, who are the pure stones that will build the celestial Jerusalem."

1 The Trinity is to be believed humbly and not pried into more than is licit

For the holy and ineffable Trinity of the Supreme Unity, which was hidden from those under the yoke of the Law but manifested in the new Grace to those freed from servitude, must be believed by the faithful with simple and humble heart, One True God in Three Persons; and it must not be rashly scrutinized, nor must anyone be dissatisfied with the gift he has received from the Holy Spirit. If such a one seeks more than is fitting, in the temerity of his self-exaltation he will fall into a worse state, not find what he improperly seeks. And this is shown by the present vision.

For *this pillar you see in the west corner of the building* symbolizes the true Trinity; for the Father, the Word and the Holy Spirit are One God in Trinity, and that Trinity is in Unity. It is the perfect pillar of all good, reaching from the heights to the depths and governing the whole terrestrial globe.

BOOK THREE

It stands in the west corner because the Son of God was incarnate in the sunset of the world; and He glorified His Father everywhere and promised the Holy Spirit to His disciples. So too, the Son, in undergoing death by the will of the Father, gave a noble example to humans, so that they too could rightfully enter the edifice of the Supreme Father by performing true and just works in the Holy Spirit.

And it *is wondrous, secret and supremely strong.* For God manifests Himself in His creatures so wondrously that they can never exhaust His presence; and so secretly that they cannot scrutinize him by any willful knowledge or sense; and so strongly that all their strength is directed by Him and cannot be compared with His strength.

2 Christ's blood saves the world and shows the Trinity, but incomprehensibly

It is purple-black in color, and is so placed in the corner that it protrudes both inside and outside the building. This is to say that, by the will of the Father, His only Son poured out His purple blood on behalf of humans with their black sins; and thus He saved the world by His Passion and brought the true and right faith to believers. And when the old rituals failed and the new holiness arose, the worship of the Holy Trinity was most plainly proclaimed; for it was openly believed that the Heavenly Father sent His Son, conceived by the Holy Spirit, into the world. And the Son sought the glory of His Father and not His own, and disclosed the profound consolation of the Holy Spirit, as had been foretold; and thus it was hidden on no side, but was proclaimed both to the faithful, who abode in God's work, and to the unbelievers, who stood outside the faith.

But *it is so great in extent that neither its size nor its height is clear to your understanding;* which is to say that the Trinity is of such ineffable glory and power that its greatness of majesty and its altitude of divinity cannot be bounded by any twist or presumption of the human mind. *But it is miraculously even and without roughnesses;* for, wonderful to relate, it is mild and benign in grace, and smooth in its sweet justice to all those who hasten to it, so that no rough place of injustice is in it, but justly and beautifully it confers salvation.

3 The Trinity is manifest in power and pierces even unbelievers' hearts

The outside part has three steel-colored edges, which stand out like sharp sword-edges from the bottom to the top. This is to say that the ineffable Trinity stands against the darkness of the world, appearing openly in the Unity of

Deity. Its sovereignty and power are hidden from none of its creatures except the hearts of unbelievers; from them it is concealed because of their unbelief. Therefore, God's judgment in due recompense deservedly slays them like sharp steel; it yields to no prideful opposition, but extends from one end to the other, which is to say from the creation to the end of the world. And all that exists it has penetrated and does penetrate like a sword of division, in profound Divinity and in all wisdom and power.

4 Unbelief opposes the Catholic faith, and God cuts it down in confusion

And one of these faces Southwest, where a great deal of dry straw lies cut and scattered by it. This is to say that among the Christian people the just and divine Trinity cuts down and burns up all who raise the aridity of heterodoxy and negation and rejection against the righteous Catholic faith. They are utterly confounded, like the grass that is trodden underfoot and burned in the fire, separated from the fruitful grain of the wheat. For faith and works stem from knowledge of Scripture; and all that is contrary to the true faith, though the foolish people follow it like stupid cattle, is scattered and annihilated.

5 God casts down the boasting of the Jewish people

And another faces Northwest, where a lot of little wings have been cut off by it and have fallen. This is to say that the Divinity rejected the high vanity of the Jewish people, which was flying in great pride and mental exaltation, trying to be just in itself and not in God; like the Pharisees, who tried to ascend into the heights of the heavens, trusting with confidence in themselves. But by God's just judgment they fell, rent in pieces for their presumption and their bad conduct.

6 The devilish divisions of the Gentiles are cut down by God and destroyed

And the middle edge faces West, where lie many decaying branches that it has cut away. For by the Trinity the heinous and diabolical schisms of the pagans, who stray from the right faith into the sunset of infidelity, are cut off. And as decaying branches are a nuisance, unfit for human use, so this people, who followed the Devil's lies and not the divine commands, was cut off and rejected from the joy of life.

And therefore all of these have been cut off by those edges for their temerity. For in all these cases, the true and holy Trinity allows the unfaithful people who boldly try to break away from it or stubbornly do not believe in it to cut

themselves off from it and go to perdition; for in their madness and ignorance they attack the Divinity, and choose not to yield to the faith that the Son of God brought in Himself. This faith He transmitted to humanity through His disciples, as the following parable shows:

7 Parable on this subject

A certain lord who owned a fire-producing flint decided to command a numerous people to do a necessary thing, both personally and through messengers. But the messengers did not understand their lord's words, and were foolish and inexperienced at fulfilling his command, stupidly nattering. So while they were trying there arose a tumult; there was a great tempest, with rain and violent thunder, so that the earth quaked and the rocks were rent. And a vessel that had lain in the earth with its mouth facing away from the heavens, and which had a lot of small vessels within it, was rooted out of the earth with great force and its mouth turned to face Heaven.

And then the lord used his flint to produce a violent fire, which ran through those messengers with such heat that all their veins were inflamed and all timid indolence was stricken from them, as quickly as something poured over a dry skin runs off it. And so at last they remembered all the things they had learned and heard from their lord; and they went forth to the rootless people, whose cities had been destroyed, and announced to them their lord's command. For some of these they reconstructed their roots and rebuilt their cities; but others they did not treat so, but slew them like pigs and divided them. And therefore that flint is respected by the whole world, and terrifies and slays all the sins of human flesh.

This means the following. That lord is the Father Almighty, with Whom is His Only-Begotten, the cornerstone conceived by the ardent Holy Spirit and born as a man from the intact Virgin, the fairest and most beautiful flower of all fair and beautiful holiness. For the Son of God in His Divinity was before all time and all creation with the Father and the fiery Comforter; and then, when it pleased the Father, He was sent as was foretold, that he might be conceived by the Holy Spirit, truly incarnate and born of the Virgin, and bestow on believers the fairness and beauty of life.

When He was incarnate, the Father benignly proclaimed through Him and His disciples the necessary thing, the deliverance and salvation of those who believed in Him. But His disciples, while the Son was with them in the world in His body, were foolish and unknowing and unresponsive, slow to understand His words in the Spirit and to fulfil them in work. For they heard them only as in a dream; they were simple, timid and frightened, and had not yet been strengthened.

And meanwhile there came the time of the raging hearts; the Jews,

causing a tumult, sought to stir up many charges against the Son of God and in that great tempest kill Him. And they carried out their malignity even as they wished; in that violent storm a murder was done such as was never seen before and will never be again. And the earth quaked, which is to say that earthly human minds and all of creation were terrified, and because of their criminal deed the laws of the Jews, written on stone, were cracked.

Then the first man, in whom is signified all of creation, and who lay buried in death, bending all his will toward the things of earth and turning his back on Heaven and God, was uprooted from the dust of death, in which he slept with his children, by the great power of the Son of God. And thus he sighed with all his heart and mind and turned to face the celestial country; for he heard Christ, the Son of God, Who was slain for his sake.

But after the Son of God had ascended to the Father, through the Son and according to His promise the Holy Spirit descended. For now the whole earth was full of heavenly dew because the Bread of Heaven had been in it; the faithless had ignored Him like a false rumor, but the faithful had received Him with all their devotion. And so, because the true Word had become incarnate, the Holy Spirit came openly in tongues of fire; for the Son, Who converted the world to the truth by His preaching, was conceived by the Holy Spirit. And, because the apostles had been taught by the Son, the Holy Spirit bathed them in Its fire, so that with their souls and bodies they spoke in many tongues; and, because their souls ruled their bodies, they cried out so that the whole world was shaken by their voices.

And the Holy Spirit took their human fear from them, so that no dread was in them, and they would never fear human savagery when they spoke the word of God; all such timidity was taken from them, so ardently and so quickly that they became firm and not soft, and dead to all adversity that could befall them. And then they remembered with perfect understanding all the things they had heard and received from Christ with sluggish faith and comprehension; they recalled them to memory as if they had learned them from Him in that very hour.

And so, going forth, they made their way among the faithless peoples who did not have roots, which is to say the sign of the knowledge of holy innocence and justice, and whose city, which is to say the instruments of God's law, had been destroyed by faithlessness. And to these they announced the words of salvation and of the true faith in Christ. And thus they brought back many of this throng to the knowledge of God and led them to the center, which is to say the font of baptism, where they received the holiness they had lost by their proud transgressions. And they built the holy city of the commandments of God, thus rebuilding the city which that seducer the Devil had taken from them in Adam, and restored it to them in the faith that leads to salvation.

BOOK THREE

But there were some who did not believe, and did not choose to receive the faith of baptism and the protection of God's command; and these, reading the signs, the apostles passed by and condemned to death for their hardness and unbelief. For in their crimes and the filth of their carnal pollutions, wallowing in fornication and adultery as a pig wallows in the mud, they were not willing to be converted to the true faith, and therefore they were divided and separated from life.

And thus the Son of God was shown throughout the whole world by many and wondrous signs, ineffably begotten of the Father in His Divinity and then miraculously born of the Virgin in time. And so the hearts of all who hear these things should be alarmed and agitated by fear and trembling, so that the vain and deceitful works they have been pleased to do may be negated in them by contempt of death. For the true Word of God bears testimony to the Holy Trinity and to life-giving salvation through the water of regeneration, as the beloved John shows in the words of his exposition, when he says:

8 Words of John

"And it is the Spirit Which testifies that Christ is the Truth. There are three that give testimony on earth: the spirit, and the water, and the blood; and the three are one. And there are Three Who give testimony in heaven: the Father, the Word and the Spirit. And the Three are One" [1 John 5:6–8; Hildegard has reversed the order of the heaven and earth parts]. This is to say that the human spirit is spiritual; it does not come from the blood, nor is it born out of the flesh, but it emerges from the secret places of God, invisible to the mutable flesh. Therefore it bears testimony to the Son of God, Whose glory is wondrous in mystical breath; no person can perfectly understand that glory, or know how the Only-Begotten of God was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born into the world, just as no person can fully know how the soul permeates the human body and blood to make up one life.

And, as the human spirit is the certain cause of the knowledge granted a person by God, and permeates everything else God gives him, being true and faithful life and not false or deceptive; so too Christ is the perfect Truth, in Whom life has risen and the light of salvation has shone, and from Whom death, which is deceptive, has fallen away.

So three, which signify the Holy Trinity, give testimony on earth, showing and granting in this world the remedy of life-giving salvation; for through that salvation the heavenly things without end must be attained, and in mortal flesh they are only awaited in hope and not possessed in actuality.

Thus the human spirit in itself testifies to Me, for it will not live fully in restored salvation unless it rises again through Me in the water of regenera-

tion. For humanity is deficient in the light that shines in Me, since it was expelled from felicity because it was corrupted into crime and increasingly bloody deeds.

And water testifies to Me, for it purifies all filthy things in it, and clearly purges the fatal pestilence of death; it is joined to the spirit before the blood is, because as the spirit is spiritual, so the water brings spiritual sanctification. It stands in the middle between the spirit and the blood, because its confirming carries both soul and body through spiritual regeneration to life.

And blood too testifies; for it alters its poisoned course toward the house of holiness through the water of salvation, which is the medicine that arises in My Son and remains in His life. For blood by itself carries shameful crimes and turbulent injustice, and runs through uncertain paths, in a twisted sweetness that leads to burning lust and frightful vices, which choke innocence, increasing in appetite by what they feed on; all this by the temptation of that seducer the Devil.

And these three are one. For the spirit without the bloody material of the body is not the living person, and the bloody material of the body without the soul is not the living person; and these two are not strengthened unto life in the grace of the new Law except through the water of regeneration, or perfected in salvation as long as they are separated from this saving water. For then the transcendent honor of life is wanting to the person's reason; the redeemed must always make perfect praise resound in the presence of God, Who gave him that reason.

For God by His own will created Man for that honor, which is consummated in the body of His Son in eternal life; when lost Man lives again in the honor of life, redeemed in God by healing grace. And the spirit, which is invisible to bodily eyes, symbolizes the Father, Who is incomprehensible to every creature; and the water, which purges filth, symbolizes the Word, the Son of God, who by His Passion wiped out human stains; and the blood, which surrounds and warms people, is a symbol of the Holy Spirit, arousing and enkindling the brightest human virtues. So these three, the spirit and the water and the blood, are in one and one in three, and, as was said, one in salvation; and they signify the Trinity in Unity, and the Unity in Trinity. How?

The holy and heavenly Trinity gives heavenly testimony; It is not taken from something else but originates by sure faith in Itself. How? The Father testifies that before the ages He begot His one fruitful Word, through Whom all things were made; and then, at the appointed time, the Word gloriously flowered in the Virgin. The Word testifies that He went forth from the Father and stooped to enter a human nature, becoming incarnate in the purity of virginity. He went forth from the Father a Spirit and returned again to the Father in fruitful flesh; and so He stands in the middle, since He

was invisibly begotten by the Father before time began, and conceived in the body within time by the Holy Spirit in the womb of the Virgin. And the Holy Spirit testifies that It quickened the intact Virgin so that she conceived the Word of God, and that It strengthened the doctrine of the same Word in tongues of flame, permeating the apostles so that they proclaimed the true Trinity throughout the world. How?

They cried aloud that God the Father had completed the work whereby He created Man for heavenly happiness, of which he was then robbed. Man was made from the mud of the earth to stand upright, but by his own will had bent down toward the earth again; but now by grace he is able to stand upright a second time through the incarnate Son of God. And, enlightened and confirmed by the Holy Spirit, so as not to perish in perdition but be saved in redemption, he has been restored to eternal glory.

9 On the distinction and unity of the Three Persons

Thus the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit testify that they are in no way disunited in power, even though they are distinguished in Persons, because they work together in the unity of the simple and immutable substance. How? The Father creates all things through the Word, Who is His Son in the Holy Spirit; the Son is He by Whom all things are perfected in the Father and the Holy Spirit; and the Holy Spirit is He by Whom all things flourish in the Father and the Son. And so these three Persons are in the unity of inseparable substance; but They are not indistinct among themselves. How? He Who begets is the Father; He Who is born is the Son; and He Who in eager freshness proceeds from the Father and the Son, and sanctified the waters by moving over their face in the likeness of an innocent bird, and streamed with ardent heat over the apostles, is the Holy Spirit.

For the Father had the Son before time began, and the Son was with the Father, and the Holy Spirit was co-eternal with the Father and the Son in the Unity of Divinity. Hence it must be seen that if one or two were lacking of these Three Persons, God would not be in fullness. How? They are one Unity of Divinity; and so, if any of Them were lacking, God would not be. For though these Persons are distinct, They are nonetheless one substance, whole and immutable and of indescribable beauty, and remain undivided in unity. How?

10 Three similes for the Trinity

Power, will and fire are the three peaks of a single height of work. How? The will is in the power, and the fire is in the will, and they are

inseparable, like expelled human breath. How? The indivisible emission of human breath is the whirling air currents, the moisture and the warmth. So too is the complete human eye. How? The circuit of your eyesight has two transparent parts, but they form one housing for all that is within them. Hear and understand, O human.

Even so there are Three Persons in one immutable essence of Divinity. In the Father is the Son, in both the Holy Spirit, and They are one, and work inseparably with each other; for the Father does not work without the Son, nor the Son without the Holy Spirit, nor the Holy Spirit without Them, nor the Father and the Son without the Holy Spirit, but They are undivided unity. Thus God is Three Persons, eternal before all ages; and the assumption of the flesh by the Son did not occur before the beginning of the world, but at the preordained time near the end of times when God sent His Son. And when the Son became incarnate and the virginal flower blossomed in her intact virginity, God was still in Three Persons and willed to be so invoked; and therefore, no Person was added to the ineffable Trinity, but the Son of God simply assumed flesh.

Hence also these Three Persons are one God in Divinity. And whoever does not believe this will be cast out of the Kingdom of God, for he tears himself away from the wholeness of Divinity in faith, as it is written:

11 Words of the Book of Kings

"And on the third day there appeared a man who came out of Saul's camp with his garments torn, and dust strewed on his head" [2 Kings 1:2]. This is to say: On the day when the Catholic faith arose by the manifestation of the Holy Trinity, humanity, which had now emerged from the camp of the army of death, broke out into many schisms and perversely sought what it was not possible for it to know. Therefore, seduced by the Devil's artful persuasions, some now imagine that they are ascending above the heights, and choose to know more than they should about the incomprehensible Divinity. And therefore the garment of salvation and justice is torn from them, because they oppose God, and they are defiled by the strewing of divisions on the head of their faith. For they lack complete faith, but scatter among many sects the honor due solely to the Deity, and they diminish His high honor by mocking it in schisms. And so God will judge them all, as is clear from the following verses:

"And David said to the young man who told him, 'Where do you come from?' He answered, 'I am the son of a stranger, an Amalekite.' And David said to him, 'Why did you not fear to put out your hand to kill the Lord's anointed?' And David called one of his servants and said to him, 'Go near and

fall upon him.' And he struck him so that he died. And David said to him, 'Your blood be upon your own head; for your mouth has spoken against you, saying "I have slain the Lord's anointed." ' " [2 Kings 1:13–16].

This is to say: The Victorious One, incomprehensible to every creature, speaks to the childish and self-exalting ignorance of humanity, which tries to know what it should not know; for in its folly it accosts God and announces to Him with temerity, "Lord, I know You well!" And God answers it thus: "Where do you come from, who, having a beginning, seek to know the Whole, which lacks a beginning?" And the folly that has arisen in the creature with a beginning says, as if it knew: "I am the son of a stranger, who comes from the accursed land; for the first man fell by the taste of the fruit, and journeyed into exile from his country, and I am his descendant."

Then God says to him: "Because you are a person from the accursed land, driven out as an exile from your country, why did you not fear presumptuously to seek out what is not for you to know? This madness chokes your deeds and makes them unable to give hope, and approaches in wickedness to murder. For anyone who rashly searches out what God was before the creation of the world, or what God will do after the last day, is to be cut off from a share in the blessed communion, which is not to be known by a creature with a beginning who is in a state of sin. And so he will be miserable, torn away from the good knowledge that saves, because he obstinately sought out what he should not have sought out.

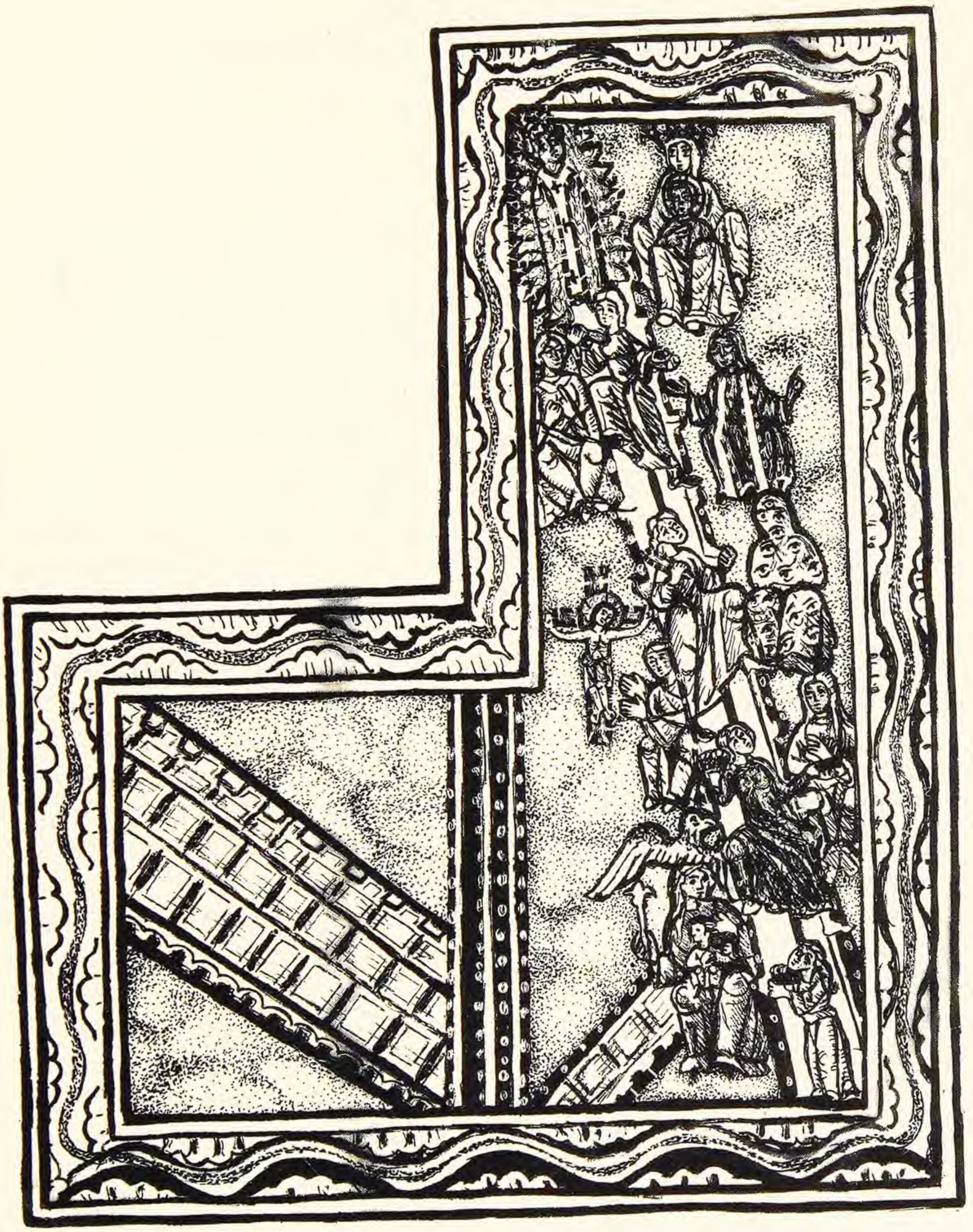
"And so you, who do these things with presumption and the cruelty of murder, are slaying within yourself the blessed understanding of King David's prophecy; for your soul should seek only pure knowledge, and believe faithfully in God with appropriate simplicity."

And then God commands the Jealousy of His pure justice, which has in it no spot of iniquity, and says to it in the righteous unity of His judgment: "Make haste and fall on him, and take from him the knowledge of good, which he had; let him never repose in any happiness of the senses, since he never prepared his heart for Me to repose in."

And so the blow of the Jealousy of the Lord strikes that creature, so that no spark of eyesight remains to him to see and know God. And so he dies to the justice of life-giving comfort, because he was not able to rule himself. And then God says to him, "Your bloody wickedness, by which you raise yourself to heights you cannot understand, recoil upon your own mind, which you unjustly raised against Me. May evil trample you underfoot in the mud, from which you cannot raise yourself to a right measure of faith, for you did not follow the right paths but sought division in your mind. May words of wisdom forsake your mouth, which spoke against your salvation when you deceitfully sought out the secret and incomprehensible Divinity, and presumed to know what is not to be known. You said rashly within

yourself, 'I know well what God is!' and through this temerity you destroyed your inner salvation; you did not choose to believe in God with discretion, but proudly raised yourself against Him."

But let the one who has ears sharp to hear inner meanings ardently love My reflection and pant after My words, and inscribe them in his soul and conscience.



PILLAR OF THE SAVIOR'S HUMANITY

eual & quid ſignificet.

xvii. Specialit de carnalit & habitu
eal & quid ſignificet.

xviii. Specialit de timore dñi & habitu
eius & quid ſignificet.

xviiii Specialit de obedientia & habitu
eal & quid ſignificet.

xx. Specialit de fide & habituabus.
& quid ſignificet.

xxi. Specialit de ſpe & habitu eius & quid ſignificet.

xxii Specialiter de caritate & habitu
eius & quid ſignificet.

xxiii Specialit de gra dñi & ſancti & habitu ei & quid ſignificet.

VISION EIGHT
The Pillar of the Humanity of the Savior

And then I saw, on the south side of the wall of the building beyond the pillar of the true Trinity, a great and shadowed pillar, which protruded both inside and outside the building; and it was so obscure to my sight that I could not tell its size or height. And between this pillar and the pillar of the true Trinity there was a gap three cubits wide in the wall, as mentioned above [*p. 325*]; *only the foundation had been laid.*

Thus this shadowed pillar was standing in the same place in the building where I had previously seen, in the celestial mysteries vouchsafed by God from above, a great four-sided radiance of brilliant purity [*p. 109*]. *This radiance, which signifies the secrets of the supernal Creator, was shown to me in the greatest mystery; and in it, another radiance shone forth like dawn, with a deep purple light glowing in it, which was a mystical manifestation of the mystery of the incarnate Son of God. But in the pillar, there was an ascent like a ladder from bottom to top, on which I saw all the virtues of God descending and ascending, laden down with stones and going with keen zeal to their work.*

And I heard that Shining One Who was seated on the throne say, "These are God's strongest labourers!" *And among these virtues I saw seven in particular whose form and appearance I especially noted. They resembled each other in this. All of them, like all the other virtues described so far, were clad, as it were, in silk. All of them went with white hair and bare heads, and without a cloak except the first, who wore a woman's head-veil and a mantle like transparent crystal, and the second, who had black hair, and the third, whose form did not seem human. The first, fourth and fifth were wearing white tunics. All had white shoes except the third, who, as mentioned, did not seem to be in human form, and the fourth, who was wondrously shod in shoes of shining crystal.*

And the differences among them were as follows. The first figure wore a gold crown on her head, with three higher prongs; it was radiantly adorned with green and red precious stones and white pearls. On her breast she had a shining mirror, in which appeared with wondrous brightness the image of the incarnate Son of God. And she said:

BOOK THREE

1 Words of Humility

"I am the pillar of humble minds and the slayer of proud hearts. I began at the lowest point and ascended the steep slope to Heaven; but Lucifer raised himself above himself and fell beneath himself. Whoever wishes to imitate me and be my child and embrace me as a mother and carry out my work, let him start at the foundation and gradually mount upward from virtue to virtue, with a sweet and tranquil mind. For anyone who tries to ascend by taking hold of the highest branch of the tree first will more often than not swiftly fall. But anyone who begins his ascent at the root will not fall so easily, if he proceeds with caution."

And the second figure was a deep sky-blue like a hyacinth, both in person and in tunic. Into her tunic two stripes were marvellously woven and incomparably adorned with gold and gems, so that one stripe descended to the figure's feet over each shoulder in both front and back. And she said:

2 Words of Charity

"When Lucifer in Heaven devoured himself with hatred and pride, I was provoked to indignation. Oh! Oh! Oh! Humility would not tolerate this; and therefore he was cast into great ruin. But when the human race was created, oh! oh! oh! the noble Seed, and oh! oh! oh! the sweetest Offshoot, the Son of God, was born human at the end of times for the sake of humanity. Lucifer wanted and intended to rend my garment and my integrity, but I appeared as a most brilliant splendor in God and in Man. Nowadays the blind and the dead declare that the reality behind my name is brothels and harlots and incest; but just as filth cannot touch Heaven, this filthy accusation cannot touch my will. And so I will make myself wings of the other virtues, and cast out these harmful things Lucifer has scattered throughout the world. Where, O Virtues, is Lucifer? He is in Hell. So let us arise and draw nearer to the true Light, and build high and strong towers throughout all provinces; so that when the Last Day comes we may bear much fruit, both carnal and spiritual. And when the full number of the Gentiles has come in, then we too shall be perfect on earth and in Heaven. O shameful Lucifer, what did your hasty temerity avail you? In the primal splendor in which God created you, you raved and gave yourself over to madness, and tried to tread me underfoot and cast me out of Heaven; but you fell into the abyss and I stayed in Heaven, and later descended to earth in the incarnate Son of God. And through me is perfected the multitude of the faithful, armed with a thousand soldierly arts of justice and goodness; though, had you been able to, you would long since have snatched them away. O Humility, who lifts to the stars the oppressed and the crushed! O Humility, glorious queen of the virtues! What a strong

and victorious protector you are to all who are yours! No one falls who loves you with a pure heart. And I too am a valuable and desirable defense to those who are mine; for I am very slender and subtle, and I seek out in those who revere me the smallest openings, and deeply penetrate them."

The third figure I saw in the same form as I had seen her in my previous vision: greater and taller of stature than the other virtues, and non-human in form. She was covered with eyes all over her body, for she lived wholly in wisdom; she wore a shadowy garment through which the eyes could look out. And she trembled in fear before the Shining One seated on the throne. And she said:

3 Words of Fear

"Oh, woe to the miserable sinners who do not fear God but hold Him as an impostor! Who can evade fear of the incomprehensible God, Who allows the wicked who do evil to perish? Therefore I will fear the Lord God much and much. Who will help me in the presence of the true God? And who shall deliver me from His fearsome judgment? No one at all, except God Himself. Therefore I will seek Him, and fly to Him for refuge."

And the fourth was wearing a snow-white chain around her neck, and her hands and feet were chained together with white fetters. And she said:

4 Words of Obedience

"I cannot run in secular paths according to my will, or be infected by human desire; but I choose to return to God the Father of all, Whom the Devil rejected and chose to disobey."

And the fifth had a red chain around her neck. And she said:

5 Words of Faith

"God is One, to be adored in Three Persons of one substance and equal glory. Therefore I will have faith and confidence in the Lord, and never blot out His name from my heart."

And the sixth was clad in a pale-colored tunic. Before her in the air was the cross of the Passion of the crucified Son of God; and toward it she raised her eyes and hands with great devotion. And she said:

6 Words of Hope

"Spare those who sin, O loving Father! You have not forsaken the exiles, but have raised them up upon Your shoulders. And so we do not perish, who have hope in You."

BOOK THREE

And the seventh was dressed in a tunic more brilliant and pure than crystal, which shone resplendent like water when the sun reflects from it. And a dove was poised over her head, facing her with its wings spread as if to fly. In her womb, as if in a clear mirror, appeared a pure infant, on whose forehead was written "Innocence"; and in her right hand she held a royal scepter, but she had laid her left hand on her breast. And she said:

7 Words of Chastity

"I am free and not fettered, for I have passed through the pure Fountain Who is the sweet and loving Son of God. I have passed through Him, and I have come forth from Him. And I tread underfoot the Devil with his limitless pride, who has not prevailed to fetter me. He is alien from me, because I am always in the Heavenly Father."

Now at the summit of the shadowed pillar I saw another beautiful figure, standing bareheaded; it had curly black hair, and a manly face so ardently bright that I could not look on it clearly like a human one. It was clad in a tunic of purple and black, with a stripe of red over one shoulder and a stripe of yellow over the other, which fell to its feet in front and back. Around its neck it had a bishop's stole, wonderfully adorned with gold and precious gems. But a pure radiance so surrounded it that I could not look at it, except from head to foot in front; its arms and hands and feet were concealed from my sight. And that radiance around it was full of eyes on all sides, and was all alive, changing its form like a cloud and becoming now wider and now narrower. And the figure cried with a loud voice in the world, and said to humanity:

8 Words of the Grace of God, to admonish humans

"I am the Grace of God, my little children; therefore hear and understand me, for my admonition makes radiant the souls of those who do. I keep them in blessedness, so that they will not return to iniquity. And because they have not despised me, I choose to touch them with my admonition so that they will do good works; those, that is, who seek me in simplicity and purity of heart.

"So I admonish and exhort humanity, and grant it pearls of goodness; when a person's mind is touched by me, I am his beginning. That is to say, when a person understands my admonition with his sense of hearing, and his senses consent to my touching his mind, I initiate good in him. And it is needful that he begin thus, with me helping him. Then a struggle follows: Will my gift attain its end or not? How? Understand thus. When I admonish a person, so that he begins to lament and weep for his sins, then if his will consents to my admonition—for he will feel the change in his mind, and

according to his mind's desire he will raise his eyes to see and his ears to hear and his mouth to speak and his hands to touch and his feet to walk—his mind will raise itself to conquer his senses, so that they will learn things their habits could not teach them. How?

"They will change themselves, for they must, though unwillingly, follow the will that is set over them. They are subject to it in service, being its inferiors; they will follow it, willing or not. Thus I initiate good, and kindle it in the mind, and give the will work to accomplish; and this I do by admonition, exhortation and the fire of the breath of the Holy Spirit. But if the will resists these gifts, all that I have mentioned comes to naught. And therefore, while a person can still make a start, inflamed by the pre-eminent gifts that come from me, let him hasten to do so; let his will quickly come to good and end its work in splendor.

"For this is why Man has the knowledge of good and evil, that he himself in all his works may know God better by avoiding evil and doing good. For thus he worships God with fear and embraces Him with perfect charity. How? Thus: by opening the inner eyes of the spirit to good, and denying and cutting off the evil that the outer person can do. And so the earthly creation is subject to his power, that he may understand and love God the more, and with that understanding do in Him the work of his knowledge; by which knowledge he fears and loves the Almighty, Who has given him this great honor of having the creatures serve him. Thus Man must wisely distinguish between the creatures, knowing which are to be loved and hated, which are useful and which are useless; and thus all his works will be concluded in faith, through which he understands God, and pleases God and His angels.

"And sometimes I touch a person's mind to warn him to begin to work justice and avoid evil, but he disdains me and thinks he can do what he wants. He postpones the time of repentance until his body is reduced to old age enough to obey him, and he is so old he is tired of sinning. And then I admonish and urge him again to do good and resist in his mind. If he ignores me, he is often brought to the pass of doing good as it were unwillingly and in spite of himself, by monetary and other troubles that come upon him. And, with his mind thus troubled, he has little delight in doing what he planned to do when he was prosperous and unopposed, when he thought he could act as and when he pleased. And such a person receives me in doubt; but yet I choose not to forsake him, for though it was thus he received me, he did not wholly despise me. And so I do not labor vainly in him.

"For I do not find it loathsome to touch ulcerated wounds surrounded by the filthy, gnawing worms that are innumerable vices, stinking with evil report and infamy, and stagnating in habitual wickedness. I do not refuse to close them gently up, drawing forth from them the devouring poison of

malice, by touching them with the mild fire of the breath of the Holy Spirit. But often, such a wound grows hardened by old irritation, so that sin grows hot and burning in the person's mind; and in the clotted mass of this filth new wounds of sin appear, swelling and rising from the defilement of worms and the application of dark muck, from which come the deadly poisons of scorpions, serpents, frogs and other poisonous vermin. And such wounds become as hardened as stone, a hardness no one dares try to break open. These things burden such people with insupportable loads; and what happens then? People of little faith cannot believe it is possible for such a one to be converted to God from his iniquity; they see him as already food for the Devil. But I will not forsake this person; I choose, by my help and action, to be on his side in the struggle. I start by gently touching the strong and stony crust of his sin, which is so hard to break, for it stinks so vilely of horrible crimes, which have caused his great filth and wickedness and are like a rotting corpse and the food of the Devil; and he has certainly swallowed them into his stomach. How? The Scripture states that the Son of God said, 'My food is to do the will of My Father' [John 4:34]; and so the opposite is the Devil's food, by which he pulls people down into death, inspiring those who consent to his will and turn aside to follow him. And this is the desire and the continual study of the Devil, for from this filth all evil arises.

"But many of these people recognize me. How? When I begin to touch them, one of them may say to himself, 'What is happening to me? I know nothing of good and am incapable of thinking of it.' And then, in his ignorance, he sighs and says, 'Alas for me, a sinner!' But he feels nothing more, because he is weighed down by his huge weight of sin, and the darkness of iniquity troubles him. Then I touch his wounds again. And, having been admonished by me before, he understands me better this time, and looks at himself, saying, 'Woe is me! What shall I do? I do not know and cannot think what will become of me for my many sins. Oh, where shall I turn, and to whom shall I flee, who can help me cover over my shameful crimes and efface them by repentance?'

"And again he looks at himself, with the same turbulence that formerly propelled him into sin; and then he turns to true repentance, with a desire as great as his former eagerness to sin. And as this person, by my warning, thus wakes from the sleep of death, which he had preferred to life, he no longer desires to sin by thought, word or deed, which before were ardently directed toward crime. And in strong repentance he rises to me; and I wholly receive him, and from henceforward discharge him as free. He will no longer be troubled by the aforesaid things, which I use to warn my dearest children to hold out against the fiery arrows of the Devil's persuasion; for he no longer needs them. For he will always sorrow at the sins he has committed, and in his self-scorn he will do such severe penance that he will deem himself

unworthy to be called human. And this victory comes out of the stench of those filthy people, whom I choose not to cast out; for after sinning they have sought me. I am prepared to do anything they ask for those who do not spurn me but receive my admonition and devoutly seek me. But those who despise and reject me are dead, and I do not know them.

"For there are many people who, feeling my presence and understanding that my admonition has touched their minds, fly from me by the evil ways of the sins they conceive, which they have swallowed by their choice, consent and deeds. And therefore they are to God as nothing, with no being at all, since they choose not to know what they can do when I touch them. I do not want to be near the pollution of those sinners, who will not receive my admonition or purify themselves by my exhortation and turn from their sins; they do not desire to eat that food which is the Scripture of the Gospel, with which all the faithful should be satisfied, or to taste the gift of its savor. They flee from the Grace of God; for they do not want to see or hear or think of what they should do when goodness admonishes them. They flee the good admonition like a worm burrowing into the earth. The worm hides itself from all the beauty of the world; and so do the wicked, flying from the commands of God and wrapping themselves in ordure, pollution and death, and hiding in it, afraid to come out of the stench of evil into the light. Such as these do not belong to me, for I do not choose to be apportioned here and there amid the mire. How? I choose to be with those who understand me and repent in purity; and then I join myself to human corruption in order to purge it. But those who refuse to receive me I cast from me, choosing not to be with them; I have no part with them, for their part is that of stupid folly, which will not hear me. And I have no wish to take part in the work that builds up the obdurate perversity that ends in death.

"And those who spurn me thus imitate the lost angel, who saw God but did not want to contemplate and humbly acknowledge Him; and thus suddenly fled from heavenly glory and, trying to gain equal honor with God, fell into death. These people despise me because their deeds are wicked and their pleasures call for illicit carnal desires. And because they despise me, they do what they will. They set little value on God, and so neglect His command. And therefore, I often condemn them in my indignation to do their full will, and so the life of eternal happiness eludes them as if they counted for nothing. And often they fall short in happiness both in this life and in the life to come, because they are hard and unmoved by the happiness that comes from good. For I forsake the obstinate sinner who perseveres in his evil deeds, but I impart life to one who looks at himself and in pure repentance turns to me from his sins.

"For I am the firmly founded pillar, and I never forsake one who seeks me; one who understands me and intimately and faithfully unites with me

will never fall into perdition. But one who forgets me in his mind and in his pride raises himself above me is trusting in himself rather than me; he scorns to have faith in me, counting the Grace of God as nothing. I inhabit his mind like a whirlwind, but he regards me with careless mockery, desperately exalting himself in pride. And because of his pride, not because of the gravity of his sins, he mocks me thus: "What is the Grace of God?" And I will cast him down and slay him and never raise him up by my choice; for he is dead to eternal joy.

"And people who do not have confidence that they can rise from a grave state of sin reject Almighty God and His grace; they despair miserably as if they cannot be saved from the enormity of their crimes, and so they fail and are rejected by me. And they run bitterly into death, and live their eternal death in the lowest part of Hell.

"But now I shall speak of my beloved children, who receive me with open senses and willing mind and clear intellect, and touch me with sighs and tears, and follow me with joy to embrace me. O my flowers, who when they feel my presence rejoice in me, and I in them! They are more sweet and pleasant to me than precious stones and pearls to the people who most fervently desire them. They are to me, indeed, the finest cut stones; for in my sight they are always lovable. I will polish and refine them without ceasing, that they may rightly and fitly be placed in the heavenly Jerusalem, for in their minds they are always feasting with me in goodwill, never sated with my justice. When they feel my touch, they hasten to me like the hart to the water-brook. I often withdraw from them, so that it seems to them that they are without help; this I do that their outer person may not be puffed up with pride. Then they weep aloud and lament, thinking I am offended with them; but it is thus I scrutinize their faith.

"And I still hold them with a strong hand, taking away their pride and forcing them to be ignorant of what they are in their secret good deeds; for thus I will to produce in them the fruits of grief and sorrow. And sometimes I let the Devil try to seduce them with the fiery arrows of impurity and burning fornication, which wound their frail bodies; this I permit that they may be imbued with the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and so become great messengers, glorious in virtue. They are tested like gold in the furnace, tried by mockery and provocation and set at naught; very often they will be stripped of their substance by robbers, and torn like lambs by wolves in the adversities of popular dissensions. But as sheep scattered by the wolf do not die, so these people do not perish in soul but live more fully, purified by their troubles. For a good tree is watered and pruned and dug about that it may bear fruit, and worms are removed from it lest they eat the fruit. What then?

"Let good people, then, not grow hardened or embittered toward God's justice; let them be mild and prepared to receive every good, cutting off evil

from themselves and scrutinizing their works so as to repel the hurtful attacks of their enemies. For before a person feels me in his mind and his intellect knows that I am within him, I am his Head, planting fruitfulness and power within him; I establish in him the strength of the city built on the firm rock. Let every faithful person therefore hear me saying to him:

"O human! Is it proper and fitting that a rational person should be mindless like an irrational beast, which does nothing but what it wants? O wretched people, who refuse to know the great glory that God gave them when He made them in His likeness! But they cannot have their wish and freely do all the evil they desire by right, as if their bodily nature gave them permission; they forget that they have that nature so that they can do good. God in His ordinances established all things justly; and who can oppose Him? What then? Can anyone compare himself with God's ordinance, or compete with Him in wisdom or discretion about anything? And why then do they wish to give up the ability that was given them to act rightly or wrongly? How? When I warn those who understand me with my touch, and they feel my presence, by my help they can carry out their good desires; but those who despise me fall into weakness and evil. But the wicked try to excuse themselves, and claim they cannot do good works, so that they can freely work the will of their outer persons.

"So now, my dearest children, sweeter in fragrance to me than spices, hear me admonishing you. While you have time to do good and evil, worship your God with true devotion. Again, O my dearest children, who are rising like the dawn, and who must burn in charity like the sun; run and make haste, dearest ones, in the way of truth, which is the light of the world, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, Who redeemed you in the last days by His blood so that when you die you may joyfully attain to Him."

And again I heard the One Who was seated on the throne saying to me:

"Those who desire heavenly things must faithfully believe, but not wrongfully examine, the Son of God's being sent into the world by the Father and born of the Virgin. For the human mind, weighed down by the frail mortal flesh and the grave burden of sin, cannot know the secrets of God, beyond what the Holy Spirit reveals to those It wills."

9 The humanity of the Savior appears in the works of the faithful people

So, in a mystical mystery, *the pillar you see on the south side of the wall of the building beyond the pillar of the true Trinity* signifies the humanity of the Savior, Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the sweet Virgin, the Son of the Most High; for He is the strong pillar of sanctity and holds up the whole edifice of the Church. His humanity is manifested in the ardent

faith of its stones, which are the faithful people who work hard by the goodness of the Supernal Father when the Trinity has been revealed to them. For when the Trinity in One God was made known to the believing people, the belief also appeared that the incarnate Word of God must be worshipped as true God with the Father and the Holy Spirit in the unity of the divinity of the One True God.

10 The Incarnation, shadowy to the mind, is known to faith and works

It is a great and shadowed pillar, which protrudes both inside and outside the building. For the great and incomprehensible holiness of the true Incarnation is so obscure to human minds that it cannot be contemplated, except insofar as it can be done by faith. It can be understood in faith and works by those who labor in the divine cult, that is, inside the building; and those who stand idle outside can know it by words and sounds.

And it is so obscure to your sight that you cannot tell its size or height. For My Son came among humans in the mortality of the flesh to undergo death for the people, and thus was in shadow because He was mortal; but He came without any spot of sin, so that His true incarnation exceeds all the power of the human intellect, incomprehensible in the mystical greatness of God's mysteries and incalculable in the might of His divine power.

11 God alone knows who and how many will make up the body of Christ

And between this pillar and the pillar of the true Trinity there is a gap three cubits wide in the wall, as mentioned above. This is to say that the incarnate Son of God, Who is true God with the Father and the Holy Spirit, is now inherent in His members; that is, the faithful people who will be born up till the end of the world and made members of their Head through living works, as miraculously and symbolically you were shown above. But who, how many and what kind of people they will be in the long ages to come, who will adore the Trinity in the Unity of Divinity with faithful and devout worship, resides in the mystery of the ineffable Trinity; for the place of those yet to be born is empty, and the wall of their good works has not yet been built.

But the foundation has been laid, which is to say that they are in God's foreknowledge, and the faith that will save them is already strongly established; and so Man must not hope and trust in anyone except God, and never despair of His mercy, since He is the strong foundation of the faithful soul.

VISION EIGHT

12 All the works of the Son and the Church are in the Father's will

But this shadowed pillar is standing in the same place in the building where you had previously seen, in the celestial mysteries vouchsafed by God from above, a great four-sided radiance of brilliant purity. This radiance, which signifies the secrets of the supernal Creator, was shown to you in the greatest mystery. This is to say that the incarnate Son of God did all His works and suffered all His injuries in the body in the world according to the Father's secret will. That great radiance expresses this, in that its four-sidedness is a symbol of God's mysteries; for many who are born in the four corners of the world are to attain to the knowledge of Christ. So does its brilliant purity, for no darkness can obscure the lucent Divinity; and so here the nature of the supernal and glorious Majesty, the Creator, Who made everything in His profound and mysterious knowledge, is revealed to you in symbols. Thus you see that no one helped that Creator, and no one resisted and opposed Him; He created everything through His Word by His will and goodness. *So in it another radiance shines forth like dawn, with a deep purple light glowing in it, which is a mystical manifestation of the mystery of the incarnate Son of God.* For thus God displays in His secret places the purity of the dawn, which is to say the Virgin Mary, who bore in her womb the Son of the Celestial Father. And the Son shed His purple blood, which glowed with the light of salvation, so that by this secret vision, the Incarnation of the Son is shown to you in mystical obscurity.

13 In Christ all virtues work fully and are openly manifested

But in the pillar, there is an ascent like a ladder from bottom to top. This is to say that in the incarnate Son of God all the virtues work fully, and that He left in Himself the way of salvation; so that faithful people both small and great can find in Him the right step on which to place their foot in order to ascend to virtue, so that they can reach the best place to exercise all the virtues. How? In the fine places which are good hearts, the virtues join in the holy work of perfecting the Son of God in His members, the people who are His elect. And so in Him is the example of perfection for all the faithful who concern themselves with the law of God and try to ascend from good to better. They see the manifestation of the true Incarnation, in which the Son of God was truly shown in the flesh; and that is where the certain ascent to the heavenly places is to be found. Therefore, *you see all the virtues of God descending and ascending, laden down with stones;* for in God's Only-Begotten the lucent virtues descend in His Humanity and ascend in His Divinity.

They descend through Him to the hearts of the faithful, who with good heart and eagerness leave their own will and betake themselves to righteous deeds, as a workman bends down to lift a stone that he must carry to a building site. And they ascend through Him when they offer to God the heavenly works that people have done with rejoicing, that the body of Christ may be perfected as quickly as possible in His faithful members. And so they carry stones to the higher places; these are the winged and shining deeds people do, with their help, to win salvation. For each action is given wings by God to rise above the filth of the human mind and gain bright splendor with which to shine before God; for what flows from the fountain of eternal life cannot be obstructed or hidden. And as a fountain should not be concealed, but in plain sight, so that everyone who thirsts may come to it and draw water and drink, so too the Son of God is not obstructed or hidden from the elect, but is in plain sight, preparing to requite all deeds and show by just rewards which ones are done for the sake of His will. Therefore let the faithful person walk to God in his faith and seek His mercy, and it will be given to him. But those who do not seek it will not find it, as a fountain does not flow for people who know of it but do not come to it. They have to approach it if they want to draw its water. Thus let Man do. Let him approach God through the law God established for him, and he shall find Him, and the bread of life and the water of salvation will be given to him, that he may no longer hunger or thirst. Therefore, *these virtues are going with keen zeal to their work;* for they run zealously to their divine labor like torrents of water, that the members of Christ may shine brighter than the sun and be nobly perfected in splendor and united to their Head. And therefore, as you have heard, they are called God's strongest laborers, because they are always active in the good deeds of the faithful.

14 The seven virtues represent the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit

And among these virtues you see seven in particular whose form and appearance you especially note. This is to say that among all virtuous deeds these seven virtues best designate the seven fiery gifts of the Holy Spirit. For it was by the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit that the glorious Virgin conceived the Son of God without sin, sanctified by these holy virtues; they were clearly shown in God's Only-Begotten and illumine the hearts of the faithful as if in His form. And by this appearance they take their place in the unity of faith, as My servant Isaiah testifies, saying:

15 Words of Isaiah

"And there shall come forth a branch out of the root of Jesse; and a flower shall rise up out of his root. And the Spirit of the Lord will rest upon

him; the spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the spirit of counsel and of fortitude, the spirit of knowledge and of piety; and the spirit of the fear of the Lord shall fill him" [Isaiah 11:1–3]. This is to say: The Virgin Mary came forth from the troubles of earthly oppression into the sweetness of moral life, as a person might come forth from a house in which he was imprisoned, not by rising above the roof but by walking in the designated path; or as a trickle of wine is pressed from the winepress, not by spurting up above the winepress but by flowing gently down in its proper channel. And why a branch? Because it is not thorny in its manner, or knotted with worldly desires, but straight, unconnected with carnal lusts; arisen, therefore, from the root of Jesse, who was the foundation of the royal race from which the stainless mother had her origin. And so from the root of that branch arose the sweet fragrance of the Virgin's intact fecundity; and when it had so arisen, the Holy Spirit inundated it so that the tender flower was born from her. How? Like a flower born in a field though its seed was not sown there, the Bread of Heaven arose in her without originating in a mingling with a man and without any human burden; it was born in the sweetness of divinity, untouched by unworthy sin, without the knowledge and utterly without the influence of the devious serpent. Hence this Flower deceived the serpent; He ascended on high and lifted up with Him the sinful human race, which the serpent had seduced and drawn down with him into perdition. And because this Flower was the Son of God, the Spirit of the Lord rested upon Him; which is to say, the Spirit of the eternal Divinity. How?

When Humility was exalted by the ascent of the Flower, scorn and disaster overtook Pride; for the first woman had listened to it when she strove to know more than she should have, but the second woman submitted to God's service and confessed Him, acknowledging herself to be small and humble. And so the Holy Spirit ardently rested on Him in Whom was hidden the surpassing charity that saved the lost people and effaced human crime and wickedness. For the fullness of sanctity was in Him, and the living light shone upon Him, and that light withered the fruit of sin and the evils that followed from it; and in that light the dead were healed, and the banner that conquered and destroyed death was raised. Sanctity was completely fulfilled in Him, because He was conceived with no mixture of sin, unlike human children who are born in many different sins. And when that Flower breathed forth a perfume of justice by deed and word, the Holy Spirit brought forth its fruit in fullness; for the Son of God, now clothed in flesh, clearly showed in His deeds what in time past the Holy Spirit had awakened in human minds by Its inspiration mystically and secretly.

The Holy Spirit is said to have rested on the Flower in a sevenfold manner, as God created all things through His Word in the Holy Spirit and on the seventh day rested from His work. But these gifts go in pairs in their

meaning; for body and soul are joined together in twofold love by the unction of the Holy Spirit, yet should work as one in fear of the Lord, since fear venerates charity with trembling and adores One above all. And so the Spirit of the Lord is known by the strong virtues that shine forth from It, as branches grow out from a root; so also there is one God from Whom all good things come and through Whom all things are wisely disposed. And, since the Spirit of the Lord rested upon that Flower, the spirit of wisdom was also with Him; for where the Spirit of the Lord was present, wisdom could not be lacking.

And so the spirit of wisdom and understanding was in Him; for when God created all things by His Word, great wisdom appeared, for it was so diffused in the Word that He was Wisdom. That Word was invisible when He was not yet incarnate, but when He was incarnate, He became visible; the Word, Who was in the heart of the Father before all creatures, by Whom all things were made and without Whom nothing was made that was made, shone forth within time as a Flower, visible as a human being and offering good understanding to all humans by His words. What then? Understanding and wisdom should go together; for Man was created by God with wisdom and should worthily have understood his Creator. Thus, before the Virgin Birth, God was to be understood as God without qualification; and after the Virgin Birth, which brought forth the Flower in the flesh, he was to be understood with amazement as both God and Man. And thus what was previously invisible to the intellect became visible and was seen in the Flower; for He was the tangible reason why Man can now understand God in His actions. How? When a person wisely worships his God, his wisdom is the origin of good works. And understanding follows; for when a person does a good work through wisdom, that work shines forth to others, and they apprehend with joy the sweet scent and taste it has because of him.

And in this virginal Flower counsel follows understanding; for Man, who had understanding, had to be freed by divine counsel. Therefore the spirit of counsel and of fortitude rested upon Him; for the Father held the counsel outside of time that His Word would be incarnate within time, perfecting all His works according to the Father's will and showing in Himself obedience, so that when it shone on people through Him they might learn to imitate Him in their actions.

And so, in the great virtue arising from His Divinity, fortitude arose; but by counsel it lay concealed in Him, that it might the more strongly vanquish the Devil. How? Fortitude rightly follows counsel; for God's counsel destroyed the kingdom of the Devil through the fortitude of His Son. The Son of God, the strong Lion, crushed fatal infidelity by the shining light of faith; for it is by great fortitude that people believe through counsel what they cannot see with their bodily sight. What does this mean? Counsel

united to fortitude pierces the hardness of stony hearts obdurate in their evil habits; it so overrides that senseless hardness that the work of the flesh is abandoned and the work of God fittingly performed. And so, in the aforesaid Flower, knowledge accompanies fortitude; for, by the fortitude God gives them, people attain to the knowledge of Him. And in His supernal sweetness, the spirit of piety resided in Him along with the spirit of knowledge. For He knowingly has compassion on human miseries, and is the hope by which people enter into salvation; and He knowingly wiped out the sin of the world in great piety by His death. What then?

Piety is rightly linked with knowledge; for the Son of God fulfilled the will of His Father knowingly and in great piety. For He, the only Son, born of the Virgin, scattered among the peoples the seed of heavenly virtue; and so He made it possible for them to follow the company of the angels in the modesty of chastity, since this virtue arose in supernal piety. And so, in the branch that came forth from Jesse, the virtues of this Flower put forth buds. The first woman had fled from these virtues by consenting to the counsel she heard from the serpent, and the whole human race fell in her and was cut off from supernal joy and glory; but the blossoming of this branch uplifted the human race in knowledge through piety to the holiness of salvation. How? The fortitude that conquers the Devil and is joined to knowledge is inspired by the Holy Spirit when faithful people devoutly acknowledge God with ardent desire and embrace Him eagerly in the very depths of their souls.

And in the virginal Flower piety is followed by fear of the Lord; for when the faithful have piety, they fear the Lord in order to fulfil His commands. And so the fear of the Lord filled that Flower. For He Himself was so full of virtues that there was no room in Him for deathly pride or pleasure in honor or transgression of the Law; he was completely full of fear of the Lord, and never sought what was not His like the first of the angels and Adam, but honored his Father in all His works and offered Him fitting obedience. And thus the fear of the Lord is the beginning of all justice, for it is the end and the beginning of the other virtues; as the seventh day of rest was both the end and the origin of all the creatures. How? Fear releases trembling, and trembling stimulates the growth of the buds of fruitful virtues. And therefore this Flower is full of fear of the Lord; for all the buds of good works are attached to Him and draw their material from Him. And the Flower gives fruitfulness in all virtues, filled as He is beyond all others with their fruit and able to perfect all good things, as the Scripture says of Him:

16 Words of Solomon

"As the apple tree among the trees of the woods, so is my beloved among the children. I sat down under the shadow of him whom I desired; and

his fruit was sweet to my palate" [Song of Songs 2:3]. Which is to say: The Son of the Virgin is the sweet Lover in chaste affection; and the faithful soul grasps Him to crown her integrity with His sweet embrace, renouncing an earthly husband. She unites herself to Christ, loves Him with binding certainty and regards Him in the mirror of faith. He is the most beautiful fruit of the fruitful tree; which is to say that the Son of the Virgin comes forth from virginal modesty as its fruit, giving refreshing food to those who hunger and sweet drink to those who thirst. And thus He excels all the trees of the woods, which is to say the human children who are conceived and live in sin, not yielding the fruit He yielded; for He came from God bearing the fruit of the sweetness of life, while others have no fruit or fecundity of their own, but only that derived from Him. How? He gave salvation to the world through his Incarnation; he appeared as the beloved Son of God among the sons of men, who through His fervor flourished and bore fruit, but were not fruitful with His great fullness. For He came from God, all-holy, and was born of a virgin. And why is He beloved? Because he treads underfoot whatever obstructs the faithful soul, which is hastening to the heavenly places.

And therefore the faithful soul most rightly calls Him beloved; for she denies herself in faithful love, and strives after Him with devotion, struggling against carnal pleasures and rebuking herself for her desires. And she is close to Him, like a wife to a husband whom she married willingly and joyfully. And so, when she begins to keep herself chaste and sigh for the Son of God, she says to herself, "I want to overthrow carnal desire and unite with this Bridegroom; He has fired me with ardent desire for Him and so kept me from the opposite fire, and under the shadow of His love I sit down." How? "Because my desire is inflamed by His love, my soul consents to my keeping down the fiery love of the flesh. And therefore His sweetest fruit, which I tasted in my soul when I sighed for God, is sweeter to me than all the sweetness of carnal delights I used to feel." And why sweet? Because He was born of the Virgin, and so has the sweetest savor and the strongest unguent, which He distils like balsam; which is the resurrection unto life, by which the dead have been raised. And that unguent has the healing in it that through His incarnation cleanses the wounds of sin; for the Incarnation is full of sanctity and sweetness and all the virtues of virginity.

Therefore, O Virginity, which by the ardent enkindling produced the greatest fruit, which shone in the star of the sea and fights the savage darts of the Devil and despises all shameful filth, rejoice in celestial harmony and hope for the company of angels. How? The Holy Spirit makes music in the tabernacle of Virginity; for she always thinks of how to embrace Christ in full devotion. She burns for love of Him and forgets the human frailties, which burn with carnal desire; she is joined to the One Husband Whom sin

never touched, without any lust of the flesh, but flowering perpetually with Him in the joy of the regal marriage.

17 On the appearance and dress of the aforesaid virtues and what it means

So, now, *you see a resemblance in the aforesaid virtues: All of them, like all the other virtues described so far, are clad, as it were, in silk.* This is to say that each of these shining lights in its own rank prepares a devout unanimity in human minds; and, like the rest of the virtues in God, they have soft garments, which is to say gentleness and affection in judging holy souls and an absence of the thorns or hardness of vice. *Some of them go with white hair and bare heads, and without a cloak;* which is to say that the virtues, which are joined in pure innocence in human minds, are without a veil of evil habits, and are not surrounded by worldly leanings, but entirely flee the influence of vice.

But *the first wears a woman's head-veil and a mantle like transparent crystal;* for she wears the chains of humble subjection to God and throws down the pride of the Devil with supernal care. She cleaves to the merciful Head, Who is Christ, and imitates in lucent purity that humble and pure Priest; and so she is without any taint of sins, restrained and humble and pure as befits the priests of that Most High Priest.

And the second has black hair; which clearly shows that through Christ her Head she cleanses the blackness of human sins.

And the third seems to have a non-human form; for her function is to alarm people and make them tremble in terror. And therefore she does not have a human appearance; for humans often disregard God and forget to fear Him, and she never does.

The first, fourth and fifth are wearing white tunics. For they are surrounded by the garment of innocence, which Adam lost when he transgressed the righteous command; it was recovered for salvation in the white Lily, Which flowered from virginity, Who assumed the work of obedience to God. And that work shines before God as the brightest star in the sky to human eyes.

All have white shoes, except the third, who, as mentioned, does not seem to be in human form. For these virtues are the most beautiful deeds of humans, who nullify in themselves the desires of the flesh, following the most splendid example of their Savior. But one does not resemble a human being, because a human is often careless and forgets himself in arrogance, but she is always careful and never takes refuge in audacity; and so she is the dispenser of just warnings, that the faithful may carefully heed God's judgment. *And the fourth is wondrously shod in shoes of shining crystal;* for she constrains

herself by her own will to pursue the shining path of Christ, and chokes death within her by the ardent flame of the Holy Spirit.

But there are differences among these virtues; which is to say that, though they are unanimous in their desire, they work diverse works in people.

18 Humility and her appearance

So *the first figure* designates Humility, who first manifested the Son of God when God, Who holds heaven and earth in His power, did not disdain to send His Son into the world. Thus she *wears a gold crown on her head, with three higher prongs,* because she surpasses and sweetly precedes the other virtues, and so is crowned with the gold crown of the precious and resplendent Incarnation of the Savior. For He adorned her head with this mystery when He became incarnate. The crown is triangular, for the Trinity is in the Unity and the Unity in the Trinity; the Son with the Father and the Holy Spirit is One True God, excelling all things in the height of Divinity. *It is radiantly adorned with green and red precious stones and white pearls.* For the Humanity of the Savior manifests the high and profound goodness of His works; the Son of God wrought them in the greenness of the blossoming of the virtues in His teachings, and in the redness of His blood when He suffered death on the cross to save humanity, and in the whiteness of His resurrection and ascension. And with all of these the Church is lighted and adorned, like an object set with precious stones.

And on her breast she has a shining mirror, in which appears with wondrous brightness the image of the incarnate Son of God. This is to say that in Humility, who stands in the heart of the sacred temple in blessed and shining knowledge, gratefully and humbly but splendidly and permanently, there shines forth the Only-Begotten of God, in all the works He performed in the body in which He showed Himself to the world. And so the noblest impulses of the hearts of the faithful elect are sealed by this figure, who sets up her tribunal in them and rules and directs all their actions. For she is the solid foundation of all human good deeds, as she shows in the maternal admonition already quoted.

19 Charity and her appearance

And *the second figure* designates Charity; for, after the Humility with which the Son of God deigned to become incarnate, the true and ardent lamp of Charity was lighted when God so loved humanity that for its love He sent His Only-Begotten to take a human body. She *is a deep sky-blue like a hyacinth, both in person and in tunic;* for through His humanity, the incarnate

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Son of God enlightened faithful and heavenly people, as a hyacinth illumines any object on which it is put down. And so He inflamed them with Charity that they might faithfully assist all the needy, and this virtue is clothed with the tunic of God's sweetness that she may shine upon all people with true light for their devotion, use and profit.

Therefore, *into her tunic two stripes are marvellously woven and incomparably adorned with gold and gems.* These are the two commandments of Charity, which issue from the sweetness of God; they are adorned with His good and noble will as if with gold, and by just works as if by bright gems, by the wonderful gift of the Supreme Giver. So that *one stripe descends to the figure's feet over each shoulder in both front and back;* for she carries those commandments very carefully, the one regarding God as on her right shoulder and the one regarding one's neighbor as on her left. As Scripture says, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself" [Luke 10:27]. This is to say:

You should love the Lord your God, Who is your Lord because He has dominion over every creature, and Who is your God because He has no beginning but only is, the Creator of all things. For the sake of the love of Him in your heart, you should overcome and throw down your material body, which is exceedingly hard to do, because if the flesh has been conquered, the spirit will reign in you, and then you will understand God in your soul. And then you will wisely keep His commandments, and not fulfil them grudgingly. And thus all the powers of your soul and body will be subject to God; for when the first victory is gained in your body, you will understand God securely in your mind in everything you propose to do. For He is a firm bulwark for you against the snares of your enemies, so that no enemy can surpass His strength; and your mind should contain these things, to confirm and consolidate everything you do.

You shall therefore do these things with all your heart, and all your soul, and all your strength, and all your mind, that nothing may be wanting to you in faith, and you may not consent to anything contrary to God; you shall not waste yourself in matters alien to Him, but collect yourself in the sweetness of His love. You shall also love yourself. How? If you love God, you love your salvation. And, loving yourself in all this, you shall also love your neighbor, who is each faithful person who is joined to you by the Christian name and faith; you shall rejoice in his righteous prosperity and heavenly salvation, and his steadfast preservation in faith, in the same way you rejoice in your own salvation.

And this therefore is the double work of Charity in humans, descending to their very feet, which is to say to the appointed end; and it shows before

them in loving God, and behind them in helping other people and thus following Charity. And then Death is rejected, and the people may attain the perfection of life, as Charity declares in her words already quoted.

20 Fear of the Lord and her appearance

And *the third figure* signifies Fear of the Lord, who arose in the minds of the faithful after the Charity God showed humanity when He willed His Son to undergo death for its sake. And this Fear arose that people might understand the heavenly commands more fully and perfectly than they previously had when doing them. Now *you see her in the same form as you did in your previous vision;* for the immutable God, as was declared to you before, must be held in equal and similar honor and reverence in every thing and creature of His. And *she is greater and taller of stature than the other virtues, and non-human in form;* for she above all the others brings people anguish and trembling. They look with sharp vision upon the greatness of the Supreme Majesty and the loftiness of His Divinity, and they grow afraid; for God is to be dreaded and venerated by all people, since they were created by Him and not another. For which reason this virtue does not resemble a human being; for, as was mentioned, she rejects the perverseness that opposes God with evil deeds, and fixes her inner eye on God alone and walks the righteous paths of His will. Thus *she is covered with eyes all over her body, for she lives wholly in wisdom.* For, with the eyes of good understanding, she looks all around her and contemplates God in all His wonders, so as to pick out the right path of good works and bypass the Devil's morass of evil works by that knowledge of God. She shines with wisdom, for she despises the deadly things that harm the spirit; she flees death and abandons iniquity, and wisely builds herself a house in life.

She wears a shadowy garment through which the eyes can look out. For she is surrounded by the severe abstinence that destroys carnal desire in humans; and in that abstinence she looks toward the light of life, in which Man is wondrously brilliant in beatitude. *And she trembles in fear before Me.* For into the hearts of ardent people she infuses anguish and trembling, so that they will always hold in dread the turbulence and weakness of their flesh; and thus they will not slide into sin, or place their confidence in themselves or other people, but in Him Who reigns for all time. And so she avows in her speech already quoted.

21 Obedience and her appearance

And the fourth designates Obedience; for when Fear is shown to Me in reverence, it is next fitting that My commands be obeyed. Thus she *is*

wearing a snow-white chain around her neck; for when people forsake the strength of the neck of their own wills and join with the innocent Lamb, My Son, she makes their minds pure by the subjection of faithful obedience. *And her hands and feet are chained together with white fetters;* for she is bound by the purity of true faith to the work of Christ and the way of truth. And she does not act or walk as she wishes, but as God the Ruler tells her, as she demonstrates in her words already quoted.

22 Faith and her appearance

And the fifth designates Faith; for when the people have Obedience, and obey My commands upon hearing them, they will become believers in Faith, and faithfully fulfil in deeds what they learn by wisdom and admonition.

She *has a red chain around her neck;* for she perseveres faithfully and steadily, and is adorned with the martyrdom of blood. So she trusts not in deceptive vanities but in God, and this, as already quoted, she declares about herself.

23 Hope and her appearance

And the sixth represents Hope, who rises to life after Faith and belief in God. Her life is not on earth, but hidden in the heavenly places until the time of the eternal reward, for which Hope longs with her whole desire, as does a servant for his pay or a youth for his inheritance. Thus she *is clad in a pale-colored tunic;* for her trust is as yet pallid, because she has not yet been rewarded, but wearily awaits the coming of her longed-for desire.

But *before her in the air is the cross of the Passion of the crucified Son of God; and toward it she raises her eyes and hands with great devotion.* This is to say that she causes in the minds of the faithful a celestial desire, as if it hovered in the air, for the martyrdom of My Only-Begotten, so that they may raise to Him with humble and sincere minds this inner vision of faith and the glorious results of their labor. And so she says in her prayer already quoted.

24 Chastity and her appearance

And the seventh designates Chastity. For after people have placed their hope fully in God, the perfect work increases in them, and then by Chastity they start wanting to restrain themselves from the desires of the flesh. For abstinence in the flower of the flesh feels strongly, as a young girl who does not want to look on a man nonetheless feels the fire of desire. But Chastity renounces all filth and longs with beautiful desire for her sweet Lover, the sweetest and loveliest odor of all good things, for Whom those who love

Him wait in timid beauty of soul. Thus she *is dressed in a tunic more brilliant and pure than crystal, which shines resplendent like water when the sun reflects from it.* It is brilliant because of her simple intent, and pure because not covered with the dust of burning desire; miraculously strengthened by the Holy Spirit, she is enwrapped in the garment of innocence, which shines in the bright light of the Fountain of living water, the splendid Sun of eternal glory.

And a dove is poised over her head, facing her with its wings spread as if to fly. This is to say that Chastity at her beginning, at her head, as it were, is protected by the extended and overshadowing wings of the Holy Spirit; and so she can fly through the Devil's snares, one after another. For the Spirit comes with the ardent love of holy inspiration to wherever Chastity shows her sweet face.

Therefore too, *in her womb as if in a pure mirror appears a pure infant, on whose forehead is written "Innocence."* For in the heart of this purest and brightest of virtues there lives inviolable, beautiful and sure integrity. Its form is immature because it is simple infancy that has integrity; and its forehead, which is to say its knowledge, shows no arrogance and pride but only simple innocence.

And *in her right hand she holds a royal scepter, but she has laid her left hand on her breast.* This is to say that on the right, the side of salvation, life is shown in Chastity through the Son of God who is the King of all people. And through Him as defender, Chastity confounds the left, the side of lust, and reduces it to nought in the hearts of those who love her. How? She allows no liberty to lust; as a fierce bird snatches a rotting corpse and tears it and reduces it to naught, she rejects and crushes stinking lust in God's sight. And, defeated by her, it cannot survive, as she hints in her words, already quoted.

25 The Grace of God and its appearance

But *at the summit of the shadowed pillar you see another beautiful figure.* This is to say that, by the supreme and surpassing loving kindness of the Almighty in the Incarnation of the Savior, another resplendent virtue was manifested, namely the Grace of God. And it is powerful and full of God, admonishing people to repent, so that all their villainies may be forgiven through it.

It stands bareheaded; for its dignity and glory are revealed to all who seek it. *It has curly black hair;* for the Only-Begotten of God clothed Himself in virginal flesh without a stain of sin in the time of the Jewish people, who were tangled and knotted up in their black unfaithfulness.

And *it has a manly face so ardently bright that you cannot look on it clearly*

like a human one. For God's Grace, in the powerful might of Divinity, appeared to give life in life, and it burns so ardently in that glorious Divinity that no human being can see it with inner or outer sight while he is still weighed down by the heaviness of the body. So it does not stand with its secrets revealed to human judgment, but is mysterious; for the judgments of divine grace are hidden.

It is clad in a tunic of purple and black, which is to say that the work of Grace, which burns in charity, leans down over the blackness of sins as if it were clothing people. How? It warns people toward salvation, and lifts them from the mire of sin toward the vision of the light by means of penitence. For, as day puts the darkness to flight, it builds up sinners toward life by taking away their misdeeds through repentance.

This tunic has a stripe of red over one shoulder and a stripe of yellow over the other, which fall to its feet in front and back. For the Grace of God, in its strength and piety, bends down to the faithful and lifts them on high to heavenly places. How? By the two ways of the stripes. It grasps the anguish of the frail flesh, worn out by bloody battle, and the strength of the soul, grown tepid in the body, and draws them up to love of heavenly things by the red and yellow splendor of the Humanity and the Divinity of the Son of God, the most serene Sun. And so the faithful person who is touched by the integrity of Grace can resist his own sinful desires; he can put virtue in front of him and mortify vice behind him, and thus courageously consummate his works and be clothed in them as in lovely and delightful clothes.

And *around its neck it has a bishop's stole, wonderfully adorned with gold and precious gems.* This is to say that Christ, the Son of God, Who is the High Priest of the Father, has the high power of the priestly office everywhere in the world; and so that office should be adorned by the Grace of God with the gold of wisdom and the gems of virtues by the faithful who are His imitators and members. But *a pure radiance so surrounds it that you cannot look at it, except from head to foot in front;* for the Grace of the Omnipotent is surrounded by the serene whiteness of His mercy. In the times before the Humanity of the Savior, Grace was hidden, invisible and unknown, in the mystery of the Divinity; only from the time of His Incarnation down to the last of His members, who will live at the end of the world, does Grace show forth as far as possible to human understanding, openly manifested in its works.

But *its arms and hands and feet are concealed from your sight;* for the true power and deeds and goal of the Grace of God working in humans can be fully known to no one who is weighed down by a body.

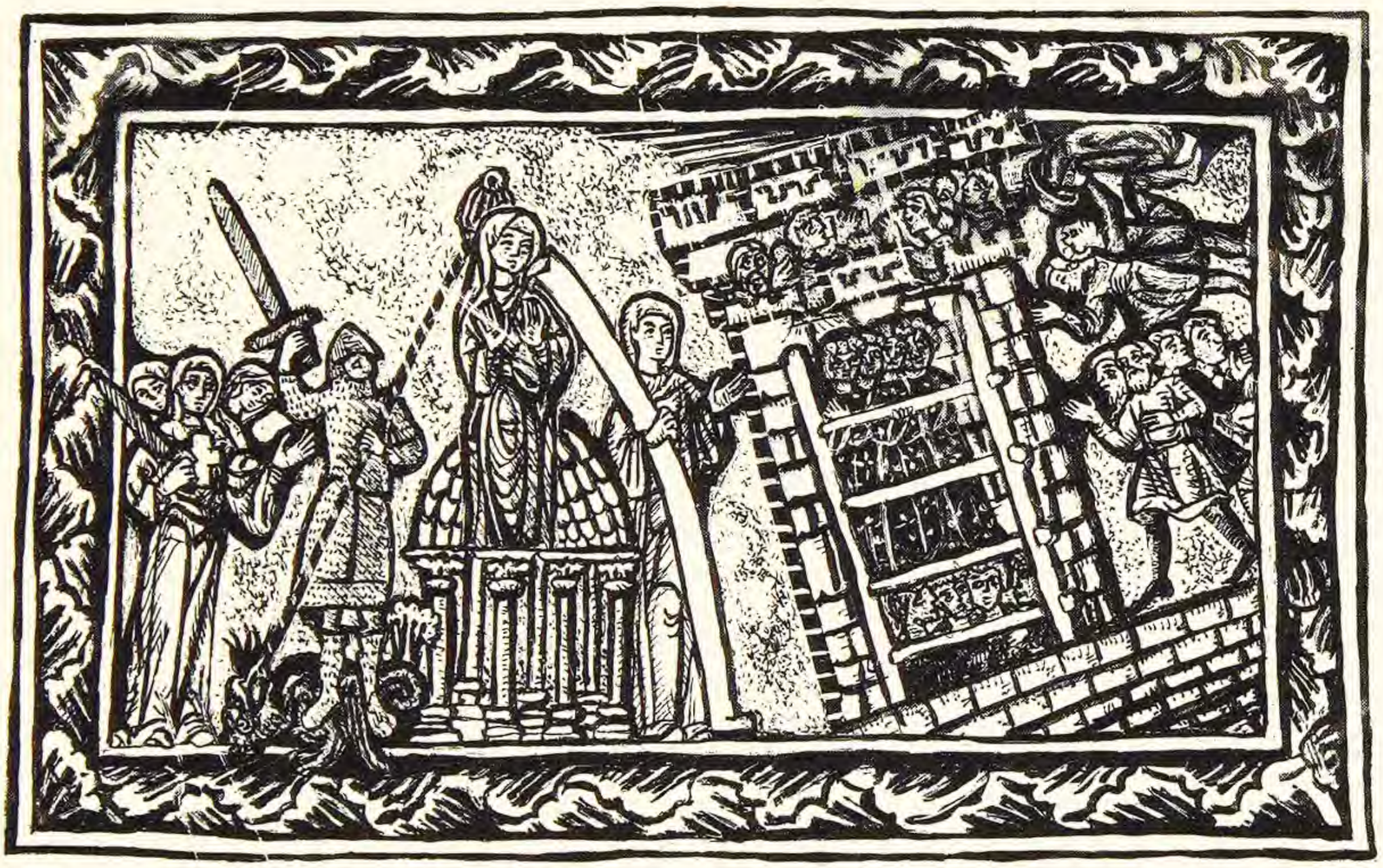
And *that radiance around it is full of eyes on all sides, and is all alive.* This is to say that the divine pity, which dwells in the Grace of God, manifests His many mercies and His abundant compassion in the form of many eyes,

which look upon the sorrows of the people who try to follow God. And that radiance is all alive to console and save their souls, and does not prepare perdition for them, but life.

And that radiance changes its form like a cloud; for Grace goes before the just, that they may watch themselves and not fall, but follows sinners, that they may repent and rise again. And *it becomes now wider and now narrower;* for to the miserable and weeping hearts of the faithful Grace comes in great abundance and fruitfulness, while in the profligate and hard minds of sinners it often contracts itself to a trickle because of their aridity.

And so God's Grace precedes and follows, touches and warms people, as was said; and those who desire to be the children of God can ardently receive and fulfil its words, despising fleeting things and embracing lasting ones. And so this virtue encourages the children of God to do, in its exhortation already quoted.

But let the one who has ears sharp to hear inner meanings ardently love My reflection and pant after My words, and inscribe them in his soul and conscience.



THE TOWER OF THE CHURCH

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VISION NINE
The Tower of the Church

After this I saw, in front of the pillar of the humanity of the Savior, a tower of brilliant splendor, set into the stone wall on the south side of the building so that it was visible both inside and outside the building. Its breadth was five cubits across any radius of its interior, but its height was so great that I could not make it out.

And between that tower and the pillar of the humanity of the Savior there was nothing but a foundation laid, on which the wall had not yet been built. Thus there appeared an empty gap, as mentioned [*p. 325*]*, which was one cubit long. And this tower was not yet finished, but was being diligently constructed, with great skill and speed, by a great many workers. Around its summit there were seven bulwarks, built with wonderful strength.*

And I saw a ladder, which reached from the inside of the building to the summit of this tower, with a multitude of people standing on the rungs from the bottom to the top. They had fiery faces and white garments, but black shoes; and among them were some who were similar in form but taller and more splendid, who looked at the tower with great concentration.

And then, to the north of the building, I saw the world and the people who descended from Adam going to and fro between the building's shining wall of reflective knowledge and the circumference of the circle that surrounded the One seated on the throne. Many of these people went into the building, between the tower of the anticipation of God's will and the pillar of the divinity of His Word, entering and leaving through the wall of reflective knowledge like clouds, which are diffused here and there. And each one who entered the building was clothed in a white garment. Some of them rejoiced with great joy in the smoothness and softness of this garment, and kept it on; but others seemed bothered by its weight and confining nature, and tried to take it off. And that virtue whom I had previously heard called the Knowledge of God often graciously stopped them, and said to each one, "Consider, and keep the garment with which you are clothed."

And I saw that some of them accepted this rebuke, and though the garment seemed to hinder them, they made a great effort and kept it on; but others scoffed at these words, furiously pulled off the garment and threw it away, returning to the world from which they had come. And there they tried out many things and learned a lot about useless worldly vanities. And some of them at last returned into the building, took up the garment they had thrown away and put it on again;

but others did not try to return, but remained ignominiously in the world, stripped of it.

And I saw that some, who were very dirty and black and acted insane, came from the North and burst into the building; they invaded the tower, carrying on and hissing at it like serpents. And some of them left off this madness and were made pure, but the others persevered in their wickedness and filth.

And I also saw, inside the building facing the tower, seven white marble pillars, completely smooth and round, seven cubits high. They supported a round dome of iron, which rose nicely to a fair height. And on top of this dome I saw a very beautiful figure standing and looking out at the people in the world. Her head shone like lightning, with so much brilliance that I could not look directly at it. Her hands were laid reverently on her breast; her feet were hidden from my sight by the dome. She had on her head a circlet like a crown, which shone with great splendor. And she was clad in a gold tunic, with a stripe on it from the breast to the feet, which was ornamented with precious gems; they glittered in green, white, red and brilliant sky-blue. And she cried out to the people in the world, saying:

1 Words of Wisdom

"O slow people, why do you not come? Would not help be given you, if you sought to come? When you begin to go in God's ways, gnats and flies buzz and hinder you; but take up the fan of the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and drive them away as fast as possible. You should run, and you should hope for God's help. Show that you are unfeignedly in God's service, and you will be strengthened by His hand."

And on the pavement of the building I saw three other images; one of them leaned against the marble pillars, and the other two stood before her on each side. All of them were directing their attention toward the pillar of the humanity of the Savior and the tower that was being built. She who was leaning against the pillars seemed to be as broad as five people standing side by side, and so tall that I could not take in all her height; and thus she could see everything in the building. She had a large head and clear eyes, with which she was looking acutely into the heavens; and she was as white and translucent as an unruffled cloud. But I could see no other human attributes in her. And she cried out in a voice that rang through the whole building, saying to the rest of the virtues:

2 Words of Justice

"Let us swiftly arise; for Lucifer is spreading his darkness through the whole world. Let us build towers, and strengthen them with heavenly bulwarks, for the Devil is the adversary and opponent of the elect of God.

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Lucifer began by wanting and trying to get too much in his glory; and now he wants and tries to get too much in his darkness. For he blows and scatters his malice and wickedness all over, and never ceases. And we are the soldiers of Heaven against him, to conquer him in his malice and wickedness; for otherwise, because of his enmity, people will not be able to be saved in the world. And as he, when he first revolted, tried to resist the Divinity, so too will his imitator, the Antichrist, try to resist the Lord's Incarnation in the last days. Lucifer was thrown down at the beginning of time; Antichrist too will fall, at the end of time. Then it will be known Who is the true God; it will be seen Who He is, Who has never fallen. But as Lucifer had demons as supporters, who followed him from the height of Heaven as he fell to damnation, so even now he has people on earth who follow him to the ruin of perdition. So we virtues are appointed to fight his subtleties and mockeries, which he sends into the world to devour souls; and so we will reduce all his arts to naught in the souls of the just, until he is confounded in every respect. And so we acknowledge God, Who is just in all things, and so must not be concealed but made manifest."

And the first of the figures who stood before this one on each side appeared to be armed; she was arrayed in a helmet, breastplate, greaves and iron gloves, and held an unsheathed sword in her right hand and a spear in her left. And she trod a horrible dragon under her feet, sticking the spear into its mouth so that it vomited forth unclean spume. And she held the sword as if to strike with it, brandishing it vigorously. And she said:

3 Words of Fortitude

"O mighty God! Who can resist or oppose You? The ancient serpent, the devilish dragon, cannot. Hence, with Your help, I too choose to resist him so that no one may prevail over me or throw me down, be he strong or weak, prince or outcast, noble or baseborn, rich or poor. I choose to be the strong steel that makes all the arms to be used in God's wars unconquerable; I am the sharp edge of those weapons, and because of You, O mighty God, no one can dash me in pieces. Through You I arise to overthrow the Devil. Hence I am a sure refuge for weak humans, and give their softness a cutting sword for their defense. O merciful and benevolent God, help the broken-hearted!"

The other figure had three heads; one was in the normal place and one was on each of her shoulders, but the middle one was a little higher than the other two. The middle and the right-hand one shone so brightly that their brilliance dazzled my eyes, so that I could not quite see whether their faces were masculine or feminine; the one on the left was a little bit shadowed, and veiled with a woman's white veil. The figure was dressed in a white silk tunic and white shoes. On her

breast was the sign of the cross, about which a great radiance shone like the dawn. In her right hand she held a naked sword, which she laid with great devotion against her breast and the cross.

And I saw written on the forehead of the middle head, "Sanctity," and on that of the right-hand one, "The root of goodness," and on that of the left-hand one, "Self-sacrifice." And the middle one looked at the other two, and said:

4 Words of triple-headed Sanctity

"I spring from holy Humility, born of her as an infant is born of its mother. By her I was raised and strengthened, as a child is cherished and strengthened by a nurse. My mother Humility bears down and conquers all opposition, even that which is unbearable to others."

And the right-hand head looked at the middle one, and said:

5 Words of the right-hand head

"I rise from my root in the lofty-headed mountain Which is God. And therefore, O Sanctity, I must be attached to your body to enable you to stand."

And the head at the left also looked at Sanctity's middle head, and said:

6 Words of the left-hand head

"O woe, O woe, O woe! How could I be so rigid and inflexible as not to conquer myself, O Sanctity, and come to your aid? For if I fled, you could not stand without me. Alas, alas, alas for the neglecter of good! I must root out the painful thorn that would prick me toward perdition, and pluck it out before it is completely buried in me and inflames me with foul corruption. O Sanctity, I seek to evade and break, with God's help, the Devil's entangling snare, that you may freely persevere in your work."

And again the One Who, as described above, was seated on the throne, showed these things to me and said:

7 After the Incarnation a new people built a new wall of virtues

When the Son of God became incarnate, a new people was called and arose, supported by His doctrine of salvation in the Holy Spirit. They were fortified against the fearsome enemy, whom no one can resist without the help of God's grace, by the exhortations of the strong toward blessed virtue. And, with God's help, they were so unconquerable that no art of that seducer could tear them or take them away from God. Therefore, *this tower you see in*

front of the pillar of the humanity of the Savior represents the Church. It arose when My Son's Incarnation was accomplished, newly built out of all good works and the lofty strength of heavenly deeds; it is a strong and fortified tower, standing against the Devil and resisting his iniquity.

8 The Church, illumined by Christ's humanity, displays all human knowledge

Therefore *this tower is of brilliant splendor, set into the stone wall on the south side of the building so that it is visible both inside and outside the building.* For the Church is illumined by the steady light of the humanity of the Son of God. To construct the divine edifice, she joins together living stones enkindled by the fire of the Holy Spirit; and thus her part in the work the Supreme Father is doing through His Only-Begotten is manifest both to believers and to unbelievers, to the inner understanding that comes from heavenly knowledge of Scripture and to the outer foolishness of secular affairs.

9 The Church gives all her adornments to her Bridegroom

Its breadth is five cubits across any radius of its interior; for the Church honors the Lamb, her Bridegroom, by giving Him all her inner thoughts and meditations, which ornament her by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, on what she receives through the five senses. And she also gives Him all the virtues the true Lamb shows her.

10 The human heart cannot comprehend what divine wisdom works in the Church

But its height is so great that you cannot make it out; for the height and depth of divine wisdom and knowledge in the work of the Church is too great to be understood by the fragile mortal human heart.

11 The Church is moving toward perfection but only God knows what it will be

And between that tower and the pillar of the humanity of the Savior there is nothing but a foundation laid, on which the wall has not yet been built; thus there appears an empty gap, as mentioned, which is one cubit long. This is to say that the knowledge of God, that firm foundation, conceals from the Church, the betrothed of My Son, that great praise she will have; for she is not yet radiant in complete perfection, and lies in human hearts without fully flowering in

them. But the gap is one cubit long, narrow enough to reach across; for the human senses are in the power of the One True Almighty God, and thus people can know good and evil and grasp through their intellect whatever is useful for them. And this was clearly shown you above.

And this tower is not yet finished, but is being diligently constructed, with great skill and speed, by a great many workers. This is to say that the Church has not yet come to the direction and status she will have; but, with great diligence and industry, she incessantly hastens toward her full beauty through swiftly passing time and by means of her children.

12 The Church is surrounded by the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit

And the tower *has around its summit seven bulwarks, built with wonderful strength.* For the Church is surrounded in her high celestial labors by the seven impregnable gifts of the Holy Spirit; and they are so strong that no adversary can destroy them, or even lift his mind so far as to touch them.

13 The Church is fortified by its doctors, flowering in apostolic doctrine

And *you see a ladder, which reaches from the inside of the building to the summit of this tower.* This is to say that the work the Supreme Father worked through His Son in His divine counsel had many stages by which the Church was set up and progressed. These stages, by the simple unity of the plan for the Church, lead to the height of the secret places of Heaven, strengthening and fortifying the Church as they go.

So *a multitude of people are standing on the rungs from the bottom to the top.* For throughout the Church's progress, from her first betrothal to the nuptial day when she will openly rejoice with her Bridegroom in the full number of their children, the shining apostles stand on the rungs of God's commands, giving light and protecting her from the darkness of infidelity.

14 The doctors of the Church have brought back the erring to true faith

And thus *they have fiery faces and white garments, but black shoes.* For in the minds of these apostolic guides the flame of the Holy Spirit kindled wondrous faith in the One God, so that they were resplendent before God and the world in the bright garment of good works. But they have black shoes, because they walked on the roads of infidelity and the filthy crimes of

the unbelievers; and they won them over by their example, and finally, with great difficulty, converted them to the way of justice.

15 The apostles and their successors tenderly care for the Church

And *among them are some who are similar in form but taller and more splendid.* This is to say that the apostles stand out among those defenders of the Church as its first founders; after the Son of God, they built her by their preaching. They and their followers who imitate them had the same ideas, which the apostles preached and their successors believed; but the apostles are outstanding, since they had no predecessors from whom to draw the example of the new grace except the Son of God Himself, from Whose mouth they heard the words of life. And they also surpass the others in glory, because it was they and not the others who saw the splendor of the Incarnation. *And they are looking at the tower with great concentration;* for they are always there to help the Bride of God in divine love and solicitous piety, so that she can continue in perfect strength. As it is written:

16 Words of Solomon

"Your neck is like the tower of David, which is built with bulwarks; a thousand bucklers hang upon it, all the armor of the valiant" [Song of Songs 4:4]. This is to say:

The Incarnation of the strong Lion, the Son of the Supreme Ruler, Who arose from the blooming of the Virgin, is the strongest instrument of the new grace; and so too the strength of your incorrupt faith, O Bride, is set as the sure rampart of the faithful people. How? All your children stand and join themselves into walls around your strength, nourished by the new light that trickles from the pure living Fountain. And in this strong joining they hold you as the neck holds the head to the rest of the body; and so you cannot be destroyed or dismembered, anymore than the victorious weapons of true David could be defeated. How?

The strong tower is the strength of Christ Jesus the Son of God, and in it the conquering hosts of the faithful are tested without defeat. No adversary can boast of prevailing over them, for they hold fast to Christ, true God and Man, through Whom in the Second Coming all your children will gloriously attain adulthood in salvation. To this end the pure Incarnation was foretold by the prophets and adorned by precious gems of virtue. And it was manifested through the world for the salvation of believers through those bulwarks of apostolic doctrine who planted the justice of the True Light, as the following parable shows.

17 Parable on the same subject

A certain lord had a marble city; he cried out upon it with a loud voice, and inscribed writings on its inner walls, from which the scrapings of the stone trickled down. And he spoke a single word to the waters of the sea, commanding them to rise above the mountaintops. And, this being done, he told the flames of the fire to burn on the altars of small tabernacles; and when they did, the tabernacles grew so high that they rapidly overtopped the city. Which is to say:

This lord is the One Whom no other ever excelled in dominion. He alone is over all things and in all things, for nothing is before Him or after Him; and so He is Lord of all. He had in His power this noble city, the company of the prophets, who were strong and constant against the raging tempests of the world. And when the Lord cried out upon them, He filled them with the Holy Spirit, and stirred them up to bring forth His mysteries in obscure words, as a distant sound is heard when the words cannot yet be made out. But the true Word, the incarnate Son of God, followed on the sound of their prophecy. And when the Lord infused their understanding richly with the spirit of wisdom, He inscribed many things in their hearts; and thus they prophesied by their sense of the Spirit the mysteries of God in the present and future, and uttered in the Spirit harsh words against wicked human behavior. And so they moved the hard hearts of the Jews to mildness and compassion and good works.

But after the Word of God became incarnate, the Heavenly Father gave a sign to His apostles, who, though human, were set apart from the common people, like pure streams diverted from the other waters that flow in a plain. He told them to flow forth into the world in a flood of true faith, overturning and wearing away the great divisions of pride and idol-worship, that all by their preaching might know the true God and forsake their infidelity. And when this faith was strengthened in the people, the Provider for all gently spoke to His elect, whose minds glowed with the flame kindled by the glowing hearts of those touched by the fiery tongues of the Holy Spirit. And He told them to despise the world and contemplate celestial life, and not to refuse to be humble and poor in spirit, but to dwell in humility so as to prepare for themselves treasure in Heaven. And those martyrs and virgins and other self-rejecters who did despise transitory things and worked in humility, meditating in lofty zeal on God's wise precepts, ascended in that self-denial to the love of heavenly things. And so in the eagerness of their good works they surpassed the vinedressers who worked in the vineyard of the Old Testament, for they counted themselves as nothing and strove with their whole desire toward Heaven.

And so a thousand bucklers, perfect defenses of the perfected faith,

hang from the Son of God. And the first shepherds of the Church follow His example and despise themselves for the hope of Heaven; they pour out their blood to protect the Catholic faith from the fiery darts of the Devil, which wound human souls. And the other elect, who follow them, also form a heavenly militia and take arms to establish the love of God in this world. How? The ancient serpent infused into the first man the evil stench of contempt for God, and so the Devil himself is now pierced with the darts of Heaven: the perfume of the spices of charity and continence, and the fetters of God's commandments, and the yoke of Christ's company. And thus, cast out from the city of God, confounded and trodden down into his clear damnation, he is abhorred by all the faithful.

18 Those who live according to the flesh await the knowledge of God's power

But now *to the north of the building you see the world, and the people who descend from Adam going to and fro between the building's shining wall of reflective knowledge and the circumference of the circle that surrounds the One seated on the throne*. This is to say that by the sin of the first parent the world and worldly people are subject to carnal desires, which are centered on earthly weaknesses and worldly longings. But, for one thing, the knowledge of good and evil has been given them, that they may draw near to God by good and fly from evil; and, for another, God has shown them His power, that they may know they are under His rule and all their deeds are judged by Him.

19 The different kinds of people who enter and leave the Church

Many of these people are going into the building, between the tower of the anticipation of God's will and the pillar of the divinity of His Word, entering and leaving through the wall of reflective knowledge like clouds, which are diffused here and there. For some approach the divine work through reflective knowledge, admonished by the Old and New Testaments and renouncing carnal desires. But some follow their pleasure and go out of it in the same way due to their evil desires; their will for good or evil propels them as swiftly as clouds, and they withdraw, carried passively by their thoughts. *And those who enter the building are clothed in a white garment;* which is to say that those who approach God's work with good will are clothed by His mercy in a pure and shining garment of the true faith that knows God. *Some of them rejoice with great joy in the smoothness and softness of this garment, and keep it on*. For they are imbued with sweet and mild Catholic faith and have a

contrite and humble spirit, and they are bathed in inner holiness; so they rejoice with their inner vision in heavenly things, and devoutly do and keep what the Holy Spirit inspires in them. *But others seem bothered by its weight and confining nature, and try to take it off.* For they feel weighed down by a heavy burden and impeded by the difficulty of the path; so they tear and torture themselves inwardly by their restless and bitter habits and forbidden desires, and end by trying to reject faith in works and refusing to listen to the divine precepts. *And that virtue whom you heard called the Knowledge of God often graciously stops them, admonishing them in the words already quoted.* For the Most High God, as you saw, knowing how hard human hearts can be softened, in His mercy inclines Himself to them. He reminds them often to pray to Him and inwardly lament and weep, that He may deliver them from their perilous iniquity, to which they came by the Devil's persuasion. And by this penitence He tells them to return to knowing what good will is, and remembering the garment of innocence they received by the regeneration of the Spirit and water.

And you see that some of them accept this rebuke, and though the garment seems to hinder them, they make a great effort and keep it on. This is to say that, when the Holy Spirit admonishes them and they receive the warning in faith, they choose the path that is harsh and difficult for them; and finally, not letting their weariness make them despairing or apathetic, with great labor they complete it.

But others scoff at these words, furiously pull off the garment and throw it away, returning to the world from which they have come; and there they try out many things and learn a lot about useless worldly vanities. These are the people who hold God's law and justice in derision; in their vain error they strip themselves of the Catholic faith and deny it by wicked works, which lead to death, and turn aside to the worldly vanities that they earlier pretended to leave. And there they use perverse arts to probe into lustful deeds, and so learn the strong savor of the world; and the Devil deceives them into perversions and mockeries. *And some of them at last return into the building, take up the garment they threw away and put it on again;* for they return from the way of error to the divine path, and reject the schisms the Devil had imposed on them. And so they resume the dress of true faith, which they received in baptism and threw away in error when they scorned the true God; and they praise Him again with pure and simple heart. *But others do not try to return, but remain ignominiously in the world, stripped of it.* For they disdain to return to God in pure penitence, and remain despoiled of the garment of innocence and stripped of the good that would come from works of faith. And so, full of the Devil's vicious arts in the evil vanities of the world, they live impenitent till death, and so are confounded both in this world and in the life to come.

VISION NINE

20 On simoniacs, and the hidden divine judgment on them

And you see that some, who are very dirty and black and act insane, come from the North and burst into the building; they invade the tower, carrying on and hissing at it like serpents. This is to say that there are wicked people, willful and blithely careless, who are blackened by the Devil's point of view, and so despise God. Therefore, they seek what they desire not through the gift of the Holy Spirit, but inspired and incited by devilish arts. So they come from the direction of Hell and craftily get into the divine edifice; and by secret intrigues and open seizure, they insanely ingest the offices ordained by God by means of execrable, horrible, devilishly black money. And by their mad folly they throw the Church into disorder, and so hiss at her with the deceiving hisses of the ancient serpent. How? With diabolical cleverness they mislead the unwary and conquer them with deadly bribes; and their boastful hissing corrupts the Church, for they are stealing the powers God constituted in her. And because they do these things, they are banished from My sight; I do not recognize them as holders of these offices, for they got them by themselves and not through Me. And so My servant Hosea indicates, saying, "They have reigned, but not by Me; they have been princes, and I knew not; of their silver and their gold they have made idols for themselves, that they might perish" [Hosea 8:4]. This is to say:

People who do their own will set up for themselves whatever their own desires dictate. What is that? Their lustful will, which persuades them that they can rule people by offices they have stolen or seized, though they never asked or got them from or were set up in them by Me. Sometimes I allow this to happen, so that their wills may bring them to judgment, punishing them for not seeking Me. What will it profit them? For it will produce nothing in them but aridity; it is not rooted, and will give rise to a useless weed without a trunk. For fruitless plants spring up easily by themselves from the ground; but fruit-bearing ones must be sown and planted with great labor. And so I sometimes allow a person's earthly desires to blossom, if they have no root in evil, though they also seek no root in good and so will lack summer fertility. I also sometimes allow a virtuous desire, well-rooted in good, to bear fruit in misery; for I love to water with sanctity all that lacks winter sterility. And so the vile often surpass the useful common people in power, as weeds are sometimes taller than useful plants; but these people are appointed only by their own desires, not rooted firmly in My planting or touched by My gift of knowledge. And I permit this to happen by just judgment; for they established themselves by themselves and did not ask Me, and they will answer for it in the judgment.

For these people pervert to their vain opposites the felicity of good

doctrine, which should be mentally purified from unworthy unbelief as silver is purified from dross, and the utility of deep wisdom, which should make their faith splendid and show them how to worship, venerate and confess God. How? They turn this felicity to profound infelicity, for they give the reason they have from God over to the insatiable lusts of the flesh as if that stinking and putrid flesh were God. They do not seek to raise their eyes to the God Who made them, but they hold their own will as God, living by what they ordain for themselves. And they do this not to possess the field that bears the crop of eternal life, but to flee it and lose themselves forever in impenitence. That which they worship as God is dead, and so they too are dead, these buyers and sellers of spiritual things who wanted to be something without asking Me. For how can one who insanely usurps power and makes the rational gift of the Holy Spirit a thing to be sold get anything out of the sale? For one who sells his substance to others no longer has the use of it. And how can the buyer use the salvation he bought? For he did not try to receive it from God, but hastened to buy it for money. But God in His righteous judgment allowed him to buy it.

For God, in His anger at certain people, allows them to become thieves; but yet He punishes them for it by a secret judgment now and not in the future. He allows them to be confounded by the very thing they loved in place of the Holy Spirit, so that they will be brought by this disaster to penitence, and return to God for forgiveness. And other people He tolerates and does not afflict in the present, but justly delays His judgment till the future; for they hold their wills in place of God, and so God in future will demonstrate to them what their wills are worth amid torments. And still others He punishes both now and in the future; for they willfully make their brilliant minds vile and contemptible, and imitate the evil deeds of the Devil. He allows some to go this far that their evil may be negated by penitence, and that they may punish themselves bitterly and cast away their wrong like a putrid corpse. But He mercifully stops others from reaching this point; for if they did, they would do things that merited the pains of Gehenna, and would not escape them.

Now if someone dishonors and usurps a chair of power by means of his spiritual father, money—for in that transaction money becomes his bishop —he buys himself perdition, and both he who gave and he who received the money must be cast out of their dignities. For if a person's animal is stolen from him and sold to another, the one from whom it was stolen has every right to demand it back if he finds it, while both he who sold it and he who bought it must give it up. And so too an office that should be held according to My rules is governed strictly by those rules; and if by some secret bribe it is stolen and wickedly given to an alien, the one who put it up for sale and the

one who bought it shall both justly be deprived of the use of it. For they have made the temple consecrated to My name a den of thieves. How?

The wisdom and counsel I put into their hearts they have put up for sale in the marketplace, and so they are getting the wages of iniquity by the perdition of others. So they must renounce this traffic with bitter penance or they will answer to Me for it in the unquenchable fire. For one who tries to juxtapose a living dignity, vivified by the Spirit, with the stench of corruption by buying it for dead money will be lost, unless he hastens to repent that perverse presumption. As Peter, the son of the Dove, who deserted all error when enkindled by the Spirit, said to the fleeting whirlwind who tried to absorb the light into hideous blackness:

21 Words of Peter the apostle on this subject

"May your money perish with you, because you have thought that the gift of God could be purchased with money. You have no part or lot in this word; for your heart is not right in the sight of God" [Acts 8:20–21]. Which is to say:

This is money with which you falsely believed you could become the master of a thing alien to you, but which regards you as a servant or as nothing at all. May it go with you into the perdition of the fires of Gehenna if you do not repent, and if you keep the gift of the ardent Holy Spirit, which you purchased with money. For in your transitory wisdom you have thought that you could have for money the enkindling of your soul by the great Searcher of Hearts; and you did not trust to get it by God's gift. But if you repent of this wrong, you must give up what you bought, and hold the money you gave for it as lost; for you tried to buy an eternal thing with mud from Him Who created you from the mud. And as long as you keep this purchase, you will never share in the light of the company of the supernal angels; for by your speech you have revealed your heart's rapacity, coveting a thing not desired by the citizens of glorious eternity. And so your heart in this wickedness is unjust in God's sight, for it wants to have by a money purchase what should be given freely by God. And My just judgment likens those who will not seek this divine concord by the free gift of the Holy Spirit to vain idols. For idols are the work of hands, and have no truth in them, but they are worshipped by the infidels instead of God; and so too those who use gifts not illumined by the Holy Spirit are teachers of deceit. For they do not take an office sighing in their souls as being unworthy of it, but receive it with eager pride from other people, and ignore My will about it.

Therefore, I know not whence they come, and hold them as alien to Me; and if they persevere in their injustice, they are cut off from Me. But if they

repent with their whole heart, I will receive them; and the angels will rejoice in them.

22 Offices of power are set up by God, and one who resists them resists God

But, though those who strive after these dignities with perverse ardor act unjustly, and, as mentioned, consent must not be given to their usurpation, nonetheless government itself is good for human welfare and well-ordained by God. And so it must not be stubbornly resisted, but obeyed for love of Me. So let no faithful person who wants to obey God oppose himself to the authority that governs him; for, in keeping and feeding God's sheep, it imitates Him in honor, and must not be destroyed by an alien who is a thief and a robber. So, as no one should oppose God, no one should foolishly resist His authorities.

Therefore, everyone who lives in soul and body should obey the offices superior to him and subject himself to them, whether they maintain corporeal or spiritual justice. Human laws should be guided by fear of the authorities, lest people should turn from the right path and follow their undisciplined wills to become laws unto themselves. This would be going astray from the way of the Lord; for powers from God exist to keep people from straying. How?

Human governments are set up by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, that through them people may learn to fear the Lord. If people pervert them into anarchy by their wills, God does not will it but only permits it, that these people's twisted wants may be satisfied to their ruin.

And thus the powers of office are inspired by God for human advantage, justly ordained by Him of necessity; for otherwise the people of God would live like flocks without a shepherd, and follow every winding path of disorder. Hence he who resists them out of pride and refuses to obey them in just humility opposes not people but Me, the Creator, Who disposes all things justly. He follows Adam's transgression in so opposing Me, and thus increases the darkness of his condemnation; he is driven out of joy into sorrow. This does not mean a person who humbly refuses his consent to perverse wickedness, for if he does so properly he increases God's justice and does not diminish it; it refers to one who tries to overthrow an office improperly because of his exalted pride. For, as mentioned, these offices were constituted by Me for the advantage of the living; and one who proudly defies them resists My inspiration. Nonetheless, some people, in mad ignorance and forgetting to fear Me, obtrude themselves upon these dignities, and transgress the divine commands by their wicked wills. And, by My just

judgment, I let it be as they wish; but they will answer for it in a just judgment, either by severe penance or in the fires of Gehenna.

23 On simoniacs who repent and those who do not

But you see that *some of them leave off this madness and are made pure, but the others persevere in their wickedness and filth.* This is to say that some of them, by divine inspiration, come to themselves out of their wickedness and, by pure and true penitence, earn the right to be cleansed and saved. But others are obdurate and impenitent, and remain in their crafty impurity till the end of their life; and therefore they will die miserably by choking, a painful and cruel death.

24 God gave the gifts of the Holy Spirit to defend and adorn the Church

And you see, inside the building facing the tower, seven white marble pillars, completely smooth and round. This is to say that the Omnipotent Father, Who has supreme power without beginning or end in the perfect round of eternity, has worked for the protection and beauty of the new Bride by manifesting the seven modes of the purifying inspiration of the Holy Spirit, which drive away all adverse storms. *And they are seven cubits high,* because these gifts surpass in strength and height all human intellect, and thus show that He Who created all things must be worshipped in pure faith.

They are supporting a round dome of iron, which rises nicely to a fair height. For these pillars, in their excelling glory, manifest the profound and incomprehensible power of the Divinity; and by their perfect straightness, they protect and support in Heaven the people who, by the gifts of the Holy Spirit, separate themselves from carnal pleasures here below.

25 Wisdom and her appearance

And *on top of this dome you see a very beautiful figure standing.* This is to say that this virtue was in the Most High Father before all creatures, giving counsel in the formation of all the creatures made in heaven and earth; so that she is the great ornament of God and the broad stairway of all the other virtues that live in Him, joined to Him in sweet embrace in a dance of ardent love. And *she is looking out at the people in the world;* for she protects and guides the people who want to follow her, and keeps with great love those who are true to her. And this figure represents the Wisdom of God, for through her all things are created and ruled by God. *Her head shines like lightning, with so much brilliance that you cannot look directly at it;* for God,

BOOK THREE

Who is terrible or mild to every creature, sees and judges all things as a human eye assesses what is before it, but no human can understand fully the profound mystery of the Divinity.

Thus *her hands are laid reverently on her breast;* this represents the power of Wisdom, which she wisely holds to do her work so that no one can oppose her by craft or might. *Her feet are hidden from your sight by the dome;* for her depths are hidden in the heart of the Father and invisible to humans, and her secrets are naked and manifest to God alone. *She has on her head a circlet like a crown, which shines with great splendor.* This is to say that the Majesty of God is without beginning or end and bright with incomparable glory, and the Divinity is so radiant that mortal sight cannot look on it. *And she is clad in a gold tunic;* which is to say that Wisdom is often thought of as pure gold. *It has a stripe on it from the breast to the feet, which is ornamented with precious gems; they glitter in green, white, red and brilliant sky-blue.* For from the beginning of the world, when Wisdom first openly displayed her workings, she extended in a straight line to the end of time. She is adorned with the holy and just commandments, which are green like the first sprouts of the patriarchs and prophets who sighed in their tribulations for the Incarnation of the Son of God, and white like the virginity of Mary, and red like the faith of the martyrs, and brilliant blue like the lucent love of contemplation, which, by the ardor of the Holy Spirit, mandates love for God and one's neighbor. And so she will proceed even to the end of the world, and her admonition will not cease, but will spread as long as the world endures; and so Wisdom declares, in her already-quoted exhortation.

26 The appearance of Justice, Fortitude and Sanctity

And on the pavement of the building you see three other images. This is to say that these virtues, which do the divine work by treading the earthly underfoot and following the heavenly, are the three instruments by which the Church strives toward eternity in her children: nourishment from their teachers, and the fight of the faithful against the Devil, and the rejection of consent to vice. *One of them is leaning against the marble pillars;* for the doctors of the Church, imbued with the gifts of the Holy Spirit, find rest in their strength. *And the other two are standing before her on each side;* for, as the exhortation says, the love of God and of neighbor resides in the united and cooperative action of these virtues.

Therefore *all of them are directing their attention toward the pillar of the humanity of the Savior and the tower that is being built.* For they are showing by their unanimity that the Son of God, true God and true Man, is devoutly worshipped and adored in the Church; and they are raising up justice, dem-

onstrating the way of salvation in the Old Testament saints, the Most High God and the Incarnation of His Son.

27 Justice and her appearance

So *this figure who is leaning against the pillars* represents God's Justice; for she arises after Wisdom, and by the Holy Spirit works in all the justice of human beings. She *seems to be as broad as five people standing side by side;* for she takes in all five human senses and uses them to abide in the law of God, and she contains and keeps all the commandments God instituted for those who love her. *And she is so tall that you cannot take in all her height, and thus she can see everything in the building.* For she is greater than the human mind, and extends up into Heaven, just as she bent down from Heaven in the Incarnation of the Savior when He Who was the Son of God came forth from the Father, Who is true Justice. And so she looks at all the attributes of the Church, for they are made and contained by her, and thus are the higher bulwarks joined to confirm the strong tower. *She has a large head and clear eyes, with which she is looking acutely into the heavens;* for Justice, in her supreme goodness, has shown people a bright vision in the incarnate Son of God, Who showed Himself in a human body to darkened mortal eyes, teaching heavenly things to save their souls. And *she is as white and translucent as an unruffled cloud;* for she dwells in the purity of the minds of the just, who direct all their desire toward obeying the justice of God, and so is as white as a cloud. And thus she prepares for herself a pleasant habitation in just hearts.

But you can see no other human attributes in her; which is to say that she remains heavenly and not terrestrial, as was declared to you. That is, those human deeds that weigh people down do not cling to her, but only those that lead them to justification and life. For God is just; and she, fighting against the Devil, shows it in her exhortation, already quoted, to the other virtues, which work for God.

28 Fortitude and her appearance

And *the first of the figures who stand before this one on each side* represents Fortitude. For Fortitude arises after God's Justice like a prince under the rule of a supreme king, to repel by righteous and holy labor all traps set for humans by their enemies. For she is armed by the power of Almighty God, and, strong in faith, repels the advances of the Devil. Therefore, she *is arrayed in a helmet,* which is to say with supernal power to save believers; *and in a breastplate,* which is to say in Christian law, which can never be

destroyed by the Devil's arrows because it is full of justice; *and in greaves,* which is to say in righteous paths walked by the main teachers in their doctrines; *and in iron gloves,* which are the strong and noble works the faithful do in Christ.

She holds an unsheathed sword in her right hand; which is God's admonitions in the divine Scriptures, whose inner meaning the Son of God disclosed when He opened the Law to show the sweetness of its kernel. *And she has a spear in her left hand;* for when carnal desires for the pleasure of the flesh afflict the faithful, they resist by thinking of the eternal.

And she is treading a horrible dragon under her feet; which is to say that, by the path of righteousness, she subjugates to her power the ancient and frightful serpent. *She is sticking the spear into its mouth, so that it is vomiting forth unclean spume;* for, with the mighty daring of chastity, she pierces the gaping jaws of foul and devilish lust, and wrings from it the burning venom with which it polluted humans.

And she holds the sword as if to strike with it, brandishing it vigorously; for God has displayed the vast strength of His pervasive Word to slay all unfaithful idol-worship and other schisms of unbelief. And so this virtue shows, in her admonition already quoted.

29 Sanctity and her appearance

The other figure signifies Sanctity; for when the Devil is repelled by Fortitude, Sanctity arises in the good to adorn them in the heavenly host. She *has three heads;* for three attributes make up her condition. *One is in the normal place and one is on each of her shoulders;* for God, the Head of all dignities, is to be respected and venerated in prosperity and adversity, in human joy and sorrow. *But the middle one is a little higher than the other two;* for He Who is the Judge of the good and the evil rises in His equity above all things. *The middle and the right-hand one shine so brightly that their brilliance dazzles your eyes, so that you cannot quite see whether their faces are masculine or feminine;* which is to say that Sanctity is so honorable and sweet and full of heavenly grace that the depth of her mystery exceeds the human intellect, and, weighed down by mortality, that intellect cannot discern her liberty or her subjection in Christ, except what is seen in Him Himself.

But the head on the left is a little bit shadowed, and veiled with a woman's white veil. For this perfection, sternly constraining itself for love of God, is anxious and careful to defend itself by God's help when attacked by the Devil and people; and so, in the sighs of faithful hearts, it commends itself humbly to the Supreme Redeemer in the purity and beauty of the Christian fight.

The figure *is dressed in a white silk tunic;* which is to say that she is surrounded by works of sweet and lucent zeal, in which perfect Sanctity

imitates My Son. *And she is protected by white shoes;* for she shines brightly in human minds, through the death of Christ and the pure regeneration of the Spirit and water, that they too may imitate His death.

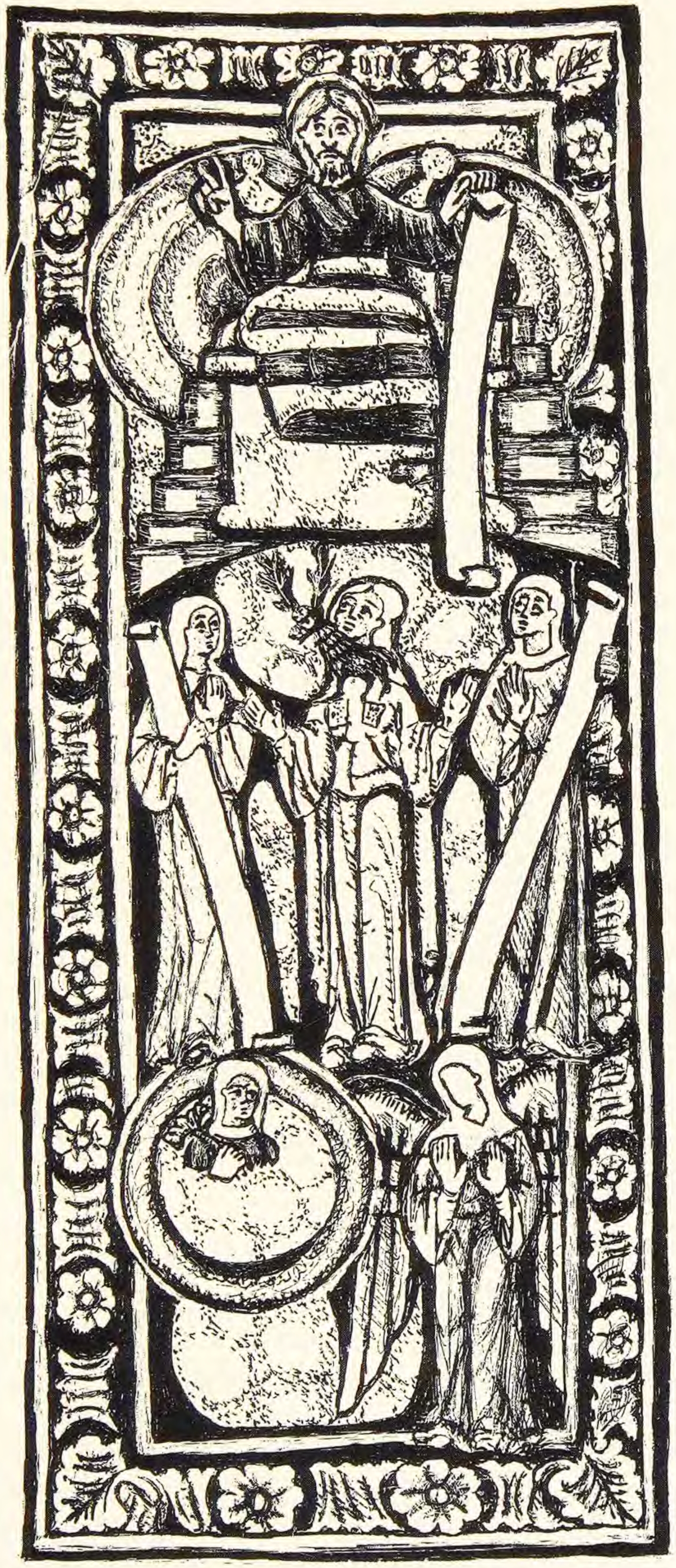
On her breast is the sign of the cross, about which a great radiance shines on her breast like the dawn. For Sanctity awakens, in the minds of believers who lovingly embrace her, the repeated remembrance of the Passion of Christ Jesus. She declares with bright faith that He Who obeyed the Father and suffered so much in His holy human state was born without stain of sin from the beautiful dawn, the Virgin Mary.

In her right hand she holds a naked sword, which she lays with great devotion against her breast and the cross. This is to say that her holy works show how much she loves the Scriptures revealed by the Holy Spirit, which the chosen recall to mind as they sweetly remember the Passion of their Redeemer.

And you see written on the forehead of the middle head, "Sanctity"; for Sanctity is known by the inner face of the soul, full of joy in life and without unworthy shame. *And on that of the right-hand one is "The root of goodness";* for that is clearly the beginning and the foundation of Sanctity unto salvation. *And on that of the left-hand one is "Self-sacrifice";* for she sternly restrains herself from sluggishness, softness and vain earthly pleasures, and adorns herself with the other virtues that she may be perfected and persevere.

And the middle one looks at the other two, and they look at it, and they all consult together for their advantage; for they are strongly united in inner vision and in love, and none of them can last without the help of the others. And so they direct their words and adminitions to people, to help them go forward.

But let the one who has ears sharp to hear inner meanings ardently love My reflection and pant after My words, and inscribe them in his soul and conscience.



THE SON OF MAN AND THE FIVE VIRTUES

VISION TEN
The Son of Man

And after this, I saw on the summit of the eastern corner of the building, where the shining part and the stone part of the wall came together, seven white marble steps, which rose like an arch up to the great stone on which the Shining One sat on the throne.

And on these steps a chair was placed, on which sat a man of youthful appearance. His face was manly and noble, but pale; he had black hair down to his shoulders, and was clad in a purple tunic. He was visible to me from his head to his navel, but from the waist downward he was hidden from my sight. And he looked on the world and cried out loudly to the people in it, saying:

1 Words of the Son of Man

"O foolish people! You languidly and shamefully shrink into yourselves, and do not want to open an eye to see how good your souls could be. You constantly burn to do the evil your flesh desires, and refuse to be of good conscience and think rightly. It is as if you did not know good and evil, or have the glory of knowing how to avoid evil and do good. Hear Me, the Son of Man, saying to you: O human, regard what you were when you were just a lump in your mother's womb! You were mindless and powerless to bring yourself to life; but then you were given spirit and motion and sense, so that you might live and move and come to fruitful deeds.

2 Man has the knowledge of good and evil and so has no excuse

"So you have the knowledge of good and evil, and the ability to work. And so you cannot plead as an excuse that you lack any good thing that would inspire you to love God in truth and justice. You have the power to master yourself and not want and take pleasure in injustice; you can punish yourself and flee from the illicit lusts you delight in, and so honor My martyrdom by fighting against your burning desires and bearing My cross in your body. And why have you this great power? So that you may avoid evil and do good. And you will answer to Me for your knowledge of good and evil, as you know yourself to be human. But you despise good and do evil, and burn with

carnal desire; good seems grievous to you, and evil is easily awakened in you. And so you choose not to restrain yourself, but to sin freely.

"What did I not do for you when I, the Son of Man, suffered on the cross in frail flesh, and trembled in great anguish? Because of that, I require of you a self-martyrdom; you must suffer for the lusts of your flesh and your other unruliness, your illicit desires contrary to My will and the bad actions that come from them. And you cannot excuse yourself by saying you do not know your good from your bad actions.

3 Admonition to the married

"But I do not reject the chaste coupling of legitimate marriage, which was set up by divine counsel when the children of Adam were fruitful and multiplied. But it is to be done for the true desire of children and not for the false pleasure of the flesh, and only by those to whom it is allowed and harmless by divine law, those allied to the world and not set apart for the Spirit. You should love the good you have from Me better than yourself. You are heavenly in spirit but earthly in flesh; and so you should love heavenly things and tread the earthly underfoot. When you do heavenly things I show you a supernal reward; but when you seek to do what is unjust by the will of your flesh, I show you My martyrdom and the pains I endured for your sakes, that you may fight your wrong desires for love of My Passion.

"You have been given great intelligence; and so great wisdom is required of you. Much has been given to you, and much will be required of you. But in all these things I am your Head and your helper. For when Heaven has touched you, if you call on Me I will answer you. If you knock at the door, I will open to you. You are given a spirit of profound knowledge, and so have in yourself all that you need. And, this being so, My eyes will search you closely and remember what they find.

"Therefore, I require of your conscience a wounded and sorrowful heart; for thus you can restrain yourself when you feel drawn toward sin and burn in it to the point of suffocation. Behold, I am watching you; what will you do? If you call upon Me in this travail, with a wounded heart and tearful eyes and fear of My judgment, and keep calling on Me to help you against the wickedness of your flesh and the attacks of evil spirits, I will do for you all that you desire, and make My dwelling-place in you.

4 Analogy of the field

"Now therefore, my child, note how much work and sweat goes into a field before it is sown with seed. But after it has been sown, it brings forth

the crop. Attend and consider these things. Do I not refuse to let the earth bring forth a crop without the sweat of labor? But when I choose, it bears so abundantly that people have the fullest sufficiency, or even more; and when I choose, it bears so meagerly that people can hardly survive their hunger, or even pine and die. And so too are people sustained by Me. To a person who willingly and with good heart receives the seed of My word, I grant the gifts of the Holy Spirit in superabundance, as to a good field. One who now receives My word and now refuses to accept it is like a field that is sometimes green and sometimes dried-up. But this person does not perish utterly; his soul suffers hunger, but he has some greenness, though not much. But one who never chooses to hear My words, or waken his heart to good by the admonition of the Holy Spirit or by human instruction, will die completely. You wonder at this, O human, and want to know why.

5 Man must not look into what he is not meant to know

"But, just as you cannot look on Divinity with your mortal eyes, you cannot grasp its secrets with your mortal minds, except insofar as God permits you. Your wavering mind turns this way and that; and as water is evaporated by the heat of a furnace, your spirit is dried up by the turbulence of your foolish mind. For you want to know what cannot be known by the sinful seed of Man. Will you raise your finger and touch the clouds? This cannot be done; and neither can this search into what is not for you to know. As plants cannot comprehend the nature of the earth because they lack sense and intellect, and know not what they are or how they bear their fruit, though in their usefulness they encompass the earth; or as gnats or ants or such small creatures do not seek to rule their own kind, or to know or understand the power and nature of lions or greater animals; so you cannot know what is in the knowledge of God.

"Where were you and what were you doing when Heaven and earth were made? He Who created them did not need your help, nor does He now. Why do you search into God's judgment? You are touched by the rain of salvation from above; show Me how you labor in the field of your heart to cultivate it. If that labor pleases Me, I will give you good fruit; the fruit with its reward shall be according to your labor. Do I give the fruits of the earth without labor? Neither, O human, do I give to you without the sweat I ask of you. For through Me you have in yourself all the means to work.

"Exercise yourself therefore diligently in labor, and you shall have the fruit thereof. And when you have the fruit, you shall have its reward. But now what? Many seek me with a devout, pure and simple heart, and having found Me never let Me go.

6 No one may too quickly come into the way of holiness

"But many joke and play and try to approach Me without mental labor or cogitation. They are unwilling to deliberate their course first, calling on Me and examining the habits of their body; they wish only to seize upon Me like one awaking from deep sleep, and take the way of sanctity by their own will with a sudden and deceiving motion. Some therefore take My yoke on their shoulders by rejecting secular affairs, others by fleshly continence, others by modest virginity; and they think it possible to be what they wish without recognizing what they are and what they are capable of. But they remain unaware of Who made them and Who their God may be, wishing only to have Him as their servant and do their will.

"To the person who tries to unite himself to Me thus vainly, while in his ignorance he does not know Me, I will not give My gift; I will not sow an empty field. Therefore his foot will often stumble. And I say to him: 'O human, why have you not examined the field of your mind, and rooted out the weeds and thorns and thistles? Why have you not called on Me and examined yourself? For before you come to Me you are as one drunk and insane and ignorant of self; you can do no shining deed without My help. And, after seeking Me in inconsiderate haste as if in a dream, you grew weary in My service, and remembered your other dream of habitual sins; and so you returned to your former crimes, insane and ignorant of the good, and deprived yourself of the help and consolation of the Spirit, the Paraclete.

" 'But what was your guide and helper in this? Your fallacious and deceitful mind; it led you foolishly into aridity, without the fruitful memory in your intellect that you can do nothing good without Me. And so what do you have? You will be wretched and empty, and will fall down before Me and before the people and be trodden into the vain dust. If you work against Me, what can you do? Nothing. And with Me, what can you do? The most shining works, which are more splendid than the light of the sun and sweeter to taste than honey and milk to the desiring people. For when you seek Me in your inmost soul, as you were taught through faith in baptism, do I not do everything you desire?'

"But some who should have sought Me out before they fell seek Me, sighing and sorrowing, after they fall. And to them I offer My hand, saying, 'Why did you not seek Me before falling? Where was I, and where did you seek for Me? And when you sought Me, did I reject you?' And I say, 'O human! If you stood on a bridge over deep water, and foolishly boasted and forgot yourself the way you have despised Me in these matters, thinking all things were possible to you and you did not need My help; if then you said proudly, "I choose to avoid this bridge and walk on the water!" would you be acting wisely? If you act so presumptuously and foolishly toward this cre-

ation, which was made for your profit, you will perish. But this will not happen, because you have a present and visible fear of the water and of drowning, and are on your guard. Or if you saw a large tree that had been sawn through and was falling, would you not flee to avoid being injured by it? Or if you saw lions or bears or wolves coming your way, would you not for fear hide in the ground if you could? But since you flee thus from physical injury, why do you not flee the cruel death of the soul by fearing your Creator? Have you ever seen or heard of one who could rebel against Me? For he who is not with Me will be dissolved, and he upon whom I fall will be broken in pieces. Where were you when Heaven and earth were created, which go on as they were meant to? But you, who were formed by God's counsel and touched by His illumination, transgress His commands. Oh, great mindlessness! For the sake of the creation that serves you, you despise your God, though you tread the earth and watch the heavens, which fear their Creator and fulfil His commands; this you foolishly do not do, for you choose not to know Him in your thoughts or your deeds, or to look toward Him and know Him as you should.

" 'Therefore, if you do not repent, Hell will justly receive you, for you have imitated the one who was thrown in his obduracy down from Heaven. But if you fall, seek Me with a constant outcry, and I will lift you up and receive you. O human, you sometimes try to touch the highest things, when you cannot understand even the lowest.'

7 How virgins and celibates should draw near to sanctity

"Therefore, hear me when I tell you this. If because of My words you wish to bear My yoke, and renounce secular business or abstain from the things of the flesh, before you come to that, cry out and persevere in seeking Me; and I will help you. And if, touched by My admonition, you wish to imitate Me, recognizing that I was born without male seed in modest virginity as a flower is born in an unplowed field, humbly show Me the field of your mind and speak to Me with a flood of inner tears. And say, 'O my God, I, an unworthy human, do not have it in me to carry out my undertaking to keep my virginity unless you, Lord, help me. For I am guilty of upsurges of burning desire and wallow in misery, wondering about the reason for my weakness. By my own strength I cannot vanquish my taste for the sweetness of the flesh, for I am a tree conceived and born in sins. Therefore, O Lord, give me by Your might the fiery gift that will extinguish this perverse kindling and burning in me, that with righteous breath I may drink of the water of the living Fountain that will make me rejoice in life. For now I am dust and ashes, regarding the works of darkness more than the works of light.' And if you are zealous and constant in this supplication, I will prepare

for Myself in you the field Isaac saw in his son, when he said, 'See, the smell of my son is as the smell of a plentiful field, which the Lord has blessed' [Genesis 27:27]. And I will bless that field of Mine in My heart. And as Isaac went on to say, 'Be lord of your brethren, and let your mother's children bow down before you' [v. 29], so too you will be a generation raised above the common people. And I will sow in that field roses and lilies and other perfumes of virtue, and I will water it constantly with the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and I will uproot what is useless and tear out what is evil in it, so that I may survey it with my eyes and feast them on the greenness and the blossoming of this uncorrupt field.

"But this will be My doing and through Me, not yours or through you, O human. For I am the Flower of the field; as a field engenders a flower without being plowed, so I the Son of Man was born of a virgin without her coupling with a man. And therefore this gift is Mine and not yours, for you were conceived in sins and born of corruption. But if you faithfully ask this gift of Me, you may expect it confidently from Me; I will grant that in the sight of My Father you may participate with Me in virginity. But because of the weakness of your body, you will not have it without suffering from your desires; for your weak human nature will often manifest itself in you, and, since you are flesh of flesh, you cannot escape it.

"But in this you should bear My cross and imitate My martyrdom; you should restrain yourself and conquer yourself through Me, which is always pleasing to Me. For I know you are a fragile vessel, and so I choose to share in and pity your pains. But if, because of those pains, you fall, rise up quickly and do penance from the heart; and I will receive you and save you.

8 Inner continence of mind and examples pertaining to it

"But certain people, deceived by the Devil and obdurate in evil, think they are sanctified if they keep their outer selves from marriage; but they remain uncircumcised in mind and spirit, overflowing with impure thoughts and bringing forth evil in their words and works. They ignore the fact that this is disgraceful; they tepidly keep their bodies intact from fornication, but they reject the virginity of the spirit. Hence they are unworthy in My sight, outside both the physical and the spiritual law; for they have lived according to God's justice neither in the flesh nor in the spirit. They have not kept either the law of marriage, which was appointed for them, or what is more than the law's command, the love of virginity. Therefore they are unworthy in My eyes, and I know not what they are. For I have not seen them either walk in the command of the Law or do more than was commanded them; and they are rejected from My sight. I compare them to waste ground, which

brings forth thorns and thistles and useless weeds, though their height and color is that of roses and lilies and the other useful flowers and herbs that have healthy sap and sweet fruit and healing fragrance. And I compare them to copper, which pretends to be gold, but is secretly only an imitation and counterfeit of gold. For in the same way these people masquerade as wise virgins, but are inwardly full of craft and unworthiness.

"Therefore they are also in My sight like a tepid breeze, with no briskness of heat or cold. For their mental heat makes them unfit to persevere in the virginity they began in; and in the cold of secular affairs they cannot proceed as they would like. They do not wander outside the confines of the law like the publicans, or sin within it like the unjust, but are inwardly tepid, neither just nor unjust. But, as the young of unclean animals are cast out before they are conscious of living or grown into strength, so these people are cast into death; for they do not know how to live unto life, or know in themselves the strength of the virtues, which are in the house of wisdom. And so I spew them out of My mouth, for if they remain impenitent they are unworthy of My sight. So now, O human, look into yourself.

9 Analogy of the treasure

"If someone who loved you very much gave you a treasure, and said to you, 'Profit from this, and enrich yourself, that it may be known who gave you this treasure,' you would have to consider very carefully. You would have to ponder on how to make the best gain out of it, and say to yourself, 'I should make the best profit possible with my lord's treasure, that he too may be praised for it.' And after it was thus increased to advantage and you had multiplied it, a good report would come to the ears of the one who had given it to you. And he would think of you because of it, and love you more, and confer greater gifts on you.

"This is what your Creator does. He loves you exceedingly, for you are His creature; and He gives you the best of treasures, a vivid intelligence. He commands you in the words of His Law to profit from your intellect in good works, and grow rich in virtue, that He, the Good Giver, may thereby be clearly known. Hence you must think every hour about how to make so great a gift as useful to others as to yourself by works of justice, so that it will reflect the splendor of sanctity from you, and people will be inspired by your good example to praise and honor God. And when you have justly multiplied it to advantage, this praise and thanksgiving will come to the knowledge of God, Who by the Holy Spirit inspired these virtues in you. And He Himself, in the sweetness of His love, will give you grace to overflowing; He will make you burn yet more for love of Him, so that, strengthened by the Holy

Spirit, you may wisely discern the good and do greater deeds, and ardently glorify your Father, Who gave you these things.

"Let My sheep hear these words, and let those who have the inner ears of the spirit lay hold of them; for it pleases Me that people who know and love Me should understand what to do by the gifts of the Holy Spirit."

And in the eastern part of the building, I saw three figures standing on the pavement before that youth; they stood next to each other, and looked at him devotedly. And, opposite the North, between the building and the great circle, which extended from the Shining One Who sat on the throne, I saw a wheel hanging in the air; in it was a human figure who could be seen from the breast up, looking with penetrating gaze on the world.

And in the southern corner of the building, another figure appeared standing on the pavement inside, turning most joyfully toward the youth. And all these figures resembled each other in the following ways. Like the other virtues I had seen, they were all clad in silk garments. All of them were veiled with white head-veils, except the right-hand one of the three mentioned above, who was bareheaded and had white hair. None of them wore a cloak except the middle one of these three, who had a white one. But they were all clothed in white tunics except the one in the wheel, who had a black tunic, and the left-hand one of the three, whose tunic was pale-colored. All were shod in white, except the middle one of the three, whose shoes were black and painted with different colors. But this was the divergence between them:

On the breast of the middle figure of the three who stood together were two little windows. Above them was a hart, facing the right side of the figure, so that its forefeet were above the right window and its hind feet above the left, poised to run. And this figure said:

10 Words of Constancy

"I am the strong pillar, who cannot be moved by light changefulness; a blast of wind cannot shake me like the leaf of a tree, for I abide in the true Rock, which is the true Son of God. Who can prevail to move me? and who can harm me? Neither strong nor weak, prince nor noble, rich nor poor will ever be able to keep me from persevering in the true God, Who will not be moved forever.

"And I will not be moved, for I was founded on the strongest foundation. For I do not choose to be with flatterers, who are blown here and there and all ways by the wind of temptation, and who are never at rest in constancy but always fall to the lower and worse. I do not act so; for I am set on the firm rock."

And the figure on her right contemplated the hart, and said,

11 Words of Celestial Desire

" 'As the hart pants after the water-brook, so my soul pants after You, O God' [Psalm 41:2]. Therefore, I will skip over the mountains and hills, and bypass the sweet weakness of this transitory life, and with pure heart regard only the Fountain of living water. For He is full of immeasurable glory, with whose sweetness no one can ever be sated."

And the figure standing on the left looked at the little windows, and said,

12 Words of Compunction of Heart

"I always gaze on and think of the true and eternal Light; and neither thought nor desire nor contemplation will make me sated with the perpetual sweetness that is in Supernal God."

And the figure who was opposite the North in a wheel had a blossoming twig in her right hand. The wheel revolved without ceasing, but the figure within it remained motionless. And on the perimeter of the wheel was written, "If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there also shall My servant be" [John 12:26]. And on the breast of the figure was carved, "I am the sacrifice of praise in all lands." And that figure said,

13 Words of Contempt of the World

" 'To him who overcomes, I will give to eat of the tree of life which is in the Paradise of my God' [Revelation 2:7]. For the fountain of salvation has drowned Death, and poured its stream into me to make me blossom in redemption."

And the figure who stood in the southern corner was so bright of face that I could not look fully at her. She had a white wing on either side, each broader than the figure herself. And she said,

14 Words of Concord

"Who is so strong as to try to oppose God? And who is so audacious that he would dare to strip me naked and corrupt me into shameful hatred and envy? God is just, and alone in power and glory. I want to embrace Him always with pure and joyous face, and rejoice in all His judgments. And I do not want to change, but to remain always in one mind and praise God continually. Therefore neither the Devil nor envious Man could ever weaken me or degrade me to the insanity of deceit, or make me stop persevering in peace and concord. And when the world passes away, I will appear more gloriously in the heavenly vision."

BOOK THREE

After this I looked, and behold, all the pavement of the building appeared like white glass, which shone with a calm splendor. But the splendor of the Shining One seated on the throne, Who was showing me all these things, shone brightly through that pavement even into the abyss. And between the building and the circle where it extended from the One on the throne the earth was visible, sloping downward, so that the building suddenly seemed to be placed on a mountain. And the Shining One seated on the throne spoke to me again:

"The Son of the Living God, born of the Virgin, is the Cornerstone, rejected by those who should have built their salvation on the law of God and refused; for they loved darkness more than light and death more than life. But the Son reigns mightily in those who burn with the touch of the Holy Spirit, tread their outer selves under foot and hasten with full consent to the inner things of the Spirit, in fullness of virtue and good works."

15 God's work in humans is consolidated by the gifts of the Holy Spirit

Therefore, *you see on the summit of the eastern corner of the building, where the shining part and the stone part of the wall come together, seven white marble steps.* For the sevenfold ascent of pure fortitude rises in high justice from the true East, which is the Cornerstone of the divine work, where the two parts of the wall of necessity, reflective knowledge and human deeds, hold to each other in secure repose. This ascent is full of the righteous actions God works and perfects in humans, as He worked on six days and rested on the seventh.

16 God unites the deeds of the faithful to Fear of the Lord

These steps *rise like an arch up to the great stone on which the Shining One sits on the throne;* for every act that is done by the faithful in faith and work is fittingly united by God's providence to the Fear of the Lord, upon which He Who rules all things is enthroned in supreme omnipotence.

17 The Son of God guides those who seek to persevere, and destroyed death

And on these steps a chair is placed, which is to say that the firm foundation of protection is set above the works God works in humans, to guide and help them. And whoever chooses to persevere in Him will not sink into error, for He is the mighty support on which all justice is established.

And on the chair sits a man of youthful appearance. This is the constant ruler, the Son of Man, Who reigns as One God in all justice with the Father

and the Holy Spirit. His face is manly and noble, for He is the strong Lion Who has destroyed death and the noble Sinless One Who was visibly born of the Virgin. But he is pale; for He did not seek earthly honor by earthly means, but was gentle, poor and humble with a holy humility.

18 The birth and Passion of the Son of God ended the shadow of the Law

He has black hair down to his shoulders; for the Jewish people did not seek the clarity of faith displayed in the Incarnation of My Son, and so they remained in the darkness of the shadow of the mere outward understanding of the Law, and wasted away in obstinacy and faithlessness. They arose from the head of justice, but they only reached as far as the shoulders of fortitude; and when the perfect work blossomed in the humanity of My Son, they ended in unbelief.

And he is clad in a purple tunic; for He poured out His blood in charity to save people who had perished.

19 God's past deeds for the Church can be seen by people but not the future

He is visible to you from his head to his navel; which is to say that from His Incarnation to the present time the works He has done in the Church have been manifest to the faithful. *But from the waist downward he is hidden from your sight;* for the things that will be in the Church from the present time to the end of time are not for people to see or know, except by divine revelation and Catholic faith. For the great splendor of virtues that will be manifested in people before the last day still lie hidden, unknown to humanity.

20 God looks on humanity with mercy and tells them to imitate the saints

And he looks on the world, because the Son of God directs a merciful gaze toward people, *and speaks* faithful words of warning to them about things past and things to come; He tells them to imitate the heavenly army of saints, flee from the dangers of sin, and fight with great strength to attain supernal felicity and escape the punishments of the wicked.

21 Constancy, Celestial Desire, Compunction, Contempt of the World, Concord

And in the eastern part of the building you see three figures standing on the pavement before that youth; they stand next to each other, and look at him

devotedly. This is to say that when justice arose and bore down carnal desire, which occurred when by the decision of the Almighty Father the Son of God appeared in the flesh, these three virtues showed themselves unalterably unanimous in their devotion in the power of the Trinity; and they direct their gaze to the Son, because they desire Him and seek Him in all the faithful. Hence also, *opposite the North, between the building and the great circle that extends from the Shining One Who sits on the throne, you see a wheel hanging in the air; and in it is a human figure who can be seen from the breast up, looking with penetrating gaze on the world.* This wheel is the circle of divine mercy, which fights the arts of the Devil by the secret power of God, and builds a spiritual structure in human minds. It rolls in the air, now touching the power of God's justice and now confirming His work in people. And in it appears Contempt of the World, a Christian perfection, seen as far down as the breast of her fortitude. For this virtue, trusting in God in the severest of struggles, reminds people who are living in the secular world with her penetrating warnings to imitate the example of the Son of God, Who went before them, rejecting worldly things and desiring Him with an unalterable mind. *And in the southern corner of the building, another figure appears standing on the pavement inside, turning most joyfully toward the youth.* For when fallen Man was restored to life and fruitful ardor through the goodness of the Supernal Father, this virtue showed itself openly in sweet affection, trod secular things underfoot and turned toward the Son of God in company of the angels and faithful people. For she blossomed by the power of Heaven in the Incarnation of the Savior.

22 Their appearance and dress

And all these figures resemble each other; for with similar devotion they manifest God in those people who magnify Him in their works. So, *like the other virtues you have seen, they are all clad in silk garments.* For they are equal in power to the other virtues you were truly shown before, and they are equally tending upward toward God in the gentle activity of their sweet work in the faithful.

All of them are veiled with white head-veils; which is to say that they all consecrate themselves before God their Head with great devotion to the pure propositions of the Law, as a wife veils herself before her husband. *Except the right-hand one of the three mentioned above, who is bareheaded and has white hair;* for she manifests herself in strength and felicity through the Heavenly Trinity, not weighed down by any earthly care, and in the purity of her heavenly desire seeks only to depart and be with Christ. *None of them wears a cloak,* for they have been divested of all duties of servitude that might hinder them from the duties of freedom: to gaze perpetually into Heaven and

long for God, desiring nothing unless it is separate from earthly things. *Except the middle one of these three, who has a white cloak;* this signifies her perseverance in the divine beauty of the conscious keeping of the blessed Law. For this virtue is wrapped and covered in this work as a person is wrapped in his cloak.

But they are all clothed in white tunics; which is to say that they live in the purity of good works, without the blackness of depraved habits darkened by the villainies and vices of blind infidelity. *Except the one in the wheel, who has a black tunic;* for she moves with the swiftness of divine clemency, and lives amid the deeds whose stringency is difficult for the flesh. *And the left-hand one of the three, whose tunic is pale-colored;* for she is surrounded and defended by God's supreme Majesty in adversity, and protected by the sorrow of the work she does, weeping and wailing and sighing to God. *All are shod in white;* for they glow with the death of My Son and prepare the way of peace in human minds so that those minds can desire celestial things. *Except the middle one of the three, whose shoes are black and painted with different colors;* for she, though she remains under God's protection, bears the divisions of the faithless, who turn aside into black mockery from the way of truth. But she is in the path of righteousness, and trusts in the death of My Son; and so she perseveres in strength and beauty through the many attacks of the Devil and the many tribulations of the human spirit, and makes her way toward heavenly things.

But there is a divergence between them; for, though they are of one mind and join to do their work, each one separately shows her powers over the people subject to her in heavenly fervor and clarity.

23 On Constancy

So *the middle figure of the three who stand together* symbolizes Constancy, who is the pillar and rampart of the virtues who join with her. She reveals herself to people in the center of this number, which signifies the Holy Trinity, showing them that they should be constant in good works. For indeed Christ, Who was God and Man, crowned His works in the world with a good end; and so this virtue is the foundation of the other inner virtues in people, and by her discipline leads them to God. And so *on her breast are two little windows;* which is to say that in human hearts the things of Heaven are manifested in two mirrors of faith. For there must be faith in both the divinity and the humanity of the Son of God, through Whom the virtue of Constancy, perfected by the strength of His righteousness, shall not be removed from people. *Above these windows is a hart, facing the right side of the figure.* For the Son of God is elevated by the belief of the Christian people above the faith that He is God and Man, and in His swiftness, which

represents Celestial Desire, He faces the right side of Constancy. For eternal life is to be found by perseverance in good works. Therefore *the hart's forefeet are above the right window and its hind feet above the left, poised to run;* for when He hastened with great suffering to the Passion of the Cross, His course brought Him the salvation of souls and true life to those who persevere. And so this virtue points out, in her already quoted words of avowal.

24 On Celestial Desire

And *the figure on her right* prefigures Celestial Desire, who always looks up to Heaven and moves toward salvation, even as Constancy does not seek the joys of the transitory but desires the felicity of the eternal. She *contemplates the hart;* for she continually longs for the Son of God and His shining work, and cannot be sated with His sweet embraces. And so she affirms in her discourse on her desire, already quoted.

25 On Compunction of Heart

But *the figure standing on the left* indicates Compunction of Heart, and that memory in the mind that bemoans and weeps for its exile with intense contrition. By her blessed lamentations Constancy turns away from the left, the side of the soul's perdition, and hastens from death to life. And so she *looks at the little windows;* for, acting in the hearts of the faithful, she directs all her intention to the Son of God, Who reigns in Humanity and Divinity. And she delights in the sweetness of this continuous vision, as she shows openly in her words, already quoted.

26 On Contempt of the World

And *the figure who is opposite the North in a wheel* indicates the perfection of Christ in Contempt of the World; for the Son of God most clearly shows the fullness of virtue in the rejection of secular things. For He, living among humans, did not pant for earthly things; and so He admonished His imitators to strive eagerly after the heavenly. She *has a blossoming twig in her right hand;* for, in the happiness of a saved soul, she holds fast the fresh and beautiful shoot of blessed virtues, bathed in the breath of the Holy Spirit. And so *the wheel revolves without ceasing, but the figure within it remains motionless;* for the mercy of God bends down to humans and has compassion on their miseries, and so is always available to those who seek it, but the perfection of Christ in Contempt of the World has no instability or fickleness, but always turns to what is immutable.

And on the perimeter of the wheel is written, "If anyone serves Me, let him

follow Me; and where I am, there also shall My servant be." This is to say that the abundant mercy of God has this quality: Whoever does service to the Son of God by imitating His example will rejoice in heavenly beatitude, and will attain to the endless company of the angels.

And so on the breast of the figure is carved, "I am the sacrifice of praise in all lands." For Christ wisely taught disdain for secular things, and imparted to the hearts of His elect that every faithful soul should venerate and adore Him with deepest devotion as the sacrifice of the Father, offered on the wood of the cross. For the voices and tongues of all the faithful continually make His glory and praise resound through the whole world, thanking Him for their restoration to life, as this virtue clearly manifests in her already quoted discourse.

27 On Concord

And *the figure who stands in the southern corner* signifies Concord, who flies from the madness of the evil spirits and embraces the company of the blessed angels; for love of God she avoids the quarrels of the faithless, and longs for the vision of eternal peace. Hence *she is so bright of face that you cannot look fully at her;* for she is devoid of deadly hate and envy, and so brings greater glory to human souls than the mortal mind, weighed down by the frail body, can grasp. *She has a white wing on either side, each broader than the figure herself;* which is to say that this virtue extends the protection of her shining goodness to those who tire themselves out in righteous work both in prosperity and in adversity. Her charity to human beings is broader than the whole expanse of the multitudes of people who are yet to be born. And when the world has ended, she will fly above the heaven of heavens in greater glory than she appears in now; for then nothing earthly and transitory will be sought, but what is celestial and eternal will be sweetly embraced, and all glorious and beautiful things will endure while all clouds of injustice are dispersed. And this is truly predicted in this virtue's words.

28 Good deeds are shown in the strong faith and perfect works of believers

And you see that *all the pavement of the building appears like white glass, which shines with a calm splendor.* This is to say that the strength of true faith supports and expands the work and the city of God, shining pure and clear in its candor and mirror-like simplicity. Faith watches and builds the city of God with all the works done in her. And so when people begin to do good works with a calm and bright intention, they touch God; and when they perfect the works, their souls are saved and they know Him profoundly. For

when the work is accomplished, faith herself shows the devotion with which each soul has sought God.

29 God cast down the ancient serpent by the fortitude of faith

And the splendor of the Shining One seated on the throne, Who is showing you all these things, shines brightly through that pavement even into the abyss. For the grace of Almighty God, Who rules all and manifests to you all the things you are learning in this vision, reduced the Devil to nothingness and the perdition of death through the fortitude of faith. How? When the Son of God charged His faithful to publish to the world the teachings received from Him, God in His power pierced the darkness of unbelief with the pure faith that is in the regeneration of the Spirit and water, and cast down the ancient serpent and the eternal death of perdition he brought into the abyss of chaos.

30 Pagans, Jews and false Christians are expelled from the Church on high

But *between the building and the circle where it extends from the One on the throne the earth is visible, sloping downward, so that the building suddenly seems to be placed on a mountain.* This is to say that between the strong power of Almighty God and the chosen works of His goodness there stand people who deny the true faith and follow the temporal instead of the eternal. Such are pagans, Jews and false Christians; they descend from evil to evil, and, ignoring the teaching of the Catholic faith about the transitory, try in their pleasures to draw out wicked deeds into the deepest sins. But the great and beautiful work of God, in the height of His supreme goodness, shines out clearly amid this dark misery to anyone who seeks it, as the beloved Evangelist John testifies by divine revelation, saying:

31 Words of John on this subject

"And he took me up in the spirit to a great and high mountain; and he showed me the holy city Jerusalem, coming down out of Heaven with the glory of God" [Revelation 21:10–11]. This is to say: The Spirit lifts up the spirit. How? The Holy Spirit, by Its power, draws the human mind out of the heavy flesh, that it may share in the vision of the Spirit, Whose eyes are not obscured by the blindness of carnal pleasure, and Who sees the inner things. What does this mean? The Holy Spirit lifts the human spirit upward to the mountain of heavenly desires, that it may clearly see the works to be done in the Spirit, the great works of God. A thousand deeds of the Devil lie prostrate before these works, and they tower over them as a mountain rises

above the level surface of the earth; they have an immovable foundation, like a mountain, which does not leave its place; they are so high that mortals cannot encompass them by their reason, for they surpass the most excelling human wisdom, which springs from minds that are of the earth and earthly.

And thus the work of the Spirit is shown to the faithful and holy soul: The heavenly Jerusalem is to be built spiritually, without the work of physical hands, through work given by the Holy Spirit. The greatness and loftiness of these works of the Spirit are manifest, for that city will be adorned by good works performed by people touched by the Holy Spirit. It will be situated upon a hill, with countless buildings assembled from the most noble of stones: the holy souls in the vision of peace, purified from all taint of sin. And so, with these precious stones it will shine like gold; for wisdom displays her brightness in good people. But where did they come from—these works performed in righteous justice, which adorn the celestial Jerusalem? From the height of Heaven; for, as the dew descends from the clouds and sprinkles the earth with its moisture, good works descend on people from God, watered by the rain of the Holy Spirit. And so the person of faith brings forth good sweet fruit, and attains to the company in the supernal city. And the heavenly works, which descend on humans by the gift of the Holy Spirit, have the brightness of Him from Whom they emanated. How? The glory of God shines in the good works of the just, making Him known, adored and worshipped the more ardently on earth. And through the virtues the holy city is adorned with their ornaments, because people who with God's help do good works worship Him in His countless wonders. And so by this revelation the eyes of the spirit see and know that by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit righteous human works appear before God in the regions of Heaven.

32 God will bring the Church to her consummation and confound the Devil

And so, as has been shown, God works from the East to the North to the West to the South, and brings to that consummation which is the last day, for love of the Church in His Son, all that was predestined before the creation of the world. He produces His work through Himself, and draws it back to Himself confirmed and adorned and completed in the highest perfection. And this is mystically symbolized by the aforesaid towers and virtues. How? When Adam fell, the justice of righteous actions was revived in Noah, surrounded with many miracles, and extended throughout time till the last day. And God did not cease to manifest this by His elect in different times: in the preparation of Noah [east corner], the manifestation in Abraham and Moses [north corner], and the consummation in His Son [west corner].

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How? Before time began the desire was in the heart of the Celestial Father to send His Son into the world at the end of time, to save and redeem lost humanity. And the Son, born of the Virgin, fulfilled with a perfect work all things foretold by the Old Testament saints, inspired by the Holy Spirit. It was as when, to perform an action, first the human arm bends and then the hand works. What does this mean? When Adam, by God's just judgment, was cast out of the flowering land, justice first began to move in Noah, like the joint of the shoulder. Then it broadened into more definite manifestations in Abraham and Moses, like the more flexible elbow joint. And finally it came to perfection in the Son of God, through Whom all the signs and marvels of the old Law were publicly fulfilled, and through Whom all the virtues, which will adorn the heavenly Jerusalem in her children, are declared in the regeneration of the Spirit and water, as the hand with its fingers accomplishes and puts the final touches on a work. And thus I perfect My work, to My glory and your confusion, O Devil! I have opposed you by the strength of My arm in the North and the West, and resisted you from the East to the South, as far as the sun's course runs. And in the West I have so undermined you that you are utterly confounded. For in My Church, which is the mountain of fortitude, I do the work of justice and sanctity, and destroy you, O shameful impostor. You wanted My people to be destroyed; and you yourself will be conquered and destroyed utterly.

But let the one who has ears sharp to hear inner meanings ardently love My reflection and pant after My words, and inscribe them in his soul and conscience.

THE END OF TIMES

VISION ELEVEN
The Last Days and the Fall of the Antichrist

Then I looked to the North, and behold! five beasts stood there. One was like a dog, fiery but not burning; another was like a yellow lion; another was like a pale horse; another like a black pig; and the last like a gray wolf. And they were facing the West. And in the West, before those beasts, a hill with five peaks appeared; and from the mouth of each beast one rope stretched to one of the peaks of the hill. All the ropes were black except the one that came from the mouth of the wolf, which was partly black and partly white. And lo, in the East I saw again that youth whom I had first seen on the corner of the wall of the building where the shining and stone parts came together, clad in a purple tunic. I now saw him on the same corner, but now I could see him from the waist down. And from the waist down to the place that denotes the male he glowed like the dawn, and there a harp was lying with its strings across his body; and from there to the width of two fingers above his heel he was in shadow, but from there down to the bottom of the feet he was whiter than milk. And I saw again the figure of a woman whom I had previously seen in front of the altar that stands before the eyes of God [*p. 169*]*; she stood in the same place, but now I saw her from the waist down. And from her waist to the place that denotes the female, she had various scaly blemishes; and in that latter place was a black and monstrous head. It had fiery eyes, and ears like an ass', and nostrils and mouth like a lion's; it opened wide its jowls and terribly clashed its horrible iron-colored teeth. And from this head down to her knees, the figure was white and red, as if bruised by many beatings; and from her knees to her tendons where they joined her heels, which appeared white, she was covered with blood. And behold! That monstrous head moved from its place with such a great shock that the figure of the woman was shaken through all her limbs. And a great mass of excrement adhered to the head; and it raised itself up upon a mountain and tried to ascend the height of Heaven. And behold, there came suddenly a thunderbolt, which struck that head with such great force that it fell from the mountain and yielded up its spirit in death. And a reeking cloud enveloped the whole mountain, which wrapped the head in such filth that the people who stood by were thrown into the greatest terror. And that cloud remained around the mountain for a while longer. The people who stood there, perceiving this, were shaken with great fear, and said to one another: "Alas, alas! What is this? What do you think this was? Alas, wretches that we are! Who will help us, and who will deliver us? For we know not how we were deceived. O*

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Almighty God, have mercy on us! Let us return, let us return; let us hasten to the covenant of Christ's Gospel; for ah, ah, ah! we have been bitterly deceived!" And lo, the feet of the figure of the woman glowed white, shining with a splendor greater than the sun's. And I heard the voice from Heaven saying to me:

1 The five ferocious epochs of temporal rule

All things that are on earth hasten to their end, and the world droops toward its end, oppressed by the weakening of its forces and its many tribulations and calamities. But the Bride of My Son, very troubled for her children both by the forerunners of the son of perdition and by the destroyer himself, will never be crushed, no matter how much they attack her. But at the end of time she will rise up stronger than ever, and become more beautiful and more glorious; and so she will move sweetly and delightfully to the embraces of her Beloved. And this is mystically signified by the vision you are seeing. For *you look to the North, and behold! five beasts stand there.* These are the five ferocious epochs of temporal rule, brought about by the desires of the flesh from which the taint of sin is never absent, and they savagely rage against each other.

2 The fiery dog

One is like a dog, fiery but not burning; for that era will produce people with a biting temperament, who seem fiery in their own estimation, but do not burn with the justice of God.

3 The yellow lion

Another is like a yellow lion; for this era will endure martial people, who instigate many wars but do not think of the righteousness of God in them; for those kingdoms will begin to weaken and tire, as the yellow color shows.

4 The pale horse

Another is like a pale horse; for those times will produce people who drown themselves in sin, and in their licentious and swift-moving pleasures neglect all virtuous activities. And then these kingdoms will lose their ruddy strength and grow pale with the fear of ruin, and their hearts will be broken.

5 The black pig

And another is like a black pig; for this epoch will have leaders who blacken themselves with misery and wallow in the mud of impurity. They

will infringe the divine law by fornication and other like evils, and will plot to diverge from the holiness of God's commands.

6 The gray wolf

And the last is like a gray wolf. For those times will have people who plunder each other, robbing the powerful and the fortunate; and in these conflicts they will show themselves to be neither black nor white, but gray in their cunning. And they will divide and conquer the rulers of those realms; and then the time will come when many will be ensnared, and the error of errors will rise from Hell to Heaven. And then the children of light will be pressed in the winepress of martyrdom; and they will not deny the Son of God, but reject the son of perdition who tries to do his will with the Devil's arts.

And these beasts are facing the West; for these fleeting times will vanish with the setting sun. For people rise and set like the sun, and some are born, and some die.

7 The five peaks and the five ropes

And in the West, before those beasts, a hill with five peaks appears; for in these peaks is symbolized the power of carnal desire. *And from the mouth of each beast one rope stretches to one of the peaks of the hill;* for each of those powers will extend throughout the period in question. *All the ropes are black except the one that comes from the mouth of the wolf, which is partly black and partly white.* For the length of the ropes indicates how far people are willing to go in their stubborn pleasures; but though the one that symbolizes greed is partly black and puts forth many evils, yet some will come from that direction who are white with justice. And these latter will hasten to resist the son of perdition by ardent wonders, as My servant Job indicates about the righteous doer of justice, when he says:

8 Words of Job

"The innocent shall be raised up against the hypocrite, and the just shall hold to his path; and to clean hands he shall add strength" [Job 17:8–9]. Which is to say:

One who is innocent of bloody deeds, murder and fornication and the like, will be aroused like a burning coal against one who deceives in his works. How? This latter speaks of honey but deals in poison, and calls a man friend but stifles him like an enemy; he speaks sweet words but has malice within him, and talks blandly to his friend and then slays him from ambush.

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But one who has a rod with which to drive away vile brutes from himself walks in the light of the shining sun on the righteous path of his heart; he is raised up in the sight of God as a bright spark and a clear light and a flaming torch. And so, bearing in himself the strongest and purest works, he puts them on like a strong breastplate and a sharp sword, and drives away vice and wins virtue.

9 The Church will shine in her justice until the time of Antichrist

And therefore, *in the East you see again that youth whom you first saw on the corner of the wall of the building where the shining and stone parts come together, clad in a purple tunic, now standing on the same corner.* For here is the Sunrise of Justice, the Son of Man, manifest to you to confirm the truth afresh through His mysteries and miracles; still presiding over the union of reflective knowledge and human deeds, having shed His blood by the will and goodness of the Father for the salvation of the world. So *now you can see him from the waist down;* for now you see Him in the strength of His members who are His elect, and He will flourish as Bridegroom of the Church, with many obscure signs and wonders, until their number is complete. *And from the waist down to the place that denotes the male he glows like the dawn;* for until the time of the son of perdition, who will pretend to be the man of strength, His faithful members will be perfected in fortitude and He will be splendid in the justice of His righteous worshippers. *So, in the same place, a harp is lying with its strings across his body;* which signifies the joyful songs of those who will suffer dire torments in the persecution that the son of iniquity will inflict upon the chosen, torturing their bodies so much that they are released from them and pass over into rest.

10 The Church's faith will be in doubt until the witness of Enoch and Elijah

And from there to the width of two fingers above his heel he is in shadow. For, from the time of the persecution the faithful will suffer from the son of the Devil until the testimony of the two witnesses, Enoch and Elijah, who spurned the earthly and worked toward heavenly desires, faith in the doctrines of the Church will be in doubt. People will say to each other with great sadness, "What is this they say about Jesus? Is it true or not?"

11 Before the end of the world the Devil will perish and the truth be known

But from there down to the bottom of the feet he is whiter than milk. That is to say that, by the testimony of those same witnesses who await the eternal

reward when the son of perdition is defeated, before the world ends the Son of Man will be brilliantly and beautifully seen in the Catholic faith. The truth will be plainly shown in Him, and the falsity of the son of iniquity rejected in every way, as My servant David testifies when he says:

12 Words of David

"The king shall rejoice in God; all they that swear by Him shall be praised; for the mouth of them that speak wicked things is stopped" [Psalm 62:12]. Which is to say: The profound knowledge of the beautiful human language that gives voice to the will and disposition of God is a great measure of human stature; and it makes music at the altar of God, for it knows Him. And when the hissing and gaping of the Devil, which taints human minds with shame, is forsaken in the time of desperation, the blessed will be praised in minds that sing, and they will make a flowing path of words to the pure fountain of the mighty Ruler.

13 When justice grows cold the Church will undergo suffering and persecution

And you see again the figure of a woman whom you previously saw in front of the altar that stands before the eyes of God, standing in the same place. For the Bride of the Son of God is shown to you again, to reveal the truth, always present to the pure prayers of the saints and, as was said before, offering them up devotedly to the eyes of Heaven. *But now you see her from the waist down;* for you see her in her full dignity as the Church, replete with the full number of her children, in the mysteries and wonders by which she has saved so many. *And from her waist to the place that denotes the female, she has various scaly blemishes.* This is to say that, though she is now flourishing worthily and laudably in her children, before the time in which the son of perdition will try to perfect the trick he played on the first woman, the Church will be harshly reproached for many vices, fornication and murder and rapine. How? Because those who should love her will violently persecute her.

14 Antichrist will horribly rend the faithful and cruelly tear humanity

And thus in the place where the female is recognized is a black and monstrous head. For the son of perdition will come raging with the arts he first used to seduce, in monstrous shamefulness and blackest wickedness. *It has fiery eyes, and ears like an ass', and nostrils and mouth like a lion's;* for he runs

wild in acts of vile lust and shameful blasphemy, causing people to deny God and tainting their minds and tearing the Church with the greed of rapine. *It opens wide its jowls and terribly clashes its horrible iron-colored teeth;* for with his voracious and gaping jaws he evilly infuses those who consent to him with his strong vices and mordant madness.

15 The son of perdition, unable to be gentle, will try to persecute

And from this head down to her knees, the figure is white and red, as if bruised by many beatings; for the son of perdition will try to seduce people by evil deceptions, and at first speak to them flatteringly and gently, but then try cruelly to pervert and force them. And then the Church will know purity of faith in her children, but anguished and bloody terror and the tribulations of many sufferings for herself.

16 The Church near the end of the world will be bathed in righteous blood

And from her knees to her tendons where they join her heels, which appear white, she is covered with blood. For at the time near the end of the world when she must endure assault, until the coming of the two witnesses of Truth who will keep the Church together by their strength, she will suffer most terrible persecutions, and the blood of those who despise the Destroyer will be most cruelly shed. What does this mean? When the son of perdition is strengthened through deceit, and derives confidence from his perverse teachings, the Church, as she hastens on, will be bathed in the noblest blood; and then she will be fully constructed as the celestial dwelling. For you, O streets of Jerusalem, will then shine with the purest gold which is the blood of the saints; the Devil will be extinguished for persecuting the members of the Supernal King, and his great terror will be reduced to naught.

17 We are now in the seventh millennium

But, O ye people who desire to dwell in those streets, flee from the Devil and adore God, Who created you! For in six days God completed His works, and on the seventh day He rested. What does this mean? The six days are the six numbered epochs; and in the sixth epoch the latest miracles were brought forth in the world, as God finished His work on the sixth day. But now the world is in the seventh epoch, approaching the end of time, as on the seventh day. How? The prophets have completed their utterances, My Son

has accomplished His will in the world, and the Gospel has been preached openly throughout all lands; and throughout the times of this full number and more years after it, despite the diversity of human customs, the world has remained as it was well-established by Me.

18 Why God now utters new mysteries by the mouth of an unlearned person

But now the Catholic faith wavers among the nations and the Gospel limps among the people; and the mighty books in which the excelling doctors had summed up knowledge with great care go unread from shameful apathy, and the food of life, which is the divine Scriptures, cools to tepidity. For this reason, I now speak through a person who is not eloquent in the Scriptures or taught by an earthly teacher; I Who Am speak through her of new secrets and mystical truths, heretofore hidden in books, like one who mixes clay and then shapes it to any form he wishes.

19 God's warning to the learned not to spurn these words but exalt them

O fruitful and rewarding teachers! Redeem your souls and loudly proclaim these words, and do not disbelieve them; for if you spurn them, you contemn not them but Me Who am Truth. For you should nurture My people under My law, and care for them until the time for their supervision is past, and all cares and labors cease. But from now on the predestined epoch is approaching, and you are hastening toward the time when the son of perdition will appear. Grow therefore in vigor and fortitude, My elect! Be on your guard, lest you fall into the snare of death; raise the victorious banner of these words, and rush upon the son of iniquity. For those who forerun and follow the son of perdition whom you call Antichrist are in the way of error; but as for you, follow the footsteps of Him Who taught you the way of truth, when He appeared with humility and not with pride in the world in the body. Hear therefore and understand.

20 The words of the Holy Spirit to the Church about the last days

For the Spirit speaks to the Church about the time of the final error. In the end of times death shall rush upon the Church, when the accursed, the son of the curse, shall come; and he is the curse of curses, as My Son testifies in the Gospel about the worst city of error, saying:

21 The Gospel on this subject

"And you, Capernaum, will you be exalted up to Heaven? You will go down into Hell" [Matthew 11:23]. Which is to say: O you cave of iniquity, you concealing ditch, with your wings of hypocrisy and pretense! How can you stand on the high place of the walls, when your eyes devour the wickedness of vice, hiding the burning light under a bushel of excrement? You say, "Who is as great as the hypocrite and murderer, since the foolish call him Lord?" Will you have the signs and wonders of Heaven, when you dip your finger in Hell? How? Your works probe the bottom of Hell, and in its voracity you will lie swallowed up; and Hell will vomit forth your stench, so that the world may see the bitterness of death for the destroyer who has destroyed.

22 When the world is dissolved in the elements, the Church will be completed

But a head without a body or other members should not be. The Head of the Church is the Son of God; the body and the other members are the Church and her children. The Church is not yet perfect in her members and her children; but on the last day, when the number of the elect is filled up, the Church will also be full. And on that last day the whole world will be confounded; I, God, will take away the four elements and all that is mortal in human flesh, and in the consummation of the world there will be full joy for the offspring of the Church.

23 The world is in its seventh epoch, and Man cannot know what will follow

For, as was said, God completed His work in six days. Five days represent five numbered epochs; and in the sixth, new wonders were manifested on earth, as on the sixth day the first man was created. And now the sixth number is complete and the seventh has come, and the course of the world is fixed in, as it were, the seventh day of rest. For now that work which the mighty doctors kept sealed in the holy Scriptures is revealed; it is openly expounded in gentle words, like the words of this book, as if on a Sabbath of rest. For there are six days of work and a seventh of rest; there is no other number of days. And what lies beyond cannot be known to you, O human, but is in the keeping of the Father. But you, O humans, have a time to traverse from now on, until the coming of that murderer who will try to pervert the Catholic faith. But as to what may happen then, it is not for you to know the time or the moment, even as you cannot know what comes after

the seven days of the week; for only the Father knows this, Who has placed these things in His power. And about the days of the week and the times of the ages, it is not for you, O human, to know more.

24 How God willed His Son to be incarnate

But after five numbered epochs I brought forth heavenly miracles for the world, as in five days the other creatures were created before Man and subjected to Man. For up to then there was a large population of pagans and Jews, and various schisms and evils were increasing among both the Gentile and the Jewish peoples. The Law and the prophets had finished their work, and all the peoples had been tested for evil and for good, before my Only-Begotten took flesh from the Virgin. For I did not will to send Him until all these things had first taken place, so that all justice might be tried by Him and all injustice offended by Him. If My Son had come earlier, it would have been premature, like a person who wants to gather his fruits before they ripen; and if His Incarnation had been postponed until the very end of the world, He would have come too abruptly, like a fowler who catches birds by trickery, so that they know not how they fell into his nets. But My Son came, as it were, at the ninth hour, when the day is turning to evening; when the heat of the day is declining, and the cold is setting in. And so after five epochs of the world, My Son showed Himself to the world as it began to move toward its end. What then? He came and laid bare the essence of the Law, changing its water into the wine of the Gospel; and so He caused floods of virtue to stream forth. And He came opportunely to do this, when the churchly virtues the Holy Spirit enkindled could take root and grow in humans, and the virginity He brought in Himself could bud and flower.

25 Antichrist and his mother

But the insane murderer, the son of perdition, will come soon, when the last times descend and the earth forsakes its course; as if at the time when day departs and the sun goes down to its setting. O My faithful ones, hear this testimony, and understand it with devotion that you may be safe, lest the terror of the destroyer should come upon you unawares and cast you into the ruin of infidelity and perdition. Arm yourselves therefore, and prepare yourselves for the most strenuous battle, forewarned with firm defenses. For the time will come in which this vile deceiver will horribly appear. The mother who will bring this deceiver into the world will be nurtured in vice from her infancy to her girlhood by the arts of the Devil, living among the most abominable people in the vilest of waste places. Her parents will not recognize her, and those with whom she stays will not know her; for the

Devil, pretending to be a holy angel, will persuade her to go away from them and guide her deceptively as he wishes. She will separate herself from all people, so as to conceal herself more easily; and then she will secretly engage in vile fornication with men, though only a few, defiling herself with them with a great appetite for wicked doings, as if her holy angel commanded her to do this deed of shame. And in the burning heat of this fornication, she will conceive the son of perdition without knowing which man's semen engendered him.

And Lucifer, the ancient serpent, will take delight in this turpitude, and by My just judgment will breathe on the embryo and possess it with all his power in its mother's womb. And so that destroyer will issue from the womb of that mother full of the Devil's spirit. Then she will stop her habitual fornications and declare to the unwise and foolish people that she has no husband, and knows not the father of her infant. And she will call the fornication she has done holy, and the people will think and call her holy.

And the son of perdition will be nurtured by the Devil's arts until he comes to full adulthood, always withdrawing from people who know him.

26 Antichrist will learn magic from his mother and God will allow it

And throughout this time, his mother by magic arts of hers will show him both to the worshippers and to the non-worshippers of God, and he will be seen and loved by them. And when he reaches maturity, he will teach a doctrine that is clearly perverse, thus fighting against Me and My elect; and he will gain such strength that in his great power he will try to raise himself above the clouds. But it is by My just judgment that I will permit him to do his will on various creatures. For as the Devil said in the beginning, "I will be like the Most High," and fell, I will lead him to fall in the last days, when he will say through this son of his, "I am the savior of the world!" And as every age of the faithful knew that Lucifer was a liar when he tried at the beginning of time to be like God, so now every person of faith will see that the son of iniquity is a liar, making himself like the Son of God before the last day.

27 The power of Antichrist and the miracles he will seem to do

For he is the evil beast, who kills those who deny him; he will join with kings, dukes, princes and the rich, crushing humility and exalting pride, and by the Devil's arts subjecting the whole world to himself. His power will issue forth like the wind; he will seem to set the air in motion and bring forth

fire and lightnings from heaven, and raise thunders and hailstorms, to uproot mountains and dry up water, to take the greenness from forests and give it back again. In many parts of Creation he will display his illusions, in moisture and freshness and dryness. And he also will cause unceasing deceptions in people. How? He will seem to make the healthy sick and the sick healthy, to cast out devils, and sometimes to raise the dead. How? When someone departs from this life whose soul is in the power of the Devil, by My permission he will sometimes perform illusions on his corpse, making it move as if alive; but he is allowed to do this only occasionally, for a very short time and no longer, lest his presumption bring God's glory into scorn. Some people who see this will trust in him; and others will wish both to keep their earlier faith and to win his favor. And, choosing not to afflict these latter too severely, he will bring illness upon them. They will seek medicine from doctors, but will not be cured; and so they will return to him to see whether he can cure them. And when he sees them he will take away the weakness he brought upon them; and so they will love him dearly and believe in him. And so many will be deceived, for they will blind their own inner vision with which they should have regarded Me. For they will use their minds to probe this novelty their outer eyes see and their hands touch, and despise the invisible things that abide in Me and must be understood by true faith. For mortal eyes cannot see Me, but I show My miracles in the shadows to those I choose. No one shall see Me while he remains in a mortal body, except in the obscurity of My mysteries; for so I spoke to My servant Moses, as it is written:

28 Words of Moses on the vision of God

"For no one shall see Me and live" [Exodus 33:20]. This is to say that no one who is mortal shall fix his mortal gaze on the glory of My Divinity and continue to live his mortal life in his corruptible ashes; for he changes with passing time, leaving one life and passing to another, while I, Who established all living things, live without change. And as a gnat cannot live if he plunges into a flame, so a mortal could not remain alive if he were to see the glory of My Divinity. And so I show Myself to mortals in obscurity as long as they are weighed down by their mortality; like a painter showing people invisible things by the images in his painting.

But, O human, if you love Me, I embrace you, and I will warm you with the fire of the Holy Spirit. For when you contemplate Me with a good intention and know Me by your faith, I will be with you. But those who despise Me turn to the Devil, and choose not to know Me; and therefore I too reject them.

BOOK THREE

29 Dupes of the Devil show omens in creatures, but cannot control them

But the Devil makes sport of these people, and deceives them however he likes, so that they think that what he shows them is true. And the Devil imparts this art of deceiving to those who trust in him, so that they can at will show people by this fallacious art various portents in creatures. But they cannot in any way alter the elements or other creations of God; they simply feign monstrosities like nebulous apparitions to deceive those who believe in them. And as Adam, seeking more than was right for him to have, lost the glory of Paradise, so these people let slip their inner vision and hearing, forsaking God and worshipping the Devil.

30 How Antichrist will deceive his followers and why it will be allowed

And in this way the son of perdition will practice his deceitful arts on the elements, and show in them the beauty and sweetness and delight desired by those he deceives. And this power will be permitted to him for one purpose: that the faithful may perceive in their faith that the Devil has no power over the good, but only over the evil, whose lot is eternal death. For whatever this son of iniquity brings to pass, he will do with power, pride and cruelty, for he has no mercy, humility or wisdom; he will incite people to follow him by his domination and the wonders he shows. And he will acquire for himself many peoples, telling them to do their own will and not restrain themselves by vigils or fasting; he will tell them that they need only love their God, Whom he will pretend to be, and then they will be delivered from Hell and attain to life. And they, being so deceived, will say, "Oh, woe to the wretches who lived before these times! For they made their lives miserable with dire pains, not knowing, alas, the loving kindness of our God!" He will show them his treasures and riches, and allow them to feast as they will, confirming his teaching by deceitful signs so that they think they need not restrain or chastise their bodies in any way. He will command them to observe circumcision and the Jewish laws and customs, but will alleviate for them as much as they want the stronger commands of the Law, which the Gospel, by worthy penance, converts into grace. And he will say, "When anyone is converted to me, I will blot out his sins, and he shall live with me forever." He will throw out baptism and the Gospel of My Son, and scorn all the precepts handed down to the Church. And he will say, with devilish mockery: "See what a madman that was, Who through His falsehoods decreed that the simple people should observe these things!

VISION ELEVEN

31 The pretended death of Antichrist, and his accursed scripture afterward

"But I will die for you and to your glory, and rise again from death; and so I will deliver my people from Hell, that you may live gloriously with me in my kingdom, as that deceiver pretended He had done before." And he will tell his beloved ones to run him through with a sword and wrap him in a clean shroud, until the day of his resurrection. And he will delude them into thinking they are killing him, and so they will fulfil his commands. Then he will pretend to rise again, and bring out a writing as if for the salvation of souls, which is really a dire curse. And he will give this to people for a sign and command them to adore him. And if any person of faith refuses for love of My name, he will kill that person in great suffering and torture. And thus all who see and hear this will be struck with great wonder and doubtful amazement, as My beloved John shows, saying:

32 Words of John

"And I saw one of his heads as if slain unto death; and his death's wound was healed. And all the earth marvelled at this beast" [Revelation 13:3]. This is to say:

I, the lover of God's mysteries, saw the deceiver and the accursed surrounding the holiness of the saints with great and countless iniquities, and wearying them with many vices. By his lying arts he will pretend he is pouring out his blood in death and perishing; he will be thought to be stricken and dying, but he will not fall in the body but in a deceiving shadow. And, having deceived people with these false wounds and pretended to be dead, he will pretend to come back to life as if from the sleep of death. And everyone in the world will stand in terrible amazement, horrified at this accursed man as the people were amazed at the great size and strength of Goliath when he appeared before them armed for war.

And so, as you see, the pillars of My elect will be troubled by great wonder, both by their torments and by the perverse and marvellous and horrible signs that the son of perdition will produce; and they will lament in mournful anguish.

33 Enoch and Elijah, and why they are reserved to this time

But then I will send forth My two witnesses, whom I will hold back until this time in My secret will: Enoch and Elijah. They will resist him and bring back those who err to the way of truth. They will show the faithful the strongest and solidest virtues; for when the words of their witness in each of

their mouths agree with each other, they will augment the faith of their hearers. For these two witnesses of the truth were reserved so long by Me so that now, when they will appear, their discourse may be held and confirmed in the hearts of My elect, and through it the seed of My Church may survive in humility. And to the children of God whose names are written in the book of life, they will say:

34 Their words to the children of God

"O ye who are righteous and elect and gloriously praise the graces of the blessed life, hear and understand what we confidently tell you. This accursed one was sent by the Devil to lead into error the souls who submit to his commands. We have been secluded from this world and reserved in the secret places of God, so that we have had no human care or anguish; and we were reserved and sent to you now so that we may contradict the errors of this destroyer. See therefore if we are like you in bodily stature or age."

35 Their true signs by which the Antichrist will be cast down

And all who choose to know and confess the true God will follow these two aged witnesses of truth, carrying the banner of God's justice and abandoning the iniquitous error. For they will be radiant with praise before God and the people; they will hasten through the villages and roads and cities, wherever the son of perdition has breathed out his perverse doctrine, and perform in them signs by the Holy Spirit, so that all who see them will marvel greatly. These great signs, founded on the firm rock, will be given to them that they may reject the perverse and false signs. For as lightning kindles and burns, so does the son of perdition do his wicked acts in iniquity, burning the people with his magic arts as lightning burns; but Enoch and Elijah will terrify and cast out his whole cohort with the thunderbolt of righteous doctrine, and so fortify the faithful.

36 How they will be killed by God's permission and receive their reward

But by the consent of My will, Enoch and Elijah will at last be killed by Antichrist; and then they will receive in Heaven the reward of their labors. And the flowers of their doctrine will fade because their voices have ceased in the world; but they will bear fruit among the elect, who will despise the words and the ravings of the Devil's arts because they are set on the hope of a heavenly inheritance. Solomon tells this of a good and perfect person, saying,

VISION ELEVEN

"The house of the just is in great strength, but in the fruits of the wicked is trouble" [Proverbs 15:6]. Which is to say:

In the righteous person, the reflection of the eye of God is a vivid inner dwelling where weariness and misery are not; and God's eye sees His wonders in this person like a sword eager to strike. But the deeds that come forth like growing fruits from the proud heart, which erects ruins on its pleasures, will bring only sadness; for the proud heart does not trust in that hope which blossoms in the fullness of Heaven.

37 Antichrist, trying to learn the secrets of Heaven, will strike the Church

Now you see that *that monstrous head moves from its place with such a great shock that the figure of the woman is shaken through all her limbs.* This is to say that the son of perdition, the head of iniquity, will raise himself in his great arrogance and pride from the small error of his inherent wickedness, and seize upon a greater one, wanting to be exalted above all people. And when his deceptions are thus about to end, the whole Church and all her children, great and small, will be cast into extreme fear, as they watch his mad presumption. *And a great mass of excrement adheres to the head, which raises itself up upon a mountain and tries to ascend the height of Heaven;* for the mighty arts of the Devil, which bring with them so much filth, will help the son of iniquity, give him the wings of pride, and raise him to such great presumption that he will think he can also penetrate the secrets of Heaven. How? When he has completely fulfilled the Devil's will, and by God's just judgment his great power for iniquity and cruelty is no longer allowed to increase, he will assemble all his cohort and tell those who believe in him that he wants to go to Heaven. But, even as the Devil did not know that the Son of God was born to redeem souls, so also this worst of men, entangling himself in the evil of evils, will be ignorant that the mighty hand of God is about to strike him a blow.

38 God's power will strike the son of perdition and send him to damnation

And behold, there comes suddenly a thunderbolt, which strikes that head with such great force that it falls from the mountain and yields up its spirit in death. For God's power will manifest itself and destroy the son of perdition, striking him with such jealousy that he will fall violently from the height of his presumption, in all the pride with which he stood against God. And, so ending, he will vomit forth his life in the death of eternal perdition. For, as

BOOK THREE

My Son's temptations ended when He said to His tempter, "Begone, Satan!" and the Devil fled in terror, so now those trials the son of iniquity inflicted on the Church will be ended by My jealousy.

39 The place of pride will become so fetid that the deceived will turn back

And a reeking cloud envelops the whole mountain, which wraps the head in such filth that the people who are standing by are thrown into the greatest terror. For the impure and hellish stench will fill the whole place of his pride, in which that worst of criminals boiled with such uncleanliness. And, by God's just judgment, neither his beginning nor his end will be remembered, and the people, seeing his corpse prostrate on the ground, voiceless and rotting, will know that they were deceived. *And that cloud remains around the mountain for a while longer;* for the smell of that devilish pride will show it to be impure, and thus the people seduced by him will perceive that stench and that impurity, and turn from their error and come back to the truth. *For the people who stand there, perceiving this, are shaken with great fear; when they see these things the greatest horror will assail them, and they will pour out doleful words and tearful plaints, and admit that they have grievously sinned.*

40 When Antichrist is dead the Church will shine to recall the erring

And lo, the feet of the figure of the woman glow white, shining with a splendor greater than the sun's. This is to say that when the son of perdition is laid prostrate, as was said, and many of those who had erred return to the truth, the Bride of My Son, standing on a strong foundation, will manifest purity of faith and the beauty that surpasses all the beauty of the glories of earth.

41 None but God can know the day of judgment

But after the wicked one has fallen, let no mortal ask when the last day and the dissolution of the world will come. For he cannot know it, because the Father has hidden it as a secret. Prepare yourselves therefore, O humans, for the judgment. But, as was said, the son of perdition and his father the Devil with all his arts will be conquered in the last days by My Son, the mighty Warrior. This was prefigured when the enemies of the mighty Samson were cast down, as it is written:

42 Example of Samson

"And when he strongly shook the pillars, the house fell on all the princes and the rest of the multitude that was there. And he killed many more at his death than he had killed before in his life" [Judges 16:30: cf. chaps. 14–16 complete]. This is to say:

The Son of God, symbolized by the mighty Samson, first wed the Synagogue; to her He gave the secrets of His wonderful doctrine, which were hidden in the Old Testament, and benignly disclosed to her the inner sweetness of the Law, which was stronger than a lion. But the Synagogue deceived Him and caused His secrets to be mocked; she refused to respect His doctrine, but despised it in arrogant pride. Troubled by this, He foretold that the kingdom of God would be taken from the Synagogue and given to another nation. Thus, amid many prodigies and amid a great crowd, He went up to Jerusalem; and the unbelief of those who spread their garments in the way came to an end when He paid by miracles what He had promised those to whom His bride had betrayed Him.

And in this turbulence He left His bride, prophesying that her house would be left desolate. But the father of His bride, Seduction of the Devil, married her to another husband, Infidelity. Then the Son of God sent out wise foxes, the apostles, who burned the standing corn of His enemies with the fire of the Holy Spirit; that is, they turned the precepts of the Law to spiritual insight. And so the Synagogue was burned with her father, which is to say that her perverse infidelity was overthrown.

Then, with great signs and wondrous miracles, He struck down the unbelieving, so that all trembled in great amazement. And they said they feared the Romans would come and take away their country and people; and therefore they gathered their cohort to destroy Him. And He hid on a hill, and prayed, if it might be, for this cup to pass from Him.

But Judas Iscariot betrayed Him, delivering Him into the hands of His enemies. And He concealed the might of His strength, which was in His hair, which is to say in His Father; which was unknown to all the people except those who grasped it by faith, as hair can be grasped on a human head. But He showed the might of His strength afterward, when He chose to suffer, wielding as it were the jawbone of an ass; for He told the daughters of Jerusalem to weep not for Him but for themselves, and thus "killed" them by predicting to them the terror of the evils to come.

And in His affliction on the cross, when He thirsted a fountain of faith sprang from the Gentiles; and He did not blush to drink from it, declaring that so it was accomplished. And when He gave up the ghost, He descended

into Gehenna, as it were, to the harlot; and His enemies tried to take Him by setting guards at His sepulchre. But He rose again from death, carrying away the two doors, His special elect and the common people whom He freed from Hell. And so He sought the heavenly kingdom. And then His beautiful Bride, the Church, asked Him diligently after their marriage how she might know His strength. And He revealed His powers to her not all at once, but little by little, discreetly.

How? When the faithful first received the Catholic faith, some of them thought to walk in both the old and the new Law until they had reached perfect rectitude; as it were, in sinews still moist and not yet completely dried. And the Church, still inexperienced, said to the crowds, "This is the strength of my Bridegroom!" And the people, hearing these words, wanted to come and worship God all at once by the book and not to live by the promptings of the Holy Spirit. But His strength is not in this. Then virginity was nobly constituted, which had never before been deemed glorious, like new ropes, which had never bound anything. And this binding strongly held the Son of God, but did not capture Him fully. But the Church raised herself and said, "O my friends, these are the greatest powers of my Bridegroom!" And all at once, with great tumult, many people rushed upon Him, saying, "We have seized Him in His greatest strength!" But not thus is His strength manifested. And then the Church was assured of the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, as it were His seven locks of hair, fastened by a strong nail to the apostolic preachers as a foundation. And when she had thus woven faith, the Church cried out, "Oh, how strong is my Bridegroom in His seven locks of hair!" And all the peoples who heard her seized upon Him, thinking that this was the limit of His strength. But again, His strength is not thus known.

And so the Church shed many tears, because she did not know the strength of the Holy Trinity; she said that she had indeed seen the humanity of the Son of God, but had not yet perfectly understood His Divinity. Moved by this, He manifested by His beloved John such secrets of the Holy Trinity as it was lawful for Man to know, in the honor of the Father and the fire of the Holy Spirit. And He laid His head upon the heart of His Bride; and He will rest there until the great schisms that will come with the son of perdition. And then His strength will be cut off as He is robbed of His hair; for people in that time will choose to follow the son of perdition and not Him, saying, "How is this, O God, that we see such wondrous miracles?" And so His strength will be cajoled, and true faith clouded with the blindness of infidelity. But when Enoch and Elijah appear, His strength will return to Him; and He will shatter by force all pride and presumption. He will hurl down the son of perdition with all the arts and vices of the Devil; and when the Church and the Christian name have passed over from the present temporal age to eternity, He will crush the Devil's evil much more severely

than He did when divine worship flourished in the world within time. What does this mean? That when time ends, the temporal persecutions of the Devil and deeds of human virtue will both cease.

But let the one who has ears sharp to hear inner meanings ardently love My reflection and pant after My words, and inscribe them in his soul and conscience.

THE DAY OF JUDGMENT

513

Quom̃ dem̃a. & sol. & luna. & stelle xvi. Verba vobis de eodem.

THE NEW HEAVEN AND THE NEW EARTH

ost hec
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oīa dem̄a
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tali m̄ enamelceret ꝯd amplius
⁊ appareret. Et audiui uocem ma
gno clamore ꝑ oīa ciu̇ē tam
uociferant⁹ ⁊ dicent⁹. O uos filii ho
mini qui uitra uacet⁹. lingua eōrs.
Et ecce oīa ossa hominū ingēa.
loco earum erant uelut tumo mo
numo ꝯgregata. ⁊ sua carne obuc
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rexer. Et non uidebatur fulgetum.
⁊ mali ingredine apparentes. ita
ut ⁊ opus cuiq; uspio aptū uide
ret. Et quidam ex eis ihe signa-
rant. quidam aut̄ non. ita ut

VISION TWELVE
The New Heaven and the New Earth

After this I looked, and behold, all the elements and creatures were shaken by dire convulsions; fire and air and water burst forth, and the earth was made to move, lightning and thunder crashed and mountains and forests fell, and all that was mortal expired. And all the elements were purified, and whatever had been foul in them vanished and was no more seen. And I heard a voice resounding in a great cry throughout the world, saying, "O ye children of men who are lying in the earth, rise up one and all!"

And behold, all the human bones in whatever place in the earth they lay were brought together in one moment and covered with their flesh; and they all rose up with limbs and bodies intact, each in his or her gender, with the good glowing brightly and the bad manifest in blackness so that each one's deeds were openly seen. And some of them had been sealed with the sign of faith, but some had not; and some of those signed had a gold radiance about their faces, but others a shadow, which was their sign.

And suddenly from the East a great brilliance shone forth; and there, in a cloud, I saw the Son of Man, with the same appearance He had had in the world and with His wounds still open, coming with the angelic choirs. He sat upon a throne of flame, glowing but not burning, which floated on the great tempest which was purifying the world. And those who had been signed were taken up into the air to join Him as if by a whirlwind, to where I had previously seen that radiance which signifies the secrets of the Supernal Creator; and thus the good were separated from the bad. And, as the Gospel indicates, He blessed the just in a gentle voice and pointed them to the heavenly kingdom, and with a terrible voice condemned the unjust to the pains of Hell, as is written in the same place. Yet He made no inquiry or statement about their works except the words the Gospel declares would be made there; for each person's work, whether good or bad, showed clearly in him. But those who were not signed stood afar off in the northern region, with the Devil's band; and they did not come to this judgment, but saw all these things in the whirlwind, and awaited the end of the judgment while uttering bitter groans.

And when the judgment was ended, the lightnings and thunders and winds and tempests ceased, and the fleeting components of the elements vanished all at once, and there came an exceedingly great calm. And then the elect became more

splendid than the splendor of the sun; and with great joy they made their way toward Heaven with the Son of God and the blessed armies of the angels. And at the same time the reprobate were forced with great howling toward the infernal regions with the Devil and his angels; and so Heaven received the elect, and Hell swallowed up the reprobate. And at once such great joy and praise arose in Heaven, and such great misery and howling in Hell, as were beyond human power to utter. And all the elements shone calm and resplendent, as if a black skin had been taken from them; so that fire no longer had its raging heat, or air density, or water turbulence, or earth shakiness. And the sun, moon and stars sparkled in the firmament like great ornaments, remaining fixed and not moving in orbit, so that they no longer distinguished day from night. And so there was no night, but day. And it was finished.

And again I heard the voice from Heaven, saying to me:

1 In the last days the world will be dissolved in disasters like a dying man

These mysteries manifest the last days, in which time will be transmuted into the eternity of perpetual light. For the last days will be troubled by many dangers, and the end of the world will be prefigured by many signs. For, as you see, *on that last day the whole world will be agitated by terrors and shaken by tempests, so that whatever is fleeting and mortal in it will be ended.* For the course of the world is now complete, and it cannot last longer, but will be consummated as God wills. For as a person who is to die is captured and laid low by many infirmities, and in the hour of his death suffers great pain in his dissolution, so too the greatest adversities will precede the end of the world and at last dissolve it in terror. For the elements will then display their terrors, because they will not be able to do so afterward.

2 All creation will be moved and purified of all that is mortal in it

And so, at this consummation, *the elements are unloosed by a sudden and unexpected movement:* all creatures are set into violent motion, fire bursts out, the air dissolves, water runs off, the earth is shaken, lightnings burn, thunders crash, mountains are broken, forests fall, and whatever in air or water or earth is mortal gives up its life. For the fire displaces all the air, and the water engulfs all the earth; and thus all things are purified, and whatever was foul in the world vanishes as if it had never been, as salt disappears when it is put into water.

3 The bodies of the dead will rise again in their wholeness and gender

And *when, as you saw, the divine command to rise again resounds, the bones of the dead, wherever they may be, are brought together in one moment and covered with their flesh.* They will not be hindered by anything; but if they were consumed by fire or water, or eaten by birds or beasts, they will be speedily restored. And so the earth will yield them up as salt is extracted from water; for My eye knows all things, and nothing can be hidden from Me. And so all people will rise again in the twinkling of an eye, *in soul and body, with no deformity or mutilation but intact in body and in gender; and the elect will shine with the brightness of their good works, but the reprobate will bear the blackness of their deeds of misery.* Thus their works will not there be concealed, but will appear in them openly.

4 The risen who are signed and unsigned

And some of them are sealed with the sign of faith, but some are not; and the consciences of some who have faith shine with the radiance of wisdom, but the consciences of others are murky from their neglect. And thus they are clearly distinguished; for the former have done the works of faith, but the latter have extinguished it in themselves. And those who do not have the sign of faith are those who chose not to know the living and true God either in the old Law or in the new Grace.

5 The Son will come to the judgment in human form

And then the Son of God, in the human form He had at His Passion when He suffered by the will of the Father to save the human race, will come to judge it, surrounded by the celestial army; He will be in the brightness of eternal life, but in the cloud that hides celestial glory from the reprobate. For the Father vouchsafed to Him the judging of the visible things of the world, because He had lived visibly in the world; as He Himself shows in the Gospel, saying:

6 The Gospel on this subject

"And He has given Him power to judge, because He is the Son of Man" [John 5:27]. Which is to say:

The Father has borne witness to His Son. What does this mean? The Father gave power to the Son, because He remained with the Father in

divinity but received humanity from a mother; and, because He is human, He received also from the Father that every creature should feel Him as the Son of God, for all creatures were created and formed by God. And therefore all deeds will be judged by the Son, whatever their nobility or baseness, and He will put them in their proper order. For, as He was a man palpable and visible in the world, He can justly distinguish all that is visible in the world. And He will appear in His power of judging terrible to the unjust but gentle to the just, and judge them so that the very elements will feel the purgation.

7 The signed will be taken up easily to meet their Judge

And those who are signed are taken up to meet the Just Judge not with difficulty but with great speed, so that in them, who had faith in God, the works of faith may clearly be seen. And, as was shown you, *the good are separated from the bad,* for their works are dissimilar. For here it is apparent how both the bad and the good have sought God, in infancy and childhood and youth and old age.

8 All God's flowers, the great heroes of the Church, will appear radiant

And here all the flowers of My Son will shine out in radiance; that is to say, the patriarchs and prophets who lived before His Incarnation, the apostles who lived with Him in the world, the martyrs, confessors, virgins and widows who have faithfully imitated Him, the holders of high office, both secular and spiritual, in My Church, and the anchorites and monks who chastised and mortified their flesh and imitated the humility and charity of the angels in their garments, thus belittling themselves for My Son's name. Those who seek Me in the contemplative life because they think that life is more glorious than another are as nothing to Me; but any who seek Me in humility in that life because the Holy Spirit inspired them to do so, I will put in the first ranks in the celestial homeland.

9 Amid the silence of Heaven, the Son will give sentence on all

Then the heavens will subdue their praises and remain awhile in silence, while the Son of God pronounces judicial sentence both on the just and on the unjust. And they will give ear with reverence and honor to how He decides; and *He will gently grant supernal joys to the just, and terribly consign the unjust to the pains of Hell. And there will be no further excuses or questions about human works,* for here the consciences of both the good and the bad are naked and revealed.

10 Why the good and the bad need to be judged

Now the just, who will receive the words of the most equitable Judge, have indeed done many good works, but while they lived in the world they did not act with fullness of perfection, and therefore their deeds must now be judged. And the unjust, who will suffer a severe judgment against them, have indeed done much evil; but they did not act in ignorance of the Divine Majesty, in the wicked unbelief that would damn them without judgment. And so they will not escape the Judge's sentence, for all things must be weighed equitably.

11 Unbelievers are already judged and so will not come to the judgment

But those who are not signed in faith, because they did not believe in God, *will tarry in the North, the region of perdition, with the Devil's band, and not come to this judgment. But they will see it all in obscurity and await its end, groaning deeply* within themselves because they persevered in unbelief and did not know the true God. For they neither worshipped the living God in the Old Testament before the institution of baptism, nor received the remedy of baptism in the Gospel, but continued under the curse of Adam's fall, with its penalty of damnation. And therefore they are already judged, for the crime of infidelity.

12 When the judgment is finished, a great calm will arise

And when the judgment is ended, *the terrors of the elements,* the lightnings and thunders and winds and tempests, *will cease, and all that is fleeting and transitory will* melt away and *no longer be,* like snow melted by the heat of the sun. And so, by God's dispensation, *an exceedingly great calm will arise.*

13 Glory will receive the elect and Hell swallow up the damned

And thus the elect will become splendid with the splendor of eternity, *and with My Son their Head and the glorious celestial army will embrace glory and the heavenly joys; while the reprobate, together with the Devil and his angels, will wretchedly direct their course toward eternal punishment,* where eternal death awaits them for following their lusts instead of My commands. And so *Heaven will receive the elect* into the glory of eternity, because they have loved the Ruler of the heavens; and *Hell will swallow up the reprobate,* because they did not renounce the Devil. And then *such great joy and praise will resound in the glory of Heaven and such great groaning and howling will arise in*

Hell as to exceed the grasp of the human understanding. For the first have eternal life and the second eternal death, as My Son declares in the Gospel, saying:

14 The Gospel on this subject

"And these shall go into everlasting punishment; but the just into life everlasting" [Matthew 25:46]. Which is to say: Those who befoul themselves in the house of evil passions, and do not thirst to drink justice from the Supreme Goodness, will come in the course of their infidelity and wickedness to submersion in the pains of eternal perdition, and according to their deeds will receive the torments of Hell. But the builders of the heavenly Jerusalem, who faithfully stand in the gates of the daughter of Zion, will be radiant in the eternal life, which the fruitfulness of the chaste Virgin miraculously gave to all believers.

15 How the elements and heavenly bodies will be changed, and night ended

And, as you see, *when all these things are over the elements will shine out with the greatest brightness and beauty, and all blackness and filth will be removed from them.* And *fire, without its raging heat,* will blaze like the dawn; *air without density* will be completely limpid; *water without its power to flood or drown* will stand transparent and calm, and *earth without shakiness* or roughness will be firm and level. And so all these will be transformed into great calm and beauty.

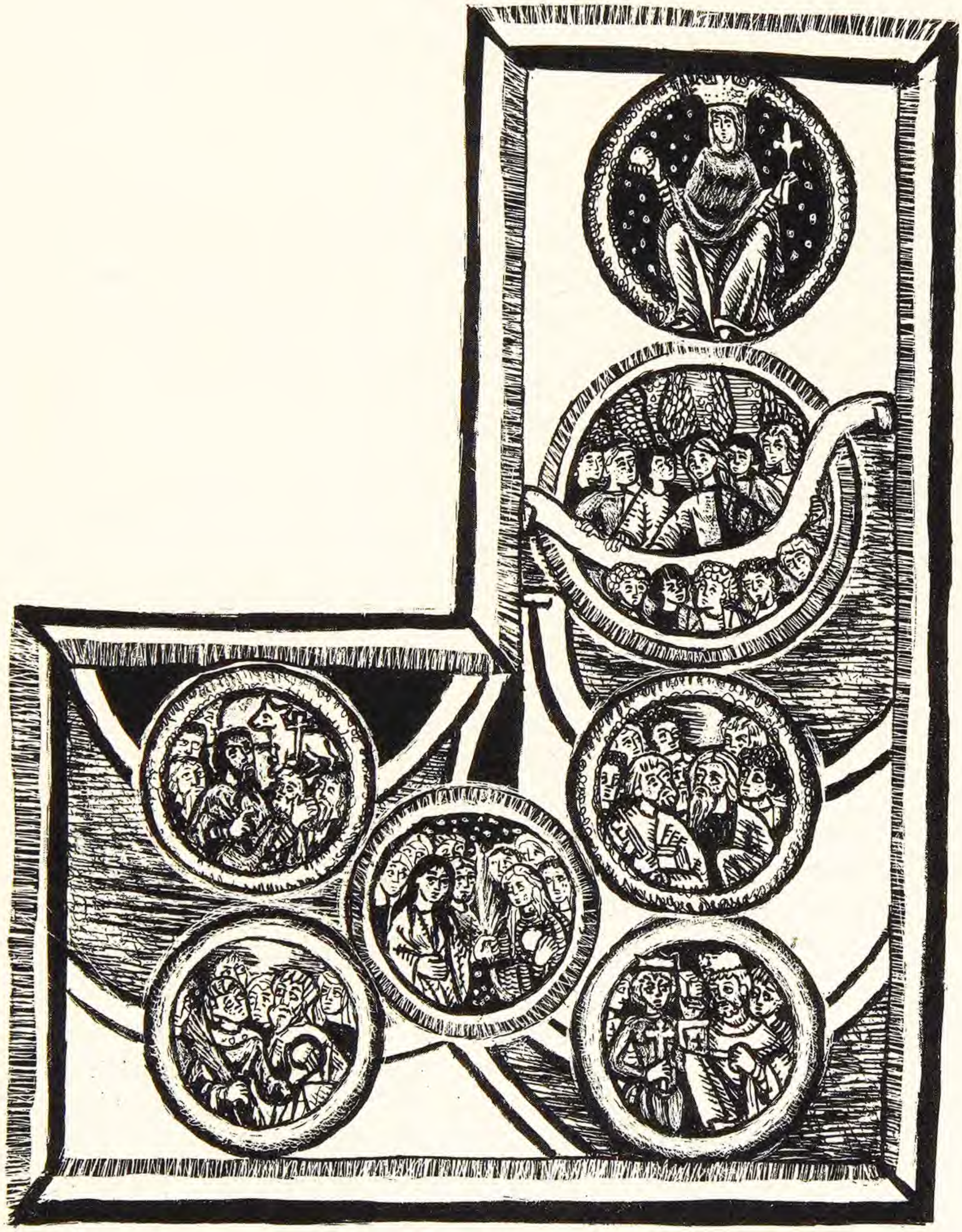
And *the sun and moon and stars will sparkle in the firmament* like precious stones set in gold, with great glory and brilliance; and *they will no longer restlessly revolve in orbit* so as to distinguish day from night. For the world will have ended and they will have become immutable; and from that time on *there will be no darkness, and day will be perpetual.* As My beloved John witnesses, when he says:

16 Words of John

"And there shall be no more night, and they will not need the light of the lamp or the light of the sun; for the Lord God will illumine them" [Revelation 22:5]. Which is to say: One who possesses a treasure sometimes hides it and at other times shows it, and even so night conceals the light, and day drives out the darkness and brings light to humanity. But it will not be so when time is transformed; for then the shade of night will be put to flight and its darkness will not appear from that time on. For in this transmutation the

light people now light to dispel the darkness will not be needed; and the sun will not move and by its motion bring times of darkness. For then the day will be without end; for the Ruler of all, in the immutable glory of His Divinity, will illumine those who in the world have by His grace escaped the darkness.

But let the one who has ears sharp to hear inner meanings ardently love My reflection and pant after My words, and inscribe them in his soul and conscience.



THE CHOIRS OF THE BLESSED

dictione diabolicarū artiū.

I Q°d de ineffabili grā sua corde & ore ds inceſſabilit laudandus ē.

II Q°d ſimphonia ī unanimitate & concordia pferenda ē.

III Q°d uerbum corp° ſymphonia autē ſpm. & armonia diuinitatē uerbū. ū humanitatē filii designat.

IIII Q°d p ſymphoniā racionabilitas ſuos mouet ad uigilandū.

V Q°d ſymphonia dura corda emollit. & humorē ꝙ punctionis inducit. & ſpm ſcm aduocat.

VI Q°d fideles oīm deuotione icessanter uibilare debet.

VII Verba dauid de eadem re.

VISION THIRTEEN
Symphony of the Blessed

Then I saw the lucent sky, in which I heard different kinds of music, marvellously embodying all the meanings I had heard before. I heard the praises of the joyous citizens of Heaven, steadfastly persevering in the ways of Truth; and laments calling people back to those praises and joys; and the exhortations of the virtues, spurring one another on to secure the salvation of the peoples ensnared by the Devil. And the virtues destroyed his snares, so that the faithful at last through repentance passed out of their sins and into Heaven.

And their song, like the voice of a multitude, making music in harmony praising the ranks of Heaven, had these words:

1 Songs to holy Mary

O splendid jewel, serenely infused with the Sun!
The Sun is in you as a fount from the heart of the Father;
It is His sole Word, by Whom He created the world,
The primary matter, which Eve threw into disorder.
He formed the Word in you as a human being,
And therefore you are the jewel that shines most brightly,
Through whom the Word breathed out the whole of the virtues,
As once from primary matter He made all creatures.

O sweet green branch that flowers from the stem of Jesse!
O glorious thing, that God on His fairest daughter
Looked as the eagle looks on the face of the sun!
The Most High Father sought for a Virgin's candor,
And willed that His Word should take in her His body.
For the Virgin's mind was by His mystery illumined,
And from her virginity sprang the glorious Flower.

And again a song resounded:

2 To the nine orders of heavenly spirits

O glorious living light, which lives in Divinity!
Angels who fix your eyes with ardent desire

BOOK THREE

Amid the mystical darkness surrounding all creatures
On Him with Whom your desires can never be sated!
O glorious joy, to live in your form and nature!
For you are free from every deed of evil,
Although that evil first appeared in your comrade,
The fallen angel, who tried to soar above God,
And therefore that twisted one was submerged in ruin.
And then for himself a greater fall he prepared
By his suggestions to those whom God's hand made.

O angels with shining faces who guard the people,
O ye archangels, who take just souls into Heaven,
And you, O virtues and powers, O principalities,
Dominions and thrones, who by five are secretly counted,
And you, cherubim and seraphim, seal of God's secrets,
Praise be to you all, who behold the heart of the Father,
And see the Ancient of Days spring forth in the fountain,
And His inner power appear like a face from His heart.

And again they sang:

3 To the patriarchs and prophets

O eminent men, who traversed the hidden ways,
And looked with the eyes of the spirit, and in lucent shadows
Announced the Living Light that would bud from the stem
Which blossomed alone from the Light that rooted within it!
O ancient saints, you foretold the souls' salvation
Who were sunk in death; like wheels you turned and circled,
And wondrously spoke of the Mount That touches Heaven.
And then He came, and anointed the many waters,
And so the shining light arose among you,
And, going before Him, displayed the Mount Himself.

O happy roots, from whom miracles and not vices
Grew in the burning way of lucent shadow!
And you, O fiery voice of meditation
Who went before the abyss-sealing Cornerstone;
Rejoice in your Head, in the One Whom so many among you
Invoked with ardor, yet never on earth beheld.

And another song was sung:

4 To the apostles

O warrior cohort of the thornless Flower!
Your sound fills the world, traversing the realm of the senses,
Where madmen feast and defile themselves with swine;
And you, infused with the Comforter, conquered them.
O noble race of the Savior, whose roots are fixed
In the tabernacle of the Word's complete labor,
You take by the Lamb the path of the water's salvation.
He sent you armed with a sword amid dogs most savage,
Who with the work of their fingers destroyed their glory,
Subjecting the Handlessly Made to their hands' own makings.

O lucent crowd of apostles, in truest knowledge
You rose to open the Devil's mighty prisons
And cleanse his slaves in the fount of living waters.
You are the glorious light in the blackest darkness,
The pillars that prop the jewelled Bride of the Lamb,
Whose banner-bearer first was the Virgin Mother,
For joy of the Lamb, Who weds the immaculate Bride.

And another song resounded:

5 To the martyrs

O ye who have poured out your blood in triumph,
And conquered a share in the blood of the Lamb who perished,
Feasting upon the slain calf's sacrifice,
And so built the Church, what a great reward is yours!
Alive, you followed the Lamb, and despised your bodies,
Adorned His pains, and so recaptured your portions.

O rose blossoms, blessed in the joy of your blood's effusion!
Your fragrant blood flowed forth from the inner counsel
Of Him Who has been always, without beginning,
And planned before time began His great redemption.
Your company is honor, whose blood abounded
To build the Church in the stream from your noble wounds.

And another song was sung:

BOOK THREE

6 To the confessors

O ye who succeed and serve the mighty Lion,
And rule between the temple and the altar,
The angels sing praises and stand to help the peoples,
And so do you, in the Lamb's service careful.

O ye who imitate the Most Exalted,
In His most precious and glorious Sacrament!
How great is your glory, in which the power is given
To loose and bind the indolent and the straying,
To beautify white and black, and lift their burdens.
Yours too is the office of the angelic order,
And yours is the task of knowing the firm foundations
And where to lay them; and therefore great is your honor.

And another song resounded:

7 To the virgins

O lovely faces who look on the face of God
And build in the dawn; O noble blessed virgins!
The King took thought for you, sealing you to His purpose
And decking you with all ornaments of Heaven,
And so you are a garden adorned in sweetness.

O noble verdure, which grows from the Sun of splendor!
Your clear serenity shines in the Wheel of Godhead,
Your greatness is past all earthly understanding,
And Heaven's wonders surround you in their embrace.
You glow like dawn, and burn like the Sun in glory.

And another song was heard, like the voice of a multitude breaking out in melodic laments over the people who had to be brought back to that place:

8 The lament over the ones to be recalled

Oh, this is a voice of sorrow and great lamenting!
Ah! ah! what a wonderful victory has arisen:
The desire for God, while carnal pleasure flees!
But oh, alas! how few were the wills that were sinless,
How few the desires that fled from lust to You!

VISION THIRTEEN

Mourn, mourn then, Innocence, you whose modest goodness
Has never failed, nor craved what the Serpent showed you,
For people respected, though they neglected you.

O Living Fountain, how great is Your sweet compassion!
You never lost sight of the face of the straying people,
But saw in advance the way that You would save them
From the fallen angels, who thought they had reft them from You.
O daughter of Zion, rejoice that God restores you
So many cut off from you by the ancient serpent,
Who now shine brighter than ever they shone before.
The Living Light now says of the ones He rescued,
"The guileful serpent I flouted in his seduction,
His work was not so perfect as once he thought it.
I swore by Myself, and I did more, far more,
For them than he did to them. And so your joy
Is ended, your snares destroyed, and all your greed
Is come to nothing, O wickedest of impostors!"

And again a song was heard, like the voice of a multitude, exhorting the virtues to help humanity and oppose the inimical arts of the Devil. And the virtues overcame the vices, and by divine inspiration people turned back to repentance. And thus the song resounded in harmony:

9 The exhortation of the virtues and the fight against the Devil

THE VIRTUES: We virtues are in God, and there abide; we wage war for the King of Kings, and separate evil from good. We appeared in the first battle, and conquered there, while the one who tried to fly above himself fell. So let us now wage war and help those who invoke us; let us tread underfoot the Devil's arts, and guide those who would imitate us to the blessed mansions.

SOULS (in the body, lamenting): Oh, we are strangers, wandering off toward sin! What have we done? We should have been daughters of the King, but we fell into the darkness of sin. O living Sun, carry us on Your shoulders into the just inheritance, which we lost in Adam! O King of Kings, let us fight in your battle!

A FAITHFUL SOUL: O sweet Divinity and O lovely Life, in Whom I may put on a robe of glory, and receive what I lost in the beginning! I long for You, and I call upon the virtues.

VIRTUES (answering): O blessed soul! O sweet creature of God, who were formed in the depths of God's profound wisdom, you have loved much.

BOOK THREE

THE SOUL: Oh, I come to you gladly; give me the kiss of the heart!

VIRTUES: We must join with you in the battle, O daughter of the King.

THE SOUL (burdened and complaining): Oh, burdensome labor! Oh, heavy load I must endure while garbed in this life! It is most hard for me to fight against the flesh.

VIRTUES: O soul created by God's will, O happy instrument! Why are you so weak against the thing God has crushed by the Virgin? Through us you must conquer the Devil.

THE SOUL: Help, support me, that I may stand firm!

KNOWLEDGE OF GOD: See what it is that you are clothed with, O daughter of salvation, and stand firm! Then you will never fall.

THE SOUL: Oh, I know not what to do or where to flee! Woe is me! I cannot use rightly that which clothes me. I want to tear it off!

VIRTUES: O bad conscience, O wretched soul! Why do you hide your face in the presence of your Creator?

KNOWLEDGE OF GOD: You do not know or see or taste Him Who created you.

THE SOUL: God created the world; I do Him no wrong if I want to enjoy it.

THE DEVIL (whispering to the soul): Fool, fool! What good is your labor? Regard the world, and it will embrace you with honor.

VIRTUES: Alas, alas! Virtues, let us loudly lament and mourn; for a sheep of the Lord is fleeing from life.

HUMILITY: I, Humility, queen of the virtues, say: Come to me, all of you virtues, and I will strengthen you, so that you can seek the lost coin and give it the crown of blessed perseverance!

VIRTUES: O glorious queen, O sweetest mediator! We come gladly.

HUMILITY: Beloved daughters, I keep you in the King's wedding chamber. O daughters of Israel, God raised you under His tree, so now remember your planting. Rejoice, O daughters of Zion!

THE DEVIL (to the virtues): What good is it that there should be no power but God's? I say that I will give everything to the one who follows me and his own will; but you and all your followers have nothing to give, for none of you knows who you are.

HUMILITY: I and my companions know well that you are the ancient dragon, who tried to fly higher than the Most High, and was thrown into the deepest abyss by God Himself.

VIRTUES: But all of us dwell on high.

THE SOUL (in the body, repentant and lamenting): O royal virtues! How beautifully you shine in the Supreme Sun! How sweet is your dwelling! Oh, woe is me, I fled from you!

VISION THIRTEEN

VIRTUES: Come, O fugitive, come to us! and God will receive you.

THE SOUL: Alas, alas! Burning sweetness plunged me into sins; I dare not enter with you.

VIRTUES: Do not fear or flee; the Good Shepherd seeks you, His lost sheep.

THE SOUL: Now I need you to take me back, for I fester with wounds the ancient serpent has dealt me.

VIRTUES: Run to us, and follow with us that path in which you will never fall; and God will heal you.

THE SOUL: I am a sinner who fled from Life; I must come to you full of sores, that you may offer me the shield of redemption.

VIRTUES: O fugitive soul, be firm, and put on yourself the armor of light!

THE SOUL: O soldiery of the Queen, O white lilies and crimson roses, look gently upon me! I have lived as a stranger and an exile from you; help me to rise up in the blood of the Son of God! O Humility, who are true healing, help me; for Pride has broken me with many vices, and wounded me with many scars. Now I fly to you; oh, receive me!

HUMILITY (to the virtues): O virtues all, for the sake of Christ's wounds receive this mourning sinner, scarred as she is, and bring her to me.

VIRTUES (to the soul): We will bring you back, and we will not desert you; the whole celestial army rejoices over you! And so we will sing a song of rejoicing.

HUMILITY (to the soul): O unhappy daughter, I will embrace you; for the great Physician for your sake suffered deep and bitter wounds.

THE DEVIL (whispering to the soul): Who are you, and whence do you come? You embraced me, and I led you forth; and now you return and confound me! But I will throw you down in battle.

THE SOUL (to the Devil): I recognized that all your ways are evil, and so I fled from you. And now, O impostor, I fight against you! (To Humility): O Queen Humility, help me with your healing remedy!

HUMILITY (to Victory and the other virtues): O Victory! You conquered the Devil in Heaven; run now with your companions, and all bind this Devil!

VICTORY (to the virtues): O strong and glorious soldiers, come and help me conquer this deceiver!

VIRTUES (to Victory): O sweetest warrior in the flowing fountain that engulfed the ravenous wolf! O you crowned with glory, we gladly fight with you against the deluder of souls.

HUMILITY: Bind him, O splendid virtues!

VIRTUES: O queen, we will obey you, and do your commands in all things.

BOOK THREE

VICTORY: Rejoice, comrades! The ancient serpent is bound!

VIRTUES: Praise be to you, O Christ, King of the angels! O God, Who are You Who had this great counsel in You? It destroyed the hellish drink, which poisoned the publicans and sinners; and they now shine in celestial goodness. Praise therefore be to You, O King! O Father Almighty, from Your ardent heat flows the fountain; guide your children with a favorable wind on the waters, that we may lead them into the celestial Jerusalem.

And these voices were like the voices of a multitude lifting up its sound on high. And their song went through me, so that I understood them perfectly.

And I heard a voice from the shining sky, saying to me:

10 God must be unceasingly praised for His grace with heart and voice

Praises must be offered unceasingly to the Supernal Creator with heart and mouth, for by His grace he sets on heavenly thrones not only those who stand erect but those who bend and fall.

Thus, O human, *you see the lucent sky*, which symbolizes the brilliance of the joy of the citizens of Heaven; *in which you hear different kinds of music, marvellously embodying all the meanings you heard before. You hear the praises of the joyous citizens of Heaven, steadfastly persevering in the ways of Truth, and laments calling people back to those praises and joys.* For, as the air encloses and sustains everything under the heavens, so the wonders of God, which you have already been shown, are enveloped for you in a sweet and delightful song. It sings with joy of the wonders of the elect who dwell in the heavenly city and eternally express their sweet devotion to God; and it laments over the wavering of those the ancient serpent is trying to destroy, but who will be led to blessed joy by the divine power, and know the mysteries no human mind can know that bows down to the earth. *And you hear the exhortations of the virtues, spurring one another on to secure the salvation of the peoples ensnared by the Devil; and the virtues destroy his snares, so that the faithful at last through repentance pass out of their sins and into Heaven.* For the virtues in the minds of the faithful resist the vices by which the Devil wearies them, and redeem them; and when their mighty strength conquers these vices, the people who fell into sin return by God's will to repentance, diligently examining and weeping over their former deeds, and weighing and considering their future ones.

11 The song is sung in unity and concord

And so that song, like the voice of a multitude, makes music in praise among the ranks of Heaven. For the song of rejoicing, sung in consonance and in

concord, tells of the glory and honor of the citizens of Heaven, and lifts on high what the Word has shown.

12 The words are the body and the music the spirit

And so the words symbolize the body, and the jubilant music indicates the spirit; and the celestial harmony shows the Divinity, and the words the Humanity of the Son of God.

13 By this song the sluggish soul is aroused to watchfulness

And as the power of God is everywhere and encompasses all things, and no obstacle can stand against it, so too the human intellect has great power to resound in living voices, and arouse sluggish souls to vigilance by the song.

David shows this by his songs of prophecy and rejoicing; and Jeremiah shows it by the sorrowful voice of his lamentation. And you also, O human, with your poor and frail little nature, can hear in the song the ardor of virginal modesty embraced by the blossoming branch; and the acuity of the living lights, which shine in the heavenly city; and the profound utterances of the apostles; and the outpouring of the blood of the faithful who offer themselves; and the secrets of the priestly office; and the procession of virgins, blooming in the verdancy of Heaven. For the faithful creature rejoices to his Creator in a voice of exultation and gladness, and returns Him perpetual gratitude. *And you hear another song, like the voice of a multitude breaking out in melodic laments over the people who have to be brought back to that place.* For the song does not only harmonize and exult over those who persevere in the path of rectitude, but also exults in the concord of those who are resurrected from their fall out of the path of justice, and are at last uplifted to true beatitude. For the Good Shepherd has brought back to the fold with joy the sheep that was lost.

And again you hear a song, like the voice of a multitude, exhorting the virtues to help humanity and oppose the arts of the Devil. And the virtues overcome the vices, and by divine inspiration people turn back to repentance; and so their song resounds in harmony. For the sweet alliance of the virtues draws the faithful to true beatitude, though the vices the Devil uses as snares accumulate direly. But the virtues do not merely conquer the vices, but destroy them; and so they lead people who consent to be helped by God to eternal reward by true penitence. And this is shown by the words of their song.

14 The song of rejoicing softens the hard heart and summons the Holy Spirit

For the song of rejoicing softens hard hearts, and draws forth from them the tears of compunction, and invokes the Holy Spirit. And so *those voices you hear are like the voice of a multitude, which lifts its sound on high;* for jubilant praises, offered in simple harmony and charity, lead the faithful to that consonance in which is no discord, and make those who still live on earth sigh with heart and voice for the heavenly reward.

And their song goes through you so that you understand them perfectly; for where divine grace has worked, it banishes all dark obscurity, and makes pure and lucid those things that are obscure to the bodily senses because of the weakness of the flesh.

15 The faithful should rejoice without ceasing

Therefore, let everyone who understands God by faith faithfully offer Him tireless praises, and with joyful devotion sing to Him without ceasing. As My servant David, filled with the spirit of lofty profundity, exhorts on My behalf, saying:

16 Words of David

"Praise Him with the sound of trumpets; praise Him with psaltery and harp. Praise Him with timbrel and dance; praise Him with stringed instruments and flute. Praise Him on high-sounding cymbals; praise Him on cymbals of joy; let every spirit praise the Lord" [Psalm 150:3–5]. This is to say:

You know, adore and love God with simple mind and pure devotion. Praise Him, then, with the sound of trumpets, which is to say by the use of the reason. For when the lost angel and his consenters fell into perdition, the armies of the blessed spirits stood firm in the truth of reason, and with faithful devotion adhered to God.

And praise Him on the psaltery of deep devotion, and the honey-toned harp. For when the trumpet sounds the psaltery follows, and when the psaltery sounds the harp follows; as first the blessed angels stood fast in the love of truth, and then after the creation of Man the prophets arose with their wonderful voices, and then the apostles followed with their words of sweetness.

And praise Him with the timbrel of mortification and in the dance of exultation. For after the harp sounds, the timbrel exults, and after the timbrel, the dance; as after the apostles preached words of salvation, the martyrs

endured many bodily torments for the honor of God, and then arose the truthful doctors of the priestly office.

And praise Him with the stringed instruments of human redemption and the flute of divine protection. For after the dance of joy, the voice of the stringed instruments and the flute emerge; as, after the doctors who served beatitude showed the truth, there appeared the virgins, who loved the Son of God, Who was true Man, like stringed instruments and adored Him, Who was true God, like flutes. For they believed Him to be true Man and true God. What does this mean? When the Son of God assumed flesh for human salvation, He did not lose the glory of Divinity; and so the happy virgins chose Him as their Bridegroom, and knew Him with faithful devotion as true Man in betrothal and true God in chastity.

And praise Him too on high-sounding cymbals, which is to say by loud and joyful declarations, whenever people who lay in the depths of sin are touched by divinely inspired remorse and raise themselves from those depths to the height of Heaven.

And praise Him on cymbals of joy, which is to say by statements of praise, whenever the strong virtues gain the victory and overthrow human vice, and lead people who persevere in good works and holy desires to the beatitude of the true recompense.

And so let every spirit who wills to believe in God and honor Him praise the Lord, Him Who is the Lord of all; for it is fitting that anyone who desires life should glorify Him Who is Life.

And again I heard a voice from the lucent sky, saying: "O King most high, praise be to You, Who bring these things to pass in a simple and untaught person!"

And another voice cried out from Heaven with a great shout, saying:

Hear and attend, all you who desire to have heavenly recompense and bliss. O ye people who have believing hearts and await the heavenly reward, take these words and lay them up in your inmost hearts, and do not reject this admonition that comes to you. For I the Living and True Witness of Truth, the speaking and not silent God, say and say again: Who shall prevail over Me? He who tries it I will overthrow. Let not anyone lay hold of a mountain, which he cannot move, but let him abide in the valley of humility. Who walks a road without water? The one who is swayed by the whirlwind, and divides fruit but does not eat it. And how can My tabernacle be there? My tabernacle is the place where the Holy Spirit pours forth His overflowing waters. What does this mean?

I am in the midst. How? Whoever lays hold of Me worthily shall not fall, either as to height or as to depth or as to breadth. What does this mean?

I am that Charity which emulous pride cannot cast down, a fall into the depths cannot dash to pieces and the wide expanse of evils cannot crush. Can

BOOK THREE

I not build as high as the footstool of the sun? The strong despise Me, who show their strength in the valleys; the apathetic leave me at the sound of the tempest; and the learned refuse My food; and so do they all who build towers for themselves according to their own will. But I will confound them through the small and the weak, as I overthrew Goliath by a boy, and conquered Holofernes by Judith. And therefore, if anyone rejects the mystical words of this book, I will draw My bow against him and transfix him by the arrows from My quiver; I will knock his crown from his head, and make him like those who fell in Horeb when they murmured against Me. And if anyone utters curses against this prophecy, may the curse that Isaac uttered come upon him. But anyone who embraces it and keeps it in his heart and makes its ways plain, I will fill with the dews of Heaven.

And whoever tastes this prophecy and fixes it in his memory will become the mountain of myrrh, and of frankincense, and of all aromatical spices, and the diffusion of many blessings; he will ascend like Abraham from blessing to blessing. And the new spouse, the Bride of the Lamb, will take him to herself, for he is a pillar in the sight of God. And the shadow of the hand of the Lord will protect him.

But whoever rashly conceals these words written by the finger of God, madly abridging them, or for any human reason taking them to a strange place and scoffing at them, let him be reprobate; and the finger of God shall crush him.

Praise, therefore, praise God, ye blessed hearts, for the miracles God has wrought in the frail earthly reflection of the beauty of the Most High; as He Himself foreshadowed when He first made Woman from the rib of the man He had created.

But let the one who has ears sharp to hear inner meanings ardently love My reflection and pant after My words, and inscribe them in his soul and conscience. Amen.

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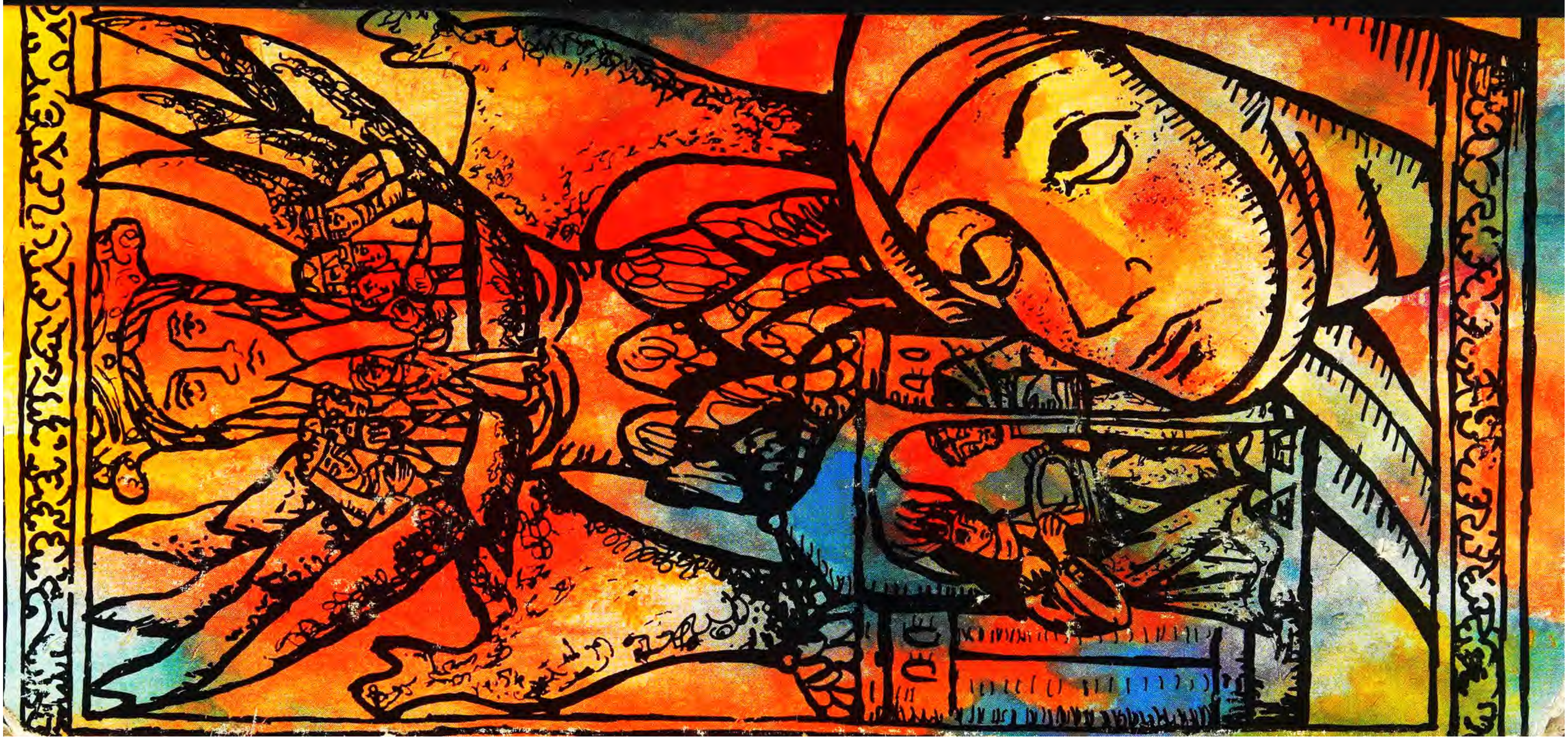

The Ten Books on the Way of Life and Great Deeds of the Carmelites

(including *The Book of the First Monks*)

A medieval history of the Carmelites written c.1385 by

Felip Ribot, O.Carm.

Edited and translated by

Richard Copsey, O.Carm.

Early Carmelite Spirituality 1

Second Edition

EARLY CARMELITE SPIRITUALITY

Volume 1

Felip Ribot, O.Carm.

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Edited and translated by Richard Copsey, O.Carm.

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Preface to the Second Edition

The very successful reception and sale of the first edition of *The Ten Books* confirmed the demand in the Carmelite Family and beyond for a modern English translation of this key text of medieval spirituality. This second edition has been produced to keep up with that demand, and the opportunity has been taken to make a handful of minor revisions and corrections; many thanks to those who have pointed these out to us. The pagination has remained the same, allowing easy referencing to either edition.

Johan Bergström-Allen
Carmelite Projects & Publications Office, York
March 2007

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The cover illustrations are reproduced by kind permission of the prior and community of Aylesford Priory, Kent, England. All other illustrations are taken from the *Speculum Carmelitanum*, (ed.) Daniel a Virgine Maria, (Antwerp, 1680), vol. 1.

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ABBREVIATIONS

(abbreviations of books of the Bible are given in the table of authorities)

Bullarium Carm.	*Bullarium Carmelitarum*, edited by Eliseo Monsignano, (Rome, 1715. 2 vols).
Cassian Conferences	*The Conferences of John Cassian,* (trans.) E. Gibson (Xlibris, 2000).
Cassian Institutes	John Cassian, *The Monastic Institutes. On the training of a Monk and The Eight Deadly Sins*, (ed.) Jerome Bertram (London: St. Austin, 1999).
Chandler thesis	Paul Chandler, O.Carm., "The *Liber de Institucione et Peculiaribus Gestis Religiosorum Carmelitarum in Lege Veteri Exortorum et in Nova Perseverancium ad Caprasium Monachum* by Felip Ribot, O.Carm." doctoral thesis, University of Toronto, 1991.
Friedberg	*Corpus Iuris Canonici*, (ed.) A. Friedberg, (Leipzig, 1879. 2 vols).
The Hermits from Mount Carmel	Richard Copsey*, Carmel in Britain 3*: *The Hermits from Mount Carmel*, (Faversham: Saint Albert's Press, 2004).
Medieval Carmelite Heritage	Adrian Staring, O.Carm., *Medieval Carmelite Heritage* (Rome: Institutum Carmelitanum, 1989), 44-48.

INTRODUCTION

Carmelite origins

When the crusader forces conquered Jerusalem in 1099, to great acclaim throughout Christendom, it was thought that the Latin kingdom then established would endure for centuries, thus preserving the Holy Land in Christian hands. However, this was not to be the case, and it was not long before the Moslem forces, regrouping under their new leader Saladin, inflicted a disastrous defeat on the Christian army at the Battle of Hattim in 1187. Once again, the whole of the Holy Land was under Moslem control and it was only in the Lebanon that the surviving crusaders could find refuge. With the arrival of the Third Crusade, led by Richard the Lionheart from England and Philip II from France, a determined effort was made to recapture as much of the Holy Land as possible. Acre fell to the crusading forces in 1192, and Richard led a campaign which regained control of a narrow coastal strip down to Ascalon. This area remained under Christian control until the final assault and fall of Acre to the Moslem forces in 1292.

Within the confines of the coastal strip was the mountain range of Mount Carmel overlooking the bay of Haifa, and it provided one of the few places where those Christians seeking to live as hermits could find solitude in relative safety. Following the recapture of Acre, a few of them began to gather around the well of Elijah on Mount Carmel. Some time between 1206-1214, they sent a deputation down to the patriarch of Jerusalem, Albert Avogadro, then resident in Acre, asking for him to draw up some guidelines for them so that they could live together as a community. He provided them with a *formula vitae*, or 'way of life', and gave them his blessing.[1] The small community flourished and grew in size. After the death of Albert, the community sought some permissions and approval of their way of life from Rome, which were granted by Honorius III in a bull dated 1226, and by Gregory IX in two bulls dated 1226 and 1229.[2]

Relations with the surrounding Moslem kingdoms were never easy and increasing attacks on the small Latin kingdom led some of the hermits to move away from Mount Carmelin search of safer places. A foundation was made in Cyprus around 1235, and then other hermits returned to Europe, founding houses in Messina in Sicily and Les Aygalades near Marseilles in France around 1238. Carmelite hermits arrived at Hulne and Aylesford in England in 1242. In Europe, though, the hermits found new problems. The fact that they were unknown in the West, and their strange dress (they wore a striped cloak), meant that many bishops were reluctant to have them in their dioceses or to grant them permission to undertake any public functions. So the new Order had to struggle for survival. A sequence of petitions to Rome led to the issue of some papal documents from Innocent IV in their support, which urged the bishops to foster the new arrivals. A change of name from the 'hermits of Mount Carmel' to the 'brothers of the blessed Mary of Mount Carmel' also helped their image. Then, in 1247, a general chapter was convened in Aylesford, and it sent a delegation to the pope seeking formal approval of the Order's 'way of life'. Later the same year, after seeking advice from two Dominicans, pope Innocent IV gave his approval, and Albert's document – subject to certain small modifications and amendments – be-

1 The 'way of life' received by Albert is given in Ribot's work, see Book 8, Chapter 3.
2 *Bullarium Carm.*, i, 2-4.

came a formal Rule.[3] This marked the beginning of a rapid expansion for the Order. The total of 17 houses in 1250 was effectively doubled by 1260 (to 33) and quadrupled by 1270 (to 69).

However, this growth, which was matched by many other new orders, raised serious disquiet among the bishops and diocesan clergy. The result was a call for a general council which met at Lyons in 1274. The previous general council of the Lateran in 1215 had issued a ban on any new orders, but this was never fully implemented. So, among the points on the agenda for the bishops at Lyons was a proposal to suppress all religious orders founded since 1215. After due deliberation this proposal was accepted, with the exception of the Franciscan and Dominican Orders who were considered to be of great use to the Church. As for the Carmelites and the Augustinians, there was some doubt as to their status, so they were left as they were pending a further decision.[4]

This threat to their survival aroused serious concern among the Carmelites, and a few years later at a general chapter in 1281 they launched a campaign to secure permanent approval from the Holy See.[5] An international study house was established at Paris, the leading university of the time, so as to enable Carmelites from throughout the Order to gain academic degrees and especially doctorates. This would enhance the Order's usefulness to the Church by providing scholarly theologians, as well as candidates for bishoprics and other offices. The first Carmelite to gain his doctorate in Paris was Gerard of Bologna in 1295, and English Carmelites were incepting at Oxford and Cambridge at around the same time.[6] The prior general, Pierre Millau, began writing to important figures throughout the world asking for their support for the Order. A letter to king Edward I of England survives which mentions, in passing, that the Order was founded in honour of Mary. This is the first time this claim is made, and it ignores the fact that Mary is nowhere mentioned in the Rule.[7] Two further letters written in support of the Carmelites survive, both from the Holy Land, one signed by three bishops, and the other by the Grand Masters of the Templars and the Hospitallers.[8] The set of Constitutions issued by the 1281 general chapter contain an important opening paragraph which outlines the Order's origins. Here the claim is made that the Carmelite hermits on Mount Carmel were following in a continuous tradition of devout persons living there since the time of the prophet Elijah.[9] Finally a few years later, a campaign to change the unusual striped cloak for a more befitting pure white cloak was begun, and came to a successful conclusion when the pope approved the change in 1287.

These efforts to gain formal and permanent approval of the Order were effective.[10] The Carmelites were granted a succession of bulls culminating in 1326 when pope John XXII granted the Order all the same privileges as the Dominicans and Franciscans. From this point onwards, the Order flourished. It produced a number of very talented theologians

3 The text of his decree is found in Ribot's work which follows, Book 8, Chapter 7.

4 Ribot expounds on the decree of the council in Book 10, Chapter 7.

5 'Constitutiones Capituli Londinensis anni 1281', (ed.) Ludvico Saggi, O.Carm., *Analecta Ordinis Carmelitarum* 15 (1950) 203-245. The constitutions issued by this chapter are the earliest available. It is possible that some action was taken to gain support for the Order in the preceding chapter of 1278 but no records survive.

6 The evidence from Carmelite records is that it took 11-12 years after ordination to gain a doctorate. In addition, there was considerable expense involved which frequently called for financial support from generous sponsors. Humphrey Necton was the first Carmelite doctor at Cambridge and Peter Scaryngton or Swanington was the first at Oxford.

7 *Medieval Carmelite Heritage,* 44-48.

8 See Richard Copsey, O.Carm, "Two letters from the Holy Land" in *The Hermits from Mount Carmel*, 29-50 (text 42-50).

9 "Constitutiones Capituli Londinensis anni 1281", 208.

10 The documents have been reprinted in *Medieval Carmelite Heritage*, 54-70.

and other scholars, notably John Baconthorpe who lectured in Paris, Oxford, and Cambridge. By the latter part of the fourteenth century the Order was at its peak, and playing a significant part in national and international affairs. In England, the Order was prominent in its opposition to Wycliffe and the Lollards who followed him. However, the exaggerated claims put forward by the Carmelites in order to justify their approval, their foundation by Elijah and the claim that Mary was their special patron, began to cause offence among the other orders. A Franciscan attacked the Order's claims in Germany and was answered by the Carmelite John of Hildesheim in his *Dialogue between a detractor and a supporter* (c.1370). Then, a serious situation arose in Cambridge where students in the university created disturbances against the Carmelites. The Order was stopped from giving public lectures, and an appeal was made immediately to the chancellor for a public debate. How far the students were prompted by the other mendicant orders is not known, but it was a Dominican, John Stokes, who challenged the Carmelite claims in a hearing before the assembled doctors of the university. The Order was defended by its regent master, John Hornby, who arrived with all the papal bulls and old chronicles that he could find. Stokes attacked on three fronts, claiming that the Carmelites were not descended from Elijah, that they were not formally approved by the Church, and that the Mary in their title was not Mary the Mother of God (whom the Dominicans claimed as their own) but rather St. Mary of Egypt, a converted prostitute. In the debate, Hornby's arguments (which still survive) prevailed, and the chancellor issued a formal declaration in the Carmelites' favour.[11] This document was copied by the Order and rapidly distributed around the other provinces.

Felip Ribot and his *Ten Books*

It was against this scenario that, some time after 1379, a new Carmelite history emerged based on previously unknown documents.[12] The work was entitled *The Way of Life and Great Deeds of the Carmelites*, but was frequently referred to by the title of its first part, *The Book of the First Monks*. Its author was the provincial of Catalonia, Felip Ribot, who had written a number of other scholarly works.[13] Felip Ribot was a Catalan who joined the Order in Perelada. He gained a doctorate before 1372, but at which university is not known. King Pedro IV of Aragon sent Ribot's name to pope Gregory XI as a candidate for serving on the Inquisition in 1375. He was appointed provincial of Catalonia in 1379, and served in this office until his death in 1391.

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11 For an account of this debate and Hornby's arguments, see J. P. H. Clark, "A Defence of the Carmelite Order by John Hornby A.D. 1374" *Carmelus* 32 (1985) 73-98.

12 In dating Ribot's work, the fact that he signs himself as provincial of Catalonia implies that he wrote the work after 1379, the year of his appointment. Normally scholars give the latest date of composition as 1391, the year of his death, but the work is cited by Francesc Martí, a member of Ribot's own province, in his *Compendium veritatis immaculatae conceptionis Virginis Mariae Dei Genitricis*, which is known to have been written in Barcelona in 1390. Therefore, Ribot's work must have been in circulation some time before then. Fr. Adrian Staring believed that the copy of Ribot's work which Martí used is that which survives in Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, Ms. 779. [*Medieval Carmelite Heritage*, 270 n.13].

13 Ribot's other two surviving works have been edited by Jaume de Puig i Oliver in "El *Tractatus de haeresi et de infidelium incredulitate et de horum criminum iudice* de Felip Ribot, O.Carm.", *Arxiu de Textos Catalans Antics*, 1 (1982), 127-190; and "El *Tractatus de quatuor sensibus sacrae Scripturae* de Felip Ribot, O.Carm. (m. 1391)", *Arxiu de Textos Catalans Antics*, 16 (1997), 299-389.

In his prologue, Ribot claims that his treatise is compiled from four works written by various Carmelites during the Order's history. The first is an account entitled *The Book of the Institute of the First Monks who began under the Old Law and continue under the New, to Caprasius the monk*. This work, Ribot claims, was written by John, 44th bishop of Jerusalem, in 412 A.D., and it describes how the Order was founded by Elijah, and its history through the Old Testament up to the coming of Christ when all the Carmelites become Christians. Now there was a John, 44th bishop, who occupied the see of Jerusalem from 387-417. He was a supporter of Chrysostom and a friend of Rufinus. He entered into an argument with St. Jerome who accused him of sympathising with the Pelagians, and he was censured by the pope for not controlling the violence of the Pelagians. However, only in the Carmelites' imagination did the Order exist in 412 A.D. and Ribot has clearly concocted most of what he attributes to John.

Ribot's second source is Cyril, a hermit on Mount Carmel, who supposedly was writing around 1220. His short account which is written in the form of a letter to a "brother Eusebius" takes the history of the Carmelites through the Moslem occupation of the Holy Land and the arrival of the crusaders in 1099. He finishes by giving the text of the 'Way of Life' or Rule as received from Albert, the patriarch of Jerusalem. No Cyril features in the few Carmelite documents surviving from the Holy Land, but there is one possible link. Around the late 1290s, a group of Franciscans, probably in Paris, followers of Joachim of Fiore, produced a curious little work entitled *Oraculum Cirilli*.[14] This claims to contain a letter sent from 'Cyril, a hermit on Mount Carmel' to Joachim of Fiore asking for his interpretation of a text. Cyril had a vision while celebrating mass, in which an angel appeared to him and gave him two silver tablets containing a mysterious text. Cyril writes to Joachim asking for his help in interpreting this text, and the rest of the *Oraculum* consists of sections of this 'text' and its interpretation by Joachim.[15] The *Oraculum* came into Carmelite circles when it was found around 1340 by Pierre Maymet, a French Carmelite student in Paris, who transcribed the work and made it available to his confreres.

Ribot's third source is Sibert de Beka, a well-known German who entered the Carmelite Order in Cologne. He studied at Paris, where he gained his doctorate in 1316. He was chosen to chair a commission to revise the Carmelite ordinal which he produced in 1312, and this became the standard reference for Carmelite liturgical practice from then on. In 1317, Sibert was elected provincial and remained in office until he died in 1332. He was a very influential figure in the Order, lecturing at Paris for some years, even while provincial. He was a personal friend of pope John XXII and is credited with obtaining the bull of 21 November 1326 when the Order was given the same privileges as the Dominicans and Franciscans. He was one of the theologians consulted by the pope about the condemnation of Marsilius of Padua's *Defensor Pacis*, and on 24 January 1327 he presided at the ecclesiastical trial of Master Eckhart.[16]

Ribot claims to have found a commentary on the Rule by Sibert de Beka which explains the need for the formal approval of the Rule in 1247 and the reasons for the changes and modifications which were made. This commentary also contains the text of the Rule approved by pope Innocent IV.

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14 Paul Puir, "Oraculum Angelicum Cyrilli nebst dem Kommentar des pseudoJoachim", in K. Burdach, *Briefwechsel des Cola di Rienzo*, (Berlin, 1913-1929) vol. 2, pt. iv, 221-343.

15 In at least one copy of Ribot's work, Cyril's letter is addressed not to Eusebius but to the abbot Joachim [of Fiore], i.e. Lambeth Palace Libr. Ms. 192.

16 For the details of Sibert's life, see the numerous references to him in F.-B. Lickteig, O.Carm., *The German Carmelites at the Medieval Universities*, (Rome: Institutum Carmelitanum, 1981).

Finally, Ribot transcribes a work entitled *William of Sandwich, hermit on Mount Carmel, A chronicle on the spread of the Carmelite Order through the regions of Syria and Europe and the loss of the monasteries in the Holy Land*. This work describes the experiences of the Order during the thirteenth century, the expansion of the Order in the Holy Land, the way in which the Carmelites were forced to migrate to Cyprus and Europe, and the final fall of the monasteries in the Holy Land into the hands of the Moslems. Again, William of Sandwich is a real character and his name appears as one of the definitors for the Holy Land at the general chapter held in Montpellier in 1287. However, nothing more is known about him and Ribot is the first to produce his chronicle.

The structure of Ribot's *Ten Books*

Books 1-7

Ribot adopts a very precise structure for his work. As stated, it is divided into 10 books, and each book consists of 8 chapters. Following an explanatory prologue, Books 1-7 contain the treatise of John 44th bishop of Jerusalem. Ribot claims that the large part of the text in these chapters is by John 44th, but Ribot has interspersed John's narrative with quotations from the Church Fathers (such as Augustine, Jerome, and Isidore), as well as more recent authors such as William of St. Thierry (the quotes from his *Golden Letter* are attributed by Ribot to St. Bernard, a common mistake in that period). The range of authorities quoted gives evidence of Ribot's scholarship, although some of the references are common among earlier Carmelite writers. Ribot himself (labelled as *Author*) has also added some explanatory paragraphs. John 44th's work is addressed to Caprasius, a monk on Mount Carmel, who begs him to explain the foundation of the Order and its early history, and the work was originally written in Greek.

Of the first seven books, Book 1 is an exegesis of a short text from the story of Elijah, taken from the Bible's *Books of the Kings*:

> The word of the Lord came to Elijah saying: Depart from here and go towards the East, and hide yourself in the wadi Carith, which is over against the Jordan, and there you will drink of the torrent, and I have commanded the ravens to feed you there. [1 *Kgs* 17:2-4].

The significance of this text is explained by God to someone who wants to be a monk, and it is revealed that each phrase forms an instruction on how to live the monastic life.

Books 2-4 then describe how Elijah formed the first community of Carmelites, his handing on of the leadership to Elisha and then the community's history during the Old Testament. The early Carmelites are called 'sons of the prophets' in the Bible, and various biblical personages are claimed as Carmelites, such as Jonah, Micah, Obadiah and the Rechabites.

Book 5 relates the coming of Christ and explains how John the Baptist lived as a Carmelite during his early years in the desert. Then, after preaching in the Jordan he returned to baptise them and inform them of the coming of Christ. The Order flourished and people joined from all nations. The Carmelites were in Jerusalem at the time of Christ's Ascension, and were present in the crowd at Pentecost. They were baptised by the apostles and began to preach the gospel.

Book 6 starts with an explanation of why the Order is devoted to Mary. The little cloud rising from the sea which Elijah saw from Mount Carmel is regarded as a symbol of Mary,

and the story is interpreted with typical medieval ingenuity to explain how this foretold the immaculate conception of Mary, her vow of perpetual virginity, the time at which she would be born, and the incarnation of her son. In honour of the Virgin Mary, the Carmelites built a chapel on Mount Carmel in 83 AD. The last part of this book deals with the various titles of the Order, such as 'sons of the prophets', 'monks', 'hermits', 'anchorites', down to 'Carmelites' and 'brothers of the blessed virgin Mary of Mount Carmel'.

Book 7, the last of John's treatise, deals with the habit. It explains in general why the monk wears a habit, and then explains the symbolism of each part of the Carmelite habit. When dealing with the cloak, John explains that the Carmelites started with a white cloak, a copy of that worn by Elijah. Then, after the arrival of the Moslems, they were forced to stop wearing it because the Moslem *satraps* wore white as a sign of office, and so the Carmelites had to adopt the striped cloak instead. Only after their arrival in Europe were they able to return to the white cloak once again.

Books 8-10

Book 8 contains two short works: the account written by Cyril, "a hermit on Mount Carmel", of the history of the Order from the arrival of the Moslems up to the giving of the first form of the Rule by the patriarch Albert; and a commentary on the approved Rule written by Sibert de Beka. Cyril's history is in the form of a letter to "brother Eusebius" and occupies Chapters 1 and 2 of Book 8. In Chapter 1, Cyril relates how the Carmelites survived under Moslem rule but were forced to change their white cloak for a striped one, and then in Chapter 2 how they were first formed into a community with a prior by Aymeric of Salignac, patriarch of Antioch. Aymeric also arranged for the book of John 44th to be translated into Latin as the Carmelites no longer knew Greek. This narrative forms the introduction to the text of the Rule as given by the patriarch of Jerusalem, Albert, which forms Chapter 3.[17] The authorship of Chapter 4 is not stated, but it is almost certainly Ribot speaking for himself as he explains how all the clauses in the Rule given by Albert can be found at least implicitly in John 44th. Sibert de Beka's commentary starts in Chapter 4 and is intended to explain why the Carmelites sought approval of their Rule in 1247. The danger for the Carmelites was that this approval would be seen by their enemies as the first time that the Rule was approved by a pope, and so Sibert is at pains to show that the initiative was taken by the Carmelites, not because they needed formal approval but because there were some points unclear in Albert's text, and also that since the transfer to the West they needed to have some of its conditions mitigated. Chapter 5 goes through these changes in detail, explaining the reason for each one. Chapter 7 then gives the full text of the Rule as approved by Innocent IV, evidently taken from an official copy as it includes the formal introduction from the papal register. Chapter 8 would again appear to be a postscript by Ribot as it contains extracts from a series of later papal bulls confirming the Church's approval of the Carmelite Rule.

Book 9 is the chronicle by William of Sandwich. This describes the way in which the Order flourished in the Holy Land during the Latin kingdom. It explains how the Order grew and multiplied, and Chapter 2 gives a list of supposed foundations made by the Order throughout the Holy Land and further north in the regions of Lebanon and Antioch. In Chapter 3, William explains that, due to the continual attacks of the Moslems, some houses were lost, and the Order began seeking to make foundations in safer places, first in

[17] If it is genuine, this text by Ribot is the only copy of the early rule given by Albert. Most scholars are inclined to think this is a genuine text, although where Ribot obtained it is unknown.

Cyprus, and then Europe. Chapters 4 and 5 describe the Carmelites' expansion through Europe and some of the problems encountered from the bishops. Chapter 6 is devoted to an account of a miracle in which St. Louis of France is rescued from shipwreck during a storm near Acre after praying to Mary. As the storm calms, he hears the bells of the monastery on Mount Carmel calling the hermits to matins. After docking in Acre, he goes up to the monastery and, impressed by the holiness of the hermits there, he brings a group of them back to France, giving them a house on the outskirts of Paris. Chapter 7 describes further problems encountered in Europe, and then Chapter 8 finishes the work with an account of the fall of the Holy Land, the capture of Acre, and the massacre of the remaining hermits on Mount Carmel, as they sung the *Salve regina*.

Book 10 concludes Ribot's masterpiece with an account of approvals of the Rule by later popes, and privileges granted to the Order, such as exemption from local episcopal jurisdiction. Then Ribot details at length how the Order is approved both in divine law (Chapter 5) and in canon law (Chapter 6). Finally, Chapters 7 and 8 deal with the thorny problem of the decree issued by the Second Council of Lyons, which stated that the Carmelites and Augustinians may remain in their present state until decided otherwise. Ribot's argument, which is standard among Carmelite apologists of the period, is based on the Latin wording of the decree which states: "in suo solito statu volumus permanere" (we wish them to remain in their present or customary state). Ribot argues that the text is wrong and should be "in suo solido statu volumus permanere" (we wish them to remain in a secure or stable state). This difference of one single letter in the Latin has enormous significance for the Order. In fact, due to Carmelite persistence, pope John XXII gave full recognition to the Order and decreed in his text, "in statu firmo, solido et stabili decrevimus et volumus permanere" (we decree and wish them to remain in a firm, secure and stable state).

The whole work ends with a postscript by Ribot which recaps the contents.

Critical analysis

The major problem surrounding Ribot's work is that none of the texts which he transcribes are referred to by other Carmelite historians of the period. None of the earlier chronicles and histories of the Order mention texts by John 44th. or Cyril, or William of Sandwich. Sibert de Beka is the best known of Ribot's sources, but nobody else has ever heard of him writing a commentary on the Rule, although his composition of such a work would be quite feasible. In fact, none of the texts transcribed by Ribot have ever been found outside of Ribot's own work. A chronicle such as that by William of Sandwich would have been enormously popular among the early Carmelites, but it has never been found in a manuscript by itself. All Ribot's four sources are found only in his composition.

On its date alone, the treatise of John 44th has to be rejected as spurious. Similarly, the letter of Cyril is so fantastical in its account of the Carmelites living under Moslem rule and their formation into a community by Aymeric of Salignac that it too must be fiction. Sibert de Beka's commentary on the Rule could possibly be genuine, and it is the sort of work which he could have composed. However, the style of the text, and the way in which the work so clearly complements Ribot's argument, arouse considerable suspicion about its authenticity. The fact that it has never been noticed or found in a separate form would seem to confirm that it is another composition by Ribot himself. Finally, the chronicle by William of Sandwich has lots of genuine information on the Holy Land, but the list of Carmelite foundations there, for example, must be fictitious, as many of these areas were

back under Moslem control before the Carmelites began, and the accounts of the miracle experienced by St. Louis (which is unknown in the contemporary accounts of his crusade) and the final massacre of the hermits singing the *Salve regina* bear all the marks of medieval legendary invention.

So, almost the whole of Ribot's work would seem to be his own composition. One part, though, Book 1, would seem to be adapted from a pre-existing text. This little biblical exegesis on the life of the monk almost certainly comes from some other source. Its style is different from the following six books attributed to John 44th. The succeeding books contain quotations from the Fathers and passages by Ribot himself, whilst Book 1 (Chapters 2-8), in contrast, contains only references taken from scripture. The writer is so immersed in the scripture that many paragraphs are little more than sequences of biblical quotations. Each chapter in this book has a definite structure which is missing from the chapters in later books. Each chapter starts with an exposition of a phrase from the scriptural text and expounds its meaning. Then the second half of the chapter is addressed to the monk himself and identifies the significance of this phrase for his own monastic vocation. There is no specific Carmelite element in these chapters, and no mention of any of the later themes, such as how Elijah formed a community of disciples, etc. Chapter 1 is clearly an introduction by Ribot himself, but Chapters 2-8 can be separated out as a little self-contained treatise which has no links with any other part of Ribot's work. In fact, Book 2, Chapter 1 covers the same ground as Book 1, with many of the same ideas. In Book 2, Chapter 1, however, there are quotations from the Fathers such as Isidore, Jerome, and Cassian. The fact that this initial chapter in Book 2 does not refer to Book 1, where the same theme has been treated at great length, lends further argument to the hypothesis that Ribot found the text of Book 1 elsewhere and added it after starting Book 2. Discovering where Ribot found this treatise, or whether he composed it himself on a separate occasion, would need further study.

Clearly the rest of the treatise attributed to John 44th is largely Ribot's invention, although he has taken and developed ideas from elsewhere. The identification of Mary with the cloud is earlier than Ribot, and is found in the Fathers.[18] The complicated exegesis of this passage into a prediction of Mary's immaculate conception and the date of Christ's incarnation bears all the marks of a passage adapted from elsewhere. Similarly, the contents of Book 7 and its exposition of the significance of the habit would have been a passage commonly used for the instruction of novices.[19]

Significance of Ribot's composition

It is difficult nowadays to appreciate the significance of Ribot's composition. It appeared out of the blue, so to speak, and astounded the whole Order. Here was a magnificent 'history' of the Carmelites, apparently confirming all the Order's early history and based, seemingly, on impeccable sources. From this moment onwards, Ribot's work became the sourcebook and 'bible' for all Carmelite writing. Thomas Netter, the provincial of England and the outstanding Carmelite theologian of the period, wrote to the prior general a few years after the composition's emergence begging for a copy of the work to be sent to him,[20] and Netter refers to it in his magisterial work, *Doctrinale Antiquitatum Fidei Catholicae Ecclesiae*.[21] Ribot's work was translated into English by

18 Kevin Alban, O.Carm. is currently researching this theme.

19 In fact, one is suspicious that after Book 5, Ribot ran out of ideas on the history of the Order, and Chapters 6 and 7 are slight diversions to fill out his narrative. It is likely that these chapters were taken, at least in part, from pre-existing works or sermons.

Thomas Scrope around 1435 whilst Scrope was an anchorite in the Carmelite house in Norwich.[22]

The figures mentioned in the work rapidly acquired other legendary details about their lives. Miracles were credited to John 44th, and the Caprasius to whom his work is addressed becomes prior on Mount Carmel for 42 years and dies in 464 AD. Cyril, with his correspondent Eusebius, were credited with the conversion of Armenia after ten years of missionary work there. He and Eusebius then retired to the Holy Land and became Carmelites, Cyril was elected prior on Mount Carmel and third prior general, whilst Eusebius became prior at the Carmelite monastery on the Black Mountain near Antioch.

William of Sandwich is credited with living in the Holy Land from 1254 and dying in 1291 soon after his escape from Acre, just before its fall, but having had time enough to finish his chronicle.

Many of the stories in Ribot's work are quoted extensively elsewhere, and his vision of the Order coloured Carmelite spirituality for centuries to come. In fact, it is Ribot's portrait of Elijah which transforms the prophet's status from a brief mention in the first chapter of histories of the Carmelites into becoming a significant spiritual figure in Carmelite life.

A copy of Ribot's work, translated into Spanish, was in the convent of the Incarnation in Avila, and was read by St. Teresa of Jesus in that town. It gave her a vision of how the Order had lived during the early years of its existence and was a seminal influence on her ideas for the reform of the Carmelite Order.[23]

Sadly, it was only in the twentieth century, as the Order's historians developed more scientific approaches, that a critical attitude was adopted to Ribot's composition, even though outsiders such as the Bollandists and others had long raised doubts about it. In spite of the evident fiction of much of its contents, Carmelites were reluctant to confess defeat over its historicity. Fr. Benedict Zimmerman, OCD, was severely criticised by one of his confreres when he dared to doubt the Order's foundation by Elijah. Fr. Norman Werling, O.Carm., in his M.A. thesis for the Catholic University of America in 1946, "The Date of the *Institution*", argued that the work was written between 1247 and 1287.[24] At the time this was one step closer to the truth, though his conclusions have long been super-

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20 Thomas Netter mentions the work in two of his letters to the prior general. The letters are not dated but must have been written before June 1425:
"May you also deign to let me have through him the work of John XLIV addressed to the monk Caprasius, or another of the requested books if you have any, at my expense." [letter 27]
"Finally, I ask you, and many other people with me, to have the book of John XLIV to the monk Caprasius copied at our expense, a book which would be of great value and honour to us if it could be purchased for us in ancient script." [letter 28]

21 See Thomas Netter, O.Carm., *Doctrinale Antiquitatum Fidei Catholicae Ecclesiae*, (ed.) Bonanventura Blanciotti, O. Carm., (Venice, 1759), iii, 573-579.

22 London, Lambeth Palace Library, Ms. 192, which contains a Latin copy of the work followed by Scrope's translation. Dr. Valerie Edden is currently editing Scrope's translation for publication. For details, see Valerie Edden, "The prophetycal lyf of an heremyte': Elijah as the Model of the Contemplative Life in *The Book of the First Monks*', in E. A. Jones, (ed.), *The Medieval Mystical Tradition in England: Exeter Symposium VII*, (Woodbridge, Suffolk: D. S. Brewer, 2004), 149-161. On Ribot's reception within the wider context of vernacular Carmelite literature in medieval England, see Johan Bergström-Allen, *'Heremitam et Ordinis Carmelitarum': a Study of the Vernacular Theological Literature Produced by Medieval English Whitefriars, particularly Richard Misyn, O.Carm.*, (unpublished M. Phil. Thesis, University of Oxford, 2002). For a recent study of Ribot's significance, see Andrew Jotischky, *The Carmelites and Antiquity: Mendicants and their Pasts in the Middle Ages*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002). On the place of Ribot's work in the development of the Order's Elijan tradition, see Jane Ackerman, *Elijah, Prophet of Carmel*, (Washington D. C.: ICS Publications, 2003).

23 This manuscript is preserved in the Carmelite archives in Saint Albert's International Centre (CISA) in Rome, and was used in the preparation of the Latin text of Books 8-10 for this translation.

24 Werling's thesis was printed in *The Sword*, 13 (1949), 275-334.

seded. By the 1950s, even Carmelite scholars accepted that the work was a fabrication, although they debated whether parts of it were genuine. In 1991, the Latin text of the first seven books was edited by Paul Chandler, O.Carm., in his doctoral thesis, "The *Liber de Institucione et Peculiaribus Gestis Religiosorum Carmelitarum in Lege Veteri Exortorum et in Nova Perseverancium ad Caprasium Monachum* by Felip Ribot, O.Carm.". Chandler's research marked the beginning of more intensive study of the work, and a more critically objective understanding of its composition.[25] However, there is still much research to be done on its composition and in identifying the sources used by Ribot. Considerable discussion among scholars continues, but few of their findings have appeared in print as yet.

The Latin Text

The initial success of Ribot's work led to it being copied widely, and Paul Chandler traced ten early manuscript copies for his critical edition.[26] In 1507 the work was printed for the first time in the *Speculum Carmelitanum*, edited by Battista Cathaneis, O.Carm. (Venice, 1507). This ensured a wider dissemination of the work, but Cathaneis' text suffers from many errors.

The work was printed again in the series *Maxima Bibliotheca Veterum Patrum* (original edition, 1589; seventh edition, Lyons, 1677), which was edited by Marguarin de la Bigne.[27] He wanted to present it as the work of John 44th bishop of Jerusalem, but Ribot's book contained later material and numerous quotations from the Latin Fathers which could not have been part of the supposed Greek original, plus the sections by Ribot himself. Therefore, de la Bigne 'reconstructed' the primitive text by eliminating all the supposed interpolations. With all these excisions, de la Bigne was forced to abandon Ribot's structure for the work and to divide the remaining text into 41 chapters. This partial text was in turn based on the version that de la Bigne found in the *Speculum Carmelitanum*, which itself was a poor copy. De la Bigne's version of the work was very influential, because it was published in the prestigious and widely circulated *Bibliotheca Patrum,* the first great collection of writings of the Fathers, and it formed the basis of a number of translations. However, its mutilated text has created many problems of interpretation even up to the present.

It was only with the appearance of Paul Chandler's thesis that a critical edition of the first seven books became available. However, his partial approach again removed Ribot's original structure of ten books which form an organic whole.

Existing translations of the text

Over the years, there have been many partial translations of Ribot's work into different languages. However, they have all suffered from the fact that no critical edition of the Latin text existed, and in many cases they focussed exclusively on the treatise of John 44th, to the exclusion of the other parts of Ribot's work. In 1940, Norman Werling produced a translation of the treatise of John 44th.[28] However, due to the Second World War, the only text Werling had available in the U.S.A. was the de la Bigne edition where, of course, all the chapter headings are different and a large part of the text is missing. Translations in other languages, such as R. Mollinck and Irenaeus Rosier's Dutch version,[29] and that by Valentino di San José,[30] suffered from the same lack of a complete text.

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25 See *Chandler thesis*. Sadly, Chandler's thesis has not yet been published.

26 These are listed in *Chandler thesis*.

27 *Maxima Bibliotheca Veterum Patrum* (original edition, 1589; seventh edition, Lyons, 1677).

28 This was published in *The Sword*, 4, (1940), 20-24, 152-160, 309-320; 5, (1941), 20-27, 131-139, 241-248; 6, (1942), 33-39, 147-155, 278-286, 347-355.

Book 1, with its more mystical theme and its advice for the monk, was instantly popular, and was translated by itself or with the first one or two chapters of Book 2. Small pamphlets with only this part of Ribot's work have appeared in Dutch (1948, 1971), English (1969, 1974), French (1945-1954), German (1980), Italian (1946, 1951, 1983, 1986), and Portuguese (1983).[31]

More recently, a translation into Italian by Edmundo Coccia of Paul Chandler's critical text of the first seven books has appeared.[32] This is a carefully prepared and nicely presented book, but sadly, by limiting itself to the first seven books it continues the impression that John 44th's treatise has an existence as an independent entity. This has never been the case, and such an approach obscures Ribot's original intention.

All the above translations have focussed on the supposed treatise by John 44th and completely ignored the last three of Ribot's books. Luckily, the chronicle of William of Sandwich was translated into English by Jude Cattelona some years ago.[33] The text of the Albertan Rule in Book 8 has also received a lot of attention from scholars, and it is often included in one form or another in books on the Carmelite Rule. The remainder of Book 8 and Book 10 have been almost completely ignored.

The present translation

For the purpose of the translation into English which follows, Paul Chandler's Latin text was used for the first seven books. For the last three books, the Latin text had to be constructed from a number of sources. Some parts have appeared in print, although with varying degrees of trustworthiness, and they are listed in the footnote below.[34] For the remainder, and as a check on the printed versions, recourse has been made to three manuscript copies. These were:

Rome, Biblioteca del Teresianum, Ms. 69.
London, Lambeth Palace Library, Ms. 192.
Rome, Archives of the Carmelite Order (A.O.C., II.C.O.II.35), Ms. from the Incarnacion, Avila.

In addition, these have been checked against the two printed editions (accepting their imperfections):

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29 R. Mollink, O.Carm. and Irenaeus Rosier, O.Carm., *Het Boek over de Ersten Monniken,* Merkelbeek [1943], (mimeographed).

30 Anon. [Valentino de San José, OCD], *Libro de la institución de los primeros monjes fundados en el antiguo testamento y que perseveran en el nuevo, por Juan Nepote Silvano, obispo XLIV de Jerusalén, traducido al latín por Aymerico, patriarca de Antioquía, y del latín al castellano por un carmelita discalzo, y Carta de san Cirilo Constantinopolitano, traducida al castellano*, (Avila 1959).

31 The translations are all listed in *Chandler thesis*.

32 Felip Ribot, *Istituzione e gesta dei primi monachi*, a cura di Edmondo Coccia, (Vatican: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2002).

33 Book 9 was translated by Jude Cattelona, O. Carm., in *The Sword*, 3, (1939), 365-368, 479-487.

34 Book 8, Chapters 1-2: 'Epistola Sancti Cyrilli', (ed.) Gabriel Wessels, O.Carm., *Analecta Ordinis Carmelitarum*, 3, (1914-1916), 279-286.
Book 8, Chapter 3: Bruno Secondin, O.Carm., *La Regola del Carmelo. Per una nuova interpretazione*, (Rome: Quaderni di 'Presenza del Carmelo', 1982), appendice 1, pp. 91-97.
Book 8, Chapters 3, 5-6 (incomplete): "Regula Primitiva O. N. et Mutationes Innocentii IV", (ed.) Gabriel Wessels, O.Carm., *Analecta Ordinis Carmelitarum*, 3, (1914-1916), 212-223.
Book 8, Chapter 7: Carlo Cicconetti, O.Carm., *La Regola del Carmelo*: *origine - natura - significato*, (Rome: Institutum Carmelitanum, 1973), 201-205.

Speculum Carmelitanum, (ed.) Battista Cathaneis, (Venice, 1507), fos. 2-42.
Speculum Carmelitanum, (ed.) Daniel a Virgine Maria (Antwerp, 1680), i, 7-114.

The final Latin text is as accurate as possible, taking into account the limited number of manuscripts which were available for consultation.

The starting point for the English text was some photocopied pages which were circulated at a conference held in Washington D.C. These contained the first part of a projected translation by Paul Chandler of the first seven books. The remainder were taken from Norman Werling's translation of the de la Bigne edition of John 44th's treatise where, of course, all the chapter headings were different and a significant part of the text missing. In addition, there was the translation of the chronicle of William of Sandwich by Jude Cattelona. This latter translation, together with the Chandler/Werling composite text, was all that was available when the present translator compiled a volume of early Carmelite documents in English for use by student friars in the British province of Carmelites. This compilation was well received, and led to a request from the prior general, Joseph Chalmers, for the collection to be made available in a printed form so that it could be more widely available, especially for those engaged in the training of young Carmelites. At present, a new enlarged collection of texts is being prepared for publication.[35] When the question arose of including Ribot's work in this collection, an incomplete translation was not really an option; the work is so significant that it was time for a full text in English to be made available. So the project to produce a new translation of the whole of Ribot's *Ten Books* took root.

Although advantage was taken of existing translations where available, the whole of this translation has been compared with the Latin original, and the final English text – after extensive corrections and revisions – is my responsibility alone. However, I am deeply grateful to all those Carmelites whose earlier labours made my work so much easier.[36]

In Ribot's text, there are some problems with the exact translations of his technical Latin words into English. Ribot uses, for example, a variety of words to refer to the Carmelite Order (*institutio*, *religio*, *ordo*, etc.), just as its members are given diverse nomenclatures (*monachi*, *professores*, *heremiti*, *filii prophetarum*, *cenobiti*, etc.). It is not possible to translate each of these with a separate English word, and I am not sure that Ribot always uses them in a technically accurate sense.[37] There are instances when Ribot seems to be using a different term simply to lend variety to his text. Although Catholics do use the word 'religious' to refer to members of a religious order, I have tried to avoid using this word as it is often misunderstood by those who come from other denominational backgrounds or from none at all. In general, I have chosen English words which give the sense of Ribot's ideas, rather than attempting to slavishly follow his exact choice of Latin terms.

A particular difficulty is caused by the word *institutio*, which in Latin means not only the founding or creation of a group but also its way of life, rules and customs. The English word 'institute' does not do the Latin justice. So I have felt free to use 'way of life' or 'foundation' or some other term depending on the sense of the passage. Those who wish to do a more technical study of the words used by Ribot will, of course, refer to the Latin text.

Then there is the title! For years, the work has commonly been called *The Book of the First Monks*, but this is not the title given it by Felip Ribot. Ribot's Latin title is more cor-

35 Translations of many of the Carmelite documents cited in the footnotes will be included in this collection, *Early Carmelite Documents*, to be printed by Saint Albert's Press.

36 I am particularly grateful here to Paul Chandler for allowing me to make use of his translation of Book 1 and Book 2, Chapter 1. This is part of his own projected translation, which will contain all the scholarly apparatus.

37 These terms are listed individually in the Index, but should not be regarded as definitive nomenclature.

rectly rendered as *The Ten Books of the Way of Life* (or Institute) *and Great Deeds of the Carmelites*. The *Book of the First Monks* is an abbreviation of the title of John 44th's treatise given at the beginning of Book 1, Chapter 1, that is, *The Book of the Institute of the First Monks which began under the Old Law and continues under the New, to Caprasius the monk*. But this title applies only to Books 1-7 and occurs underneath the opening line of Book 1, which has the introduction: *Here begins Book 1 of the Way of Life and Great Deeds of the Carmelite monks*.[38] After a long deliberation, I feel that Felip Ribot was clear about what he wanted the title to be and that he should have his way. So, his original title has been used at the front of this book, but in order to prevent any confusion, I have left *The Book of the First Monks* as a subtitle.

Although advantage has been taken of modern editions of the Bible when translating the scripture quotations, the Vulgate text frequently differs from the modern versions and Ribot's quotations have their own idiosyncrasies. This has often made it necessary to translate the Latin afresh in order to reflect the nuances intended by Ribot or by one of his supposed authors. The scripture references reflect modern conventions and so the numbering of the Psalms and the titles of the books of Samuel and Kings have been adjusted. As might be expected in a medieval work, the scripture references abound, so where there is a sequence of references in a single paragraph, these have been grouped together into one footnote in order to reduce the number.

For the other footnotes, I have benefited from the researches of Paul Chandler and other scholars. However, I have not felt it appropriate to include all the references to similar passages in works by the Church Fathers unless these add to the understanding. On occasion, though, I have added further notes, particularly where there are links to other earlier Carmelite writings which have probably influenced Ribot. It is important to realise that Ribot's work did not appear out of nothing, but was a culmination of a series of Carmelite historical works (and imagination) over the previous 100 years or more. Ribot's quotations from the Church Fathers and other authors are mostly used to support his legendary history of the Carmelites, so his interpretation of them can be somewhat partisan. As with the scripture quotations, even though published translations exist, it has frequently been necessary to translate the Latin quotations afresh so as to preserve the particular slant of Ribot's argument. In general, the footnotes list published translations where available; otherwise, the footnote indicates the part of the work where the quotation can be found and scholarly readers will need to refer to the standard modern patristic collections, such as *Corpus Christianorum* or *Sources chrètiennes*.

Postscript

My thanks are due here to the members of the Indonesian Carmelite province who invited me to go to Indonesia in the summer of 2004 to give their annual retreat based on Ribot's book. It was their interest and encouragement which gave me a great stimulus to finish the first draft of this translation. The community in the Carmelite house in Malang, in particular, gave me the warmest of welcomes, looked after all my needs, and provided me with space, time and an air-conditioned room in which to complete the major part of this translation. To all of the members of this province, true Carmelite brothers, I owe an enormous debt of gratitude.

[38] The title chosen by Paul Chandler for his thesis curiously combines both of Ribot's titles together, "The *Liber de Institucione et Peculiaribus Gestis Religiosorum Carmelitarum in Lege Veteri Exortorum et in Nova Perseverancium ad Caprasium Monachum*", which confuses the whole situation.

For the greatness of this work,
I give thanks to the Holy Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
the almighty and eternal God, my creator, redeemer and sanctifier
who has guided me from the beginning of this work,
leading me through the chapters right up to the end.
To whom be praise, honour, virtue and glory for ever and ever.
Amen.

Felip Ribot, Carmelite

THE TEN BOOKS

ON

THE WAY OF LIFE AND GREAT DEEDS

OF

THE CARMELITES

Ill. 3: The word of the Lord came to Elijah saying, “Depart from here and go towards the East, and hide yourself in the wadi Carith”. [1 *Kgs* 17:2-3]

PROLOGUE

Here begins the prologue to the Ten Books on the way of life and great deeds of the Carmelites.

The Lord held the people of Israel in a special place in his affection for as he says of them in *Exodus*, Chapter 4: "Israel is my firstborn son", and unlike other nations, God treated them like a beloved son and through his servant Moses gave them the great wisdom of the law, so that they might understand well God's will and having understood it, put it into practice, as the prophet says in Psalm 147: "He declares his word to Jacob, his statutes and his laws to Israel; he has not dealt thus with any other nation nor he has revealed his laws to them." But the people, glorying in the fact that they could trace their human descent from Abraham, trusted that this ancestry was sufficient for their salvation without needing to imitate Abraham's deeds; which trust our Lord rejected when he said to them in *John* Chapter 8: "If you were the sons of Abraham, then you would do the works of Abraham". From this over-confidence, in fact, the people not only failed to follow Moses' law, as our Lord said to them in *John* Chapter 7: "Moses gave you the law and yet none of you keeps the law"; also they neglected to study the law and to seek to understand it. As a result, God's anger was kindled, as king Josiah says in the fourth book of *Kings*, Chapter 22: "Great is the wrath of the Lord that is kindled against us, because our fathers have not obeyed the words of this book, to do according to all that is written concerning us."[39]

But just as the Israelite people, before all other people, were taught by God through Moses about the great wisdom of the law, so the Carmelite monks before all other men of the Israelite people were instructed by God through the prophet Elijah about the special writings and rules of the monastic life. They should, though, lest they incur God's wrath, not boast that they have so great a prophet as this as the author and founder of their Order, but rather they should strive to imitate the life of this prophet, to study and understand his teachings and the rules of this Order, and to copy his deeds.

And as they seek with all speed to understand and to do this, I, brother Philip Ribot, doctor in sacred scripture and prior provincial of the province of Catalonia of this Order, have consulted and studied with careful attention and edited into one volume all that the early fathers of this Order have written truthfully of its first way of life, of the teachings of Elijah, and of the progress of the Order both during the time of the Old Law and then under the New, until in our own days it has spread throughout the different regions of Europe.

I was greatly guided in this work by four of the earlier fathers who had taken care to write conscientiously about our history. The first of whom, called John, was a hermit on Mount Carmel and afterwards bishop of Jerusalem. Taking great care, he was the first to write about the founding of this Order and the wonderful works of the founder and the first members of our Order. He lived at the time of the emperors Arcadius and Honorius.[40]

The second, called Cyril, was a prophet and hermit on Mount Carmel. He wrote about the things which happened to our Order from the time of John up to the composition of the Order's Rule. He lived during the time of the emperor Henry VI.[41]

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39 *Ex* 4:22; *Ps* 147:19; *Jn* 8:39; *Jn* 7:19; 2 *Kgs* 22:13.

40 Honorius Flavius and Arcadius Flavius were the two sons of the Roman emperor Theodosius. Honorius ruled the western part of the empire from 395-423, whilst Arcadius ruled the eastern part from 395-408.

41 Henry VI was Holy Roman Emperor from 1191-1197.

The third, called William of Sandwich, was a hermit on Mount Carmel. He wrote a chronicle about the spread of our Order through the provinces of Syria and Europe, and of the loss of the monasteries in the Holy Land. He lived during the time of emperor Rudolf.[42]

The fourth, called Sibert de Beka, a doctor in sacred scripture, wrote a tract commenting on the Rule of this Order. He lived during the time of emperor Henry VII.[43]

Thus the present volume is entitled *The Book of the Way of Life and Great Deeds of the Carmelites*, and is composed using the writings of the said fathers of this Order, whose writings at times correspond with passages cited from other authorities, saints or other trusted authors. In this volume, all that follows immediately after the citing of any author are the actual words written by the author cited, even if in a different chapter they are subsequently attributed to another writer. Now, as I am well aware that every passage of human eloquence is always subject to criticism and contradiction by rivals, I have endeavoured to identify with red lettering the authors and books from which the passages and arguments quoted in this book have been taken, so that everyone may read them in their original source before rejecting them. For as blessed Isidore says in the second book of his *Soliloquies*: "When the written text is not examined in detail, some go on the attack entangled in a labyrinth of errors, because they judge before having understood, they accuse before having read and reread the text."[44] In this work, I referred to myself only occasionally when no greater authority could be found, lest the order of the narrative or its development should be impeded.

My main reason for composing this volume was because of the dispersion of these texts and references which, until now, have never been collected together so that they may be read in one volume, even though the way of life and history of our Order are not fully covered. However, in this volume, in abridged form, arranged in separate ordered books, the origins of this Order and its way of life and history and its standing are described clearly enough.

Now the present work is separated into ten books or parts, each one of which is divided into eight chapters, and each book is headed by a brief preface which gives a summary of the contents of the whole book and of each of its chapters.

The first book explains the way of life of this Order as it was put forward by God to the prophet Elijah to be lived, and is described by lord John, the bishop of Jerusalem.

The second book reveals how Elijah lived out this way of life, and how he brought together and retained disciples to live in the same way.

The third book deals with the places where the first members of this Order lived, and how they reached perfection through this way of life in them.

The fourth book deals with the ascent of Elijah into paradise, and how this Order, after his departure, was led by Elisha and preserved from the Jewish captivity.

The fifth book treats of the time when the members of this Order were first baptised, and of the men who baptised them and led them to a knowledge of the Incarnate Word.

The sixth book lays out the titles of this Order and most importantly why its members are called the brothers of the blessed Mary.

The seventh book considers the habit of this Order and the reasons for its changes and differences.

42 Rudulf I of Hapsburg was king of Germany from 1273-1291.
43 Henry VII was Holy Roman Emperor from 1312-1313.
44 Actually not from Isidore but Gratian's *Decretals* D 29 c 1: *Friedberg*, i, 106.

The eighth book reveals the first authors to formulate this way of life and the Rule of our Order and of the correction, clarification and mitigation of that Rule.

The ninth book describes the growth of this Order across the provinces of Syria and Europe, and of the loss of the houses in the Holy Land.

The tenth book demonstrates the exempt status of this Order and the approval and confirmation given it.

In these ten books, it will be possible to learn enough of the truth about the Carmelites so as to devoutly study the beginning, progress and growth of their Order, the admirable qualities of its founders and earliest members, the eremitical monastic way of life and its purpose, and the blessed reward gained by those who live it worthily.

Therefore I beg you, dear brothers, in imitation of the holy fathers who went before us, that you should welcome and read this way of life, examine and understand it, test and live it, for through observance of it you will appease God's anger, and "being adopted as sons" you may receive your eternal reward, for as the Wiseman, in *Sirach*, Chapter 48, says of our father Elijah: "Blessed are those who hear you and are blessed with your friendship."[45]

The end of the prologue to the whole work etc.

[45] *Gal* 4:5; *Sir* 48:11.

Ill. 4: Elijah by the brook of Carith gathered together some righteous men and began to instruct them in the monastic life given to him by God.

BOOK 1

PREFACE TO THE FIRST BOOK

Here begins the preface to the first book.

Author. This book deals entirely with the first founder of this Order, and the origins and first form of this way of life, that is, the method for reaching prophetic perfection and the end of the eremitical monastic life.

This book contains eight chapters:

Chapter 1: What were the beginnings of the first founder of this Order, at what time did he live, from whom he was born, where did he grew up, and when did he first take up this dedicated way of life.

Chapter 2: How Elijah was the first man, under the inspiration of God, to lead the monastic and prophetic eremitical life, and how God communicated to him the way of reaching the goal and the perfection of this way of life, partly openly and partly in a mystical fashion.

Chapter 3: How it is necessary for the monk to renounce possessions and riches in order to achieve prophetic perfection and the goal of the eremitical monastic life.

Chapter 4: How it is necessary for the monk to crucify all human desires, and to relinquish his own will, in order to reach prophetic perfection and the goal of the eremitical religious life.

Chapter 5: How, in order to attain prophetic perfection and the goal of an eremitical religious life, It is necessary for the monk to seek solitude, and to avoid all human contact, especially with women, and to live chastely.

Chapter 6: How in order to be able to grasp prophetic perfection and the goal of the eremitical religious life, it is required above all that the monk should be full of love, and how he should love God and neighbour in this way so that he is in love.

Chapter 7: How the monk, through these four achievements, will reach prophetic perfection and attain the goal of the eremitical religious life, and be able to remain in it.

Chapter 8: How the monk ought to persevere humbly until he reaches prophetic perfection and the goal of the eremitical religious life.

Here ends the preface.

Here begins the first book of the way of life and great deeds of the Carmelites.

Chapter 1

What were the beginnings of the first founder of this Order, at what time did he live, from whom was he born, where did he grow up, and when in his youth did he decide to live a dedicated way of life.

John XLIV bishop of Jerusalem in his book on the way of life of the first monks who began under the Old Law and continue under the New, to the monk Caprasius.

With good reason, beloved Caprasius, you inquire about the beginning of the Order and how and from whom it came forth, for these are things that should be examined before anything else. For although an understanding of this way of life consists in experience alone – and this understanding cannot be given fully in words alone unless from someone who is experienced, nor can it be completely grasped by you unless with equal application and toil you strive to learn it through experience – nevertheless, you will be able to follow the teaching of this way of life much better and be encouraged to practise it more fervently if you understand the worthiness of its members and founders, and are acquainted with the original pattern of life of the Order.

So that we may proceed in due order, we shall begin to speak for a while of the supreme founder of this Order and its first way of life. Then we shall describe briefly some of the holy deeds, glorious virtues and the habit worn by the founder himself, and then of his first disciples and the other early members of the Order, as the ancient followers of this – our way of life – understood all these things before us, and taught them to us both in the Old law and in the New, by their teachings and their example. From all this you may learn how our Order's way of life is confirmed by the authority of outstandingly holy men, and how we, following a form of life which is founded not on novelties or empty fables but on the original approved example of the complete monastic life, make a way in our hearts for the Lord, and we "make straight the paths for our God" to come to us, so that "when he comes and knocks we may open immediately" to him who says "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him and he with me".

Know this, therefore, and remember: From the beginning of the reign of Ahab, king of Israel, until the coming of Christ in the flesh, there passed about 940 years. It was this length of time, as recorded by the chroniclers, that Ahab began to rule before the incarnation of our Lord Jesus. In these days of Ahab, king of Israel, and in his kingdom, there was a certain great prophet of the tribe of Aaron whose name was Elijah, born in the city of Tishbe in the region of Gilead, of a father named Sabach, and from this Tishbe Elijah was called the Tishbite. Later Elijah was an inhabitant of the city of Gilead, which was built on Mount Gilead, and which took its name from the mountain, as did the region surrounding the mountain, which lay across the Jordan, and was allotted to the half-tribe of Manasseh.

Chapter 2

How Elijah was the first man, under the inspiration of God, to lead the monastic and prophetic eremitical life, and how God communicated to him the way of reaching this goal and the perfection of this life, partly openly and partly in a mystical fashion.

This prophet of God, Elijah, was the first leader of monks, from whom this holy and ancient way of life took its origin. For he, having reached divine contemplation and filled with the desire for higher things, withdrew far from the cities, and laying aside all earthly and worldly things, was the first to begin to devote himself to following the religious and prophetic eremitical life, which, under the inspiration and command of the Holy Spirit, he initiated and formulated. Then God appeared to him and commanded him to flee from normal human habitation and hide himself in the desert away from the crowds, and thereafter live like a monk in the desert according to the way of life made known to him.

This is all proved by the clear testimony of Holy Scripture, for we read about this in the first book of *Kings*, Chapter 17: "The word of the Lord came to Elijah saying, 'Depart from here and go towards the East, and hide yourself in the wadi Carith, which is over against the Jordan, and there you will drink of the torrent, and I have commanded the ravens to feed you there.'"[46]

Now these salutary commands which the Holy Spirit inspired Elijah to fulfil, and these welcome promises which he encouraged him to strive for, should be meditated upon by us hermit monks word for word, not only for their historical sense but even more for their mystical sense; because our way of life is contained in them so much more fully, that is, the way of arriving at prophetic perfection and the goal of the religious eremitical life.

The goal of this life is twofold.[47] One part we acquire by our own effort and the exercise of the virtues, assisted by divine grace. This is to offer God a pure and holy heart, free from all stain of sin. We attain this goal when we are perfect and "in Carith", that is, hidden in that love of which the Wiseman speaks: "love covers all offences".[48] Wishing Elijah to reach this goal, God said to him, "Hide in the wadi Carith".

The other goal of this life is granted to us as the free gift of God, namely, to taste somewhat in the heart and to experience in the mind the power of the divine presence and the sweetness of heavenly glory, not only after death but already in this mortal life.[49] This is to "drink of the torrent" of the pleasure of God. God promised this to Elijah in the words: "And there you shall drink of the torrent".

It is to achieve both these goals that the prophetic eremitical life is adopted by the monk, as the prophet bears witness: "In a desert land" he says, "where there is no way and no water, so in the sanctuary have I come before you, O God, to see your power and your glory".[50] And so, by choosing to remain "in a desert land where there is no way and no water", and so to come before God "in the sanctuary", that is, with a heart purified of sin, he indicates that the first goal of the solitary life which he has chosen is to offer God a holy heart, that is, purified of all actual sin. By adding "to see your power and your glory", he indicates quite clearly the second goal of this life, which is, whilst in this life, to experience or

46 1 *Kgs* 17:2-4.
47 The ideas here come from *Cassian Conferences,* 345-6.
48 *Prv* 10:12.
49 *cf.* also *Cassian Conferences,* 284-5.
50 *Ps* 63:1-2. The Latin text used here differs from modern versions.

to see mystically in the heart something of the power of the divine presence and to taste the sweetness of heavenly glory.

Through the first of these, that is, through purity of heart and perfection of love, one comes to the second, that is, to an experiential knowledge of the divine power and heavenly glory. As the Lord says in *John* Chapter 14: "He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and will show myself to him".[51] And so God, by what he had proposed to the holy prophet Elijah in all the above words, wanted greatly to persuade him – the first and outstanding leader of monks – and us his followers, that we should "be perfect as our heavenly Father is perfect", "having above all things love, which is the bond of perfection".[52] Therefore, in order that we may be worthy of the perfection urged on us and the promised vision of glory, let us seek attentively to understand clearly and logically, and to fulfil in our actions, the form of life given by God in the above words to blessed Elijah as a way to achieve them.

For, speaking to the holy Elijah, the Lord also says, both in the Old Law and the New, to every hermit monk: "Depart from here", that is, from the perishable and transitory things of this world, and "go towards the East", that is, against the natural desires of your flesh, "and hide in the wadi Carith", so that you do not live in the cities with their crowds, "which is over against the Jordan", that is, so that through love you are cut off from all sins. By these four steps you will ascend to the height of prophetic perfection, and "there you will drink of the torrent". And so that you may be able to persevere in this: "I have commanded the ravens to feed you there".

All this you will understand better if, going through each part separately, we explain them clearly and in order.

Chapter 3

How it is necessary for the monk to renounce possessions and riches in order to achieve prophetic perfection and the goal of the eremitical monastic life.

Therefore these things which I entreat you to do, you should study in sequence, one by one. Now, firstly, I told you in my instruction: "Depart from here", that is, "from your country and your kindred and your father's house", not only in spirit, but so that you do not "set your heart" on the earthly goods which you have inherited or perishable worldly riches, but also strive that you do not even possess such things. "For unless a person renounce everything that he possesses, he cannot be my disciple". Although it is true that the possession of riches does not itself close the gate of the kingdom of heaven to a rich man, so long as he does not set his heart on them; as the Wiseman says in *Sirach* Chapter 31: "Blessed is the rich man who is found without fault, who has not gone after gold nor put his trust in treasures of money". Yet it is clear from what the Wiseman says next: "Who is he? We will praise him", that he well knows the difficulty of finding such a man, who possesses riches and yet does not set his heart on them. For the human heart easily clings to the things it is used to. Moreover, when riches are possessed, they cause stronger desires to

[51] *Jn* 14:21.
[52] *Mt* 5:48; *Col* 3:14.

burn in the heart and give rise to more intense greed. As the Wiseman says in *Sirach*, Chapter 5: "The surfeit of the rich man will not let him sleep". So, occupied in the useless love of wealth, he has to exert himself on his personal affairs, and thus he is continually beset by the needs of his never-ending duties, and these do not allow the desire to enter him of fulfilling the call of the divine command which he has heard. "For the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches and desires for other things enter in, and they choke the word and it is rendered fruitless", and so "it will be hard for a rich person to enter the kingdom of heaven".[53]

Therefore, my son, "if you wish to be perfect" and to arrive at the goal of the eremitical monastic life, "and there to drink of the torrent", "Depart from here", that is, from the perishable things of this world, renouncing in your heart and in your actions all earthly possessions and privileges for my sake, for this is an easier and safer way that leads to prophetic perfection and brings you at last to the kingdom of heaven. "For everyone who has left house, or brothers, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands for my name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold" already in this life, foretasting the sweetness of my delight, which surpasses a hundred times all earthly things, and finally "he shall possess life everlasting".[54]

Thus you have heard briefly the first step by which you can rise to the height of prophetic perfection.

Chapter 4

How it is necessary for the monk to crucify all human desires, and to relinquish his own will, in order to reach prophetic perfection and the goal of the eremitical religious life.

Now listen to the second. It follows in my counsel: "And go towards the East", that is, against the natural desires of your flesh. For, you ought to know that "on the day you were born, your navel cord was not cut" from sin, because "you were born entirely in sins". As the prophet says, speaking for every person begotten by man of a woman: "Indeed, in guilt was I born, and in sin my mother conceived me".[55]

It is due to this original sin in which man is conceived that the flesh "has desires against the spirit". "I see", says the Apostle, "in my members another principle at war with the law of my mind, taking me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members". This law of sin, that "wide gate" which a person enters when he consents to sin, is that "broad road which leads to destruction", on which he travels when he lives according to it, "that leads to destruction and those that enter through it are many". But "when someone comes to serve the Lord", he must "keep away from worldly desires that war against the soul", "stand uprightly and in the fear of God and prepare his soul" not for rest nor for delights but for temptations and trials, for "it is necessary to undergo many hardships to enter the kingdom of God". "How narrow the gate and constricted the road that leads to life. And those who

53 *Gn* 12:1; *Ps* 62:11; *Lk* 14:33; *Sir* 31:8-9; *Sir* 5:11; *Mk* 4:19; *Mt* 19:23.
54 *Mt* 19:29.
55 *Ez* 16:4; *Jn* 9:34; *Ps* 51:7.

find it are few". For "few are chosen" and "the flock is small to whom it has pleased the Father to give the kingdom".[56]

Therefore, my son, "if you wish to be perfect" and to arrive at the goal of the eremitical monastic life, "to drink of the torrent there", "go towards the East", that is, against the natural desires of the flesh, and "sin must not reign over your mortal body, so that you obey its desires". For I know how "to keep the unrighteous under punishment for the day of judgement, and especially those who follow the flesh with its depraved desire and show contempt for authority". Therefore "go not after your lusts but keep your desires in check", forsaking the flesh totally and humbly subjecting it for my sake to the good judgement of a superior until death; for "no disciple is superior to his teacher, but everyone will be perfect if he is like his master". Indeed, I am the Lord and teacher of the prophets and "I came down from heaven not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me", of the Father, "becoming obedient to him unto death, even death on a cross". Therefore "if anyone wishes to come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross every day and follow me". For "whoever does not carry his cross and come after me, cannot be my disciple".[57]

If you wish, therefore, to come after me "towards the East", that is, against the natural desires of your flesh, consider how it is necessary for you to carry the cross. Just as someone who is crucified has no power to move or turn his limbs by his own will, but hangs immobile where the executioner has fixed them, so must you be fastened to the cross and deny yourself, so that you do not turn your will to what pleases you and delights you at this moment, but instead seek to apply your whole will to that to which my will has bound you, "so as to live for the rest of the time in the flesh no longer by human passions but by the will of God".[58]

And, as he who is fastened to the tree of the cross does not think of the present, forgets the past, is not worried about tomorrow, is not moved by any desires of the flesh, and is not puffed up with pride, or competition, or revenge or envy, but while he still has breath in his body considers himself dead to the world so that he may fix the longing of his heart only on that place where he does not doubt that he is going, so also must you be fastened by the fear of the Lord, dead to all these things, having the eyes of your soul fixed firmly on where you should hope to go at any moment.[59]

In this way "go towards the East", that is, against the natural desires of your flesh. For "those who belong to Christ have crucified their flesh with its passions and desires", "always carrying about in the body the dying of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in their bodies". In which, when they have been transformed, they shall come through it to heavenly glory, as the Apostle tells them: "for you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God; when Christ your life appears, then you too will appear with him in glory".[60]

Behold, I have shown you briefly the second step by which you can reach the state of prophetic perfection.

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56 *Gal* 5:17; *Rom* 7:27; *Mt* 7:13; *Sir* 2:1; 1 *Pt* 2:11; *Sir* 2:1; *Ac* 14:22; *Mt* 7:14; *Mt* 22:14; *Lk* 12:32.
57 *Rom* 6:12; 2 *Pt* 2:9-10; *Sir* 18:30; *Lk* 6:40; *Jn* 6:38; *Phil* 2:8; *Lk* 9:23; *Lk* 14:27.
58 1 *Pt* 4:2.
59 For the crucified disciple *cf. Cassian Institutes*, 61-2.
60 *Gal* 5:24; 2 *Cor* 4:10; *Col* 3:3-4.

Chapter 5

How, in order to attain prophetic perfection and the goal of an eremitical religious life, it is necessary for the monk to seek solitude, and to avoid all human contact, especially with women, and to live chastely.

Now to treat of the third step. It follows in my counsel: "And hide in the wadi Carith". For I do not want you to linger any longer among the crowds in the city "for in the city I see injustice and strife; day and night evil prowls about its walls, evil and mischief are in its midst and injustice, usury and deceit have not departed from its streets". Because all such things are to be shunned, the prophet himself, given to you as an example, chose to live in solitude rather than in the city. "Behold", he says, "far away did I flee, I lodged in the wilderness". And of course the Wiseman says, "Be guilty of no evil before the city's populace, nor disgrace yourself before the assembly. Do not plot to repeat a sin; even for one you will not go unpunished".[61] But if, as the Wiseman says, you live in *monos,* that is, alone or by yourself, you shall not be free from sin, therefore you must fear and weep in solitude, that is, perform the duty of a monk.

For *monos* in Greek means "one" or "singular" or "alone", and *achos* in Greek means "sad". Therefore a monk is called *monachos,* "alone and sad", that is, as one lamenting in solitude for his own sins and those of others. And this is to be preferred more than living among the crowds in the city. For if, as the Wiseman testifies, you will not be always immune from sin "in one" – that is, living in *monade*, or singular, or in solitude – how much more so will you sin again and again if, as he says, you immerse yourself among the people.

Turn away, therefore, from where the crowd gathers, lest in the city you be forced to do the things that nature and your will do not wish, that is, you will be disturbed by the anger of others, you will suffer foreign wars, you will be ensnared by the harlot's eye or led by a beautiful figure to forbidden pleasures, or you will be ensnared by the shackles of greed and other vices, and all these things can be avoided by solitude. "Who has given the wild ass his freedom, and who has loosed him from his bonds" unless it was him "who made the wilderness his home and the salt flats his dwelling?" Therefore "he scoffs at the crowds in the city, he hears not the cry of the tax-collector".[62] The ass is an animal which loves solitude, and signifies him who lives alone, far from the crowd of people. God "loosens the bonds" of his sins and "sets him free" from the slavery of sin; while "he makes the wilderness a home for him and the salt flats his dwelling" which increases his thirst, so that he might thirst after the justice of his heavenly homeland, which, at the end, will satisfy him. "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst for righteousness: for they will be satisfied."[63]

Therefore, my son, "if you wish to be perfect" and to arrive at the goal of the eremitical monastic life and "drink of the torrent there", "hide in the wadi Carith", that is, cultivate silence in hidden solitude. Thus, knowing your weakness and the fragile vessel that you carry, you should fear to blunder about in the city lest you clash with the crowds, fall and be broken. "You shall sit alone, therefore, and hold your peace, for it is good to hope in silence for the salvation of God". "Hide, therefore, in the wadi Carith", which means "separation", because it fosters your prophetic perfection that, hidden, you are "separated"

61 *Ps* 55:10-12; *Ps* 54:8 *Vulgate*; *Sir* 7:7-8.
62 *Jb* 39:5-8.
63 *Mt* 5:6.

from human company, and also, you are not joined in marriage to a woman. "It is good for man not to touch woman". "I am telling you this for your own benefit and for that which is honourable, and that it may offer you the opportunity of following the Lord without distraction". For you must be separated from those things which hinder you from being wholly centred on God. "The cares of this world and the deceits of riches suffocate the word of God" and thus impede the soul from wholly loving God. As the Wiseman says, "Whoever loves him will keep his word", for "he who has a wife is anxious about the affairs of this world" and so is drawn away from wholly adhering to the love of God, for "he seeks how to please his wife". But "he who is without a wife is anxious for the things of the Lord, and seeks how he may please God". So, "if you are not bound to a wife, do not seek a wife". "You will be more blessed if you remain according to my counsel", that you may be one of those eunuchs who "have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven". "For I will give them a place in my house, and a name better than sons and daughters; I will give them an everlasting name which shall never perish".[64]

Behold, I have explained to you the third step by which you can reach the height of prophetic perfection.

Chapter 6

How in order to be able to grasp prophetic perfection and the goal of the eremitical religious life, it is required above all that the monk should be full of love, and how he should love God and neighbour in this way so that he is in love.

Now learn the fourth step. It follows in my admonition: "which", that is Carith, "is over against the Jordan". "Jordan" means "their descent", so in this text it fittingly signifies sin. For what makes men fall from the dignity of having the image and likeness of God into misery and disgrace except sin, which is the transgression of the divine laws? As the Wiseman says, "Sin makes the people wretched". Therefore, when the people were about to transgress the laws of God, Moses told them "You will sink lower and lower".[65] For every natural thing, although it be impeccable among its own type, when it is compared to a higher being it is rendered unsightly and dirty and loses its prestige; likewise, something precious when mixed with something inferior becomes corrupted, even though in its own class the inferior thing is not corrupted. Even gold is spoiled when silver is mixed with it.

As scripture says, I have made man of so excellent a nature that I appointed him Lord of every creature. Thus, although creatures are impeccable among their own type, human hearts lose their dignity and are corrupted when they take delight in created things. The prophet says of those who fix their hearts on created things: "They became as abominable as the things they loved". Again, the prophet writes in another place, "Destroyed is the pride of the Jordan", that is, of sin. For sinners, in despising God's law, arrogantly sin against God, and thus descend into the desolation of corruption and abomination. As the prophet says, "They are corrupted and become abominable in their iniquities".[66]

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64 *Lam* 3:28, 26; 1 *Cor* 17:1; 1 *Cor* 7:35; *Mt* 13:22; *Sir* 2:18; 1 *Cor* 7:33; 1 *Cor* 7:32; 1 *Cor* 7:27; 1 *Cor* 7:40; *Mt* 19:12; *Is* 56:5.

65 *Prv* 14:34; *Dt* 28:43.

66 *cf. Gn* 1:26-28; *Hos* 9:10; *Zec* 11:3; *Ps* 52:2.

"Carith" means separation, and so may rightly be taken to mean love, because love alone divides man from the Jordan, that is, from the descent into sin. For this reason, Carith, that is love, is "over against the Jordan", that is, against the descent into sin, because as the Apostle says, however rich a man is in all other things: "even if he speaks every language, has every prophecy and all faith and all knowledge, and distributes all his possessions to feed the poor, and even if he delivers his body to be burned, and yet has no love, it profits him nothing"; nor shall he "be raised from the death" due to sin "unto life". For "whoever does not love remains in death". From this death, though, man is separated by love and transferred to life, as the apostle John testifies: "We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love our brothers". Truly then, Carith, that is love, is "over against the Jordan", namely against the descent into sin, because, as the Wiseman says, "love covers all offences".[67]

Therefore, my son, if you wish to be perfect and to arrive at the goal of the monastic eremitical life, and to be "over against the Jordan", that is, against the descent into sin, you must hide in Carith, that is, in love, and "there drink of the torrent". "You must love the Lord your God with your whole heart, and with your whole soul and with your whole mind".[68] When you have done this, you will be perfect and will hide "over against the Jordan" in Carith, that is, hidden in love.

If, however, you refuse to do this, you will become pitiful and depraved and not in Carith but in the Jordan, that is, you will be in the descent into sin. If you love anything more than me, then you do not yet love me with your whole heart, nor are you in Carith, that is, in love, and therefore you are not worthy to see me. "Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me". But if you love anything else more than me, you do not yet love me "with your whole heart", and you are not in Carith, that is, in love. For if you love me with your whole heart, and however dear your soul and all other things are to you, you would prefer my love to them all, and everything which would turn your heart from it you would immediately reject and hold in disdain. "If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother and wife and brothers and sisters, and even his very life, he cannot be my disciple".[69]

If, however, you offer me your heart so full of love and commit yourself to me with so much affection that whatever I do not wish and forbid to you, however difficult it may be to avoid, yet for love of me you will completely avoid it and detest it, and whatever I wish and command you, however difficult it may be to do, you will nevertheless observe and do it for love of me, then you will begin to love me "with your whole heart and whole soul and whole mind" and to be in Carith, that is, in love. For "whoever has my commandments and observes them, is the one that loves me". "And the first of all commandments is this: 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord your God is the one God. You shall love the Lord your God with your whole heart, and with your whole soul, and with your whole mind. This is the first and the greatest commandment'".[70]

This cannot be observed without love of neighbour, because "whoever does not love his brother, whom he sees, cannot love God, whom he can not see". Therefore the second commandment is similar: "You must love your neighbour as yourself", that is, in the same

67 1 *Cor* 13:1-3; 1 *Jn* 3:14; *Prv* 10:12.
68 *Mt* 22:37.
69 *Mt* 10:37; *Lk* 14:26.
70 *Jn* 14:21; *Dt* 6:4; *Mt* 22:37, 38.

way and for the same reason as you love yourself. But you ought to love yourself for the good in you and not the evil. If you love yourself for the evil, then you do not love but hate yourself: "Whoever loves sin hates his own soul". Therefore, you must love your neighbour as yourself for the good and not for the evil: "In everything do to others as you wish they would do to you", "and what you would hate to have done to you, never do it yourself to anyone". "Love of neighbour never does evil". Therefore, you must so love your neighbour and act towards him in such a way that he becomes upright if he is wicked, or remains upright if he is good. Again, you must love yourself, not because of yourself, but because of God. Whatever is loved for its own sake becomes a source of joy and happiness, the hope of attaining which is comforting, even on earth. But you must not place your hopes for a happy life in yourself or any other man. "Cursed be the man who trusts in men and seeks his strength in his flesh, and whose heart turns away from the Lord". Therefore, you must make the Lord the source of your joy and happiness, as the Apostle says: "But now you have been freed from sin and become slaves of God, the benefit that you have leads to sanctification and its end is everlasting life in Christ Jesus our Lord".[71]

If you understand this clearly, you should love God because of himself, and yourself not because of yourself but because of God. And, since you should love your neighbour as yourself, you should love him also not because of yourself, nor because of him, but because of God. What else is this but to love God in your neighbour? "In this", says the apostle John, "we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep his commandments". In the preparation of your soul you do all this if you love God because of himself, and because of God you love your neighbour as yourself. "On these two commandments depend the whole law and the prophets". "Love is the fulfilling of the law".[72]

Therefore, the apostle Peter recommends possessing love above all: "But before all things have a constant mutual love among yourselves, for love covers a multitude of sins". But the less Carith, that is, love, covers all your sins and is "over against the Jordan", that is, against the descent of sin, the less you love God and your neighbour. Indeed, the less the love, the less forgiveness of sin is merited; as it is written: "The one to whom little is forgiven, loves little". But the more Carith, that is, love, covers your sins and is "over against the Jordan", that is, against the descent of sin, the more you love God and neighbour, because the greater the love, the greater the remission of sins it merits; as it is written: "Many sins are forgiven her because she has loved much".[73]

Behold, I have shown you the fourth step by which you can attain the good of prophetic perfection which you desire.

Chapter 7

How the monk through these four achievements will reach prophetic perfection and attain the goal of the eremitical religious life, and be able to remain in it.

It remains now for you to learn how you are to attain the height of prophetic perfection and the goal of the eremitical monastic life through the four preceding steps. It follows

71 1 *Jn* 4:20; *Mt* 22:39; *Ps* 10:6 *Vulgate*; *Mt* 7:12; *Tb* 4:16; *Rom* 13:10; *Jer* 17:5; *Rom* 6:22.
72 1 *Jn* 5:2; *Mt* 22:40; *Rom* 13:10.
73 1 *Pt* 4:8; *Lk* 7:47.

in my instruction: "And there you will drink of the torrent". In other words you need to – from the example of the Wiseman – "withdraw your flesh from wine that you might turn your mind to wisdom and avoid foolishness". For "wine is a luxurious thing, and drunkenness riotous. Whosoever is delighted therewith shall not be wise".[74] To come more easily, then, to true wisdom, in Carith you must abstain from wine; to relieve your thirst and preserve the life of your body you will drink of the contents of the torrent there, that is, of the water of the torrent.

But remember how before I said to you "And there you will drink of the torrent", I said "Hide in the wadi Carith". I said this first because – in order to drink spiritually of the torrent – you must first be hidden in Carith, that is, in love. You will not be hidden there immediately when you first begin because, as it is said, not just any love but only wholehearted love "covers all offences".[75] Even though as soon as you begin to love me with your whole heart you are truly "in Carith", that is, in love, you are not immediately "hidden in Carith", that is, in love, because you are not at once completely divided from all actual desire for sin. For bodily desires and unclean thoughts will rise up in you – indeed they are not so soon quieted – seeking to tempt your heart to forbidden things and to withdraw you from my love entirely; and for this reason you are not yet able to love me perfectly with your whole heart. And even though your heart from then on assiduously and habitually retains my love in itself, you are still not able to be brought to me peacefully and perfectly through true love.

So, lest you fall completely from my love, it is necessary for you to seek to expel all unclean thoughts and bodily desires which are in opposition to my love. While you are subduing those unlawful passions, you will not be continually hidden in Carith, that is, in love, because you will not yet love me perfectly with your whole heart.

There remain many things which are permitted to you, which are not commanded nor forbidden to you – such as marriage, riches, worldly business and similar things which I have mentioned above – which, when you are engrossed with them, even if they do not turn your heart entirely from my love will not readily permit you to think of me, but will often hinder you from thinking of me and seduce your heart from the ardour of my love. The less that love burns within you, the less you love me with your whole heart and the less you love me, the less you are "hidden in Carith", that is, in love; and the less you are hidden in love, the less you are heading towards prophetic perfection and the goal of the monastic eremitical life.

Therefore, my son, so that you may more quickly be "hidden in Carith", that is, in love, and reach your destined end and "there drink of the torrent", avoid not only those things I have forbidden which separate you off completely from my love, such as carnal passions which act contrary to it, and unclean thoughts, but you must also flee from those things which dim the ardour of my love, such as those things which I exhorted you against above, namely riches and marriage and other things which involve worldly business: "No soldier in God's service entangles himself with worldly business, since he wants to please the one who enlisted him".[76] With the greatest zeal, therefore, seek those things which draw you to the ardour of my love, such as the precepts of my law, and those things which I urged on you above, namely poverty and the crucifixion of bodily desires, obedience and the renunciation of your own will, continence and the solitude of the desert.

74 *Sir* 2:3; *Prv* 20:1.
75 *Prv* 10:12.
76 2 *Tm* 2:4.

If you are so diligent in following my commands and counsels that you flee not only unclean thoughts and bodily desires contrary to my love, but even other things which impede or retard the fervour of my love; and if you choose the things which favour my love so that you love me completely with such a heartfelt love and cling to me in peace with such powerful affection that, in your mind, you feel no desire contrary to my love or a hindrance to it, then you are beginning to love me perfectly with all your heart and to be "hidden in Carith", that is, in love, and are on the way to your chosen goal. For "the aim of the law is the love which comes from a pure heart and a good conscience and sincere faith".[77]

Whatever I command you in my law, or advise – whether it is to fly from unclean thoughts or the desires of the flesh or the world so that you may keep your heart pure from them, or to do your duty to your neighbour and to avoid offending him so that you may preserve a good conscience towards him without reproach, or to devote yourself to the obligations of my worship so that you might serve me with "a faith without pretence" and sincere – all these things I urge on you for this reason, that from your "pure heart and good conscience and sincere faith" there may freely rise a love so fervent and powerful, and yet so peaceful, that it may join your heart to me completely, without resisting, so that you feel nothing whatever in your heart contrary to or impeding my love, but your heart rests totally at peace in my love. This is nothing other than to have a heart cleansed from all stain of real sin and to be "hidden in Carith", that is, in that love of which the Wiseman says: "love covers all offences".[78]

When, therefore, you arrive at this goal of the prophetic and monastic eremitical life, and are "hidden in Carith", that is, in love, then there "you will drink of the torrent", for in this perfect union of yourself with me, I shall give you and your companions to drink from that torrent of which the prophet says to me: "You shall give them to drink of the torrent of your pleasure".[79]

It is written:

> "If you return to the Almighty you will be restored
> and if you put iniquity far from your tent;
> he will give you flint for earth,
> and for flint torrents of gold,
> and the Almighty will stand against your enemies,
> and silver will be heaped in front of you.
> Then shall you delight in the Almighty
> and shall lift up your face toward God."[80]

See from this how – if you turn back to God "with all your heart" as has been said above – you will be gradually restored.

Firstly, "you will put sin far from your tent", that is, from your heart, for otherwise you cannot be joined with the Almighty; as it is written: "If we say we have fellowship with God and continue to walk in darkness, we lie". "It is our crimes which separate us from God, and our sins hide his face from us".[81]

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77 1 *Tm* 1:5.
78 1 *Tm* 1:5; *Prv* 10:12.
79 *Ps* 36:9.
80 *Jb* 22:23-27 *Vulgate*.
81 1 *Jn* 1:6; *Is* 59:2.

Secondly, "for earth" – that is, for the earthly affections and riches, you shall put them aside – "God will give you flint", that is, a strong and ardent love. For flint is a hard stone and gives off sparks from which fire is born, and it signifies that perfect love of which the Wiseman says, "love is as strong as death, devotion as enduring as hell; its brightness is like flashes of fire or of flames". This God gives, as the Apostle says: "The love of God poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us".[82]

Thirdly, "for flint", that is for the strong and perfect love observed by you, God will give you "torrents of gold", that is, those inexpressible and sweet spiritual delights about which it is written: "The eye has not seen, nor ear heard, neither has it entered into the heart of man, what God has prepared for those that love him". These delights are truly called "a torrent" because with the force of a torrent and with great abundance of pleasure they flood the mind of the prophet. As it is written: "The fountain of wisdom is an overflowing stream". But just as a torrent quickly dries up with the heat of the risen sun, so this spiritual abundance, when carnal passions arise, soon vanishes from the mind of the prophet and dries up. These are indeed torrents of gold, they shine both with the ardour of the love of God from whence they flood into the mind of the prophet, and with the bright knowledge of God to which they secretly lead the prophetic man. As the Lord says: "He who loves me, will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and show myself to him".[83]

Fourthly, when you attain such knowledge of God, "the Almighty shall stand against your enemies", visible and invisible, protecting you from them, as he himself says: "I shall protect him because he knows my name".[84]

Fifthly, "silver will be heaped in front of you", of which the prophet says, "The words of the Lord are holy words, pure as silver" that is love "tried by fire".[85] Therefore, for love of God you should leave the world and the companionship of men so that with a pure heart you may cling to God, and then you will be worthy to enjoy an abundance of divine conversation, where hidden and even future things will be revealed to you by God. Then you will overflow with indescribable delights from the Almighty, and gladly raise up the fullness of your mind to contemplate God.

Behold, I have taught you how to reach prophetic perfection and to attain the goal of the monastic eremitical life.

Chapter 8

How the monk needs to persevere humbly until he comes to prophetic perfection and the goal of the eremitical religious life.

Finally, you must see how you need to persevere in the perfection of the prophetic eremitical life. For there follows, in my promise: "And I have commanded the ravens to feed you there". I have judged this especially necessary for your consolation, for although you will overflow with indescribable delights as long as you drink from the torrent of my raptures, for two reasons your joy will not yet be complete.

82 *Sg* 8:6; *Rom* 5:5.
83 1 *Cor* 2:9; *Prv* 18:4; *Jn* 14:21.
84 *Ps* 90:14.
85 *Ps* 11:7.

Firstly, because from the very depths of your heart you will desire intensely to look directly upon my face; however you will not be able to see it clearly, "for no man shall see me and live", because I "dwell in inaccessible light", which no man has seen in this life, nor can he see. Secondly, because although you will seek to remain a while in those inexpressible delights which you drink from the torrent of my raptures, yet suddenly, due to the frailty of your body, you will be removed from them and returned to yourself. "For the corruptible body burdens the soul, and this earthly shelter weighs down the mind that has many concerns". For these two reasons then – because you will not be able to see my face clearly, and because, burdened with a corruptible body, you will not able to remain long in that glorious contemplation of the sweetness you have tasted – you will pray then, if you wish to persevere in perfection, and begin to sigh, saying: "O God, my God, I keep watch for you at daybreak. My soul thirsts for you, for you my flesh thirsts in so many ways! As in a desert land, trackless and without water, so in the sanctuary have I come before you, that I may see your power and your glory".[86]

It is true – lest you pine away in unquenchable sighs and inconsolable sadness of heart from this desire to see me and this hunger to taste the sweetness of the delights of my glory, and for your consolation – that "I have commanded the ravens to feed you there". The word "ravens" is to be understood correctly as the holy prophets whom I have given you as an example, because in no way do they take pride in the radiance of their holiness, but through the grace of humility and the knowledge of their own weakness they confess the blackness in themselves as sinners, saying: "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us". Therefore, it is written of each of them: "Who provides food for the raven when her young ones cry to God, casting about because they have no food?".[87]

The instinct of the raven is to watch the open mouths of her young, born white, casting about here and there in the nest waiting for food, but not to feed them at first until she recognises in the blackness of their feathers the likeness of her own colour. But when she sees them turning black, she gives all her energy to feeding them.

So it is when chicks – or disciples – are born to the holy prophet whom I sent. In the end they come to such grace through his example that "they drink of the torrent" of my delights, like the prophet himself. But since, through the weakness of their nature, they have not yet been led to taste that sweetness, they must cry to me, casting about here and there in their desire since they cannot as yet eat the food of inner sweetness which they long for. And according to what is written – "Unless you be converted and become as little children, you cannot enter the kingdom of heaven" – they must then, through humility consider themselves as chicks, that is, as little ones in virtue, and they should fear lest through sin they harm the growth of virtue, for it is written, "We all offend in many ways".[88] But many of them ignore their sins and do not reflect on their weakness, and so they fail to display the blackness of humility which they ought to assume against the brightness of the world. For the less they are able to consume inwardly that spiritual nourishment, so much more do they make an outward show after the fashion of this life.

Therefore, the raven looks upon the open mouths of her chicks, but before she gives them food the raven waits to see the black feathers begin to cover them. And so, the prophet sent by me, before he leads his disciples to the hidden banquet of my delights,

86 *Ex* 3:20; 1 *Tm* 6:16; *Sir* 9:15; *Ps* 62:2-3 *Vulgate* (partly in 63:1 *NAB*).
87 1 *Jn* 1:8; *Jb* 38:41.
88 *Mt* 18:3; *Jas* 3:2.

warns them and waits until, following his example, they darken from the brightness of this present life through the laments of humble repentance and they recognise in themselves the blackness of their sins. If, in the confession of their past life, they express cries of sorrow from their inmost hearts, it is as if their feathers blacken, and then the prophet brings to their open mouths the food which has been prepared by me, and he invites them to taste the sweetness coming from the torrents of my raptures. And the more he feeds them with the ardours of these torrents, the more he sees the brightness of the world blacken in them through the laments of humble repentance. But so that the disciples may know that the food to which the prophet invites them comes from me, it is rightly expressed in this petition: "Who provides the food for the raven, when her young ones cry to God, casting about because they have no food?". You surely know that no one provides it but God who, as it is written: "gives food to the young ravens that call upon him".[89]

Therefore, my son, when you arrive at prophetic perfection and the goal of the eremitical monastic life and you drink of the torrent of my love, lest you be elated at such great sweetness that you have tasted, you will suddenly be removed from it for a time because of the weakness and imperfection of your flesh. Beware, therefore, that you do not "go down from the housetop of perfection "to take anything" back which you have renounced. For "No one who puts his hand to the plough and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God". So, "forgetting the things that are behind, and stretching yourself towards what lies ahead, press toward the mark till you come to the prize of your supernal vocation". For it is not the one who begins what has been described but he "who perseveres in them unto the end who will be saved". On this account, casting about like the raven's chicks, you must cry to me without ceasing: "As the hart longs for fountains of water, so my soul longs after you, O God".[90]

Now, if you do not return at once to the sweetness of my delight that you have tasted, this happens firstly so that you may know that it is not through your own merits but by my grace that you reached that sweetness; and secondly so that you may long for it even more fervently, and through the intensifying of your desire you may become more capable of receiving it. But lest, in the meantime, you fall away from perfection altogether: "I have commanded the ravens to feed you there". For I have ordered your holy predecessors, the prophets, that they should feed you the understanding by their example of humble repentance, by which they humbly recognised in themselves the blackness of their sins and avoided the brightness of fleshly life. Therefore, if you seek to be wise in the meantime, you should feed avidly on their teaching. As it is written: "The wise man explores the wisdom of the men of old, and occupies himself with the prophecies".[91]

For, if you follow their example and turn from the brightness of this present life, through knowledge of your own frailty and an abundance of true humility, and thus grow completely black like the raven's chicks, and if through devout prayer and humble and true confession of sins you offer to God copious cries of sorrow, like blackening feathers, and if, like the raven's chicks, you withdraw from the crowds in the city and live in solitude, you will blacken completely the brightness of the joy of this carnal life and of the possessions and other riches of the world. Then God will lead you to taste again the sweetness of the food flowing from the torrent of his delights. For thus is it written; "Consider the ravens;

89 *Jb* 38:41; *Ps* 146:9.
90 *Mt* 24:17; *Lk* 9:62; *Phil* 3:13, 14; *Mt* 24:13; *Ps* 41:2.
91 *Sir* 39:1.

they do not sow, neither do they reap, neither have they storehouse or barn, and yet God feeds them".[92]

Behold, I have taught you how you should persevere humbly in the perfection of the prophetic eremitical life.

And so ends the institution, that is, the manner of coming to prophetic perfection and the goal of the monastic eremitical life, which God gave to the prophet Elijah to observe, and which has been commented on and expounded by John XLIV bishop of Jerusalem, from the sayings of both the Old Law and the New.

Thus ends the first book of the way of life and great deeds of the Carmelites.

92 *Lk* 12:24.

The Carmelite Tradition

Spirituality in History

Steven Payne
Phyllis Zagano, *Series Editor*

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Preface

The worldwide explosion of interest in "spirituality" has sent inquirers in several directions. One of the more fruitful is toward the traditional spiritualities that have enriched and nurtured the church for many hundreds of years. Among the oldest Christian spiritualities are those connected to particular foundations, charisms, or individuals. This series of spiritualities in history focuses on five distinct traditions within the history of the church, those now known as Benedictine, Carmelite, Dominican, Franciscan, and Ignatian.

Each volume in the series seeks to present the given spiritual tradition through an anthology of writings by or about persons who have lived it, along with brief biographical introductions of those persons. Each volume is edited by an expert or experts in the tradition at hand.

The present volume of Carmelite spirituality has been edited by Steven Payne, O.C.D., past editor of ICS Publications and of *Spiritual Life* magazine, and the author of several works in philosophy of religion, theology, and Carmelite spirituality. He is a member of the Carmelite Forum and of the Carmelite Institute in Washington, DC, of which he is a past president. Fr. Payne, of the Washington Province of Discalced Carmelite Friars, is a member of the Carmelite Friars' formation team at the Monastery of St. John of the Cross near Nairobi, Kenya, and director of the Institute of Spirituality and Religious Formation (ISRF) at Tangaza College, a constituent college of the Catholic University of Eastern Africa (CUEA) in Nairobi.

Fr. Payne's elegant presentation of the essentials of the Carmelite tradition traces the various paths followers of the original hermits of Mount Carmel have lived through the eight hundred years since Albert, the Latin patriarch of Jerusalem, handed them their simple plan of life. The remarkable contemplatives who move through these pages

demonstrate the results of their belief in God's immanence, even in darkness. Each entry adds another layer to the unfolding mysteries of Carmelite spirituality, inserted in the history of the church and of the world. The lives of the thousands of men and women who sought and seek the living God in silence and solitude form the quiet background for the few whose writings are here so well represented. Their contemporary witness to Christian contemplation gives living witness to the writings of their predecessors.

My own work on this book and for this series has continued with the able assistance of librarians, particularly the reference and interlibrary loan staff of Hofstra University, Hempstead, New York, who have tirelessly met so many of my research needs. I am grateful as well for the congenial staff of Liturgical Press, and especially for the professional support and encouragement of Hans Christoffersen, editorial director, and Peter Dwyer, director of Liturgical Press.

Phyllis Zagano
September 8, 2010
Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Introduction

Brief introductions to this or that spiritual tradition never seem entirely satisfactory, especially to those who know the tradition firsthand. When I was unexpectedly transferred to the Discalced Carmelite Community in Nairobi, Kenya, some years ago, for example, among the first tasks I was given was to teach a few introductory classes on *African* spirituality. Needless to say, the African students were amused at my early efforts to present systematically, from the few available texts I had read, what they knew far better from lifelong personal experience!

Yet even to clarify the scope of our topic was not easy. We recognized that the term "spirituality" itself is notoriously difficult to define. But to speak of "*African* spirituality," some argued, as if it were distinct from African religion, culture, ethics, politics, economics, and so on, is already to impose foreign categories on what Africans have traditionally experienced as part of a unified whole. Moreover, since the continent is home to hundreds of different peoples and cultures, each with its own traditional beliefs and practices, some wondered if we should speak instead of African *spiritualities* in the plural.

In the end, however, we came to admit the usefulness of the singular term. We could thereby refer collectively to certain distinctive ways of relating to the transcendent that, if not exclusive to Africa or exemplified in every African individual or society, are nevertheless found, in some form, virtually everywhere across the continent. In that sense, and with all the necessary qualifications, it seemed legitimate to us to talk of "African spirituality."

The issues are much the same when we turn to Carmelite spirituality, the focus of this volume. Carmelites typically do not distinguish their spirituality from their whole way of life, and no simple description can capture all the rich diversity of its symbols, themes, practices, and

representative figures. The Carmelite tradition has been evolving for at least eight hundred years, and Carmelites have traditionally claimed spiritual (and sometimes even historical) roots going back much further, even to the biblical figures of Mary and Elijah. Over many centuries, the ancient "vine of Carmel" has sprouted many branches. Besides the friars and nuns of the two main groups (the Order of Carmelites and the Order of Discalced Carmelites), there are today the numerous "apostolic" congregations, secular institutes, and ecclesial movements that belong to the broader Carmelite family, as well as countless Lay and Secular Carmelites around the globe who live a Carmelite vocation "in the midst of the world."

Meanwhile, the classic spiritual texts of Carmel are now eagerly read by people of all faiths (and no faith). Surveys of Western spirituality invariably give great prominence to the Carmelite tradition. Three of the Carmelite saints (Teresa of Avila, John of the Cross, and Thérèse of Lisieux) have been named doctors of the church for their spiritual teaching. All of this suggests that "Carmelite spirituality" is not monolithic but has many expressions and can take many forms. Certainly it is no longer the private monopoly of any one group, but belongs to the entire church and world. One might argue, then, that today there are *many* Carmelite spiritualities, because there are so many different perspectives on the Carmelite heritage and so many ways of being Carmelite.

And yet to speak of "Carmelite spirituality" in the singular is to acknowledge that, down through the ages, these varied Carmelite expressions have returned again and again to certain images, themes, and spiritual models in pondering the mystery of divine-human friendship: the mountain, the garden, the spring, the hermit's cell, the journey, night, fire, the heart, allegiance to Jesus Christ, continual pondering of the Law of the Lord, radical availability to God, mystical union, self-transcending love, contemplative prayer, prophetic zeal, Elijah, Mary, Joseph, and so on. At first glance this list of characteristic emphases may seem disappointing, since each one can also be found in other Christian spiritual traditions. But, in fact, this is only to be expected if Carmelite spirituality is but one way of trying to live the Gospel with complete fidelity. Carmelite spirituality seeks nothing more nor less than to "stand before the face of the living God" and prophesy with Elijah, to "hear the word of God and keep it" with Mary, to grow in friendship with God through unceasing prayer with Teresa, to "become by participation what Christ is by nature" as John of the Cross puts it, and thereby to be made, like Thérèse of Lisieux, into instruments of God's transforming merciful love

in the church and society. One of the striking features of the tradition's greatest saints and teachers is that the more thoroughly "Carmelite" they are, the more universal their message. They speak directly to hearts of those who may know little of religious orders but are somehow searching for meaning in life, yearning for a deep encounter with God. Perhaps the clearest example is Thérèse herself, dying at twenty-four in an obscure French Carmel; her simple yet profound reflections mainly on the ordinary struggles of convent life have inspired an audience of millions and helped make her the most popular saint of modern times.

The Carmelite tradition offers an abundance of spiritual "classics." We have chosen representative texts from the main periods of Carmel's history and from the main branches of the Carmelite family. Authors quoted here include men and women, ordained and lay, scholars and nonscholars, famous and little known. Inevitably, many favorite passages had to be omitted for lack of space, but the bibliography provides guidance for those who may want to explore further.

First in every sense is a work known as the Rule of St. Albert (ca. 1207), the earliest surviving document related to the Carmelites. Among the shortest of the classic rules, it is in fact a *formula vitae* composed by the Latin patriarch of Jerusalem, Albert of Vercelli, at the request of the original group of European hermits assembled in the *wadi-ain-es-Siah* on the western slopes of Mount Carmel. It sets out briefly the fundamental elements of the Carmelite vocation, and is the foundational text to which all later Carmelite reforms and renewal movements have turned for inspiration.

Next comes a selection from *The Flaming Arrow* (ca. 1270), which Thomas Merton once described as "representative of the pure and prophetic spirit of the early Carmelites."[1] Ostensibly written as he was retiring from office by Nicholas of France, a disillusioned prior general of the time, this highly rhetorical work laments that the Carmelites are already abandoning their original spirit by following the mendicant friars into urban life and ministry, and exhorts them to return to the prayerful solitude of the desert.

Medieval Carmelite spirituality, however, finds its fullest expression in the third work anthologized here, *The Book of the Institution of the First Monks*, first published in the late fourteenth century but long assumed to be much older. Written in the form of a lengthy allegorical commentary on the biblical account of Elijah in 1 and 2 Kings, this book brings together the Order's Elijan and Marian spirit, as well as the prophetic and contemplative dimensions of its spirituality.

Many scholars suggest that, in addition to the Carmelite Rule, this *Book of the Institution of the First Monks* may have helped inspire the ideal of a renewed Carmel in Teresa of Avila (1515–1582), one of history's most remarkable women. In a period when the church and society in Spain were deeply distrustful of feminine initiative, Teresa not only managed to inaugurate and oversee a large-scale reform movement within the Order but also, in her rare free moments, composed some of the most highly regarded mystical texts of all time, from which we have chosen a few key passages.

Twenty-seven years her junior, John of the Cross (1542–1591) became Teresa's friend and collaborator, helping to extend her reform movement to the Carmelite friars. Today John is ranked among the greatest poets of the Spanish language and among the greatest teachers of mystical spirituality. In recent times, both Christians and non-Christians alike turn especially to his treatment of the "dark night" for guidance in facing the mystery of human suffering and the experience of God's seeming silence.

An unusual selection from St. Teresa's favorite friar, the prolific Jerome Gracián (1545–1614), brings out an important aspect of Teresian spirituality too often overlooked, namely, her aversion to "sad-faced" sanctity and her insistence on balance and a sense of humor for a healthy spiritual life. Gracián's *Constitutions of the Cerro* offers a satiric body of legislation for "melancholy" friars and nuns set on destroying their own religious orders.

The passages in the next section are from Mary Magdalen de' Pazzi (1566–1607), a near contemporary of Teresa of Avila and John of the Cross. She entered the Carmelite convent of Florence in 1582 and soon began receiving almost daily visions, messages, and ecstasies. Her ecstatic utterances, transcribed by the other sisters in the community, fill five manuscript volumes and are noteworthy for their doctrinal content.

In seventeenth-century France, the Carmelites of the Ancient Observance (i.e., the Carmelite Order from which Teresa's Discalced Carmelites had become canonically separate) underwent their own renewal movement, known as the reform of Touraine. Its great spiritual figure is John of St. Samson (1571–1636), the blind lay brother whose dictated mystical texts are once more available in contemporary critical editions.

The most influential representative of the Teresian reform in the seventeenth century, as it began to spread beyond Spain, was not a prominent theologian or even a canonized saint. Nicolas Herman, better known as Br. Lawrence of the Resurrection (1614–1691), spent over fifty years in

the Discalced Carmelite Monastery of Paris, working mainly as community cook and sandal maker. Because he found the formal meditation methods of his era too complex, he developed his own approach of simply remaining always in God's presence throughout the day, in good times and bad. After his death, his surviving letters, notes, and records of his conversations were gathered under the title *The Practice of the Presence of God*, which has gone through myriad editions in many languages.

In Belgium, the O.CARM. Touraine reform produced a number of important spiritual writers, including the lay "tertiary" Maria Petyt (1623–1677) and her spiritual director, the Carmelite friar and theologian Michael of St. Augustine (1621–1684). As the passages included in this section show, their writings present Carmelite spirituality in an emphatically Marian form, yet firmly grounded in traditional Catholic doctrine rather than private devotions.

In the eighteenth century, the Discalced Carmelite nuns of Compiègne in France opened a new chapter in Carmelite spirituality, written not with pen and ink but in their own blood. The story of Teresa of St. Augustine and her companions, who offered their lives to "restore peace" and were martyred during the French Revolution's Reign of Terror, has been immortalized in the Poulenc opera, *Dialogues of the Carmelites.* This section includes a more historically accurate account of their dramatic final moments.

Among the many admirers of the Compiègne martyrs was Thérèse of Lisieux (1873–1897), whom Pope Pius X famously described as "the greatest saint of modern times." Known especially for her "little way," and represented here by passages from *Story of a Soul*, she remains one of the church's most appealing saints, and recently became the newest, and youngest, doctor of the church.

Seven years her junior, Elizabeth of the Trinity (1880–1906) has been called Thérèse's "sister in the spirit."[2] Her famous "Prayer to the Trinity," included below, is quoted in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, and she is remembered especially for having so deeply experienced and taught the fundamentally trinitarian character of the Christian spiritual life.

World War II and the rise of Nazi ideology produced a new wave of Carmelite martyrs. Titus Brandsma (1881–1942), a member of the Carmelite Order in Holland, was a leading scholar and educator who served for a time as rector magnificus of the Catholic University of Nijmegen. As ecclesiastical advisor to the Dutch Catholic journalists, he consistently urged them to resist printing Nazi materials and was accordingly arrested and later martyred at Dachau.

Even more prominent among the Carmelite victims of Nazism was Titus's contemporary, St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, better known as Edith Stein (1891–1942). Born into a Jewish family but abandoning her faith as an adolescent, Stein became a leading figure in the early phenomenological movement and personal assistant to the philosopher Edmund Husserl. Convinced of the truth of Christianity after a conversion experience in 1921, she sought admission to the Catholic Church and later to the Discalced Carmelite convent of Cologne, Germany. A transfer to the Carmel of Echt, Holland, provided only temporary safety. She was finally arrested by the Nazis and sent to her death at Auschwitz in 1942. More recently Pope John Paul II named her copatroness of Europe.

Closer to our own day, Jessica Powers (1905–1988) lived for nearly five decades as Sr. Miriam of the Holy Spirit, a nun of the Carmel of Pewaukee, Wisconsin. The subject of numerous books and articles, she is regarded as one of the great religious poets of our time. Her work reminds us that Carmelite spirituality, and indeed any profound spirituality, expresses itself most effectively in the language of imagery and symbol. Following a small sampling of her poems, we then close this volume with a few contemporary voices, sharing their reflections on what Carmelite spirituality can contribute to the church and world of the twenty-first century and beyond.

I wish to give special thanks to Liturgical Press and to series editor Phyllis Zagano for her unfailing patience and support. I am also deeply grateful to all the members of the Carmelite family who have advised and assisted me in this project or granted permission to use the texts quoted here, as well as those who, by their words and example over many years, have helped me better understand the practical significance of Carmelite spirituality in today's world. Finally, for each of the authors and works represented here, many others (e.g., John Baconthorpe, John Soreth, Baptist of Mantua, Anne of St. Bartholomew, Mary of Jesus Crucified, Francisco Palau, Teresa of the Andes) could also have been chosen. The Carmelite tradition offers an almost endless variety of spiritual treasures. These brief selections will have served their purpose if they whet the reader's appetite to explore further. But at the same time, it should be remembered that Carmelite spirituality is most fully expressed not on the written page but in the "living book" of day-to-day Carmelite life. Even within the Carmelite family, in different times and places, access to the "classics" of the tradition has often been limited for various reasons. Many exemplary Carmelites have lived and died without having had much opportunity for serious study of our great spiritual mas-

ters. Instead, they learned by faithfully living the life, by imbibing the wisdom and spiritual practices of the Carmelite men and women who handed on to them what they had received.

This volume, then, offers no formal definition of Carmelite spirituality but simply presents some of the major representative voices from the Carmelite tradition. Further resources are listed in the bibliography. But the most reliable guides to this heritage must be sought elsewhere, outside of books. What is Carmelite spirituality? Ask any Carmelite who knows what it is to "stand before the face of the living God."

The Carmelite Tradition

The story of the Carmelite tradition can be told in many ways. Some authors begin with the prophet Elijah, or with Mary under the title of "Our Lady of Mount Carmel." Others take Teresa of Avila as their point of reference. Still others work backward from the present to retrieve whatever in the Carmelite heritage seems useful for today.

Here we begin with the *place* from which this tradition takes its name. Mount Carmel is not, in fact, a single mountain but rather a range of high hills along the eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea, in the northwestern part of what is now the modern state of Israel. From a high promontory above the city of Haifa, these hills stretch to the southeast for more than fifteen miles, and are dotted with woodlands and secluded valleys, bearing abundant and diverse vegetation. The town of Nazareth is visible in the distance to the east. Even today, despite the incursions of urban development, one can easily appreciate why the word "Carmel" is so often used in the Hebrew Scriptures to evoke natural beauty and fruitfulness (cf. Song 7:6; Isa 33:9; 35:1-2; Jer 2:7), a place to commune with God.

From antiquity, Mount Carmel has been regarded as sacred, even among the ancient pagans. Today it is home to several Druze communities and to the Bahá'í World Centre, with its spectacular Shrine of the Báb. But for Jews, Christians, and Muslims, Mount Carmel is forever linked with the memory of the prophet Elijah the Tishbite, whose mission was to summon the people away from their religious syncretism (including worship of the Canaanite rain-god), back to single-hearted fidelity to the one true God. Elijah suddenly bursts onto the pages of Scripture with the powerful declaration: "As the Lord the God of Israel lives, before whom I stand, there shall be neither dew nor rain these years, except by my word" (1 Kgs 17:1). Mount Carmel is identified as the site

of his dramatic confrontation with the prophets of Baal (1 Kgs 18:19-40), and the subsequent end to the long drought after Elijah's servant returned from the top of Carmel and reported seeing a small white cloud rising over the sea (1 Kgs 18:42-46).

Many extrabiblical traditions portray Elijah (and his successor Elisha) spending long periods on Mount Carmel, in solitude or guiding the otherwise obscure "guild of prophets" occasionally mentioned in the Elijah/Elisha cycle. Several patristic authors imaginatively portray Elijah as a kind of model for the Christian monk and even as the "founder" of monasticism and the eremitical life. During the flowering of Palestinian monasticism in the fourth to seventh centuries, a number of Byzantine monastic settlements and *laurae* (loosely knit hermit communities) were established on Mount Carmel, no doubt attracted by its association with Elijah.

Yet the origins of the Carmelites as we know them today still remain somewhat mysterious. Perhaps this is altogether fitting for a tradition so closely associated with mystical spirituality. In any case, most contemporary historians trace their beginnings to some time after the Third Crusade (1189–1192), when it seems that a group of "Latin" (that is, European) hermits settled in the *wadi-ain-es-Siah* on the western slopes of Mount Carmel, in a strip of coastal territory recaptured from Saladin. It was a time of dramatic social and religious change in Europe, with the decline of the feudal system, the rise of city-states, and the corresponding emergence of an urban middle class whose spiritual needs, like those of the urban poor, were not being met by traditional ecclesiastical and monastic structures. Popular piety of the day was marked by increasing devotion to the humanity of Jesus Christ and a corresponding desire to imitate his way of life as closely as possible, according to the understanding of the period. Pilgrims were eager to reach the Holy Land and to walk, literally, in the footsteps of Christ. Many vowed to remain there, pursuing a life of penance and prayer.

This was also the era of the "vita apostolica" movement. Countless ordinary Christians were unimpressed by a monastic life grown too comfortable (at least according to their perceptions). They sought instead what was understood to be a more "apostolic life," not by undertaking more numerous "apostolates" in the contemporary sense, but rather by imitating the poor itinerant preaching life of Jesus and the apostles. The new mendicant groups, such as the Franciscans and Dominicans, who played such a key role in the renewal of the medieval church, grew out of this larger movement.

As far as we now know, the anonymous hermits who gathered together in the *wadi* on Mount Carmel would have shared many of these same aspirations. They had a "prior" rather than a monastic "abbot," for example, and consciously chose not to embrace any of the traditional monastic rules. Instead, they approached Albert of Vercelli, the papal legate and patriarch of Jerusalem, for a brief set of written norms "in keeping with [their] avowed purpose." The "formula of life" he provided (known to later generations as the Carmelite Rule or the Rule of St. Albert) outlines a simple fraternal life of "allegiance to Christ" in unceasing prayer and meditation, common ownership of goods, silence, manual labor, practice of the virtues, and mutual charity (Rule, pars. 2–4). It became the foundational document for the entire Carmelite spiritual tradition.

The original site also left its enduring imprint on Carmelite spirituality. The hermits had chosen to establish themselves "near the spring [of Elijah]" on the mountain sacred to his memory (Rule, par. 1). Little wonder, then, that later generations of Carmelites, pondering the group's obscure beginnings, would come to claim not only a spiritual but even a historical connection with this great prophet whom the Scriptures link with the coming of the Day of the Lord and the appearance of the Messiah (see Mal 3:23-24; Sir 48:10-12; Matt 17:1-13). Elijah gradually came to be seen as the "father" and model of Carmelites.

In addition, following one of the directives in Albert's "formula of life," the hermits in the *wadi* built "an oratory in the midst of the cells," which they dedicated to Mary (cf. Rule, par. 14). To the feudal mind, this choice meant that she was the "lady of the place," the one under whose patronage and protection the hermits would fight their spiritual battles. Gradually, Christian pilgrims and the church at large came to identify this little community of hermits, according to the name of their chapel, as the "brothers of Our Lady of Mount Carmel," and the Carmelites themselves came to identify Mary as their special patron, mother, and even sister, seeing in her life the pattern of their vocation.

Within a few decades, as the political situation in Palestine deteriorated, the Carmelites began migrating westward, making foundations in Cyprus, Sicily, southern France, England, and other parts of Europe. Yet they soon discovered that their eremitical lifestyle on Mount Carmel did not easily translate to the new European context. Moreover, as recent arrivals from the East, they were suspected of being in violation of the Fourth Lateran Council's ban of 1215 against the founding of any additional religious orders (although their "rule of life" predated the council's decision). Accordingly, in 1247, at the Carmelites' request, Pope

Innocent IV promulgated the "Innocentian" version of the Carmelite Rule, which included minor alterations to Albert's text. These brought out more clearly the communal dimension of their life and allowed the Carmelites to found houses not only in "solitary places" but wherever they were "given a site that is suitable and convenient for the observance proper to your Order" (Rule, par. 5).

Later tradition also held that it was at this critical juncture, in 1251, that St. Simon Stock, prior general of the Carmelites, received from Mary the brown scapular, together with weighty promises of special assistance at the time of death to those who would wear it devoutly. Modern scholars have raised many questions about the historical accuracy of these scapular traditions. (Among other difficulties, the earliest surviving testimonies come more than a century and a half after the vision was said to have occurred, and modern research indicates that the prior general in 1251 was a man named Godfrey, not Simon.) But what is beyond dispute is that the Carmelites soon began to thrive, for which they gave thanks to Our Lady of Mount Carmel. Moreover, in the centuries that have followed, the brown scapular has gradually become one of the most familiar expressions of Catholic Marian devotion, and has been repeatedly endorsed by the church as a way of symbolizing allegiance to Mary and her Son by wearing a part of the habit of the Order especially dedicated to her.

A more practical reason for their newfound success was that the Carmelites had begun assimilating themselves to the mendicants, who were attracting numerous vocations at the time. They followed the other mendicants in founding houses in the urban academic centers and sending their students to the universities to train them for scholarly and professional careers. With the Franciscans and Dominicans, the Carmelites and Augustinians came to be recognized as among the four principal mendicant orders of the Middle Ages (joined later by the Servites and others).

Not all were happy with these changes, however. The *Ignea Sagitta*, or *Flaming Arrow*, is a long lament about the decline of the Carmelites from their initial fervor, a critique of their new lifestyle in the cities, and a call to return to the contemplative life of the desert. The text was apparently composed around the year 1270 by the prior general of the Order, Nicholas the Frenchman (also known as Nicholas of Narbonne). This would make it the earliest surviving document of significant length originating from within the Order, and perhaps the earliest expression of a perennial yearning among dedicated Carmelites to recapture something of the original spirit of the first hermits.

In addition, because the Carmelites were unable to point to any saintly founder of recent memory when challenged about their legitimacy, they sought ever stronger ecclesiastical confirmation of their way of life, and became ever more insistent on their links with Elijah the prophet. A text known as the *Rubrica prima*, from the earliest surviving Carmelite *Constitutions*, has this to say:

> Since some of the younger brothers in our Order do not know how to satisfy according to the truth those who inquire from whom and in what way our Order had its origin, we wish to respond to them, giving them a written formula for such inquirers. For we say, bearing witness to the truth, that from the time of those devout inhabitants of Mount Carmel, the prophets Elijah and Elisha, holy fathers of both the Old Testament and the New have truly loved the solitude of that same mountain for the sake of contemplation of heavenly things; that they undoubtedly lived a praiseworthy life of holy penitence there next to the spring of Elijah; and that by a holy inheritance this life has been continuously maintained. In the time of Innocent III, Albert, patriarch of the church of Jerusalem, gathered their successors into one college, writing a Rule for them which Pope Honorius, Innocent's successor, and many of his successors, approving this Order, have most devoutly confirmed with the testimony of their bulls. In this profession we, their followers, serve the Lord in various parts of the world until the present day.[1]

With the collapse of the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem in 1291, the Carmelites lost all physical contact with their original home. The hermits were finally driven from their *wadi* (Carmelite tradition has them martyred) and were unable to return until hundreds of years later. Yet even as their external lifestyle became less and less distinguishable from that of other mendicant friars, Mount Carmel itself remained for them a "dangerous memory," and Carmelites continued to see themselves as somehow still "sons of the prophets" and hermits at heart. In the last decades of the fourteenth century, the Carmelite provincial of Catalonia, Philip Ribot, published a collection of documents that included a remarkable text known as *The Book of the Institution of the First Monks*, allegedly written for the Carmelites in AD 412, though now generally thought to have been composed by Ribot himself, perhaps drawing on earlier materials. Insisting on Elijah as founder of the Order, the work takes the form of a detailed allegorical reading of the Elijan cycle from 1 and 2 Kings. Though no longer regarded as a reliable historical account, *The Book of the Institution of the First Monks* is appreciated today as perhaps the finest synthesis of medieval Carmelite spirituality, blending the Order's ascetical and mystical doctrine, and explaining the spiritual

significance of various elements in the Carmelite way of life. Most important, Ribot neatly ties together the earlier Elijan and Marian heritage. Thus, in an interpretation that would have an enormous impact on later Carmelite art and literature, Ribot suggests that the small white cloud rising over the sea (1 Kgs 18:44), ending the drought after the battle with the prophets of Baal, was a foreshadowing, for Elijah, of the torrent of grace that would come through the Blessed Virgin and her Son.

Meanwhile, throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries the Carmelites had their great saints (such as Peter-Thomas, papal legate and Latin patriarch of Constantinople), eminent scholars (such as John Baconthorpe), and national heroes (such as Nuno Alvares Pereira, who led the fight for Portuguese independence). Yet in the wake of the Black Plague, the Western Schism, the Hundred Years' War, and other calamities, they suffered the same general decline in religious observance as the other Orders and the rest of the European church.

Perhaps the best known Carmelite example is the career of Fra Filippo Lippi (1406–1469), subject of a famous poem by Robert Browning. According to some sources, he was orphaned in infancy and entrusted to the care of the friars at the Carmine in Florence, where he was professed at the age of fifteen. Florence at this time had become the cultural center of the Italian Renaissance, and the Carmine played its part. Thus, as a young friar, "Lippo" was able to observe the masters Masolino and Masaccio painting their famed frescoes in the Carmine's Brancacci Chapel. Encouraged by the prior to develop his own artistic skills, Fra Filippo went on to become one of the most outstanding painters of the *quattrocento.* But as his fame grew and the number of commissions increased, he spent less and less time in the monastery, setting up his own studio in the city and obtaining his own property. Despite the patronage of Cosimo de' Medici, Filippo seems to have been chronically short of money and was even taken to court for forgery. In 1456 he was appointed chaplain to the Augustinian nuns of Prato, where he met an attractive younger boarder, Lucretia Buti. Their relationship produced a son, Filippino Lippi, who went on to become an important painter in his own right. Fra Lippo Lippi is perhaps the greatest visual artist that Carmel has so far produced. His paintings hang in major galleries around the world, and his Madonnas, in particular, remain perennial favorites. But unlike his near contemporary, the saintly Dominican Fra Angelico, Lippi's mode of living his vocation left much to be desired.

In 1432 Pope Eugene IV granted further modifications of the Rule, relaxing somewhat the requirement of abstinence from meat and allow-

ing the friars to move about more freely. Modest though the changes were, rejection of this "mitigation" became one of the rallying points for those who sought to renew the spirit of Carmel, such as members of the Mantuan and Albi reforms. The most important contribution to the renewal efforts in this period, however, came from John Soreth, prior general of the Carmelites for twenty years (1451–1471). Besides encouraging more faithful religious observance, he obtained papal approval in 1452 to formally accept laity into the Order as "tertiaries," and communities of women as Carmelite nuns. The permission was worded broadly, and the lifestyle of the tertiaries and nuns took different forms in different parts of Europe, but Soreth clearly hoped that the addition of these new members would have a beneficial influence on the friars as well.

Indeed, it was from the first such community of Carmelite women in the Castilian region of Spain that the Order's most influential renewal movement would eventually emerge. In 1535 a lively and outgoing twenty-year-old by the name of Teresa de Ahumada y Cepeda reluctantly left her father's home to join the nearby Carmelite Monastery of the Incarnation in Avila. It was a large and busy religious community that reflected the economic and class divisions of Spanish society, with many visitors to entertain and long hours spent in elaborate liturgical prayers. At first Teresa found the life surprisingly congenial, and she began to grow in prayer, but a complete breakdown in health and long convalescence found her settling into a life of religious routine. After a "second conversion" at the age of thirty-nine, however, Teresa rededicated herself to faithfully living the Carmelite Rule, especially what she called its "most important aspect," namely, "unceasing prayer" (*Way*, 4.2), which she understood in terms of "an intimate sharing between friends" and "taking time frequently to be alone with the one whom we know loves us" (*Life*, 8.5).[2] As her spiritual life deepened and her extraordinary religious experiences raised concerns among confessors and superiors, Teresa began writing, both to clarify her own path and to teach others the ways of contemplative prayer. From her pen would eventually flow such spiritual classics as *The Book of Her Life*, *The Way of Perfection*, and *The Interior Castle.*

Seeking to create a more conducive environment for "unceasing prayer," Teresa established the new monastery of San José in Avila in 1562. Everything was arranged according to her ideal of a small austere community of enclosed Carmelite women, living together as friends and supporting one another in a vocation of intense contemplative prayer for the sake of the church. The Teresian reform had begun. Visiting five

years later, the Carmelite prior general approved what he saw, and Teresa eagerly took up his challenge to establish as many similar foundations as she could. At her invitation, Juan de Yepes, a young Carmelite priest, also joined her project, taking the name "John of the Cross" and helping her to spread this reform to the Carmelite friars. John himself was an outstanding poet, and his poems "The Dark Night," "The Spiritual Canticle," and "The Living Flame of Love," together with their prose commentaries, are considered among the greatest works of Western mystical literature. For many today, the message of Teresa of Avila and John of the Cross, for which both were named doctors of the church, is virtually synonymous with Carmelite spirituality. More successfully than previous authors, they offer a detailed analysis of requirements, pitfalls, and progressive stages in the journey toward transforming mystical union, and their writings provide a dynamic synthesis of major Carmelite themes and symbols. They teach, among other things:

- that the spiritual life is a process (like climbing a mountain, watering a garden in different ways, traveling by night, journeying through an enormous castle, changing from a silkworm to a butterfly, or searching for a beloved who, it turns out, was always near) through predictable stages toward an outcome beyond all expectation;
- that the goal is nothing less than intimate loving union with the Trinity and an ever-deepening friendship with Christ that transforms us into his likeness, by dying and rising with him who heals all our brokenness (one might call it a "christification" that includes both "divinization" and "humanization," yet without ever losing our creaturely identity);
- that faithful friends, a loving community, wise spiritual guides, liturgy and sacraments, good books (especially Scripture), learning, "determined determination," silence, solitude, humility, healthy asceticism, affability, fidelity to regular times of quiet prayer, and so on can be great helps along the way, but must never become idols;
- that the purpose is not self-satisfaction but service of others. (Indeed, it has sometimes been said that Teresa was the first founder of a contemplative community to fully grasp the essentially apostolic nature of an authentic contemplative vocation, that a life dedicated to contemplative prayer may, in some mysterious way, be the greatest service of all that one can render.)

Though initially the prior general preferred the term "contemplative Carmelites" for Teresa's followers, they soon became popularly known as "discalced" (because members typically wore sandals or went barefoot as a sign of greater austerity). After the death of Teresa (in 1582) and John of the Cross (in 1591), the movement they had begun separated from the original Carmelite Order (sometimes called the "Ancient Observance" and identified by the religious initials O.CARM.) to become the Order of Discalced Carmelites (sometimes called, a bit misleadingly, the "Primitive Observance," and identified by the initials O.C.D.). Soon the Discalced Carmelites themselves had divided further into a Spanish and Italian Congregation, with the latter embracing Teresa's enthusiasm for the missions and carrying the Carmelite presence to many parts of Europe, the Middle East, and beyond.

Teresa's writings were also enormously popular throughout Europe in the seventeenth century, and especially in France, influencing Francis de Sales, Vincent de Paul, and many members of the French school of spirituality. During that same time period, a lay brother of the Discalced Carmelite community in Paris, Lawrence of the Resurrection, developed a simple and appealing approach to prayer by "keeping God always present"; a collection of his letters, notes, and conversations, published posthumously under the title *The Practice of the Presence of God*, remains a perennial favorite among many Protestant Christians, who are often unaware of the implicitly Carmelite origins and orientation of Lawrence's spirituality. Meanwhile, seventeenth-century France also gave birth to a new renewal movement among the Carmelites of the Ancient Observance. Known as the reform of Touraine, it likewise featured outstanding mystical and spiritual authors such as John of St. Samson. This Touraine reform included, among other points, a stronger emphasis on well-celebrated liturgy, and its influence eventually spread throughout the Carmelite Order.

But the papal condemnations of Quietism and semi-Quietism in 1687 and 1699 had a chilling effect on Catholic interest in mysticism, and for the next two centuries mainstream Catholic spirituality tended to focus on more "active" expressions of piety, such as personal devotions and structured methods of meditation. Carmelite spirituality became closely associated with Marian devotions, especially the brown scapular. Teresa's influence helped spread devotion to St. Joseph, about whom she had written so warmly. From Carmelite communities in Beaune (France) and Prague came widely popular forms of devotion to the Infant Jesus, just as devotion to the Holy Face would later emerge from the

Carmel of Tours. But even among Carmelites the works of Teresa and John were approached with some caution, and their more mystical texts were not ordinarily considered suitable reading for the laity or those in early religious formation. Meanwhile, Carmelite spiritual theologians of this period spent considerable effort trying to squeeze the doctrine of Teresa and John into scholastic categories, and wrote at length on increasingly technical issues such as the nature and possibility of "acquired contemplation." Among Catholics, in other words, popular interest in Carmelite mysticism had gone into temporary decline.

Along with the whole church, Carmel was deeply shaken by the political revolutions that swept through Europe in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. She continued to produce saintly members but they were typically noted more for the example of their holy and heroic lives rather than for any memorable spiritual writings. The best example, perhaps, is that of the sixteen Discalced Carmelite nuns of the community of Compiègne, France, who collectively offered their lives "to restore peace to the church and to the state" and died at the guillotine in 1794 during the Reign of Terror. The inspiring story of their martyrdom has become widely known, albeit in a somewhat fictionalized form, through the novelette *Song at the Scaffold* and the opera *Dialogues of the Carmelites.*

Verging on extinction after so much persecution and so many losses, the Carmelites of the Ancient and Primitive Observances, like other religious orders, experienced an astounding resurgence in numbers and vitality as the nineteenth century progressed. Once again, they enthusiastically embraced the work of the missions. And just when it seemed as if Carmelite spirituality had nothing more to offer the modern world beyond the recycling of its rich spiritual heritage, a fresh flowering of the "vine of Carmel" occurred in the unlikeliest of places, an obscure Carmelite community in Normandy. There in 1897 Sr. Thérèse of the Child Jesus and of the Holy Face died of tuberculosis in the Lisieux Carmel at the age of twenty-four, virtually unknown. Yet her spiritual autobiography, published a year later under the title *Story of a Soul*, quickly captured the hearts of the Catholic faithful everywhere, with its account of "ordinary" holiness through her "little way" of confidence and love, and its promise of a "shower of roses" through her intercession. Once described by Pope Pius X as "the greatest saint of modern times," Thérèse is certainly among the best known and most popular, cherished even far beyond the bounds of Roman Catholicism for her message of childlike confidence in God's merciful love. Numerous religious congregations and lay movements have based themselves on her message, and she has been the subject of more

films, books, and articles than almost any other modern Catholic figure. In 1997 she was named doctor of the church, by far the youngest—the third Carmelite and only the third woman—to receive this recognition.

With the general resurgence of interest in mysticism and spirituality at the beginning of the twentieth century, the new chapter in Carmelite spirituality opened by the "Little Flower" was soon followed by others. Influenced by Thérèse and following a similar course, Elizabeth of the Trinity died of Addison's disease in the Carmel of Dijon (France) in 1906 at the age of twenty-six, leaving behind a trove of letters and retreat notes testifying to her intense focus on the reality of the indwelling Trinity, of which Teresa and John had written so eloquently. Meanwhile, inspired by *both* Thérèse and Elizabeth, nineteen-year-old Teresa of the Andes professed her religious vows on her deathbed in 1920 at the Carmel of "los Andes" in Chile, subsequently becoming the first Chilean to be canonized and Carmel's youngest canonized saint. Her shrine draws thousands of pilgrims each year, especially among the youth, who are attracted by her theme of God as "the joy of my life."

Two twentieth-century examples of Carmel's Elijan spirit of prophetic witness are Titus Brandsma, O.CARM., and Sr. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, O.C.D., better known as Edith Stein. Both were scholars and teachers, both wrote extensively on Carmelite topics, both strongly opposed the ideology and actions of the National Socialists, especially their persecution of Jews, and both died in 1942 in Nazi concentration camps (Brandsma at Dachau and Stein at Auschwitz). Brandsma was a professor of philosophy and history of mysticism at the Catholic University of Nijmegen in the Netherlands. At the time of his arrest he was serving as ecclesiastical advisor to the Dutch Catholic journalists, urging them to refuse publication of Nazi propaganda. Jewish-born Edith Stein was a noted philosopher and leading member of the Göttingen Circle of early phenomenologists before her conversion to Catholicism and eventual entry into the Discalced Carmelite community of Cologne. In 1933 she had already written to Pius XI urging the pope to speak out more forcefully against the anti-Semitic policies of the Nazis. Transferred to the Carmel of Echt in the Netherlands, she was completing a major text on St. John of the Cross when she was arrested, along with her sister Rosa and other Catholics of Jewish descent, in retaliation for a pastoral letter of the Dutch bishops critical of National Socialism. The example of Stein and Brandsma helps remind contemporary Carmelites that their spiritual heritage has social implications, and that the mystical and prophetic dimensions of Carmelite spirituality are inseparable.

The twentieth century also brought a fresh flowering of Carmelite spirituality in the Anglophone world, with new English-language translations and studies of the Carmelite classics, new Carmelite authors, and new initiatives to interpret the Carmelite tradition for contemporary English-speaking audiences. Carmelite themes pervade the work of American author Sr. Miriam of the Holy Spirit, O.C.D., better known as Jessica Powers (1905–1988), who is increasingly recognized as among the best of modern religious poets.

In our own day, Carmelite spirituality is more popular than ever, and the Carmelite classics are read by men and women of every religious background. It could be said, in fact, that during its long journey through history, Carmelite spirituality has become ever more "democratized." A heritage once viewed as the special preserve of medieval hermits and cloistered nuns is now seen as speaking profoundly to the universal human longing for self-transcendence and integral liberation. John of the Cross's description of the "dark night," Thérèse's "trial of faith," and the honest witness of so many Carmelites to their own spiritual trials and struggles strike a responsive chord with people today facing a world of massive suffering and injustice, where God often seems silent and hidden. Nor has it escaped notice that over the centuries, in varying degrees, Carmel has provided a significant space for women's religious experience and testimony, even when these were not always sufficiently respected in the broader church and world. And busy Christians today, who cannot withdraw to the silence and solitude of a cell in the *wadi* on Mount Carmel, still look to the Carmelite tradition for guidance on how to cultivate the far more important *interior* silence and solitude essential for spiritual growth, how to center themselves in the *hermitage of the heart*, where the living God is encountered.

And what of the future? Since the nineteenth century, many new "apostolic" congregations, secular institutes, and ecclesial movements have associated themselves in some way with Carmel and embraced at least some aspects of Carmelite spirituality as part of their charism. The Lay and Secular Carmelites have experienced a phenomenal upsurge in numbers in the wake of the Second Vatican Council, and are increasingly assuming roles of greater leadership and responsibility. Today Carmelite vocations seem to be most plentiful in the developing world, where the different branches of Carmel are experiencing their most dramatic growth. Thus the Carmelite family is becoming increasingly diverse and "global," facing the exciting challenge of inculturating its spirituality in new and varied contexts. Perhaps the next great representative of

Carmelite spirituality will come from Africa, Latin America, or Asia, and may not come from the ranks of the Carmelite friars, nuns, and sisters. Given the surprising turns in Carmel's rich spiritual heritage, however, it is risky at best to predict its future, except to affirm that Carmelite spirituality will continue to nourish people of goodwill throughout the world for many generations to come.

The Carmelite Rule (ca. 1207)

Apart from the Bible itself, no text is more fundamental for Carmelite spirituality than what has come to be known as the Rule of St. Albert. It has shaped generation after generation of Carmelites, and is the original articulation of the spiritual ideal to which all Carmelite renewal movements have attempted to return. Yet at least in its earliest form it is not technically a "rule" at all in the strict canonical sense, but a simple *formula vitae* (formula of life), composed for a single community of medieval hermit-penitents on Mount Carmel in Crusader Palestine, by someone who was not himself a member.

St. Albert of Jerusalem, as he is called by Carmelites, was born around 1150 in the diocese of Parma, and later joined the canons regular of Mortara before being chosen as bishop of Bobbio in 1184. A year later he was named bishop of Vercelli, a post he ably filled during the next two decades. In 1205 he was elected patriarch of Jerusalem and subsequently took up official residence in Acre, near Mount Carmel, because Jerusalem itself remained under Muslim control. During his distinguished career he played a role in drawing up rules for several religious groups, including the Humiliati, and carried out many important diplomatic missions for the pope.

Much about the first recipients of the Rule of St. Albert remains obscure. We do not even know their names. Tradition has given the name "Brocard" to their leader, though only his first initial, "B," appears in the earliest manuscripts. Most scholars today would at least agree that they were a group of "Latin" hermits who assembled sometime around the beginning of the thirteenth century in the *wadi-ain-es-Siah* near the "spring of Elijah" on the western slopes of Mount Carmel, already sacred to the memory of the prophet Elijah as the site of his contest with the prophets of Baal (1 Kgs 18:20–46). Europe was in the midst of a religious

revival and devout Christians everywhere were seeking a more "apostolic" life (that is, one more closely imitating the poor and simple lifestyle of Jesus and his apostles) in contrast to the perceived complacency and wealth of the traditional monastic orders. At the same time, as noted earlier, a deepening spiritual focus on Christ's humanity inspired many to go on pilgrimage to the Holy Land to visit the sites associated with Jesus, and sometimes even to remain, dedicating themselves to prayer and penance.

Such were the first Carmelites. We do not know precisely when they settled on Mount Carmel. Presumably it was some time after the Third Crusade (1189–1192), that is, after Richard the Lionhearted had recaptured from Saladin's Muslim troops the narrow coastal strip that included Acre, Mount Carmel, and the *wadi-ain-es-Siah.* Presumably also the hermits had been living on Mount Carmel for some time before they requested Albert's intervention. The Rule of St. Albert bears no date, but we know that it must have been delivered to the Carmelites between 1206, when Albert first arrived in Acre, and 1214, when he was assassinated.

The text is in the form of a letter from the patriarch of Jerusalem to "his beloved sons in Christ, B. and the other hermits under obedience to him, who live near the spring on Mt Carmel" (par. 1). Albert notes at the outset that there are already "many and varied" approved ways of living "a life of allegiance to Jesus Christ . . . pure in heart and steadfast in conscience, . . . unswerving in the service of [one's] Master" (par. 2). Indeed, at the time, new groups like the Carmelites were being pressured to conform to more familiar models of religious life by adopting one of the classic Rules, of Benedict or Augustine. But Albert evidently approves of what he observes in this hermit community, and wishes to grant their request for a particular *formula vitae* "in keeping with your avowed purpose" (par. 3), which suggests to many commentators that there had been some kind of consultation process. The hermits may even have presented him with a preliminary draft indicating what they hoped would be included. In any case, the fact that this document differs so dramatically from other legislation Albert helped to write seems to imply that it was based on what the hermits were already living, or aspiring to live, rather than on some alien model.

Thus despite many points of contact with the earlier desert and monastic traditions, and traces of the influence of Cassian throughout the document, these first Carmelites consciously opted for an alternative to the Benedictine model, at least as it was being lived at that time. Albert requires first of all that they have a "prior, one among yourselves, to be

chosen by common consent, or that of the greater or maturer part" (par. 4). Unlike the traditional monastic abbot who served for life as the supreme authority and spiritual father of his community, the Carmelite "prior" is simply the "first among equals," chosen for a set term of office, and making decisions in regular consultation with the brethren he serves. Again, in contrast with the Benedictine tradition of dormitory living, each Carmelite hermit is to have his own "cell," presumably to better support a life of intense personal prayer.

Albert goes on to offer a few general guidelines regarding the duties of the prior, the daily schedule, community prayer, common ownership, fraternal correction, fasting, abstinence, and so on. He instructs the hermits, as they prepare for their spiritual battles, to "clothe yourselves in God's armor" (par. 18), which includes chastity, holy meditations, holiness of life, faith, and the word of God. The longest paragraphs in this *formula vitae* are devoted to work and silence.

Particularly notable throughout is the spirit of freedom and balance. Albert is content to lay down a few key points, and leave the rest to the ongoing discernment of the group. His use of many qualifying phrases ("if necessary," "if it can be done without difficulty," "unless bodily sickness, or feebleness, or some other good reason, demand a dispensation") allows for great flexibility (cf. pars. 14–16). And though, in closing, Albert encourages the brothers to ever greater generosity of spirit, he reminds them to use holy *discretio*, which is "the guide of the virtues" (par. 24). Thus the text reveals far more about the original spirit of the thirteenth-century hermits in the *wadi-ain-es-Siah* than about the details of their daily life, which is why it has proved so durable an inspiration for generation after generation of their successors living in vastly different times and circumstances.

Nevertheless, the hermits themselves soon felt the need for some adaptations as they began returning West in the face of mounting Muslim pressures in Palestine. They quickly discovered that the eremitical lifestyle they had followed in the *wadi* did not easily translate to the very different climate and culture of western Europe, where they also were suspected of violating the Fourth Lateran Council's 1215 ban against the further founding of new religious orders. Accordingly, they were eager to seek papal approval as well as certain "clarifications" and "mitigations" of their *formula vitae.* Responding to their request, Innocent IV promulgated a slightly revised version in 1247. The changes he approved included meals and canonical office in common, some moderating of the requirements regarding silence and abstinence, and most important,

permission to establish foundations "where you are given a site suitable and convenient for the observance proper to your Order" (par. 5). The Carmelites interpreted this clause as allowing houses in the towns and cities, where they soon began assimilating themselves to the ranks of the mendicants (Franciscans, Dominicans) and began sending their students to the universities. In 1432 Pope Eugene IV granted further dispensations, which many saw as symptomatic of a decline in religious observance.

Thus when Teresa of Avila in the sixteenth century called for a return to the spirit of the "Primitive Rule" of Carmel, she actually had in mind the Innocentian version, which Carmelites of her time described as "primitive" when contrasted with the mitigation of Eugene IV. In fact, with its stronger emphasis on the communal dimension of Carmelite life, the Innocentian version, though not the earliest, was better suited to her reform efforts. Today it is Albert's *formula vitae* with the Innocentian modifications that stands at the head of most Carmelite legislation. The following pages, therefore, present the reconstructed original version of Albert's Rule, with the Innocentian modifications and additions indicated in italics.

What, then, is this Rule all about? Many authors of the past have insisted that its "heart" lies in the precept that "each one of you is to stay in his own cell or nearby, pondering the Lord's law [i.e., Scripture] day and night and keeping watch at his prayers unless attending to some other duty" (par. 10). Thus in *The Way of Perfection* St. Teresa writes that "our primitive rule states that we must pray without ceasing. If we do this with all the care possible—for unceasing prayer is the most important aspect of the rule—the fasts, the disciplines, and the silence that the order commands will not be wanting" (*Way*, 4.2). Some more recent commentators, however, would also insist on the centrality (both in the text and in the life of the first hermits) of the "oratory" where the Carmelites are "to gather each morning to hear Mass" (par. 14), and of the elements of life in common sketched out in the surrounding paragraphs. But however one interprets the balance between personal prayer and community life in Albert's *formula vitae*, certainly both are crucial in the Carmelite tradition.

More surprising are the apparent omissions. Albert's text says nothing directly about the apostolate, although we know the first hermits had established themselves near a source of fresh water along the main pilgrim route, and so presumably attracted many visitors. Moreover, the two biblical figures who would assume such importance in the later Carmelite tradition, Elijah and Mary, are not even mentioned by name.

Their presence must be found "between the lines." Albert addresses his text to the hermits living "near the spring," known to the locals as the "spring of Elijah"; thus the first Carmelites had founded at a site resonant with memories of the great prophet. Likewise, the "oratory" that Albert had directed them to build they dedicated to Mary, who thus became the "lady of the place" and their adopted patron. Such seemingly small details had a decisive impact in shaping Carmelite spirituality ever after.

The Carmelite Rule

(Albert's "formula of life," with the AD 1247 additions and modifications by Innocent IV indicated in italics. In cases where Innocent IV replaced some of Albert's text, the two versions are indicated by "[Alb.]" or "[Inn.].")

1. Albert, called by God's favor to be Patriarch of the Church of Jerusalem, bids health in the Lord and the blessing of the Holy Spirit to his beloved sons in Christ, B. and the other hermits under obedience to him, who live near the spring [of Elijah] on Mt Carmel.

2. Many and varied are the ways in which our saintly forefathers laid down how everyone, whatever his station or the kind of religious observance he has chosen, should live a life of allegiance to Jesus Christ—how, pure in heart and stout in conscience, he must be unswerving in service of his Master.

3. It is to me, however, that you have come for a rule of life [*formula vitae*] in keeping with your avowed purpose, a rule you may hold fast to henceforward: and therefore:

4. The first thing I require is for you to have a Prior, one of yourselves, who is to be chosen for the office by common consent, or that of the greater and maturer part of you; each of the others must promise him obedience—of which, once promised, he must try to make his deeds the true reflection—[Inn.] *and also chastity and the renunciation of ownership.*

5. [Inn.] *If the Prior and brothers see fit, you may have foundations in solitary places, or where you are given a site that is suitable and convenient for the observance proper to your Order.*

6. Next, each one of you is to have a separate cell, situated as the lie of the land you propose to occupy may dictate, and allotted by disposition of the Prior with the agreement of the other brothers, or the more mature among them.

7. [Inn.] *However, you are to eat whatever may have been given you in a common refectory, listening together meanwhile to a reading from Holy Scripture where that can be done without difficulty.*

8. None of the brothers is to occupy a cell other than that allotted to him, or to exchange cells with another, without leave of whoever is Prior at the time.

9. The Prior's cell should stand near the entrance to your property, so that he may be the first to meet those who approach, and whatever has to be done in consequence may all be carried out as he may decide and order.

10. Each one of you is to stay in his own cell or nearby, pondering the Lord's law day and night and keeping watch at his prayers unless attending to some other duty.

11. [Alb.] Those who know their letters, and how to read the psalms, should for each of the hours, say those our holy forefathers laid down and the approved custom of the Church appoints for that hour. Those who do not know their letters must say twenty-five "Our Fathers" for the night office, except on Sundays and solemnities when that number is to be doubled so that the 'Our Father' is said fifty times; the same prayer must be said seven times in the morning in place of Lauds, and seven times too for each of the other hours, except for Vespers when it must be said fifteen times.

[Inn.] *Those who know how to say the canonical hours with those in orders should do so, in the way those holy forefathers of ours laid down, and according to the Church's approved custom. Those who do not know the hours must say twenty-five "Our Fathers" for the night office, except on Sundays and solemnities when that number is to be doubled so that the "Our Father" is said fifty times; the same prayer must be said seven times in the morning in place of Lauds, and seven times too for each of the other hours, except for Vespers when it must be said fifteen times.*

12. [Alb.] None of the brothers must lay claim to anything as his own, but your property is to be held in common; and of such things as the Lord may have given you each is to receive from the Prior—that is from the man he appoints for the purpose—whatever befits his age and needs. However, as I have said, each of you is to stay in his allotted cell, and live, by himself, on what is given out to him.

[Inn.] *None of the brothers must lay claim to anything as his own, but you are to possess everything in common; and each is to receive from the Prior—that is from the brother he appoints for the purpose—whatever befits his age and needs.*

13. [Inn.] *You may have as many asses and mules as you need, however, and may keep a certain amount of livestock or poultry.*

14. An oratory should be built as conveniently as possible among the cells, where if it can be done without difficulty, you are to gather each morning to hear Mass.

15. On Sunday too, or other days if necessary, you should discuss matters of discipline and your spiritual welfare: and on this occasion the indiscretions and failings of the brothers, if any be found at fault, should be lovingly corrected.

16. You are to fast every day, except Sundays, from the feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross until Easter Day, unless bodily sickness or feebleness, or some other good reason, demand a dispensation from the fast; for necessity overrides every law.

17. [Alb.] You are always to abstain from meat, unless it has to be eaten as a remedy for sickness or great feebleness.

[Inn.] *You are to abstain from meat, except as a remedy for sickness or feebleness. But as, when you are on a journey, you more often than not have to beg your way, outside your own houses you may eat foodstuffs that have been cooked with meat, so as to avoid giving trouble to your hosts. At sea, however, meat may be eaten.*

18. Since man's life on earth is a time of trial, and all who would live devotedly in Christ must undergo persecution, and the devil your foe is on the prowl like a roaring lion looking for prey to devour, you must use every care to clothe yourselves in God's armour so that you may be ready to withstand the enemy's ambush.

19. Your loins are to be girt with chastity, your breast fortified by holy meditations, for, as Scripture has it, holy meditation will save you. Put on holiness as your breastplate, and it will enable you to love the Lord your God with all your heart and soul and strength, and your neighbour as yourself. Faith must be your shield on all occasions, and with it you will be able to quench all the flaming missiles of the wicked one: there can be no pleasing God without faith; [and the victory lies in this—your faith]. On your head set the helmet of salvation, and so be sure of deliverance by our only Saviour, who sets his own free from their sins. The sword of the spirit, the word of God, must abound in your mouths and hearts. Let all you do have the Lord's word for accompaniment.

20. You must give yourselves to work of some kind, so that the devil may always find you busy; no idleness on your part must give him a chance to pierce the defenses of your souls. In this respect you have both the teaching and the example of Saint Paul the Apostle, into whose mouth Christ put his own words. God made him preacher and teacher of faith and truth to the nations: with him as your leader you cannot go astray. We lived among you, he said,

labouring and weary, toiling night and day so as not to be a burden to any of you; not because we had no power to do otherwise but so as to give you, in your own selves, an example you might imitate. For the charge we gave you when we were with you was this: that whoever is not willing to work should not be allowed to eat either. For we have heard that there are certain restless idlers among you. We charge people of this kind, and implore them in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that they earn their own bread by silent toil. This is the way of holiness and goodness; see that you follow it.

21. The Apostle would have us keep silence, for in silence he tells us to work. As the Prophet also makes known to us: Silence is the way to foster holiness. Elsewhere he says: Your strength will lie in silence and hope.

[Alb.] For this reason I lay down that you are to keep silence from Vespers until Terce the next day, unless some necessary or good reason, or the Prior's permission, should break the silence.

[Inn.] *For this reason I lay down that you are to keep silence from after Compline until after Prime the next day.*

At other times, although you need not keep silence so strictly, be careful not to indulge in a great deal of talk, for, as Scripture has it—and experience teaches us no less—Sin will not be wanting where there is much talk, and He who is careless in speech will come to harm; and elsewhere: The use of many words brings harm to the speaker's soul. And our Lord says in the Gospel: Every rash word uttered will have to be accounted for on judgement day. Make a balance then, each of you, to weight his words in; keep a tight rein on your mouths, lest you should stumble and fall in speech, and your fall be irreparable and prove mortal. Like the Prophet, watch your step lest your tongue give offense, and employ every care in keeping silent, which is the way to foster holiness.

22. You, brother B., and whoever may succeed you as Prior, must always keep in mind and put into practice what our Lord said in the Gospel: Whoever has a mind to become a leader among you must make himself servant to the rest, and whichever of you would be first must become your bondsman.

23. You other brothers too, hold your Prior in humble reverence, your minds not on him but on Christ who has placed him over you, and who, to those who rule the Churches, addressed the words: Whoever pays you heed pays heed to me, and whoever treats you with dishonour dishonours me; if you remain so minded you will not be found guilty of contempt, but will merit life eternal as fit reward for your obedience.

24. Here then are the few points I have written down to provide you with a standard of conduct to live up to: but our Lord, at his second coming, will reward anyone who does more than he is obliged to do. See that the bounds of common sense [*discretio*] are not exceeded, however, for common sense is the guide of the virtues.[1]

Ignea Sagitta (*The Flaming Arrow*) (ca. 1270)

Within a few decades of their beginnings, the Latin hermits of Mount Carmel had already begun migrating westward, where they had to adapt themselves to an environment very different from what they had known in the *wadi.* To some in Europe, these newcomers appeared to be in violation of the Fourth Lateran Council's ban on new religious orders. To others, their claims to a special affiliation with Mary, and even the striped mantle they wore, seemed problematic. Most of all, making their foundations in "solitary places" without the benefit of owning large tracts of land made it difficult for the Carmelites to support themselves or recruit new vocations.

Faced with such challenges, the Carmelites began seeking a series of ecclesiastical confirmations and concessions to ensure their survival. Chief among them were the modifications to Albert's "formula of life" approved by Pope Innocent IV in 1247, which drew them significantly closer to the category of the mendicant friars, a process that continued throughout the 1200s. Broadly interpreting Innocent's permission to found in places "suitable and convenient for the observance proper to your Order," they began following the Franciscans and Dominicans into the cities and engaging in preaching and sacramental ministry. By the end of the century, they had changed the striped mantle for a white one (hence the nickname "Whitefriars") and had become largely urban and clerical (since only those ordained were allowed to preach).

Their choice to join the ranks of the friars was certainly understandable, for the mendicant movement was one of the great "success stories" of that era, particularly in the case of the Franciscans and Dominicans. Mendicant vocations were plentiful, and their ministries were much in demand. Nor did medieval Christians necessarily see an intrinsic incompatibility between the calling of a hermit and that of a friar. Francis of

Assisi, after all, had written a "Rule for Hermits," and the mendicant order of Augustinian friars (the Order of Hermit Friars of St. Augustine) was created through the union of various hermit communities that were following the Rule of Augustine. Still, it is also understandable that such developments would also provoke a profound uneasiness among some of those aware of how much the daily lifestyle of the Carmelites had changed in a few short years.

The only surviving major literary work from the thirteenth century originating from within the Order, the *Ignea Sagitta* (translated as *Fiery Arrow* or *Flaming Arrow*) gives the name of its author as "Brother Nicholas, sometime Prior General of the Order of the Brothers of the Blessed Mary of Mount Carmel," and bears a date of February, 1270. It takes the form of an elaborate lament over the decline of the Carmelites from their original ideal, and a call to return to their desert origins. The overall tone is highly critical, and one might rightly call it a "jeremiad," especially since Jeremiah and Lamentations are among the biblical books most often cited. Yet "looking at the work objectively and free from administrative concern," Thomas Merton once wrote, "we feel it is permitted to admire the author and sympathize with his ideals."[1]

Nicholas Gallicus (Nicholas the Frenchman, also known as Nicholas of Narbonne) had served as prior general of the Carmelites from 1266 to 1271, and in that capacity would have had the opportunity to gauge the state of the Order as he visited its scattered and rapidly multiplying communities. He writes that he "sailed the seas and journeyed from country to country" as he "made the round of the Provinces and [became] acquainted with their members." Little is known about him beyond a few matters of administration and what is contained in the *Ignea Sagitta* itself, which reveals him to be a well-educated man, able to quote from Scripture, patristic and medieval writers, canon law, and even classical philosophy. Tradition holds that the text was written as he was resigning from office, disillusioned and discouraged. More recently it has been suggested, however, that he may simply have died in 1271, with this letter still unpromulgated (or even written later and pseudonymously attributed to him). This would help explain, in fact, why the *Ignea Sagitta* seems to have passed unnoticed by Carmelites of his time. Still, the evidence is not strong enough to draw any certain conclusion. What *is* certain, however, is that the author is deeply dissatisfied by what he sees as the Order's abandonment of its original spirit.

The work is divided into a prologue and fourteen chapters. Nicholas first addresses the Order as "devoted Mother of mine," "most religious

of Mothers," and "tenderest of Mothers," calling her to mourn the loss of her former glory. He then turns accusingly to her "unfaithful" offspring, whom he calls "stepsons," who have abandoned the desert for the city, before addressing the "true sons" and exhorting them not to stand idly by as the Order falls into ruin. Without rejecting active ministry as such, he rejects the excuse of Carmel's "stepsons," that living in the cities enables them to better serve the people of God, by arguing instead that they are poorly equipped for apostolic works, and that in any case they performed a far greater service, and more effectively inspired others to holiness, when they remained alone in their cells, "pondering God's law day and night." (Indeed, one of his complaints against urban Carmelites is that their cramped accommodations in the city allow only for contiguous individual rooms, not the freestanding "separate" cells specified by the Rule.)

Repetitive, verbose, rambling, at times intemperate and highly rhetorical, the *Ignea Sagitta* as a whole may strike contemporary readers as overwrought and overwritten. Nicholas, for example, finds absolutely nothing favorable to say about the city (which he dismisses as a "cesspool of vices"), and seems inordinately suspicious of women (who "turn wise men into fools, strong men into weaklings, and saintly men into apostates"). His use of Scripture is highly selective, simply ignoring passages that run counter to his argument, such as the warning of Ecclesiastes: "Do not say, 'Why were the former days better than these?' For it is not from wisdom that you ask this" (Eccl 7:10). Yet it is the perennial privilege of age, perhaps, to recall the past as a golden era. And there is a kind of paradoxical consolation for discouraged Carmelites today in knowing that, so shortly after the Order's beginnings, there were already complaints of its decline, even though its best (and worst!) days still lay far in the future.

In any case, it is clear that Nicholas's stern language is motivated by a genuine love of hermit vocation and an authentic concern for the welfare of his Carmelite brethren. Moreover, *The Flaming Arrow* also includes passages of great beauty, as when Nicholas recalls biblical models of solitude, or praises the beauty of the desert. For Carmelites, the text represents, in a sense, one of the earliest commentaries on the Rule and the Order's primitive spirit. For Christians in general, it remains an eloquent defense of the perennial value of the eremitical life.

From the *Ignea Sagitta*

Here begins the Letter called THE FLAMING ARROW, by Brother Nicholas, sometime Prior General of the Order of the Brothers of Blessed Mary of Mount Carmel; in which Letter he mourns the Order's primitive spirit, utterly passed away.

Prologue

Nicholas, in his poverty, bids all his fellow-prisoners [cf. Rom 16:7] health and the counsel of the Holy Spirit for ever.

The sight of that devoted Mother of mine [i.e., the Carmelite Order] who conceived me as one dead and brought me forth before my time [cf. 1 Cor 15:8], between her degenerate stepsons [i.e., Carmelites who have embraced life in the city] on the one hand and those wrongful prisoners who are her true children [i.e., Carmelites who still long for the desert] on the other, moves me to minister to each, with the help of God's grace, what each stands in need of.

Our Mother I shall do my best to awaken, with my sobs of lament, from her heedless slumber, so that she may take account of her deformed condition and mend it. . . .

In this desire of mine it is my heart's love that goes out to every one of you without exception, for it is a shame common to all of us that I want to do away with. But I know—and although I would spare myself this burden if I could, I cannot—that this letter, fittingly named *The Flaming Arrow* for its bright, sharp truthfulness, welcomed as it may be by the lawful sons whose faces are towards the light [cf. 1 John 1:7], will seem hateful to the stepsons, whose ill deeds it will show to be the deeds of those who hate the light [cf. John 3:20].

Chapter I

"How the gold has grown dim, the finest of colours is changed, the stones of the sanctuary lie scattered at the head of every street!" [see Lam 4:1]. . . .

Have you forgotten that you were rightly counted as 'gold,' in your former state, for the excellence of your devotion? For just as gold is more precious than other metals, so were you distinguished among all the Orders for the greater sureness of your secret contemplation. . . .

. . . Those 'stones' your true sons were, while, mortared together in unfeigned charity [cf. 2 Cor 6:6] they held aloof from the

least violation of what they had vowed when they made profession; while yet they strove (at home in their cells, not wandering the streets) to "ponder God's law" and "watch at their prayers" [cf. Rule of St. Albert] not because they were compelled to, but happily, moved by joy of spirit. Alas! Now, torn loose from the mortar of charity by discord and instability, pitifully "scattered at the head of every street," they are "stones of the sanctuary" no longer. . . .

Chapter III

. . . [The stepsons] will perhaps reply, only too ready to give birth to the arrogance they have conceived, in some such deceitful manner as this:

> We have not the least intention of resisting the divine will, but of conforming to it; for our purpose is to edify the people of God, preaching his word, hearing confessions, giving advice, and performing other good works to our own profit and that of our neighbours. This, rightly and properly, is our wholehearted desire. This is the reason—and a very good one—why we left the desert's solitude to come and carry out these works amid the throngs of the cities.

See, Mother, see the pride of your stepsons! Never a thought do they give to you, to spare you confusion and shame . . .

Fools! What use is this veneer of apparent truth with which you try to gloss over your protestations? . . . You falsely assure anyone who is ready to believe you that it is so as to be able to profit both yourselves and your neighbours, by putting into act what in times past you were privileged to experience, that you have abandoned your desert life and come into the cities. Let me point out to you that you achieve neither of these aims in the city, while both were fully accomplished in the solitude of your former days.

As long as you persevered in solitude in your contemplations, your prayers and holy exercises, with profit to yourselves, the renown of your holiness, wafted abroad like a perfume, far and wide, over city and town, brought wonderful comfort to all those it reached; and it attracted many, in those days, to the solitude of the desert, edified by its fragrance, and drawn, as though by a cord of tenderness, to repent of their misdeeds.

But now, conducting yourselves as worldlings among worldlings, you profit neither yourselves nor them. Indeed in not profiting you lose, and you offend the people, the very ones you are so anxious

to please, by inflicting on them the poisonous stench of your ill fame. . . .

. . . Though like seeks like, as the saying goes, it is when they know them to be different from themselves in the holiness of their lives that those in the world truly love and honour religious. When they see that they are no different from themselves in their vicious ways, they may sometimes praise them to their faces, but behind their backs they deride them and hold them up to ridicule, for they rightly deem them of little worth.

Chapter IV

Where among you, tell me, are to be found preachers, well versed in the word of God, and fit to preach as it should be done?

Some there are, indeed, presumptuous enough, in their craving for vain glory, to attempt it, and to trot out to the people such scraps as they have been able to cull from books, in an effort to teach others what they themselves know neither by study nor by experience. They prate away before the common folk—without understanding a word of their own rigmarole—as bold-faced as though all theology lay digested in the stomach of their memory, and any tale will serve their turn if it can be given a mystical twist and made to redound to their own glory. Then, when they have done preaching—or rather tale-telling—there they stand, ears all pricked up and itching to catch the slightest whisper of flattery. But not a vestige do they show of the endowments for which, in their appetite for vain glory, they long to be praised. . . .

. . . It is no less a matter for wonder that these same illiterates I speak of are breathlessly eager to be appointed physicians—useless ones though they make—of spiritual wounds and maladies, in the hearing of confessions. Ignorant alike of theology and law, they are unable to distinguish between one form of leprosy and another, loose what should not be loosed, and bind what should not be bound. A fine doctor indeed who thinks he can cure everyone's ills, every sort of disorder, with one and the same medicine—and what medicine! . . .

. . . Make the round of the Provinces, examine all their members, and tell me, on your return, how many there are in the Order who are worthy and capable of preaching, hearing confessions, and giving counsel, as befits those who dwell in cities. If you say there are many you will be wide indeed of the truth. I who have made the round of the Provinces and become acquainted with their members

must sadly admit how very few there are who have knowledge enough or aptitude for these offices. . . .

Chapter V

. . . What is this new Order that has appeared in the cities, tell me? Answer me—though you must surely blush as you do so—in what useful occupation are you engaged there? I will spare you the embarrassment of telling the truth, and will answer more truthfully than you would yourselves. Two by two you roam the streets of the city from morning to night, you scurry hither and thither; and your master is he who "prowls about like a roaring lion seeking someone to devour" [cf. 1 Pet 5:8]. Thus, in you, to your utter disgrace, is the prophecy truly fulfilled: "On every side the wicked prowl" [see Ps 12:9]. . . .

. . . The main reason for your wanderings is to visit not orphans but young women, not widows in their adversity but silly girls in dalliance, beguines, nuns, and highborn ladies. Once in their company you gaze into each other's eyes and utter words fit for lovers, the downfall of right conduct and a snare to the heart. . . .

. . . But now raise your eyes and see how, in the desert, the Lord delivers and defends those who dwell there by the might of his arms from the snares of the enemy, casting an impregnable wall about them.

In the desert heavenly guardians stand with us in battle array; in the desert the angels, our fellow-citizens, posted as sentinels on the ramparts of our desert-founded city, never cease, as they faithfully keep watch night and day, to praise the name of the Lord; and thus we may boldly proclaim with the Prophet: "Blessed be the Lord, for he has shown his wondrous mercy to us in a fortified city" [see Ps 31:22].

We could be happy there together, hidden in the desert, in the possession of a true city—a true fellowship, that is, of citizens. But you, not content with that, are doing your best to divide and destroy our fellowship, in your hankering after another kind of city. . . .

Chapter VI

Was it not our Lord and Saviour who led us into the desert, as a mark of his favour, so that there he might speak to our hearts with special intimacy? It is not in public, not in the market place, not amid noise or bustle that he shows himself to his friends for their

consolation and reveals his secret mysteries to them, but behind closed doors. . . .

. . . You who flee solitude and spurn the consolation it has to offer, would you hear how the Lord has shown by his works the high esteem in which he holds it?

To the solitude of the mountain did Abraham, unwavering in faith and discerning the issue from afar in hope, ascend at the Lord's command, ready for obedience's sake to sacrifice Isaac his son [cf. Gen 22:1-12; Rom 4:16-22]; under which mystery the passion of Christ—the true Isaac—lies hidden.

To the solitude of the mountain was it also that Abraham's nephew, Lot, was told to flee for his life in haste from Sodom [cf. Gen 19:15-30].

In the solitude of Mount Sinai was the Law given to Moses, and there was he so clothed with light that when he came down from the mountain no one could look upon the brightness of his face [cf. Exod 34:28-35; 2 Cor 3:7].

In the solitude of Mary's chamber, as she conversed with Gabriel, was the Word of the Father Most High in very truth made flesh [Luke 1:26-38].

In the solitude of Mount Thabor it undoubtedly was, when it was his will to be transfigured, that God made man revealed his glory to his chosen intimates of the Old and New Testaments [Matt 17:1-18; Mark 9:2-8; Luke 9:28-36].

To a mountain solitude it was that our Saviour ascended alone, in order to pray [cf. Matt 14:23; Mark 6:46; Luke 6:12; John 6:13].

In the solitude of the desert did he fast forty days and forty nights together, and there did he will to be tempted by the devil, so as to show us the most fitting place for prayer, penance and victory over temptation [cf. Matt 4:1-11; Mark 1:12-13; Luke 4:1-13].

To the solitude of mountain or desert it was, then, that our Saviour retired when he desired to pray; although we read that he came down from the mountain [cf. Luke 6:17] when he wished to preach to the people or manifest his works. He who planted our fathers in the solitude of the mountain thus gave himself to them and their successors as a model, and desired them to write down his deeds, which are never empty of mystical meaning, as an example.

It was this rule of our Saviour, a rule of utmost holiness, that some of our predecessors followed of old. They tarried long in the solitude of the desert, conscious of their own imperfection. Sometimes, however, though rarely, they came down from their desert, anxious, so as not to fail in what they regarded as their duty, to be

of service to their neighbours, and sowed broadcast of the grain, threshed out in preaching, that they had so sweetly reaped in solitude with the sickle of contemplation. . . .

Chapter VII

. . . We have undertaken by our profession to live according to a Rule that abounds with observances. A brief consideration of that Rule is therefore not out of place.

There are three general practices to which our profession obliges us: obedience, chastity and the renunciation of ownership. These are common to the profession of all Orders. . . .

. . . But in our Order, as in every other, these general practices are reinforced by others that are more particular, and by these the Orders are distinguished one from another, some being stricter than others . . .

. . . For the Lord, whose providence is unerring in its dispositions, designedly set some in the desert with Mary, when it was his purpose to array the garden of the Church militant with a diversity of Orders, and others with Martha in the city. Those endowed with learning, industrious in the study of the Scriptures, and of adequate moral probity, he established in the city, so that they could exercise their zeal in nourishing the people with his word. Those of a simpler cast, however, those with whom he holds secret colloquy, he marked out to be sent into the desert. . . .

With such special care has the Lord provided for the guidance of all religious, whether in the desert or in the city, that in his infinite wisdom he has given them all, through those best qualified to draw up their Rules, their own distinct ways of life—the ways he knew to be best suited to each of the Orders in the circumstances its members would find themselves in.

Chapter VIII

Let us then examine carefully our own form of life, the form we profess to follow. Let us apply our minds to a close scrutiny of it, to find out whether our salvation demands that we live in the desert or in the city.

The Holy Spirit knows what is best for each man. Was it not for a purpose that he laid down in our Rule that "each one is to have a separate cell"? It does not say "contiguous," but "separate," in order that the heavenly Bridegroom and his Bride, the contemplative soul, might converse the more secretly as they repose therein. . . .

. . . For this is the command he gave us in our Rule: "Each of you is to stay in his cell or nearby, pondering God's law day and night, and keeping watch at his prayers unless some other duty claims his attention." Do you not see? If we mean to live up to our profession, as I said, we must have separate cells. Regular observance necessarily obliges us to have them, so that we may stay in them, pondering God's law day and night, and keeping watch at our prayers unless some other duty claims our attention.

But you city dwellers, who have exchanged your separate cells for a common house, what spiritual task do you perform, there in full view of one another, what are your holy occupations? When do you ponder God's law and watch at your prayers? Does not all the vanity you see or hear, say or do, as you wander hither and thither all day long, come back to your memories at night? Do you not busy those memories of yours with lawless and unclean thoughts, so that your distracted minds can ponder nothing else? . . .

. . . I know that when you come home from your rovings and ramblings, there and then the rumours begin to fly. The hubbub grows louder, disagreement makes its appearance, quarrels arise, offence is taken, envy springs up, hatred is conceived, plots are hatched, and often these words of strife end in fisticuffs and blows. "Behold how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity" [cf. Ps 133:1]—idle brethren in a single house! But just as that house divides those it unites in body from the love of God and neighbour, and scatters them, so do the separate cells unite by bodily separation those they shelter from strife, and bind them together in that love.

Perhaps some of you will say: "Although we live in the city, we have separate cells, or mean to have them by and by." "Why this waste?" I reply. What use to you in the city are cells that none enters except at bedtime, so that he might sleep and rest in greater security? As I said, you scurry about the lanes and streets of the city at random all day—do you not?—and as soon as you get home, down you sit, cheek by jowl, to exchange rumours and gossip. Why, your whole day's labour is vanity! You reserve your empty cells for sleep alone—do you not?—and spend a third of the night, if not half, in foolish chatter and immoderate tippling. Cells are of no use to those whose thoughts and pastimes are vain. They are for those who make prayer their business. . . .

Chapter XI

And now that you have heard the things that lead to damnation, I will tell you some of the wonderful privileges which are ours in the desert. It is unbelievable how much consolation, outward and inward, they bring.

In the desert all the elements conspire to favour us. The heavens, resplendent with the stars and planets in their amazing order, bear witness by their beauty to mysteries higher still. The birds seem to assume the nature of angels, and tenderly console us with their gentle carolling. The mountains too, as Isaiah prophesied, "drop down sweetness" incomparable upon us, and the friendly hills "flow with milk and honey" such as is never tasted by the foolish lovers of this world. When we sing the praises of our Creator, the mountains about us, our brother conventuals, resound with corresponding hymns of praise to the Lord, echoing back our voices and filling the air with strains of harmony as though accompanying our song upon stringed instruments. The roots in their growth, the grass in its greenness, the leafy boughs and trees—all make merry in their own ways as they echo our praise [cf. Isa 55:12]; and the flowers in their loveliness, as they pour out their delicious fragrance, smile their best for the consolation of us solitaries. The sunbeams, though tongueless, speak saving messages to us. The shady bushes rejoice to give us shelter. In short, every creature we see or hear in the desert gives us friendly refreshment and comfort; indeed, for all their silence they tell forth wonders, and move the interior man to give praise to the Creator—so much more wonderful than themselves. . . .

Chapter XIV

. . . But I have been complaining of you, Mother, when it is myself I should have been complaining of, myself I should have been impugning. How could I have presumed, how dared to govern you, I who have never learned to govern myself? . . .

. . . Spare your penitent son then, Mother, and be merciful; forgive him. For although, through stupidity and weakness, he may have offended you in some matters, you must not, I beg of you, impute this to his will, which has always been devoted to you.

GIVEN AND EXECUTED in the year of our Lord one thousand two hundred and seventy, in the month of February, on Mount Enatrof, terrible to enemies; there is the house of God and the gate of Paradise.[2]

The Book of the Institution of the First Monks (ca. 1380)

By the closing decades of the fourteenth century, church and society in Europe were reeling from the impact of multiple calamities. By some estimates, the Black Death (ca. 1348–1350) claimed the lives of over half of the European population. The church was split by the Western Schism (1378–1417) with two rival claimants to the papacy each offering dispensations and privileges to win the allegiance of followers. The on-again-off-again Hundred Years' War (1337–1453) left large parts of France devastated.

Religious life was seriously affected. To fill up their depleted ranks, orders began recruiting anyone they could find, including many who were underage or otherwise unsuitable. Dispensations from community acts or the obligations of the vow of poverty were easily obtained. Priests were able to accumulate multiple benefices and salaried chaplaincies that guaranteed a sizeable income with few pastoral responsibilities (e.g., a Mass said annually on the anniversary of the donor's death). Among religious, private ownership and administration of finances and property (including one's own rooms in the monastery!) had become widespread. And as with the "diploma mills" of today, money placed in the right hands could obtain documents giving one the title of "doctor" or even "bishop," with all of the rights and exemptions, and none of the responsibilities, ordinarily attached to such positions.

Remarkably, however, in the midst of this decline appeared the most important and influential text of medieval Carmelite spirituality apart from the Carmelite Rule itself. Sometime between the years 1379 (when he was appointed to office) and 1391 (the year of his death), the Carmelite provincial of Catalonia, Felip Ribot, brought out *The Way of Life and Great Deeds of the Carmelites*, purporting to be an anthology of four earlier Carmelite works. The first, longest, and most important bears the title

The Book of the Institution of the First Monks and, according to Ribot, was originally written for the Greek-speaking Carmelites in AD 412 by John, the forty-fourth patriarch of Jerusalem. Addressed to a certain monk of Mount Carmel named Caprasius, and relying on an imaginative and highly allegorical reading of certain biblical passages, especially the Elijan cycle, the work traces the "history" of the Carmelites from their founding by the prophet Elijah until the coming of Christ. (The other works in this collection discuss the significance of Albert's Rule and the modifications approved by Innocent IV, and bring the story of the Carmelites down to the time of their migration to Europe and subsequent expulsion from the Holy Land in 1291.)

Divided into seven "books" of eight chapters each, *The Book of the Institution of the First Monks* describes the nature and origin of the Carmelite vocation to prayer; the significance of the Order's habit, customs, and titles; and especially its Marian orientation. Book 6, for example, includes a lengthy allegorical analysis of 1 Kings 18:41-46, arguing that God revealed to Elijah and his followers the future coming of the sinless Virgin Mother and her Savior Son through the symbol of the "small white cloud" rising above the sea. Carmel's two great scriptural paradigms, Mary and Elijah, were thus ingeniously linked through an interpretation of this biblical scene in a way that powerfully influenced later Carmelite art, liturgy, and spirituality.

Although *The Book of the Institution of the First Monks* draws upon earlier sources (including patristic authors), scholars today agree that it is substantially a medieval work, most probably composed by Ribot himself. Nevertheless, for centuries after its publication this text powerfully influenced the spirituality of Carmelite men and women, who took its claims to antiquity at face value and regarded it as a kind of earlier "rule" by which their predecessors had lived before receiving Albert's "formula of life." St. Teresa's Monastery of the Incarnation in Avila possessed a copy, for example, and it may have helped to shape her understanding of the early life of the hermits on Mount Carmel. Contemporary Carmelites, no longer concerned with defending its historical accuracy, are now better able to appreciate *The Book of the Institution of the First Monks*, not as an accurate account of Carmelite origins, but rather as an inspiring reflection of the spirituality and self-understanding of medieval Carmelites.

From *The Book of the Institution of the First Monks*

Chapter 1: *What were the beginnings of the first founder of this Order, at what time did he live, from whom was he born, where did he grow up, and when in his youth did he decide to live a dedicated way of life.*

John XLIV bishop of Jerusalem in his book on the way of life of the first monks who began under the Old Law and continue under the New, to the monk Caprasius.

With good reason, beloved Caprasius, you inquire about the beginning of the Order and how and from whom it came forth, for these are things that should be examined before anything else. For although an understanding of this way of life consists in experience alone—and this understanding cannot be given fully in words alone unless from someone who is experienced, nor can it be completely grasped by you unless with equal application and toil you strive to learn it through experience—nevertheless, you will be able to follow the teaching of this way of life much better and be encouraged to practise it more fervently if you understand the worthiness of its members and founders, and are acquainted with the original pattern of life of the Order.

So that we may proceed in due order, we shall begin to speak for a while of the supreme founder of this Order and its first way of life. Then we shall describe briefly some of the holy deeds, glorious virtues and the habit worn by the founder himself, and then of his first disciples and the other early members of the Order, as the ancient followers of this—our way of life—understood all these things before us, and taught them to us both in the Old law and in the New, by their teachings and their example. From all this you may learn how our Order's way of life is confirmed by the authority of outstandingly holy men, and how we, following a form of life which is founded not on novelties or empty fables but on the original approved example of the complete monastic life, make a way in our hearts for the Lord, and we "make straight the paths for our God" to come to us, so that "when he comes and knocks we may open immediately" to him who says "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him and he with me."

Know this, therefore, and remember: From the beginning of the reign of Ahab, king of Israel, until the coming of Christ in the flesh, there passed about 940 years. It was this length of time, as recorded by the chroniclers, that Ahab began to rule before the incarnation of our Lord Jesus. In these days of Ahab, king of Israel, and in his kingdom, there was a certain great prophet of the tribe of Aaron whose name was Elijah, born in the city of Tishbe in the region of Gilead, of

a father named Sabach, and from this Tishbe Elijah was called the Tishbite. Later Elijah was an inhabitant of the city of Gilead, which was built on Mount Gilead, and which took its name from the mountain, as did the region surrounding the mountain, which lay across the Jordan, and was allotted to the half-tribe of Manasseh.

Chapter 2: *How Elijah was the first man, under the inspiration of God, to lead the monastic and prophetic eremitical life, and how God communicated to him the way of reaching this goal and the perfection of this life, partly openly and partly in a mystical fashion.*

This prophet of God, Elijah, was the first leader of monks, from whom this holy and ancient way of life took its origin. For he, having reached divine contemplation and filled with the desire for higher things, withdrew far from the cities, and laying aside all earthly and worldly things, was the first to begin to devote himself to following the religious and prophetic eremitical life, which, under the inspiration and command of the Holy Spirit, he initiated and formulated. Then God appeared to him and commanded him to flee from normal human habitation and hide himself in the desert away from the crowds, and thereafter live like a monk in the desert according to the way of life made known to him.

This is all proved by the clear testimony of Holy Scripture, for we read about this in the book of *Kings*, Chapter 3: "The word of the Lord came to Elijah saying, 'Depart from here and go towards the East, and hide yourself in the wadi Carith, which is over against the Jordan, and there you will drink of the torrent, and I have commanded the ravens to feed you there'" [1 Kgs 17:2-4].

Now these salutary commands which the Holy Spirit inspired Elijah to fulfil, and these welcome promises which he encouraged him to strive for, should be meditated upon by us hermit monks word for word, not only for their historical sense but even more for their mystical sense; because our way of life is contained in them so much more fully, that is, the way of arriving at prophetic perfection and the goal of the religious eremitical life.

The goal of this life is twofold. One part we acquire by our own effort and the exercise of the virtues, assisted by divine grace. This is to offer God a pure and holy heart, free from all stain of sin. We attain this goal when we are perfect and "in Carith," that is, hidden in that love of which the Wiseman speaks: "love covers all offences" [Prov 10:12]. Wishing Elijah to reach this goal, God said to him, "Hide in the wadi Carith."

The other goal of this life is granted to us as the free gift of God, namely, to taste somewhat in the heart and to experience in the mind

the power of the divine presence and the sweetness of heavenly glory, not only after death but already in this mortal life. This is to "drink of the torrent" of the pleasure of God. God promised this to Elijah in the words: "And there you shall drink of the torrent."

It is to achieve both these goals that the prophetic eremitical life is adopted by the monk, as the prophet bears witness: "In a desert land" he says, "where there is no way and no water, so in the sanctuary have I come before you, O God, to see your power and your glory" [Ps 63:1-2]. And so, by choosing to remain "in a desert land where there is no way and no water," and so to come before God "in the sanctuary," that is, with a heart purified of sin, he indicates that the first goal of the solitary life which he has chosen is to offer God a holy heart, that is, purified of all actual sin. By adding "to see your power and your glory," he indicates quite clearly the second goal of this life, which is, whilst in this life, to experience or to see mystically in the heart something of the power of the divine presence and to taste the sweetness of heavenly glory.

Through the first of these, that is, through purity of heart and perfection of love, one comes to the second, that is, to an experiential knowledge of the divine power and heavenly glory. As the Lord says in *John* Chapter 14: "He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and will show myself to him" [John 14:21]. And so God, by what he had proposed to the holy prophet Elijah in all the above words, wanted greatly to persuade him—the first and outstanding leader of monks—and us his followers, that we should "be perfect as our heavenly Father is perfect," "having above all things love, which is the bond of perfection" [Matt 5:48; Col 3:14]. Therefore, in order that we may be worthy of the perfection urged on us and the promised vision of glory, let us seek attentively to understand clearly and logically, and to fulfil in our actions, the form of life given by God in the above words to blessed Elijah as a way to achieve them.

For, speaking to the holy Elijah, the Lord also says, both in the Old Law and the New, to every hermit monk: "Depart from here," that is, from the perishable and transitory things of this world, and "go towards the East," that is, against the natural desires of your flesh, "and hide in the wadi Carith," so that you do not live in the cities with their crowds, "which is over against the Jordan," that is, so that through love you are cut off from all sins. By these four steps you will ascend to the height of prophetic perfection, and "there you will drink of the torrent." And so that you may be able to persevere in this: "I have commanded the ravens to feed you there."

All this you will understand better if, going through each part separately, we explain them clearly and in order.[1]

Teresa of Avila (1515–1582)

One striking feature of the Carmelite spiritual tradition is that its most prominent representative came not from among the hermits on Mount Carmel but centuries later, from the feminine branch in Spain. Although women had long been associated in various ways with the Carmelite friars, it was only in 1452 that the reforming prior general John Soreth, as part of his effort to renew the Order, obtained papal permission (through the bull "Cum nulla") to grant formal membership as Carmelite nuns to groups of "pious virgins, widows, beguines, mantellates or others who wear the habit." The first such community in Castile was established in 1479 in Avila, later moving outside the city walls to its present site of the Monastery of the Incarnation, which was officially dedicated in 1515.

That same year, Avila's most famous citizen, Teresa de Ahumada y Cepeda, was born into a large family that had bought its way into the minor nobility, partly in order to cover up Jewish ancestry on the father's side in an era of rising anti-Semitism. (At that time the Spanish monarchs regarded themselves as responsible for the church in Spain, and considered a common Catholic faith one of the most important factors uniting the diverse regions of the Iberian Peninsula; the Spanish Inquisition that they established thus gradually assumed the task of investigating anyone suspected of heterodoxy, Protestant sympathies, or ancestral links with other religions.)

By her own account, Teresa was a pious child, affectionate and outgoing, with a lively intelligence and imagination. Like most women of her era and social class, she received a modest education at home, where she learned reading, writing, and other domestic skills. As a teenager, after the death of her mother, Teresa came under the influence of more "worldly" and frivolous young relatives, until her father decided to send

her to a nearby Augustinian convent boarding school to protect her "honor." There, guided by an older nun, she became more serious about her prayer and began to ponder her future. In 1535, after a great interior struggle, she finally left her home and father to enter the Carmelite Monastery of the Incarnation, where she was professed a year later.

Teresa acknowledges that she found convent life more congenial than she expected, and yet after a short time, her health broke down completely. She was taken to a healer for treatments that proved nearly fatal and left her partially paralyzed for several years. She attributed her cure in 1542 to the intercession of St. Joseph, and for the rest of her life promoted special devotion to him.

Teresa had already begun making progress in contemplative prayer and recollection before her illness, but during and after her long convalescence, she settled into what she later regarded as a state of comfortable mediocrity, fulfilling her religious obligations but spending long hours gossiping in the parlor with the monastery's numerous visitors. In fact, life at the Incarnation posed other challenges as well. The community was too large to provide adequately for its members, who were often forced to go out to their families in search of a decent meal. Wealthy sisters lived in suites of rooms, often with servants, and were addressed by their formal social titles, while the poorer ones huddled together in dormitories. The daily schedule was filled with liturgical obligations and vocal prayers required by the monastery's benefactors, so that there was little time to pursue quiet personal prayer, even if the sisters had felt so inclined. In addition, Teresa acknowledges that she was badly misled for a time by the notion that spiritual progress required setting aside all concepts and images of created things, even those of the human Jesus; she would later become an eloquent defender of the indispensability of Christ's humanity for Christian prayer.

After a profound "conversion" experience in Lent of 1554 before a representation of the wounded Christ, Teresa recommitted herself to the practice of "mental prayer." Soon she began having extraordinary spiritual experiences that alarmed her friends and confessors, who suspected that they might be the work of the devil, until they were reassured by more qualified spiritual advisors. In the meantime, learning of turmoil occurring elsewhere in Europe because of the Protestant Reformation, and pondering what she could do to help within the limitations imposed on women of her day, Teresa concluded that her first obligation "was to follow the call to the religious life, . . . by keeping my rule as perfectly as I could" (*Life*, 32.9).[1] For her, this meant especially a commitment to

unceasing prayer. Not long afterward, she felt inspired to found a small austere community of similarly minded Carmelite women, living together simply as equals, in mutual friendship, dedicated to an intense life of contemplative prayer for the sake of the church and the world (cf. *Way*, 1.2). The project was particularly problematic in the strongly patriarchal culture of her time, which stressed social status and honor, and in which those interested in contemplative prayer (especially women) often fell under the suspicious eye of the Inquisition.

Overcoming many obstacles and great opposition, Teresa was able to bring her dream to fulfillment with the founding of the Monastery of St. Joseph in Avila in 1562, the first community of her reform. As a sign of her new way of life, she set aside the formal title "Doña Teresa de Ahumada" and began identifying herself by her religious subtitle, as "Teresa of Jesus." Five years later, during a visit to Avila, the Carmelite general encouraged her to establish more such foundations, subsequently granting permission for similar communities of Carmelite men; among her first male recruits was John of the Cross. Thus at the age of fifty-two Teresa began a career as the leader and driving force behind not just a single monastery but an entire renewal movement within the Carmelite family, which would become known as the "discalced." (Literally, the term "discalced" means "without shoes," and was popularly used at the time to refer to certain reform groups among religious congregations, because of their custom of wearing sandals or going barefoot as a sign of greater austerity.) By the time of her death in 1582, seventeen foundations of the nuns of the Teresian reform were already established, along with numerous communities of her friars. Later on, the movement she began would evolve into a new juridically independent religious order, the Discalced Carmelites (or more officially, the Discalced Nuns and Friars of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel).

Even more important than Teresa's work as a reformer and founder, however, is her lasting impact as a spiritual teacher, especially through her many writings. Despite many other demands on her time, Teresa took up her pen frequently and for a variety of reasons: to satisfy the wishes of superiors and confessors, to give an account of her inner journey, to clarify her own thoughts, to guide the members of her reform movement and all who sought her advice, to provide a historical record of how her communities had been established, to insist on women's capacity for a deep and vibrant interior life, to share her wisdom regarding the ways of God with human beings, and to sing the mercies of the Lord. Though she lacked any formal literary training and often complained about the burden of writing, she was an exceptionally gifted author, among the first

to describe the progressive stages in the Christian spiritual journey so clearly and in such detail, with such a wealth of memorable images. Her writings are full of warmth, humor, and common sense even when discussing the most sublime topics. Besides numerous letters, poems, and other shorter texts she left behind, Teresa is particularly remembered for three major works, now regarded as spiritual classics. In *The Book of Her Life*, Teresa recounts her spiritual journey from childhood to the time of establishing her first foundation in 1562; in the midst of her account she inserts a dozen chapters famously comparing the degrees of prayer to four ways of watering a garden. In *The Way of Perfection*, written at the request of her own nuns, Teresa explains the nature of their vocation and three qualities she considers necessary for anyone seeking "to follow the way of prayer" (love for one another, detachment, and true humility), before demonstrating, through an extended commentary on the Our Father, how to pursue "mental prayer." *The Interior Castle*, her masterpiece, compares the soul to a great crystalline castle of seven progressively more interior sets of rooms, through which one journeys in prayer toward the center, where the Lord dwells. (A fourth major work, *The Book of Foundations*, continues Teresa's account of her foundations down to the final community she established in Burgos in 1582, in her last months.)

Teresa's writings were first published in 1588, only six years after her death, in an edition edited by Luis de Leon, and quickly spread throughout Europe and beyond. Her works have remained in print ever since, and have been translated into most major languages. Teresa's influence on Catholic spiritual theology has been incalculable, and she is regarded as one of the foremost mystics of the Christian tradition. In 1970 she was declared doctor of the church by Pope Paul VI, the first woman to be honored with this title. Today her works are avidly read by spiritual seekers of all sorts. She is admired even by those of no particular religious affiliation as someone who dramatically overcame the prejudices of her time—against women, those of Jewish ancestry, and those interested in deeper interior prayer—in order to accomplish great things.

From *The Book of Her Life*[2]

(Numbers indicate chapter and section in the Kavanaugh/Rodriguez edition.)

8.5. The good that one who practices prayer possesses has been written of by many saints and holy persons; I mean mental prayer—glory be to God for this good! If it were not for this good, even

though I have little humility, I should not be so proud as to dare speak about mental prayer.

I can speak of what I have experience of. It is that in spite of any wrong they who practice prayer do, they must not abandon prayer since it is the means by which they can remedy the situation; and to remedy it without prayer would be much more difficult. May the devil not tempt them, the way he did me, to give up prayer out of humility. May those persons believe that God's words cannot fail. For if we are truly repentant and resolve not to offend God, He will return to the former friendship and bestow the favors He previously did, and sometimes more if the repentance merits it.

Whoever has not begun the practice of prayer, I beg for the love of the Lord not to go without so great a good. There is nothing here to fear but only something to desire. Even if there be no great progress, . . . at least a person will come to understand the road leading to heaven. And if one perseveres, I trust then in the mercy of God, who never fails to repay anyone who has taken Him for a friend. For mental prayer in my opinion is nothing else than an intimate sharing between friends; it means taking time frequently to be alone with Him who we know loves us. In order that love be true and the friendship endure, the wills of the friends must be in accord. The will of the Lord, it is already known, cannot be at fault; our will is vicious, sensual, and ungrateful. And if you do not yet love Him as He loves you because You have not reached the degree of conformity with His will, you will endure this pain of spending a long while with one who is so different from you when you see how much it benefits you to possess His friendship and how much He loves you. . . .

9.4. This is the method of prayer I then used: since I could not reflect discursively with the intellect, I strove to picture Christ within me, and it did me greater good—in my opinion—to picture Him in those scenes where I saw Him more alone. It seemed to me that being alone and afflicted, as a person in need, He had to accept me. I had many simple thoughts like these.

The scene of His prayer in the garden, especially, was a comfort to me; I strove to be His companion there. . . . I remained with Him as long as my thoughts allowed me to, for there were many distractions that tormented me. Most nights, for many years before going to bed when I commended myself to God in preparation for sleep, I always pondered for a little while this episode of the prayer in the garden. . . . I believe my soul gained a great deal through

this custom because I began to practice prayer without knowing what it was; and the custom became so habitual that I did not abandon it, just as I did not fail to make the sign of the cross before sleeping. . . .

11.5. Speaking now of the initial stages of those who are determined to seek out this good [i.e., prayer] and embark on this enterprise (for I shall speak afterward of the other stages I began to mention in regard to mystical theology, which I believe it is called), the greatest labor is in the beginning because it is the beginner who works while the Lord gives the increase. In the other degrees of prayer the greatest thing is enjoying; although whether in the beginning, the middle, or the end, all bear their crosses even though these crosses be different. For all who follow Christ, if they don't want to get lost, must walk along this path that He trod. And blessed be the trials that even here in this life are so superabundantly repaid.

11.6. . . . It seems now to me that I read or heard of this comparison—for since I have a bad memory, I don't know where or for what reason it was used, but it will be all right for my purposes. Beginners must realize that in order to give delight to the Lord they are starting to cultivate a garden on very barren soil, full of abominable weeds. His Majesty pulls up the weeds and plants good seed. Now let us keep in mind that all of this is already done by the time a soul is determined to practice prayer and has begun to make use of it. And with the help of God we must strive like good gardeners to get these plants to grow and take pains to water them so that they don't wither but come to bud and flower and give forth a most pleasant fragrance to provide refreshment for this Lord of ours. Then He will often come to take delight in this garden and find His joy among these virtues.

11.7. But let us see now how it must be watered so that we may understand what we have to do, the labor this will cost us, whether the labor is greater than the gain, and for how long it must last. It seems to me the garden can be watered in four ways. You may draw water from a well (which is for us a lot of work). Or you may get it by means of a water wheel and aqueducts in such a way that it is obtained by turning the crank of the water wheel. (I have drawn it this way sometimes—the method involves less work than the other, and you get more water.) Or it may flow from a river or a stream. (The garden is watered much better by this means because the ground is more fully soaked, and there is no need to water so

frequently—and much less work for the gardener.) Or the water may be provided by a great deal of rain. (For the Lord waters the garden without any work on our part—and this way is incomparably better than all the others mentioned.)

11.8. Now, then, these four ways of drawing water in order to maintain this garden—because without water it will die—are what are important to me and have seemed applicable in explaining the four degrees of prayer in which the Lord in His goodness has sometimes placed my soul. . . .

11.9. Beginners in prayer, we can say, are those who draw water from the well. This involves a lot of work on their own part, as I have said. They must tire themselves in trying to recollect their senses. Since they are accustomed to being distracted, this recollection requires much effort. They need to get accustomed to caring nothing at all about seeing or hearing, to practicing the hours of prayer, and thus to solitude and withdrawal—and to thinking on their past life. . . . They must strive to consider the life of Christ—and the intellect grows weary in doing this. . . .

14.1. It has been explained now how the garden is watered by labor and the use of one's arms, drawing the water up from the well. Let us speak now of the second manner, ordained by the Lord of the garden, for getting water; that is, by turning the crank of a water wheel and by aqueducts, the gardener obtains more water with less labor; and he can rest without having to work constantly. Well, this method applied to what they call the prayer of quiet is what I now want to discuss.

14.2. Here the soul begins to be recollected and comes upon something supernatural because in no way can it acquire this prayer through any efforts it may make. . . .

In this prayer the faculties are gathered within so as to enjoy that satisfaction with greater delight. But they are not lost, nor do they sleep. Only the will is occupied in such a way that, without knowing how, it becomes captive; it merely consents to God allowing Him to imprison it as one who well knows how to be the captive of its lover. O Jesus and my Lord! How valuable is Your love to us here! It holds our love so bound that it doesn't allow it the freedom during that time to love anything else but You.

14.3. The other two faculties [i.e., memory and intellect] help the will to be capable of enjoying so much good—although sometimes

it happens that even though the will is united, they are very unhelpful. But then it shouldn't pay any attention to them; rather it should remain in its joy and quietude. . . .

16.1. Let us come now to speak of the third water by which this garden is irrigated, that is, the water flowing from a river or spring. By this means the garden is irrigated with much less labor, although some labor is required to direct the flow of the water. The Lord so desires to help the gardener here that He Himself becomes practically the gardener and the one who does everything.

This prayer is a sleep of the faculties: the faculties neither fail entirely to function nor understand how they function. The consolation, the sweetness, and the delight are incomparably greater than that experienced in the previous prayer. The water of grace rises up to the throat of this soul since such a soul can no longer move forward; nor does it know how; nor can it move backward. It would desire to enjoy the greatest glory. . . . This experience doesn't seem to me to be anything else than an almost complete death to all earthly things and an enjoyment of God.

I don't know any other terms for describing it or how to explain it. . . . This prayer is a glorious foolishness, a heavenly madness where the true wisdom is learned; and it is for the soul a most delightful way of enjoying. . . .

18.1. May the Lord teach me the words necessary for explaining something about the fourth water. Clearly His favor is necessary, even more so than for what was explained previously. In the previous prayer, since the soul was conscious of the world, it did not feel that it was totally dead. . . .

In all the prayer and modes of prayer that were explained, the gardener does some work, even though in these latter modes the work is accompanied by so much glory and consolation for the soul that it would never want to abandon this prayer. As a result, the prayer is not experienced as work but as glory. In this fourth water the soul isn't in possession of its senses, but it rejoices without understanding what it is rejoicing in. It understands that it is enjoying a good in which are gathered together all goods, but this good is incomprehensible. All the senses are occupied in this joy in such a way that none is free to be taken up with any other exterior or interior thing. . . .

In the previous degrees, the senses are given freedom to show some signs of the great joy they feel. Here in this fourth water the

soul rejoices incomparably more; but it can show much less since no power remains in the body, nor does the soul have any power to communicate its joy. . . .

From *The Way of Perfection*

(Numbers indicate chapter and section in the Kavanaugh/Rodriguez edition.)

1.1. When I began to take the first steps toward founding this monastery . . . , it was not my intention that there be so much external austerity or that the house have no income; on the contrary, I would have desired the possibility that nothing be lacking. . . .

1.2. At that time news reached me of the harm being done in France and of the havoc the Lutherans had caused. . . . The news distressed me greatly, and, as though I could do something or were something, I cried to the Lord and begged Him that I might remedy so much evil. It seemed to me that I would have given a thousand lives to save one soul out of the many that were being lost there. I realized I was a woman and wretched and incapable of doing any of the useful things I desired to do in the service of the Lord. All my longing was and still is that since He has so many enemies and so few friends that these friends be good ones. As a result I resolved to do the little that was in my power; that is, to follow the evangelical counsels as perfectly as I could and strive that these few persons who live here do the same. I did this trusting in the great goodness of God, who never fails to help anyone who is determined to give up everything for Him. My trust was that if these Sisters matched the ideal my desires had set for them, my faults would not have much strength in the midst of so many virtues; and I could thereby please the Lord in some way. Since we would all be occupied in prayer for those who are the defenders of the Church and for preachers and for learned men who protect her from attack, we could help as much as possible this Lord of mine who is so roughly treated by those for whom He has done so much good. . . .

1.3. O my Redeemer, my heart cannot bear these thoughts without becoming terribly grieved. What is the matter with Christians nowadays? Must it always be those who owe You the most who afflict You? Those for whom You performed the greatest works, those You have chosen for Your friends, with whom You walk and

commune by means of Your sacraments? Aren't they satisfied with the torments You have suffered for them? . . .

1.5. O my Sisters in Christ, help me beg these things of the Lord. This is why He has gathered you together here. This is your vocation. These must be the business matters you're engaged in. These must be the things you desire, the things you weep about; these must be the objects of your petitions—not, my Sisters, the business matters of the world. For I laugh at and am even distressed about the things they come here to ask us to pray for: to ask His Majesty for wealth and money—and this is done by persons who I wish would ask Him for the grace to trample everything underfoot. They are well intentioned, and in the end we pray for their intentions because of their devotion—although for myself I don't think the Lord ever hears me when I pray for these things. The world is all in flames; they want to sentence Christ again, so to speak, since they raise a thousand false witnesses against Him; they want to ravage His Church—and are we to waste time asking for things that if God were to give them we'd have one soul less in heaven? No, my Sisters, this is not the time to be discussing with God matters that have little importance. . . .

26.1. Now then let us return to our vocal prayer that it may be so recited that, without our being aware of the fact, God may grant us everything together and also enable us to say vocal prayers as we should, as I have mentioned.

As is already known, the examination of conscience, the act of contrition, and the sign of the cross must come first. Then, daughters, since you are alone, strive to find a companion. Well what better companion than the Master Himself who taught you this prayer [i.e., the Our Father]? Represent the Lord Himself as close to you and behold how lovingly and humble He is teaching you. Believe me, you should remain with so good a friend as long as you can. If you grow accustomed to having Him present at your side, and He sees that you do so with love and that you go about striving to please Him, you will not be able—as they say—to get away from Him; He will never fail you; He will help you in all your trials; you will find Him everywhere. Do you think it's some small matter to have a friend like this at your side?

26.2. O Sisters, those of you who cannot engage in much discursive reflection with the intellect or keep your mind from distraction, get used to this practice! Get used to it! See, I know that you

can do this; for I suffered many years from the trial—and it is a very great one—of not being able to quiet the mind in anything. But I know that the Lord does not leave us so abandoned; for if we humbly ask Him for this friendship, He will not deny it to us. And if we cannot succeed in one year, we will succeed later. Let's not regret the time that is so well spent. Who's making us hurry? I am speaking of acquiring this habit and of striving to walk alongside this true Master.

26.3. I'm not asking you now that you think about Him or that you draw out a lot of concepts or make long and subtle reflections with your intellect. I'm not asking you to do anything more than look at Him. . . .

26.4. . . . If you are joyful, look at Him as risen. Just imagining how He rose from the tomb will bring you joy. The brilliance! The beauty! The majesty! How victorious! How joyful! Indeed, like one coming forth from a battle where he has gained a great kingdom! And all of that, plus Himself, He desires for you. . . .

26.5. If you are experiencing trials or are sad, behold Him on the way to the garden: what great affliction He bore in His soul; for having become suffering itself, He tells us about it and complains of it. Or behold Him bound to the column, filled with pain, with all His flesh torn in pieces for the great love He bears you; so much suffering, persecuted by some, spit on by others, denied by His friends, abandoned by them, with no one to defend Him, frozen from the cold, left so alone that you can console each other. Or behold Him burdened with the cross, for they didn't even let Him take a breath. He will look at you with those eyes so beautiful and compassionate, filled with tears; He will forget His sorrows so as to console you in yours, merely because you yourselves go to Him to be consoled, and you turn your head to look at Him.

26.6. O Lord of the world, my true Spouse! (You can say this to Him if He has moved your heart to pity at seeing Him thus, for not only will you desire to look at Him but you will also delight in speaking with Him, not with ready-made prayers but with those that come from the sorrow of your own heart, for He esteems them highly.) Are You so in need, my Lord and my Love, that You would want to receive such poor company as mine, for I see by Your expression that You have been consoled by me? . . . If it's true, Lord, that You want to endure everything for me, what is this that I suffer for

You? Of what am I complaining? . . . Let us walk together, Lord. Wherever You go, I will go; whatever you suffer, I will suffer. . . .

26.9. What you can do as a help in this matter is try to carry about an image or painting of this Lord that is to your liking, not so as to carry it about on your heart and never look at it but so as to speak often with Him; for He will inspire you with what to say. . . .

26.10. It is also a great help to take a good book written in the vernacular in order to recollect one's thoughts and pray well vocally, and little by little accustom the soul with coaxing and skill not to grow discouraged. . . .

From *The Interior Castle*

(Numbers indicate dwelling place, chapter, and section in the Kavanaugh/Rodriguez edition.)

1.1.1. Today while beseeching our Lord to speak for me because I wasn't able to think of anything to say nor did I know how to begin to carry out this obedience, there came to my mind what I shall now speak about, that which will provide us with a basis to begin with. It is that we consider our soul to be like a castle made entirely out of a diamond or of very clear crystal, in which there are many rooms, just as in heaven there are many dwelling places. For in reflecting upon it carefully, Sisters, we realize that the soul of the just person is nothing else but a paradise where the Lord says He finds His delight. So then, what do you think that abode will be like where a King so powerful, so wise, so pure, so full of all good things takes His delight? I don't find anything comparable to the magnificent beauty of a soul and its marvelous capacity. Indeed, our intellects, however keen, can hardly comprehend it, just as they cannot comprehend God; but He Himself says that He created us in His own image and likeness.

Well if this is true, as it is, there is no reason to tire ourselves in trying to comprehend the beauty of this castle. Since this castle is a creature and the difference, therefore, between it and God is the same as that between the Creator and His creature, His Majesty in saying that the soul is made in His own image makes it almost impossible for us to understand the sublime dignity and beauty of the soul. . . .

1.1.3. Well, let us consider that this castle has, as I said, many dwelling places: some up above, others down below, others to the sides; and in the center and middle is the main dwelling place where the very secret exchanges between God and the soul take place. . . .

1.1.5. Well getting back to our beautiful and delightful castle we must see how we can enter it. It seems I'm saying something foolish. For if this castle is the soul, clearly one doesn't have to enter it since it is within oneself. How foolish it would seem were we to tell someone to enter a room he is already in. But you must understand that there is a great difference in the ways one may be inside the castle. For there are many souls who are in the outer courtyard—which is where the guards stay—and don't care at all about entering the castle, nor do they know what lies within that most precious place, nor who is within, nor even how many rooms it has. You have already heard in some books on prayer that the soul is advised to enter within itself; well that's the very thing I'm advising. . . .

1.1.7. Insofar as I can understand the door of entry to this castle is prayer and reflection. I don't mean to refer to mental more than vocal prayer, for since vocal prayer is prayer it must be accompanied by reflection. A prayer in which a person is not aware of whom he is speaking to, what he is asking, who it is who is asking and of whom, I do not call prayer however much the lips move. . . .

6.7.5. It will also seem to you that anyone who enjoys such lofty things will no longer meditate on the mysteries of the most sacred humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ. Such a person would now be engaged entirely in loving. This is a matter I wrote about at length elsewhere. . . . Nonetheless, they will not make me admit that such a road is a good one . . .

6.7.6. . . . To be always withdrawn from corporeal things and enkindled in love is the trait of angelic spirits not of those who live in mortal bodies. It's necessary that we speak to, think about, and become the companions of those who having had a mortal body accomplished such great feats for God. How much more is it necessary not to withdraw through one's own efforts from all our good and help which is the most sacred humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ. I cannot believe that these souls do so, but they just don't understand; and they will do harm to themselves and to others. . . . The Lord Himself says that He is the way; the Lord says also that

He is the light and that no one can go to the Father but through Him, and "anyone who sees me sees my Father.". . .

7.1.5. . . . Now then, when His Majesty is pleased to grant the soul this divine marriage that was mentioned, He first brings it into His own dwelling place [i.e., the seventh]. He desires that the favor be different from what it was at other times when He gave the soul raptures. I really believe that in rapture he unites it with Himself, as well as in the prayer of union that was mentioned. But it doesn't seem to the soul that it is called to enter into its center. . . .

7.1.6. In this seventh dwelling place the union comes about in a different way: our good God now desires to remove the scales from the soul's eyes and let it see and understand, although in a strange way, something of the favor He grants it. When the soul is brought into that dwelling place, the Most Blessed Trinity, all three Persons, through an intellectual vision, is revealed to it through a certain representation of the truth. First there comes an enkindling in the spirit in the manner of a cloud of magnificent splendor; and these Persons are distinct, and through an admirable knowledge the soul understands as a most profound truth that all three Persons are one substance and one power and one knowledge and one God alone. It knows in such a way that what we hold by faith, it understands, we can say, through sight—although the sight is not with the bodily eyes nor with the eyes of the soul, because we are not dealing with an imaginative vision. Here all three Persons communicate themselves to it, speak to it, and explain those words of the Lord in the Gospel: that He and the Father and the Holy Spirit will come to dwell with the soul that loves Him and keeps His commandments.

7.1.7. Oh, God help me! How different is hearing and believing these words from understanding their truth in this way! Each day this soul becomes more amazed, for these Persons never seem to leave it any more, but it clearly beholds, in the way that was mentioned, that they are within it. In the extreme interior, in some place very deep within itself, the nature of which it doesn't know how to explain, because of a lack of learning, it perceives this divine company.

7.1.8. You may think that as a result the soul will be outside itself and so absorbed that it will be unable to be occupied with anything else. On the contrary, the soul is much more occupied than before

with everything pertaining to the service of God; and once its duties are over it remains with that enjoyable company. If the soul does not fail God, He will never fail, in my opinion, to make His presence clearly known to it. It has strong confidence that since God has granted this favor He will not allow it to lose the favor. Though the soul thinks this, it goes about with greater care than ever not to displease Him in anything. . . .

7.4.6. O my Sisters! How forgetful this soul, in which the Lord dwells in so particular a way, should be of its own rest, how little it should care for its honor, and how far it should be from wanting esteem in anything! For if it is with Him very much, as is right, it should think little about itself. All its concern is taken up with how to please Him more and how or where it will show Him the love it bears Him. This is the reason for prayer, my daughters, the purpose of this spiritual marriage: the birth always of good works, good works. . . .

7.4.8. Keep in mind that I could not exaggerate the importance of this. Fix your eyes on the Crucified and everything will become small for you. If His Majesty showed us His love by means of such works and frightful torments, how is it you want to please Him only with words? Do you know what it means to be truly spiritual? It means becoming the slaves of God. Marked with His brand, which is that of the cross, spiritual persons, because now they have given Him their liberty, can be sold by Him as slaves of everyone, as He was. . . .

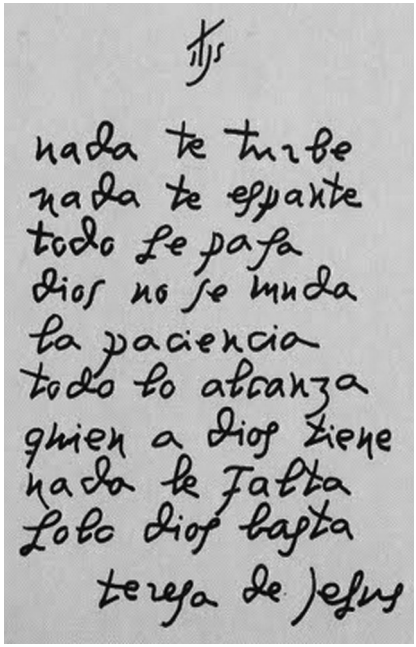
7.4.9. I repeat, it is necessary that your foundation consist of more than prayer and contemplation. If you do not strive for the virtues and practice them, you will always be dwarfs. And, please God, it will be only a matter of not growing, for you already know that whoever does not increase decreases. I hold that love, where present, cannot possibly be content with remaining always the same. . . .

7.4.12. This is what I want us to strive for, my Sisters; and let us desire and be occupied in prayer not for the sake of our enjoyment but so as to have this strength to serve. Let's refuse to take an unfamiliar path, for we shall get lost at the most opportune time. It would indeed be novel to think of having these favors from God through a path other than the one He took and the one followed by

all His saints. May the thought never enter our minds. Believe me, Martha and Mary must join together in order to show hospitality to the Lord and have Him always present. . . .

7.4.15. . . . In sum, Sisters, what I conclude with is that we shouldn't build castles in the air. The Lord doesn't look so much at the greatness of our works as at the love with which they are done. And if we do what we can, His Majesty will enable us each day to do more and more, provided that we do not quickly tire. But during the little while this life lasts—and perhaps it will last a shorter time than each one thinks—let us offer the Lord interiorly and exteriorly the sacrifice we can. His Majesty will join it with that which He offered on the cross to the Father for us. Thus even though our works are small they will have the value our love for Him would have merited had they been great. . . .

The Bookmark of St. Teresa



Efficacy of Patience

Let nothing trouble you,
Let nothing scare you,
All is fleeting,
God alone is unchanging.
Patience
Everything obtains.
Who possesses God
Nothing wants.
God alone suffices.[3]

John of the Cross (1542–1591)

Over the past one hundred years or so, John of the Cross has gradually emerged from the shadow of his more popular older contemporary, Teresa of Avila. Once read almost exclusively by Catholic spiritual theologians, his works are now eagerly studied by popes and diplomats, poets and artists, feminists and philosophers, psychologists and spiritual directors, Hindus and Buddhists, and countless numbers of ordinary Christians who find in him a wonderful guide for the spiritual journey. Today he is recognized in his own right as one of the most important figures in Carmelite spirituality and among the greatest mystics of the Western church.

Juan de Yepes was born in 1542 in Fontiveros (Spain), the youngest of three sons of Gonzalo de Yepes and Catalina Alvarez. His parents earned a meager living as humble weavers. Within a few years after John's birth, Gonzalo died, along with the middle brother, leaving the widowed mother to care for her two remaining sons. In search of employment, she moved the family to Medina del Campo, where John received his early education in a catechism school for the children of the poor. Later, as a teenager, John began working as a kind of nurse-orderly at Medina's so-called Plague Hospital, whose patients included many suffering from venereal diseases, and where he developed a lifelong concern for the sick. The hospital administrator was so impressed by this young man that he allowed him, in his spare time, to attend the new Jesuit *colegio* nearby, where John received a basic grounding in the humanities. Later on, the same administrator offered to sponsor John's seminary studies if he would return to the hospital afterward as permanent chaplain, a major career opportunity for this poor youth. But John declined the offer and instead chose to enter the Carmelites in 1563, taking the name of John of St. Matthias. After a year of novitiate, he was

sent for studies to the University of Salamanca, one of the great institutions of learning at that time. After three years in the arts program, he was ordained to the priesthood in 1567 and returned to Medina del Campo to celebrate his first Mass. There he had a life-changing encounter with Teresa of Avila, who was in Medina at the time establishing the second foundation for the nuns of her reform, and looking for possible candidates to begin a similar initiative among the friars.

Although an outstanding student, John was apparently yearning for a lifestyle with a greater focus on contemplative prayer. In her account of their first meeting, Teresa notes that

> when I spoke with this young friar, he pleased me very much. I learned from him how he also wanted to go to the Carthusians. Telling him what I was attempting to do, I begged him to wait until the Lord would give us a monastery and pointed out the great good that would be accomplished if in his desire to improve he were to remain in his own order and that much greater service would be rendered to the Lord. He promised me he would remain as long as he wouldn't have to wait too long. (*Foundations*, 3.17)[1]

John then returned to Salamanca for a final year of theological studies. The following year, Teresa obtained a run-down farm property in the remote village of Duruelo for her project. She then took John with her while making another foundation of the nuns in Valladolid, in order "to teach [him] about our way of life so that he would have a clear understanding of everything, whether it concerned mortification or the style of both our community life and the recreation we have together" (*Foundations*, 13.5). Thus trained by Teresa herself, on November 28, 1568, John (along with two other friars) formally renounced Eugene IV's mitigation of the Carmelite Rule and established the first foundation of the Discalced Carmelite friars at Duruelo. As a sign of his new way of life, John also changed his religious subtitle at this time, becoming known thereafter as "John of the Cross." He was appointed the subprior and novice master of this new community.

For the rest of his life, John was entrusted with a variety of pastoral and administrative responsibilities among the discalced. He was especially valued as a wise and compassionate superior, confessor, and spiritual director. After Teresa was sent back in 1571 to be prioress of the Incarnation in Avila, the monastery she had left years before to begin her reform, she arranged to have John of the Cross assigned there as vicar and confessor to the nuns, because she believed he was the one best suited to assist in their spiritual growth. In early December 1577,

some of John's own Carmelite confreres who were not part of the discalced movement, and who believed that John was defying his superiors by remaining at the Incarnation, arranged to have him abducted and taken to the Carmelite monastery in Toledo, where he was held under appalling conditions for close to nine months. Biographers have described the physical hardships he endured in lurid detail. Far more difficult for John, however, was his ordeal of interior darkness, the temptations to despair, and the fear that he had been abandoned not only by his friends and companions but by God as well. Yet in the nothingness (*nada*) of his Toledo cell John found the All (*Todo*), and when he escaped dramatically in mid-August of 1578, he brought with him some mystical verses composed during his imprisonment, including the first thirty-one stanzas of "The Spiritual Canticle," now ranked among the most sublime poetic compositions of all time.

In later years, it seems that John would often use his poems as the starting point for spiritual talks to the nuns and friars, and as they requested further clarifications, he began to develop his major prose commentaries. Toward the end of his life, John found himself once again the subject of persecution, this time by friars of his own reform movement, after he had spoken out against the heavy-handed policies of the rigorist leadership that had assumed power among the discalced. He was left without office and was preparing for assignment to a new mission in Mexico when he took ill. He spent his final days in the monastery of Ubeda, where the resentful prior treated him harshly, until finally won over by John's graciousness. John died on December 14, 1591.

Like Teresa, John of the Cross is remembered today primarily as a spiritual author and teacher, and he was honored with the title doctor of the church in 1926. Unlike Teresa, however, he left no "spiritual autobiography" as such. Nevertheless, John of the Cross is a poet of the first rank, and it is especially through his poetry, with its "strange figures and likenesses" (*Canticle*, prologue, 1), that readers catch a glimpse of the profound depths of his own mystical experience. His four classic prose treatises—*The Ascent of Mount Carmel*, *The Dark Night*, *The Spiritual Canticle*, and *The Living Flame of Love*—are all structured as commentaries on his poems, and (as John himself indicates) barely begin to uncover "in a general way" the inexhaustible riches contained in the verses.

In contrast to Teresa, John received a first-rate philosophical and theological education, which he does not hesitate to draw upon in his prose works. However, the same scholastic principles and distinctions that endeared him to past generations of Catholic spiritual theologians

can prove daunting to a contemporary audience unfamiliar with the terminology. First-time readers of his prose sometimes find John "extreme," especially in light of certain radical statements ("endeavor to be inclined always not to the easiest, but to the most difficult . . ." [*Ascent*, 1.13.6]) and the fact that his early biographers tried to present him as a model of "strict observance." Yet if John is extreme, it is the extremism not of the grim ascetic but of the lover yearning for union with the Beloved as quickly as possible.

Because all of John's surviving texts were written after he had already developed his basic insights, the teaching throughout his commentaries is remarkably consistent. In the *Spiritual Canticle* treatise, John presents the successive stages of the mystical life through the image of a bride searching for, and finding, her bridegroom. The *Living Flame* commentary focuses on the deeper levels of mystical union once lover and beloved have been united. In the *Ascent* and *Dark Night* treatises, John describes the journey toward union with God in terms of a series of active and passive "nights" of sense and spirit, aligning these with the classic distinctions of the three "ages" (beginners, proficients, and the perfect) and three "ways" (purgative, illuminative, and unitive) of the spiritual life (see *Ascent*, 1.1.1–3; 2.1.2–3; *Night*, 1.1.1; 1.14.1; 2.1.1; see also *Canticle*, Theme 1–2; 22.3). According to John, we start the journey as spiritual beginners, "fired with love's urgent longings" for God (see *Ascent*, 1.14.1–3) but still troubled by our disordered desires for other satisfactions. Our efforts at self-discipline are crucial but must be completed by the "passive night of sense," in which our early fervor starts to wane and we learn to serve God for God's own sake, not for the consoling feelings our religious practices used to bring. Becoming "proficients" once the initial honeymoon phase has passed, we move into a quieter, deeper, and more stable "contemplative" approach to prayer and life, although accessing new levels of awareness may give rise to extraordinary experiences of various sorts. John advises caution toward visions, voices, and other paranormal phenomena that may occur, noting that they are not sure signs of holiness and may often simply be indicators of unresolved issues in the depths of the soul, still in need of purification. If God so chooses, we will undergo a second and far more radical crisis, which John calls the "passive night of spirit," where all hidden (and even unconscious) resistance is purged and we are prepared for "spiritual marriage" or "transforming union" with God. According to John, in this blissful "unitive way" of the "perfect" all inner turmoil ceases, as our human capacities are integrated and focused on God, and

we "become by participation what Christ was by nature" (see *Canticle*, 39.5–6). For those who reach this goal, only a "thin veil" still separates this life from the eternal beatitude of heaven (see *Flame*, 1.29–35).

Nevertheless, despite his exalted view of human destiny and the unmatched beauty of his poetry, John remains best known for his description of the "dark night" experience. As Pope John Paul II has noted, this phrase is now used everywhere in speaking of overwhelming "physical, moral, or spiritual suffering, such as illness, the scourge of hunger, war, injustice, loneliness, the meaninglessness of life, the very fragility of human existence, the sad awareness of sin, the apparent absence of God," and so many other tragedies and struggles of our contemporary world. "All such moments have led to a better understanding of this expression of his, giving it moreover the character of a collective experience, applicable to the very reality of life and not just to a stage along a spiritual path. The Saint's teaching is invoked today in the face of the immeasurable mystery of human suffering."[2] After more than four centuries, John continues to point to the cross of Christ and remind us of its message of hope: that the One beyond all our imaginings is somehow with us in the midst of our anguish, mysteriously transforming our darkness into light, our death into new life.

From *Sayings of Light and Love*[3]

(*Sayings* are numbered according to the Kavanaugh/Rodriguez translation.)

27. Mine are the heavens and mine is the earth. Mine are the nations, the just are mine, and mine the sinners. The angels are mine, and the Mother of God, and all things are mine; and God himself is mine and for me, because Christ is mine and all for me. What do you ask, then, and seek, my soul? Yours is all of this, and all is for you. Do not engage yourself in something less or pay heed to the crumbs that fall from your Father's table. Go forth and exult in your Glory! Hide yourself in it and rejoice, and you will obtain the supplications of your heart.

34. Well and good if all things change, Lord, provided we are rooted in you.

60. When evening comes, you will be examined in love. Learn to love as God desires to be loved and abandon your own ways of acting.

100. The Father spoke one Word, which was his Son, and this Word he speaks always in eternal silence, and in silence must it be heard by the soul.

"The Dark Night"

1. One dark night,
fired with love's urgent longings
—ah, the sheer grace—
I went out unseen,
my house being now all stilled.

2. In darkness and secure,
by the secret ladder, disguised,
—ah, the sheer grace!—
in darkness and concealment,
my house being now all stilled.

3. On that glad night,
in secret, for no one saw me,
nor did I look at anything,
with no other light or guide
than the one that burned in my heart.

4. This guided me
more surely than the light of noon
to where he was awaiting me
—him I knew so well—
there in a place where no one appeared.

5. O guiding night!
O night more lovely than the dawn!
O night that has united
the Lover with his beloved,
transforming the beloved in her Lover.

6. Upon my flowering breast
which I kept wholly for him alone,
there he lay sleeping,
and I caressing him
there in a breeze from the fanning cedars.

7. When the breeze blew from the turret,
as I parted his hair,

it wounded my neck
with its gentle hand,
suspending all my senses.

8. I abandoned and forgot myself,
laying my face on my Beloved;
all things ceased; I went out from myself,
leaving my cares
forgotten among the lilies.

From *The Ascent of Mount Carmel* and *The Dark Night* (John's commentaries on "The Dark Night" poem)

(Sections are numbered according to the Kavanaugh/Rodriguez translation.)

The Ascent of Mount Carmel, Prologue

1. A deeper enlightenment and wider experience than mine is necessary to explain the dark night through which a soul journeys toward that divine light of perfect union with God that is achieved, insofar as possible in this life, through love. The darknesses and trials, spiritual and temporal, that fortunate souls ordinarily undergo on their way to the high state of perfection are so numerous and profound that human science cannot understand them adequately. Nor does experience of them equip one to explain them. Only those who suffer them will know what this experience is like, but they won't be able to describe it. . . .

4. . . . Some spiritual fathers are likely to be a hindrance and harm rather than a help to these souls that journey on this road. . . .

It will happen to individuals that while they are being conducted by God along a sublime path of dark contemplation and aridity, in which they feel lost and filled with darknesses, trials, conflicts, and temptations, they will meet someone who, in the style of Job's comforters [Job 4:8-11], will proclaim that all of this is due to melancholia, depression, or temperament, or to some hidden wickedness, and that as a result God has forsaken them. Therefore the usual verdict is that these individuals must have lived an evil life since such trials afflict them.

5. Other directors will tell them that they are falling back since they find no satisfaction or consolation as they previously did in

the things of God. Such talk only doubles the trial of a poor soul. . . . And when this soul finds someone who agrees with what it feels (that these trials are all its own fault), its suffering and distress grow without bounds. And this suffering usually becomes worse than death. Such a confessor is not satisfied with this but, in judging these trials to be the result of sin, he urges souls who endure them to go over their past and make many general confessions—which is another crucifixion. The director does not understand that now perhaps is not the time for such activity. Indeed, it is a period for leaving these persons alone in the purgation God is working in them, a time to give comfort and encouragement that they may desire to endure this suffering as long as God wills, for until then no remedy—whatever the soul does, or the confessor says—is adequate. . . .

The Ascent of Mount Carmel, book I, chapter 1

1. . . . [One] should know that a soul must ordinarily pass through two principal kinds of night—which spiritual persons call purgations or purifications of the soul—in order to reach the state of perfection. Here we will term these purgations nights because in both of them the soul journeys in darkness as though by night.

2. The first night or purgation . . . concerns the sensory part of the soul. The second night . . . concerns the spiritual part. . . .

3. This first night is the lot of beginners, at the time God commences to introduce them into the state of contemplation. . . . The second night or purification takes place in those who are already proficients, at the time God desires to lead them into the state of divine union. This purgation, of course, is more obscure, dark, and dreadful, as we will subsequently point out.

The Dark Night, book I, chapter 8

1. This night, which as we say is contemplation, causes two kinds of darkness or purgation in spiritual persons according to the two parts of the soul, the sensory and the spiritual. . . . The sensory night is common and happens to many. These are the beginners of whom we will treat first. The spiritual night is the lot of very few, those who have been tried and are proficient, and of whom we will speak afterward.

2. The first purgation or night is bitter and terrible to the senses. But nothing can be compared to the second, for it is horrible and frightful to the spirit. . . .

3. Since the conduct of these beginners in the way of God is lowly and not too distant from love of pleasure and of self, . . . God desires to withdraw them from this base manner of loving and lead them on to a higher degree of divine love. . . . God does this after beginners have exercised themselves for a time in the way of virtue and have persevered in meditation and prayer. For it is through the delight and satisfaction they experience in prayer that they have become detached from worldly things and have gained some spiritual strength in God. This strength has helped them somewhat to restrain their appetites for creatures, and through it they will be able to suffer a little oppression and dryness without turning back. Consequently, it is at the time they are going about their spiritual exercises with delight and satisfaction, when in their opinion the sun of divine favor is shining most brightly on them, that God darkens all this light and closes the door and the spring of sweet spiritual water they were tasting as often and as long as they desired. . . . God now leaves them in such darkness that they do not know which way to turn in their discursive imaginings. They cannot advance a step in meditation, as they used to, now that the interior sense faculties are engulfed in this night. He leaves them in such dryness that they not only fail to receive satisfaction and pleasure from their spiritual exercises and works, as they formerly did, but also find these exercises distasteful and bitter. . . . [When] God sees that they have grown a little, he weans them from the sweet breast so that they might be strengthened, lays aside their swaddling bands, and puts them down from his arms that they may grow accustomed to walking by themselves. This change is a surprise to them because everything seems to be functioning in reverse.

The Dark Night, book I, chapter 10

1. . . . Spiritual persons suffer considerable affliction in this [passive] night [of sense], owing not so much to the aridities they undergo as to their fear of having gone astray. Since they do not find any support or satisfaction in good things, they believe there will be no more spiritual blessings for them and that God has abandoned them. . . .

2. If there is no one to understand these persons, they either turn back and abandon the road or lose courage, or at least they hinder their own progress because of their excessive diligence in treading the path of discursive meditation. They fatigue and overwork themselves, thinking that they are failing because of their negligence or sins. Meditation is now useless for them because God is conducting them along another road, which is contemplation and is very different from the first. . . .

4. The attitude necessary in the night of sense is to pay no attention to discursive meditation since this is not the time for it. They should allow the soul to remain in rest and quietude even though it may seem obvious to them that they are doing nothing and wasting time, and even though they think this disinclination to think about anything is due to their laxity. Through patience and perseverance in prayer, they will be doing a great deal without activity on their part.

All that is required of them here is freedom of soul, that they liberate themselves from the impediment and fatigue of ideas and thoughts, and care not about thinking and meditating. They must be content simply with a loving and peaceful attentiveness to God, and live without the concern, without the effort, and without the desire to taste or feel him. All these desires disquiet the soul and distract it from the peaceful, quiet, and sweet idleness of the contemplation that is being communicated to it. . . .

The Dark Night, book II, chapter 1

1. If His Majesty intends to lead the soul on, he does not put it in this dark night of spirit immediately after its going out from the aridities and trials of the first purgation and night of sense. Instead, after having emerged from the state of beginners, the soul usually spends many years exercising itself in the state of proficients. In this new state, as one liberated from a cramped prison cell, it goes about the things of God with much more freedom and satisfaction of spirit and with more abundant interior delight than it did in the beginning before entering the night of sense. . . .

The Dark Night, book II, chapter 2

3. Not all of these proficients fall into actual imperfections in the same way. . . . Some encounter greater difficulties. . . . They

receive an abundance of spiritual communications and apprehensions in the sensory and spiritual parts of their souls and frequently behold imaginative and spiritual visions. All of this as well as other delightful feelings are the lot of those who are in this state, and a soul is often tricked through them by its own phantasy as well as by the devil. . . . As a result, these proficients are easily charmed and beguiled if they are not careful to renounce such apprehensions and feelings and energetically defend themselves through faith. . . .

The Ascent of Mount Carmel, book II, chapter 22

3. . . . [The] chief reason in the old law that the inquiries made of God were licit, and the prophets and priests appropriately desired visions and revelations from him, was that at that time faith was not yet perfectly grounded, nor was the Gospel law established. It was necessary for them to question God, and for him to respond sometimes by words, sometimes through visions and revelations, now in figures and likenesses, now through many other kinds of signs. All his answers, locutions, and revelations concerned mysteries of our faith or matters touching on or leading up to it. . . .

But in this era of grace, now that the faith is established through Christ and the Gospel law made manifest, there is no reason for inquiring of him in this way, or expecting him to answer as before. In giving us his Son, his only Word (for he possesses no other), he spoke everything to us at once in this sole Word—and he has no more to say. . . .

5. Those who now desire to question God or receive some vision or revelation are guilty not only of foolish behavior but also of offending him by not fixing their eyes entirely on Christ and by living with the desire for some other novelty.

God could answer as follows: If I have already told you all things in my Word, my Son, and if I have no other word, what answer or revelation can I now make that would surpass this? Fasten your eyes on him alone because in him I have spoken and revealed all and in him you will discover even more than you ask for and desire. You are making an appeal for locutions and revelations that are incomplete, but if you turn your eyes to him you will find them complete. For he is my entire locution and response, vision and revelation, which I have already spoken, answered, manifested, and revealed to you by giving him to you as a brother, companion, master, ransom, and reward. . . . Hear him because I have no more

faith to reveal or truths to manifest. If I spoke before, it was to promise Christ. If they questioned me, their inquiries were related to their petitions and longings for Christ in whom they were to obtain every good, as is now explained in all the doctrine of the evangelists and apostles. But now those who might ask me in that way and desire that I speak and reveal something to them would somehow be requesting Christ again and more faith, yet they would be failing in faith because it has already been given in Christ. Accordingly, they would offend my beloved Son deeply because they would not merely be failing him in faith, but obliging him to become incarnate and undergo his life and death again. You will not find anything to ask or desire of me through revelations and visions. Behold him well, for in him you will uncover all of these already made and given, and many more. . . .

19. It ought to be noted in this regard that, even though we have greatly stressed rejection of these communications and the duty of confessors to forbid souls from making them a topic of conversation, spiritual fathers should not show severity, displeasure, or scorn in dealing with these souls. With such an attitude they would make them cower and shrink from a manifestation of these experiences, would close the door to these souls, and cause them many difficulties . . . The spiritual father should instead proceed with much kindness and calm. . . .

Spiritual directors should guide them in the way of faith by giving them good instructions on how to turn their eyes from all these things. . . . They should explain how one act done in charity is more precious in God's sight than all the visions and communications possible—since these imply neither merit nor demerit—and how it is that many individuals who have not received these experiences are incomparably more advanced than others who have received many.

The Dark Night, book II, chapter 3

1. These souls, then, are now proficients. Their senses have been fed with sweet communications so that, allured by the gratification flowing from the spirit, they could be accommodated and united to the spirit. . . . In this purgation [of the passive night of spirit], these two portions of the soul will undergo complete purification, for one part is never adequately purged without the other. The real purgation of the senses begins with the spirit. . . .

3. . . . [In the passive night of spirit] God divests the faculties, affections, and senses, both spiritual and sensory, interior and exterior. He leaves the intellect in darkness, the will in aridity, the memory in emptiness, and the affections in supreme affliction, bitterness, and anguish by depriving the soul of the feeling and satisfaction it previously obtained from spiritual blessings. . . .

The Lord works all of this in the soul by means of a pure and dark contemplation. . . .

The Dark Night, book II, chapter 10

1. For the sake of further clarity in this matter, we ought to note that this purgative and loving knowledge, or divine light we are speaking of, has the same effect on a soul that fire has on a log of wood. The soul is purged and prepared for union with the divine light just as the wood is prepared for transformation into the fire. Fire, when applied to wood, first dehumidifies it, dispelling all moisture and making it give off any water it contains. Then it gradually turns the wood black, makes it dark and ugly, and even causes it to emit a bad odor. By drying out the wood, the fire brings to light and expels all those ugly and dark accidents that are contrary to fire. Finally, by heating and enkindling it from without, the fire transforms the wood into itself and makes it as beautiful as it is itself. Once transformed, the wood no longer has any activity or passivity of its own. . . . It possesses the properties and performs the actions of fire: It is dry and it dries; it is hot and it gives off heat; it is brilliant and it illumines; it is also much lighter in weight than before. It is the fire that produces all these properties in the wood.

2. Similarly, we should philosophize about this divine, loving fire of contemplation. Before transforming the soul, it purges it of all contrary qualities. It produces blackness and darkness and brings to the fore the soul's ugliness; thus one seems worse than before and unsightly and abominable. This divine purge stirs up all the foul and vicious humors of which the soul was never before aware; never did it realize there was so much evil in itself, since these humors were so deeply rooted. And now that they may be expelled and annihilated they are brought to light and seen clearly through the illumination of this dark light of divine contemplation. Although the soul is no worse than before, either in itself or in its relationship with God, it feels clearly that it is so bad as to be not only unworthy that God see it but deserving of his abhorrence. In fact, it feels that

God now does abhor it. This comparison illustrates many of the things we have been saying and will say.

3. First, we can understand that the very loving light and wisdom into which the soul will be transformed is what in the beginning purges and prepares it, just as the fire that transforms the wood by incorporating it into itself is what first prepares it for this transformation.

4. Second, we discern that the experience of these sufferings does not derive from this wisdom . . . but from the soul's own weakness and imperfection. Without this purgation it cannot receive the divine light, sweetness, and delight of wisdom, just as the log of wood until prepared cannot be transformed by the fire that is applied to it. And this is why the soul suffers so intensely. . . .

5. . . . These imperfections are the fuel that catches on fire, and once they are gone there is nothing left to burn. So it is here on earth; when the imperfections are gone, the soul's suffering terminates, and joy remains.

"The Spiritual Canticle"

Stanzas between the Soul and the Bridegroom

Bride

1. Where have you hidden,
Beloved, and left me moaning?
You fled like the stag
after wounding me;
I went out calling you, but you were gone.

2. Shepherds, you who go
up through the sheepfolds to the hill,
if by chance you see
him I love most,
tell him I am sick, I suffer, and I die.

3. Seeking my Love
I will head for the mountains and for watersides,
I will not gather flowers,
nor fear wild beasts;
I will go beyond strong men and frontiers.

4. O woods and thickets,
planted by the hand of my Beloved!
O green meadow,
coated, bright, with flowers,
tell me, has he passed by you?

5. Pouring out a thousand graces,
he passed these groves in haste;
and having looked at them,
with his image alone,
clothed them in beauty.

6. Ah, who has the power to heal me?
now wholly surrender yourself!
Do not send me
any more messengers,
they cannot tell me what I must hear.

7. All who are free
tell me a thousand graceful things of you;
all wound me more
and leave me dying
of, ah, I-don't-know-what behind their stammering.

8. How do you endure
O life, not living where you live,
and being brought near death
by the arrows you receive
from that which you conceive of your Beloved?

9. Why, since you wounded
this heart, don't you heal it?
And why, since you stole it from me,
do you leave it so,
and fail to carry off what you have stolen?

10. Extinguish these miseries,
since no one else can stamp them out;
and may my eyes behold you,
because you are their light,
and I would open them to you alone.

11. Reveal your presence,
and may the vision of your beauty be my death;

for the sickness of love
is not cured
except by your very presence and image.

12. O spring like crystal!
If only, on your silvered-over faces,
you would suddenly form
the eyes I have desired,
which I bear sketched deep within my heart.

13. Withdraw them, Beloved,
I am taking flight!

Bridegroom

Return, dove,
the wounded stag
is in sight on the hill,
cooled by the breeze of your flight.

Bride

14. My Beloved, the mountains,
and lonely wooded valleys,
strange islands,
and resounding rivers,
the whistling of love-stirring breezes,

15. the tranquil night
at the time of the rising dawn,
silent music,
sounding solitude,
the supper that refreshes, and deepens love.

16. Catch us the foxes,
for our vineyard is now in flower,
while we fashion a cone of roses
intricate as the pine's;
and let no one appear on the hill.

17. Be still, deadening north wind;
south wind, come, you that waken love,
breathe through my garden,
let its fragrance flow,
and the Beloved will feed amid the flowers.

18. You girls of Judea,
while among flowers and roses
the amber spreads its perfume,
stay away, there on the outskirts:
do not so much as seek to touch our thresholds.

19. Hide yourself, my love;
turn your face toward the mountains,
and do not speak;
but look at those companions
going with her through strange islands.

Bridegroom

20. Swift-winged birds,
lions, stags, and leaping roes,
mountains, lowlands, and river banks,
waters, winds, and ardors,
watching fears of night:

21. By the pleasant lyres
and the siren's song, I conjure you
to cease your anger
and not touch the wall,
that the bride may sleep in deeper peace.

22. The bride has entered
the sweet garden of her desire,
and she rests in delight,
laying her neck
on the gentle arms of her Beloved.

23. Beneath the apple tree:
there I took you for my own,
there I offered you my hand,
and restored you,
where your mother was corrupted.

Bride

24. Our bed is in flower,
bound round with linking dens of lions,
hung with purple,
built up in peace,
and crowned with a thousand shields of gold.

25. Following your footprints
maidens run along the way;
the touch of a spark,
the spiced wine,
cause flowings in them from the balsam of God.

26. In the inner wine cellar
I drank of my Beloved, and, when I went abroad
through all this valley
I no longer knew anything,
and lost the herd that I was following.

27. There he gave me his breast;
there he taught me a sweet and living knowledge;
and I gave myself to him,
keeping nothing back;
there I promised to be his bride.

28. Now I occupy my soul
and all my energy in his service;
I no longer tend the herd,
nor have I any other work
now that my every act is love.

29. If, then, I am no longer
seen or found on the common,
you will say that I am lost;
that, stricken by love,
I lost myself, and was found.

30. With flowers and emeralds
chosen on cool mornings
we shall weave garlands
flowering in your love,
and bound with one hair of mine.

31. You considered
that one hair fluttering at my neck;
you gazed at it upon my neck
and it captivated you;
and one of my eyes wounded you.

32. When you looked at me
your eyes imprinted your grace in me;

for this you loved me ardently;
and thus my eyes deserved
to adore what they beheld in you.

33. Do not despise me;
for if, before, you found me dark,
now truly you can look at me
since you have looked
and left in me grace and beauty.

Bridegroom

34. The small white dove
has returned to the ark with an olive branch;
and now the turtledove
has found its longed-for mate
by the green river banks.

35. She lived in solitude,
and now in solitude has built her nest;
and in solitude he guides her,
he alone, who also bears
in solitude the wound of love.

Bride

36. Let us rejoice, Beloved,
and let us go forth to behold ourselves in your beauty,
to the mountain and to the hill,
to where the pure water flows,
and further, deep into the thicket.

37. And then we will go on
to the high caverns in the rock
which are so well concealed;
there we shall enter
and taste the fresh juice of the pomegranates.

38. There you will show me
what my soul has been seeking,
and then you will give me,
you, my life, will give me there
what you gave me on that other day:

39. the breathing of the air,
the song of the sweet nightingale,

the grove and its living beauty
in the serene night,
with a flame that is consuming and painless.

40. No one looked at her,
nor did Aminadab appear;
the siege was still;
and the cavalry,
at the sight of the waters, descended.

From *The Spiritual Canticle* (John's commentary on "The Spiritual Canticle" poem)

Prologue

1. . . . I do not plan to expound these stanzas in all the breadth and fullness that the fruitful spirit of love conveys to them. It would be foolish to think that expressions of love arising from mystical understanding, like these stanzas, are fully explainable. The Spirit of the Lord, who abides in us and aids our weakness, as St. Paul says [Rom 8:26], pleads for us with unspeakable groanings in order to manifest what we can neither fully understand nor comprehend.

Who can describe in writing the understanding he gives to loving souls in whom he dwells? And who can express with words the experience he imparts to them? Who, finally, can explain the desires he gives them? Certainly, no one can! Not even they who receive these communications. As a result these persons let something of their experience overflow in figures, comparisons and similitudes, and from the abundance of their spirit pour out secrets and mysteries rather than rational explanations.

If these similitudes are not read with the simplicity of the spirit of knowledge and love they contain, they will seem to be absurdities rather than reasonable utterances, as will those comparisons of the divine Song of Solomon and other books of Sacred Scripture where the Holy Spirit, unable to express the fullness of his meaning in ordinary words, utters mysteries in strange figures and likenesses. The saintly doctors, no matter how much they have said or will say, can never furnish an exhaustive explanation of these figures and comparisons, since the abundant meanings of the Holy Spirit cannot be caught in words. . . .

The Spiritual Canticle, stanza 39

2. In this stanza the soul declares with five expressions the "what" she says the Bridegroom will bestow on her in that beatific transformation. First, she says it is the breath or spiration of the Holy Spirit from God to her and from her to God. . . .

3. This breathing of the air is an ability that the soul states God will give her there in the communication of the Holy Spirit. By his divine breath-like spiration, the Holy Spirit elevates the soul sublimely and informs her and makes her capable of breathing in God the same spiration of love that the Father breathes in the Son and the Son in the Father. This spiration of love is the Holy Spirit himself, who in the Father and the Son breathes out to her in this transformation in order to unite her to himself. There would not be a true and total transformation if the soul were not transformed in the three Persons of the Most Holy Trinity in an open and manifest degree.

And this kind of spiration of the Holy Spirit in the soul, by which God transforms her into himself, is so sublime, delicate, and deep a delight that a mortal tongue finds it indescribable, nor can the human intellect, as such, in any way grasp it. Even what comes to pass in the communication given in this temporal transformation [on earth] is unspeakable, for the soul united and transformed in God breathes out in God to God the very divine spiration that God—she being transformed in him—breathes out in himself to her.

4. In the transformation that the soul possesses in this life, the same spiration passes from God to the soul and from the soul to God with notable frequency and blissful love, although not in the open and manifest degree proper to the next life. Such I believe was St. Paul's meaning when he said: Since you are children of God, God sent the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, calling to the Father [Gal 4:6]. This is true of the Blessed in the next life and of the perfect in this life according to the ways described.

One should not think it impossible that the soul be capable of so sublime an activity as this breathing in God through participation as God breathes in her. For, granted that God favors her by union with the Most Blessed Trinity, in which she becomes deiform and God through participation, how could it be incredible that she also understand, know, and love—or better that this be done in her—in the Trinity, together with it, as does the Trinity itself! Yet God accomplishes this in the soul through communication and participa-

tion. This is transformation in the three Persons in power and wisdom and love, and thus the soul is like God through this transformation. He created her in his image and likeness that she might attain such resemblance.

5. No knowledge or power can describe how this happens, unless by explaining how the Son of God attained and merited such a high state for us, the power to be children of God, as St. John says [John 1:12]. Thus the Son asked of the Father in St. John's Gospel: Father, I desire that where I am those you have given me may also be with me, that they may see the glory you have given me [John 17:24], that is, that they may perform in us by participation the same work that I do by nature; that is, breathe the Holy Spirit. . . .

6. Accordingly, souls possess the same goods by participation that the Son possesses by nature. As a result they are truly gods by participation, equals and companions of God. . . . Although this participation will be perfectly accomplished in the next life, still in this life when the soul has reached the state of perfection, as has the soul we are here discussing, she obtains a foretaste and noticeable trace of it in the way we are describing, although as we said it is indescribable.

Jerome Gracián (1545–1614)

Despite the differences in their ages and backgrounds, Teresa of Avila and John of the Cross shared a deep mutual respect and friendship. Yet when "la Madre" needed someone to help lead her growing Carmelite reform, she turned not to the man she had once acknowledged as "the father of my soul" but to an even younger friar whom she glowingly describes, in chapter 23 of *The Book of Foundations*, as a "man of much learning, intelligence, and modesty," able to "organize all the things pertaining to the order in these initial stages."

Jerónimo de la Madre de Dios, better known today as Jerome Gracián, came from a large and well-connected family. His father had served as secretary for Charles V and Philip II, and his mother was daughter of the Polish ambassador to Spain. At the age of fifteen he went to the University of Alcalá, where he studied law and theology and was ordained to the priesthood. At Alcalá he came into contact with the nuns and friars of the Teresian reform, and decided to enter the novitiate. Then in 1573, only a few months after Gracián's profession of vows, the apostolic visitator Francisco Vargas delegated him to serve as visitator of the Carmelites of the Observance in Andalusia, charged with the task of implementing reforms. Soon after, he was named vicar of *all* Carmelites in Andalusia. Subsequently the papal nuncio Ormaneto confirmed and even expanded Gracián's responsibilities. Not surprisingly, however, there was strong opposition, especially among the Andalusian friars of the Observance and their superiors, to the appearance on the scene of this freshly minted Carmelite claiming authority to impose new regulations. The general administration of the Carmelite Order sought to have Gracián's appointments revoked. Indeed, after the death of Ormaneto, a new nuncio, less favorable to the Teresian reform, deposed Gracián and had him confined for a time to a monastery.

Eventually, however, Pope Gregory XIII granted permission for the discalced to form their own province, and in 1581 Gracián was elected its first provincial by a slim margin. Gracián shared Teresa's enthusiasm for the apostolate, especially the missions, and remained close to the Teresian nuns, but his critics among the discalced friars regarded him as lax and his policies as too "soft." The administration of his rival and successor, Nicholas Doria, who stressed physical austerity and strict observance, eventually decided to expel Gracián from the Order in 1592. Gracián spent many years appealing the decision (including two terrible years as a prisoner of Turkish pirates) until finally receiving a papal brief authorizing him to return to the Carmelites. Because of the opposition in Spain, however, he accepted an invitation to live with the Italian Carmelites of the Observance while retaining his discalced habit. Later he moved to the Spanish Netherlands and assisted the Discalced Carmelites in establishing a presence there.

In recent decades there has been a renewed interest in, and reevaluation of, this complex and somewhat tragic figure of the early Teresian reform. In 1999, after a thorough review, the Discalced Carmelite Order officially lifted Gracián's decree of expulsion. His cause for canonization has been introduced in Rome.

A man of boundless energy, Gracián was a prolific author whose writings enjoyed a large readership in their day, though most are now out of print. His *Summary of the Excellencies of St. Joseph* (1597), for example, was translated into several languages and became "a European best-seller," representing "a watershed in the development of the saint's cult."[1] Here, however, we have chosen a selection of a different sort, one that clearly illustrates a striking characteristic of Teresian spirituality, namely, its lively appreciation of wit and humor as teaching tools and aids to spiritual growth. The *Constitutions of the Cerro* takes the form of a parody of typical religious legislation, in this case intended for an imaginary congregation of ill-tempered, troublesome, and neurotic friars and nuns (here described under the umbrella term, "melancholic"). Members of this fictional "Cerro" order are put under obligation to do precisely those things most likely to destroy religious life and make community living unbearable! The prologue suggests that this work could be useful for both amusement and edification at recreation times, by holding up a kind of mirror to readers in which they can examine their own dysfunctional behaviors.

Some have speculated that this work may have originated from humorous conversations between Gracián and Teresa herself in 1582,

during their struggles in Teresa's last months to establish her final foundation in Burgos. Whatever the case, the final section on the importance of loving those who offend us is especially poignant in light of what Gracián would later suffer at the hands of others.

From *Constitutions of the Cerro*

Jesus + Mary

Provincial Chapter of the *Cerro*

Which Deals with the Imperfections and Faults of the Melancholy,

Which Arise from Sadness, Anger, Bitterness of Heart,

Disobedience, Despondency and a Wounded Spirit

Written in the form of Constitutions,

Commanding Everything Contrary to What is Proper,

so as to Serve as Recreation for the Religious

as well as an Examination of Conscience

[Letter of convocation]

We, Fray Melanco Cerruno, Provincial of all the melancholy, the sad and bitter-hearted, the vexed, restless, scrupulous, ill-tempered, insufferable and agitated, etc.:

Since the term of our office has now come to an end, we must have a Chapter and elect a Provincial. We order our subjects upon receipt of this patent and convocation letter, to gather in chapter and elect a delegate. Then, leaving behind a vicar for the convent, come as quickly as possible to our convent of La Culpa to deal with matters for the good governance of the Order and to plot how, in the houses of the Discalced friars and nuns, to break the Rule and Constitutions, introduce abuses, ruin the good spirit and perfection they seek, as well as the fruit they wish to give the Church by their example; and how to introduce at the beginning such imperfections and relaxations as may later cause notable harm, and many souls be condemned and—after laboring in this life—lose any reward and go to the dwelling of our great friend *Pedro Botero* [i.e., the devil].

Because we are so concerned about your health, we advise you always to travel at a bad time: in the summer from 8 AM until 6 PM so that you might enjoy the sun (this pertains to those coming by

way of La Mancha and Andalusia [where the heat is excessive]); and in the winter, before dawn, in order to enjoy the cool. If there has been a lot of rain, you must go by way of the *Paso de los Pontones* and path of Gumiel, on the Burgos road [where the roads become nearly impassible]. Always and in every case, lose your way, even if it seems impossible to err. In every inn, forget and leave some of your baggage behind. Your pack animals should be very thin or seedy. Try to give bad example in everything while on the way, so that those who see you may despise religious. Because of you, the servants of God who stay in the monastery, keeping cloister and doing penance, may lose.

Meeting of the Priors and Delegates and Examination of the Patent Letters

On the date designated for the Chapter, the following religious met together with the Very Rev. Fr. Fray Melanco Cerruno:

From the convent of Disobedience, Prior Disobedient Backtalk and his companion, Fray Rigid Stiffneck; from the convent of Sensuality, Fray Sensual Softy, prior, and Fray Relaxed Meddler, his companion, the enemy of chastity; from the convent of La Avaricia, Fray Greedy Sharp, prior, and Fray Attached Toad, his companion, opponents of poverty; from the convent of Inattention, Fray Inattentive Bozo, prior, and Fray Hernando Dozer, his companion, opponents of the Divine Office and spiritual things; from the convent of La Gula, Fray Nabuzardan Glutton, prior, and Fray Sardanapal Discontent, socius, opposed to fast and abstinence; from the house of Little Discipline and Bad Confession, Fray Pious Bamba, prior, and Fray Shameful Excuses, socius; from the convent of Constant Chatter, Fray Goldfinch Talker, prior, and Fray Vociferous Self-seeking, socius, opponents of silence; from the convent of Sloth, Fray Lazy Goof-off, prior, and Fray Purse Beggar, socius, opponents of manual labor; from the convent of Dissension and Pride, Fray Nabucodonosor Proud, prior, and Master Moth of Corruption, socius, opponents of humility and peace; from the convent of Carelessness and Neglect of Responsibilities, the Bachelor Fray Ignorant Simpleton, prior, and the Presentado Fray Careless Deviator as socius.

The said priors and companions presented their letters and patents and the other messages they brought for the said Provincial Chapter and Fray Melanco Cerruno received and feasted them very well.

The next morning, before proceeding to the election of the Provincial and Definitors, the Very Rev. Fr. Fray Melanco Cerruno, Provincial, and the above mentioned Chapter members assembled and ordered the reading of the Rule and Constitutions of *el Cerro* and everyone noted what needed to be deleted or added to them that they might be confirmed before the election of the Provincial. Thus they read the chapters in the following order:

Constitutions of the Very Grave and Downcast
Fray Melanco Cerruno

We, Fray Melanco Cerruno, in our misfortune Provincial of all the *cerros*, the quarrelsome, and the difficult, wish poor health and misfortune to all the melancholics and the closed-minded and scrupulous who live in our convents.

Be it known that our Provincial Chapter petitioned that, since we live scattered among the Discalced convents without a rule or constitutions and without a way of life, that We, as a good shepherd, ought to gather you together and impose constitutions and rules; which we do by means of the constitutions that follow below, which will serve for the quarrelsome and unpraiseworthy mode of life of our servants.

Chapter I: *Concerning obedience*

1. First of all, let none of our subjects, in any case whatsoever, fail to object at least once or twice to that which obedience might demand of him or her. If they raise objections three or four or five times or even more, we will reward them when they appear before us. Use discretion, however, and maintain discipline. They must not only make their objection with disgust to what they are commanded, but so that the good and laudable custom of objecting not be lost, let them reply so rudely that all might see what obedience is. . . .

7. We ordain that, should the superior on some occasion mortify you or reprimand you, or say something harsh, you be disproportionately afflicted and become quite noticeably angry, gloomy and arrogant, so that the superior should be depressed and the other brothers or sisters feel it and be scandalized. Then get headaches and other illnesses so you can always go about complaining. Superiors from that point on will not dare reprimand or correct you, and

you can continue growing in your imperfections, vices and bad habits. . . .

Chapter II: *Concerning Chastity and the Cloister*

1. Let all our subjects be so chaste in everything that if by chance they see someone raise her eyes slightly or show some necessary courtesy to a secular, they think all is already lost. Let them always assume that things will come to a bad end, and say this, growling and murmuring. Let them never speak or mention this without exaggeration and malice, rash judging everything. . . .

Chapter III: *Concerning Poverty*

1. We decree and ordain for the perfect keeping of poverty that, though in the main they have put aside possessions, they should under the same claim to poverty become so attached to a patched habit or some broken sandals that they become notably annoyed and upset should the superior take them away. If on the other hand the superior take away a new habit and give an old one, let them become sad and upset and try to cover the holes by never taking off the mantle and hiding when seculars visit or things like this. . . .

Chapter IV: *Concerning Divine Office and Spiritual Exercises*

. . . 13. Touching the Divine Office and the canonical hours, the Fathers added that if on occasion for whatever reason one of our subject's attention wanders in the choir, however briefly, then it should seem to them that they have not prayed it satisfactorily. They should go back and recite the entire office, so that they are always short of time and full of scruples.

14. Let them be great friends of some old rubrics so that they think they do not meet their obligations by doing what is ordinarily recited unless the recitation is very burdensome. When chanting let them hold the final notes for a long time with great devotion, so that they slow things down and make choir hateful. . . .

When they got to this point in the constitutions, Rev. Fr. Fray Melanco asked for attention in order to treat of a very grave doctrine, which he had discussed with Rev. Fr. Fray Moth of Corruption, prior of the convent of Dissension, and he spoke in this manner:

"You already know, Reverend Fathers and my dear friends, how much I desire to destroy the convents of the discalced friars and nuns, to please my friend Satan, and for this reason I have given you constitutions and teaching as ingenious as I can; but it seems to me that in all these I have been beating about the bush and have not arrived at the root or the essence, which is what I want to say now, pointing out the steps by which one descends to hell by way of discord, anger and harshness and hatred.

"You know that a religious is obliged under pain of mortal sin to follow the way to perfection, although not obliged to be perfect. And that perfection is no other thing than perfect love of God and neighbor, as Jesus Christ, their Doctor and Teacher declared. Responding to the question of what is the greatest commandment of the law, that is, the highest perfection, Christ said, 'You shall love God with all your heart and all your soul and all your strength; and the second like it is this: you shall love your neighbor as yourself.' . . .

"What we must do with great diligence is get them to forget this high perfection and make it appear that everything consists in doing many penances, or going about outwardly composed, or having much delight and consolation in prayer and other things that they imagine, all the while going around with a heart full of hatred, rancor and animosity, sinking little by little towards hell, until they arrive there. . . ."

Having finished this speech, Fray Melanco said, "This, my comrades, is the plan by which all well-ordered communities and convents destroy themselves and in the same way we can destroy the discalced friars and nuns without any doubt. So take courage and be diligent, for they will not take perfection from us."

And having said this he began to weep bitterly and to say, "Woe is me! Woe is me! My soul escapes me when I think of a way to teach their superiors to undo this *Cerro*, which is the universal weapon before which everything falls and it is this:

Brief, Clear and Certain Plan for Attaining the Height of Perfection

"Devote yourself to being very humble and love God tenderly. And put that person who has hurt you the most, whether inside or outside the convent, in your heart and together with the Heart of Christ love that one greatly. Let this be the first person you pray for. Ask nothing good for yourself that you do not first ask for the other. Make many acts and promises to God that if for the glory and honor of God, it were necessary for you to lose honor, health and life and

even your own glory for the honor, health and life and even glory of that person, then you are determined to give all that good.

"By making these promises and desires often and continually kissing their feet interiorly and even the ground on which they walk, and orienting all your acts and resolutions in prayer, you will by this single road rise to the highest grade of perfection and attain heroic virtue and pull up the *Cerro* by the roots."

The priors, when they saw Fray Melanco weeping so, consoled him saying that no one could understand such teaching. Then they called Srs. Ignorance, Passion and Malice and charged them to hide this secret thoroughly so that the *Cerro* might reach its greatest height.

* * *

These are the Constitutions of the *Cerro*, which we command be kept in all evil and disobedience so that, little by little, true religion be destroyed and intolerable abuses introduced. . . .[2]

Mary Magdalen de' Pazzi (1566–1607)

The Carmelite mystic and visionary Mary Magdalen de' Pazzi was born in 1566 into a noble and devout Florentine family and was given the baptismal name of Catherine. Even as a young child, Catherine felt drawn to God and strongly attracted to the Eucharist. Shortly after her first communion at the age of ten, she also made a personal vow of perpetual virginity. Trained in the practice of Ignatian meditation by Jesuit confessors and spiritual directors, Catherine entered the novitiate of the Carmelite Monastery of St. Mary of the Angels in Florence in 1583, where she was given the religious name of Sr. Mary Magdalen.

During her novitiate, the future saint became dangerously ill and so was allowed to profess her vows early, on May 27, 1584. Her sudden recovery was followed by a series of visions and ecstatic experiences lasting forty days, with two-hour ecstasies after Mass each morning as well as other "excesses of love" throughout the day. Such experiences continued into the following year, culminating in an almost continual eight-day trance in June 1585, from the vigil of Pentecost to Trinity Sunday, during which she is said to have "received the Holy Spirit in different forms" and entered into dialogue with the Persons of the Trinity. This was immediately followed by a period of great interior dryness and affliction lasting five years, as she was tormented by blasphemous thoughts, temptations against chastity, and terrible doubts about her religious vocation and her own salvation. At the same time, like Catherine of Siena, she felt inspired to write letters to religious leaders, even the pope, urging them to work for the renewal of the church.

Her five years in "the lion's den" of spiritual trials ended at Pentecost in 1590. Afterward her extraordinary experiences became less frequent, though during this time a famous incident occurred when she was overcome with the thought that God was not sufficiently loved and

ran about the monastery ringing the bells, summoning her sisters to "love Love." She devoted herself increasingly to the care of her sisters in community, especially the sick and elderly. From 1595 to 1598 she was given charge of the junior professed. In 1598 she became the novice mistress and in 1604 the subprioress. That same year, the ecstasies finally came to an end with the onset of her final illness, which brought intense physical suffering. She died peacefully on May 25, 1607, with the final words "*Benedictus Deus*—Blessed by God!" She was beatified in 1626 and canonized in 1669. Her feast day is celebrated on May 25.

An unusual feature of Mary Magdalen de' Pazzi's "works" is that, for the most part, they were not written by the saint herself. Rather, sisters in the community, present during her ecstasies, would describe her actions and record the words she uttered. Sometimes she would assume the voice of God the Father, or of Christ. Sometimes in her trances she would move about the monastery in a kind of pantomime of what she was experiencing (acting out scenes related to the Passion, etc.). Often the words and actions involved elaborate symbolism, and we cannot be sure that the sister-scribes always fully understood what they were witnessing. As a result, the "works" of Mary Magdalen de' Pazzi are somewhat difficult for contemporary readers to appreciate and understand. She left behind no systematic teaching on prayer and spirituality. Yet her ecstasies typically focused on the mysteries of the Christian faith: the Trinity, Jesus Christ as beloved Savior and spouse of the soul, the saving value of Christ's blood, the role of the Holy Spirit, the place of Mary, Scripture as God's inspired word, the meaning of religious life and the vows, and the centrality of love of God and neighbor. But above all, as Benedict XVI recently wrote in a letter marking the fourth centenary of her death, Mary Magdalen de' Pazzi represents a "living love that recalls the essential mystical dimension of every Christian life" and "manifests to all the dignity and beauty of the Christian vocation." The pope ends his letter with the prayer that this saint may "still make her voice heard in all the church, spreading to every human creature the proclamation to love God."[1]

From *The Forty Days*

> FIRST. (May 27, 1584). During the morning of the feast of the Most Holy Trinity [i.e., Trinity Sunday], after I had made my profession, I felt myself altogether abstracted from corporal feelings and drawn to know and penetrate the bond and union that I had made

with God. And I seemed to see that I was bound to the Most Holy Trinity by three chains, or bonds, which were the three vows that I had promised in my profession.

The first bond was the vow of chastity, by which I was bound and joined to the Eternal Father, Who is Purity Itself. I saw that this purity was one of the closest bonds and unions that the soul could have with God, through that conformity that the soul has with God by being pure. And I seemed to be united to God in such a way and so closely bound to Him that it did not seem possible for me to be ever, ever separated from God, if only I would not fall into a sin of the flesh. . . . And I saw that this bond was so precious that neither its grandeur nor the union that the soul has with God could ever be expressed by human tongue.

Then I saw myself bound and joined to my Spouse Jesus by the vow of obedience; and this also seemed to me to be a bond so great that it could never be comprehended. And as I saw the great worth and the grandeur and the utility of this virtue, I was quite grieved by the little knowledge that I had of the usefulness of this holy virtue that makes the soul conformed to Jesus, Who was so very obedient. And I saw that if creatures could know the greatness and usefulness that this virtue brings to the soul, they would subject themselves to every creature, even the least. . . .

Then I was bound to the Holy Spirit by the vow of poverty. Not that the soul becomes conformed to the Holy Spirit (by poverty), since the Holy Spirit is full of all heavenly treasures and riches; but I understood this bond to unite in the way that Jesus spoke of in the Gospel: "Blessed are the poor in spirit!" (Mt 5:3). And blessed are those souls that recognize and know how to receive and to preserve in themselves the riches and the treasures of that Spirit!

Afterwards, since I had offered my heart to Jesus on the vigil of the Most Holy Trinity, I knew through the following experience that He had accepted it; for during this morning of the Trinity I saw Jesus, Who returned it to me and, together with it, gave me the purity of the Virgin Mary, which purity I saw to be so grand that I could never explain it. And after this, Jesus, caressing me sweetly, as if I were a new bride, united me entirely to Himself and locked me in His side, wherein I found a most pleasant repose.

Then it seemed to me that the Lord took away my will and all my desires, so that I cannot will or desire anything, save that which the Lord wills; and I saw my will so conformed and united to the will of God that of myself I cannot will anything. . . .

SECOND. (May 28, 1584). On Monday morning, after I had taken Communion and while I was considering those words of Jesus, "No man cometh to the Father, but by Me" (Jn 14:16), I seemed to see Jesus in the manner of a bridge (I do not know what other comparison to give Him) and to understand that no one could save himself except by passing over that bridge, that is, except by the way of His commandments and of His life and passion. Then I seemed to see the Most Holy Trinity all filled with love for creatures; but I also saw that creatures did not recognize this love and did not put all their effort into loving God purely. And I saw that God has created the soul of an unfaithful person with the very same love with which He created the soul of His most holy Mother; but, whereas the Virgin cooperated with that grace and always continued to augment it and increase it in herself, the unfaithful make themselves unworthy. And I saw that that love was so great and unlimited that never, never could any creature comprehend it. Indeed, it seems to me that no one who does not experience it could understand it even a little.

And as I saw such great love, I was forced to cry, "Love, Love!" with such impetus and vehemence that I even said the words exteriorly with my mouth; and if I had been able, I would have gone running through the world shouting: "Love, Love!" But as I looked around and saw that creatures paid so little attention to this love, I could not help but feel the greatest sorrow, so that I wept even corporally, and I was very sad.[2]

From *Revelations and Enlightenments* (also known as *The Eight Days of the Holy Spirit*)

Here follows the Third Book of the Revelations and Enlightenments received by the beloved soul and spouse of Jesus Christ, Sister Mary Magdalen—the daughter of Sire Camillus Pazzi, and a nun of our monastery of Saint Mary of the Angels on St. Fredian street—on the solemn feast of the Holy Spirit in the year 1585 and throughout the octave, until the morning of the Most Holy Trinity.[3]

During all this time she remained rapt in an excess of mind both day and night, except for a period of about two hours [each day] that was granted to her to recite the Office and to take some little bit of food and a bit of repose.

Seven times she received the Holy Spirit in different forms, each morning at about the hour of Tierce [about 9 o'clock]: once as fire,

once as a dove, once as a column, and so forth—as one will see, step by step, in these raptures, which we shall go on describing as well as we know how and can.

However, we could never, with tongue or pen, make one who has not seen her, capable [of understanding these things]. Neither [could we portray] her ways, her gestures and her words, spoken with so much grace, so much majesty and so much charm. Yet we shall try, assisted by the grace of the Lord, to write everything correctly, and with all sincerity and care, simply as we have had it from her own mouth while she spoke in these raptures. For, as has been said several times in the previously written Book of Colloquies, she is accustomed to speak at all times, sometimes in the role of the Eternal Father, sometimes in that of her Spouse, the Word, sometimes as herself. [And] after she has been silent for a good while—longer or shorter, according to how the Lord guides her—the Eternal Father speaks to her always, ordinarily, in the enlightenments of great importance; yet most of the time she speaks as herself.

FIRST NIGHT. A rapture of enlightenment regarding the Holy Spirit, and what one must do to receive Him worthily. . . .

Because of your restlessness, O Holy Spirit, You do not remain in the immovable Father; for since He is so powerful and wise, and since You likewise are powerful and wise, if You were to remain in the Father, You would not be able to communicate Yourself to creatures, who have so much need of You. So too, if You were to remain in the Incarnate Word, You could not be with creatures; for You know that the Word is of such immense purity, of such eternal truth, of such unequalled unity that You could not remain in a thing so impure as a creature is. And yet You are always in the Father, in the Word, in Yourself, and in all the blessed spirits and in creatures. . . .

You do no repose in creatures as creatures, of themselves inclined to sin; but You repose in them by communication, by operation, by wisdom, by power, by liberality, by benignity, by charity, by love, by purity, and in, fine, by Your own goodness, because, by infusing these graces into your creatures, You make them apt to receive You. . . .

You have honored Your Holy Spirit, O Eternal, Only-begotten, Incarnate Word Made Man! "He has exalted the horn of your Christ!" . . . And that Holy Spirit has then exalted You! You have exalted Him, and He has exalted You! . . .

And how has He exalted You? . . . By pouring Himself into Your elect, because in pouring Himself into them the Spirit makes

them do Your works, O Word! And so You are as much exalted in them as You can be exalted by Yourself, inasmuch as they have become another You, by union and participation, through the infusion of that Spirit. But then, by the communication of Your christs and your gods, You are exalted in as many as {are those in whom} this Spirit infuses Himself; for You make all of them christs, gods, and words in You. "I have said: You are gods, and all of you the sons of the Most High" (Ps 81:6). There is no longer one God, but a thousand, thousand gods; one God in essence and in Three Persons, but a thousand, thousand gods by participation, communion and union. . . .

Please, O Word, I beseech You, do not take away from me the power of Your divinity! But keep me, O Lord, in that innocence that You gave me from the beginning! Keep the pact that You made with Yourself for me! Keep me, I beseech you, so that I can pour You into my neighbor, I mean, Your love, Your light, into the creatures that You love! Keep Yourself in me; and keep also all those who in labor and fatigue are walking along Your ways! Keep Your Holy Spirit in me; and confirm Your bride in Your grace, so that she can crown it with the regeneration accomplished in all Your creatures, in order to lead them to You![4]

John of St. Samson (1571–1636)

By the end of the sixteenth century, the Carmelite reform begun by Teresa of Avila had become juridically independent (as the Order of Discalced Carmelites), but in the following century, in France, a new renewal movement flowered on the ancient stock of Carmel, this time destined to remain within the original Order. Known as the reform of Touraine, this movement likewise stressed prayer, silence, and solitude, but also included a profound appreciation of the value of beautiful and well-celebrated liturgy.

The great spiritual master of the Touraine reform was the blind lay brother John of St. Samson. Jean de Moulin was born into a relatively prosperous family in Sens, but contracted smallpox at the age of three and lost his eyesight due to poor medical treatment. After the death of his parents, he went to live with an uncle, and developed a passion for poetry and music, becoming skilled in a variety of instruments, especially the organ. At the same time, he began exploring mystical authors and devoting himself to prayer. Later he moved to Paris, where he fell into near destitution. Providentially, he came into contact with the Carmelites at Place de Maubert, where he attended daily Mass and spent long hours in prayer. There he joined a group of Carmelite friars and laity who met regularly to read and discuss spiritual texts.

Eventually, John asked to be admitted to the Carmelite Order, and was sent for his novitiate to Dol, where he professed his religious vows in 1607, taking the name John of St. Samson. When the Dol monastery was evacuated during an outbreak of the plague, John chose to stay behind and tend the sick, and began an involvement in the ministry of healing. In 1612 John transferred to the community in Rennes, which had embraced the Touraine reform. Here he remained for the rest of his life, helping to form young friars in the spirit of the reform, providing

spiritual guidance to all who came seeking his counsel, and dictating thousands of pages on contemplative prayer and spirituality.

Perhaps because of his blindness, John of St. Samson's works lack the colorful expressions and vivid images of an author like Teresa of Avila, which may explain why his texts have never been as popular as those of other Carmelite authors. Nevertheless, he is esteemed as one of Carmel's greatest mystics. Overall, his spirituality shows the strong influence of Ruusbroec, Herp, and others of the Rheno-Flemish "school" whose writings John had studied. Among his themes are the importance of *vacare Deo* (absolute availability to God), conformity to Christ and his cross, union with God in the deepest center of the soul, and the practice of what John calls "aspiring" or aspirative prayer, which he understands as "a loving and inflamed thrust of the heart and of the spirit, by which the soul surpasses itself and all created things and unites itself intimately with God."[1] In the passage selected here, John describes this form of prayer in greater detail.

Among John's immediate disciples were a number of significant Carmelite spiritual writers of the reform of Touraine, such as Dominic of St. Albert (1596–1634), who wrote treatises on prayer and mystical theology; Maur of the Child Jesus (d. 1690), who, as his name suggests, promoted devotion to the infant Christ; and Mark of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin (1617–1696), who compiled and gave definitive shape to the spiritual directory of the Touraine reform. John himself has been called "the most profound of the French mystics" and the French John of the Cross. The projected ten-volume critical edition of his works, now under way, should make this important figure in the history of Carmelite spirituality accessible once more to contemporary readers.

From *The Goad, the Flames, the Arrows, and the Mirror of the Love of God, Designed to Impassion the Soul with the Love of God in Himself*

(This text was written by John of St. Samson for the bishop of Dol, Antoine Revol.)

Chapter Seven

On the Nature and Practice of Aspiring

Now we should reduce the exercise and practice of the mystical way to its purest and simplest terms. To prepare for this, we must

first provide an accurate definition of the activity of aspiring [i.e., aspirative prayer].

Aspiring is, therefore, not merely an affectionate conversation, a good exercise in itself, from which aspiring is born and proceeds. Aspiring then is an expression of love: a love so purely and radically expressed that it transcends all loves that are comprehensible by the senses, the reason, or the intellect. By the impetuosity and force of the Spirit of God, it arrives at union with God, not by chance but by a sudden transformation of the spirit in God. In this, I say, the human spirit goes beyond all the love that can be understood and comprehended in the abundant and ineffable sweetness of God Himself, in Whom it is amorously immersed. Behold aspiring in its essence, its cause, and its effect.

The way of aspiring is mostly exercised by familiar, respectful, affectionate, and relaxed conversation. By it the lover is closely elevated to God by varying degrees. And this way is so excellent that by its exercise, you will soon arrive at the peak of all perfection, becoming in love with love.

It is normal for the habitual exercise and practice of aspiring to come after the affective and relaxed prayer of meditation. I say affective and relaxed to make it obvious that there is no question of laboring to satisfy the curiosity of the intellect. Rather the person must imagine the divine works that he desires to know. Having pictured them to himself in a way that makes them sufficiently envisioned and known, he should turn them over to the will so that it may be ignited and nourished by them, as by its proper prey in a hunt. One uses the dog to chase the hare in order to catch it. But when the quarry is caught, it is not fed to the dogs but is immediately taken from them to provide food for men. In a similar way, the understanding, like a good hunting dog, should not have a greater or different pleasure than its nature deserves. It ought to flush out light and truth to expand and extend itself to the fullness of its power. But having penetrated it completely, the will should take it as its own suitable supernatural nourishment, being excited and ignited by its power.

. . . The mystics have written enough about the primary methods and principles of this divine science. . . . Here I will merely say that the will is everything, so to speak. Of course, it is normal for a long period of meditative reasoning to precede aspiring. Thus, affection needs as a prelude the luminous representations of the understanding. Excited and afire with this knowledge, the affection instantly embraces it.

Finally, those who make great progress in this divine science are soon perfectly fit for this exercise of aspiring, especially if they are of a sensitive nature. On the other hand, others are never ready for it. They are too occupied with the simple and loving gaze with and in God—which, however, is still a very good form of mysticism. . . . Of the way of aspiring and its effects, the mystics have written excellent treatises. But I have shown their essence in the preceding chapters when I said that it did not involve deliberate exertion but instead the operation of the heart, the reason, and the spirit. Most important, you cannot begin this exercise too soon; you may start even sooner than I said, provided you have understood the full meaning of my words. But if someone consciously desires to make himself the prey of love, he will soon find himself so well instructed in this divine science that he can deal with love itself in all its successive steps.

Love is the means to love, the less excellent love is the means to the more excellent love, and the more excellent love is the means to the highest love and to the ultimate and supreme exercise of active love. All these modes and stages have their own theory and practice. They all lead to simple and eminent contemplation within their object, love itself: contemplation that is ethereal, subtle, lofty, profound, extensive and unique. By such contemplation one is always—in a manner of speaking—powerfully acted upon and intensely ravished.

Entering this way is easy for sensitive souls but difficult for less sensitive ones. Thus, the former are very easily ravished by the Beauty of their love's Object; but the latter, it seems, are ravished in the same love, which does not stop in the understanding. As a result, the object that overpowers them carries away their will along with their understanding. Indeed this love is so overpowering that the will alone enters the amorous bosom of love, where it savors an unutterable love beyond all understanding and all expression. All the while, the dumbfounded intellect remains paralyzed at the gate.

Such is the effect of love's flood rushing into its lovers. It sweeps them away, ravishes them, and swamps them in its waves. These people become love itself—its spirit, its divinity—insofar as it is possible for any creature in this life. Nothing is past, future, or even eternal; all is present in this deliriously wonderful sea. When one returns to and in himself, he sees and feels himself to be less than the tiniest jot. Thereupon, one reanimates his flight, but not for himself. Instead, he moves in God, desiring to be engulfed in His

infinite expanse, in order to continue his own life in that infinite life.

Thus, the action of this love is so supernatural and so divine in God that it becomes both the means and the end. It is the means because the creature lovingly joins his own love to it. It is the end because the creature abides in it with ineffable love, joy, and delight. The sight of the intuitive and ravishing Beauty of God holds her as if asleep in its delectable bosom. This state surpasses all human definition and comparison.

What must be avoided, especially at the beginning of the exercise, is too much exertion of either head or heart. Such an effort might interfere and render the soul incapable of this exercise. This most excellent and noble exercise must be perfectly received by the soul. Thus acquired, it can easily, powerfully, and sublimely create the union beyond union—if I may say so—of the loving creature in God, its blessed lover. It is most important to avoid setting up any obstacle, and one must be vigilant about immoderate exertion, especially for one's own enjoyment. Such selfishness would be an iniquitous and perverted act, completely unworthy of true love. Whatever good of His may be in the creature and whatever the creature's good in Him, His Majesty still wills that he conserve enough energy for the functions and activities of human life, especially the duties of his vocation and station.

The proper thing to do in this divine way is to try to begin at a distance with loving conversations. Then you must motivate yourself to love love itself in itself by considering all the emanations and creations of His love, not only in grace and nature but also in glory. Think of how men converse with incomparable admiration, astonishment and wonder about the prodigious deeds of goodness and love by a human king. For an infinitely greater cause, all men—especially you—have a limitless subject of eternal wonder and delight. I mean the infinite prodigies that they see and should see of our good God: His ecstatic love in itself that is emitted to us men—so poor, weak, and miserable in countless ways both natural and supernatural—for His infinite glory and our infinite good.

Just as in Him we live, move, and have our being [see Acts 17:28], it is in Him that we must flow back with a most active and unflagging current. We must not only always know and perform supernatural works. We must also know Him with excellence and love Him with constant ardor. And this we must enjoy most wonderfully, fully, and eternally with our whole being. Meanwhile, after this life we look forward to our full and consummated beatific

pleasure in the immensity of His totality, in the infinite expanse of His amorous furnace, aglow with His infinite fire. In such a life, those who live in holiness and love realize by felt experience their status as pilgrims on earth. Thus, they feel that there are no more miserable people in this world than they. I should add that, for countless reasons, the humiliations of the perfect are far from and most unlike those of the imperfect.

Until now I have shown you in copious detail the excellence of the true mystics in their own mystical way. I also have shown you—at least in outline—the means of embarking on it usefully and fruitfully as well as of persevering on it to the end of the journey. In addition, I have shown you how to avoid danger or harm. Therefore, it is here appropriate for me to compose a concrete act of aspiring. It will lead you, as by the hand, joyfully along this holy and loving trail. This path is so delightful and delectable that anyone who knows it will lovingly travel it at his own cost and expense. Such happiness is beyond words.

An Act of Aspiring

Why did you bother, Lord my God, to create a universe that could add nothing to your happiness? Did You not have within Your own Being the source of infinite beatitude? Why did You share this being by creating so many varied creatures that could add nothing to You in return?

O Goodness! O immense Love! Your will attracts these creatures so that they can witness Your divine and eternal thoughts. So that they can know and love you and always act attuned to your glorious love. So that they can know and love only You in every other being. So that they will always remain adorned with Your divine image, their beauty and their supernatural crown.

Of what do I speak, O lover of men and angels? How great is the distance from being to non-being? From being to nothingness? From nothing, the universe in all its greatness and excellence has been created. The angels are right to marvel at the boundless infinity of Your Majesty. At Your love and limitless goodness. How much more, then, should they astound us men—who are as nothing compared to them?

But let us go on rejoicing. We are the most excellent creations of You, Who are the ecstasy of love and create the ecstasy of love. The holy angels and holy men are creations so powerful that they reduce lesser men to nothing. The latter receive God's gifts and spoil them

all, using them in ways that are as evil as themselves. They are content to exist in a state of natural well-being, without any consideration of the One Who is their very existence and all their good.

Think about these things in any way you like, for all such reflection is good. But you, what do you think of yourself? And what could you say to God about yourself, except something like this: Who am I, Lord? Who am I? Whence have You drawn me by creation—by a second creation—except from the mud of all corruption? From the dirt, where I was truly poorer than poverty itself? You raised me up to understand truly, to act honestly, and to love sincerely. You called me forth to speak with me and seat me with the princes of your elect and chosen people.

O love! O Goodness! O immense Mercy! O all-filling Majesty! You sanctify [everyone] who comes into the world—except those who love nothing but the world. Who can place limits and restraints on what is done in me by You and on what I am in You? No one, Lord. No one could do it. Now I feel myself totally obliged to Your infinite Majesty: both for what Your Majesty is in itself and for all the blessings it has bestowed on my entire being throughout my life—blessings of nature and of grace.

But if I present your Majesty with an accounting of the blessings received by nature, how many magnificent realities must I neglect to mention? And if I add to them an accounting of the blessings received by grace, how can I ever finish? I speak here of the gifts that go above and beyond the ordinary graces You bestow on all Your chosen ones: new creation, baptism, conservation, election. These are things of which I am scarcely deserving, except for Your love and its special grace.

No, my love and my life. I am dumbfounded, for of myself I have nothing. If I know anything of myself, it is that I am so wretched and corruptible that of myself I would go off and drown myself in sin, the abyss of all corruption.

O my dear Life! O my dear Love! You have given me my very self when you gave me free will. By it I return myself to You as a pure and eternal holocaust, to the full extent of my power. I am infinitely unworthy, for so late have I known You and so late have I loved You.

O truth eternal! O truth ever-new! How often, in the fullness of their life, have creatures called out to me: Where is your God? And how inadequate were my answers? For all along were You within me, as if in Your own kingdom. Yet not always did I feel the presence of Your love. Thus, I compelled myself to search everywhere for You. I sought to know You, to feel You, and to love You. I wanted to be

Your royal abode, whose sanctification You eternally desired. Seeking what I already possessed, dear Love, brought me endless regret.

Ah! What greater misery can be imagined than to live only by and for oneself, not experiencing the wonderful operation of God's perfecting love within oneself? What can this be, O my dear Life? You have commanded me to be perfect as You are perfect and to be holy as You are holy. Yet I completely fail to apply myself to such an effort, as if I had never heard You.

But now, my dear Love and my dear Life, I rue my loss—not by myself but by You within me. I will not spare myself as I vigorously put my hand to the plow with no thought of rest. No matter what the cost, I will turn all the activity of my inner powers and my heart back to You in order to love You eternally. Alas! Alas! My dear Love! In the past my heart was ever turbulent, like the sea agitated by furious tempests. Thus, I lived with an unsteady and restless heart, not even guessing the cause of my misery.

Ah! My dear Love! My dear Life! What is a heart not dedicated to loving You except a den for all sorts of thieves, each one of whom tears away at it, greedy for his share? Thus is a man horribly violated by his own invited guests. He is a wretched captive, and each captor does his larceny, lest he lose his share. O how the misery of men is unfathomably beyond comprehension! And how much greater their misery because they enjoy their servitude, lusting ever more for subjection to the masters of their misery.

Yet go on, go on once more, my Love and my Life! By Your mercy the snare has been broken, and I have been freed from those who would carry me off with them to perdition. It is You who have done it; it is You whom I want to love with a love that is perfecting and sovereign. With a love that is sublime, a love that is strong. For this, I confide myself totally to Your Goodness because I know I cannot trust myself.

Conclusion

From this you can see the fullness of love, which grows not only larger but also denser by the living flame of aspiring. Yet for love all things are good. Love does not need academic research to flash the abundant simple flames of its heart with endless ardor. The heart knows neither discretion, nor moderation, nor measure; for its Beloved ravishes it with His sweet impulse and adorable beauty. Thus, with no other hope it desires to lose itself deeper and deeper in the Beloved.[2]

Lawrence of the Resurrection (1614–1691)

Few Carmelite authors have touched as many hearts as Br. Lawrence of the Resurrection. Yet, paradoxically, the impact of his simple but inspiring call to "practice the presence of God" has been far greater beyond rather than within his own homeland, religious order, and denomination.

Biographical details are sketchy. In 1614 Nicolas Herman was born in the small village of Hériménil, in the region of Lorraine (now part of France). His parents, Dominic and Louise, were apparently devout but poor, and he seems to have received little formal education, though he learned to read and write.

When he was eighteen years old, Nicolas experienced a profound "conversion" at the sight of a barren tree in winter, recognizing how God's providence would soon bring it to life again. But before turning to religious life, he entered the military on the side of his native Lorraine in the bloody Thirty Years' War. At one point he was taken prisoner and nearly executed as a spy before convincing his captors of his innocence. After being released and rejoining his regiment, he was seriously wounded in 1635 and returned home to recuperate. Like Ignatius of Loyola and many others, the young Nicolas began to ponder the "disorders of his youth" (Eulogy, 12) during his convalescence.[1] We are told that he "often relived the perils of his military service, the vanity and corruption of the times, the instability of other people, the treason of an enemy, and the infidelity of his friends," finally resolving "to undertake a holier profession and fight under the standard of Jesus Christ" (Eulogy, 10–11).

But there were several false starts. At first he tried living as a hermit. He quickly discovered, however, that he lacked the mature emotional stability needed for this way of life. Next he tried his luck as the valet of the treasurer of the savings bank, but proved to be, as he admits, "a

clumsy oaf who broke everything." Finally, at twenty-six, he applied to the Order of Discalced Carmelites on the rue de Vaugirard in Paris, where he was accepted as a lay brother and given the religious name "Lawrence of the Resurrection."

By his own account, Lawrence fully expected to be "skinned alive" for his shortcomings, but was surprised to find religious life very much to his liking. However, in his early years as a Carmelite he underwent a kind of "dark night," fearing that he might be damned for having responded so poorly to God's many graces, and unable to find any help in the complicated prayer manuals of his day. But he resolved to continue acting purely for the love of God, regardless of his ultimate fate. "When I accepted the fact that I might spend my life suffering these troubles and anxieties . . . I found myself changed all at once," he recounts. "And my soul, until that time always in turmoil, experienced a deep inner peace as if it had found its center and place of rest" (Letter 2). From that point on, Lawrence set aside all other devotions and methods not required by his Order and dedicated himself to the continual "practice of the presence of God," in which he finally found deep peace and satisfaction.

After religious profession, he was assigned to the monastery kitchen, "to which he had the strongest natural aversion." He was responsible for feeding a growing community, which eventually reached about one hundred friars, many of whom were young candidates studying for the priesthood. In addition, at a time when lay brothers were assigned most of the manual work, Br. Lawrence's duties included answering the door and welcoming visitors, directing the day laborers coming from outside, assisting the poor who came for help, and running errands. Moreover, as the city grew, the area around the monastery quickly developed and there was often construction going on in the neighborhood. But "he got used to doing everything for the love of God, asking him at every opportunity for the grace to do his work," and so "was able to carry it out with great ease" (*Conversations*, 18). Thus Lawrence found his path to inner peace not in the withdrawn life of a hermit but amid the bustle of everyday life. Then, over time, Lawrence developed a worsening limp (perhaps due to the old war wound), and after fifteen years in the kitchen, he was shifted to the job of community sandal maker, which he could carry out while seated. After three serious illnesses in his later years, he passed away peacefully on February 12, 1691, at the age of seventy-seven, joking to his confreres that his only suffering was that he had not suffered enough for love of God.

For Lawrence, "the practice of the presence of God" means "to take delight in and become accustomed to his divine company, speaking

humbly and conversing lovingly with him all the time, at every moment, without rule or measure, especially in time of temptation, suffering, aridity, weariness, and even infidelity and sin" (Maxims, 6). Though simple, he admits this approach is not always easy, especially at the outset if the mind and imagination are inclined to wander. It takes great faith, he says, to persevere until the practice becomes habitual and one begins to feel its beneficial effects. Lawrence advises beginners to use short interior aspirations such as "My God, I am completely yours" (Maxims, 30) as a way of curbing distractions and bringing the attention back to God. It is also crucial, he notes, to be striving for virtue, and this practice will assist us in becoming more like the One we love and in whose divine presence we constantly live.

We are told that, despite his "rough exterior" and blunt manner by cultured Parisian standards of that time, "his heart was open, eliciting confidence, letting you feel you could tell him anything, and that you had found a friend" (Ways, 3). In later years, as his reputation spread, he received a steady stream of visitors from all walks of life coming for spiritual advice. Among these was Joseph de Beaufort, vicar general to Louis-Antoine de Noailles who subsequently became cardinal-archbishop of Paris. It was de Beaufort who, after Lawrence's death, gathered what writings he could find and published them, along with his own recollections of the saintly friar, in two small volumes (the second prefaced by de Noailles's approbation of Lawrence's life and teachings), later combined into the single work known today as *The Practice of the Presence of God.*

A more prominent, if less frequent, visitor was Archbishop François de Fénelon, already well known for his progressive views on politics and women's education. In 1697 Fénelon published his *Explication des maximes des saints*, in part to support the teaching of his friend Madame Guyon that "pure love" of God required moving beyond a merely "mercenary love" concerned about one's own salvation. When critics insisted that such a doctrine was contrary to Scripture and an invitation to moral indifference, Fénelon pointed to the example of devout predecessors such as Br. Lawrence, who had overcome his fear of damnation by resolving to love God "purely," and whose book had been recommended by no less than the archbishop of Paris himself! Thus when twenty-three propositions from Fénelon's book were later condemned in 1699, the taint of suspicion also fell on authors he had invoked, and the Catholic faithful for the most part neglected Br. Lawrence (and mystical spirituality in general) for generations. However, the condemnations only piqued Protestant interest, especially among those of the Pietist Movement, and soon

Br. Lawrence's texts were appearing in numerous Protestant editions, especially in German and English. John Wesley, for example, included Br. Lawrence in his "Christian library" and recommended him to his followers. More recently, Lawrence has become a favorite spiritual guide even to many of other faiths.

Not surprisingly, contemporary editions of *The Practice of the Presence of God* hoping to attract the broadest readership often say little about Lawrence's Catholic and Carmelite roots, and until recently he was often overlooked in surveys of Carmelite spirituality. Still, perceptive readers will find in him many echoes of Teresa and John of the Cross, whose teachings he would have studied as a young religious. And long before Thérèse of Lisieux, Lawrence "threw himself headlong into the arms of infinite mercy" (Eulogy, 44) and spoke of serving God in the littlest things, even to "picking up a straw" out of pure love for God. One can argue that Br. Lawrence took the high spiritual doctrine of the Carmelite tradition and made it simple and accessible to everyone. It has become increasingly clear that this humble lay brother deserves a place of honor among Carmel's great spiritual teachers.

From "Conversations" recorded by Joseph de Beaufort[2]

First Conversation (August 3, 1666)

1. I saw Brother Lawrence for the first time, and he told me that God had granted him a special grace of conversion at the age of eighteen when he was still in the world. One day in winter while he was looking at a tree stripped of its leaves, and he realized that in a little while its leaves would reappear, followed by its flowers and fruit, he received a profound insight into God's providence that has never been erased from his soul. This insight completely freed him from the world, and gave him such a love for God that he could not say it had increased during the more than forty years that had passed.

2. He had been the valet of Monsieur de Fieubet, the treasurer of the Savings Bank, and was a clumsy oaf who broke everything.

3. He had asked to be admitted to religious life, thinking he would be skinned alive for his awkwardness and imperfections, and thereby would offer God his life and all its pleasures. But God had fooled him, for he experienced only satisfaction. This led him to tell God frequently: "You have tricked me."

4. [He said] that we must establish ourselves in God's presence by continually conversing with him, and that it was shameful to give up conversation with him to turn to foolishness. We must nourish our souls with an exalted idea of God, and thereby we will draw great joy from being with him. We must enliven our faith, for it is a shame that we have so little. Instead of taking faith as our rule and guide, we amuse ourselves with insignificant, constantly changing devotions! This way of faith is the mind of the church, and is all we need to reach perfection.

5. We must give ourselves to God entirely and in complete abandonment in the temporal and spiritual realms, finding joy in carrying out his will whether he leads us by the way of suffering or consolation, for it is all the same to one who is completely abandoned. We must remain faithful even in times of aridity when God is testing our love for him. This is when we make suitable acts of resignation and abandonment, a single one of which will result in great progress.

6. [He recounted] how he was not astonished on hearing every day about miseries and sins; on the contrary, he was surprised there were not more, considering the evil of which the sinner is capable. He did pray for sinners, but knowing that God could set them straight when he wanted, he worried no more about it.

7. [He said] that in order to arrive at self-abandonment to God to the extent that he willed, we must watch over all the movements of the soul, since it can become entangled in spiritual things as well as in the most base. God gives the necessary light to those who have the true desire to be with him, and that if I had this intention I could ask to see him whenever I wanted without fear of bothering him, and if not, I ought not come to see him at all.

From "Letters" of Br. Lawrence

Letter 2: To a Spiritual Director (1682–1683)

Dear Reverend Father,

Since I am not able to find my way of life described in books—although this does not really disturb me—I would, nonetheless, like to have the reassurance of knowing your thoughts on my present state.

Several days ago during a discussion with a pious person, I was told the spiritual life was a life of grace that begins with servile fear, that intensifies with the hope of eternal life, and that finds its

consummation in pure love; and that there are various ways of ultimately arriving at this blessed consummation.

I haven't followed these methods at all; on the contrary, I don't know why they provoked such fear in me in the beginning. But for this reason, on my entrance into religious life I made the resolution to give myself entirely to God in atonement for my sins, and to renounce everything else for the sake of his love.

During the first years I ordinarily thought about death, judgment, hell, paradise, and my sins when I prayed. I continued in this fashion for a few years, carefully applying myself the rest of the day—even during my work—to the practice of the presence of God who was always near me, often in the very depths of my heart. This gave me a great reverence for God, and in this matter faith alone was my reassurance.

I gradually did the same thing during mental prayer, and this gave me great joy and consolation. This is how I began. I will admit that during the first ten years I suffered a great deal. The apprehension that I did not belong to God as I wished, my past sins always before my eyes, and the lavish graces God gave me, were the sum and substance of all my woes. During this period I fell often, but I got back up just as quickly. It seemed to me that all creatures, reason, and God himself were against me, and that faith alone was on my side. I was sometimes troubled by thoughts that this was the result of my presumption, in that I pretended to be all at once where others were able to arrive only with difficulty. Other times I thought I was willingly damning myself, that there was no salvation for me.

When I accepted the fact that I might spend my life suffering from these troubles and anxieties—which in no way diminished the trust I had in God and served only to increase my faith—I found myself changed all at once. And my soul, until that time always in turmoil, experienced a deep inner peace as if it had found its center and place of rest.

Since that time I do my work in simple faith before God, humbly and lovingly, and I carefully apply myself to avoid doing, saying, or thinking anything that might displease him. I hope that, having done all that I can, he will do with me as he pleases.

I cannot express to you what is taking place in me at present. I feel neither concern nor doubt about my state since I have no will other than the will of God, which I try to carry out in all things and to which I am so surrendered that I would not so much as pick up a straw from the ground against his order, nor for any other reason than pure love.

I gave up all devotions and prayers that were not required and I devote myself exclusively to remaining always in his holy presence. I keep myself in his presence by simple attentiveness and a general loving awareness of God that I call "actual presence of God" or better, a quiet and secret conversation of the soul with God that is lasting. This sometimes results in interior, and often exterior, contentment and joys so great that I have to perform childish acts, appearing more like folly than devotion, to control them and keep them from showing outwardly.

Therefore, Reverend Father, I cannot doubt at all that my soul has been with God for more than thirty years. I will omit a number of things so as not to bore you. I think, however, it would be appropriate to indicate the manner in which I see myself before God, whom I consider as my King. . . .

My most typical approach is this simple attentiveness and general loving awareness of God, from which I derive greater sweetness and satisfaction than an infant receives from his mother's breast. Therefore, if I may dare use the expression, I would gladly call this state the "breasts of God," because of the indescribable sweetness I taste and experience there.

If on occasion I turn away either because of necessity or weakness, inner movements so charming and delightful that I am embarrassed to talk about them, call me immediately back to him. I beg you, Reverend Father, to think about my great weaknesses, of which you are fully aware, rather than these great graces with which God favors my soul, unworthy and ignorant as I am.

Regarding the prescribed hours of prayer, they are nothing more than a continuation of this same exercise. Sometimes I think of myself as a piece of stone before a sculptor who desires to carve a statue; presenting myself in this way before God I ask him to fashion his perfect image in my soul, making me entirely like himself.

At other times, as soon as I apply myself I feel my whole mind and soul raised without trouble or effort, and it remains suspended and permanently rooted in God as in its center and place of rest.

I know that some would call this state idleness, self-deception, and self-love. I maintain that it is a holy idleness and a blessed self-love, should the soul in this state be capable of it. In fact, when the soul is in this state of rest its former acts do not trouble it; these acts were formerly its support but now they would do more harm than good.

I cannot agree to calling this self-deception, since the soul in this state desires God exclusively. If this is self-deception then it is

up to God to correct it; may he do with me as he pleases, for I seek him alone and want to be entirely his. I would appreciate it if you would let me know your impressions of this. It would mean a great deal to me for I have a special regard for you, Reverend Father, and am, in Our Lord,

Yours,

From "Spiritual Maxims" of Br. Lawrence

Chapter Two: *Practices Necessary to Attain the Spiritual Life*

6. The holiest, most ordinary, and most necessary practice of the spiritual life is that of the presence of God. It is to take delight in and become accustomed to his divine company, speaking humbly and conversing lovingly with him all the time, at every moment, without rule or measure, especially in times of temptation, suffering, aridity, weariness, even infidelity and sin.

7. We must continually apply ourselves so that all our actions, without exception, become a kind of brief conversation with God, not in a contrived manner but coming from the purity and simplicity of our hearts.

8. We must perform all our actions carefully and deliberately, not impulsively or hurriedly, for such would characterize a distracted mind. We must work gently and lovingly with God, asking him to accept our work, and by this continual attention to God we will crush the head of the devil and force the weapons from his hands.

9. During our work and other activities, even during our reading and writing, no matter how spiritual—and, I emphasize, even during our religious exercises and vocal prayers—we must stop for a moment, as often as possible, to adore God in the depths of our hearts, to savor him, even though in passing and stealthily. Since you are aware that God is present to you during your actions, that he is in the depths and center of your heart, stop your activities and even your vocal prayers, at least from time to time, to adore him within, to praise him, to ask his help, to offer him your heart, and to thank him. Nothing is more pleasing to God than to turn away from all creatures many times throughout the day to withdraw and adore him present within. Moreover, this turning inward imperceptibly destroys the self-love found only among creatures. In the end, we can offer God no greater evidence of our fidelity than by frequently

renouncing and scorning creatures in order to enjoy their Creator for a moment. I do not mean by this that you must withdraw forever from your duties, for that would be impossible; prudence, the mother of all virtues, must be your guide. I do say, nonetheless, that it is a typical error among the spiritually minded not to withdraw from what is external from time to time to adore God within themselves and enjoy his divine presence in peace for a few moments. This digression was long but I thought the matter called for some explanation. Let's get back to our exercises.

10. All these adorations must be made by faith, believing that God is truly in our hearts, that we must adore, love, and serve him in spirit and in truth, that he sees everything that happens and will happen in us and in all creatures; that he is independent of everything and the one on whom all creatures depend, infinite in every kind of perfection. He is the one who, by virtue of his infinite excellence and sovereign domain, deserves all that we are as well as everything in heaven and on earth, of which he can dispose as he wishes in time and in eternity. All our thoughts, words and actions belong by right to him. Let's put this into practice.

11. We must carefully examine which virtues are the most essential, which are the most difficult to acquire, which sins we commit most often, and which are the most frequent and inevitable of our falls. We must have recourse to God with complete confidence at the moment of combat, remain firm in the presence of his divine majesty, adore him humbly, bring him our miseries and weaknesses, and lovingly ask him for the help of his grace. In this way we will find every virtue in him without our having any of our own.

Chapter Six: *Means to Acquire the Presence of God*

27. The first means is great purity of life.

28. The second is great fidelity to the practice of this presence and to the fostering of this awareness of God within, which must always be performed gently, humbly, and lovingly, without giving in to disturbance or anxiety.

29. We must take special care that this inner awareness, no matter how brief it may be, precedes our activities, that it accompanies them from time to time, and that we complete all of them in the same way. Since much time and effort are required to acquire this

practice, we must not get discouraged when we fail, for the habit is only formed with effort, yet once it is formed we will find contentment in everything. . . .

30. It would be appropriate for beginners to formulate a few words interiorly, such as: "My God, I am completely yours," or "God of love, I love you with all my heart," or "Lord, fashion me according to your heart," or any other words love spontaneously produces. But they must take care that their minds do not wander or return to creatures. The mind must be kept fixed on God alone, so that seeing itself so moved and led by the will, it will be obliged to remain with God.

31. This [practice of the] presence of God, somewhat difficult in the beginning, secretly accomplishes marvelous effects in the soul, draws abundant graces from the Lord, and, when practiced faithfully, imperceptibly leads it to this simple awareness, to this loving view of God present everywhere, which is the holiest, the surest, the easiest, and the most efficacious form of prayer.

32. Please note that to arrive at this state, mortification of the senses is presupposed. . . .

Chapter Seven: *Benefits of the Presence of God*

33. The first benefit that the soul receives from the [practice of the] presence of God is that its faith becomes more intense and efficacious in all life's situations, and especially in times of need, since it easily obtains graces in moments of temptation and in the inevitable dealings with creatures. For the soul, accustomed to the practice of faith by this exercise, sees and senses God present by a simple remembrance. It calls out to him easily and effectively, thus obtaining what it needs. It can be said that it possesses here something resembling the state of the blessed, for the more it advances, the more intense its faith grows, becoming so penetrating in the end that you could almost say: I no longer believe, for I see and experience.

34. The practice of the presence of God strengthens us in hope. Our hope increases in proportion to our knowledge. It grows and is strengthened to the extent that our faith penetrates the secrets of the divinity by this holy exercise, to the extent that it discovers in God a beauty infinitely surpassing not only that of the bodies we see on earth but even that of the most perfect souls and of the angels.

The grandeur of the blessing that it desires to enjoy, and in some manner already tastes, satisfies and sustains it.

35. This practice inspires the will with a scorn for creatures, and inflames it with a sacred fire of love. Since the will is always with God who is a consuming fire, this fire reduces to ashes all that is opposed to it. The soul thus inflamed can live only in the presence of its God, a presence that produces in its heart a holy ardor, a sacred zeal and a strong desire to see this God loved, known, served, and adored by all creatures.

36. By turning inward and practicing the presence of God, the soul becomes so intimate with God that it spends practically all its life in continual acts of love, adoration, contrition, trust, thanksgiving, oblation, petition, and all the most excellent virtues. Sometimes it even becomes one continuous act, because the soul constantly practices this exercise of his divine presence.

37. I know that few persons reach this advanced state. It is a grace God bestows only on a few chosen souls, since this simple awareness remains ultimately a gift from his kind hand. But let me say, for the consolation of those who desire to embrace this holy practice, that he ordinarily gives it to souls who are disposed to receive it. If he does not give it, we can at least acquire, with the help of ordinary grace, a manner and state of prayer that greatly resembles this simple awareness, by means of this practice of the presence of God.

Michael of St. Augustine (1621–1684) and Maria Petyt (1623–1677)

As the reform of Touraine began to spread, it produced a number of important spiritual writers. Michael of St. Augustine was a member of the "stricter observance" in the Flemish Province. Born in Brussels into a fervently Catholic family, he entered the Carmelites in 1639 and spent most of his religious life in Mechelen, serving many years as prior of the community and several terms as provincial. He was a tireless writer on many themes, but is best remembered today for his treatise *The Mariform Life*, which presents the Christian goal of union with God and conformity to Christ from a thoroughly Marian perspective.

Two years his junior, Maria Petyt was born into a wealthy merchant family from Hazebrouck. She tried to join the Canonesses of St. Augustine but was refused for health reasons, after which she joined a group of beguines in Ghent. Here she came under the spiritual care of Michael of St. Augustine, who guided her into the paths of mystical prayer. Later she moved next to the Carmelite church in Mechelen, where she lived for many years as a lay anchorite and Carmelite "tertiary." With the encouragement of her director, she began writing down her spiritual experiences, which Michael eventually published in a four-volume edition. Maria Petyt's writing style is simple, direct, vivid, and even humorous at times. Most striking is her profound experience of the presence and role of Mary even in the highest states of mystical union.

Carmel has always associated itself with Mary, and Michael of St. Augustine and Maria Petyt are included here because they represent the culmination of a certain strand of Marian spirituality, one that foreshadows that of Louis Grignion de Montfort. The writings of Michael and Maria complement each other; he presents in theological terms what she describes from her own religious experience. Though some expressions used may sound extreme and not to everyone's taste, as Michael acknowledges, these Carmelites are careful never to separate Mary from her divine Son.

They clearly recognize that, however exalted Mary's status and privileges may be, these are entirely the work of grace in her, a grace won by her Son's death and resurrection, and a work accomplished by the God who "lifts up the lowly." There is no fundamental competition between love of God and love of Mary, Michael argues, since both loves were united in the heart of Jesus, and the same spirit within us that cries "Abba, Father" also cries out "Ave, Mater" (Hail, Mother). For both Michael of St. Augustine and Maria Petyt, the Mother of Jesus continues the role she played at Cana: to bring us to Christ and say, "Do whatever he tells you."

From *Union with Our Lady: Marian Writings of the Venerable Mary Petyt of St. Teresa, T. O. Carm.*[1]

5. How she honors and prays to the Blessed Virgin, in God

As for my love, my knowledge of divine things, the lights which I receive concerning revealed truths, my supernatural attractions—all this, it seems to me, is drawn from its source, which is the Unity of the Divine Being, although it sometimes flows superabundantly into my soul. Yet such a superabundant flood does not distract the soul from this Unity, for in all things the soul sees, recognizes, and tastes the one Divine Unity, in a mysterious and wonderful manner. The strength and the light of God alone aid the soul and raise it up to this level.

In like manner, it is in the Divine Being as in a mirror that I behold, honor, and love our all-lovable Mother, and that I pray to Her. I behold Her as making but one with this Divine Mirror, with this ineffable Being. And so when I kneel before one of Her statues and implore Her help for some intention towards which I feel an inner attraction—for the welfare of souls, the needs of my country, or something similar—soon Her image becomes present in this interior mirror, where She is contained together with all other creatures. At other times I seem able, in some manner, to penetrate beneath the exterior image, noticing nothing corporal, and I behold her totally contained in the hidden depth of my spirit.

6. A tender love impels her towards Jesus and Mary. . . .

It is an extremely tender love which I feel for Jesus and for His dear Mother, who is my Mother also. And this kind of love gives me great familiarity with Jesus, great ease in His company. With Him I am like a spouse, full of tenderness and affection. And the

feeling He evidences for me in return also appears to be full of affection. The same is true of my dear Mother. She seems to have adopted me as Her child; She instructs me in perfection and purity of spirit, so that I may become more pleasing to Jesus. She leads me to the love of Jesus and to loving commerce with Him. . . .

12. . . . She is shown how to love Jesus, Mary and Joseph, and how to converse in spirit with them.

. . . I contemplate Jesus, Mary, and Joseph and enjoy their presence in the depth of my soul, seeing them as united for all eternity to the Divine Being with whom they are totally permeated.

At present, these Three show themselves to me all together, without there being introduced the least intermediary in my contemplation of the Divine Being. For he, as it were, overshadows them and fills them. They seem, in some way, to be absorbed in him, and it is thus they present themselves. So true is this, that it is impossible for me to lose the presence of God, even for an instant, when I consider them or raise up my love to them. In them, I see and love nothing except God alone and that which is divine. The remembrance of them in no way prevents me from remaining in God. It in no way detracts from my simplicity of spirit.

Thus I have come to understand how the blessed in heaven can see and love each other in God without impeding their beatific vision, their joy and their love. I have learned by experience that it is the same here.

18. . . . She sees Mary present in choir during the chanting of the Salve Regina. She asks Her blessing and rejoices in the fact that she belongs to the Order.

. . . On the eleventh of August, 1668, while the [Carmelite] religious were chanting the Hail, Holy Queen and the Litany, I experienced a particular joy and contentment of heart because I seemed to see our most tender Mother there among Her dear Brothers. She was greatly pleased, and the praise, gratitude, and respectful devotion paid to Her seemed to delight Her immensely. . . .

Full of gratitude, I rejoiced that this lovable Mother had called me to be a part of such an Order. [She was living as a "third order" Carmelite in a small house attached to the Carmelite church in Maline, Belgium. —Ed.] I saw well with what a special love She cherished this Order, because it is so dedicated to Her veneration and Her love, because it celebrates Her feasts with such devotion

and respectful familiarity, such as befit Her true children and Brothers. For this reason did I feel so happy at being able, like the others, to take refuge under Her maternal protection; at being a member, no matter how insignificant, of the Order; at being a small shoot of this Vine of Carmel, in which I should love to bring forth fruits in superabundance for the pleasure of my Beloved and His lovable Mother.

22. The Blessed Virgin commands her to explain in what the "Marian Life" consists. . . .

I believe that my dearest Mother is commanding me to explain at some greater length what it has often been freely given me to experience of this life in Mary, or "Marian Life." . . .

Without a doubt it is true that, according to the usual manner of expressing it, God is our sole and final end. In obtaining this end, in contemplating and enjoying this Supreme Good, there is contained the soul's complete happiness, whether in this life or in the next. In this sense, the soul can neither aspire nor attain to anything higher.

But in another sense the soul can aspire to something more, can tend to something higher, and this in a manner which bears some analogy to the condition of the blessed in heaven. The Saints possess, each of them, one glory, one happiness, one satisfaction which comes to them from the contemplation, love, and fruition of the Divine Face and the Divine Being. . . . Yet certain Saints and Blessed, it is commonly known, receive a glory and happiness over and above that described already, a glory and happiness that is to a certain extent supplementary, each one according to his merits or according to the providence of God.

A similar situation comes to pass in this life, when certain souls are favored with supplementary gifts, graces, and favors, through which, if I may so speak, they become like the Saints and arrive at a more lofty manner of life in union with God. In this sense, such a situation constitutes a higher degree of spiritual life than the degree of simple mystical union, and hence one may truly speak of a more eminent degree. That which I experience of this life in Mary, or Marian life, seems to be a twofold life . . .

From Michael of St. Augustine, *Life with Mary: A Treatise on the Marian Life*[2]

Chapter One: Just as we can live a deiform and divine life, so we can live a mariform and marian life, that is, a life in conformity with Mary's good pleasure and in her spirit.

. . . We have said elsewhere that we must live deiformly, that is, conformably to God's good pleasure and according to the demands of the divine will. In like manner, it is fitting for us to live mariformly, that is, conformably to the good pleasure of Mary, the Mother of God. This is the reason why those who profess to be Mary's most dear children use one and the same eye of discretion to judge whether all that they do and omit be according to the good pleasure of God and their lovable Mother. . . .

Chapter Five: Life and death for Mary must be directed, further, to God, just as in the veneration of other saints.

Here it must be noted that life for Mary must be directed and ordered also to God. (This is true, in the same way, of love and veneration of other saints.) Mary herself is totally devoted to God's good pleasure, and she lives for God eternally, according to his will, his love, and his glory. Hence all life for Mary must be further directed to God, so that we do not live and die for Mary as for our ultimate end, with inordinate self-seeking and attachment to [anything] which is not God. This should be our aim: through life and death in and for Mary to live and die more perfectly in and for God, for the love of God and according to his good pleasure and to establish the kingdom of Mary within us, together with the reign of Jesus. For the kingdom of Mary is not opposed to the kingdom of Jesus; it is, rather, completely directed to the kingdom of Jesus.

Therefore, the soul which loves God and which professes to be a true child of this lovable Mother should watch carefully, so that in all its works it allow its love of God (which is poured forth in its heart by the Holy Ghost who is given to it) to extend to Mary. Such a soul must lovingly have recourse to her, keep itself reverently turned towards her by the constant filial remembrance of her presence. Yet the soul must see to it that this extension of the divine love to Mary return again to God, to terminate ultimately in him. For the love of Mary is not permitted, nor is it to be exercised, for any reason other than God's sake.

When the soul is led and directed in its marian life by the Spirit of God, inwardly and almost spontaneously, then there is no

problem in this regard. For then the soul learns by experience that this life for Mary is in no way a hindrance to life for God, but rather a help and a stimulus. It finds that its love reaches God with and through Mary, that it rests simultaneously in Mary and in God, though ultimately, of course, in God as in its final end.

Chapter Six: The marian life is, in a certain sense, more perfect than a life of simple union. We find an illustration of this in the life of the blessed in heaven.

. . . The blessed in heaven all enjoy perfect glory and joy in the face-to-face contemplation of God. They are filled with the light of glory and their souls are flooded with beatific love, and in this consist their supreme joy and happiness. Yet, as everyone admits, the blessed possess, besides this essential beatitude and glory, other accidental joys, each one according to the measure of his merits and according to the disposition of God, the Rewarder. Such accidental joys are found, for example, in the contemplation of the most sacred humanity of Christ, of his holy wounds, of the holy cross as the instrumental cause of the soul's beatitude; in the delights of intimacy with the most glorious Mother of God, with the blessed Joseph, or other of the saints; in an especially clear and profound knowledge of some of God's mysteries. There are many like joys, in which one of the blessed shares more, another less. Thus is one saint more sublime in glory than another, because the beatific love in one is more intense and also extends to more delightful objects than in another. . . .

It is in this sense that the marian life joined to the divine life is more perfect, is one grade higher than the ordinary contemplative and unitive life, since the marian life is twofold: divine-marian, life in God and in Mary, through the simple contemplation, love and enjoyment of God in Mary and of Mary in God. . . .

Chapter Eight: The marian life in no way hinders the simple contemplative life. . . .

. . . True, some souls are found, even among those who tend towards the summit of perfection, to whom this marian life is foreign and seems senseless. To such souls this life seems not a little opposed to detachment from all creatures, and hence alien to true perfection. But they must beware of despising this life or of judging it proper to imperfect spirits, beginners, or proficients. Let them know that, as we have earlier explained, the marian life can easily

accompany the divine life without in any way hindering it; in fact, it can serve as a help and a stimulus to the divine life, especially when it is caused in the soul by the direct action of God.

Yet our interior attraction must be followed. Thus, aside from the actual influence of the Holy Spirit, it is unwise to force the spirit or to urge it to act in the manner outlined above. It suffices to regard one's dear Mother with deep affection, to love her in what might be called a more mature manner, until she deigns to infuse this spirit of marian life into the soul. . . .

Chapter Thirteen: The Spirit of Jesus produces in the soul love for God the Father; it also produces love for Mary, the Mother of God, as it did in Jesus himself. . . .

"Because you are the sons of God, God hath sent the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying: Abba, Father," writes St. Paul [see Gal 4:6]. From this we learn that the Spirit of Jesus abides in the children of God, producing in them, according to their capacity, a tender love for God the Father. But just as this Spirit produced in Jesus a filial love for his Eternal Father, so it also produced in him a filial affection for his most dear Mother, and this it will continue to do for all eternity. Is it any wonder, therefore, if the Spirit of Jesus which, in the hearts of the children of God cries Abba, Father (that is, produces love for the Father of Jesus), also cries from those same hearts Ave, Mater [Hail, Mother] (that is, produces filial and reverential love and affection for Mary) even as happened in Jesus himself during his lifetime and happens now in heaven?

. . . For it is one and the same Spirit of Jesus which produces all in these souls; namely, both divine and marian love, without hindering either. Only think how this took place in Christ without prejudice to the highest perfection, and you will realize how it can take place in certain of Mary's chosen children without prejudice to the contemplative life of perfection.

. . . One and the same Spirit of Jesus, as we have said, accomplishes all this in the faithful soul, according to the capacity of each one and the desire of the Spirit. Hence, there should be, in the future, no cause for wonderment, since this union of marian and divine life is thus justified theoretically and, practically, is established as being realized in certain souls.

Martyrs of Compiègne (d. 1794)

After the official condemnations of Quietism and semi-Quietism in the late 1600s, though interest in mystical spirituality continued among groups such as the Protestant Pietists, Catholics increasingly turned toward the seemingly safer path of more "activist" spiritual practices. The mystical works of Teresa, John of the Cross, and others tended to be relegated to the shelves of monastic libraries. Popular devotions (like those associated with the brown scapular of Carmel and Carmelite devotion to the Infant of Prague) abounded. Mental prayer came to be understood largely in terms of highly structured meditations on set religious themes, leading to edifying resolutions. Carmelite scholars expended enormous intellectual energy trying to fit the teachings of John and Teresa into the categories of scholastic theology, and to identify a Teresian "method" of meditation that could stand alongside the Ignatian, Sulpician, and other "methods."

Given such trends, it is hardly surprising that Carmel in the eighteenth century produced no great spiritual classics. It did, however, offer the world inspiring witnesses of another sort. Chief among them were the sixteen Discalced Carmelite nuns of Compiègne who died at the guillotine during the Reign of Terror in 1794.

The monastery of Compiègne, about fifty miles north of Paris, was founded in 1641, and had long enjoyed friendly relations with the French royal family, who spent several weeks each year at a nearby chateau. In fact, the youngest daughter of Louis XV, Madame Louise Marie of France (1737–1787), had entered the Carmel of Saint-Denis (Paris) in 1770, and had played a role in the vocation of several Compiègne nuns. Among them was Marie Madeleine Claudine Lidoine, prioress at the time of the martyrdom, who took the same religious name as her royal benefactor, Teresa of St. Augustine. Nevertheless, the members of the Compiègne community

represented a broad cross-section of French society, from descendants of military officers, government officials, and the nobility to the daughters of cobblers, saddlers, haberdashers, tax collectors, and ordinary laborers.

The causes and consequences of the French Revolution are still widely discussed and variously interpreted. Here it is sufficient to recall that what began as a movement promoting certain urgent but somewhat limited political and social reforms gradually took a more radical and violent turn, and became increasingly hostile toward the institutional Catholic Church, which was viewed as too closely tied to the *Ancien Régime.* Religious orders were targeted for extinction, since their vows seemed to run contrary to the Enlightenment ideals of freedom and the ultimate authority of human reason. Contemplative religious in particular were seen as social parasites who contributed nothing useful to the welfare of society.

In 1790 the National Constituent Assembly canceled the previous privileges of the clergy, confiscated church property in the name of the state, and declared the permanent suspension of all religious vows. Wearing religious habits in public was forbidden, and thousands of French religious returned to secular life, went into hiding, or fled into exile. Though the Compiègne nuns unanimously assured the authorities that they wanted only "to live and die" as Carmelites, they were expelled from their convent on September 14, 1792, the feast of the Triumph of the Holy Cross. Nevertheless, they found lodgings in four small apartments nearby, and remained in continual contact with one another under the leadership of the prioress, Mother Teresa of St. Augustine (Madame Lidoine), following their previous way of life as best they could.

Even before their expulsion, Madame Lidoine had discovered in the community archives a brief account of a "mystic dream" experienced by one of their aspirants in the previous century. In the dream, this young lodger who would later enter the Carmel seemed to see the Compiègne community—with the exception of a few members—appearing in glory "following the Lamb," who had earlier appeared as the suffering Christ. Sensing that this might be a premonition of their own fate, Mother Teresa of St. Augustine proposed to her Carmelite sisters that they make an act of consecration as a community, offering themselves as a holocaust "to restore peace to France and to the church." After some initial hesitation, the nuns all agreed and began renewing this act of consecration each day for nearly two years.

On June 22, 1794, the community was finally arrested and imprisoned at the former Visitation convent of Compiègne. (Three of the sisters

were away at the time and thus escaped arrest, including Sr. Marie of the Incarnation, who was in Paris and fled to safety with the prioress's mother; in her later years she would write an account of the martyrdom of her former community.) After about three weeks, just as they had been given permission to wash their secular clothing, word came that the Compiègne nuns were to be transported to Paris for trial. Accordingly, contrary to usual protocol, they were taken to the capital in the only dry clothing they had, their religious habits (with small caps substituting for the traditional veils).

At a brief show trial on July 16 (solemnity of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, patron of the Order), the nuns were accused of conspiring against the Republic, and the judge described them as "fanatics" for clinging to their "religion." In fact, these Carmelites were not recklessly seeking their own destruction; Madame Lidoine attempted to refute the accusations and argued that if any wrong had been done, she alone was responsible and the others should be spared. In the end, however, all sixteen community members present received the death sentence.

The following day they were taken to the Place du Trône (now the Place de la Nation) for execution. Eyewitnesses report that the usually bloodthirsty mob fell strangely silent at the appearance of the tumbrels full of nuns in their Carmelite habits, chanting the *Salve Regina*, the *Miserere*, the *Veni Creator Spiritus*, and other ancient hymns as they approached their deaths. It was a sobering reminder to many of how monstrous the Reign of Terror had become.

At the foot of the scaffold the nuns renewed their vows and kissed the small image of the Madonna and child held in the palm of Mother Teresa of St. Augustine. Thus the youngest member, Sr. Constance, who had remained a novice for six years due to the civil laws against the taking of religious vows, was finally able to make her religious profession before ascending to the guillotine. Madame Lidoine herself was the last to be executed, after assisting the others. The bodies of the nuns were deposited in a mass grave in the nearby Picpus cemetery. Only ten days later, Robespierre was executed at the same guillotine, and the Reign of Terror effectively ended, a sign to many that the Compiègne nuns' generous act of consecration had been accepted.

"Teresa of St. Augustine and Companions" were beatified on May 27, 1906. Their story attracted increasing attention in the twentieth century with the publication in 1931 of Gertrud von Le Fort's religious novella *Die Letzte am Schaffott* (The Last One at the Scaffold), later translated into English as *Song at the Scaffold.* Le Fort's narrative centers on

the fictional Blanche de la Force, a fearful young woman from an aristocratic family who first seeks refuge in a Carmelite vocation at Compiègne, later fleeing the convent as the political situation becomes more threatening, and finally returning to join the nuns at the guillotine, thus becoming "the last one" executed. (Contrary to the historical record, in Le Fort's version it is Marie of the Incarnation, zealous for martyrdom, who pushes for the "act of consecration" despite the reservations of her superior, Madame Lidoine, yet is ultimately frustrated in her desire for courageous self-sacrifice.) The Dominican R. L. Bruckberger acquired screen rights to the story and arranged for George Bernanos, then dying of cancer, to write the dialogues. Bernanos's text was later used by composer Francis Poulenc in his *Dialogues of the Carmelites*, one of the most acclaimed of modern operas. Gertrud von Le Fort had reshaped the story to grapple artistically with her own fears in the face of Nazism's rising tide, while Bernanos's version served as a kind of "final testament" as he faced his own approaching death. Yet despite liberties taken with the historical record, both fictional versions remain true to a central lesson from the witness of the Compiègne nuns, namely, that Christian martyrdom is not the product of merely human courage but a manifestation of the grace of God, "who chooses the weak and makes them strong."

Christmas Hymn by Teresa of St. Augustine (Madame Lidoine)

("To Be Sung at the Crèche"; composed some time after the community's expulsion from their convent)

Heavenly Child, I long for you,
Nothing else satisfies my heart;
Therefore I'm under your sway.
I feel the intensity of your love.
Heal this guilty, sinful heart,
Let it be wounded with sorrow and love!
Heavenly wounds, O wounds so welcome!
Break this heart, that it may ache night and day!

Divine love, with my whole being
I come to your cradle to bring a gift:
My soul surrenders itself to your judgments,
And my mind submits to them forever. . . .
I want nothing; your heart is all things;
Here I sacrifice my own views and desires.
In your heart, I want to be enclosed.

For your love's sake, I accept martyrdom. . . .

Ah! my hopes are founded on death
For I die of being unable to die.
And hasten, Lord, hasten my deliverance!
Break these bonds, fulfill my longing!
Immolate your victim as you will!
Your divine blows are sacred to me!
If I die beneath your hand, it is my happiness.
To my heart, your demands are but an attraction!

Divine Shepherd, I place beneath your staff
This little flock entrusted to my care.
Loving Child, alongside your crib
I surrender to you mother and children.
O Mother of love, O august Sovereign,
Deign, oh! deign to place us in your bosom.
In your help, O powerful Queen,
Your dear children have every right to hope.[1]

Song Composed in Prison by Julie-Louise of Jesus

(to the tune of *La Marseillaise*)

Let our hearts be joyful
The day of glory is here!
Far from us every weakness
Seeing the banner come,
Seeing the banner come!
Let us prepare ourselves for victory,
Let us all march like true conquerors
Beneath the flags of a crucified God!
Let us run, let us fly to glory;
Let us revive our ardor!
Our bodies belong to the Lord:
Let us climb, let us climb the scaffold
And make him victorious!

O ever-desirable happiness
For the Catholics of France:
To follow the admirable road,
So often traveled before
So often traveled before

By the martyrs, toward execution
Following Jesus, with the King!
Christians, let us proclaim our faith;
Let us adore the justice of God;
May the fervent priest,
The faithful believer,
Seal, seal with every drop of their blood,
Faith in a crucified God!

Great God, you see my weakness,
I long for it—yet I'm still afraid.
Confidently my ardor impels me,
But give me your help.
But give me your help.
I cannot hide my fear from you
When I think of paying the price of death;
But you will be my comfort.
No, I say, no more hesitation.
Hasten the moment!
I await my transformation.
Lord, Lord, without delay
Make my heart content!

Holy Virgin, our model,
August Queen of martyrs,
Deign to support our zeal
By purifying our intentions.
By purifying our intentions.
Protect France still;
Help us from heaven's height.
Make us feel, even here,
The effects of your power.
Sustain your children,
Submissive, obedient.
Let us die, let us die with Jesus
And our faithful King!

See, O divine Mary,
The holy rapture of your children.
If our life comes from God,
For his sake, we accept death.
For his sake, we accept death.
Show yourself our tender Mother;

Present us to Christ Jesus,
And, enlivened by his Spirit,
On fire with his holy love,
May we, in leaving this earth
For our heavenly abode,
Sing, sing with the saints
His goodness forever![2]

From *To Quell the Terror* by William Bush (chap. 10)

The journey to the scaffold had begun. Escorted by mounted guards and foot soldiers on that hot late afternoon in July, the tumbrels bearing the 40 condemned bumped slowly over the paving stones of the Conciergerie courtyard before emerging from the gates of the Palace of Justice. As the procession of guards, horses, foot-soldiers and jolting, springless tumbrels advanced along the uneven stone streets, accompanied by a highly eclectic escort of vociferous regulars, curious street rabble, and a few sympathizers, the *Miserere* arose from the tumbrels. . . .

The universal silence greeting the procession has been attested to by all witnesses. On that evening those passionate voices which daily railed against the condemned were struck dumb, even to the "furies of the guillotine" at the place of execution. All watched silently, waiting in a sort of eerie, hushed expectancy. . . .

Was it the nuns' serene expressions, their white cloaks, or their singing that produced the strange, embarrassed silence along the route? . . . They projected no hint of tragedy, no reason for regret. A rare glory of being seemed to demonstrate that death by the guillotine was for them the crowning of their lives. Had they not, just the night before, sung of this as their own "day of glory"?

. . . Also sung en route to the guillotine were the words of tender, helpless abandon of the *Salve Regina*. Never for these Christian women consecrated to Our Lady of Mount Carmel had they seemed more appropriate. . . .

The 24 other prisoners could not but be engulfed by the strange hush as the procession advanced. . . .

The comments of one Parisian working-class woman that evening as she watched the Carmelites pass by have been preserved for us. . . . They could have come only from an eyewitness who heard this simple woman observe to all and sundry, as the people of Paris have ever been wont to do at public events: "What good souls! Just look at them! Tell me if you don't think they look just

like angels! I tell you, if those women don't go straight to Paradise then we'll just have to believe it doesn't exist!". . .

Between the time the sentence was passed in the late afternoon and the arrival at the Place du Trône, three hours would probably have elapsed. The hot evening was thus well advanced before the bumping tumbrels finally reached the vast site. Even at an hour nearing eight o'clock, however, the light would still have been intense, as it is at the end of long, clear Parisian midsummer days, when an intense twilight's bright, hot light tenaciously holds night at bay. . . .

Mounted on its high scaffold, stark against the still bright midsummer evening sky, the realism of the naked blade defied the courage of the would-be martyrs. The resourceful prioress allowed no time, however, for inner battles with fear. As we have seen, she was prepared for this fateful moment and greeted the scaffold's uncompromising reality with the equally uncompromising theological affirmations of the *Te Deum*. . . .

After the singing of the *Te Deum*, the devotions led by Madame Lidoine were those normal for a dying Carmelite. If possible, the dying nun, after the Holy Spirit had been invoked, renews her monastic vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, her hands between those of the prioress. Thus is explained the hymn next sung before the guillotine: the *Veni Creator Spiritus*, invoking the Holy Spirit to quicken and enflame the nuns with the Holy Spirit as their consecration to him was renewed. . . .

Monseigneur Jauffret specifies that this hymn of invocation completed, the nuns renewed their vows in "loud and intelligible voices," led by the prioress. . . .

Certainly the Carmelites' sacrifice on July 17, followed by Robespierre's fall one republican *décade* later on July 27, has caused many to believe that their sacrifice was efficacious. What is sure is that with the Great Terror ended, a less ominous fate awaited prisoners such as the English Benedictines. . . .

The 41-year-old Madame Lidoine moves up to the foot of the scaffold, the worn little clay image of the Virgin and child clutched tightly in her palm, a last, pathetic relic of all that had once been the royally favored Carmel of Compiègne. . . .

Sister Henriette of the Divine Providence, Madame Pelras, the community's young infirmarian, now offers to stand by Mother Lidoine and assist the others up the steps. . . .

. . . Sister Constance, the [community's] youngest member at age 29, had been the last to join the community. For five long years

she had been forbidden by law to make her final vows. Now, just moments before, as the others renewed their vows, she, joining in, had at last also pronounced hers. Let her then, the last, be the first to enter into the bridal chamber. . . .

Madame Lidoine is ready. Sister Constance, in a panic so shortly before for not having finished her office, is summoned by the prioress and confidently approaches. Reports are that all panic was suddenly gone. Fully conscious that her vows had at last been pronounced and that she was indeed dying as a professed Carmelite, she seemed transfigured by the life-giving Spirit just invoked. She kneels at her prioress's feet, her first and last act of submission as a professed Carmelite. A final maternal blessing is given and the tiny clay image of the Virgin and Child, cupped in the prioress's palm, is proffered to this youngest daughter for a last kiss.

Head humbly bowed, Sister Constance, asks in a clear, young voice: "Permission to die, Mother?" "Go, my daughter!" It is reported that it was after rising from her knees to face the machine, and as she started up the steps of the scaffold, that Sister Constance intoned the first line of the psalm, *Laudate Dominum omnes gentes*. It was the psalm sung by Saint Teresa of Avila at the foundation of a new Carmel. In 1604 Mother Anne of Jesus, just arrived from Spain under the escort of Cardinal de Bérulle, had introduced this Teresian custom into France when she walked into the church of the first Carmel in Paris. At that historic moment the great Spanish nun is reported to have startled her sisters by this sudden outburst of praise . . .

Now, 190 years later, in that same city where Christian civilization seemed to be in its death throes as the old order collapsed, the familiar verses, spontaneously begun by Sister Constance at the foot of the guillotine, were again taken up by the surprised nuns "with greater fervor than harmony." They would continue throughout the community's immolation, punctuated by the recurring fatal thud cutting short voice after voice. . . .

Said to have been as radiant as "a queen going to receive her diadem" as she mounted the steps singing, Sister Constance is also reported to have waved aside the executioner and his two valets upon reaching the top of the steps. She thus approached the vertical balance plank unaided, chanting that God's mercy was confirmed upon her. . . .

Professionals hardened to the most violent of human emotions, ever confident in their professional ability to assure death, whatever might be the resistance of the condemned, [the executioners] Sanson and his valets had guillotined nuns on several occasions. The blood

of Madame Lidoine's friend, Madame Chamboran of the Carmel of Saint-Denis, had been poured out on this same scaffold in March. Still the execution of a whole community of 16, determined to offer themselves in what appeared to be a ritual sacrifice, was unprecedented. The women's implacable acceptance of everything happening to them, their simple joy as they sang, awaiting certain death, pointed towards a dimension beyond their expertise. Normally masters on their own scaffold, this evening the executioners found themselves minor players in an unfamiliar drama where death had lost its dread. The crowd of regulars gathered around the scaffold this evening had mysteriously sensed this. All watched in an unprecedented silence.

Apart from Sister Constance's being the first to die, and Madame Pelras dying just before Madame Lidoine at the end, we know nothing of the order in which the martyrdom proceeded. . . .

Fourteen times the implacable three sounds have been heard. Fourteen times a headless body has been tossed into the cart. Now Madame Pelras' turn has come. She kneels before the prioress, is blessed, and gives her last kiss to the little image cupped in Madame Lidoine's palm. "Permission to die, Mother?" "Go, my daughter!"

The 34-year-old Sister Marie Henriette of the Divine Providence, reported to have been of great natural beauty, remains unshaken either by the spectacle in the red cart below, or the blood on the scaffold, or even by the splattered executioners as she climbs up to face them. As the chanting fades the appearance, up on the scaffold, of this young nun who had proven of such *sang-froid* in helping all the others, could not but make a profound impact upon the still silent crowd. . . .

From the foot of the scaffold, . . . Mother Teresa of Saint Augustine watches. Her gratitude is great as she beholds this last, so touchingly faithful daughter strapped to the vertical plank, her arms bound behind her. It is now all almost over. By His mercy it had been given her to escort all 15 of them to the threshold of His bridal chamber. Now she must make haste. She too was invited to the feast. . . .

Climbing the steps, Mother Lidoine is transfigured. Briefly freed in these fleeting seconds from all worldly responsibilities to others, she savors a bride's joyous assurance of belonging only to the Bridegroom in the hour of her nuptials.

. . . Below in the crowd all eyes are fixed upon the yet unsullied white mantle of the 41-year-old prioress. The blood-spattered

executioners bind her hands and strap her to the balance plank. Like a sheep before its shearers, like a lamb led to the slaughter, she, like her Master, opens not her mouth (Is 53:7). For a few shining seconds she grasps that it is being given, even to her, to enter into the fullness of the most ineffable divine mystery known to the race, a mystery older than the world itself: the mystery of the Lamb, slain from the foundation of the world (Rev 13:8).

The balance plank swings forward. It is finished. . . .

Because it thus bears all the marks of Christian martyrdom according to the great unbroken Christian tradition of both Eastern and Western Churches, the execution of the 16 Carmelites should never be dismissed as a mere manifestation of the martyrs themselves, or even of the powerful personality of their prioress. Rather must it be viewed, as martyrdom should always be viewed, as an exceptional but very great mystical manifestation of God at work, making of the martyrs "bearers of God" through their oblation. For through the inexplicable, self-imposed, and unprecedented silence that accompanied their long procession and continued throughout their ceremonial sacrifice, it was *he*, through them, who was revealing something of his presence and power in the world at that hour. . . .

The glory of Jesus Christ the world can never contain, for it is not of this world. Yet, even so, in the Father's great mercy to our fallen race through the Holy Spirit, the glory of the only-begotten Son can be seen and experienced in this world. The records show it was indeed seen and experienced by those who, in self-imposed silence, participated in the theophany that constituted the martyrdom of the 16 Carmelites of Compiègne.[3]

Thérèse of Lisieux (1873–1897)

On September 30, 1897, after a long and agonizing struggle with tuberculosis, Thérèse Martin died at the age of twenty-four in the Carmel of Lisieux, all but unknown outside her religious community and immediate family circle. Few imagined that during her last eighteen months Thérèse had been struggling with a profound "trial of faith," assailed by terrible doubts about the reality of heaven—a trial she nevertheless chose to embrace, for as long as God wished, in solidarity with sinners and those without faith. Even some of her community members wondered what could possibly be said of this "sweet and simple" young nun after her death. Yet within a few years she had become not only Carmel's best known modern figure but one of the most popular saints of all time.

The basic facts of Thérèse's life are well known and often recounted. Marie-Françoise-Thérèse Martin was born in Alençon in Normandy, France, on January 2, 1873. She was the last of Louis and Zélie Martin's nine children, among whom only five daughters—Marie, Pauline, Léonie, Céline, and Thérèse herself—survived into adulthood. As an infant she was separated for a year from her family in order to be cared for by a wet nurse. Then at the age of four she lost her mother to breast cancer, and immediately chose her older sister Pauline as "second mother." Some years later, further traumatized by the shock of her beloved Pauline leaving home for the Carmelite convent, Thérèse lapsed into a "strange sickness" in which she "appeared to be almost always delirious." After two months, she suddenly recovered upon seeing the "ravishing smile" of the statue of Mary at her bedside. She had finally found a maternal figure from whom she could never be separated.

Nevertheless, for some years Thérèse remained a nervous and emotionally high-strung child, until she experienced a kind of "conversion"

following Christmas Midnight Mass in 1886, mastering her emotions after an uncharacteristically sharp remark from her father that previously would have reduced her to tears. "I felt charity enter into my soul," she later wrote, "and the need to forget myself and to please others; since then I've been happy!" Soon after she began to feel a powerful urge to save souls, especially those of great sinners, such as the notorious murderer Henri Pranzini, whose apparent final repentance she believed her prayers had helped to bring about. Deciding that she, too, was called to Carmel, where Pauline and Marie had now preceded her, she began her efforts to enter the convent before the usual age. During a pilgrimage to Rome, she even broke normal Vatican protocol by appealing directly to Leo XIII during a papal audience. He reassured the young woman that she would indeed enter "if God wills it."

Finally obtaining the necessary permissions, Thérèse entered the Carmel of Lisieux in April 1888 at the age of fifteen and quickly adapted herself to the convent regimen. Gradually she was given a number of responsibilities, such as helping with the formation of novices, among whom later was her own sister Céline. During her nine years in Carmel, she was known for her generosity and fidelity, her joyful yet mature spirit, her kindness even to the most difficult members, and her notable avoidance of favoritism toward relatives.

Yet she also felt keenly the disparity between her childhood aspirations to heroic sanctity and the reality of her own weaknesses. She began searching for a "new way." Refusing to become discouraged, she concluded that God would not have inspired such aspirations without intending to fulfill them, and decided that what was required was to entrust herself entirely to God's merciful love with childlike confidence. Thus she "discovered," or rediscovered, what she called her "little way," later characterized by others as the "little way of spiritual childhood."

This "little way" found further expression in her famous "Oblation to Merciful Love." Impressed but not attracted by the accounts of heroic nuns who had offered themselves as "victims" of God's justice (to take upon themselves the penalty of others' sins), Thérèse offered herself instead to merciful love, reasoning that God wished all the more to find souls willing to receive the infinite divine love.

Like her spiritual mother Teresa of Avila, Thérèse was keenly aware of the apostolic significance of her contemplative Carmelite vocation, and took to heart the needs of the church and world. She was assigned to pray for, and correspond with, two "missionary brothers" (Maurice Bellière and Adolphe Roulland), which further inflamed her zeal for the

missions. She even dreamed of one day being assigned to a Carmel in the missions herself.

Toward the end of Thérèse's brief life, her older sister Pauline (Mother Agnes) directed her to transcribe her childhood memories. Later, at the request of her sister Marie, she wrote out an explanation of her "little way" and her vocation. Finally, as her tuberculosis began to take its toll and it was obvious she would not live much longer, Mother Agnes's successor, Mother Marie de Gonzague, told Thérèse to continue the story, adding details about her life in the convent.

After Thérèse's death, Pauline edited these three manuscripts (often referred to as A, B, and C) into a continuous text known as *Story of a Soul*, published a year after her death in place of the usual obituary letter. The book quickly became one of the best-selling religious texts of all time, translated into dozens of languages. Devotion to Thérèse also spread rapidly, as people everywhere felt their prayers were answered through the intercession of the "Little Flower" who had promised to send a "shower of roses" and to "spend her heaven doing good on earth." The speed with which she was beatified (1923) and canonized (1925) was unprecedented. In 1927, at the request of missionaries, she was named copatron of the missions alongside Francis Xavier, and in 1997 she became only the third woman to be named a doctor of the church. On October 19, 2008, her parents were beatified.

The selections that follow are from *Story of a Soul.* In the first, Thérèse briefly describes her discovery of the "little way." The second comes from the text written for her sister Marie (Manuscript B), mentioned above. Both contain much of Thérèse's teaching, and some of her most famous passages.

From *Story of a Soul*

Chapter 10

> . . . I have always wanted to be a saint. Alas! I have always noticed that when I compared myself to the saints, there is between them and me the same difference that exists between a mountain whose summit is lost in the clouds and the obscure grain of sand trampled underfoot by passers-by. Instead of becoming discouraged, I said to myself: God cannot inspire unrealizable desires. I can, then, in spite of my littleness, aspire to holiness. It is impossible to me to grow up, and so I must bear with myself such as I am with all my imperfections. But I want to seek out a means of going to

heaven by a little way, a way that is very straight, very short, and totally new.

We are living now in an age of inventions, and we no longer have to take the trouble of climbing stairs, for, in the homes of the rich, an elevator has replaced these very successfully. I wanted to find an elevator which would raise me to Jesus, for I am too small to climb the rough stairway of perfection. I searched, then, in the Scriptures for some sign of this elevator, the object of my desires, and I read these words coming from the mouth of Eternal Wisdom: "*Whoever is a LITTLE ONE, let him come to me*" [see Prov 9:4]. And so I succeeded. I felt I had found what I was looking for. But wanting to know, O God, what You would do to *the very little one* who answered Your call, I continued my search, and this is what I discovered: "*As one whom a mother caresses, so will I comfort you; you shall be carried at the breasts, and upon the knees they shall caress you*" [see Isa 66:12-13]. Ah! Never did words more tender and more melodious come to give joy to my soul. The elevator which must raise me to heaven is Your arms, O Jesus! And for this I had no need to grow up, but rather I had to remain *little* and become this more and more.[1]

Chapter 9

Do not believe I am swimming in consolations; oh, no, my consolation is to have none on earth. Without showing Himself, without making His voice heard, Jesus teaches me in secret; it is not by means of books, for I do not understand what I am reading. . . . I understand so well that it is only love that makes us acceptable to God, that this love is the only good I ambition. Jesus deigned to show me the road that leads to this Divine Furnace, and this road is the *surrender* of the little child who sleeps without fear in its Father's arms. "Whoever is a *little one*, let him come to me" [see Prov 9:4]. So speaks the Holy Spirit through the mouth of Solomon. This same Spirit of Love also says: *"For to him that is little, mercy will be shown"* [see Wis 6:7]. The Prophet Isaiah reveals in His name that on the last day: *"God shall feed his flock like a shepherd; he shall gather together the lambs with his arm, and shall take them up in his bosom"* [see Isa 40:11]. As though these promises were not sufficient, this same prophet whose gaze was already plunged into the eternal depths cried out in the Lord's name: *"As one whom a mother caresses, so will I comfort you; you shall be carried at the breasts and upon the knees they will caress you"* [see Isa 66:12-13].

After having listened to words such as these, dear godmother [i.e., her sister Marie, a nun in the same community], there is nothing to do but to be silent and to weep with gratitude and love. Ah! if all weak and imperfect souls felt what the least of souls feels, that is, the soul of your little Thérèse, not one would despair of reaching the summit of the mount of love. Jesus does not demand great actions from us but simply *surrender* and *gratitude*. . . .

See, then, all that Jesus lays claim to from us; He has no need of our works but only of our *love*, for the same God who declares He *has no need to tell us when He is hungry* did not fear *to beg* for a little water from the Samaritan woman. He was thirsty. But when He said: *"Give me to drink,"* it was the *love* of His poor creature the Creator of the universe was seeking. He was thirsty for love. Ah! I feel it more than ever before, Jesus is *parched*, for He meets only the ungrateful and indifferent among His disciples in the world, and among *His own disciples*, alas, He finds few hearts who surrender to Him without reservations, who understand the real tenderness of His infinite Love. . . .

You asked me, dear Sister, to write to you *my dream* and *"my little* doctrine" as you call it. I did this in these following pages, but so poorly it seems to me you will not understand it. Perhaps you will find my expressions exaggerated. Ah! pardon me, this will have to be put down to my poor style, for I assure you there is *no exaggeration* in my *little soul*. Within it all is calm and at rest.

When writing these words, I shall address them to Jesus since this makes it easier for me to express my thoughts, but it does not prevent them from being very poorly expressed!

J.M.J.T.
September 8, 1896

(To my dear Sister Marie of the Sacred Heart)

O Jesus, my Beloved, who could express the tenderness and sweetness with which You are guiding my soul! It pleases You to cause the rays of Your grace to shine through even in the midst of the darkest storm [i.e., her "trial of faith"]! . . .

At the first glimmerings of dawn I was (in a dream) in a kind of gallery and there were several other persons, but they were at a distance. Our Mother was alone near me. Suddenly, without seeing how they had entered, I saw three Carmelites dressed in their mantles and long veils. It appeared to me they were coming for our

Mother, but what I did understand clearly was that they came from heaven. In the depths of my heart I cried out: "Oh! how happy I would be if I could see the face of one of these Carmelites!" Then, as though my prayer were heard by her, the tallest of the saints advanced toward me; immediately I fell to my knees. Oh! what happiness! the Carmelite *raised her veil or rather she raised it and covered me with it*. Without the least hesitation, I recognized *Venerable Anne of Jesus*, Foundress of Carmel in France. Her face was beautiful but with an immaterial beauty. No ray escaped from it and still, in spite of the veil which covered us both, I saw this heavenly face suffused with an unspeakably gentle light, a light it didn't receive from without but was produced from within. . . .

Seeing myself so tenderly loved, I dared to pronounce these words: "O Mother! I beg you, tell me whether God will leave me for a long time on earth. Will He come soon to get me?" Smiling tenderly, the saint whispered: *"Yes, soon, soon, I promise you."* I added: "Mother, tell me further if God is not asking something more of me than my poor little actions and desires. Is He content with me?" The saint's face took on an expression *incomparably more tender* than the first time she spoke to me. Her look and her caresses were the sweetest of answers. However, she said to me: "God asks no other thing from you. He is content, very content!" After again embracing me with more love than the tenderest of mothers has ever given to her child, I saw her leave. My heart was filled with joy, and then I remembered my Sisters, and I wanted to ask her some favors for them, but alas, I awoke!

O Jesus, the storm was no longer raging, heaven was calm and serene. I *believed*, I *felt* there was a *heaven* and that this *heaven* is peopled with souls who actually love me, who consider me their child. This impression remains in my heart, and this all the more because I was, up until then, *absolutely indifferent to Venerable Mother Anne of Jesus*. I never invoked her in prayer and the thought of her never came to my mind except when I heard others speak of her, which was seldom. And when I understood to what a degree *she loved me*, how *indifferent* I had been toward her, my heart was filled with love and gratitude, not only for the Saint who had visited me but for all the blessed inhabitants of heaven.

O my Beloved! this grace was only the prelude to the greatest graces You wished to bestow upon me. Allow me, my only Love, to recall them to You today, *today* which is the sixth anniversary of *our union*. Ah! my Jesus, pardon me if I am unreasonable in wishing to express my desires and longings which reach even unto infinity.

Pardon me and heal my soul by giving her what she longs for so much!

To be Your *Spouse*, to be a *Carmelite*, and by my union with You to be the *Mother* of souls, should not this suffice me? And yet it is not so. No doubt, these three privileges sum up my true *vocation*: *Carmelite*, *Spouse*, *Mother*, and yet I feel within me other *vocations*. I feel the *vocation* of the WARRIOR, THE PRIEST, THE APOSTLE, THE DOCTOR, THE MARTYR. Finally, I feel the need and the desire of carrying out the most heroic deeds for *You, O Jesus*. I feel within my soul the courage of the *Crusader*, the *Papal Guard*, and I would want to die on the field of battle in defense of the Church.

I feel in me the *vocation of* the PRIEST. With what love, O Jesus, I would carry You in my hands when, at my voice, You would come down from heaven. And with what love would I give You to souls! But alas! while desiring to be a *Priest*, I admire and envy the humility of St. Francis of Assisi and I feel the *vocation* of imitating him in refusing the sublime dignity of the *Priesthood*.

O Jesus, my Love, my Life, how can I combine these contrasts? How can I realize the desires of my poor *little soul*?

Ah! in spite of my littleness, I would like to enlighten souls as did the *Prophets* and the *Doctors*. I have the *vocation of the Apostle*. I would like to travel over the whole earth to preach Your Name and to plant Your glorious Cross on infidel soil. But *O my Beloved*, one mission alone would not be sufficient for me, I would want to preach the Gospel on all the five continents simultaneously and even to the most remote isles. I would be a missionary, not for a few years only but from the beginning of creation until the consummation of the ages. But above all, O my Beloved Savior, I would shed my blood for You even to the very last drop.

Martyrdom was the dream of my youth and this dream has grown with me within Carmel's cloisters. But here again, I feel that my dream is a folly, for I cannot confine myself to desiring *one kind* of martyrdom. To satisfy me I need *all*. Like You, my Adorable Spouse, I would be scourged and crucified. I would die flayed like St. Bartholomew. I would be plunged into boiling oil like St. John; I would undergo all the tortures inflicted upon the martyrs. With St. Agnes and St. Cecilia, I would present my neck to the sword, and like Joan of Arc, my dear sister, I would whisper at the stake Your Name, O JESUS. When thinking of the torments which will be the lot of Christians at the time of Anti-Christ, I feel my heart leap with joy and I would that these torments be reserved for me. Jesus, Jesus, if I wanted to write all my desires, I would have to

borrow Your *Book of Life*, for in it are reported all the actions of all the saints, and I would accomplish all of them for You.

O my Jesus! what is your answer to all my follies? Is there a soul more *little*, more powerless than mine? Nevertheless even because of my weakness, it has pleased You, O Lord, to grant my *little childish desires* and You desire, today, to grant other desires that are *greater* than the universe.

During my meditation, my desires caused me a veritable martyrdom, and I opened the Epistles of St. Paul to find some kind of answer. Chapters 12 and 13 of the First Epistle to the Corinthians fell under my eyes. I read there, in the first of these chapters, that all cannot be apostles, prophets, doctors, etc., that the Church is composed of different members, and that the eye cannot be the hand at one and the same time. The answer was clear, but it did not fulfill my desires and gave me no peace. But just as Mary Magdalene found what she was seeking by always stooping down and looking into the empty tomb, so I, abasing myself to the very depths of my nothingness, raised myself so high that I was able to attain my end. Without becoming discouraged, I continued my reading, and this sentence consoled me: "*Yet strive after THE BETTER GIFTS, and I point out to you* a yet more excellent way." And the Apostle explains how all *the most PERFECT gifts* are nothing without LOVE. That *Charity is the EXCELLENT WAY* that leads most surely to God.

I finally had rest. Considering the mystical body of the Church, I had not recognized myself in any of the members described by St. Paul, or rather I desired to see myself in them *all. Charity* gave me the key to my vocation. I understood that if the Church had a body composed of different members, the most necessary and most noble of all could not be lacking to it, and so I understood that the Church *had a Heart and that this Heart was BURNING WITH LOVE. I understood it was Love alone* that made the Church's members act, that if Love ever became extinct, apostles would not preach the Gospel and martyrs would not shed their blood. I understood that LOVE COMPRISED ALL VOCATIONS, THAT LOVE WAS EVERYTHING, THAT IT EMBRACED ALL TIMES AND PLACES. . . . IN A WORD, THAT IT WAS ETERNAL!

Then, in the excess of my delirious joy, I cried out: O Jesus, my Love. . . . my *vocation*, at last I have found it. . . . MY VOCATION IS LOVE!

Yes, I have found my place in the Church and it is You, O my God, who have given me this place; in the heart of the Church, my

Mother, I shall be *Love*. Thus I shall be everything, and thus my dream will be realized.

Why speak of a delirious joy? No, this expression is not exact, for it was rather the calm and serene peace of the navigator perceiving the beacon which must lead him to the port. . . . O luminous Beacon of love, I know how to reach You, I have found the secret of possessing Your flame.

I am only a child, powerless and weak, and yet it is my weakness that gives me the boldness of offering myself as *VICTIM of Your Love, O Jesus!* In times past, victims, pure and spotless, were the only ones accepted by the Strong and Powerful God. To satisfy Divine *Justice*, perfect victims were necessary, but the *law of Love* has succeeded to the law of fear, and *Love* has chosen me as a holocaust, me, a weak and imperfect creature. Is not this choice worthy of *Love*? Yes, in order that Love be fully satisfied, it is necessary that It lower Itself, and that It lower Itself to nothingness and transform this nothingness into *fire*.

O Jesus, I know it, love is repaid by love alone, and so I searched and I found the way to solace my heart by giving you Love for Love. "Make use of the riches which render one unjust in order to make friends who will receive you into everlasting dwellings" [see Luke 16:9]. Behold, Lord, the counsel You give Your disciples after having told them that "The children of this world, in relation to their own generation, are more prudent than are the children of the light" [see Luke 16:8]. A child of light, I understood that *my desires of being everything*, of embracing all vocations, were the riches that would be able to render me unjust, so I made use of them *to make friends.* Remembering the prayer of Elisha to his Father Elijah when he dared to ask him for HIS DOUBLE SPIRIT [see 2 Kgs 2:9], I presented myself before the angels and saints and I said to them: "I am the smallest of creatures; I know my misery and my feebleness, but I know also how much noble and generous hearts love to do good. I beg you then, O Blessed Inhabitants of heaven, I beg you to ADOPT ME AS YOUR CHILD. *To you alone will be the glory* which you will make me merit, but deign to answer my prayer. It is bold, I know; however, I dare to ask you to obtain for me YOUR TWOFOLD LOVE."

Jesus, I cannot fathom the depths of my request; I would be afraid to find myself overwhelmed under the weight of my bold desires. My excuse is that I am a *child*, and children do not reflect on the meaning of their words; however, their parents, once they

are placed upon a throne and possess immense treasures, do not hesitate to satisfy the desires of the *little ones* whom they love as much as they love themselves. To please them they do foolish things, even going to the extent of *becoming weak* for them. Well, I am the *Child of the Church* and the Church is a Queen since she is Your Spouse, O divine King of kings. The heart of a child does not seek riches and glory (even the glory of heaven). She understands that this glory belongs by right to her brothers, the angels and saints. Her own glory will be the reflected glory which shines on her Mother's forehead. What this child asks for is Love. She knows only one thing: to love You, O Jesus. Astounding works are forbidden to her; she cannot preach the Gospel, shed her blood; but what does it matter since her brothers work in her stead and she, *a little child*, stays very close to the *throne* of the King and Queen. She *loves* in her brothers' place while they do the fighting. But how will she prove her *love* since *love* is proved by works? Well, the little child *will strew flowers*, she will perfume the royal throne with their *sweet scents*, and she will sing in her silvery tones the canticle of *Love.*

Yes, my Beloved, this is how my life will be consumed. I have no other means of proving my love for you other than that of strewing flowers, that is, not allowing one little sacrifice to escape, not one look, one word, profiting by all the smallest things and doing them through love. I desire to suffer for love and even to rejoice through love; and in this way I shall strew flowers before Your throne. I shall not come upon one without *unpetalling* it for You. While I am strewing my flowers, I shall sing, for could one cry while doing such a joyous action? I shall sing even when I must gather my flowers in the midst of thorns, and my song will be all the more melodious in proportion to the length and sharpness of the thorns.

O Jesus, of what use will my flowers be to You? Ah! I know very well that this fragrant shower, these fragile, worthless petals, these songs of love from the littlest of hearts will charm You. Yes, these nothings will please You. They will bring a smile to the Church Triumphant. She will gather up my flowers unpetalled *through love* and have them pass through Your own divine hands, O Jesus. And this Church in heaven, desirous of playing with her little child, will cast these flowers, which are now infinitely valuable because of Your divine touch, upon the Church Suffering in order to extinguish its flames and upon the Church Militant in order to gain the victory for it! . . .

How can a soul as imperfect as mine aspire to the possession of the plenitude of *Love*? O Jesus, *my first and only Friend*, You whom

I love UNIQUELY, explain this mystery to me! Why do You not reserve these great aspirations for great souls, for the *Eagles* that soar in the heights?

I look upon myself as a *weak little bird*, with only a light down as covering. I am not an *eagle*, but I have only an eagle's EYES AND HEART. In spite of my extreme littleness I still dare to gaze upon the Divine Sun, the Sun of Love, and my heart feels within it all the aspirations of an *Eagle*.

The little bird wills *to fly* toward the bright Sun that attracts its eye, imitating its brothers, the eagles, whom it sees climbing up toward the Divine Furnace of the Holy Trinity. But alas! the only thing it can do is *raise its little wings*; to fly is not within its *little* power!

What then will become of it? Will it die of sorrow at seeing itself so weak? Oh no! the little bird will not even be troubled. With bold surrender, it wishes to remain gazing upon its Divine Sun. Nothing will frighten it, neither wind nor rain, and if dark clouds come and hide the Star of Love, the little bird will not change its place because it knows that beyond the clouds its bright Sun still shines on and that its brightness is not eclipsed for a single instant.

At times the little bird's heart is assailed by the storm, and it seems it should believe in the existence of no other thing except the clouds surrounding it; this is the moment of *perfect joy* for the *poor little weak creature*. And what joy it experiences when remaining there just the same! and gazing at the Invisible Light which remains hidden from its faith! . . .

Jesus, I am too little to perform great actions, and my own *folly* is this: to trust that Your Love will accept me as a victim. My *folly* consists in begging the eagles, my brothers, to obtain for me the favor of flying toward the Sun of Love with the *Divine Eagle's own wings*!

As long as You desire it, O my Beloved, Your little bird will remain without strength and without wings and will always stay with its gaze fixed upon You. It wants to be *fascinated* by Your divine glance. It wants to become the *prey* of Your Love. One day I hope that You, the Adorable Eagle, will come to fetch me, Your little bird; and ascending with it to the Furnace of Love, You will plunge it for all eternity into the burning Abyss of this Love to which it has offered itself as victim.

O Jesus! why can't I tell all *little souls* how unspeakable is Your condescension? I feel that if You found a soul weaker and littler than mine, which is impossible, You would be pleased to grant it

still greater favors, provided it abandoned itself with total confidence to Your Infinite Mercy. But why do I desire to communicate Your secrets of Love, O Jesus, for was it not You alone who taught them to me, and can You not reveal them to others? Yes, I know it, and I beg You to do it. I beg You to cast Your Divine Glance upon a great number of *little* souls. I beg You to choose a legion of *little* Victims worthy of Your LOVE!

The very little Sister Thérèse of the Child Jesus
and the Holy Face, unworthy Carmelite religious.[2]

Elizabeth of the Trinity (1880–1906)

Elizabeth Catez was born in the military camp of Avor, near Bourges (France), on July 18, 1880, after a long and difficult delivery. Her father, Joseph Catez, was a captain in the eighth squadron of the Equipment and Maintenance Corps. In 1882 he was reassigned to Dijon, where a second child, Marguerite (known as "Guite"), was born. Captain Catez died in 1887, leaving his wife Marie to raise their two daughters on a modest military pension.

Normally a good and warmhearted child, the young Elizabeth nevertheless showed a fiery determination to get what she wanted and could throw alarming temper tantrums when frustrated. From the time of her first confession at the age of seven, however, she began applying that same determination toward mastering her lively temperament. The following year she was enrolled for musical studies at the Conservatory, and she eventually developed into an outstanding musician with a promising future as a concert pianist, though the rest of her education was relatively neglected.

Elizabeth made her first communion on August 19, 1891, with a profound awareness of God's presence in the sacrament she had just received. That same evening she also paid her first visit to the Carmel of Dijon, where the prioress explained that her name meant "house of God." Gradually Elizabeth began to focus upon the divine indwelling, which became the hallmark of her spiritual life. Not without great effort, she became more patient and calm.

Her teenage years brought a growing attraction to the contemplative vocation of the Discalced Carmelite nuns, and already at nineteen she was eagerly reading Thérèse's *Story of a Soul*, published only two years earlier. However, at her mother's insistence, Elizabeth postponed entry into religious life and devoted herself instead to the typical activities of

a girl of her age and social position: traveling with her mother and sister, going to musical parties with friends, playing games of tennis, participating in the parish choir, helping to run a youth club for the children of workers in a local tobacco factory, and assisting with catechism classes in the parish.

Finally she received permission to enter the Carmel of Dijon at the age of twenty-one, and was given the religious name "Elizabeth of the Trinity," which she came to see as a providential summary of her whole vocation. She devoted herself to the normal routine of the monastery, meanwhile immersing herself in Scripture, in the silent prayer of Carmel, and in pondering the life of the Trinity within her soul and the souls of others. Among her favorite authors were Thérèse of Lisieux, John of the Cross, Ruusbroec, and Paul the Apostle. Her "Prayer to the Trinity," quoted in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, was written spontaneously after a sudden inspiration in 1904, and has become one of the most famous prayers of modern times. Other writings from her years in Carmel include two sets of ten-day-retreat notes (one written for her sister Guite), various prayers and verses, and a series of letters written to friends and family.

Though her religious life was outwardly uneventful, the interior peace and joy that had sometimes eluded her as a young child continued to grow. As she wrote to the mother of a friend: "It seems to me that I have found my heaven on earth, since heaven is God, and God is in my soul. The day I understood that, everything became clear to me" (L 122).[1]

In her final years, her focus on the divine indwelling of the Trinity reached new depths as she "rediscovered" the passage from Ephesians about the Christian call to become "praises of God's glory" (see Eph 1:6-14). Elizabeth decided that this was to be her "new name in heaven" (cf. Rev 2:17) and began signing her letters *Laudem gloriae.* After a long and painful struggle with Addison's disease, which she endured with remarkable serenity, she finally succumbed to the illness on November 9, 1906.

Elizabeth's posthumous career was similar to that of her "sister in the Spirit," Thérèse of Lisieux. The usual obituary letter, with selections from Elizabeth's texts, generated such a positive response that the prioress of Dijon Carmel, Mother Germaine, decided to bring out a biography with more extensive selections. Published in October 1909, *Soeur Elisabeth de la Trinité, religieuse Carmélite, 1880–1906: Souvenirs* quickly sold out and was reprinted numerous times; it has since been translated into at least ten languages. In 1939 the noted Dominican author Marie-Michel Philipon published *The Spiritual Doctrine of Elizabeth of the Trinity*, bringing her message to the attention of Catholic scholars. Some years later,

one of the great Catholic theologians of the twentieth century, Hans Urs von Balthasar, likewise devoted a major theological study to her, noting her special mission to the modern world, and writing that, in Elizabeth, "contemplative faith expands to its full biblical dimensions."[2] More recently, Elizabeth was beatified by Pope John Paul II on November 25, 1984. Today she is especially appreciated by theologians, spiritual writers, and ordinary Christians who recognize the importance of developing a more explicitly trinitarian spirituality for our times.

For the centenary of her birth in 1980, a critical edition of Elizabeth's writings was prepared by Conrad De Meester, later followed by an up-to-date biography based on a thorough review of all the testimonies and archival materials. These now permit a more complete and balanced picture of this young woman, who was at once thoroughly human and deeply mystical. When asked toward the end of her life if she expected to have a heavenly "mission," like Thérèse, Elizabeth wrote: "I think that in heaven my mission will be to draw souls by helping them to go out of themselves in order to cling to God by a wholly simple and loving movement, and to keep them in this great silence within, which will allow God to communicate himself to them and to transform them into himself" (L 335). The sentiments expressed in her final letter, addressed to her childhood friend Charles Hallo, could as well be directed toward contemporary readers: "Before going to heaven your Elizabeth wants to tell you once more of her deep affection for you and her plan to help you, day by day, until you join her. . . . You will encounter obstacles on the path of life, but do not be discouraged, call me. Yes, call your little sister; in this way you will increase her happiness in heaven; she will be so glad to help you triumph, to remain worthy of God" (L 342).

Selections here include Elizabeth's "Prayer to the Trinity," excerpts from her letters, and a section of her retreat notes, "Heaven in Faith," written for her sister Guite.

"Prayer to the Trinity"

> O my God, Trinity whom I adore; help me to forget myself entirely that I may be established in You as still and as peaceful as if my soul were already in eternity. May nothing trouble my peace or make me leave You, O my Unchanging One, but may each minute carry me further into the depths of Your mystery. Give peace to my soul; make it Your heaven, Your beloved dwelling and Your resting place. May I never leave You there alone but be wholly present, my

faith wholly vigilant, wholly adoring, and wholly surrendered to Your creative Action.

O my beloved Christ, crucified by love, I wish to be a bride for Your Heart; I wish to cover You with glory; I wish to love You . . . even unto death! But I feel my weakness, and I ask You to "clothe me with Yourself," to identify my soul with all the movements of Your Soul, to overwhelm me, to possess me, to substitute yourself for me that my life may be but a radiance of Your Life. Come into me as Adorer, as Restorer, as Savior. O Eternal Word, Word of my God, I want to spend my life in listening to You, to become wholly teachable that I may learn all from You. Then, through all nights, all voids, all helplessness, I want to gaze on You always and remain in Your great light. O my beloved Star, so fascinate me that I may not withdraw from Your radiance.

O consuming Fire, Spirit of Love, "come upon me," and create in my soul a kind of incarnation of the Word: that I may be another humanity for Him in which He can renew His whole Mystery. And You, O Father, bend lovingly over Your poor little creature; "cover her with Your shadow," seeing in her only the "Beloved in whom You are well pleased."

O my Three, my All, my Beatitude, infinite Solitude, Immensity in which I lose myself, I surrender myself to You as Your prey. Bury Yourself in me that I may bury myself in You until I depart to contemplate in Your light the abyss of Your greatness.[3]

From Letter 123 (June 19, 1902) to a Young Friend, Françoise de Sourdon

Yes, my darling, I am praying for you and I keep you in my soul quite close to God, in that little inner sanctuary where I find Him at every hour of the day and night. I'm never alone: my Christ is always there praying in me, and I pray with Him. You grieve me, my Framboise; I can well see that you're unhappy and I assure you it's your own fault. Be at peace. I don't believe you're crazy yet, just nervous and overexcited, and when you're like that, you make the others suffer too. Ah, if I could teach you the secret of happiness as God has taught it to me. You say I don't have any worries or sufferings; it's true that I'm very happy, but if you only knew that a person can be just as happy even when she is crossed. We must always keep our eyes on God. In the beginning it's necessary to make an effort when we're just boiling inside, but quite gently, with patience and God's help, we get there in the end.

You must build a little cell within your soul as I do. Remember that God is there and enter it from time to time; when you feel nervous or you're unhappy, quickly seek refuge there and tell the Master all about it. Ah, if you got to know Him a little, prayer wouldn't bore you any more; to me it seems to be rest, relaxation. We come quite simply to the One we love, stay close to Him like a little child in the arms of its mother, and we let our heart go. You used to love sitting very close to me and telling me your secrets; that is just how you must go [to] Him; if only you knew how well He understands. . . . You wouldn't suffer any more if you understood that. It is the secret of life in Carmel: the life of a Carmelite is a communion with God from morning to evening, and from evening to morning. If He did not fill our cells and our cloisters, ah! how empty they would be! But through everything, [we] see Him, for we bear Him within us, and our life is an anticipated Heaven. I ask God to teach you all these secrets, and I am keeping you in my little cell; for your part, keep me in yours, and that way we will never be parted. I love you much, my Framboise, and I'd like you to be completely good and completely in the peace of the children of God.

Your Elizabeth of the Trinity[4]

From Letter 133 (August 7, 1902) to a Young Friend, Germaine de Gemeaux

My dear little Germaine,

Thank you for your nice letter; it made me happy. . . . A Carmelite, my darling, is a soul who has *gazed on the Crucified*, who has seen Him offering Himself to His Father as a Victim for souls and, recollecting herself in this great vision of the charity of Christ, has understood the passionate love of His soul, and has wanted to give herself as He did! . . . And on the mountain of Carmel, in silence, in solitude, in prayer that never ends, for it continues through everything, the Carmelite already lives as if in Heaven: "by *God alone*." The same One who will one day be her beatitude and will fully satisfy her in glory is already giving Himself to her. He never leaves her, He dwells within her soul; more than that, the two of them are *but one.* So she *hungers for silence* that she may always listen, penetrate ever deeper into His Infinite Being. She is identified with Him whom she loves, she finds Him everywhere; she sees Him shining through all things! Is this not Heaven on earth! You carry this Heaven within your soul, my little Germaine, you can be a

Carmelite already, for Jesus recognizes the Carmelite from *within*, by her soul. Don't ever leave Him, do everything beneath His divine gaze, and remain wholly joyful in His peace and love, making those around you happy!

A Dieu, my good little Germaine. I've asked our Reverend Mother [the prioress] for a blessing for you, and I'm delighted to send it; our Mother is so good! Like you, she is called Germaine "of Jesus."

Please give my respectful and very affectionate greetings to Monsieur and Madame de Gemeaux. A big kiss to Yvonne, and for you, the best of my soul.

Elizabeth of the Trinity[5]

From "Heaven in Faith," Tenth Day

[First prayer]

38. "Si scires donum Dei . . ." "If you knew the gift of God," Christ said one evening to the Samaritan woman [see John 4:10]. But what is this gift of God if not Himself? And, the beloved disciple tells us: "He came to His own and His own did not accept Him" [see John 1:11]. St. John the Baptist could still say to many souls these words of reproach: "There is one in the midst of you, '*in you*,' whom you do not know" [see John 1:26].

39. "If you knew the gift of God. . . ." There is one who knew this gift of God, one who did not lose one particle of it, one who was so pure, so luminous that she seemed to be the Light itself: "Speculum justitiae" [mirror of justice]. One whose life was so simple, so lost in God that there is hardly anything we can say about it.

"Virgo fidelis," that is, "Faithful Virgin," "who kept all these things in her heart" [see Luke 2:19, 51]. She remained so little, so recollected in God's presence, in the seclusion of the temple, that she drew down upon herself the delight of the Holy Trinity: "Because He has looked upon the lowliness of His servant, henceforth all generations shall call me blessed!" [see Luke 1:48]. The Father bending down to this beautiful creature, who was so unaware of her own beauty, willed that she be the Mother in time of Him whose Father he is in eternity. Then the Spirit of love who presides over all of God's works came upon her: the Virgin said her *fiat*: "Behold the servant of the Lord, be it be done to me according to your word" [see Luke 1:38], and the greatest of mysteries was accomplished. By the descent of the Word in her, Mary became forever God's prey.

40. It seems to me that the attitude of the Virgin during the months that elapsed between the Annunciation and the Nativity is the model for interior souls, those whom God has chosen to live within, in the depths of the bottomless abyss. In what peace, in what recollection Mary lent herself to everything she did! How even the most trivial things were divinized by her! For through it all the Virgin remained the adorer of the gifts of God! This did not prevent her from spending herself outwardly when it was a matter of charity; the Gospel tells us that Mary went in haste to the mountains of Judea to visit her cousin Elizabeth [Luke 1:39-40]. Never did the ineffable vision that she contemplated within herself in any way diminish her outward charity. For, a pious author says, if contemplation "continues towards praise and towards the eternity of its Lord, it possesses unity and will not lose it. If an order from heaven arrives, contemplation turns towards men, sympathizes with their needs, is inclined towards all their miseries; it must cry and be fruitful. It illuminates like fire, and like it, it burns, it absorbs and devours, lifting up to Heaven what it has devoured. And when it has finished its work here below, it rises, burning with its fire, and takes up again the road on high" [quotation from Ruusbroec].

[Second prayer]

41. "We have been predestined by the decree of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will, so that we may be *the praise of His glory*" [see Eph 1:11-12].

It is St. Paul who tells us this, St. Paul who was instructed by God himself. How do we realize this great dream of the Heart of our God, this immutable will for our souls? In a word, how do we correspond to our vocation and become perfect *Praises of Glory* of the Most Holy Trinity?

42. "In Heaven" each soul is a praise of glory of the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit, for each soul is established in pure love and "lives no longer its own life, but the life of God." Then it knows Him, St. Paul says, as it is known by Him [1 Cor 13:12]. In other words "its intellect is the intellect of God, its will the will of God, its love the very love of God. In reality it is the Spirit of love and of strength who transforms the soul, for to Him it has been given to supply what is lacking to the soul," as St. Paul says again [cf. Rom 8:26]. "He works in it this glorious transformation." St. John of the Cross affirms that the "soul surrendered to love, through the strength of the Holy Spirit, is not far from being raised to the degree

of which we have just spoken," even here below! This is what I call a perfect praise of glory!

43. A praise of glory is a soul that lives in God, that loves Him with a pure and disinterested love, without seeking itself in the sweetness of this love; that loves Him beyond all His gifts and desires the good of the Object thus loved. Now how do we *effectively* desire and will good to God if not in accomplishing His will since this will orders everything for His greater glory? Thus the soul must surrender itself to this will completely, passionately, so as to will nothing else but what God wills.

A praise of glory is a soul of silence that remains like a lyre under the mysterious touch of the Holy Spirit so that he may draw from it divine harmonies; it knows that suffering is a string that produces still more beautiful sounds, so it loves to see this string on its instrument that it may more delightfully move the Heart of its God.

A praise of glory is a soul that gazes on God in faith and simplicity; it is a reflector of all that He is; it is like a bottomless abyss into which he can flow and expand; it is also like a crystal through which he can radiate and contemplate all His perfections and His own splendor. A soul which thus permits the divine being to satisfy in itself His need to communicate "all that He is and all that He has," is in reality the praise of glory of all His gifts.

Finally, a praise of glory is one who is always giving thanks. Each of her acts, her movements, her thoughts, her aspirations, at the same time that they are rooting her more deeply in love, are like an echo of the eternal Sanctus.

44. In the heaven of glory the blessed have no rest "day or night, saying: Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty. . . . They fall down and worship Him who lives forever and ever. . . ."

In the heaven of her soul, the praise of glory has already begun her work of eternity. Her song is uninterrupted, for she is under the action of the Holy Spirit who effects everything in her, and although she is not always aware of it, for the weakness of nature does not allow her to be established in God without distractions, she always sings, she always adores, for she has, so to speak, wholly passed into praise and love in her passion for the glory of her God. In the heaven of our soul let us be praises of glory of the Holy Trinity, praises of love of our Immaculate Mother. One day the veil will fall, we will be introduced into the eternal courts, and there we will sing in the bosom of infinite Love. And God will give us "the new name promised to the Victor" [see Rev 2:17]. What will it be?

LAUDEM GLORIAE[6]

Titus Brandsma (1881–1942)

Anno Sjoerd Brandsma was born in Friesland in northwest Holland on February 23, 1881. His parents, Titus and Tjitsje Brandsma, were farmers and devout Catholics in a largely Protestant region, and passed on their faith to their six children, five of whom eventually entered religious life. At the age of eleven Anno entered the minor seminary of the Franciscans, but because of continual health problems, he was encouraged to seek a less demanding life. After some time at home, he tried religious life once more, this time with the Carmelites of the Ancient Observance at Boxmeer. Here he entered the novitiate on September 17, 1898, and took the religious name of Titus, after his father. He soon discovered within himself a gift for writing, and during his student days was already involved in many literary projects, developing a Carmelite magazine and publishing in a variety of journals. In 1901 he produced his first book, and anthology of texts from St. Teresa of Avila, in whom he developed a lifelong interest.

Titus was ordained to the priesthood on June 17, 1905, but his assignment to Rome for advanced studies was delayed for a year after he annoyed one of his professors during oral examinations. Nevertheless, he graduated from the Pontifical Gregorian University of Rome with a doctorate in philosophy on October 25, 1909, and then returned to the Netherlands to teach. At first he was assigned to teach the Carmelite seminarians in Oss, where he helped reorganize the program of studies. He took an active role in the foundation of the Katholieke Universiteit Nijmegen (now Radboud University) in 1923, the first modern Catholic university in the Netherlands, and was asked to join the faculty as a professor of philosophy and mysticism. He also supervised the nearby construction of a new Carmelite monastery for the friars, where he was assigned and served for a time as superior. Titus had a keen interest in

the spirituality of his own country and region, publishing numerous studies and manuscripts of medieval mystics of the Low Countries, and even cofounding a scholarly journal dedicated to this topic. He was also involved in the Apostleship for the Reunion of Eastern Churches and the Catholic Journalists' Association. Yet despite these many commitments and repeated bouts of ill health, he was known as a warm and humble friar who made himself available to anyone who approached him, from the poor to the professors, and always tried to assist them in their needs.

During the academic year 1932–1933, Brandsma was elected to serve as the university's *Rector Magnificus*, and in this position he represented the university in relations with the Dutch government and the Vatican. In 1935 he was invited on a lecture tour in the United States. He was particularly impressed by the grandeur of Niagara Falls, of which he observed, "I see not only the beauty of nature, the immeasurable potentialities of water, but I see God at work in his creation, in his revelation of love."[1] His talks became the basis for his best-known work, *Carmelite Mysticism: Historical Sketches.* He was also asked to write the article on Carmelite spirituality for the *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité.* Both of these texts are among the earliest attempts to present a systematic historical overview of Carmel's spiritual heritage.

Titus was an early and outspoken critic of the ideology of National Socialism. After the Germans invaded the Netherlands in May 1940, they began pressuring newspapers to accept Nazi advertisements and propaganda for publication. The Catholic bishops refused, and as spiritual advisor to the Catholic journalists, Titus was entrusted with the task of conveying this decision to the Catholic editors of Holland. Titus had met with fourteen editors before he was arrested by the Gestapo in January 1942 and sent initially to the prison at Scheveningen, near The Hague. Despite the hardships of his imprisonment, Titus was at peace and found the time for prayer and solitude he had long been seeking. During his seven weeks at Scheveningen, Titus continued his writing, beginning work on a biography of St. Teresa and developing a series of meditations on the Stations of the Cross, among other texts.

On March 12 Titus was transferred with roughly one hundred others to the prison camp of Amersfoort, where the treatment was far more brutal; prisoners were put to work cutting and clearing trees, and many fell sick. Despite prohibitions against priests exercising their ministry, Titus secretly heard confessions, visited the sick, and gave spiritual guidance to many fellow prisoners. Toward the end of April, Titus was sent

back to Amersfoort for further questioning, and then on to the infamous Dachau concentration camp, where his health began to decline drastically, due to overwork, meager rations, and constant beatings. Through it all, Titus maintained a serene courage and did what he could to encourage others. Finally he became so sick that he was taken to the camp hospital, where doctors performed horrible experiments on the patients. On July 26, 1942, he was given a lethal injection, just two weeks before Edith Stein was executed at Auschwitz.

Titus Brandsma was beatified as a martyr by John Paul II on November 3, 1985. His example, like that of Edith Stein, continues to inspire many, especially in his native Holland, where in 2005 the residents of Nijmegen chose him as the greatest citizen who had lived there. Numerous churches, schools, and scholarly institutions have been named in his honor. His life clearly demonstrates that Carmelite spirituality and mysticism is entirely compatible with profound scholarship and deep engagement with contemporary social and political issues.

From *Carmelite Mysticism: Historical Sketches*

Lecture X: The Apostolate of Carmelite Mysticism

St. Thérèse Draws the World to Carmel

Now, as never before, the eyes of the world are turned toward Carmel. In its garden a flower has opened its petals, of such ravishing beauty that countless numbers have directed their step hither, wishing to remain in the pleasance where such lovely flowers bloom. They examine anew the secrets of this beauty and once more ask themselves of what the loveliness of Carmel consists. This one flower has in turn drawn attention to so many others that the world has been filled with admiration for life in Carmel and on all sides new convents have been founded in order to fill the world with those sanctuaries in which one may live so saintly a life.

I refer to the flower of Lisieux, Little St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus and of the Holy Face, whose name has flown over the world, whose life's story has been translated into all languages, who is called by God to add new lustre to the glory of Carmel.

Characteristics of Her Life

To describe in a few minutes a life so filled with proofs of intercourse with God, with virtue and abundant infusion of grace, is

next to impossible. However, I will try to summarise briefly that which is most characteristic in her life and which at the same time shows her to be one of the loveliest and most eloquent examples of the school of Carmel.

Practice of the Presence of God

In the first place surely, comes her desire to converse with God, to lead a higher life for and through Him. She thoroughly understands that the living God who fills heaven and earth, and at the same time dwells in our innermost heart must be the object of our thoughts and love. Most striking in her life is, therefore, her living in God's presence. She may justly repeat the words of Elias the Prophet: "God lives and I stand before His face." . . .

Her Love of God

As a result of this contemplation of God, love for God wells up in her with irresistible power. Her spirit has been called a spirit of love and so it is. . . . In order to remain firm in our love towards Him, she wants us continually to contemplate God's works and notice the proofs of His love. It is noteworthy that she very eagerly admires Nature and the loveliness of our earthly creation, that she enjoys the magnificence of flowers, the glory of a starry sky, but yet she wishes us to leave all this after a short time in order to mount up through this to God. They are a means, not an end.

Her Humility and Simplicity

From her life before the Face of God, and her love and admiration for His power and majesty a third idea springs forth, fitting remarkably well into the scheme of the Order. I mean the idea of her own nothingness compared with God, her wonderful consciousness of her own smallness and slightness, her humility and her conception of herself as being only a child. This characteristic is often met with in the older saints of the Order, as simplicity and humility are the special hallmarks of the Order. . . . It is so often said by various Carmelite spiritual authors—and it tallies so well with our spirit—that the Order is not called to do great things, to be spoken of, but to make itself loved and attractive by doing ordinary things well, without much talking or noise; to live in a certain seclusion for and with God more than for and with men; to attach value to what God desires more than to what man sets high store by. . . .

Her Conformity to the Will of God

She is quite in the hollow of God's hand and surrenders herself absolutely to what His Providence decrees. She strives after, as perfectly as possible, a conformity to the divine will. . . . The image of the rose shedding its petals had a particular charm for her. She wanted to shed all her leaves, to tear off all her petals and strew them on the path of the Lord. He had to come along that road; she wanted to force Him, as it were, to come and fulfill her desire. . . .

Mary Her Ideal

As a fifth trait in her character I should like to mention that her ideal on the "Little Way" was Our Lady. . . . From her youth she had a fervent, childlike devotion for Our Lady. Her statue stood in front of her in the small room of her paternal home, and it seemed to her as if it smiled down upon her. She entered the Order of Carmel to be her child and to imitate her especially in her union with Our Lord. Just as the life of Our Lady was ordinary and consisted of a series of the most common, everyday acts, so Thérèse wishes her own life to be. . . . Mary surrendered herself unreservedly to God's wishes through her "Behold the handmaid of the Lord. Be it done unto me according to Thy Word." So little Thérèse gave herself unreservedly to God, wishing to please Him only, to trust Him, to be His alone. Like Our Lady, who was not disturbed when St. Joseph did not understand her condition, but left the explanation of this mystery to God, so little Thérèse gave everything into God's hands with a limitless confidence.

. . . She also wanted to taste of union with God with the same delicacy as that with which Mary enjoyed this delight. But just as the descent of God into Our Lady at once incited her to an act of humility, made her go to Elizabeth, Thérèse likewise wanted her union with God, her surrender to Him, to manifest itself in humble acts of charity. . . .

TWO FINAL POINTS

First Point: Her Apostolate of Prayer

Finally, there are two points in the life of little St. Thérèse, deserving special note which stamp her as one of the loveliest representatives of the school of Carmel.

The mysticism of the school of Carmel could not claim to be true mysticism if it were not apostolic in its own peculiar way. St.

Thérèse of Lisieux shows us the true sense of the Apostolate of the school of Carmel. "I would be a missioner," she says, "I should like to have been one from Creation till the end of the world. I should want to preach the Gospel in all continents at once, as far as the farthest isles. Above all I should like martyrdom. One torture would not satisfy me, would not be enough. I should want to undergo them all. Open, O Jesus, the book of life in which the acts of the saints are written down, I should like to have performed them all for You." But then she recollects that God calls her along a different road to the practice of the Apostolate. The Apostolate as a work of God's grace has to be seen as a work of the mystical Body of Christ of which God is the head and the soul, of which we are the members, animated by God. Not all have to fulfill a like duty. Love gave to St. Thérèse the key of the vocation of Carmel in the Apostolate. "I understood," she says, "that if the Church has a body, built up of different organs, the chief, the most necessary organ of all, could not be wanting. I saw that it must have a heart burning with love. I understood that only love sets the limbs in motion, that if love were to be extinguished, the apostles would no longer preach the Gospel, the martyrs would refuse to spill their blood. I understand that love contains all vocations. My vocation is love. I have found my proper place in the Church. I shall be love. In this way I shall be everything. In this way my dream has come true."

Great St. Teresa Practised It Before Her

The vocation which so transported little Thérèse was not hers only, even though hardly anyone has understood it as well as she has. Great St. Teresa of Avila at the foundation of the first convent of her reform had already explained this vocation to her sisters. "Prevented from promoting as I desired the glory of God, I resolved to do the little which lay in my power, viz., to follow the evangelical counsels as perfectly as I was able and to induce the new nuns who are here to do the same, confiding in the great goodness of God Who never fails to assist those who are determined to leave all things for Him; and hoping that all of us being engaged in prayer for the champions of the Church, for the preachers and doctors who defend her, might to the utmost of our power assist my Lord Who has been so much insulted—O my sisters in Christ, help me to entreat Our Lord herein, since for this object He has assembled you here; this is your vocation, these are your employments; these your desires; hither your tears, hither your petitions must tend. . . ."

Here we see that St. Teresa not only has recommended to her sisters the Apostolate of prayer, but has given it to them as a vocation.

Mary Magdalen de' Pazzi: Another Model of Apostolic Prayer

To take an example from the Order of the [Ancient] Observance, I call your attention to the great Italian mystic, Saint Mary Magdalen de' Pazzi, of the convent of Florence. I would I had the occasion to speak longer about her spiritual life and her mystic works, but time does not allow. In this connection I will say, however, that her vocation above all was to pray and do penance in order to obtain the reform of all classes in the Church, religious, priests, laity, and even heretics and pagans. "I desire," she says, "to offer Thee, O my God, all creatures class by class. Would that I had the strength to gather all infidels, to lead them into the bosom of Thy Church. I should pray her to purge them from their unfaithfulness, to give them new life." It is in flashes of fire and with impassioned accents that she pours forth her prayer to God for the salvation of the souls redeemed by the Holy Sacrifice of Calvary.

Contemplative Convents, Aids to Missions

The Little Flower dreamt of conquering the world for God and to realize this dream she entered a convent where she was quite shut off from the world and then cried out, transported with joy, that her dream had come true. Only he can grasp this who has penetrated into the secrets of God's grace; who understands that in praying for grace and in sacrificing our life in union with the Sacrifice of Calvary, God's Grace is obtained. In this the chief part of pastoral care and of missionary work consists. This is the most splendid and intimate joining of the active and contemplative life, not in one person but in the mystical Body of which we are all members. We must be glad that the unity of the mystical Body of Christ recreates even the most secluded life, spent quite shut off from the world and in the service of God, making it a fit soil for missionary work, from which the latter can ever draw new sap of God's grace. This thought has led to the foundations of Carmels in the missionary countries also. Over and above the other sacrifices, these Sisters give up their country and climate and take a lifelong farewell of parents, relations and friends of their own. This idea drew little Thérèse in desire to Indo-China. "Here," she writes, "here I am loved and this affection is very sweet to me. But that is just

why I dream of a convent in which I should be unknown, in which I should have to bear the exile of the heart as well. . . ."

Besides, the sight of these convents in the missions keeps alive the idea of the value of the Apostolate of prayer, both for those who practice it and for those who remain outside. It is edifying to see how missionaries themselves vie with each other in founding Carmelite convents: how Popes and Bishops insist on the building of these houses; how the Pope, to further this thought, has made little St. Thérèse to be the patron saint of all mission work as well as the work of the reunion of Churches.

We Should Imitate the Little Flower

This should indue all who are called to the spiritual life of Carmel but especially those who cannot now, or who can no longer, take an active part in the Apostolate of the Church—to regard contemplation as the better part of the Order and should urge them to follow as strictly as possible the contemplative life, calling down the indispensable blessing of God on the activity of the others.

From the small convent of Lisieux St. Thérèse has preached her "Little Way" by sweeping the corridors and washing dishes, cleaning the oratory and working in the garden, by nursing the sick and helping the needy, by studying at the proper time and reading what the mind requires for its development. She has so conquered the world. It is no wonder that this conception of inner life of the school of Carmel, laid down in her *Story of a Soul*, has drawn thousands to Carmel, that in our busy, hurrying time she stands high, like a lighthouse in a churning sea.

Second Point: Her Continued Apostolate After Death

When we look up from the often storm-tossed waves of the Mediterranean to Carmel, lifting its serene height in peerless beauty as a safe haven of refuge, then the image of Little Thérèse beckons us to land there and take our rest; then it is her hand that rings the bells of its silent chapel inviting us to pray with her. . . .

You also are in a gale on your way to the Holy Land, the kingdom of God on earth. I have been allowed to ring the bells of Carmel for you, to make you hear the voices that speak of prayer and apostleship, of prayer on the flanks of that Holy Mountain. Do you also step ashore for a moment to join in this prayer and take back with you the spirit of Carmel, to make it live in the capital of your kingdom, the kingdom of your thoughts, the centre of your lives.

St. Thérèse of Lisieux has said that after death she would strew roses on earth. And of what else is a rose the symbol, if not of love of God, for Whom she wanted to be a rose, a rose shedding its petals on the road of God through the world?

Carmel is the mountain of shrubbery and flowers. With full hands the children of Carmel strew those flowers over the earth. Such a picture of St. Thérèse is widely spread. The Saint scatters widely the flowers which she receives from the hand of Our Lady. . . .

We read in the Carmelite Missal in the Preface for the Feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel the significance of the little cloud which Elias beheld from Mount Carmel appearing out of the sea. "Who through the small cloud arising out of the sea didst foretell the Immaculate Virgin Mary to the Blessed Elias the Prophet, and didst will that devotion be shown to her by the sons of the prophets." . . . She has her hands filled with flowers and she brings her Divine Son the source of all beauty and grace. On those who pray the first drops of the redeeming rain descend, roses of divine grace.

At the feet of Mary, the Mother of Carmel, I see kneeling in prayer with St. Thérèse the many saintly and blessed women and men who were the very flowers of Carmel during the preceding centuries. The flowers of their example rain down upon us. But they must be transplanted to the garden of our soul.

In our own times St. Thérèse, the "Little Flower," is elected to make that rain more abundant than ever. May she give us from the hand of the Mother of Carmel, from the Holy Mountain, the roses we need for the garden of our soul. The twofold spirit of the Prophet of Carmel will fill the garden of our heart with its sweet odors. And may God walk in its sweetness.

"Blessed are the pure of heart, for they shall see God."[2]

From the Sermons of Titus Brandsma

(Alternate second reading for the Office of Readings for July 27, from *Carmelite Proper of the Liturgy of the Hours*)

You hear it said that we live at a wonderful time, a time of great men and women. It would probably be better to say that we live in an era of decadence in which many, however, feel the need to react and to defend what is most precious and sacred. The desire for the emergence of a strong, capable leader is understandable. But we

want such a leader to fight for a holy cause, for an ideal based on divine designs and not merely on human might.

Neo-paganism [as expressed in Nazism] considers the whole of nature as an emanation of the divine: this is what it holds about various races and peoples of the earth. But as star differs from star by reason of its light and brightness, so neo-paganism considers one race more noble and pure than another; to the extent that this one race is held to embody more light within itself, it has the duty of making that life shine and enlighten the world. It is maintained that this is possible only when, eliminating elements foreign to it, it frees itself from all stain. From this notion derives the cult of race and blood, the cult of the heroes of one's own people.

From such an erroneous starting-point, this view can lead to fatal errors! It is sad to see how much enthusiasm and effort are placed at the service of such an erroneous and baseless ideal! However, "we can learn from our enemy"; from his erroneous philosophy we can learn how to purify and better our own ideal: we can learn how to foster a great love for it; how to arouse great enthusiasm, even a willingness to live and die for it; how to build up the courage to incarnate it in ourselves and in others.

We too profess our descendence from God.

We too want what he wants.

But we do not accept the idea of emanation from the divine; we do not divinize ourselves. We admit descendence in dependence. When we speak of and pray for the coming of the kingdom, it is not a prayer for a kingdom based on differences of race and blood but on universal brotherhood. In union with him who makes the sun rise on the good and on the evil, all men are our brothers—even those who hate us and fight us.

We do not want a relapse into the sin of the earthly paradise, into the sin of making ourselves equal to God. We do not wish to begin a cult of heroes based on the divinization of human nature.

We acknowledge the law of God and we submit to it. We do not wish to frustrate—through an unhealthy and heady knowledge of ourselves—our dependence on the Supreme Being who gives us existence. However, even as we acknowledge the law of God within ourselves, we also note another law of desires contrary to the Spirit of God, which wishes to prevail. At times, like St Paul, we experience the desire to act counter to the divine law; we find it difficult to recognize our imperfections; and we act in ways that are destructive to our own nature. We wish to be better than we are, with other

talents or a different personality. And sometimes we even think we are what we would like to be.

In our better moments, however, we do recognize our imperfections, and then we understand that there is room for improvement. We are honestly convinced that we could improve if we had more courage. Nothing is accomplished without effort, without struggle. In our better moments, we no longer shed tears over our own weaknesses or over those of others, but we recall what was interiorly said to St Paul: My grace is sufficient for you; in union with me you can do all things.

We live in a world in which love is condemned: it is called weakness, something to be overcome. Some say: never mind love, develop your strengths; let everyone be as strong as possible; let the weak perish. They say that the Christian religion, with its preaching of love, has seen better days and should be substituted for by old Teutonic force. Yes, some proclaim these doctrines, and they find people who willingly adopt them. Love is unknown: "Love is not loved," said St Francis of Assisi in his day; and some centuries later, in Florence, the ecstatic St Mary Magdalene de' Pazzi rang the bells of her Carmelite monastery to let the world know how beautiful love is. Although neo-paganism no longer wants love, history teaches us that, in spite of everything, we will conquer this neo-paganism with love. We shall not give up on love. Love will gain back for us the hearts of these pagans. Nature is stronger than theory: let theory condemn and reject love and call it weakness; the living witness of love will always renew the power which will conquer and capture the hearts of men.[3]

"Before a Picture of Jesus in My Cell"

(Written from Scheveningen Prison, February 1942)

A new awareness of Thy love
Encompasses my heart:
Sweet Jesus, I in Thee and Thou
In me shall never part.

No grief shall fall my way but I
Shall see Thy grief-filled eyes;
The lonely way that Thou once walked
Has made me sorrow-wise.

All trouble is a white-lit joy
That lights my darkest day;

Thy love has turned to brightest light
This night-like way.

If I have Thee alone,
The hours will bless
With still, cold hands of love
My utter loneliness.

Stay with me, Jesus, only stay;
I shall not fear
If, reaching out my hand,
I feel Thee near.

(Tr. Gervaise Toelle, O.CARM.)[4]

Edith Stein (1891–1942)

Though they never met in life and came from different branches of the Carmelite family, the names of Titus Brandsma and Edith Stein are often associated in Carmelite literature. Both were noted educators and authors, who spoke out on the issues of the day. Both died in 1942 in Nazi concentration camps of World War II.

The youngest child in a large Jewish family, Edith Stein was born on October 12, 1891—on Yom Kippur, the Jewish "Day of Atonement"—in Breslau (Wroclaw in Polish) in Lower Silesia, then part of Germany but now part of Poland. Her father Siegfried died soon after, and her widowed mother Auguste took charge of the family's struggling lumber business, turning it into a profitable enterprise. Edith was an independent-minded, intellectually precocious, and sometimes temperamental child, who insisted on beginning her education early, yet suddenly decided at age thirteen to leave school. It was at this time also that she made a conscious decision to abandon prayer, despite the fervent Jewish faith of her beloved mother.

Two years later, however, she returned to school with renewed enthusiasm, determined to become a teacher. Her excellent secondary school results qualified her for higher studies, and she entered the University of Breslau in March 1911. Here she started delving into the newly emerging field of psychology, but became disenchanted by what she considered its lack of clarity regarding basic concepts. Deeply impressed by her reading of the *Logical Investigations* of Edmund Husserl, whose phenomenological method seemed to address some of the very issues that psychology ignored, she transferred to the University of Göttingen to begin philosophical studies with "the Master." She became an active member of the "Philosophical Society" gathered around Husserl, a group that at various times had included Adolf Reinach, Max Scheler, Hedwig

Martius, Alexandre Koyré, and other outstanding scholars. Intrigued by Husserl's insistence "that an objective outer world could only be experienced intersubjectively, i.e., through a plurality of individuals who relate in a mutual exchange of information,"[1] she chose "the problem of empathy" (*Einfühlung*) for her dissertation topic, exploring how it is possible for human beings to experience and relate to other individuals as subjects. As she noted, this enabled her to focus on "something which was personally close to my heart and which continually occupied me anew in all later works: the constitution of the human person."[2] After passing her state board examinations "with highest honors," she volunteered for a year of service as a nurse in a Red Cross military hospital for infectious diseases, before following Husserl to his new position at the University of Freiburg. In 1916 she was awarded her doctorate *summa cum laude*, and became Husserl's research assistant, attempting to organize his scattered notes into publishable form. She also continued her own work, writing important essays on the individual and community and on the nature of the state. Despite her outstanding qualifications, however, she was unsuccessful in her efforts to obtain a university position, in part because female professors were still a relative rarity, and in part because of the rising tide of anti-Semitism in Germany.

Meanwhile, Stein had become increasingly sympathetic toward religion, and in 1921 she was converted from her previous atheism upon reading St. Teresa of Avila's *Book of Her Life.* She was baptized on January 1, 1922, and received into the Catholic Church. She felt drawn to the life of the Discalced Carmelite nuns but was told by her spiritual director to wait. From 1923 to 1931, she served as a teacher at the Dominican girls' school of St. Magdalena in Speyer, and became well known internationally as a lecturer on women's issues. She then spent a year as an instructor at the German Institute for Scientific Pedagogy in Münster. Distressed by the persecution of her fellow Jews, Stein wrote a respectful but eloquent letter to Pius XI, urging the church to speak out more forcefully and noting that "responsibility . . . also falls on those who keep silent in the face of such happenings."[3] She also began the autobiographical work known in English as *Life in a Jewish Family*, presenting "a straightforward account of my own experience of Jewish life" as a way of combating racial hatred.

When National Socialist policies against the hiring of Jews made it impossible for her to continue her academic career, she found herself finally at liberty to pursue a religious vocation. She applied to the Carmel of Cologne, where she was admitted in 1933 and given the religious

name she had requested, "Sr. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross." Encouraged to resume her scholarly work, she continued her efforts to bring Husserlian phenomenology into dialogue with the scholastic philosophy of Thomas Aquinas.

With violence against Jews in Germany escalating, however, she was transferred for her protection to the Carmel of Echt in Holland at the end of 1938. Any illusion of ultimate safety was soon shattered, however, when Germany invaded the Netherlands in 1940. Efforts to obtain her safe passage to a neutral country proved fruitless, however, in part because she refused to leave without her sister Rosa, who had also converted to Catholicism and had joined her in Echt, serving as portress for the community. As the danger drew nearer, Edith was completing *The Science of the Cross*, a full-length study of St. John of the Cross in honor of the four hundredth anniversary of his birth.

On July 26, 1942, the Catholic bishops of the Netherlands had a pastoral letter read in all their churches denouncing the Nazi persecution of the Jews. Nazi authorities immediately retaliated, ordering the deportation of all Catholics of Jewish descent living in Holland. On August 2, Edith and Rosa Stein were arrested and sent east. From the transit-camps along the way, Edith wrote back to her community reassuringly that "so far I have been able to pray gloriously," yet asking for prayers because "there are so many persons here who need some consolation and they expect it from the Sisters."[4] By August 9 the prisoners had reached Auschwitz, where they were sent to the gas chamber shortly after their arrival.

Because of the confusion of the war and its aftermath, it took some years for the exact circumstances of Stein's death to become known, and for her major manuscripts (mostly unpublished during her lifetime because of laws against works by Jewish authors) to be reassembled and printed. Yet slowly her reputation has grown, and today she is regarded not only as an important thinker but also as one of the great women of the twentieth century. She was beatified in 1987 and canonized in 1998 by Pope John Paul II. The same pontiff declared her copatroness of Europe in 1999, alongside Bridget of Sweden and Catherine of Siena, and presented her as a model philosopher in his encyclical *Fides et Ratio.* Numerous academic societies have been established for the study of her thought, and her works continue to be translated into the major modern languages. Even spiritual seekers who have little interest in philosophy feel drawn to the example of this heroic woman who once wrote that "those who seek the truth are seeking God, whether they know it or not."

From "Fundamental Principles of Women's Education"

In the talk which I gave . . . concerning the foundations of women's education, I tried to draw the picture of woman's soul as it would correspond to the eternal vocation of woman, and I termed its attributes as *expansive, quiet, empty of self, warm, and clear.* Now I am asked to say something regarding how one might come to possess these qualities.

I believe that it is not a matter of a multiplicity of attributes which we can tackle and acquire individually; it is rather a single total condition of the soul, a condition which is envisaged here in these attributes from various aspects. We are not able to attain this condition by willing it, it must be effected through grace. What we can and must do is open ourselves to grace. . . .

The duties and cares of the day ahead crowd about us when we awake in the morning (if they have not already dispelled our night's rest). Now arises the uneasy question: How can all this be accommodated in one day? When will I do this, when that? How shall I start on this and that? Thus agitated, we would like to run around and rush forth. We must then take the reins in hand and say, "Take it easy! Not any of this may touch me now. My first morning's hour belongs to the Lord. I will tackle the day's work which He charges me with, and He will give me the power to accomplish it."

So I will go to the altar of God. Here it is not a question of my minute, petty affairs, but of the great offering of reconciliation. I may participate in that, purify myself and be made happy, and lay myself with all my doings and troubles along with the sacrifice on the altar. And when the Lord comes to me then in Holy Communion, then I may ask Him, "Lord, what do you want of me?" (St. Teresa). And after quiet dialogue, I will go to that which I see as my next duty.

I will still be joyful when I enter into my day's work after this morning's celebration: my soul will be empty of that which could assail and burden it, but it will be filled with holy joy, courage, and energy.

Because my soul has left itself and entered into the divine life, it has become great and expansive. Love burns in it like a composed flame which the Lord has enkindled, and which urges my soul to render love and to inflame love in others. . . . And it sees clearly the next part of the path before it; it does not see very far, but it knows that when it has arrived at that place where the horizon now intersects, a new vista will then be opened.

Now begins the day's work, perhaps the teaching profession—four or five hours, one after the other. That means giving our con-

centration there. We cannot achieve in each hour what we want, perhaps in none. We must contend with our own fatigue, unforeseen interruptions, shortcomings of the children, diverse vexations, indignities, anxieties. Or perhaps it is office work: give and take with disagreeable supervisors and colleagues, unfulfilled demands, unjust reproaches, human meanness, perhaps also distress of the most distinct kind.

It is the noon hour. We come home exhausted, shattered. New vexations possibly await there. Now where is the soul's morning freshness? The soul would like to seethe and storm again: indignation, chagrin, regret. And there is still so much to do until evening. Should we not go immediately to it? No, not before calm sets in at least for a moment. Each one must know, or get to know, where and how she can find peace. The best way, when it is possible, is to shed all cares again for a short time before the tabernacle. Whoever cannot do that, whoever also possibly requires bodily rest, should take a breathing space in her own room. And when no outer rest whatever is attainable, when there is no place in which to retreat, if pressing duties prohibit a quiet hour, then at least she must for a moment seal off herself inwardly against all other things and take refuge in the Lord. He is indeed there and can give us in a single moment what we need.

Thus the remainder of the day will continue, perhaps in great fatigue and laboriousness, but in peace. And when night comes, and retrospect shows that everything was patchwork and much which one had planned left undone, when so many things rouse shame and regret, then take all as it is, lay it in God's hands, and offer it up to Him. In this way we will be able to rest in Him, actually to rest, and to begin the new day like a new life.

This is only a small indication how the day could take shape in order to make room for God's grace. Each individual will know best how this can be used in her particular circumstances. . . .[5]

From "On the History and Spirit of Carmel"

Until a few years ago, very little from our silent monasteries penetrated into the world. It is different today. People talk a lot about Carmel and want to hear something about life behind the high walls. This is chiefly attributable to the great saints of our time who have captivated the entire Catholic world with amazing speed, for instance, St Thérèse of the Child Jesus. . . .

What does the average Catholic know about Carmel? That it is a very strict, perhaps the strictest penitential Order, and that from

it comes the holy habit of the Mother of God, the brown scapular, which unites many of the faithful in the world to us. The whole church celebrates with us the patronal feast of our Order, the feast of the scapular, on July 16. Most people also recognize at least the names of "little" Thérèse and "great" Teresa, whom we call our Holy Mother. She is generally seen as the founder of the Discalced Carmelites. The person who is a little more familiar with the history of the church and monasteries certainly knows that we revere the prophet Elijah as our leader and father. But people consider this a "legend" that does not mean very much. We who live in Carmel and who daily call on our Holy Father Elijah in prayer know that for us he is not a shadowy figure out of the dim past. His spirit is active among us in a vital tradition and determines how we live. Our Holy Mother strenuously denied that she was founding a new Order. She wanted nothing except to reawaken the original spirit of the old Rule [of St. Albert].

Our Holy Father Elijah succinctly says what is most important in the first words of his that the Scriptures give us. He says to King Ahab who worshiped idols (1 Kgs 17:1), "As the Lord the God of Israel lives, before whom I stand, there shall be neither dew nor rain these years, except by my word."

To stand before the face of the living God—that is our vocation. The holy prophet set us an example. He stood before God's face because this was the eternal treasure for whose sake he gave up all earthly goods. He had no house; he lived wherever the Lord directed him from moment to moment: in loneliness beside the brook of Carith, in the little house of the poor widow of Zarephath of Sidon, or in the caves of Mount Carmel. . . . Elijah is not concerned about his daily bread. He lives trusting in the solicitude of the heavenly Father and is marvelously sustained. A raven brings him his daily food while he is in solitude. The miraculously increased provisions of the pious widow nourish him in Zarephath. Prior to the long trek to the holy mountain where the Lord was to appear to him, an angel with heavenly bread strengthens him. So he is for us an example of the gospel poverty that we have vowed, an authentic prototype of the Savior.

Elijah stands before God's face because all of his love belongs to the Lord. He lives outside of all natural human relationships. We hear nothing of his father and mother, nothing of a wife or child. His "relatives" are those who do the will of the Father as he does: Elisha, whom God has designated as his successor, and the "sons of the prophets," who follow him as their leader. Glorifying God is

his joy. His zeal to serve him tears him apart: "I am filled with jealous zeal for the Lord, the God of hosts" (1 Kgs 19:10, 14; these words were used as a motto on the shield of the Order). By living penitentially, he atones for the sins of his time. The offense that the misguided people give to the Lord by their manner of worship hurts him so much that he wants to die. And the Lord consoles him only as he consoles his especially chosen ones: He appears to him himself on a lonely mountain, reveals himself in soft rustling after a thunderstorm, and announces his will to him in clear words.

The prophet, who serves the Lord in complete purity of heart and completely stripped of everything earthly, is also a model of obedience. He stands before God's face like the angels before the eternal throne, awaiting his sign, always ready to serve. He has no other will than the will of his Lord. When God bids, he goes before the king and fearlessly risks giving him bad news that must arouse his hatred. When God wills it, he leaves the country at the threat of violence; but he also returns at God's command, though the danger has not disappeared.

Anyone who is so unconditionally faithful to God can also be certain of God's faithfulness. He is permitted to speak "as someone who has power," may open and close heaven, may command the waters to let him walk through and remain dry, may call down fire from heaven to consume his sacrifice, to execute punishment on God's enemies, and may breathe new life into a dead person. We see the Savior's predecessor provided with all the graces that he has promised to his own. And the greatest crown is still in reserve for him: Before the eyes of his true disciple, Elisha, he is carried off in a fiery carriage to a secret place far from all human abodes. According to the testimony of Revelation, he will return near the end of the world to suffer a martyr's death for his Lord in the battle against the Antichrist.

On his feast, which we celebrate on July 20, the priest goes to the altar in red vestments. On this day the monastery of our friars on Mount Carmel, the site of Elijah's grotto, is the goal of mighty bands of pilgrims. Jews, Moslems, and Christians of all denominations vie in honoring the great prophet. We remember him in the liturgy on still another day, in the epistle and preface of the Feast of Mount Carmel, as we usually call the feast of the scapular. On this day we give thanks that our dear Lady has clothed us with the "garment of salvation." The events providing the occasion for this feast did not occur until much later in the Western world. In the year 1251 [according to tradition] the Blessed Virgin appeared to the general

of the Order, Simon Stock, an Englishman, and gave him the scapular. But the preface reminds us that it was our dear Lady of Mount Carmel who bestowed this visible sign of her motherly protection on her children far from the original home of the Order. It was she who manifested herself [according to *The Book of the Institution of the First Monks*] to the prophet Elijah in the form of a little rain cloud and for whom the sons of the prophets built the first shrine on Mount Carmel. The legend of the Order tells us that the Mother of God would have liked to remain with the hermit brothers on Mount Carmel. We can certainly understand that she felt drawn to the place where she had been venerated through the ages and where the holy prophet had lived in the same spirit that also filled her from the time her earthly sojourn began. Released from everything earthly, to stand in worship in the presence of God, to love him with her whole heart, to beseech his grace for sinful people, and in atonement to substitute herself for these people, as the maidservant of the Lord to await his beckoning—this was her life.

The hermits of Carmel lived as sons of the great prophet and as "brothers of the Blessed Virgin." . . . [The] spirit which they had received from their predecessors was laid down in our holy Rule. Around 1200, it was given to the Order by St Albert, the patriarch of Jerusalem, and authorized by Pope Innocent IV in 1247. It also condenses the entire meaning of our life in a short statement: "All are to remain in their own cells . . . , meditating on the Law of the Lord day and night and watching in prayer, unless otherwise justly employed." "To watch in prayer"—this is to say the same thing that Elijah said with the words, "to stand before the face of God." Prayer is looking up into the face of the Eternal. We can do this only when the spirit is awake in its innermost depths, freed from all earthly occupations and pleasures that benumb it. Being awake in body does not guarantee this consciousness, nor does rest required by nature interfere. "To meditate on the Law of the Lord"—this can be a form of prayer when we take prayer in its usual broad sense. But if we think of "watching in prayer" as being immersed in God, which is characteristic of contemplation, then meditation on the Law is only a means to contemplation.

What is meant by "the Law of the Lord"? Psalm 118 which we pray every Sunday and on solemnities at Prime, is entirely filled with the command to know the Law and to be led by it through life. The Psalmist was certainly thinking of the Law of the Old Covenant. Knowing it actually did require life-long study and fulfilling it, life-long exertion of the will. But the Lord has freed us from the yoke of

this Law. We can consider the Savior's great commandment of love, which he says includes the whole Law and the Prophets, as the Law of the New Covenant. Perfect love of God and of neighbor can certainly be a subject worthy of an entire lifetime of meditation. But we understand the Law of the New Covenant, even better, to be the Lord himself, since he has in fact lived as an example for us of the life we should live. We thus fulfill our Rule when we hold the image of the Lord continually before our eyes in order to make ourselves like him. We can never finish studying the Gospels.

But we have the Savior not only in the form of reports of witnesses to his life. He is present to us in the most Blessed Sacrament. The hours of adoration before the Highest Good and the listening for the voice of the eucharistic God are simultaneously "meditation on the Law of the Lord" and "watching in prayer." But the highest level is reached "when the Law is deep within our hearts" (Ps 40:8), when we are so united with the triune God whose temple we are, that his Spirit rules all we do or do not do. Then it does not mean we are forsaking the Lord when we do the work that obedience requires of us. Work is unavoidable as long as we are subject to nature's laws and to the necessities of life. And, following the word and example of the apostle Paul, our holy Rule commands us to earn our bread by the work of our hands. But for us this work is always merely a means and must never be an end in itself. To stand before the face of God continues to be the real content of our lives.

Islam's conquest of the Holy Land drove the hermit brothers from Carmel. Only for the past 300 years has our Order again had a shrine of the Mother of God on the holy mountain. The transition from solitude into the everyday life of Western culture led to a falsification of the original spirit of the Order. The protective walls of separation, of rigorous penance and of silence fell, and the pleasures and cares of the world pressed through the opened gates. The monastery of the Incarnation in Avila, which our Holy Mother entered in the year 1535, was such a monastery of the mitigated Rule. For decades she endured the conflict between the snares of worldly relationships and the pull of undivided surrender to God. But the Lord allowed her no rest until she let go of everything that bound her and really became serious about recognizing that *God alone suffices.*

The great schism of faith that was tearing Europe apart during her time, the loss of so many souls, aroused in her the passionate desire to stop the harm and to offer the Lord recompense. Whereupon God gave her the idea of taking a little flock of selected souls and founding a monastery according to the original Rule and of

serving him there with the greatest perfection. After innumerable battles and difficulties, she was able to found the monastery of St. Joseph in Avila. Her great work of reform grew from there. At her death she left behind 36 monasteries of women and men of the strict observance, the new branch of the Order, the "Discalced" Carmelites. The monasteries of the reform were to be places where the spirit of the ancient Carmel was to live again. The re-established original Rule and the Constitutions drawn up by the saint herself form the fence by means of which she intended to protect her vineyards against the dangers from without. Her writings on prayer, the most complete and most animated presentation of the inner life, are the precious legacy through which her spirit continues to work among us. . . . It is the ancient spirit of Carmel. However, influenced by the battles over faith raging in her time, she gave stronger emphasis than did the primitive Carmel to the thought of reparation and of supporting the servants of the church who withstood the enemy in the front lines.

As our second father and leader, we revere the first male Discalced Carmelite of the reform, St John of the Cross. We find in him the ancient eremitical spirit in its purest form. His life gives an impression as though he had no inner struggles. Just as from his earliest childhood he was under the special protection of the Mother of God, so from the time he reached the age of reason, he was drawn to rigorous penance, solitude, to letting go of everything earthly, and to union with God. He was the instrument chosen to be an example and to teach the reformed Carmel the spirit of Holy Father Elijah. Together with Mother Teresa, he spiritually formed the first generation of male and female Discalced Carmelites, and through his writings, he also illumines for us the way on the "Ascent of Mount Carmel."

The daughters of St Teresa, personally trained by her and Father John, founded the first monasteries of the reform in France and Belgium. From there the Order also soon advanced into the Rhineland. The great French Revolution and the Kulturkampf in Germany tried to suppress it by force. But as soon as the pressure abated, it sprang to life again. It was in this garden that the "little white flower" [i.e., St. Thérèse of Lisieux] bloomed, so quickly captivating hearts far beyond the boundaries of the Order, not only as a worker of miracles for those in need, but also as a director of "little souls" on the path of "spiritual childhood." Many people came to know of this path through her, but very few know that it is not really a new discovery, but the path onto which life in Carmel pushes us.

The greatness of the young saint was that she recognized this path with ingenious deduction and that she followed it with heroic decisiveness to the end. The walls of our monasteries enclose a narrow space. To erect the structure of holiness in it, one must dig deep and build high, must descend into the depths of the dark night of one's own nothingness in order to be raised up high into the sunlight of divine love and compassion.

Not every century produces a work of reform as powerful as that of our Holy Mother. Nor does every age give us a reign of terror during which we have the opportunity to lay our heads on the executioner's block for our faith and for the ideal of our Order as did the 16 Carmelites of Compiègne. But all who enter Carmel must give themselves wholly to the Lord. Only one who values her little place in the choir before the tabernacle more highly than all the splendor of the world can live here, can then truly find a joy that no worldly splendor has to offer.

Our daily schedule ensures us of hours for solitary dialogue with the Lord, and these are the foundation of our life. Together with priests and other ancient Orders of the church, we pray the Liturgy of the Hours, and this Divine Office is for us as for them our first and most sacred duty. But it is not for us the supporting ground. No human eye can see what God does in the soul during hours of inner prayer. It is grace upon grace. And all of life's other hours are our thanks for them.

Carmelites can repay God's love by their everyday lives in no other way than by carrying out their daily duties faithfully in every respect—all the little sacrifices that a regimen structured day after day in all its details demands of an active spirit; all the self-control that living in close proximity with different kinds of people continually requires and that is achieved with a loving smile; letting no opportunity go by for serving others in love. Finally, crowning this is the personal sacrifice that the Lord may impose on the individual soul. This is the "little way," a bouquet of insignificant little blossoms which are daily placed before the Almighty—perhaps a silent, life-long martyrdom that no one suspects and that is at the same time a source of deep peace and hearty joyousness and a fountain of grace that bubbles over everything—we do not know where it goes, and the people whom it reaches do not know from whence it comes.[6]

Jessica Powers (1905–1988)

Agnes Jessica Powers entered the world on February 7, 1905, the third of four children born to Delia and John Powers, descendants of Irish and Scottish immigrants who had settled in rural Wisconsin in the previous century. Jessica was raised on the family farm near Mauston, in an area known to the locals as Cat Tail Valley. Here she developed a lifelong love of nature, but also encountered early experiences of hardship, suffering, and loss. Her beloved older sister Dorothy died of tuberculosis in June 1916, as Jessica was completing her first six years of primary school. During the following two years she attended the Sisters School in Mauston, where one of her teachers, Sr. Lucille Massart, O.P., fostered her appreciation of poetry and encouraged her to write.

In 1922, after completing high school, she enrolled in the school of journalism at Marquette University, since at that time women were not allowed in the school of liberal arts. Lacking funds to continue beyond her first year, she returned briefly to Mauston and then moved for two years (1923–1925) to Chicago, where she worked in the typing pool of a railroad manufacturing company while spending her free time reading books of poetry in the public libraries. In Chicago she joined a literary group that met regularly at the Dominican priory in River Forest to discuss and share poetry. Her early poems began to appear in newspapers and poetry journals.

Diagnosed with symptoms of tuberculosis herself, Jessica returned to Mauston for what she thought would be a short recuperation. Following the death of her mother in September 1925, however, Jessica decided to remain to help her two younger brothers run the family farm. Yet her literary interests never flagged; she continued to publish and became a frequent contributor to "The Percolator," a poetry column in the *Milwaukee Sentinel*.

By 1937 both brothers had married, and Jessica was again free to follow her dreams. She moved to New York City, where she accepted an invitation from the Catholic philosopher Anton Pegis and his wife Jessie to live with them and help care for their children. New York was the center of the Catholic Revival of the 1930s, and Jessica became an active member of the Catholic Poetry Society of America, founded a few years earlier. Her first book of poetry, *The Lantern Burns*, was published in 1939, to favorable reviews. Her reputation as an important Catholic poet was growing.

Meanwhile, she was growing spiritually as well. Jessica attended Mass daily, set aside regular times for personal prayer, and became a Franciscan tertiary. Already at Marquette she had been introduced to the poetry of John of the Cross, and a later reading of St. Thérèse's *Story of a Soul* had moved her deeply. Without knowing much about the Order itself, she began to feel a growing attraction to Carmel, though she assumed at first that her age, health, and limited financial resources would be an obstacle to joining. Still, with the encouragement of a retreat director, she began contacting Carmelite monasteries, only to be told that they were already full, until she learned of a new community being established in her home state of Wisconsin. She applied and was accepted.

Jessica entered the Carmel of the Mother of God in Milwaukee on June 24, 1941, as a postulant. Despite a recurrence of tuberculosis symptoms that required some time in a sanitarium, on April 25 of the following year she received the habit and the religious name "Sr. Miriam of the Holy Spirit," well suited to her special love for the Third Person of the Trinity. Until the end of her life she remained with this community as a Discalced Carmelite nun.

Sr. Miriam had been prepared to set aside her writing career upon entering the monastery, but her superiors encouraged her to continue. Her second book, *The Place of Splendor*, was published in 1946, the year of her final vows, and contained poems composed both before and after her entry into Carmel.

Yet finding time for poetry amid the demands of community life proved difficult. Except for *The Little Alphabet*, a children's book published in 1955, no new collection of her poems would appear for another twenty-six years. She served two successive three-year terms as prioress, from 1955 to 1961, which meant overseeing all the details of the transfer of the community to a new property in Pewaukee, on the outskirts of Milwaukee, in 1958. She was elected again for one more term from 1964 to 1967, a particularly challenging period as religious communities

struggled to respond to the Second Vatican Council's call for renewal. She felt ill-equipped for administrative duties and her literary output fell, but she accepted the will of her sisters in a spirit of generous service.

Later years brought a renewed attention to her writings. In 1972 the Carmel of Reno, Nevada, printed *Mountain Sparrow*, a booklet of ten of her poems accompanied by the artwork of Sr. Marie Celeste of the Reno Carmel. A small collection of Christmas poems, *Journey to Bethlehem*, came out in 1980, and her own community privately printed *The House at Rest* in 1984. An Italian translation of *The Place of Splendor* was published in 1981, and a French translation in 1989. Shortly before her death on July 9, 1988, she reviewed and approved the final manuscript of *The Selected Poetry of Jessica Powers*, coedited by Sr. Regina Siegfried, A.S.C. (a longtime student of her works), and Bishop Robert F. Morneau (who for many years had used her poems in his retreats and conferences). The numerous popular and scholarly books and articles on Jessica Powers that have appeared since her death confirm her status as a major religious poet of our time.

As an artist and poet, Jessica Powers stands within a long Carmelite tradition; for Carmelites, after silence itself, symbol and image are the privileged means of conveying some small glimpse of what takes place in the human-divine encounter. Many Carmelites—Teresa of Avila, the Martyrs of Compiègne, Thérèse of Lisieux, Elizabeth of the Trinity, Edith Stein, Titus Brandsma, and countless others—have felt moved to express their contemplative experiences in verse, sometimes with mixed results. However, like the poetry of her spiritual mentor St. John of the Cross, the best of Jessica Powers's poems have been recognized not only for their spiritual depth but also for their outstanding literary quality. Here we have chosen a few poems representing some of her characteristic themes: the thirst for beauty, the longing for God, journey and rest, suffering and joy, emptiness and fulfillment, God's love and mercy, the Holy Spirit and Blessed Virgin, and the wonders of nature (especially birds, both in themselves and as metaphors of spiritual realities).

The early poem "Robin at Dusk," published when she was twenty-two, expresses the youthful poet's desire "that a song of mine could burn / the air with beauty." "Letter of Departure" and "The Little Nation" reveal something of Powers's critical view of her times as she entered Carmel in 1941, a few months before the attack on Pearl Harbor that brought the United States into World War II. Like Thomas Merton and so many others, however, she found that contemplative religious life,

rather than separating her from "the world," drew her ever more profoundly into its deepest joys and sorrows. Poems such as "Counsel for Silence" (with its allusion to Elijah's sojourn in the *wadi* Cherith), "The House at Rest" (inspired by John of the Cross's "Dark Night"), "This Paltry Love," "Take Your Only Son," and "God Is a Strange Lover" speak of the struggles and purifications of the spiritual journey, the encounter with our own nothingness before God, and the heartbreak of surrendering everything we hold dear—even what we *think* we know of God, the world, and ourselves—to the all-consuming divine love. "The Pool of God" presents Mary as the model of that transparency to God that spiritual seekers long for.

Other poems, however, speak of the consoling light discovered within and beyond the pain and darkness. During her time in New York, our author once had a memorable discussion with an editor friend, who maintained that truth was the primary attribute of God, while Jessica argued for beauty. Later in life she concluded that they were both wrong, and that God's most important quality is mercy. "The Mercy of God" reflects this insight, and echoes St. Thérèse's theme of utter dependence on the God of Merciful Love. In "To Live with the Spirit" she adds that one must become a listener and a lover, casting "down forever . . . the compass of the whither and the why" and learning to walk in "waylessness" and "unknowing." "The Ledge of Light" finds the poet enjoying a foretaste of the spiritual goal, but still yearning for its complete fulfillment. The final poem here ends with a ringing affirmation of our eternal destiny as "a measureless sheer / beatitude of yes."

"Robin at Dusk"[1]

I can go starved the whole day long,
draining a stone, eating a husk,
and never hunger till a song
breaks from a robin's throat at dusk.

I am reminded only then
how far from day and human speech,
how far from the loud world of men
lies the bright dream I strain to reach.

Oh, that a song of mine could burn
the air with beauty so intense,
sung with a robin's unconcern
for any mortal audience!

Perhaps I shall learn presently
his secret when the shadows stir,
and I shall make one song and be
aware of but one Listener.[2]

"Letter of Departure"

"There is nothing in the valley, or home, or street
worth turning back for—
nothing!" you write. O bitter words and true
to seed the heart and grow to this green answer:
let it be nothing to us that we knew
streets where the leaves gave sparsely of the sun
or white small rested houses and the air
strung with the sounds of living everywhere.
The mystery of God lies before and beyond us,
so bright the sight is dark, and if we halt
to look back once upon the burning city,
we shall be paralyzed by rage or pity,
either of which can turn the blood to salt.

We knew too much of the knowable dark world,
its secret and its sin,
too little of God. And now we rise to see
that even our pledges to humanity
were false, since love must out of Love begin.
Here where we walk the fire-strafed road and thirst
for the great face of love, the blinding vision,
our wills grow steadfast in the heart's decision
to keep the first commandment always first.
We vow that nothing now shall give us cause
to stop and flounder in our tears again,
that nothing—fire or dark or persecution—
or the last human knowledge of all pain—
shall turn us from our goal.

With but the bare necessities of soul—
no cloak or purse or scrip—let us go forth
and up the rocky passes of the earth,
crying, "Lord, Lord," and certain presently
(when in the last recesses of the will
and in the meshes of the intellect
the quivering last sounds of earth are still)

to hear an answer that becomes a call.
Love, the divine, Love, the antiphonal,
speaks only to love,
for only love could learn that liturgy,
since only love is erudite to master
the molten language of eternity.[3]

"The Little Nation"

Having no gift of strategy or arms,
no secret weapon and no walled defense,
I shall become a citizen of Love,
that little nation with blood-stained sod,
where even the slain have power, the only country
that sends forth an ambassador to God.
Renouncing self and crying out to evil
to end its wars, I seek a land that lies
all unprotected like a sleeping child;
nor is my journey reckless and unwise.
Who doubts that love is an effective weapon
may meet with a surprise.[4]

"Counsel for Silence"

Go without ceremony of departure
and shade no subtlest word with your farewell.
Let the air speak the mystery of your absence,
and the discerning have their minor feast
on savory possible or probable.
Seeing the body present, they will wonder
where went the secret soul, by then secure
out past your grief beside some torrent's pure
refreshment. Do not wait to copy down
the name, much less the address, of who might need you.
Here you are pilgrim with no ties of earth.
Walk out alone and make the never-told
your healing distance and your anchorhold.
And let the ravens feed you.[5]

"The House at Rest"

On a dark night
Kindled in love with yearnings—

Oh, happy chance!—
I went forth unobserved,
My house being now at rest.

—St. John of the Cross

How does one hush one's house,
each proud possessive wall, each sighing rafter,
the rooms made restless with remembered laughter
or wounding echoes, the permissive doors,
the stairs that vacillate from up to down,
windows that bring in color and event
from countryside or town,
oppressive ceilings and complaining floors?

The house must first of all accept the night.
Let it erase the walls and their display,
impoverish the rooms till they are filled
with humble silences; let clocks be stilled
and all the selfish urgencies of day.

Midnight is not the time to greet a guest.
Caution the doors against both foes and friends,
and try to make the windows understand
their unimportance when the daylight ends.
Persuade the stairs to patience, and deny
the passages their aimless to and fro.
Virtue it is that puts a house at rest.
How well repaid that tenant is, how blest
who, when the call is heard,
is free to take his kindled heart and go.[6]

"This Paltry Love"

I love you, God, with a penny match of love
that I strike when the big and bullying dark of need
chases my startled sunset over the hills
and in the walls of my house small terrors move.
It is the sight of this paltry love that fills
my deepest pits with seething purgatory,
that thus I love you, God—*God*—who would sow
my heights and depths with recklessness of glory,
who hold back light-oceans straining to spill on me, on *me*,
stifling here in the dungeon of my ill.

This puny spark I scorn, I who had dreamed
of fire that would race to land's end, shouting your worth,
of sun that would fall to earth with a mortal wound
and rise and run, streaming with light like blood,
splattering the sky,
soaking the ocean itself, and all the earth.[7]

"Take Your Only Son"

None guessed our nearness to the land of vision,
not even our two companions to the mount.
That you bore wood and I, by grave decision,
fire and a sword, they judged of small account.

Speech might leap wide to what were best unspoken
and so we plodded, silent, through the dust.
I turned my gaze lest the heart be twice broken
when innocence looked up to smile its trust.

O love far deeper than a lone begotten,
how grievingly I let your words be lost
when a shy question guessed I had forgotten
a thing so vital as the holocaust.

Hope may shout promise of reward unending
and faith buy bells to ring its gladness thrice,
but these do not preclude earth's tragic ending
and the heart shattered in its sacrifice.

Not beside Abram does my story set me.
I built the altar, laid the wood for flame.
I stayed my sword as long as duty let me,
and then alas, alas, no angel came.[8]

"God Is a Strange Lover"

God is the strangest of all lovers; His ways are past
explaining.
He sets His heart on a soul; He says to Himself, "Here will I rest
my love."
But He does not woo her with flowers or jewels or words that
are set to music,
no names endearing, no kindled praise His heart's direction
prove.

His jealousy is an infinite thing. He stalks the soul with
sorrows;
He tramples the bloom; He blots the sun that could make her
vision dim.
He robs and breaks and destroys—there is nothing at the last
but her own shame, her own affliction,
and then He comes and there is nothing in the vast world but
Him and her love of Him.
Not till the great rebellions die and her will is safe in His hands
forever
does He open the door of light and His tendernesses fall,
and then for what is seen in the soul's virgin places,
for what is heard in the heart, there is no speech at all.

God is a strange lover; the story of His love is most
surprising.
There is no proud queen in her cloth of gold; over and over
again
there is only, deep in the soul, a poor disheveled woman
weeping . . .
for us who have need of a picture and words: the Magdalen.[9]

"The Pool of God"

There was nothing in the Virgin's soul
that belonged to the Virgin—
no word, no thought, no image, no intent.
She was a pure, transparent pool reflecting
God, only God.
She held His burnished day; she held His night
of planet-glow or shade inscrutable.
God was her sky and she who mirrored Him
became His firmament.

When I so much as turn my thoughts toward her
my spirit is enisled in her repose.
And when I gaze into her selfless depths
an anguish in me grows
to hold such blueness and to hold such fire.
I pray to hollow out my earth and be
filled with these waters of transparency.
I think that one could die of this desire,

seeing oneself dry earth or stubborn sod.
Oh, to become a pure pool like the Virgin,
water that lost the semblances of water
and was a sky like God.[10]

"The Mercy of God"

I am copying down in a book from my heart's archives
the day that I ceased to fear God with a shadowy fear.
Would you name it the day that I measured my column of virtue
and sighted through windows of merit a crown that was near?
Ah, no, it was rather the day I began to see truly
that I came forth from nothing and ever toward nothingness tend,
that the works of my hands are a foolishness wrought in the presence
of the worthiest king in a kingdom that never shall end.
I rose up from the acres of self that I tended with passion
and defended with flurries of pride;
I walked out of myself and went into the woods of God's mercy,
and here I abide.
There is greenness and calmness and coolness, a soft leafy covering
from the judgment of sun overhead,
and the hush of His peace, and the moss of His mercy to tread.
I have naught but my will seeking God; even love burning in me
is a fragment of infinite loving and never my own.
And I fear God no more; I go forward to wander forever
in the wilderness made of His infinite mercy alone.[11]

"To Live with the Spirit"

To live with the Spirit of God is to be a listener.
It is to keep the vigil of mystery,
earthless and still.
One leans to catch the stirring of the Spirit,
strange as the wind's will.

The soul that walks where the wind of the Spirit blows
turns like a wandering weather-vane toward love.

It may lament like Job or Jeremiah,
echo the wounded hart, the mateless dove.
It may rejoice in spaciousness of meadow
that emulates the freedom of the sky.
Always it walks in waylessness, unknowing;
it has cast down forever from its hand
the compass of the whither and the why.

To live with the Spirit of God is to be a lover.
It is becoming love, and like to Him
toward Whom we strain with metaphors of creatures:
fire-sweep and water-rush and the wind's whim.
The soul is all activity, all silence;
and though it surges Godward to its goal,
it holds, as moving earth holds sleeping noonday,
the peace that is the listening of the soul.[12]

"The Ledge of Light"

I have climbed up out of a narrow darkness
on to a ledge of light.
I am of God; I was not made for night.

Here there is room to lift my arms and sing.
Oh, God is vast! With Him all space can come
to hole or corner or *cubiculum.*

Though once I prayed, "O closed Hand holding me . . ."
I know Love, not a vise. I see aright,
set free in morning on this ledge of light.

Yet not all truth I see. Since I am not
yet one of God's partakers,
I visualize Him now: a thousand acres.

God is a thousand acres to me now
of high sweet-smelling April and the flow
of windy light across a wide plateau.

Ah, but when love grows unitive I know
joy will upsoar, my heart sing, far more free,
having come home to God's infinity.[13]

"Yes"

Yes to one is often no to another
here walks my grief and here has often been
my peak of anguish yes is the one need
of my whole life but time and time again
law forces no up through my heart and lips
spiked leaden ball rending as it arises
leaving its blood and pain yes is the soft
unfolding of petals delicate with surprises
curve and caress and billowing delight
out to the one or many I would guess
heaven for me will be an infinite
flowering of one species a measureless sheer
beatitude of yes[14]

Recent Voices

Over the past fifty years, the face of Carmel, like that of the church itself, has changed dramatically. The Second Vatican Council's call for renewal brought both blessings and challenges. Along with other religious families, Carmelites in the post–Vatican II era were encouraged to distinguish their perennial values from certain historical forms and expressions that might need to be modified according to "the signs of the times." Constitutions and customs were updated, though not without difficulties (especially for the Discalced Carmelite nuns). New expressions of the Carmelite way of life continued to emerge; today there are approximately one hundred congregations and secular institutes formally "aggregated" or linked to Carmelite and Discalced Carmelite friars, as well as countless groups of all sorts that incorporate various aspects of Carmel's saints and spirituality among the elements of their own vocation in the church.

Most important, Carmelites everywhere have returned to their roots, recommitting themselves to the essential elements of their Carmelite vocation and "rereading" their rich heritage in the light of today's needs. In the English-speaking world, new initiatives—such as the Institute of Carmelite Studies, the Carmelite Forum, the Carmelite Institute, associations formed by the Carmelite nuns, national secretariats established for the Lay Carmelites (belonging to the O.Carms.) and the Secular Carmelites (belonging to the OCDs), and countless other developments—are fostering greater dialogue and collaboration within the Carmelite family while making the Carmelite tradition more accessible to contemporary audiences.

At the same time, as confidence in religious institutions seems to have declined in the West, popular interest in spirituality and mysticism has blossomed. Increasing numbers of ordinary Christians feel drawn

to contemplative prayer, once thought to be restricted to monks and nuns, and they turn to the Carmelite tradition for assistance. More and more spiritual seekers of other faith traditions look to Teresa, John of the Cross, Thérèse, and other Carmelite figures as wise guides and companions on their spiritual journeys. Many of those with no denominational affiliation, who might describe themselves as "spiritual but not religious," are nevertheless eager to learn from Carmel's spiritual masters. John of the Cross's expression "dark night," later expanded to "dark night of the soul," has become a part of popular culture. Even secular academicians are intrigued by the literary accomplishments and psychological insights of the Carmelite saints.

All of this has given today's members of the Carmelite family an unprecedented opportunity to share with people across the religious and social spectrum in a common dialogue on the deepest issues of human existence. Also, as they reclaim their Elijan roots, contemporary Carmelites recognize more than ever that their commitment to prayer, silence, and solitude must deepen, rather than diminish, their concern for the great social issues of our day. They realize that the contemplative and prophetic dimensions of the Carmelite vocation must always go together. Carmelites today are involved in ministries and apostolic prayer and service of all sorts, and now have NGO status with the United Nations.

Though predictions are inherently risky, certain trends are clear and seem likely to continue. Carmelite women and laity are gradually assuming roles of greater responsibility and working alongside the friars as equal partners in prayer and ministry. The Lay and Secular Carmelites are now the fastest growing part of the Carmelite family. Among the Carmelite friars and nuns, new vocations are most plentiful in the developing world—in India, Korea, Indonesia, and parts of Africa and Latin America, for example. All of these trends present new challenges and opportunities. One of the most important tasks for Carmelites in the years ahead will be to explore how their great heritage can be authentically inculturated in new places and social contexts, in ways that will enrich all of us.

The final selections of this anthology, from three contemporary American Carmelites, are meant to reflect some of these changes and challenges as Carmel moves toward the future. The late Peggy Wilkinson (1929–2009) was a much-loved figure among Secular Carmelites in the United States. She made her profession as a Secular Carmelite in 1967, and for over forty years served as a teacher, formator, artist, author, and mentor for others while continuing to care for her husband and children. In the excerpt here from *Finding the Mystic Within You*, she speaks of

integrating her Carmelite vocation with the responsibilities of a wife and mother, and encountering the living God at the center of domestic life.

Sr. Lois Ann Wetzel, O.CARM., belongs to the Carmelite Sisters for the Aged and Infirm, one of the congregations aggregated to the Carmelite Order. She has held various nursing positions in the facilities operated by her community. She is a past board member of the Carmelite Institute and currently serves on the Carmelite Heritage committee and the Mission Effectiveness committee of her own congregation. Her contribution here was presented as part of a panel discussion at the Carmelite Forum Conference held at Saint Mary's College in South Bend, Indiana, in June 2010, on the theme of "Carmel's Quest for the Living God: A Future to Hope In."

For six years, William J. Harry, O.CARM., served as delegate to the Carmelite NGO with the United Nations, as part of his responsibilities as a general councilor for the Carmelite Order. He is currently the west commissary provincial for the Most Pure Heart of Mary Province in the United States as well as communications director for the Carmelite NGO. His essay discusses Carmel's presence with the United Nations and what Carmelites can contribute to the shared human struggle to build a better world.

Peggy Wilkinson, *Finding the Mystic Within You*

> In the late fifties, before Vatican II, when the Mass was still in Latin, and "meditation" was not yet a household word, I began to feel the need for a "something more" in my spiritual life. Unsure of what I was seeking, but confident that it was there in the deeper levels of my faith, I began looking for guidance. Most of the help I received came from books, for at the time, there were not many spiritual programs available at the parish level. (Fortunately, this has changed since Vatican II.) Every book that was either by a Carmelite or about a Carmelite seemed to speak my language and answer the need that I was unable to put into words. During the sixties, the Discalced Carmelite Monastery in Washington, D.C., held Colloquia. In 1965 my husband Tom, my brother Jim Dimond, and I attended a series, and I discovered that there was a "Third Order" for lay people. Although I have been a Catholic all of my life, I did not remember ever hearing about "Third Orders." I found that the First Order consists of priests and brothers, the Second Order of nuns, and the Third Order of those in the world, married or single, who continue their spiritual development in the spirit or charism of the parent order. Today, [some of these] Third Orders

are called [Lay or] Secular Orders. In addition to Carmelites there are Dominican, Franciscan, . . . etc.

When I found the Carmelite Secular Order it was like being led to an oasis after wandering alone in the desert for years, and I couldn't wait to attend meetings. My husband was somewhat bothered at what I was doing, thinking I was "trying to escape the humdrum (or hectic) house and family" (we have eight children) and reminding me that I did not have that much spare time for additional commitments. I could not accurately explain to him what it was I found in Carmel, but knew that for me it was my spiritual lifeblood.

Since my husband was a little wary, I thought it important not to let the path I had chosen cause any obvious change in our usual routine. I reassured him that my becoming a Carmelite would not interfere with our family life, and I would not expect everyone else to follow my spiritual path. I kept a low profile, and made my prayer life as unobtrusive as possible. I was professed on Trinity Sunday, 1967.

The basic Carmelite rule of life [for the Secular Carmelites] consists of a half-hour daily meditation and the Liturgy of the Hours. I said my office while feeding the baby her bottle. Since Tom worked shift work, he often came home as the children left for school; or the children would come in from school as he left for work. On those days my husband's dinner would be prepared in the middle of the day so that he could have his main meal before he left, and take a lunch to work. This meant that dinner had to be prepared again in the evening for the children. They were often a little "unruly" when Dad wasn't present at the table, and we can all laugh about it now, even me.

There was not too much in the way of "silence and solitude" in those days, and I rearranged my time for contemplative prayer daily according to the home schedule. (It is much better to be able to establish a regular time for contemplative prayer.) Eventually, an interior silence develops and establishes an inner grounding of peace, which is an immense help in the center of constant noise and activity, or as Tom sometimes described it, "the eye of the hurricane." That was how it sounded on rainy days, when he had worked all night and was trying to sleep, and children, their friends, and pets were "just playing" in the house.

Interior silence is even better than exterior silence, for it can usually be depended upon. It is like a firm foundation upon which, over a lifetime, the waves of problems and illnesses, crises or disasters may crash but not crush, may shake but not shatter.

Our children are not only very active, but very loving, and I was able to see many spiritual truths clarified by just observing them, especially when they were unaware. I won't embarrass them by mentioning any of the cute things they used to do, but I keep records.

With meals, laundry, dental and doctor's appointments, homework assistance, etc., I did not have a great deal of free time. When the evening meal, homework, and children's baths were over, my bath was frequently the only available quiet space and time for my meditation. As the children grew older, of course, it became much easier, and eventually I was even able to attend an occasional weekend retreat. Getting away from the routine for an extended time is not only refreshing, but spiritually enriching.

A few years later it was discovered that my mother was becoming senile, and she came to live with us. It was like having a baby again, as she could not be left alone. My husband and the children were wonderful and loving, but it was a very difficult time. As we heard about Alzheimer's disease, and saw some of its victims on television documentaries, we recognized the similar behavior. I resolved to keep Mother out of an institution as long as she could still recognize us, for she would become fearful if she did not at all times see a familiar face. Mother could still laugh and would enjoy herself with the children, and they would dance with her and include her in their games. I bought adult diapers and would have to shower and dress her. If I was not home my husband attended to her, for she was like an infant, completely unaware. After a few years, when her health worsened, we had to put Mother in a nursing home, but I was grateful that by this time she was beyond caring about where she was.

It has been a busy and active life, and I could not have made it without God's help, I am certain of that. The spiritual strength I received from my prayer relationship helped me to do things I never thought I would be able to do, not that I did them perfectly. Sometimes, it is enough just to endure. I often wondered how people could get through the difficulties of life that everyone encounters without inner support from God, even though they may have family support. Contemplative prayer and the Carmelite community were for me absolute necessities. Over the years, as my husband got to know many of the Carmelites, he understood why it was so important to me. As I became familiar with the writings of Teresa of Avila and John of the Cross I could see that the spiritual journey they describe, each in his own way, is for everyone. I wondered why their writings were not more widespread. . . .

The spirit of Carmel is love and contemplation. It is founded on the spirit of Elijah, who waited on the mountain in silence and solitude and found God, not in the earthshaking events of storm, wind, and fire, but in the everyday, often overlooked or taken for granted, "gentle breeze." The contemplative spirit requires not so much a change of life as a change of awareness, an interior change. It is not the outward circumstances of life that make a contemplative, but the inner intention of the soul.

The Order of Carmel is dedicated to Mary, who "kept the words of the Lord and pondered them in her heart." The first hermits on Mt. Carmel were called "the Brothers of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel." When they were driven out of the Holy Land because of wars, they settled in Europe.

. . . Because Teresa [of Avila] and John [of the Cross] wrote the first and most complete accounts of the various stages of the spiritual journey, their approach is usually called the "Carmelite way." Actually, it is more universal, for if the Apostles had described their own spiritual journeys, they would probably have had similar accounts, since they, too, were brought to divine transformation or "spiritual marriage." The basic spiritual journey is the same, but the experiences along the way will be different for each soul.

At the end of the Song of Songs in the Old Testament there is a conversation. St. John of the Cross writes that it is between the persons of the Trinity. "What shall we do for our 'sister' on the day she is betrothed?" They are speaking of the soul. Each soul is the "sister" . . . of God, of His very "Be"-ing. Each soul comes forth from God and is meant to return to God as a bride after it is spiritually prepared.

This spiritual preparation is the basis of the spiritual journey, and contemplative prayer is an essential part of the soul's development. We are all mystics, lovers and contemplatives. Love and contemplation are the language and activity of heaven; and earth is the soul's apprenticeship for heaven. Contemplative prayer helps to develop an awareness of who we are as children of God, why we are here, and the divine destiny to which we are called.

Teresa of Avila considered prayer more as a "relationship" than "recitation," and described it as a "friendship with the Lord that grows into love." Since friendship and love are intrinsic to human nature, Teresa believed that contemplative prayer was possible for everyone willing to make the necessary preparations.

Contemplative prayer awakens inner vision. . . . Inner awareness enables the soul to see the world in a new way—the way that God sees it. As the unmistakable presence of the Indwelling God becomes clearer, prayerful souls recognize the divine in the eyes of all of their brothers and sisters, and "see" (experience) God always at work in the world beneath ordinary surface appearances.

In this Age of the Laity the Carmelite teachings are particularly relevant, especially for the current younger generation. . . . From infancy this generation has been interiorly prepared like fertile ground, open and receptive, but for many of them there was no forthcoming spiritual seed. Their conditioning has developed a singular capacity for the Divine, and only a personal, in-depth relationship with God, a Divine Intimacy, will satisfy their spiritual hunger.

God comes to each soul as it is and we, as brothers and sisters of the same family, can love, respect, affirm, and encourage each other in our spiritual efforts, united in the same goal—if not in the same approach. As any intimate relationship is unique to the persons involved, the relationship of each soul and its Beloved is special and deeply personal. We can benefit from each other's experiences. . . .[1]

Lois Ann Wetzel, from the 2010 Panel Discussion "Carmel's Quest for the Living God: A Future to Hope In"

When I was asked to speak on this panel my immediate response was: "What could I possibly say among such lights of the Order as are represented here? I am just an everyday working Carmelite doing her everyday things in ordinary ways." But then I thought, that really describes all of us here in one way or the other.

When I consider my hope for Carmel's future I keep finding myself returning first of all to her roots. Elijah's declaration to Ahab in Chapter 17 of the first Book of Kings—"The Lord lives, I stand in his presence"—has been a favorite passage of mine for years. It speaks to me of the fundamental Carmelite stance before God. It has helped form my own interior Carmelite attitude and helped inform my outward choices.

"The Lord lives, I stand in his presence." What a beautifully intimate expression! The Carmelite stands before the presence of the living God in an intimate encounter. And in this intimate experience of coming into the presence of the Lord, the Carmelite becomes more and more who he or she was created to be by this

same loving Lord. The "I" of the encounter becomes more and more the authentic "I," the "real me" if you will, the me who is called into existence by God and precedes every role or position the person has. In standing before the Lord, every attitude, assumption and inclination must be examined and surrendered to the fire of the Divine Presence until the Carmelite is able to stand before his God in purity of heart.

Of course this does not take place because we decide it will. It does not take place in any particular time frame. As we all know, it is the work of a lifetime. And it is God's work. We just need to show up with hearts open to the encounter, with the awareness that, indeed, the Lord *does* live and, indeed, I stand in his presence, and with a willingness to allow him to do his work in us. The implications are profound.

How often do we mix up the proper order? How often does our interior stance imply to the Lord "*I* live, you stand in *my* presence"? Some translations render the passage as "The Lord lives whom I serve." How often have our attitudes or behavior said to others, "I live whom *you* serve"? Elijah's declaration to Ahab offers us a healthy dose of reality. The *Lord* lives and we stand in *his* presence.

To be effective in the world now and in the future we must bring this basic Carmelite awareness into every situation in which we find ourselves. The Lord lives and we stand in his presence in every time and place. We stand in his presence with the elderly: we stand in his presence with the immigrant, with the poor, with the dispossessed, with our families, our communities and so on.

Our service to our brothers and sisters must be more than social action. It must be more than our own plans and agendas, however enlightened they may be. We must carry our awareness of the Lord's presence with us and pray for eyes and hearts to recognize him among the people we serve and in the circumstances in which we find ourselves.

By living in the awareness of God's presence and striving to respond authentically to him, Carmelites have the opportunity to give the world what it desperately needs; reassurance that our God is with us. He is present and at work in the multitudinous social and human needs that cry to heaven for relief, from every corner of our battered world.

Carmelites of the future must be there to meet these needs. They must be there to serve him whom they love and in whose presence they stand, wherever they find him. By being faithful to the tradition that formed them, Carmelites of the future will find new and creative

ways to respond to and help shape a world where Isaiah's vision is realized: "The blind see, cripples walk, lepers are cured, the deaf hear and the dead are raised to life."[2]

William J. Harry, "Do We Have a Place at the Table?"

The idea of the Carmelites becoming an official Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) has left some asking, "Why?" They cannot make the link between our Carmelite journey and the road provided by an organization such as the United Nations. Initially I could not understand why we would seek a role at the UN myself.

The Carmelite NGO is now a reality, primarily through the good efforts of members of the Congregation of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel in Louisiana. However, participation has gradually expanded to make the project one which is more of the Carmelite Family as was the original intent. But the question about its connection to our mission as a religious family continues to be heard. Weekly I am asked "What exactly are we Carmelites doing there?"

It is a fair question. Are Carmelites not supposed to be focused on proclaiming the Gospel? Have we not discovered that our uniqueness is in being prophetic in the tradition of Elijah and in following the example of Mary? For centuries have Carmelites not usually waited for the people in our churches, schools, retreat centers and behind monastic walls? Definitely so!

But there is also a part of our Carmelite tradition that calls us to be present in the market place—where there is a good chance we will encounter people who do not share our love of God. A market place will likely provide us an opportunity to brush up against people who do not understand or even know our Carmelite traditions. It might also be the place where we can prove to be most prophetic. Does not our Carmelite tradition ask us to seek our God in places and events which may be non-traditional? Are we not called to rely on that mysterious Spirit that blows where it will? Could not this new market place be more receptive to and need Carmelite spirituality more than we might first think?

At the 2002 UN NGO Conference, on the topic of "Rebuilding Societies Emerging from Conflict: A Shared Responsibility," the opening session took place in the impressive General Assembly Hall, the most familiar venue at the United Nations. The keynote speaker was Mary Robinson, both much admired and much hated for her outspokenness against injustices as United Nations Commissioner for Human Rights. She stood at the same podium where

presidents, prime ministers, two popes, dictators, and an endless procession of ambassadors have spoken on behalf of the people of the world governments for the last half century. The Carmelites who were present took seats usually reserved for ambassadors and their staffs, our first few steps into this particular marketplace.

I expected to hear about the need for money, the value of the peacekeeping forces, the fostering of better communication between governments as ways to make sure societies emerge from wars. Ms. Robinson never once mentioned any of those tried and tired solutions. She spoke about conflict being overcome by forgiveness and reconciliation, the transformation of the people from warriors to people focused on the good in each other.

If we needed an answer to the often asked question about the purpose of our presence at the UN, Ms. Robinson gave it to us, loud and clear. She said that nothing is really going to change on the world scene until the world's peoples experience the very things that we seek in our own lives as Carmelites—forgiveness, reconciliation, and transformation of the human person.

It struck me that after 800 years of practice we certainly have a few suggestions on how this might occur in the various cultures and situations around the world. Carmelites have never come out of one mold. We "do" our charism in a variety of ways. We learn from our saints that there are a variety of ways to approach our God. But each approach requires that the human person change. Only then is . . . any real communion with our God and neighbor possible.

. . . Yes. Carmelites belong in the churches, the schools, the retreat centers, and the monasteries. But we also belong in the larger marketplace. Carmelites belong anywhere people will benefit from Carmelite spirituality. The United Nations just happens to be one more of the untested marketplaces in our world today. But it is available to us now. I heard that marketplace clearly asking for us to come forward and teach what we know about the Gospel value of transformation. We have been asked to become a part of the world's healing process and to help build the human community. Why would we not take the opportunity to serve God and God's people in this way?[3]

Notes

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2. Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Two Sisters in the Spirit: Thérèse of Lisieux and Elizabeth of the Trinity* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1992).

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1. Thomas Merton, *Disputed Questions* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Cudahy, 1960), 238.

2. Excerpts from Nicholas of Narbonne, *The Flaming Arrow (Ignea Sagitta)*, trans. and introduced by Michael Edwards, from the critical edition by Adrian Staring, Vineyard Series #2 (Durham: Teresian Press, 1985), 15–51. Originally published in Nicholas of Narbonne, "The Flaming Arrow," trans. Bede Edwards, *Sword* 39 (1979): 3–52.

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3. "Efficacy of Patience," Kavanaugh and Rodriguez, *Collected Works of St. Teresa of Avila*, vol. 3, p. 386. The image is a reconstruction of the bookmark based on examples of her handwriting.

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2. John Paul II, Master in the Faith: Apostolic Letter on the Occasion of the Fourth Centenary of the Death of Saint John of the Cross (December 14, 1990), 14. This particular translation from the original Spanish appeared in *Catholic International* 2 (March 1–14, 1991): 207.

3. Excerpts are taken from *The Collected Works of St. John of the Cross*, trans. Kieran Kavanaugh and Otilio Rodriguez, rev. ed. (Washington, DC: ICS Publications, 1991). The *Sayings* are numbered according to this edition. In references to *The Ascent of Mount Carmel* and *The Dark Night*, the numbers indicate the book, chapter, and section quoted. In references to *The Spiritual Canticle* and *The Living Flame of Love* prose commentaries, the first number indicates the stanza being commented upon, while the second number indicates the section quoted.

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3. See "Text of Stein's 1933 Letter to the Pope," in *Inside the Vatican* (March 2003): 27. The text is accompanied by an article by William Doino, "Edith Stein's Letter," exploring the context and significance of this correspondence.

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THE REVELATIONS OF MECHTHILD OF MAGDEBURG

OR

THE FLOWING LIGHT OF THE GODHEAD

Other books by Lucy Menzies

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London : J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd.

1924 THE SAINTS IN ITALY.
London : Medici Society Ltd.

1925 ST. MARGARET, QUEEN OF SCOTLAND.
London : J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd.

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London : A. R. Mowbray & Co.

1931 TRANSLATION OF MALAVAL : SIMPLE METHOD OF RAISING THE SOUL TO CONTEMPLATION. With an Introduction by Evelyn Underhill.
London : J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd.

1939 TRANSLATION OF THE ABBÉ DE TOURVILLE : LETTERS OF DIRECTION. Introduction by Evelyn Underhill.
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1947 FATHER WAINRIGHT. A Record.
London: Longmans, Green & Co. Ltd.

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The Revelations of Mechthild of Magdeburg

(1210 - 1297)

OR

The Flowing Light of the Godhead

Translated from the Manuscript in the Library of the Monastery of Einsiedeln

by

LUCY MENZIES

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In Memoriam

EVELYN UNDERHILL

Of the heavenly things God has shown me, I can speak but a little word, not more than a honey-bee can carry away on its foot from an overflowing jar.

MECHTHILD, III. i.

FOREWORD

SOME years before her death Evelyn Underhill gave me her reprint of Mechthild's *Flowing Light of the Godhead*, with the intention that I should make an English version of it. Only in the last three years have I been free to do this, too late to benefit from her help or for her to write the Introduction. Yet I feel that as she initiated the idea, this is partly her book. And as she so largely made Mechthild known to English readers, I have quoted freely from her books where she deals with special points. But here at the outset I would like her to introduce to the reader this mystic for whom she had great affection:—

> The terms in which Mechthild of Magdeburg, an educated and well-born woman, half poet, half seer, describes her union with God are intensely individual and apparently owe more to the romantic poets of her time than to earlier religious writers. *The Flowing Light of the Godhead* is a collection of visions, revelations, thoughts and letters, written in alternate prose and verse. The variety of its contents includes the most practical advice on daily conduct and the most sublime descriptions of high mystical experience. She was an artist, familiar with the literary tradition and most of the literary expedients of her time. She uses many of them in the attempt to impart to others the vision of life, light and love which she knew. . . . She perceived under romantic imagery the whole course and consummation of the soul's life. . . . In all her writings, flashes of creative imagination evoke truths far deeper and more fruitful than the literal parallel they describe.
>
> "If it had not been for the delighted reports and declarations of the mystics and saints, their insistence on Reality's overwhelming actuality and their heroic self-dedication to that which they have seen, we little half-animal creatures could never have guessed that this objective fact was there,

accessible in its richness and delightfulness to men. Still less could we have supposed that the life of conscious and devoted correspondence with this achieved and all-penetrating Perfection, which is the essence of personal religion, was possible to the human soul."[1]

[1] Quoted from *Mysticism*, 460: *Essentials*, 79: *Mystics of the Church*, 79: *Man and the Supernatural*, 24.

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INTRODUCTION

MECHTHILD'S OUTWARD LIFE, 1210-1297

NEARLY everything we know about Mechthild we learn from her own book. But a glance at her background may be useful.

The thirteenth century was a time of stirrings and impulses, of epic poetry and heroic sagas; it was the time of the Minnesingers and their joy in nature, birds and flowers. But it was also a time of spiritual awakening; the new-born joy in natural beauty was transfused with religious longing. While the young nobles rode off to the Crusades, their sisters served the celestial chivalry. Though their writings are important as literature, capturing the rich style of the Minnesingers for mysticism, they are most impressive as the medium through which an overpowering devotion to Christ found expression. Of this romantic and visionary tendency Thuringia was a centre, Mechthild of Magdeburg its most inspired spirit.

She was born in 1210 somewhere in the Archbishopric of Magdeburg, and from her language, her references to Court life, her culture, as well as the freedom and independence of her spirit, we infer that she came of noble or at least well-born parents. She only mentions them once when she prays for "my father and mother and all souls in Purgatory"—as of course she would expect all souls to be there.

As a child she was "the best-beloved" of her family. Her brother Baldwin is said to have been an exemplary child of good habits and we may conclude that Mechthild also had a careful upbringing. Though she says she was unlearned and knew no Latin, "unlearned" probably applied chiefly to theology, and she did know some Latin as

she frequently quotes from the Divine Liturgy and the Psalms with the Latin of which she would be familiar.

It was when she was twelve years old that she received a first greeting from the Holy Spirit, so overpowering that she "could no longer have given way to serious daily sins." Up till that time she "knew nothing of God save the usual Christian beliefs." But from that time the centre of her interest was changed. Though she now and ever after looked beyond the world, she never became austere or withdrawn from her fellows. She saw "all things in God and God in all things." As a girl she longed to be despised through no fault of her own, a desire to be liberally fulfilled.

When she was about twenty-three (1233) her longing for a more spiritual way of life drove her to break away from home. She went to Magdeburg where she knew only one person whom she avoided lest that friendship should interfere with her renunciation of the world and love of God. There she lived for many years as a Beguine, so-called from Lambert le Bègue, a priest of Liége who advocated women living in communities and caring for the poor and sick without taking irrevocable vows. In Germany this sisterhood was largely adopted by the Dominicans, and Mechthild, who "loved St. Dominic above all other saints," was later to become a Dominican Tertiary.

It was following the strain and upheaval of leaving home that she had her first vivid experience of God—

> Such sweetness of love, such heavenly knowledge, such inconceivable wonders. . . . Then first was my spirit brought out of my prayer and set between Heaven and earth. And I saw with the eyes of my soul the beautiful manhood of Jesus Christ. . . .

Christ as a beautiful youth, the personification of love, is one of the chief themes of her book. With her eager heart and dedicated intelligence, she saw, or rather was

shown by God, that in order to attain to Him, she must utterly conquer self—

> "I looked at my body; it was heavily armed against my poor soul . . . with all the forces of nature. Then I looked to the weapons of my soul and saw they were the sublime sufferings and death of Jesus Christ."—(iv. 2.)

For many years she so painfully conquered her body and disciplined her soul that she became worn out by austerity and desire. Then she had a severe illness. It was after this "the mighty love of God struck her so powerfully with its wonders" that she could no longer remain silent but was inwardly compelled to write down what God showed her. In her shrinking from this, for she was very humble, her confessor reassured her; she should go joyfully forward, God had called her and would look after her. Yet because of her great unworthiness, she tells us, she often wept for shame—"that I, a poor little woman, should write this book out of God's heart and mouth."

During the next fifteen years she wrote down what came to her on loose sheets of paper in her own dialect of Low German. Her Dominican friend Heinrich of Halle, Lector of Neu-Ruppin and pupil of Albertus Magnus, "loved the gift of God in Mechthild," and she trusted and confided in him, probably as her Director. He collected her loose sheets and even during her lifetime copies of this collection were circulated, the first six parts of her book.

Mechthild lived in Magdeburg for many years, probably in the Convent of St. Agnes in the eastern part of New Magdeburg. Originally Cistercian, this Convent later adopted the Dominican Rule. Morel (see Bibliography) mentions a theory found in an early MS., that Mechthild was Abbess here from 1273, succeeding her friend Jutta von Sangershausen. Mechthild's chapter about the duties of a Superior lend weight to this theory.—(vi. 1.)

The mantle of St. Hildegarde of Bingen seems to have fallen on her, for as in Hildegarde's so in Mechthild's day,

Church and State were decadent, the Church suffering from materialism, indulging in magnificent buildings, while clergy neglected their duties, convents were slack. But Mechthild's outspoken denunciation of those abuses led to her persecution; for a time she was deprived of her Communions and of the Daily Offices in Choir; it was rumoured that she was a heretic because of her writings. So-called "good Christians" looked askance at her and she was not even happy in her Convent for the Sisters found her ideals too high for them. She was charged with being unlearned, lay, and, worst of all, a woman. In v. 12 she tells us how surprised Master Heinrich was that her book was written in such a masculine way. The position of women in her day no doubt made things difficult for her. She held up a mirror to the world in which she lived and that is never a popular thing to do.

So that although she had many friends and admirers among clergy and religious who sought her counsel, after many years things became too difficult for her in Magdeburg. She was old by then, ailing and losing her sight. And so she sought refuge in the Cistercian Convent of Helfde in Saxony (probably about 1285). She was known by repute to the Abbess Gertrude and her nuns, who admired her writings, her courage and her visionary powers, and gave her both loving welcome and real understanding.

Helfde was a centre of the mystic tendencies of the time owing to the literary and visionary gifts of two of its nuns, Mechthild of Hackeborn (known as the Nightingale of the Lord who wrote down her symbolic visions in her *Liber specialis Gratiae*) and the young Gertrude (later known as the Great)—a scholar who translated Latin MSS. into German. It was largely their personal adoration of Christ which led to the Devotion of the Sacred Heart.

The Abbess Gertrude was a broad-minded woman of spiritual and mental power. She insisted on study, her nuns copied some MSS. and she bought others so that her

community might have the best possible help for their studies. Like all Cistercian houses influenced by the teaching of St. Bernard, Helfde taught that the contemplative must bring back from intercourse with God, strength and food for other souls. It was a cheerful place where a fragrant spirituality was combined with practical and intellectual work. Evelyn Underhill wrote of these nuns:

> While we may allow that they lived in a world of the imagination, it was a world in which all the delicate beauties of nature played a sacramental part and which was lit by Divine Light. Their glimpses of Heaven were full of birds and flowers. Immortal love came to them as Mechthild of Magdeburg says, "In the morning dew, in the song of birds." Their own prayers seemed to them like larks soaring up full of music to God and hovering before His face. Moreover, a frankly feminine interest in dress and jewellery found innocent satisfaction in many of their visions, with their constant and detailed descriptions of the magnificent robes and symbolic crowns of the saints.[1]

Such was the congenial atmosphere in which Mechthild spent her last years. She had thought she had done with writing. She had a serious illness soon after her arrival and before long she became totally blind. Thus, poor and helpless, she yet felt herself to be clothed "in the wedding garments of the soul" (vii. 65). She asked God what she could do in the Convent in her blindness and weakness; He answered that, in spite of them, she could still enlighten and teach. And so she dictated her seventh book to the nuns. It takes us almost to her death in 1297, in her eighty-seventh year. All her life she had had a dread as to how her soul was to pass from her body. Now God said to her,

> *It shall be thus: I draw My breath and thy soul will follow on to Me as a needle to a magnet.*

[1] Evelyn Underhill, *Mystics of the Church*, p. 79.

THE HISTORY OF THE MANUSCRIPT

Mechthild as we saw wrote on loose sheets which were collected by Heinrich von Halle. But in arranging these sheets he unfortunately did so according to his own ideas, so that although we owe him much for preserving this precious manuscript, he has largely prevented us from following the writer's spiritual development. Later, in reverence for her he made a Latin version now in the University Library of Basle: *Lux Divinitatis fluens in corda veritatis.* In his Prologue he says he has translated the original *barbara lingua* into Latin so that Mechthild's book might be available to a larger circle of readers. He also grouped the chapters according to subjects and "cut, smoothed and softened"; scholars therefore consider this version somewhat blurs the character of the original. Basle has another Latin version, thought to be of less value.

An interesting point about these Latin versions is that as they were made soon after Mechthild's death, it is quite possible that her book was known in Italy before 1300 and that it was read by Dante. It is also possible that "the solitary lady" he met on the Mount may have been inspired by our Mechthild [1]—

> una donna soletta, che si gia
> cantando ed iscegliendo fior da fiore,
> ond'era pinta tutta la sua via.
>
> *Purgatorio*, xxviii. 40.

> A lady who went her solitary way
> Singing and culling flower from flower whereof
> the colouring made all her pathway gay.

[1] Much has been written about this question. Edmund Gardner in *Dante and the Mystics* considers it. Evelyn Underhill in *Mysticism* believes that Dante had read Mechthild's book and thinks its influence is traceable in the *Paradiso.* Preger notes that in the *Divine Comedy* Matelda represents the transcendent in opposition to the material; that her name as well as what is said about the spirit of Matelda accords with our Mechthild. The facts can never be known. Although Mechthild's descriptions of Heaven and Hell are similar to those of Dante, both reflect the spirit of the age. It has also been suggested that Mechthild of Hackeborn was Dante's Matelda.

After the deaths of Mechthild and Heinrich of Halle, his collection was enlarged by the addition of the seventh part of her book written at Helfde (though many earlier sheets are included, probably all the material she had left).

In 1344 another Heinrich, of Nordlingen, and certain Friends of God in Basle, translated the whole book into the form of High German spoken on the Upper Rhine in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. This Heinrich was a secular priest who carried on a vigorous correspondence with the mystics of his time, among them Tauler, Margaret Ebner of the Golden Ring, and Christina Ebner; possibly also with Suso. It is to this Heinrich's enthusiasm for the spread of mystical writings that we owe his version of Mechthild's *Flowing Light*. In 1345 he wrote to Margaret and Christina Ebner in the Dominican Convent of Medingen:—

> I send you a book called *The Flowing Light of the Godhead*. I am led to do this by the living light of the radiant love of Christ, for to me, this book, in delightful and vigorous German, is the most moving love-poem I have ever read in our tongue.
>
> Read it eagerly with the inner perception of your hearts and I beg you to pray the *Veni Creator* . . . seven times before the Altar. Do not open this sealed book till you have prayed these prayers. Then take with you all who eagerly desire such knowledge and begin to read, modestly, and not too much. Mark any words you do not understand and I will put them in an easier form for you. For the book was lent to us in such a strange tongue that it has taken us two years hard work to translate it even as well as we have. . . .

Later, yet another Heinrich, a priest of Rumerschein, of St. Peters, Basle, sent a copy of this translation to the *Waldschwestern* or Forest Sisters of Einsiedeln, that high Alpine valley of pine forests and snow-fields. Forest Sisters

had come to Einsiedeln in very early times and had lived at first in separate houses, later in small communities in four houses and finally, as again today, in the *Kloster* or Convent of the *Vorder Au* or Front Meadow. The book came to the sisters with this letter:—

> Know that the book which comes to you from her of the Golden Ring is called *The Light of the Godhead.* Keep it carefully so that it may serve in all the houses of the Forest. It shall be one month in each house so that it circulates from one to another as it is needed. Be careful of it for it has a special truth for you.

At what date the book left the houses is not known. But in 1860 when Dr. Carl Greith, later Bishop of St. Gallen, was writing his *History of German Mysticism*, he went to the Library of the Monastery of Einsiedeln to see if he could find any useful material. And there he found and brought to light, from centuries of oblivion, the one and only complete Codex of Mechthild's book. Dr. Greith encouraged the librarian of the Monastery, Dom Gall Morel, to transcribe and publish the manuscript and an exact reprint appeared in Regensburg in 1869. (It was a copy of this rare book which Evelyn Underhill used for her translations from Mechthild, and which she gave to the present translator.)

The manuscript, No. 277 in the Library at Einsiedeln, was most generously put at my disposal through the kindness of the Abbot and Librarian of the Monastery. It is a well-preserved volume, the pages $7\frac{3}{4}$ by $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches, bound in what was no doubt originally white leather, now with the grace of years upon it, of a soft golden tint. The writing is Gothic minuscule of the thirteenth century, the black ink of the body of the manuscript and the red ink of the capitals, as clear and vivid as when they were written. Mechthild's work is contained in the first 166 pages; then follow a few pages by a Friend of God and the second half of the MS. consists of Essays and Sermons by

Meister Eckhart. The MS. is in perfect preservation, the writing clear and beautiful throughout. Some obvious slips have been made by the copyist, but the manuscript is not difficult to read, though in some cases the sense is obscure.

Heinrich lamented that it had taken him and his friends two years to translate the manuscript "even as well as we have." After three strenuous years I, too, am well aware how far short my version falls. My modest aim has been to make Mechthild's book available to English readers: we no longer have it in her original version, but in Heinrich of Halle's Latin and Heinrich of Nordlingen's High-German translation. Scholars are still occupied with philological problems concerning those two versions.[1] We cannot enter on these problems here, and indeed Mechthild's experience of God, her strivings, patience and humility speak clearly and vividly through the language in which they reach us. I have kept closely to the Einsiedeln Codex, acknowledged to be the most authentic, and the result will, I hope, make it possible for English readers to know and enjoy this attractive spirit, whose relationship with God was an intimate personal one, the satisfaction of a deep desire. She could have said with S. Catharine of Genoa "my Being is God, not by simple participation but by a true transformation of my Being."

She was fond of dialogue form. Some narratives she tells quite simply, but often she soars into poetry or rather rhythmical prose with rhymes and assonances. Strict metrical form she does not use. In a translation into English—not so rich in rhyme as German—it is not advisable to strive after either rhyme or assonances; where they have come naturally I have used them, otherwise have

[1] One of the latest students of Mechthild's book considers that the language she used would be intelligible to both Low and High German readers as the poets of Low Germany in the thirteenth century used a form of Middle-High German. Against this view we have Heinrich's own words that it took him and his friends two years hard work to translate it, because it came to them in such strange language. *Problemata Mechthildiana*, Hans Neumann.

merely tried to reproduce Mechthild's thought as simply as I could. A friend has generously helped me in the versification of some of the poems. Having translated the whole book—and the dialect has sometimes been a proposition—it is with regret that owing to the high cost of printing, I have been obliged to omit a few unimportant chapters, and here and there, unimportant paragraphs.

Mechthild had no intention of writing a book. She tells us again and again that "the mighty love of God struck her so powerfully" that she was forced to write down what came to her—her deep experience of God, of Christ, prophecies, warnings, distress at the decadence of Church and State. She wrote in prose or poetry according as the spirit moved her; in the midst of a prose discourse, she suddenly bursts into poetry. She deals with all lovely natural things, but her feeling for every beauty is transfused by the mighty Love which was her life. She is never tiresomely devout, narrow or constrained; there is a spaciousness and nobility about her, a liveliness, a sense of humour. She suffered from many of our frailties; she was as prone as we are to be impatient with those who annoyed her and she said many sharp things. But she was ashamed of her sharpness (though not of her charges) and had to go "and confess her sin with shame and tears"; she felt like a dog that had been beaten till she crept humbly back again into the mercy and love of God (v. 33).

Five years after Morel's reprint appeared, Preger wrote a serious study of it in which he says of Mechthild:—

> She unites freedom, clarity of thought and delicate inner experience with childish, naïve conceptions and true sublimity of soul. She stirs the depths of speculative mysticism and her influence is to be seen in her profound compatriot Meister Eckhart (1260-1327) in whose writings echoes of her voice can be heard. The language she handles so lightly is often the language of learning, but also rises in rhythmical movement to lyric song and

epic description. . . . She sometimes treats the interchange between God and the soul according to the conceptions and abstract terms of the speculative mysticism awakened by the Areopagite writings of the East, of which she probably learned the doctrine and expressions through her friend Heinrich of Halle, a pupil of Albertus Magnus.

As the reader will see, theology was not Mechthild's strong point.

There are two main directions in her book; the *prophetic* and the *contemplative*. On the prophetic side she derives from St. Hildegarde of Bingen (1098-1179) and St. Elizabeth of Schönau (1138-1165). On the contemplative side she is a forerunner of Suso. She owes much to Richard of St. Victor, a Scot who died about 1173, and she was inspired like all contemplatives of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries by St. Bernard of Clairvaux (1091-1153). She evidently knew the writings of Joachim of Flora who in the twelfth century prophesied the coming of the Kingdom of the Spirit, "when the place of corrupt and worldly clergy would be taken by Friars who were saintly and walked barefoot," a prophecy fulfilled by the coming of St. Dominic and St. Francis, whom Mechthild calls the Younger Brethren.

In contrast to her own vivid awareness of God the so-called Christianity of her day appalled her—though there was never any lack of humility in herself. But her sharp criticism of clergy and religious naturally made her many enemies; she was regarded as a heretic, persecuted and despised. Yet far from being an enemy of the Church, she loved it and had child-like faith in it—"I hold holy Church much much dearer than anything of my own," she wrote (vii. 2). It was those who served the Church unworthily who incurred her wrath.

The reader will notice that although the order of Chapters is not strictly chronological, the writing of the

younger Mechthild does apparently come in the first parts of her book. The human passion of the younger years gradually gives place to the mature spiritual poise of the later period, when like an eagle "she soars up to gaze into the face of God."

All mystics from whatever century or country they come have a conviction of the supreme value of their inner experience of God. Vision and love are one act in which all blessedness is found. They find all natural lovely things moving towards the expression of the inexpressible—"Music and dancing, birds and flowers, the freshness of a living, growing world, all simple joyous things, all airy beauties, are used to tell us of that vision which Clement called 'the privilege of love'." [1]

As to Mechthild's special symbolism, she must have known St. Bernard's *Homily* on the *Song of Songs* which provides many of her symbols.

In her, as in Suso, mystic love is described in terms of courtly love and of the love songs of the world. Strange to our ears yet with profound beauty and meaning is her symbol of the wine-cellar (i. 44; ii. 24; iii, 13) where the God-intoxicated soul, the lover, is inebriated by love. "When the Christian mystic, eager for his birthright says *Sanguis Christi, inebria me*, he is asking for a gift of supernal vitality, a draught of that wine of Absolute Life which runs in the arteries of the world. Those to whom the cup is given attain to an intenser degree of vitality, hence to a more acute degree of perception, than that enjoyed by other men." (*Mysticism*, 235.)

The symbol of the Mystic Dance of the soul dates from pre-Christian times. "So we move always round the One" wrote Plotinus (*Ennead*, vi. 9). Dante saw the saints in Paradise as circling lights "whirling round in such guise as their burning love befitted" (*Paradiso*, xxiv. 10-18).

[1] Underhill, *Essentials of Mysticism*, p. 78 : *Mysticism*, *The Illumination of the Self*, p. 232 *et seq.*

Suso heard the music of the angels and was invited to join in their dance; it was not, he said, "like the dancing of this world but like a celestial ebb and flow within that incomprehensible abyss which is the secret being of the Deity." Mechthild describes this circling movement which ever tends inwards to God, the Centre, in terms of the spring dances of Court life. Christ appears to her as a noble Youth; He and the virtues delight in a heavenly dance and she must dance with them.[1]

The symbolism of Court Life pervaded the Middle Ages. God was the Emperor of Heaven: Christ an Imperial Youth; the Virgin Mary a glorious Empress; the angels were princes and knights who stood before God's Throne as feudal vassals to fight in His warfare. Man, too, takes his place in the army of the heavenly Emperor under the banner of the Cross. Such pictures of the kind of life from which the young Mechthild had fled come back to her now and are turned to spiritual ends.

MECHTHILD'S SIGNIFICANCE

Love is the foundation of Mechthild's book: "I was created in Love, therefore nothing can console or liberate my nobleness save Love alone." She asks why God created the soul and answers, "From the necessity of love." But she means no idle, self-seeking love. The soul, driven through love to strip itself of earthly satisfactions and raise its whole being to higher levels, ascends at last through Christ to God Himself in Whom it is merged as water in wine.

Though Mechthild lived in a Convent her outlook is never confined; it takes in the whole of Christendom, the history of her own age, the outlook for the future, learning as well as prophecy. Her gaze penetrates the depths of Hell as well as the heights of Heaven. She insists not only that the soul needs God but that God needs and longs for

[1] In *Essentials of Mysticism*, p. 79, Evelyn Underhill devotes several pages to a study of this in one of Mechthild's greatest poems (i. 44).

the soul. She dwells on the delight of God in the hungry soul which longs for Him, the little human creature He has made for Himself. The soul is formed of love and must ever strive to return to love, therefore it can never find rest nor happiness in creaturely things, it must lose itself in love; by its very nature it must seek God Who is Love. St. Augustine had already said, "Thou art the love wherewith the soul loves Thee."

She accepts the inevitable Dark Night of the soul, the apparent forsaken-ness by God, with a courage and determination to learn from it which should be a bracing example to many modern Christians. I have purposely used the ponderous word *forsaken-ness* to drive home how she regards and values this state: "Oh! Blessed Forsaken-ness!" she exclaimed (iv. 12). She "finds Jesus in nothing so surely as in her sin"; when she goes to Him in glowing love and humble fear "the uncleanness of sin vanishes before His Divine eyes."

Though Mechthild inherited much from the past, it was her own immediate experience of God which gave her her message. She had left home because of the mighty Love which pursued her. She found she could not escape it. She who wished to be despised found herself surrounded, upheld, bound by the Love of God. Love, she finds, is an all-conquering force which compels both God and man. What she experiences is inexpressible; even in blessedness the highest state is WONDER: amazement at what the soul perceives. Love leads to union of the soul with God, for its very nature consists of exchange—"Give Me all that thine is and I will give thee all that Mine is!"

At one point the challenge "thou shalt love the Nought and flee the I" appears to be Mechthild's view. But she was too powerful an individualist to accept the dissolution of the I in the All, as the final goal of her longing: God and the soul remained two, even if undivided. The God Whom she seeks and finds and loves is Jesus: He is

the Bridegroom of her soul. Though expressed in various ways, this is not absolutely held. She declares elsewhere that the Father created the soul as His Bride (i. 22; iii. 9). Finally the Church's teaching of the Holy Trinity comes in; "On the Throne of God one sees the mirror of the Godhead, the Image of the humanity, the Light of the Holy Spirit—but above all is God! God! God! Immense, Great GOD!"

Mechthild reached forward from her environment. She dwelt with God in a way different from that of those among whom she lived. They, too, knew the love of God. But everything came to them through the Church. Though Mechthild loved and reverenced the Church, it was not necessary to her in the same way. When she lamented to God how exiled she felt without her Communions, He comforted her: "Thou art in Me and I in thee!" All her longing and struggling as also her peace and joy, her freedom and independence were founded on experience of God in her own being. She was keenly aware that she had been allowed to come to this only through the Divine Grace and that it was an utterly free gift, what von Hügel loved to call "the given-ness of Grace," won for the soul by the sacrifice of Christ.

Her vision, her poetry, her praise and her thanksgiving all delight us, but most endearing of all her qualities are her power of forgiving and her real humility. She saw herself as a speck of dust over against the Might, Majesty and Perfection of God, and while she recognized the merit of good works in others she always said of herself, "Of good works alas! I have none!" She is still in her own eyes, after a long life of effort and love which had cost her all she had, "a poor little woman." She expresses her homing-instinct for God, in a phrase which may well serve as her own epitaph—

> *The rippling tide of love which all her life had flowed secretly from God into her soul, drew it mightily back into its Source.* (vii. 45.)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

For the background of this work I owe a great deal to the University Library of St. Andrews and there especially to Mr. Dugald MacArthur. From time to time I have enjoyed the facilities of the British Museum.

Of friends who have helped and encouraged me I owe much to the Rt. Rev. Bishop Lumsden Barkway and Margaret Cropper; also to Edith Anne Robertson and Margaret Dickie, who have most kindly read the proofs.

But chiefly I wish to thank the Abbot of the Monastery of Einsiedeln and Dom Leo Helbing the Librarian, for so generously allowing me access to the Manuscript, for putting a room at my disposal and even the key thereof, so that I could come and go as I pleased and work under ideal conditions. For Einsiedeln with its great Church and Monastery, its atmosphere of peace and devotion, its mountains and its everlasting snows, is an inspiration in itself.

It seemed to me a happy augury to find, when I first arrived at Einsiedeln from St. Andrews, that many hundred years ago a craftsman had incised on the binding of the Manuscript a St. Andrew's Cross.

LUCY MENZIES.

All Saints, 1952.

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Of the Revelations to a loving soul

In the year of our Lord, A.D. 1250, and for fifteen years thereafter, this book was revealed in German by God to a Sister who was holy both in body and spirit. She served God devoutly in humble simplicity, abject poverty and heavenly contemplation, suffering oppression and scorn for more than forty years. She followed the light and teaching of the Preaching Order steadfastly and absolutely, advancing steadily and improving herself from day to day.

But this book was copied and put together by a Brother of the same Order. Much good is in this book on many things, as is seen in the Table of its contents.

Thou shalt read it nine times, faithfully, humbly and devoutly.

THIS IS THE FIRST PART OF THE BOOK

This book is to be joyfully welcomed for God Himself speaks in it

This book I now send forth as a messenger to all spiritual people both good and bad—for if the pillars fall,[1] the building cannot stand. The book proclaims Me alone and shows forth My holiness with praise. All who would understand this book should read it nine times.

This Book is called The Flowing Light of the Godhead

Ah! Lord God! Who has written this book? I in my weakness have written it, because I dared not hide the gift that is in it. Ah! Lord! What shall this book be called to Thy Glory? It shall be called *The Flowing Light of My Godhead* into all hearts which dwell therein without falseness.

[1] The clergy and rulers of the Church.

1. *How Love and the Soul, who sits enthroned as Queen, speak together* [1]

SOUL

God greet thee Lady, thy name
Is known to me, it is Love!

LOVE

God reward thee, O Queen!

SOUL

Love! I am happy to meet thee!

LOVE

And I by the greeting, much honoured.

SOUL

Love, thou didst wrestle long years
With the Holy Trinity
Till the overflow fell once for all
In Mary's humble lap!

LOVE

But, O Queen, these things were done
For thy honour and thy delight.

SOUL

Ah Love! thou hast taken from me
All I had won on earth!

LOVE

A blessed exchange, O Queen!

SOUL

To deprive me of my childhood?

[1] This Dialogue forms a Prologue to the whole work and brings us right into the atmosphere of the Middle Ages. Mechthild's language here is that of the Minnesingers, of Court Life. Love appears as a lady of rank at the Court of Heaven, wooing a Royal Bride for her Lord. Though the whole of this first part deals with a rich and living spirituality, its matter is also religious and philosophical. The philosophy is that of early German mysticism, pointing back to the Neo-Platonism of the fourth century. Here as in all Mechthild's writing "flashes of creative imagination evoke truths far deeper and more fruitful than the literal parallel they describe." Evelyn Underhill, *Essentials of Mysticism*, p. 69.

LOVE

In exchange for heavenly freedom!

SOUL

Thou hast taken away my youth!

LOVE

In exchange for many virtues.

SOUL

Thou hast taken my friends and relations!

LOVE

Queen! that is a false charge!

SOUL

And taken from me the world,
Honour and all my possessions!

LOVE

These all I shall, O Queen,
In one hour by as much as thou wilt
Of the Holy Spirit, make good to thee.

SOUL

Love, thou hast tried me so sore
Through suffering, that now my body
Can barely support its weight.

LOVE

Against that loss, O Queen,
Thou hast gained great understanding.

SOUL

Ah Love! thou hast consumed
My very flesh and blood!

LOVE

Thereby art thou enlightened
And raised up to God.

SOUL

But Love, thou art a robber,
Make thou that good to me!

LOVE

That will I do, O Queen,
I pray thee—take myself!

SOUL

Now even here on earth
Thou'st paid me back again
A hundred-fold, O Love!

LOVE

My Queen, now God and all
His heavenly realm, are thine.

2. *Of three persons and three gifts* [1]

The true greeting of God, which comes from the heavenly flood out of the spring of the flowing Trinity, has such power that it takes all strength from the body and lays the soul bare to itself. Thus it sees itself as one of the blessed and receives in itself divine glory. The soul is thus separated from the body with its power and love and longing. Only the smallest part of life remains to the body which is as it were in a sweet sleep. The soul sees God as One and Undivided in Three Persons, and the Three Persons as one Undivided God. God greets the soul in the language of the Court of Heaven not understood in this kitchen (earthly world). And He clothes it with such garments as are worn in His Palace and girds it with strength. Then it may ask for what it will, it will be granted to it.

Should it not be granted, it is because the soul is taken further by God to a secret place where it must not ask nor pray for anyone, for God alone will play with it in a game of which the body knows nothing, any more than the peasant at the plough or the knight in the tourney; not even His loving mother Mary; she can do nothing here. Thus God and the soul soar further to a blissful place of which I neither can nor will say much. It is too great and I dare not speak of it for I am a sinful creature.

Moreover, when the Infinite God brings the unmoored soul up into the heights of contemplation, it loses touch with the earth in face of that wonder and forgets that it ever was upon the earth. When this flight is at its highest, the soul must leave it.

[1] The reader will notice Mechthild's fondness for numbers. After the example of St. Bernard, she, too, liked to number and relate the degrees of love; how the soul praises God in five things; how God resembles the soul in four things and so on.

Then the All-Glorious God speaks: "Maiden! thou must humble thyself and descend again!"

She is affrighted and says: "Lord! Thou hast drawn me up so high, that I am out of myself and cannot praise Thee with any order in my body, for I suffer grievously and strive against my body!"

Then He speaks: "Ah! my dove! Thy voice is as music to my ears, thy words as savour to my mouth, thy longings as the gentleness of My gifts!"

And she replies: "Dear Lord! all must be as the Master ordains!"

And she sighs so deeply that her body is awakened and asks, "Lady! where hast thou been? Thou comest so lovingly back, so beautiful and strong, so free and full of spirit! But thy wanderings have taken from me all my zest, my peace, my colour, all my powers."

The soul exclaims, "Silence! Destroyer! Cease thy complaints! I will ever guard myself against thee. That my enemy should be wounded does not trouble me, I am glad of it!"

Such an encounter surges from the Flowing Godhead by many channels into the arid soul, ever bringing fresh knowledge and holier revelation.

O loving God, fiery within, radiant without, now that Thou hast given this even to me, so undeserving, hunger wakes in me for that life Thou has given to Thy chosen ones. To that end I would gladly suffer longer here. For no soul can or may receive this greeting till it has utterly conquered self: but in this greeting will I, yet living, die.

3. *Of the handmaids of the soul and of the blow of Love* [1]

SOUL

Ah dearest Love, for how long
Has thou lain in wait for me!
What, O what can I do?

[1] This theme, the "love chase," the spirit fleeing from the overpowering presence of God, is found in many mediaeval mystics. We are familiar with it in Francis Thompson's *Hound of Heaven*. See Underhill, *Mysticism*, p. 135.

This chapter was probably written soon after Mechthild had left her home, pursued by a mighty following love which would give her no rest.

I am hunted, captured, bound,
Wounded so terribly
That never can I be healed.
Cunning blows hast thou dealt,
Shall I ever recover from thee?
Would it not have been well
That I had never known thee?

LOVE

I hunted thee for my pleasure,
I caught thee for my desire,
I bound thee for my joy,
Thy wounds have made us one,
My cunning blows, me thine.
I drove Almighty God
From Heaven and it was I
Who took His human life
And gave Him back again
With honour to His Father—
How couldst thou hope, poor worm,
To save thyself from me?

SOUL

But Queen, I fear I might
Through one small gift of God,
Through food and drink, escape thee?

LOVE

That prisoners may not die
One gives them bread and water
And God has given thee these
Mere respites for a time.
But when thy death-blow falls,
And when thy Easter comes,
I shall be all around thee
I shall be through and through thee,
And I shall steal thy body
And give thee to thy Love.

SOUL

Love! I have been thy scribe,
Seal those words with thy sign.

LOVE

Who loves God more than self
Knows where to find the seal
It lies between us twain.—
The seal is there, thine Easter come
And God, thy glorious grave, thy Home.

4. *Of the presence at Court of the soul to whom God shows Himself*

When the poor soul comes to Court, she is discreet and modest. She looks at her God with joyful eyes. Ah! how lovingly she is there received! She is silent but longs above everything to praise Him. And He, with great desire, shows her His Divine heart. It glows like red gold in a great fire. And God lays the soul in His glowing heart so that He, the great God, and she, the humble maid, embrace and are one as water with wine. Then she is overcome and beside herself for weakness and can no more. And He is overpowered with love for her, as He ever was, He neither gives nor takes. Then she says, "Lord! Thou art my Beloved! My desire! My flowing stream! My Sun! And I am Thy reflection!"

Thus does the loving soul who cannot exist without God, come to Court.

5. *Of the torment and reward of Hell*

My body is in long torment, my soul in high delight, for she has seen and embraced her Beloved. Through Him, alas for her! she suffers torment. As He draws her to Himself, she gives herself to Him. She cannot hold back and so He takes her to Himself. Gladly would she speak but dares not. She is engulfed in the glorious Trinity in high union. He gives her a brief respite that she may long for Him. She would fain sing His praises but cannot. She would that He might send her to Hell, if only He might be loved above all measure by all creatures. She looks at Him and says, "Lord! Give me Thy blessing!" He looks at her and draws her to Him with a greeting the body may not know—

Thus the body speaks to the soul
"Where hast thou been? I can bear this no more!"
And the soul replies "Silence! Thou art a fool!
I will be with my Love
Even shouldst thou never recover!
I am His joy; He is my torment—"

This is her torment,
Never must she recover from it
But must ever endure it
And never escape from it.

6. *Of the nine Choirs and how they sing*

Now listen, my love, hear with spiritual ears what the nine Choirs sing—

We praise Thee O Lord,
That Thou hast sought us in Thy humility,
Saved us by Thy compassion,
Honoured us by Thy lowliness,
Led us by Thy gentleness,
Ordered us by Thy wisdom,
Protected us by Thy power,
Sanctified us by Thy holiness,
Illumined us by Thy intimacy,
Raised us up by Thy love.

13. *How God comes to the soul*

I come to my love
As dew on the flowers.

14. *How the soul receives and praises God*

Ah! joyful sight and happy greeting! Ah! loving embrace! Lord! Thy glory has wounded me; Thy mercy has overwhelmed me! Thou mighty Rock! so gloriously cleft, wherein none may nest but the dove and the nightingale![1]

[1] *Song of Songs*, ii, 14.

15. *How God receives the soul*

Welcome sweet dove!
Thou hast flown so long over the earth
That thy wings have grown strong enough
To carry thee up to Heaven! [1]

16. *How God compares the soul to four things*

Thou art sweet as the grape;
Fragrant as balsam;
Bright as the sun—
  Thou art a heightening of My highest love!

17. *The soul praises God in five things*

O God! so generous in the outpouring of Thy gifts!
So flowing in Thy love!
So burning in Thy desire!
So fervent in union!
O Thou who dost rest on my heart
  Without whom I could no longer live!

18. *God compares the soul to five things*

O lovely rose on the thorn!
O hovering bee in the honey!
O pure dove in thy being!
O glorious sun in thy shining!
O full moon in thy course!
  From thee I will never turn away.

19. *God caresses the soul in six things*

Thou art my resting-place, my love, my secret peace, my deepest longing, my highest honour. Thou art a delight of my Godhead, a comfort of my manhood, a cooling stream for my ardour.

[1] Or, that thy wings have grown into Heaven.

20. *The soul replies praising God in six things*

Thou art a mirror of my vision, a delight of my eyes, an escape from my self, a tempest of my heart, a fall, a weakening of my power—and yet my highest security!

21. *Of Knowledge and Revelation*

Love without Knowledge
Is darkness to the wise soul.
Knowledge without revelation
Is as the pain of Hell.
Revelation without death,
Cannot be endured.

22. *Of the mission of the Virgin Mary ; how the soul was made in honour of the Trinity*

The sweet dew of the uncreated Trinity distilled from the spring of the eternal Godhead in the flower of the chosen Maid. And the fruit of the flower is an immortal God and a mortal man and a living comfort of everlasting love; our Redeemer is become our Bridegroom!

The bride is intoxicated by the sight of His glorious countenance. In her greatest strength she is overcome, in her blindness, she sees most clearly; in her greatest clearness, she is both dead and alive. The richer she becomes, the poorer she is. . . . The more she storms, the more loving God is to her. The higher she soars, the more brightly she shines from the reflection of the Godhead the nearer she comes to Him. The more she labours, the more sweetly she rests. The more she understands, the less she speaks. The louder she calls, the greater wonders she works with His power and her might. The more God loves her, the more glorious the course of love, the nearer the resting-place, the closer the embrace. The closer the embrace, the sweeter the kiss. The more lovingly they gaze at each other, the more difficult it is to part. The more He gives her, the more she spends, the more she has. The more humbly she takes leave,

the sooner she returns. The more the fire burns, the more her light increases. The more love consumes her, the brighter she shines. The vaster God's praise, the vaster her desire for Him.

Ah! whither fares our Bridegroom and Redeemer in the Jubilation of the Holy Trinity? As God willed no longer to remain in Himself, alone, therefore created He the soul and gave Himself in great love to her alone. Whereof art thou made, O Soul, that thou soarest so high over all creatures and whilst mingling in the Holy Trinity, yet remainest complete in thyself?

SOUL.—Thou hast spoken of my beginning, I was created in love, therefore nothing can express or liberate my nobleness save Love alone. Blessed Mary! Thou art the mother of this Wonder. When did that happen to thee?

THE VIRGIN MARY.—When our Father's joy was darkened by Adam's fall, so that He was an-angered, the everlasting wisdom of Almighty God was provoked. Then the Father chose me as bride that He might have something to love, because His noble bride, the soul, was dead. Then the Son chose me as mother and the Holy Spirit received me as friend. Then was I alone the bride of the Holy Trinity and the mother of orphans whom I bore before the sight of God (that they might not quite disappear as some did). As I thus became the mother of many noble children, I was so full of the milk of compassion that I nurtured the wise men and prophets before the birth of the Son of God. After that, in my youth, I nurtured Jesus; later, as the bride of God, I nurtured holy Church at the foot of the Cross; but from that I became dry and wretched, for the sword of the human agony of Jesus spiritually pierced my soul. . . . But it was reborn of His life-giving wounds and lived again, young and child-like. But were it fully to recover, God's mother must be its mother and its nurse. Ah! God! it was so and it was just! God is the soul's rightful Father and the soul His rightful bride who resembles Him in all her sorrows.

Ah! blessed Mary! In thine old age thou didst nurture the holy Apostles with thy maternal wisdom and thy powerful prayer, so that God's honour and will should be fulfilled in them. Likewise didst thou then, as now, nurture the martyrs with strong faith in their hearts; the confessors by thy protection of

their ears, the maidens by thy purity, the widows with constancy, the perfect with gentleness, sinners through thy intercession. Ah! Lady! thou must still nurture us . . . till the Last Day. Then shalt thou see how God's children and thy children are weaned and grown up into everlasting life. Then shall we see and know in unspeakable joy, the milk and e'en the self-same breast, which Jesus oft as infant kissed.[1]

23. *Thou shalt pray that God love thee often and long: so shalt thou become pure and beautiful and holy*

Ah Lord! love me greatly, love me often and long! For the more continuously Thou lovest me, the purer I shall be; the more fervently Thou lovest me, the more lovely I shall be; the longer Thou lovest me the more holy I shall become, even here on earth.

24. *How God answers the soul*

That I love thee continuously is My Nature
For I Myself am Love;
That I love thee fervently is My Desire [2]
For I long to be greatly loved.
That I love thee long comes from My Eternity,
For I am everlasting and without end.

25. *How to bear suffering gladly for God*

God leads the child He has chosen in wonderful ways. It is a wonderful, noble and holy way which God Himself went, that One without guilt or sin should suffer pain. The soul who longs for God rejoices in this way; it rejoices in the nature of its Lord who through His great goodness suffered many things. For the Father gave His beloved Son to be tormented by the heathen,

[1] In this mingling of philosophical symbolism with legend, we see the Pseudo-Dionysian teaching of Albertus Magnus, whose fame was then beginning. We come in this chapter to Mechthild's fundamental thought, "Why did God create the soul?" and her answer "From the necessity of love."

[2] In margin, *Deus caritas est.*

put to death by the Jews, and all without sin. Now the time is come when some who appear to be spiritual, torment God's children in body and persecute them in soul, because He wills that they should be like His Son who was tormented in body and soul.[1]

26. *In this way the soul leads the senses and is free and without grief*

It is a wondrous and lofty way in which the faithful soul walks, leading the senses after it as a man with sight might lead one who was blind. In this way the soul is free and travels without grief in its heart, seeing that it wills nothing but what its Lord wills Who does everything for the best.

27. *How thou art to become worthy of the Way, to walk in it and be perfected*

Three things make the soul worthy of this way so that it recognizes it and walks in it. Firstly, that it wills to come to God, renouncing all self-will, joyfully welcoming God's grace and willingly accepting all its demands against human desires. The second thing which keeps the soul in the way is that all things are welcome to it save sin alone. The third thing makes the creature perfect in the way, namely, that it does all things to the glory of God, so that even its smallest desire will be as highly prized by God as if it were in the highest state of contemplation possible to humanity.

For all is done in love to the glory of God. Therefore all is one.

But if I sin, then I am no longer in this way!

28. *Love shall be unto death without measure and without ceasing*

I rejoice that I must love Him who loves me and I pray that till my death I may love Him without measure and without

[1] Mechthild suffered great persecution.

ceasing. Rejoice, O my soul! for He gave His life for love of thee; now love Him so greatly that thou wouldst gladly die for love of Him. So wilt thou burn inextinguishably as a living spark in the great fire of the living Majesty—

So wilt thou be filled
With the Fire of Love,
  Therefore is it well with thee here!
Thou needest no more to teach me
For I can never turn from Love;
I must be Love's prisoner,
Else would I not live.
Where Love dwells there will I dwell [1]
In death as in life—
    (Life without sorrow
    Would be fool's folly.)

29. *Of the comeliness of the Bridegroom and how the Bride should follow Him*

Vide mea sponsa! See, my Bride! how beautiful are My eyes! How comely My mouth! How fiery My heart! How delicate My hands! How swift My feet! And follow Me!

Thou shalt be martyred with Me; betrayed through envy; tempted in the desert; imprisoned through hate; denounced through slander; thine eyes shall be bound that thou mayest not recognize the truth; thou shalt be beaten by the fury of the world; brought to judgment in confession; thy head struck with rods; sent before Herod in derision; stripped in dereliction; scourged with poverty; crowned with temptation; spat on with contempt. Thou shalt bear thy cross in hatred of sin; be crucified in renunciation of all things by thine own will; nailed on the cross by the holy virtues; wounded through love; thou shalt die on the cross in holy constancy; be pierced to the heart by constant union; taken down from the cross in true victory over all thine enemies; buried in meekness; raised up from the dead to a blessed end; drawn up to Heaven by the breath of God.

[1] Reminiscent of Ruth, i. 16.

31. *Thou shalt not heed contempt*

I was greatly despised; then our Lord said: "Be not surprised! Seeing that the sublime vessel of the Chrism was cruelly cast down and spat upon, what could happen to a vessel containing only vinegar, in which there is nothing good of itself?"

32. *Thou shalt heed neither honour nor sorrow, but avoid sin*

Should honour be offered thee, be ashamed! Shouldst thou be tormented, rejoice! Should any do good to thee, be afraid. But if thou sin against Me, thou must grieve from thy heart. If thou dost not grieve, reflect how long and how deeply I was grieved through thee!

33. *Of the trust and love of a receiver of benefits*

My soul spake thus to her Love: "Lord! Thy tenderness is a wonderful trust to my body, thy compassion an unspeakable comfort to my soul; Thy love to my whole being, rest eternal!"

34. *In suffering thou shalt be as a lamb, a dove and a bride*

Thou art My lamb in thy sufferings,
My dove in thy sighings,
My bride in thy watchings.

35. *The desert has twelve things*

Thou shalt love the naughting,
And flee the self.[1]
Thou shalt stand alone
Seeking help from none,
That thy being may be quiet,
Free from the bondage of all things.

[1] Here Mechthild seems to forestall Eckhart in treating the interchange between God and the soul according to the abstract terms of areopagite writings which came to her through Albertus Magnus.

Thou shalt loose those who are bound,
And exhort the free.
Thou shalt care for the sick
Yet dwell alone.
Thou shalt drink the waters of sorrow,
And kindle the fire of love
With the faggot of virtue—
Thus shalt thou dwell in the desert.

36. *Of malice, goodness and wonders*

With the malice of thine enemies thou shalt be adorned.
With the virtues of thy heart thou shalt be honoured.
With thy good works thou shalt be crowned.
With our mutual love thou shalt be raised up.
With My glorious wonders thou shalt be sanctified.

37. *The soul answers that she is not worthy of such graces*

Ah! Beloved! undeserved contempt delights me;
The virtues of the heart I desire,
Of good works alas! I have none,
I tarnish the beauty of our two-fold love,
Of Thy glorious wonders, I am alas! unworthy!

38. *God rejoices that the soul has overcome four sins*

Our Lord delights in Heaven
Because of the loving soul He has on earth,
And says, "Look how she who has wounded Me has risen!
She has cast from her the apes of worldliness;
Overcome the bear of impurity,
Trodden the lion of pride underfoot,
Torn the wolf of desire from his revenge,
And comes racing like a hunted deer
To the spring which is Myself.
She comes soaring like an eagle
Swinging herself from the depths
Up into the heights."

39-43. *God asks the soul what it brings* [1]

GOD

Thou huntest sore for thy love,
What bring'st thou Me, my Queen?

SOUL

Lord! I bring Thee my treasure;
It is greater than the mountains,
Wider than the world,
Deeper than the sea,
Higher than the clouds,
More glorious than the sun,
More manifold than the stars,
It outweighs the whole earth!

GOD

O thou! image of My Divine Godhead,
Enobled by My humanity,
Adorned by My Holy Spirit,—
What is thy treasure called?

SOUL

Lord! it is called my heart's desire!
I have withdrawn it from the world,
Denied it to myself and all creatures.
Now I can bear it no longer.
Where, O Lord, shall I lay it?

[1] In her *Essentials of Mysticism*, Evelyn Underhill gives this celebrated letter of Mechthild, "written to a fellow-pilgrim on that Love-path which she herself trod with so great a fortitude. It represents not only the rich variety of Mechthild's resources, but also those several forms of artistic expression which the great mystics have employed . . . the imagery is double-edged, evoking moods as well as ideas. . . . It opens with a spiritual love scene . . . this develops into a dramatic dialogue between soul and senses . . . this leads again . . . to the soul's acclamation of its destiny and the crowning announcement of the union of lover and beloved. The soul is described as a maiden, the Divine Lover as a fair Youth whom she desires. The very setting of the story is just such a fairy landscape as we find in the lays and romances of chivalry . . . the dewy morning, the bird-haunted forest, the song, the dance. It is in fact a love story of the period adapted with extraordinary boldness to the purposes of mystical experience." Op. cit., pp. 79-85.

GOD

Thy heart's desire shalt thou lay nowhere
But in mine own Divine Heart
And on My human breast.
There alone wilt thou find comfort.
And be embraced by My Spirit.

44. *Of the way of love in seven things, of three bridal robes and of the dance*

GOD SPEAKS

Ah! loving soul! wouldst thou know where thy way lies?

SOUL

Yes! Holy Spirit! Show it me!

HOLY SPIRIT

Thou must overcome the need of remorse, the pain of penitence, the labour of confession, the love of the world, temptation of the devil, pride of the body, and annihilation of self-will which drags so many souls back that they never come to real love. Then, when thou hast conquered most of thine enemies, thou art so wearied, that thou criest out—Ah! beautiful Youth! where shall I find thee?

THE YOUTH

I hear a voice
Which speaks somewhat of love.
Many days have I wooed her
But never heard her voice.
Now I am moved
I must go to meet her,
She it is who bears grief and love together,
In the morning, in the dew is the intimate rapture
Which first penetrates the soul.

HER WAITING-MAIDS, THE FIVE SENSES SPEAK

Lady! Thou must adorn thyself!

SOUL

Ah! Love! Whither shall I go?

THE SENSES

We have heard a whisper,
The Prince comes to greet thee,
In the dew and the song of the birds!
Tarry not, Lady!

And so the soul puts on a shift of humility, so humble that nothing could be more humble. And over it a white robe of chastity, so pure that she cannot endure words or desires which might stain it. Next she wraps herself in a mantle of Holy Desire which she has woven out of all the virtues.

Thus she goes into the wood, that is the company of holy people. The sweetest nightingales sing there day and night and she hears also many pure notes of the birds of holy wisdom. But still the youth does not come. He sends her messengers, for she would dance. He sends her the faith of Abraham, the longings of the Prophets, the chaste modesty of our Lady St. Mary, the sacred perfection of our Lord Jesus Christ and the whole company of His elect. Thus there is prepared a noble Dance of Praise. Then the Youth comes and speaks to her—

Maiden! thou shalt dance merrily
Even as mine elect!

THE SOUL

I cannot dance O Lord, unless Thou lead me.
If Thou wilt that I leap joyfully
Then must Thou Thyself first dance and sing!
Then will I leap for love
From love to knowledge,
From knowledge to fruition,
From fruition to beyond all human sense
There will I remain
And circle evermore.[1]

THE YOUTH

Thy Dance of Praise is well done.
Now shalt thou have thy will
Of the Virgin's Son.

[1] See Dante, *Paradiso*, xxiv, where he sees the saints as circling lights ; and xxv, where they are seen " wheeling round . . . as their burning love befitted."

For thou art weary! Come at midday
To the shade by the brook
To the resting-place of love.
There thou mayst cool thyself.

THE SOUL

Ah! Lord! that is too much
That Thou shouldst companion my love;
Where the heart has no love of itself,
It will ever be aroused thereto by Thee!

Then wearied by the dance, the soul says to the senses, "Leave me! I must cool myself!" The senses answer, "Lady! wilt thou be refreshed by the tears of Mary Magdalene? Can they suffice thee?"

SOUL

Hush! ye know not what I mean!
Hinder me not! I would drink of the unmingled wine![1]

SENSES

Lady! In virgin chastity
The love of God is ready for thee!

SOUL

That may be so. For me
It is not the highest.

SENSES

Thou mayst cool thyself
In the blood of the martyrs.

SOUL

I have been martyred so many a day
I can no longer go that way.

SENSES

Many pure souls abide
By the counsel of confessors.

[1] "By this romantic method Mechthild has appealed to the fancy and emotion of the reader, and has enticed him into the heart of the spiritual situation. Next she passes to the intellectual appeal, the argument between the soul and the senses. From this she proceeds by a transition . . . which is the outcome of consummate art, to the supreme declaration of the 'deified spirit at home with the Lord' as St. Paul said."—Underhill, *Essentials*, p. 82.

SOUL

Their counsel will I obey
And yet—I cannot go that way!

SENSES

In the wisdom of the Apostles
Thou wilt find sure refuge?

SOUL

Their wisdom have I in my heart,
It bids me choose the better part.

SENSES

Lady! The angels are clear and bright
And full of Love;
If thou wouldst cool thyself,
Ascend to them above.

SOUL

The angels joy is woe to me
Unless my Lord, my Love, I see.

SENSES

In holy austerity cool thyself and save
That which God to John Baptist gave.

SOUL

Pain and suffering do not appal,
Yet Love rules ever over all.

SENSES

Ah! Lady! wouldst thou be refreshed,
Bend thee down to the Virgin's knee
To the tiny Babe and taste and see
How the angels drink of Eternity,
In the milk of the joy of the Maid!

SOUL

That is a childish joy
To suckle and rock a Babe!
But I am a full-grown Bride
I must to my lover's side!

SENSES

Ah! Lady! Comest thou there
Then are we blinded,
So fiery is the glory of the Godhead
As thou well knowest—
That all the flame and all the glow
In Heaven above and earth below
Which burneth and shineth—
All doth flow from God Himself;
From His Divine breath,
Through His Divine lips
From the counsel of the Holy Spirit—
Who may abide it, even one hour?

SOUL

Fish cannot drown in the water,
Birds cannot sink in the air,
Gold cannot perish
In the refiner's fire.
This has God given to all creatures
To foster and seek their own nature,
How then can I withstand mine?
I must to God—
My Father through nature,
My Brother through humanity,
My Bridegroom through love,
His am I for ever!
Think ye that fire must utterly slay my soul?
Nay! Love can both fiercely scorch
And tenderly love and console.
Therefore be not troubled!
Ye shall still teach me.
When I return
I will need your teaching
For the earth is full of snares.

Then the beloved goes in to the Lover, into the secret hiding place of the sinless Godhead. . . . And there, the soul being fashioned in the very nature of God, no hindrance can come between it and God.

Then our Lord said—

Stand, O Soul!

SOUL

What wilt thou Lord?

THE LORD

Thy SELF must go!

SOUL

But Lord, what shall happen to me then?

THE LORD

Thou art by nature already mine!
Nothing can come between Me and thee!
There is no angel so sublime
As to be granted for one hour
What is given thee for ever.
Therefore must thou put from thee
Fear and shame and all outward things.
Only of that of which thou art sensible by nature
Shalt thou wish to be sensible in Eternity.
That shall be thy noble longing,
Thine endless desire,
And that in My infinite mercy
I will evermore fulfil.

SOUL

Lord! now am I a naked soul
And Thou a God most Glorious!
Our two-fold intercourse is Love Eternal
Which can never die.

Now comes a blessed stillness
Welcome to both. He gives Himself to her
And she to Him.
What shall now befall her, the soul knows:
Therefore am I comforted.

Where two lovers come secretly together
They must often part, without parting.

Dear friend of God! I have written down this, my way of love, for thee. May God give it to thee in thy heart. AMEN.

46. *Of the many ornaments of the Bride.* (*Condensed*)

The Bride is clothed by the sun and treads the moon under her feet. She is crowned with union. She has a chaplain called Fear; he has a golden rod in his hand, that is Wisdom. . . . And Wisdom is clothed with delight and crowned by Eternity. . . . (The long list of ornaments which follows here is not of Mechthild's best: I give only the last part.)

The Bride has a Pack-horse, the body; it is bridled by unworthiness; fed on contempt and its stable is confession. The pack it carries is innocence. The Bride has a cloak of purple silk; that is hope, adorned with truth and crowned by song. She has a palm in one hand, forgiveness of sin and a box in the other hand filled with desire and love; these she takes to her Lover. She has a hat of peacock's feathers; that denotes holiness on earth and high honour in Heaven. The way she follows is that of meekness, adorned with inclination and crowned with certainty. And as she goes she sings—

Ah! chosen Love, I long for Thee!
Thou lovest me but givest me
Much heaviness of heart.
The need I suffer for Thee
Is not of this world!
But when Thou O Lord shalt command,
Then only shall I be released from self!

THE BRIDEGROOM

O love most loveable! Think of the hour
When first there dawned on thee
The full demand,
And thou didst fear thy lack of power
Ever to attain to it!
—Yet, all the while I waited for thee—
I held thee in My arms!

Thus spake our Lord to His chosen Bride, *Veni dilecta mea, veni coronaberis*! Come, beloved come! Thou shalt be crowned!

Then He gives her a crown of Truth which none but spiritual souls may wear. In the crown one sees four virtues, Wisdom and Sorrow, Desire and Discipline. May God give us all this crown! AMEN.

THIS IS THE SECOND PART OF THE BOOK

1. *Love raises the soul but not the senses, which come from self-will*

The height of the soul is reached in love; while the body receives its highest honour in Christian baptism. For there is nothing higher than love; no honour higher than Christianity. Therefore those who would storm the heights by fierce inhuman effort deceive themselves sorely and bear within themselves grim hearts, for they have not the virtue of holy humility which alone can lead the soul to God. When self-will gains mastery over the heart, false holiness eagerly creeps in.

2. *Of two love songs which were seen in love*

Gladly would I die of love might that be so!
For He whom I love,
Have I seen with my unworthy eyes
Within my soul.
The bride who gives lodging to her Lover,
Needs no more to seek Him.

Love cannot pass away
When the maidens often seek their groom:
His noble nature is ever ready
To welcome His bride eagerly
And draw her to His heart.
The foolish who go unwillingly after Love
May easily miss this.

3. *Of the voices of the Godhead; the light of Truth; the four rays of God in the Nine Choirs; of the Holy Trinity and of St. Mary*

O soaring eagle! darling lamb!
O glowing spark! Set me on fire!
How long must I endure this thirst?
One hour is already too long,
A day is as a thousand years
When Thou art absent!

Should this continue for eight days
I would rather go down to Hell—
(Where indeed I already am!)
Than that God should hide Himself
From the loving soul;
For that were anguish greater than human death,
Pain beyond all pain.
The nightingale must ever sing
Because its nature is love;
Whoso would take that from it
Would bring it death.
Ah! Mighty Lord! Look on my need!

Then the Holy Spirit spoke to the soul—
"Come, noble maid! Prepare thyself
Thy Lover comes!"
Startled but inwardly rejoicing
She said: "Welcome, faithful messenger,
Would that it were ever so!
I am so evil and so faithless
That I can find no peace of mind
Apart from my Love.
The moment it seems that I cool
But a little from love of Him,
Then am I in deep distress
And can do nothing but seek for Him lamenting."
Then the messenger spoke:
"Thou must purify thyself,
Sprinkle the dust with water,
Scatter flowers in thy room."
And the exiled soul replied:
"When I purify, I blush,
When I sprinkle, I weep,
When I pray, then must I hope,
When I gather flowers, I love.
When my Lord comes
I am beside myself
For there cometh with Him such sweet melody
That all carnal desire dieth within me:

And His sweet music puts far from me
All sorrow of heart.
The mighty voice of the Godhead
Has spoken to me in powerful words
Which I have received
With the dull hearing of my misery—
A light of utmost splendour
Glows on the eyes of my soul
Therein have I seen the inexpressible ordering
Of all things, and recognized God's unspeakable glory—
That incomprehensible wonder—
The tender caress between God and the soul,
The sufficiency in the Highest,
Discipline in understanding,
Realization with withdrawal,
According to the power of the senses,
The unmingled joy of union,
The living love of Eternity
As it now is and evermore shall be."

Then were seen four rays of light
Which shot forth all at once
From the noble cross-bow of the Trinity
From the Divine Throne through the nine Choirs.[1]
There none is so poor nor so rich
That he is not met by Love;
The rays of the Godhead illuminate him
With inconceivable light;
The humanity of the Son greets him
In brotherly love;
The Holy Spirit flows through him
With the miraculous creative power
Of everlasting joy!
The undivided Godhead welcomes him
With the glory of His Divine Countenance
And fills him with the blessedness
Of His life-giving breath.

[1] Each soul is allotted to a Choir according to its deserts, see iii. 1.

Love flows from God to man without effort
As a bird glides through the air
Without moving its wings—
Thus they go whithersoever they will
United in body and soul
Yet in their form separate—
As the Godhead strikes the note
Humanity sings,
The Holy Spirit is the harpist
And all the strings must sound
Which are strung in love.

There was also seen
That sublime vessel
In which Christ dwelt nine months on earth
In soul and body,
As it ever shall remain
Only without the great glory
Which at the last day
The heavenly Father will give to all
The bodies of the redeemed.
This our Lady must also lack
So long as the earth floats above the sea.

Then it was seen how nobly our Lady stood by the Throne on the left of the heavenly Father, in all her maidenly beauty, and how her human body was formed and tempered in the noble likeness of her soul; how her comely breasts were so full of sweet milk that drops of it flowed down to the glory of the Father, for the love of man, that man might be welcomed above all creatures. Though those great princes the Archangels, marvelled that human beings should be raised above them, yet is it laudable that we should be fully represented there.

On the right hand of God stood Jesus our Redeemer with open wounds—

Bleeding, unbound,
To overcome the judgment of the Father,
(Which touches many sinners so nearly!)

For so long as sin endures on the earth
So long will the wounds of Christ
Remain open and bleeding—
But after the Day of Judgment
Christ shall put on so glorious a garment
As never before was seen.
Then the sweet wounds will heal
As if a rose-leaf
In place of the wounds there lay.[1]
Then shall we see rejoicings
Which shall never die away,
Then will the uncreated God
Make all His creation new
That it shall never grow old.

Here German fails me and Latin I know not. If anything good is in this writing, it is not owing to me! But no dog ever was so bad, that if its master enticed it with a piece of bread, it would not come gladly.[2]

4. *Of a poor maid and of the Mass of John the Baptist*

(*An allegory of justification by faith*)

Ah! dear Lord! how needful it is that we should have good will, though we need good works also. Our Lord showed this to a poor maid that she might no longer be alone, though not yet worthy to serve Him. She spake thus to God: Ah! dear Lord! Must I be without Mass this day?

On that desire God took from her her earthly senses and brought her wondrously into a great church. As she saw no one in it she thought, "Alas! lazy wretch! Now art thou too late because thou didst not rise in time! That will do thee little good here!"

[1] This simile probably derives from the *Iliad* where Aphrodite anointed the body of Hector with rose-scented oil. See Kemp-Welch, op. cit., p. 76.

[2] Mechthild often compares herself to a dog. She was probably already a Tertiary of the Dominican Order, popularly known as the *Domini Canes*—Dogs of the Lord.

Then she saw a youth coming; he brought a sheaf of white flowers which he strewed below the crossing of the tower and went away. Then a second youth came with a nosegay of violets, these he strewed in the aisle; then came a third youth who brought a bunch of roses; these he strewed before the altar of our Lady. Then came a fourth youth bringing white lilies which he strewed in the choir. When the youths had done this they bowed reverently and went away; they were so beautiful to look upon that however great human distress might be, to look on them drove away all sorrow.

Then two scholars came in white robes; they brought two candles, set them on the altar and remained in the choir. Then a tall man came; he was very thin, yet not old. His garments were so ragged that his limbs showed through. He carried a white lamb on his breast and had two hanging lamps in his hands. He went to the altar and set the Lamb thereon and bowed himself lovingly before it. That was John the Baptist who should sing the Mass. (See vi. 36.)

Next came a youth in fine garments who carried an eagle before his breast: he was St. John the Evangelist. Then came an ordinary man, St. Peter; and then a tall youth brought the vestments for the Mass wherein the three robed themselves.

Then entered a great company from the Kingdom of Heaven and they filled the Church so completely that the poor maid could find no place where she might stay. So she went and stood under the tower where she found many people dressed in white robes; they had no hair but simple crowns on their heads. These were those who had not lived according to the law; the adornment of hair, signifying good works, they had not. How then had they been able to enter into Heaven? Through repentance and good-will at the end.

Further on she found people more richly dressed, adorned with the hair of the virtues and crowned with the law of God. Still others, more handsomely clad, wore rose-coloured robes and bore the honourable mark of widowhood and a crown of accepted purity.

The poor maid was meanly dressed and weak in body; she felt she could no longer remain among these three groups. So she went forward to the Choir and looked in and saw how our

Lady stood in the highest place with St. Catharine, St. Cecilia, Bishops, Martyrs, angels and a great company of maidens. When the maid saw this great gathering, she looked down at herself and wondered, whether in her pitiful garments she dared to stay. Then she noticed that she had round her a reddish-brown cloak; it was fashioned of love and signified her longing for God and all holy things. The cloak was ornamented with gold and had embroidered on it these words: *Gladly would I die of love!*

She saw herself as a noble maiden, wearing in her hair a wreath of gleaming gold with the words—

His eyes in my eyes,
His heart in my heart,
His soul in my soul
Embraced and unwearied.
(And her face seemed as the face
of an angel.)

Ah! wretched being that I am!
What has happened to me now?
For I am not so blessed
As I saw myself there!
But all those in the Choir
Looked at her in smiling delight
And our Lady beckoned to her
That she should stand in front of
St. Catharine.

So I went and stood by our Lady—
It could seldom happen
That a poor maid should see
And speak to the Mother of God!
Ah! happy nature! To take for granted
That a miserable crow
Should stand by a turtle-dove!

All who were in the Choir
Were robed in gleaming gold
And surrounded by a cloud of rapture
Brighter than the sun.

Then the Mass proceeded, *Gaudeamus omnes in Domino!* And as often as our Lady was named she knelt down and all others bowed, for God had given her the highest honour. Then the poor maid said: "Ah! Lady! could I but receive the Body of the Lord! for here there is nothing of which to be afraid." The mother of God replied: "Yes! dear Child! Make your confession!" And the Heavenly Queen beckoned to St. John the Evangelist who came and heard the confession of the penitent. She asked him to tell her how long she would live and he said: "That I may not tell thee for God does not wish it! Because if the time were long, on account of thy many distresses thou mightst fall into despair. And if the time were short, then in sorrow at thine unworthiness, thou mightst desire to live longer (to atone)."

Then St. John went to read the Gospel, *Liber Generationis* (St. Matthew, i). The poor maid whispered to our Lady: "Shall I offer?" And she answered: "Yes! if thou wilt never ask it back again!" The maid said: "Ah! Lady! that grace thou must give me from God!" And our Lady said: "Take this gold coin. It is thine own will. Offer it in all things to my Lord and Son."

In deep modesty and holy awe the little maid received the great coin. She looked at it and saw that on one side it bore the Descent from the Cross, on the other the whole Kingdom of Heaven with the nine choirs and above them the Throne of God. Then God's voice spoke to her, "If thou offer Me this coin so that thou wilt never take it back, then will I loose thee from the Cross and bring thee to Me in My Kingdom." Then that same priest who had been dedicated by the Holy Spirit while he yet dwelt in his mother, said the Low Mass. As he took the white wafer in his hands, the Lamb which was on the Altar stood up and was changed into the wafer and the wafer into the Lamb, so that I saw the wafer no more but instead a bleeding Lamb which hung on a red cross. He looked on us with such sweet eyes, that never can I forget it.

Then the poor maid asked our Lady, "Ah! dear Mother! pray thy Lord and Son that He give Himself to me!" Then she saw a gleam from out the mouth of our Lady strike the Altar and touch the Lamb with the request. And God Himself spake from

the Lamb, "My Mother! I will gladly lay Me where thou dost wish."

Then the maid went up to the Altar with great love and widely opened soul. John the Baptist took the white Lamb with the red wounds and laid it on the mouth of the maid. Thus the pure Lamb laid itself on its own image in the stall of her body and sucked her heart with its tender lips. The more it sucked the more she gave herself to it.

Now she to whom this happened is dead and gone forth. May God help us that we may see her again among the angels.[1]

5. *A song of the soul to God; how God is the garment of the soul and the soul a garment of God*

Thou shinest in my soul
As the sun on gold.
When I rest in Thee O Lord,
My bliss is manifold.
Thou clothest Thyself with my soul
Who Thyself art its mantle,
Should separation have to come
'Twould be a greater sorrow
Than any I have suffered.
If Thou wouldst love me more
Then must I surely pass away
To that place where I could love Thee
Without ceasing.
Now have I sung Thee
Yet not as I would,
If Thou wouldst but sing me
Then must I make good!

[1] This last sentence was, of course, not written by Mechthild, though it must have been added very early. That John the Baptist sang the Mass of the poor maid is to be understood in a spiritual sense. See vi. 36.

This vision gives us a good picture of the longing soul who seeks union with God. The great Church, the festive strewing of flowers and then the silent, dream-like movement of heavenly spirits, so that the maid who actually stood in an empty church did not know where to turn for the concourse of saints and spirits—the poor human soul driven there, an earthly spark among the multitude of heavenly radiancies.

6. *God's reply to the soul in five things*

When I shine, thou must reflect,
When I flow, thou must race,
When thou sighest,
Thou dost draw My Divine Heart unto thee;
When thou weepest for Me, I take thee in My arms;
But when thou lovest Me, then are we twain one;
For thus united, nothing can separate us,
Rather, a blissful waiting lies between us.

Then, O Lord, I will wait with hunger and thirst,
Eagerness and delight till that joyful hour
When the chosen words shall flow
From Thy Divine lips—
Words which can be heard of none
Save that soul alone which cuts itself loose
From the world to listen to the words of Thy mouth—
Such a soul alone can receive the Fount of Love.

7. *Of praising God in sorrow. Of two golden chalices, of sorrow and of consolation*

When I, a sinner and inert, went to my prayer one day, it seemed as if God would not give me the slightest inclination of His Grace. I bewailed my human frailty which seemed to me a hindrance to my spiritual life. "Ah! no!" said my soul. "Think rather of the faithfulness of God and praise Him for it. *Gloria in excelsis Deo.*"

And in this praise a great light appeared to my soul and in the light God Himself in great glory and unspeakable clearness. And our Lord lifted up two golden chalices in His hands and both were full of living wine. That in the left hand was the red wine of suffering, that in the right, the white wine of sublime consolation. Our Lord said: "Blessed are they who drink this wine; for although I offer both in Divine Love, yet is the white wine nobler in itself; but most blessed are they who drink of both, the white and the red."

8. *Of Purgatory: how one person releases a thousand souls with tears of love*

A certain person[1] prayed very earnestly
Yet simply to God for suffering souls.
God showed him the terrible cleansing fire
of Purgatory,
And the many torments of sinners therein,
Equal to the number of sins.
Then the human spirit grew so bold
That he seized all Purgatory in his arms.
He persevered in that suffering
But besought Love to help him.
Then God spoke from Heaven:
"Hurt not thyself thus!
'Tis too heavy for thee!"
The spirit said sadly:
"Ah! Lord! I pray Thee
Set some at least free!"
The Lord answered: "How many willst thou?"
And the spirit: "As many as those for whom
By Thy mercy I may make retribution."
Then our Lord said: "Take a thousand
And do with them what thou wilt!"

Then the poor creatures raised themselves out of the torment, blackened, burned, dirty, bleeding, reeking. The spirit spoke: "Lord! what shall happen to these poor creatures now? For in this dreadful state they cannot enter into Thy Kingdom?" Then God in His mercy bent down and spoke a word which is of great comfort to us sinners: "Thou shalt bathe them in the tears of love which flow from thy bodily eyes!"

Then all at once a great basin was seen. And the unhappy beings plunged into it and bathed in Love as bright as the sun. And the spirit felt inexpressible joy and said: "Praised be Thou, Beloved, by all creatures for ever! Now those are fit to enter

[1] Probably Mechthild herself, who often uses a masculine pronoun to hide her identity.

Thy Kingdom!" And our Lord again bent down from on high and put on their heads the crown of Love which had redeemed them and said: "This crown ye shall wear for ever that all in My Kingdom may know ye have been released by tears of love nine years before your proper time."[1]

9. *God praises His Bride in five things*

Thou art a light of the world,
A crown of maidenhood,
A healing ointment for all wounds.
Fidelity in the midst of falseness,
A bride of the Holy Trinity.

10. *The Bride replies praising God in five things*

Thou art a Light in all lights,
A flower more lovely than all crowns,
A healing salve for every ill,
An unchangeable truth without falsehood,
A host in every refuge.

11. *Of the sevenfold Love of God*

True love of God has seven forms;
Joyful love walks in the way,
Timorous love accepts labour,
Strong love is eager to do great things,
Loving love asks no fame,
Wise love has knowledge,
Free love lives without sorrow of heart,
Powerful love is ever joyful.

[1] Mechthild here follows the belief of her time that in the cleansing fires of Purgatory sinners suffered according to their deserts, while above it, Heaven was near enough for the Creator when He opened His little door and looked down, to be heard and understood by those beneath. She gives us the true idea of one soul atoning for another, as St. Catharine of Siena, "I will take thy sins upon me": or in our day, Charles Williams' doctrine of Substitution.

12. *Of sevenfold perfection*

To be gladly unhonoured, gladly disregarded, gladly alone, gladly still, gladly to be lowly, gladly to be esteemed, gladly to be one of many.

13. *There shall be love between God and the soul*

Between thee and God shall be love for evermore;
Between thee and earthly things shall be uneasiness and fear;
Between thee and sin shall be hatred and strife;
Between thee and the Kingdom of Heaven shall be everlasting hope.

14. *The causes of various things*

Bitterness of heart comes from human frailty,
Weakness of body from the flesh alone;
A lively spirit from nobility of soul;
Fear of suffering from a guilty conscience;
Illness of body from nature;
Need and misery from pride,
To be rarely of good cheer from restlessness of spirit.

15. *How a soul wounded by love is healed*

Whosoever shall be sore wounded by love
Will never become whole
Save he embrace the self-same love
Which wounded him.

17. *How God frees the soul and makes it wise in His love*

Thus God frees the simple soul and makes it wise in His love. Ah! sweet dove, thy feet are red, thy wings are smooth,

thy mouth is true, thine eyes are beautiful, thy head composed, thy wanderings happy, thy flight swift—but all too soon thou returnest to earth!

18. *How the soul touches the freedom of God in eight things*

Lord! my feet are dappled by the blood of Thy Redemption, my wings are smooth because Thou hast nobly chosen me, my mouth is ordered by Thy Holy Spirit, mine eyes illumined by Thy fiery Light; my head composed because of Thy faithful protection; my flight hastened by Thy unresting care; my sinking to earth comes from Thy union with my body; the greater release Thou givest me from earthly things, the longer must I soar in Thee!

19. *How Understanding and the soul speak together*

UNDERSTANDING

Ah! loving soul, I have been watching thee
Wondrously caparisoned in thy love.
A light was granted me for this
That I might see thee,
Otherwise it could not have happened.
Thou art threefold in thyself
Therefore mayst thou well be in the likeness of God.
Manly in thy strivings,
Thou art yet a maiden richly adorned
In the palace of thy Lord,
A happy bride in the resting-place of love.
Ah! God-loving soul! In thy struggles
Thou art armed with measureless might,
And with so great a power of soul
That all the peoples of the world,
All the charm of thine own body,
All the legions of the devil,
All the powers of Hell—
Cannot separate thee from God.

Thou dost arm thyself as with flowers,
Thy sword the glorious rose, Jesus Christ,
Thereby thou protectest thyself.
Thy shield is that white lily, the Virgin Mary,
It helps not that she stands by thee
Save that she adorns thee and increases in thee
The immeasurable glory of God.
All who engage in this warfare
Will be richly rewarded by His Majesty.

Ah! noble soul! in thy palace of the Holy Trinity, where thou standest so lovingly adorned by thy Lord, what is thy rank?

THE SOUL

Understanding! thou art wiser than I. Why dost thou ask me?

UNDERSTANDING

Because, O Soul, God has chosen thee above all things! Thou art my Mistress! My Queen!

THE SOUL

Understanding! I am noble and free-born. I may not go unhonoured, for I love God alone. Therefore I must win Him who loves, caresses and honours me—

The Holy Trinity
And all that Heaven and earth embrace
Must ever be subject to me.
If I now allow Love to rule over me,
That it may bind me in holy patience,
So that I do not increase my guilt,
It will lead me to a noble gentleness
That I may be prepared for all good things
And held in strict obedience,
Ever lovingly subject in all things
To God and all creatures.

UNDERSTANDING

Ah! Bride! Couldst thou but give me a hint
Of the unspeakable intimacy
Between God and thyself?

THE SOUL

That I cannot do;
No bride may tell what happens to her!
Of holy revelations and delights
Thou mayst hear from me—
But the supernatural teachings of God
Must be hidden from all
Save me alone.

UNDERSTANDING

Ah! Soul! if thou force me to insist
That thou disclose even a little
Of the miraculous showings and lofty words
Thou hast heard and seen in God—
Then could I set a royal light
In a dark and noisome stall!

THE SOUL

But cattle are well content to eat straw!
If some, who appear to be God's children
Shove themselves about like cattle in a dark stall
And speak of what is meaningless to them,
It is only done from pride
And false holiness.[1]

One reads that St. Paul was taken up to the third Heaven;
That could never have happened
Had he remained Saul;
Had he found the truth
In the first or second Heaven
He would never have ascended to the third!
There is a heaven made by the devil
With his false cunning;
There thought wanders in sad reflection
And the soul suffers silently
For it finds not what it loves.

[1] An allusion to her critics.

There the soul remains uncomforted
And betrays the simple senses.
In this heaven the devil appears
As a glowing angel
Like unto God even in the five wounds.
Ah! simple soul beware!
The second Heaven is formed
Of the holy longings of the senses
And of the first part of love.
In this heaven there is no light
The soul does not see God there,
But is conscious of an unspeakable sweetness
Which floods through its whole being.
It hears also a voice speaking of many things
It eagerly desires,
For its life is still entangled with earthly things.
If it has not deep humility
Then the devil brings his light
And what happens then
Is not of God.
But if true humility is there
Then the soul may fare forth to the third Heaven.
There the true light is given it . . .
(The soul has slept; now it is awakened)

THE SENSES SPEAK

Lady! thy soul has slept from childhood on
Now it is awakened by the light of true love.
In this light the soul looks round
To discover who it is
Who here shows Himself to her.
Now she sees clearly and recognizes
How GOD IS ALL IN ALL.[1]

Now I lay down all anxiety and care
And go forth with St. Paul to the third Heaven
Even should God lovingly strike down
My sinful life.

[1] 1 Cor. xii. 6; xv. 28.

The third Heaven is vaulted and ordered
And irradiated by the Three Persons
Who thus commence the true greeting of God:
Which comes from the heavenly blood. . . .

(Here in the German, as in the Latin version, the MS. breaks off.)

20. *How Sister Hildegund is adorned in Heaven* [1]

Sister Hildegund received her honour on the Feast of St. Barbara. (God showed this to a lame dog who, with lamentations, was still licking its wounds.) In my prayer I did not know whether Heaven was lowered to me or whether I was drawn up to the glorious House of God. There stood Hildegund before the throne of the heavenly Father, decked as a bride whom the King has brought home to His Palace. She was clothed in three cloaks and had seven crowns on her head and the nine choirs sang wondrously in her praise.

As I looked on her I recognized in her all the gifts she had received from God. I was eager to talk to her and ask her the reason of her apparel—"How camest thou by this rosy mantle?" And she said, "I was a martyr of fiery love so that my heart's blood often flowed over my head." I asked her further, "How camest thou by this golden mantle which shines so brightly?" And she replied, "It represents good works." Then I asked: "How camest thou by this flowery white mantle?" And she said, "From the powerful urge of love which I bore secretly in my soul and in my senses."

These were her seven crowns, Constancy, Faith, Trust, Compassion, Reason, Love and Maidenly Virtue. I asked further. "Tell me, where is the crown of humility which becomes spiritual people so well?" And she said, "That I have not specially and never won, only in so far as God has freed me from pride. These seven crowns are all specially adorned by the noble wreath of purity."

Then the choirs praised her for her virtues: "We praise thee for thy Repentance, thy Good-will, thy Truth, thy Wisdom, thy gentle Longing, thy voluntary Poverty, thy Strength and

[1] S. Hildegund of Schönau, 1188.

thy Righteousness." And the seraphim praised her thus for they were her companions: "We praise thee for thy love of God, O Queen." And the thrones praised her: "We praise the Bridegroom for the beauty of the bride!"

I asked her many things
As to which I will now keep silence.
I will only say, The Kingdom of Heaven
Is coloured by Love
While the colour of earth, alas!
Is sadly changeable
To me and to many who have not yet
attained to Heaven
Where we shall behold the Truth.

21. *If thou wouldst gaze upon this mountain thou must have seven things* [1]

I have seen a mountain
The base of which was as a shining cloud
The brightness of which
No human being could endure
In his soul for one hour.
The foot of the mountain was snow-white,
cloud covered,
But its heights were fiery and clear as the sun.
I could find neither beginning nor end of it.
Within it there played to and fro
Fiery streams of gold in unspeakable love.
Then I spake: "Lord! blessed are the eyes
Which can forever gaze
Upon this weaving of love
And glorify this wonder;
I cannot comprehend it."
Then spake the mountain,
"The eyes which would see me
Must be purified by seven things
Otherwise they cannot see me.

[1] Edmund Gardner says: "This mountain is not Self-knowledge nor Purgatory but the height of the Divine Majesty." *Dante and the Mystics*, p. 275.

These seven things are:—
Not merely standing security,
But eagerly paying the dues of the needy,
Keeping nothing for self,
Heedless of hatred,
Loving towards what is repugnant,
Forgiving towards sin,
Welcoming to all."

22. *Contemplation asks the soul about the seraphim and the lowest human beings*

CONTEMPLATION

Wouldst thou rather be a heavenly seraphim, O Soul, or a human being with body and soul in the lowest choir of angels?

THE SOUL

Thou hast seen, Contemplation, how the angels of the seraphim are noble princes and that they are one with God, one love, one fire, one breath, one light.

CONTEMPLATION

But thou hast surely seen, O Soul, that the angels are simple beings and can only praise and love and recognize God as is given them: and that the lowest human being can also attain thereto in Christian Faith with repentance, longing and goodwill, even although her soul may not burn so fervently in the Godhead?

THE SOUL

And thou hast surely seen, Contemplation, that the seraphim are God's children and yet His servants. The smallest soul is the daughter of the Father, the sister of the Son, the friend of the Holy Spirit and truly the Bride of the Holy Trinity.

Let us see upon the weights
Which weighs the heaviest!
The most worthy of all angels is Jesus Christ
Who soars above the seraphim
Who with the Father is One Undivided God.

Yet I, least of all souls,
Take Him in my hand,
Eat Him and drink Him
And do with Him what I will!—
That can never happen to the angels
However high they may be above me;
And His Godhead is never so unattainable to me
That I am not ceaselessly aware of Him
In all my being!
Thus my love of Him can never cool.
Why then should I trouble myself
As to what the angels experience?

23. *How Love questions and teaches a dull soul and would gladly bring it to its love*

LOVE

Ah! foolish soul! Where art thou?
Where is thy dwelling and how dost thou live?
Where canst thou find rest
If thou wilt not enthrone
Above thine own powers and thine own will
Thy God who rejoices in thee?

SOUL

Let me be! Unawakened,
I know not what you say!

LOVE

One must awaken the Queen
When her King desires to come to her!

SOUL

I belong to a holy Order
I fast, I watch, I am without mortal sin,
I am sufficiently bound.

LOVE

Of what use is it to bind an empty cask
If the wine still runs out?
Then one must fill it with the stones of outward works
And the ashes of the past.

SOUL

I live in the joy of companionship
And the company of good spiritual friends:
How can I deeply love
Him whom I know not?

LOVE

Alas! canst thou not know thy Lord
So often and so lovingly named to thee?
Thou art more interested in thine animal body
Than in Jesus thy sweet Lord!
Thou canst thus win little honour
In His eyes.

SOUL

I live according to my own will
Which I hope to bring to perfection.

LOVE

If thou wouldst render God true service
Thou must follow His Holy Spirit in love.

SOUL

I rest in the world of my body.

LOVE

Shame on thee this day before God!
That thou dare speak of spiritual things
And yet dost welcome only the pleasures of the body.

SOUL

But how can I support myself
If I must burden myself with thee?

LOVE

Ah! Unfaithful! He who has made the soul so noble
That it can enjoy nothing but God
Will never allow the body to want!

SOUL

Thou chidest me sore.
If I but knew where He was
I might still turn to Him.

LOVE

If thou wouldst live with Him in noble freedom
Thou must first clear thy dwelling of evil habits.

SOUL

Alas! That is done of few;
Those who are wise through learning or common sense
Dare not put themselves
In the power of pure love.

LOVE

Yet it is to the pure in heart,
Those who express only God in all their doings,
To whom He naturally turns.

SOUL

Had I turned to God
Might I have risen very high?

LOVE

Of what use is it
To clothe a sleeping man handsomely
Or put costly food before him?
He will not want to eat!
Ah! Beloved! Let me awaken thee!

SOUL

Tell me then where His dwelling is?

LOVE

There is no lord in all the world
Who lives in all His dwellings at once
Save God alone.
He lives in the peace of holy love
And whispers with His love
In the narrow confines of the soul,
He embraces her in the noble delight of His love.
He greets her with His loving eyes,
And when they gaze on each other in truth
He kisses her with His Divine lips.
Ah! well for thee, yea more than well
That sublime moment.

He woos her powerfully with His grace,
Thus she comes to the highest blessedness,
And the sweet sorrow of love
Is in her very soul.

SOUL

Ah! Love! now let love be!
Arm not thyself with anger.
Who are they who arm themselves thus?

LOVE

They are those who distress themselves and others
With evil.
  Now I will tell thee who God is—
He is higher than the Highest
And yet has bowed Himself
Down to the lowest valley,
  And the lowest valley has set itself up
On the highest heights!
Ah! foolish soul! Look well at thyself,
Open thy blinded eyes!

SOUL

If He has come down from the highest heights
For love of me,
And has given Himself with all creatures
Wholly to me—
Then must I evermore shame myself before Him,
That I never gave my worthless copper
In exchange for His precious gold.
Alas! where have I been? I, unblessed, blind
That I have lived so long without that powerful love
By which I might have overcome my need
In spite of all my enemies!
Though I, poor wretch, have failed to do much good
I will now go out from all things into God.
Ah! Love! wilt thou still receive me?

LOVE

Yea! God denies Himself to none,
But that counts both ways—
If thou wilt have love, thou must leave love!

24. *How the loving soul finds herself with God and His elect and how she will be like His saints*

Ah! Lord Jesus Christ! Thy innocent suffering comforts me, for in all my suffering, I am guilty. Thy holy death keeps my longing in Thee alive, for Thy sinless blood has flowed through my soul.

Mary, beloved mother! I stand beside thee at the Cross with all my Christian faith. The sword of holy sorrow pierces my soul because those who appear to be spiritual are so inconstant.

St. John the Baptist! I am taken prisoner with thee when the faithlessness of the courtesan of falsehood kills the word of God in my mouth.

St. John the Evangelist! I have rested with thee in love on the heart of Jesus; there I have seen and experienced such glorious things that my spirit is often beside itself.

St. Peter! with thee I am beloved of God, for humanly I am never at rest, but often in spiritual suffering in praise of Jesus Christ.

St. Paul! I am wondrously uplifted with thee and have seen so marvellous a dwelling that never had I seen anything so wonderful. Since then I would fain be a living being. And when I reflect that there the heavenly Father is the Cup-bearer, Jesus Christ the Chalice and the Holy Spirit the pure wine, and how the Holy Trinity together is the full plenishing of the Chalice and Love the mighty cellar—then God knows I would rejoice should Love call me there. Now I am well content to drink gall on this earth. Ah! Lord! I pray thee reward all those who here cause me bitterness, for they make me rich in grace.

A cup of gall came to me which was so bitter that it went right through me, body and soul. Then I asked God specially for my cup, that He would fill it with heavenly wine. That He did truly and said, "Maid! be of good cheer! the greatness of My glory shall overshadow thee; lions shall fear thee; bears shall protect thee; wolves shall flee before thee and I will be thy companion." I know now as I have known before that I must learn to drink many cups of gall to the dregs for alas! the devil has many friends among spiritual people, who are so full

of poison that they not only drink it themselves but must needs hand it in bitterness to the children of God.

St. Stephen! I kneel beside thee before Jewish hearts, among sharp stones, for they fall also on me, both large and small. Those who appear to be good, stone me in the back and flee and hide themselves that I may not recognize them or see who threw the stones. But God saw them!

St. Lawrence! For more than twenty years I was bound with thee on a dreadful gridiron, yet God kept me unharmed and released me seven years since.[1]

St. Martin! I dwelt with thee in humility; true love of God has since caused me much suffering.

Dominic, my dear Father! I have a small share in thee for which I have longed many a day.

May the blood of my sinful heart
Yet flow under the feet of heretics.

St. Catherine! I go with thee to battle, for the lord of Hell would dearly like to slay me. Then one came to me, radiant as the sun so that I might think he was an angel. He brought me a gleaming book and said, "Take the Pax, since thou mayst not come to the Mass." But my soul spoke with modest wisdom, "He who himself has no peace, can give me no peace." Then he went away and disguised himself as a poor sick man and said, "Thou who art holy, heal me!" But I said, "He who is sick himself can help no one! But it is written, Whosoever can, shall help others. It is also written: "One shall help no one against the will of God." "But to do good," he said, "is not against the will of God." But I said, "To him in whom there is no good, no one can do good. Thou hast an eternal sickness. If thou wouldst be healed thou must go and show thyself to a Priest or Archbishop or the Pope. For I myself have no power save to sin." Then he said angrily, "That I will never do!" and became as black smoke and withdrew himself rudely and went away. But I was not afraid of him.

Mary Magdalene! I live with thee in the wilderness for all things are misery to me save God alone. O Lord! heavenly

[1] That then was in her youth; therefore when she wrote this she was about thirty years old.

Father! between me and Thee there is ever an inexpressible communion in which I see and recognize many unspeakable things. Alas! I can make little use of them seeing that I am so weak a vessel and cannot bear even the smallest sparks. Undisciplined love dwells in the senses for it is still entangled with earthly things. . . . Bound (or disciplined) love [1] lives in the soul and rises above the human senses and forbids the body its own will. It is modest and very still. It folds its wings and listens to an unspeakable voice and gazes into incomprehensible light and seeks eagerly the will of its Lord. If the body then flaps its wings, the soul may never experience the highest possible to humanity. In such bound love, the wounded soul grows rich and its external senses poor because the more riches God finds in it, the more owing to the nobility of its love, it humbles itself. Whoso is thus constrained by the deepest stirrings of a mighty love, can in no wise commit mortal sin. For when the soul is bound, it must ever love. May God bind us all in this way!

25. *The plaint of the loving soul when God appears to shun it and withdraw His gifts; how the soul asks God who and what it is: of a garden of flowers and of the singing of maidens*

O Thou countless treasure in thy riches! Thou manifold and incomprehensible Wonder! Thou endless honour in the Majesty of Thy Glory! How bitter then to me, when Thou dost shun me!

Even should all creatures lament for me
None could fully tell Thee
What inhuman need I suffer;
Human death were far gentler to me.
I seek Thee in my thoughts
As a bride seeking her groom;
When bound to Thee I suffer grievously,
For the bond is stronger than I.
Therefore can I never free myself from Love.

[1] This probably means the state of ligature well known in contemplative prayer. See Evelyn Underhill, *Mysticism*, p. 330.

I call Thee with profound desire
And piteous voice.
I wait for Thee with a heavy heart,
I cannot rest, I burn without respite
In Thy flaming love.
I seek Thee with all my might,
Had I the power of a giant
Thou wert quickly lost
If I came upon Thy footprints.

Ah! Love! Run not so far ahead
But rest a little lovingly
That I may catch thee up!

Ah! Lord! seeing Thou hast taken from me all that I had of Thee, give me of Thy grace, the gift every dog has by nature, that of being true to my Master in my need, when deprived of all consolation. This I desire more fervently than Thy heavenly Kingdom!

"Sweet dove! now hark to me!
My Divine Wisdom soars so far above thee
That I must needs order My gifts to thee
Else couldst thou not bear them in thy poor body.
Thy secret seeking must needs find Me,
Thy heart's distress must needs compel Me;
Thy loving pursuit has so wearied Me
That I long to cool Myself
In thy pure soul in which I am imprisoned.
The throbbing sighs of thy sore heart
Have driven My justice from thee.
That is well for us both,
For I cannot be sundered from thee;
However far we are parted
Never can we be separated.
However lightly I touch thee
I cause thee bitter pain,
But were I to give Myself to thee
As oft as thou wouldest
Then would I deprive Myself of the dear refuge
I find in thee in the world.

For even a thousand beings could not contain
The desire of a loving soul,
The higher the love, the more blessed the pain!"
"Ah! Lord! Thou sparest too much my dark prison
Wherein I drink the sorrows of the world
And eat with lamentation
The ashy bread of my deficiency,
And am wounded to death
By the fiery rays of Thy Love.
—Now leave me here, O Lord,
Unanointed and in torment!"
"Dear heart! My Queen!
How long wilt thou be thus impatient?
If I wound thee so sore
Do I not heal thee most lovingly
In the self-same hour?
The greatness of My Kingdom is all thine
And thou shalt have power over Me Myself!
I am lovingly inclined to thee;
If thou hast the weights, I have the gold.
All thou hast done and lost and suffered for Me
Will I give thee again,
And will Myself grant thee everlasting forgiveness
For everything thou wilt."

"Lord! I would ask Thee two things,
Teach me them in Thy mercy—
Should my eyes weep miserably,
And my lips keep silence in simplicity,
And my tongue be full of lamentation,
And my senses ask me from hour to hour
What is wrong with me—All that, O Lord,
I have from Thee!
Should my flesh fall from me, my blood evaporate,
My limbs shrivel, cramp torture every vein,
My heart dissolve in Thy love,
My soul burn as the roar of a hungry lion—
How shall it be with me then?
Where wilt Thou be then? Beloved, tell me!"

"Then art thou like a new-wed bride
Whose lover has left her sleeping—
He to whom she has given herself in all trust;
She cannot suffer that he should part from her
Even one hour. When she awakes
And finds herself alone, she laments bitterly,
It is more than she can bear.
But the while the youth is not by her side,
Yet is she ever with him, his Bride!
He says: 'I come to thee at My pleasure, when I will!
Thou must be modest and still;
If thou but hide thy grief,
The power of love will grow in thee!
Now I will tell thee where I will be:
I am in Myself, in all places, all things,
As I ever was, without beginning.
And I await thee in the garden of love
And pluck thee the flower of sweet union,
And make thee a resting-place
In the pleasant meadow of Holy Understanding.
And the bright sun of My Eternal Godhead
Shall shine on thee
With the hidden wonder of My love
Which thou hast secretly engendered in Me.
Then I bend down to thee
The highest branch of My Holy Trinity
From which thou shalt pluck
The green and white and red apples
Of My gentle humanity.
And the power of My Holy Spirit shall over-
shadow thee
From all earthly sorrow,
That thou canst no more think of it.
Once thou embrace the tree
I will teach thee the song of the maidens,
The way, the words, the sweet melody
Which some of themselves, those still troubled by desire
May not yet understand;
But they shall yet have a rich exchange.

Come love! Sing on and let Me hear
How thou canst sing this song!'"

"Alas! beloved! My throat is parched
From my maidenly innocence. . . .

Yet the sweetness of thy gentleness
Brings back music to my voice
So that I now can sing this song—
Lord! Thy blood and mine is one unstained;
Thy love and mine is one and undivided;
Thy robe and mine is one, unspotted,
Thy lips and mine are one, unkissed. . . ."

Such are the words of the song of love:
May the sweet music of the heart ever remain in it,
For no earthly pen could ever describe it!

26. *Of this book and its writer*

I was warned about this book and told by many
That it should not be preserved
But rather thrown to the flames.
Then did I what from childhood I have done
When trouble overcame me:
I betook myself to prayer.
I bowed myself to my Love and said:
"Lord! now am I troubled:
Must I walk uncomforted for Thy Glory?
Thou hast misled me
For Thou Thyself commandest me to write!"
Then God showed Himself to my weary soul
And holding the book in His right hand He said:
"Beloved! Fret not thyself too sore!
The Truth may no man burn.
Those who would take this book out of My hand
Must be stronger than I!
This book is threefold
And concerns Me alone.

The parchment here before Me
Deals with My pure, righteous and wise humanity
Which suffered death for thee.
The words denote My glorious Divinity
Which flows from hour to hour
Into thy soul from My Divine mouth.
The voice of the words denotes My Living Spirit
And fulfils in itself the living Truth.
Now see in all these words
How praisefully they proclaim My holiness
And doubt not thyself!"

"Ah! Lord! were I a learned priest
And hadst Thou worked this wonder in him
Then hadst Thou endless honour therefrom.
But how can any believe
That on this unworthy soil
Thou couldst raise up a golden house
And live therein with Thy mother
And all creatures
And all the heavenly host?
Lord! therein can I find no earthly wisdom!"
"Daughter! Many a wise man loses his precious gold
Carelessly on the great highway
On which he would come to the upper school;
But someone must find it!
I have long acted thus:
Wherever I gave special grace
I sought for the lowest and smallest and most hidden.
The highest mountains may not receive
The revelations of My Grace,
For the flood of My Holy Spirit
Flows by nature down into the valleys.
One finds many a wise writer of books
Who in himself, to My sight, is a fool.
And I tell thee further, it greatly honours Me
And strengthens mightily Holy Church
That unlearned lips should teach
The learned tongues of My Holy Spirit."

Ah! Lord! I sigh and long and pray for Thy
scribe [1]
Who has copied this book for me,
That Thou wouldst reward him also
With grace never granted to man;
For Thy Grace, O Lord, is a thousandfold more
Than Thy creatures can ever receive!

Then spake our Lord:
"He has written it in letters of gold,
Therefore shall every word of it
Be inscribed on his cloak
In gleaming, heavenly gold:
For pure love must ever be
The highest of all human attributes."

When the Lord said these words to me
I saw the glorious Truth in eternal merit:
Ah! Lord! I pray Thee preserve this book
From the eyes of the false
Who come from nether regions, never from above.
For they are conceived in Lucifer's heart
Born in spiritual pride, reared in hatred,
And grown up in scorn without virtue.
God's children must suffer from this
And be oppressed by such ignominy
If with Jesus they would receive the highest honour.
We must ever keep a holy watchfulness on ourselves
And on our even-Christians,
So that should they err we may faithfully warn them
And thus save ourselves many unnecessary words.

AMEN.

[1] Heinrich von Halle.

THIS IS THE THIRD PART OF THE BOOK

1. *Of the Kingdom of Heaven and of the nine choirs and of who shall fill the spaces. Of the throne of the Apostles and of St. Mary and of Christ*

The Soul spake this to her Desire:
"Fare forth and see where my Love is,
Say to him that I desire to love!"
So Desire sped forth
For it is by nature swift
And came to the Empyrean and cried:
"Great Lord! Open! and let me in!"
Then said the Lord of that place:
"What means this fiery eagerness?"
"Lord! I would have thee know
That my Lady can no longer live thus—
If Thou wouldst flow forth to her
Then might she soar—
But the fish cannot live long
Stranded on the shore."
"Go back," said the Lord, "I cannot let thee in
Unless thou bring me that hungry soul
Who alone delights Me above all things."
As the messenger returned
And the soul perceived the will of her Lord
Ah! how lovingly she received it
And raised herself up
In strong and happy flight.

Then two angels came quickly towards her. God sent them to meet her in heartfelt love. They said, "Lady! what willest thou here above? For thou art still clothed in the darkness of earth?" "Sirs!" she answered, "be silent as to that and greet me more warmly! I will to my Love. The nearer *you* sink to earth, the more you lose your heavenly glow; while the higher I rise, the brighter I shine!" Then they took the soul between them and led her in with joy.

When the soul beheld the land of the angels
Where she was known without illusion
Heaven was opened to her.

And she stood there with melting heart
And looked on her Love and said:
"Ah! Lord! when I look on Thee
I must praise Thee in wondrous wisdom!
Where am I now?
I have lost myself in Thee!
I can no longer think of the earth
Nor of my heart's sorrow—
I had thought that when I saw Thee here above
I would lament to Thee of many things on earth—
But now, O Lord, the sight of Thee
Has in one moment raised me above my best self."

Then she knelt down, thanked Him for His Grace, took her crown from her head and laid it against the rosy scars of His feet, and begged that she might come near Him. He took her in His Divine arms and laid His Fatherly hand on her breast and gazed into her face. Ah! how she was then kissed! And in that kiss was raised up to the highest heights above all the choirs of angels.

The smallest truth
That there I saw or heard or knew
Bore no likeness
Even to the highest wisdom
Ever known on earth.

There I saw inwardly unheard of things, so my confessor tells me. I am not expert in writing, but now I fear before God if I keep silent about these things, and before ignorant people if I speak. For how can I help it that such a thing should happen to me and often has happened? In my humble simplicity, poverty and misery, God has shown me His marvels—There I saw the Creation and the ordering of the House of God which He Himself has made out of His own mouth. Therein He has placed the dearly beloved whom He has made with His own hands. The creation of this House signifies Heaven, the choirs the Kingdom, therefore one speaks of the Kingdom of Heaven.

The Kingdom has an end to its statutes, but of its being there is no end. The Heaven surrounds the choirs and between

Heaven and the human choirs are ranged the sinners of the world, nearly on a level with the choirs so that they may improve and be converted. The choirs are so holy and high above us that without purity, love and renunciation of all things, none may attain to them. All who fell out of this place were holy, therefore all who enter in must be holy too. All unbaptized children and those of six years, filled the spaces not higher than the sixth choir. From there up to the seraphim such maidens should fill the spaces as had sullied themselves in childish ways yet had done no grievous sin, and had purified themselves through confession. Nevertheless, as they had lost their first purity they could never completely replace it. After the Day of Judgment holy maidens shall fill the space above the seraphim whence Lucifer and his followers had been flung down.

Lucifer committed simultaneously three mortal sins, hatred, pride and covetousness, which the choir flung down into the abyss as quickly as one might say an Alleluia. The whole Kingdom was terrified and the pillars of Heaven shook; many others fell also. The World-to-be[1] is still void and empty; there is no one in it but it is light in itself and sparkles with rapture to the glory of God. Above the World-to-be is the Throne of God, vaulted by His power in gleaming charity which reaches down to the Heaven of the cherubim; the Throne of God and Heaven form together a glorious dwelling which surrounds the World-to-be and the nine choirs.

Above the Throne of God is nothing but God, God, God, immense, great God. Above on the Throne is seen the Mirror of the Godhead, the Image of the Humanity, the Light of the Holy Spirit. And it is known that the Three Persons are One God and that they are joined in One. On this ineffable matter it is not fitting for me to utter more.[2]

[1] This word *ellende* is generally translated as *a foreign land*; but here there is little doubt it means the World-to-be, the Beyond.

Mechthild's symbolic conception of Heaven seems to be a funnel-shaped place with the point at the top. The Throne of God where the Holy Trinity are, is at the apex. Then formed in ever-widening circles come the choirs: between each choir there yawns a space, to which human beings are allotted according to their merit.

[2] See Gardner, op. cit., p. 277. This passage again echoes the doctrine and expression of Dionysius. Mechthild's vision "resembles Dante more closely than any previous work of this kind."

Lucifer's breach must be filled by John the Baptist, who enjoys this honour above the seraphim, as well as all pure spiritual maidens destined with him for the World-to-be. By the throne of our Lady no spaces shall be filled, for through her Child she has healed all the wounds of mankind to whom she herself granted grace and preserved it to those who desired it. Her son is God and she is goddess; no one can win like honour.[1]

The Apostles are nearest to God in the Throne and have the region of the seraphim as their reward after they are purified. John the Baptist, too, is a Prince on the Throne. The angels dwell no higher than the seraphim. All above them must be human. The holy martyrs and God's preachers and ghostly lovers are also in the choirs. They come in high honour in the choir of the cherubim. There unasked I saw the reward of the preachers as it shall come to pass. Their stalls are marvellous, their reward glorious. By the foremost places are two burning lights; they signify love, and are an image of the Holy, of true inner fervour. The backs of the stalls are soft and give rest beyond expression in reward for the strict obedience to which the preachers were here subjected. The feet of the stalls are adorned with many precious stones, so that I heartily rejoiced to see so noble a reward. This they have on account of the arduous journeys their feet had to accomplish here.

(Ah! ye preachers! why do ye now wag your tongues so unwillingly and bend your heads so stiffly to the mouths of sinners?)

I have seen before God what will happen to the Preachers in Heaven—that a breath will go forth from their mouths which will be carried up by the Choirs before the Throne and will praise the heavenly Father for the wisdom with which He has endowed their tongues; and greet the Son for His share in their Office, for He Himself was a Preacher; and thank the Holy Spirit for His Grace, for He is the Master of all gifts. Thus will God's Preachers and holy Martyrs and loving Maidens rise up, for the greatest honour is bestowed on them, robed in festal garments, singing songs of Love and carrying wreaths of flowers to the glory of God.

[1] This phrase has been much criticized; it is, however, what Mechthild says.

The maidens' robes are white as lilies,
The preachers' cloaks fiery as the sun,
Because they suffered with Jesus
The shedding of blood.
The maidens' wreaths are many coloured,
The martyrs' crowns glorious.
The Preachers' wreaths represent the Word of God
Which brought them such honour
And these three groups of the Blessed
Pass before the Holy Trinity in noble procession.
And the three-fold flood of the Trinity
Flows towards them from God
And replenishes their courage;
So that they sing aloud the Truth
Which God has taught them,
In effortless joy.

The Preachers sing: "O chosen God! We have followed Thy merciful goodness in living poverty and have driven in the lost sheep which Thy hired shepherds had allowed to stray from the right way."

The Martyrs sing: "Lord! Thy innocent blood replenished our courage when we were Thy companions in martyrdom."

The blessed who now soar in Heaven and there live blissfully, are irradiated by one Light, penetrated by one Love, united in one Will even though they do not yet merit the highest state. They rest in the power of God, glory in love, and keep themselves in His ways as the air shines in the sun, till the Last Day. . . .

When God will hold His Feast, the places are set so that Bride and Bridegroom face each other, that love may come to love, body to soul, possessing full power in everlasting honour.

O darling Lamb and blessed Youth, Jesus, the heavenly Father's Child! When Thou dost rise and pass through the choirs, beckoning happily to the maidens, all follow Thee in such reverence and state that I cannot describe it. How they then disport themselves with Thee and delight in Thy love is such heavenly joy and perfect union that I know not its like.

The widows follow happily, content in sweet contemplation.

The married couples look lovingly at each other yet with restraint, for the more one here satisfies earthly joy, the more heavenly joy must be renounced there. The choirs have each their especial lustre as Heaven has its especial radiance. This is so glorious that I neither can nor may describe it—

Of the heavenly things God has shown me
I can speak but a little word,
Not more than a honey-bee
Can carry away on its foot
From an over-flowing jar.
In the first choir is Happiness
The highest of all gifts.
In the second Gentleness,
In the third Loving-kindness,
In the fourth Sweetness,
In the fifth Joyfulness,
In the sixth honourable Rest,
In the seventh Riches,
In the eighth Merit,
In the ninth fervent Love,
And in the sweet Beyond, Pure Holiness.

The highest in the Throne is mighty Honour, powerful Majesty. But above all that ever was in Heaven is WONDER—that they may behold what now is and ever more shall be.

Ah! the glorious Work! the sweet Eternity! the powerful penetration of all things and the special intimacy which ever exists between God and each individual soul! That is a thing so delicate that had I the wisdom of all men and the voice of an angel, I could not describe it. . . .

The unbaptized children under five years are held in special honour. . . . They have no crowns for God can reward them for nothing, yet He has given them this favour that they live in great peace. Some may wonder how I, a sinful being, can dare to write of such things. I say truly that had not God, seven years ago,[1] bestowed a singular grace on my heart, I should have

[1] This might refer to her twelfth year when she was first touched by the spirit, but is more likely to refer to her twenty-third year when she dedicated herself to the spiritual life.

kept silence and never dared to write. But thanks to God's mercy, the writing did me no harm, owing to the clear reflection of my sinfulness which stood openly before my soul, and the noble nature of Grace which lies in all true gifts of God.

For the higher the soul has risen, the less one should pamper or praise the body, nor should one complain of its distress before God, for the body is by nature faint-hearted. One should behave as a pensioner who can no longer serve at Court and is therefore given alms through the love of God. (And that is just; for the nobler the dog, the better the collar.)

And now, dear Lord, I offer this writing to Thy merciful goodness and beg Thee with sighs and tears, and a penitent soul, that no Pharisee may ever read it. I beg Thee also that Thy children may receive this teaching and understand it in pure Truth as Thou, O Lord, hast given it to me.

2. *How the soul praises God in seven things and how God bids her wait patiently for healing*

O sweet Jesus, most lovely form, unconcealed from the need and love of my poor soul, I praise Thee in love, in need, in fellowship with all creatures. To praise Thee delights me above all things. Lord! Thou art the sun of all eyes, the joy of all ears, the voice of all words, the power of all valour, the teacher of all wisdom, the love in all life, the order in all being.

Then God praised the loving soul in which He delighted, thus: "Thou art a light before My eyes, a lyre to My ears, a voice for My words, a meaning for My joy, an honour of My wisdom, a love in My life, a praise in My being—

SOUL

Lord! Thou art ever wounded for love of me
That Thou hast Thyself well proved.
Thou hast written me in the book of Thy Godhead,
Thou hast fashioned me after Thine own image,
Thou hast bound me hand and foot to Thy side,
Grant me, Beloved, to anoint Thee!

GOD

But where, dear heart, wilt thou find the ointment?

SOUL

Lord! I will tear the heart of my soul in twain
And lay Thee therein.

GOD

Never couldst thou give Me more precious healing
Than that I might soar ceaselessly in thy soul!

SOUL

Lord! if I might ever abide in Thee
I would ever be Thy physician!

GOD

Yea! that will I grant thee.
But My fidelity to thee
Means that thou must bide thy time.
My love bids thee work,
My patience bids thee keep silence,
My concern bids thee bear poverty,
My longing bids thee endure contempt,
My desire bids thee suffer need,
My conquest bids thee press after all virtues,
My end bids thee bear much—
In all this thou hast honour
Till I can take from thee
Thy heavy burden.

3. *A Plaint that the soul is a servant and of the Love of God*

THE SOUL

Ah! Lord! What a poor soul is this and how exiled, who here on earth is the servant of Thy love! Ah! who can help me to express how the soul suffers, for she does not know what she lacks!

LOVE

But, O Bride, thou dost say in thy Book of Love that Love flees from thee? How can that be? I would rather die of pure love than let God escape from me in dark wisdom. When I may delight in my Love, then wisdom can teach me nothing. But when I have to work at other things with my five senses,

then I rejoice when the holy Mass is brought to me. Listen, dear friend, I was joyful because intoxicated with Love and therefore spoke tenderly of the senses. But when I have drunk too deeply of Love, I can no longer think of my Love for then Love commands and what He wills, must be. To that which God desires I must adjust myself, for if He takes my body, my soul is His also—

Wouldst thou come with me to the wine-cellar
That will cost thee much;
Even hadst thou a thousand marks
It were all spent in one hour![1]
If thou wouldst drink the unmingled wine
Thou must ever spend more than thou hast,
And the host will never fill thy glass to the brim!
Thou wilt become poor and naked,
Despised of all who would rather see themselves
In the dust, than squander their all in the wine-cellar.
This also thou must suffer,
That thy friends look askance at thee
Who go with thee to the Inn.
How greatly they will scorn thee
When they cannot dare such costs
But must have water mixed with wine.
Dear Bride! in the tavern
I will gladly spend all that I have.
And let myself be dragged through the fires of love
That I may often wend my way
To that heavenly cellar.

SOUL

Thereto I gladly agree, for I would not lose Love. He who despises me and torments me, yet pours me out the Host's own wine which He Himself has drunk.

From this wine I become so overpowered
That I am verily subject to all creatures,

[1] See Introduction, p. xxviii, on the Inebriation of the self through Love, a symbol drawn from the *Song of Songs*. See also Underhill, *Mysticism*, p. 232, *et seq.*

And it seemed to me in my human dishonour
And acquired sinfulness,
That no one had ever done me such harm,
That no greater sin could be wrought
Against me, unblessed!

Therefore I would not revenge my sorrow on my enemies, although I know they would gladly break God's law against me.

LOVE

Dear Friend! when it happens that the cellar is closed, that thou must go out into the street, poor, hungry, naked and so despised that thou hast no longer any support of Christian life in thee save Faith alone—Then, if thou wilt only love, thou shalt never suffer ruin—

Ah! Bride! I have such hunger for the heavenly Father,
That I forget all sorrow;
Such thirst for the Son
That it takes from me all earthly desire,
Such need of the Spirit of both
That it overpasses all I can grasp
Of the wisdom of the Father,
All the work of the Son I can bear,
And all the comfort of the Holy Spirit
Which may come to me.
Whoso is caught in this need
Must ever depend undeserving,
On the holiness of God.

4. *How our Lady could sin and how not, as taught by the Holy Spirit*

Ah! Mary! Honoured Queen! Mother of God! and my Lady! I was asked whether thou couldst sin like other human beings, as thou didst live on this sinful earth. Now the Holy Spirit who knows all thy secrets has told me in what manner thou couldst sin. For thou wert created by God a complete human being in womanly nature and functions and didst not lay aside thy human attributes. That made thy long purity noble and dear in the sight of God.

But, Lady, divinely noble as thou wert above all human beings, thou couldst not sin. That hadst thou not in thee, thou whom the heavenly Father protected in thy childhood with the forethought of His high choice. The Holy Spirit encircled thy youth with the fulfilment of His new love and Jesus passed through thy body as dew through the flowers so that thy purity was never touched. And the power of the Holy Trinity held thy nature in bonds that it should never dare nor wish to move humanly against its Creator. And the eternal wisdom of the Godhead overshadowed thee so that thou wast awakened to the facts of human life, that thou shouldst suffer pain without sin and that the flower of thy humanity in the Son of the Almighty Godhead should not be lost.

Thus overshadowed thou didst humanly carry Jesus and nurture him as mother. But in the message of the Father and its reception by the Holy Spirit, the Word of the Son, the fire of the Godhead, the light of the Holy Spirit and the wisdom of the Son were so great in thee that thou couldst hardly find shadow in which to rest. God knows how thou then must have had to wrestle with poverty, adverse fate and many grave difficulties. Yet in thy heart thou didst remain fervent to the good work, inspired by the great Fire which burns in itself without beginning and without substance. That, O Lady, shone through thy being and drove all shadows out of thy home.

5. *How the soul laments that it cannot hear Mass nor the daily Offices. How it praises God in ten things*

A sorrowful soul lamented thus that God had cast her aside from His great love and loved her with much suffering. Alas! how sorely those can suffer who, after enjoying riches, fall into poverty. The soul exclaimed: "Ah! Lord! now am I so poor in my ailing body, so exiled in my soul and so deprived of spiritual privileges that no one reads Thy Offices before me, or celebrates the Holy Sacrament of the Mass!"

Thou spoke the Lord's voice of love:
It pierced my soul with His great words
Which I was unworthy to hear:

Thou art My desire, My love thirsts for thee,
Thou art a cooling presence to My breast,
A powerful caress to My mouth,
A gladsome joy to My being!
I am in thee and thou in Me,
We could not be closer,
For we two are fused in one,
Poured into one mould,
Thus, unwearied shall we remain forever.

Ah! Lord! Thou dost speak as if Thou wert here beside me! Yet I dare not think too joyfully of Thy words, for my body, that dead dog, ever stinks in my nostrils and other of my enemies assail me so constantly that I cannot think how it shall be at my end. Only, that in contemplating Thee, I know nothing of sorrow, for Thou hast taken me from myself and hidden Thyself in me. What Thou hast now praised in me had to be; may it yet serve to Thy praise. And our Lord answered thus:

My deepest searchings, My furthest wanderings,
My highest desires, My long expectation
I must yet teach thee.
For training costs noble maidens dear,
They must conquer themselves in all their sufferings,
And often tremble before their disciplinarian.

That, too, is the lot of My brides on earth. I was on earth for love of thee in great need. My enemies held My death dreadfully before My eyes and I had to bear mockery and poverty. But in all that I trusted in the unspeakable goodness of My Father. Order thou thy courage after that pattern!

6. *Wouldst thou rightly follow God thou must have six things*

Whoso would follow God in honest works must never stand still. He must ever travel on. He must reflect what he was in sin and what he now is in virtue, what he may be if he falls! He must lament and praise and pray day and night. When a

faithful bride awakes, she thinks of her love; if she cannot be with him she weeps! Ah! how often that happens spiritually to the brides of God!

7. *Of seven open enemies of our bliss who do us sevenfold harm*

To be useless is a bad habit and bad habits harm us in every way. Earthly desire destroys the holy word of God in us and the hard struggle against pride does us much injury. Enmity of heart drives the Holy Spirit from us. Angry passions take from us our intimacy with God. False holiness can never endure, while pure love of God can never pass away. If we do not vanquish these enemies they will take from us more than Heaven, for we can have a foretaste of Heaven even here if we live in holiness. But if we allow these enemies to gain power over us, they will rob us of the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit and extinguish in us the light of the true love of God. They also bind the eyes of holy knowledge and lead us blindly into the seven deadly sins. And where does that lead, if not into the everlasting abyss?

9. *Of the beginning of all things God has made*

Ah! Father of all Good! I, an unworthy creature, thank Thee for all the faithfulness with which Thou hast drawn me out of myself into Thy marvels; that in Thy undivided Trinity I heard and saw the sublime Council which ruled before our time, when Thou, O Lord, wert enclosed in Thyself alone and hadst no one to share in Thine unspeakable Joy.

> Then the Three Persons shone so brightly in One
> That each shone through the other
> And yet was complete in itself.

The Father was adorned in Omnipotence, the Son was like the Father in unspeakable Wisdom; the Holy Spirit was like both in perfect gentleness.

Then the Holy Spirit put a plan gently before the Father and struck the Holy Trinity asunder and said, "Lord and Father,

I will give Thee of Thyself, a gentle counsel: We will no longer be unfruitful! We will have a creative Kingdom and make angels after My pattern that they be one spirit with me; the second spirit shall be man.

For that alone is Joy
Which in great love and inconceivable happiness
We share with others in Thy Presence."

Then the Father spoke: "Thou art one Spirit with Me; what Thou dost counsel pleases Me. When the angel was created, Thou knowest what happened. Even had the fall of the angel been prevented, man had to be created. The Holy Spirit gave the angels His goodness that they might serve us and delight in our blessedness."

Then the everlasting Son spoke with conviction: "Dear Father! My nature, too, must bear fruit. As we are now to work wonders, let us fashion man after My Pattern! Although I foresee great trouble yet I must love man eternally."

Then the Father spoke: "Son! I, too, have a great longing in My Divine heart and I hear the call of love. We will become fruitful so that man will love us in return and recognize in some measure our great glory. I will make Myself a Bride who shall greet Me with her mouth and wound Me with her glance. Then first will love begin."

Then the Holy Spirit spoke, "Dear Father, I will lead Thy Bride to Thee."

And the Son spoke, "Father! Thou knowest that I am yet to die for love. Yet let us begin these things in great joy and holiness."

Then the Holy Trinity gave itself to the creation of all things and made us body and soul in infinite love. Adam and Eve were fashioned nobly after the pattern of the Everlasting Son, begotten of the Father without beginning. The Son shared His heavenly wisdom and His earthly form with Adam—

That he might have in perfect love
True knowledge and holy senses
To offer to all earthly creatures—
That is now very dear to us!

Then the Lord gave Adam in love, a modest, noble, little maid. That was Eve. He gave her the same humble love He Himself bore in honour of the Father. Their bodies should remain pure for God did not create anything that should shame them and they were clothed as angels. They should conceive their children in holy love as the sun plays upon the waters and leaves them untroubled. But from the time they ate the forbidden fruit, their bodies were altered so that they did feel shame, as we still do to-day. Had the Holy Trinity made us like the angels, owing to the noble nature of that creation, we would have had no need to be ashamed.[1]

The heavenly Father shared His Divine love with the soul and said, "I am the God of all gods; thou art the goddess of all creatures and I give thee My solemn vow that I will never forsake thee. That thou mayst not lose thyself, My angels shall ever serve thee. I will give thee My Holy Spirit as thy guardian that thou mayst not unwittingly fall into mortal sin and I also give thee (word missing) free will. Thou shalt love Love before all things and go forward with prudence.

"Thou shalt keep a simple law
Which thou must always remember—
That I am thy God!
The soul which feeds on the pure food
God left for it in Paradise,
Shall remain in great holiness
In its mortal body.
But as Adam and Eve ate the food
Not intended for them
They lost angelic purity
And forgot chastity.

Then for many years
The soul called for her love
With plaintive voice
And in great darkness, saying,
"Ah! Lord! whence came Thy sweet love?
How sorely hast Thou banished Thy rightful Queen!

[1] This sentence is obscure in the MS.

(This is the meaning of the Prophets)
Ah! Lord! how canst Thou suffer this long distress
That Thou dost not slay our death?
Thou didst will to be born—
But, Lord, all Thy doing is accomplished,
Yea! Even Thy wrath!"

Then began a solemn council in the Holy Trinity.
The Father spoke: I repent Me of My work
For I had given the Holy Trinity
So noble a bride
That the highest angels
Should have been her waiting-maids;
Had Lucifer remained in his place of honour
She should have been his goddess.
For her alone was the nuptial couch prepared
—But she wished no longer to be like Me . . .
Now is she horribly mis-shapen—
Who would accept such dirt?

Ah! then the everlasting Son knelt before His Father and said: "I will take her! Give Me Thy blessing! I will gladly take blood-stained humanity upon Myself and will heal its wounds with My innocent blood and will bind them up to the end with the cloth of humility. And I will requite human sin to Thee, by human death."

Then the Holy Spirit spake: "O Almighty God! We will make a noble procession and will proceed in glory down from these heights. I have once already waited on the Virgin Mary."

Then the Father bowed in great love to both their wills and said to the Holy Spirit: "Carry My light before My dear Son into all those hearts He shall touch with My words. But Thou, Son, shalt take up Thy Cross. I will go with Thee in all Thy ways and will give Thee a pure maid as mother, that Thou mayst more nobly uphold ignoble humanity."

Then the procession moved with great joy into the Temple of Solomon. And there Almighty God took shelter for nine months. . . .

10. *The Passion of the loving soul which it has from God; how it rises and goes to Heaven*

The longing soul is betrayed in true love, in sighing after God. She is sold in holy lamentation for her love. She is besought by many tears for her dear Lord whom she longs to find. She is caught in the first moment of recognition when God kisses her in sweet union. She is seized by many holy thoughts as she mortifies the flesh that she may not waver. She is bound by the power of the Holy Spirit and her delight is manifold. She is overwhelmed by great weakness so that she cannot bear the everlasting Light without intermission. She is dragged before the Judge in trembling shame because God is so often withdrawn from her on account of her sins. She answers all things modestly and would not willingly vex any. Her cheeks are buffeted in the Tribune when devils assail her spirit. She is taken before Herod when she recognizes herself as worthless and unworthy and despises herself in thinking of her great Lord. She is taken before Pilate for she must attend to earthly things. She is shouted at, beaten and sore wounded, when she must return to her body. She is clothed with the purple of great love. She is crowned with manifold fidelity so long as she does not ask God to reward her for her faithfulness but to accept it to His praise. She is scoffed at because she loses herself so utterly in God that she forgets earthly wisdom. She kneels at the feet of all creation to the mockery of others. Her eyes are bound with the unworthiness of her body wherein she lies imprisoned in darkness. She bears her cross along a pleasant way because in all her suffering she gives herself utterly to God.[1] Her head is struck with a rod because in her great holiness she seems like a fool. She is nailed so firmly to the cross by the hammer of Almighty Love that not all creatures can release her. She thirsts greatly on the cross of Love and would fain drink the pure wine of all God's children.

[1] This sentence and the next are in inverse order in the Einsiedeln version ; correctly placed in the Latin.

Then they all come
And offer her gall.
Her body is slain
In living Love,
And her spirit is raised up
Above all human comprehension.
After this death she goes to Hell
And comforts sorrowing souls
With her prayers of God's goodness,
Though her body knows nothing of it.
She is pierced in her side
By one blind to innocent love
And from her heart there pours forth
Much holy teaching.

She hangs high on the Cross of Love in the pure air of the Holy Spirit, turned towards the Son of the living Godhead, oblivious of all earthly things. Thus, in a holy end, she is taken down from the cross and says: "Father, receive my spirit. It is finished." She is laid in a sealed grave of deep humility for she has ever known herself the most unworthy of all creatures.

She rises happily on Easter Day having joyfully conversed with her Love in the night. In the early morning, with Mary Magdalene she comforts her maidens when she is assured that God has blotted out all her sins through the remorse of love. . . . Thus she goes out from the Jerusalem of Holy Church with a brave troop of virtues. Her body distresses her for with its ignoble art it would gladly command her will. But she insists to the virtues, "I am your Mistress; Ye must obey me in all things. If I did not go to my Father ye would ever remain fools!"

Then she ascends into Heaven where God supernaturally takes all earthly things from her. She is received into a white cloud of holy protection whence she is lovingly borne aloft and returns free from all care. Then the angels come and comfort the Man of Galilee, when we remember God's chosen friends and their holy example.

Such a passion must be suffered by every soul truly penetrated by the love of God.

12. *Thou shalt praise, give thanks, desire and pray. Of the Light and the Lantern*

Ah, dear Lord! How poor I was that I could neither think of all these words, nor pray, nor love! Then I crept to Thee and said: "Lord! wherewith can I honour Thee now?" And Thou saidst to this most unworthy of all creatures: "Thou shalt praise Me for My faithful protection; thank Me for my bountiful gifts, desire My holy wonders and pray for a holy end." Then the soul asked: "Beloved! what wonders shall I desire?" (This I must write in tears, may God help me, poorest of the poor, that I may ever stay with Jesus!) Then my Love spake: "I will set a light in the lantern and a special ray of understanding shall shine into every eye that sees the light." Then the soul asked in great humility, yet without fear: "Beloved! What shall that lantern be?"

And our Lord answered: "I am the Light! Thy breast is the lantern!"

15. *Thou shalt go to God's Table with eight virtues*

Ah, foolish Beguines! How can ye be so bold that ye do not tremble before our Almighty Judge when, as so often, ye receive the Body of the Lord as a matter of blind habit? Now I, who am the least of you all, am ever ashamed! I blush! I tremble! On one great Festival I was so afraid that I did not dare to receive because I was ashamed of even my greatest merit before the eyes of our Lord. Then I begged my Beloved that He would show me His will. He said: "Truly, when thou goest before Me in humble lamentation and holy fear, I must fain follow thee as the flood, the mill-stream. But if thou meet Me with the flowering desire of flowing love, then must I touch thee with My Divine nature as my Queen." If I am truly to show forth the goodness of God, then I am obliged to speak of myself. But that hinders me now truly no more than it hinders a hot oven to fill it with cold dough.

I went to God's Table with a noble band. They took care of me and saved me from many dangers. Truth censured me;

Fear rebuked me; Shame drove me on; Remorse judged me; Desire drew me; Love led me to the goal. Christian Faith protected me; the true meaning of all good things prepared me; and all my good works cried Alas! and Alas! over me. Almighty God received me; His pure humanity united itself with me and His Holy Spirit comforted me.

Then I said: "Lord! now Thou art mine for Thou art given to me this very day on which it was declared unto us *Puer natus est nobis*, Unto us a Child is born! Now I desire O Lord, Thy praise, not my gain; that this day Thy Blessed Body may comfort poor souls. Thou art truly mine, now this day Thou shalt be a ransom for prisoners."[1]

Then the soul won such power that she led Him by His might till they came to the most dreadful place my eyes ever lit upon. A bath was there prepared of fire and pitch, dirt, smoke and stench. A thick black cloud hung over it like a black skin. And therein lay souls like toads in filth. Their form was human, yet they were apparitions and had the devil's likeness in them. They stewed and roasted together. They cried out and suffered unspeakable things because of their bodies through which they had fallen so low. Their flesh had blinded their spirits; therefore they seethed here.

Then the human spirit spoke: "O Lord! how many of these poor creatures are there? Thou art my true ransom! Thou must take pity!" Then our Lord spoke: "Their number is above all human counting, thou canst not even grasp it because thou too art of the earth. These were all broken vessels who on earth forgot their spiritual life. They are from all ages and all lands."

Then the human spirit asked: "But, dear Lord, where are the hermits of whom I see no trace?" Our Lord answered: "Their sins were secret, therefore they are bound in a separate place...." Then the spirit was deeply distressed and laid itself down at our Lord's feet and longed mightily to be of loving service and said, "Ah, Lord! Thou knowest well what I desire!" And our Lord said: "Thou didst well to bring me here. I will not be unmindful of them."

[1] Mechthild was evidently again in favour with the Church, again receiving her Communion.

A great troop of devils stood round about and tormented the souls in the accursed bath. They were more than I could count and they rubbed and tweaked and nagged the souls and struck them with fiery thongs. The human spirit spoke to them: "Listen ye sin-eaters! Look on this ransom! Is it not precious enough to satisfy you?" Then they were terrified, quaking in utter shame and said: "Now we must flee from here. For however accursed we are, we must give way to Truth."

Then out of His Divine heart our Lord fulfilled the desire of the poor souls and they rose up in love and joy. The soul said: "Ah, dear Lord! whither shall they go now?" And He replied, "I will lead them to a hillside covered with flowers; there they will find joy greater than I can say." Then He waited on them and was their servant and their beloved companion. He said to me there were seventy thousand of them. Whereupon I asked how long their sufferings had lasted and He said: "For thirty years they have been separated from their bodies; they should have stayed another ten years in torment had not so noble a ransom been given for them." Then the devils fled, afraid to take the ransom. "Beloved," said the soul, "how long must they still stay here?" And our Lord answered, "As long as seems good to us."

16. *After the gift follows punishment and after contempt honour*

This soul reminded our Lord of His earlier words: "Lord, Thou hast said there is no gift on this earth which does not have a rod lying on it. Thou hast told me that with Thine own lips and proved it to me many times. And Thou didst show me more than six years ago that spiritual people would treat me with contempt. That they do diligently and often with anger. Is that the gift I should ask for?" Our Lord answered: "My Father gave Me the power of His Truth and the knowledge of His Holiness and after that He gave Me much suffering and ignominy. But at the last He gave Me great honour and unspeakable reward. In the same way I will give thee My Holy Trinity."

17. *Of the Purgatory of a spiritual person; of his fivefold help in suffering and of the nobility of the Preaching Order*

I saw a spiritual man in torment,
In whom I had had great faith in his life.
I prayed for three months for his soul
With heartfelt sorrow
That the worst might never happen to him,
That I might see and pray for his need
Till the eve of the Last Day.

When he gave up his spirit he was clearly shown to me in prayer which I offered for all poor souls. I saw him alone and he could not show his suffering to me. He was pale and in a white cloud. I asked, "Alas! why art thou not in Heaven?" and he answered in shame and remorse in a low voice. He read weeping in a book of which all the words cried out. The book rose like smoke over him with all the books he had ever read. He said, "I loved the world too much in thought, word and outward appearance." Two dragons lay at his feet; they drew out of him all the comfort he should have got from Holy Church, because of his perverted obedience. He had insisted on following his own will and not the advice of his director.

I asked: "Who are the enemies who torment you?" and he said: "Because of the merit of my Order no devil can touch me. I had a great struggle in my body and longed for something in my mind, but if it had come to me, it would have been harmful. Therefore God did not let me live longer. I burn in myself; my self-will must torment me." Then I asked: "How can anyone help you?" and he said: "Whoso will say a hundred *Venien*[1] for a whole year and take twelve strokes of the discipline with tears of repentance from a pure heart—that would be my penance. Masses should be said for me; please ask priests and women to pray for me. I will not tell you of the end of my sufferings for I would distress my brethren thereby. Now leave me!" Then he received the likeness of a devil and burned and was silent towards me.

[1] A prayer said prostrate with outstretched arms. It is to be noted that Mechthild does not condemn; she remains a loving friend, anxious to help and sympathize.

21. *Of Hell, how it has three parts; how Lucifer and six kinds of people are tormented and how there is no help for them*

I have seen a place
Whose name is Eternal Hatred.
It is built in the deepest abyss
Out of stones laid there by mortal sin.
Pride was the first stone
Laid by Lucifer.

Disobedience, covetousness, gluttony, impurity were the four heavy stones our father Adam brought there.

Anger, falseness and murder
Were the three stones brought by Cain.
Lying, betrayal, despair,
Which are empty of love
Were the stones with which
Judas killed himself.
The sins of Sodom and false piety
Are the corner stones built into the work.
It was building for many years,
Woe to all who helped in it!
The more they helped
With the more prejudice will they be received
Should they ever return.

The whole place is upside down, the highest being in the lowest and most unworthy places. Lucifer sits in the depths bound by his sin and out of his burning mouth there pour ceaselessly all the sin, torment and infamy by which Hell and Purgatory and the earth are so piteously surrounded. In the deepest part of Hell is Fire, Darkness, Stench, Horror and greatest Torment and there the Christians are ranged according to their works. In the middle part the torment is less. There the Jews are ranged according to their works. In the highest part is the least suffering and there the heathen are ranged according to their works. They lament thus—

Alas! had we only had a law
Such dread suffering would not have come
Everlastingly to us!
The Jews lament also:
Woe to us! Had we only followed God
According to the law of Moses
We had not been so bitterly condemned.
The Christians lament even more
That they have lost through pride
The high honour for which Christ in His love
Had destined them.
They look ceaselessly with great lamentation
At Lucifer and must stand naked before him
In their sin.
Alas! how spitefully he receives them,
"Ye who are accursed with me
What joy seek ye here?
Ye have never heard any good of me;
How then can you carry yourselves so well?"

Then he seizes the proud first of all, and crushes them under him and says, "I have not sunk so deep that I will not be above you!" All the Sodomites pass through his mouth and remain in his paunch. When he draws in his breath they move in him, but when he coughs, they are coughed out. The false saints he seats in his lap and kisses horribly and says, "Ye are my comrades. I too was attracted by pleasant falseness; thus ye were all betrayed." The usurer he gnaws ceaselessly telling him the while that he was never merciful. The robber he robs and then offers him to his friends that they may hunt and beat him and show him no mercy. The thief hangs by his heels as a kind of hanging lantern, but the unblessed see no better for that. Those who were unchaste together on earth must lie bound together before Lucifer; should one come alone, the devil is his companion.

The unbelieving masters sit at Lucifer's feet so that they must look on their unclean God. He argues with them so that they become the more ashamed. He gnaws the greedy, for he always

wants more. The murderers must stand before him covered with blood, beaten with a fiery sword by the devil. Those who on earth were guilty of grim hatred must here serve as Lucifer's smelling salts and hang before his nostrils. Gluttons and drunkards must suffer everlasting hunger and eat red-hot stones. Their drink is sulphur and pitch. There for sweetness sourness is given; there we see what we practised here. The litter there is loaded with all kinds of suffering; the wrathful are beaten with fiery thongs. The poor musician who can proudly awaken evil vanity weeps more tears in Hell than there is water in the sea.

I saw below Lucifer the foundation of Hell. It is a hard black stone which must forever support the edifice. Although Hell has neither foundation nor end, yet in its ordering it has both foundation and end.

How Hell burns and rages in itself, how the devils fight with souls, how souls seethe and roast, how they swim and wade in the morass and the stench among the reptiles and filth, how they lie in sulphur and pitch, neither they nor anyone else can ever tell. Seeing that I, through God's mercy and without effort, had seen this great distress, I, poor wretch, suffered so greatly from the stench and the subterranean heat that for three days I could neither sit nor walk nor use any of my five senses. I was as a being struck by lightning. But my soul suffered no harm for it had brought no infection with it which would there merit eternal death. It is possible that a pure soul among these wretched creatures might be to them an everlasting light and comfort. For the sinless soul must by its very nature shine and enlighten, seeing that it is born of everlasting light without suffering. But if it takes on itself the likeness of the devil then it at once loses its heavenly light.

Whether in Hell the condemned
Receive comfort from prayer or alms
I did not gather,
For they are always in such grim mood
That they shrink from all good.
After the Day of Judgment
Lucifer will put on a new garment;

That has grown of itself
Out of all the obscene sins
Ever heard of by men or angels,
For Lucifer is the first form of all sin.
And so he is bound,
And his fury and dreadfulness
Is so infused in all souls and all devils
That one can never be unconscious of his
presence.

So he stretches himself out to a great size and his rage makes him so broad that with one breath he swallows devils, Jews and heathen; they have their full reward in his paunch in their strange union! Woe for them! Soul and body! Human lips dare not speak of it. There everything is as nothing compared to the unspeakable need they suffer. Truly I cannot bear to think of their plight longer than it takes to say a *Hail Mary*, so dreadful is it there.

At the top of Hell there is a head; it is monstrous and has many horrible eyes with flames bursting out of them; they surround the poor souls who live in the fore-court whence God had removed Adam and other of our forefathers. That is now the greatest Purgatory to which a sinner can come. There I saw Bishops, Stewards and great lords in dire necessity and suffering. All who came there had narrowly been spared everlasting suffering by God; yet I found no one who had made vocal confession before death. As their outward senses were taken from them with death, the body lay still, and soul and body were without will. They had lost the obscurity of earth, for God had admitted them to the school of true knowledge. Ah! how narrow there is the way to Heaven!

Then as one being, body and soul spoke together for they were not yet separated, "True God! Have mercy on me! I am truly sorry for my sins!" In that short hour God has secretly found again many otherwise lost souls. But I did not observe this happening to any unless he had done something good with goodwill. The devils lead the stained souls from the body to Purgatory; pure angels may not touch them for they do not appear clearly to them—

But a soul upon earth
May become a help to its friends,
For the devils guard themselves
Against further molesting the soul;
If it is very sinful
It must endure other sufferings,
But it would rather suffer that
Than that the devils should catch it
And ceaselessly make sport of it.

As our holy forefathers went towards Hell they brought with them sure hope in Christian Faith with holy love of God, many humble virtues and faithful labours. They were all led to Hell though ready for Heaven. But nothing in Hell could harm them. For what they brought with them, they must burn there—And that was Love! which shall burn everlastingly in all God's children.

Even should they never come to Heaven
God has reckoned thus:
That which we take with us
We must there eat and drink,
But those who have wasted their time
In great sins still unchanged,
Must now suffer nothing worse
Than to stand before the mouth of Hell;
There Lucifer's breath flames forth ceaselessly,
And with torment pours through them
With such pain that the poor creatures
Are as much one with the flames and furies,
As the blessed are one
With the sweet knowledge of God's love.
I saw there of women
None save princesses who with their princes
Loved all kinds of sin.

Hell has high up on its summit a mouth;
It stays ever open;
Those who there enter in
Can never escape everlasting death.

22. *Of God's Compassion, Temptation and Righteousness*

I have seen and heard of such boundless compassion of God that I asked, "Lord! How may that be?"—

If Thy righteousness companions Thy compassion
How is Thy mercy so great?
Then our Lord spoke a true word thus:
I say to thee by My Divine fidelity
That there are more in Holy Church
Who go straight to Heaven
Than go down to Hell.
For righteousness has its own constant power
Even if stained by sin
And that I will never take from it.
For I come first of all as Father
To the burdened soul.
If I have had to take something good from it
That comes from the great temptation
I suffer through My children.

Then the soul spoke: "Tell me, Lord, of Thy temptation that Thy desire and mine may be made one?" Our Lord said:

"Now hear how I am tempted!
My goodness and gentleness, My faith and compassion
Force Me so sore that I let them flow
Over the mountains of pride, the valleys of humility,
The thickets of disunity
And the smooth ways of purity;
But My mercy forces Me yet further
Than the ill-will of wicked men forces them;
And My righteousness is greater
Than all the wickedness of the devil."
Then the soul spoke:
Lord! Thy righteousness
Leads Thee straightly into the living Truth
And gives me joy unspeakable—without sorrow—
For wherever righteousness enters in
Truth rejoices!

23. *The power of Desire makes one speechless*

Whoso has burned in the mighty Fire of Love could never bear to cool himself with any kind of sin. Ah! Beloved! when shall that please Thee which pleases me? Thus spoke an outlawed soul; her Beloved answered, "I know not what thou desirest; what wouldst thou?" And she replied, "Lord! the mighty power of desire has taken the power of speech from me!" And the Lord said: "Courting is not easy for maidens for their very shame is noble by nature." Then the soul lamented: "Alas! O Lord, Thou hast been too long absent from me! Could I only win Thee by magic that Thou couldst find no rest save in me alone—*then* would love begin! Then wouldst Thou be forced to ask me to glow with love." Then he answered and said:

"Ah! thou unspotted dove!
Grant me this, that I may spare thee
For the world cannot yet do without
thee!"

The soul said: Ah! Lord!
Might it only come to pass
That in my heart's desire I might see Thee
And throw my arms around Thee!
The Joy of Thy Divine love
Must then pierce my soul
So far as may be on this earth.
What I might afterwards suffer
Was never yet seen by human eyes.
A thousand deaths were too little
I long for Thee so sore!
Now will I stand firm in faith to Thee.
If Thou, Lord, canst endure it
Let me pursue Thee in longing;
For well I know
That the first longing of Love, for me,
Must come from Thyself.

24. *Two kinds of persons are offered two kinds of spirit by God*

Now I will write of a truly spiritual sister and a worldly Beguine who conversed together. The sister spoke from the true light of the Holy Spirit without sorrow, but the Beguine spoke materially in the spirit of Lucifer, in a complaining way. There are two kinds of spiritual persons on earth; they are offered two kinds of spirit. God offers His Holy Spirit to those pure beings who live in faithful holiness. Thus two pure natures come together, the glowing Fire of the Godhead and the gradual growth of the loving soul. If there is thus a pure dwelling ready for humility, a bright light will be kindled which will be seen from far. Then, O loving soul, thou wilt be rich with riches which no one can take from thee, even wert thou the poorest of the poor. Through humility one becomes rich; through discipline and a well-ordered life one becomes noble and modest; through love one becomes lovely and praiseworthy; through undeserved contempt one is raised up on high before God. Think of this, sister, and let no one drive thee from thy good habits. So shalt thou remain holy.

The devil also offers his spirit
To those who in hatred and proud desire
Are ready for the worst.
Such know not that love leads to all good,
They become poor from hatred
And the fury of the devil,
So that it becomes impossible
They should ever again find or follow
The love of God.
True love praises God constantly;
Longing love gives the pure heart sweet sorrow;
Seeking love belongs to itself alone;
Understanding love loves all in common;
Enlightened love is mingled with sadness,
Selfless love bears fruit without effort;
It functions so quietly
That the body knows nothing of it.

Clear love is still, in God alone
Seeing that both have one will
And there is no creature so noble
That it can hinder them.
  This is written by Knowledge
Out of the everlasting book.
Gold is often heavily flecked by copper,
Just as falseness and vain honour
Blot out virtue from the human soul.
The ignoble soul to whom passing things are
  so dear
That it never trembled before Love
Never heard God speak lovingly in it—
Alas! to such this life is all darkness!

THIS IS THE FOURTH PART OF THE BOOK

The second chapter of this book tells us much of what we know about Mechthild's outward life. Greeted by the Spirit in her twelfth year, she tells us that was thirty-one years ago, so that she is forty-three when she writes this chapter. For twenty years she has fought with the weapons of her soul against her senses ; so that we infer she left home when she was twenty-three to dedicate herself to the spiritual life. We are here aware of hard battles being fought out in her own soul, as in the great twelfth chapter, which reminds us of a saying of Richard of St. Victor (probably known to her), "The desirous soul no longer thirsts *for* God but *into* God, the pull of its desire draws it into the Infinite Sea."

One of Mechthild's greatest sayings comes in this book (chapter 12): *God has enough of all good things save of intercourse with the soul ; of that He can never have enough.*

1. *Five things pure maids should have*

Wouldst thou adorn maidenhood
Which God so highly honoured
That for love of thee
He Himself was the son of a maid?
(Ah! reflect what that implies!)
Be humbly silent,
Bear adversity with love,
And ever all thy days
Preserve maidenly modesty.
Ah! Maiden! What will God then give thee?
He will come to thee as a heavenly youth
And will walk in heavenly places with thee.
Alas for me! Unblessed lame dog that I am
I too cudgel myself!
Reflect what I mean by that—
The number of pure maids is small.

2. *This book has come from God. The soul praises Him for many things. Two angels and two devils are given it with twelve virtues to strive against the flesh*

All my life before I began this book and before a single word of it came from God into my soul, I was the simplest creature who ever appeared in the spiritual life. Of the devil's wickedness I knew nothing, nor of the evil of the world, and of the falseness of so-called spiritual people, I had no idea.

Now I must glorify God through speech as well as through the writing of this book. I, unworthy sinner, was greeted so overpoweringly by the Holy Spirit in my twelfth year when I was alone, that I could no longer have given way to any serious daily sin. The loving greeting came every day and caused me both love and sorrow; the sweetness and glory increased daily and this continued for thirty-one years.

I knew nothing of God except the usual Christian beliefs and I tried to follow them diligently that my heart might become pure. God Himself is my witness that I never consciously asked

Him to give me the things of which I have written in this book. I had never dreamt that such things could come to any human being. While I lived with relations and friends to whom I was most dear, I had no inkling of such matters. But I had for long wished to be despised through no fault of my own.

Then through the love of God I went to a town (Magdeburg) where I had no friends save one only. I feared that through the latter my renunciation of the world and my love of God might be interfered with.

But God never left me. He brought me such sweetness of love, such heavenly knowledge, such inconceivable wonders, that I had little use for earthly things. Then first was my spirit brought out of my prayer and set between heaven and earth. And I saw with the eyes of my soul in heavenly bliss, the beautiful humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ and I knew Him by His shining countenance. I saw the Holy Trinity, the Eternity of the Father, the work of the Son and the sweetness of the Holy Spirit. And I saw the angel to whom I was dedicated at my baptism, and my devil.

Then our Lord spoke: "I will take this one angel from thee and give thee two others instead. They shall care for thee when thou art wrapt above the earth." When the soul saw the two angels, Ah! how it shrank into itself in humility and flung itself down at the feet of our Lord and thanked Him fervently. It bewailed its unworthiness that such noble spirits should be its servitors. For one angel was a seraphim flaming with love and blessed light towards the favoured soul. The other angel was a cherubim to guard the soul's gifts of grace and to order its wisdom.

Then our Lord allowed two devils to come forward, great masters who had come from Lucifer's school whence they were seldom allowed to come out. As the soul looked at the most gruesome devil she shuddered but then rejoiced in the Lord and took courage. This devil was a deceiver disguised as an angel. Alas! at first he nearly led me astray by his false cunning. He once came to me during Mass and said: "See how good I am to look upon! Wouldst thou not worship me?" The soul answered: "Man shall worship God alone in all prosperity as in all need." Then he said: "Wilt thou not look up and see who I

am?" Then a beautiful but false cloud appeared in the air such as had led many an unbeliever astray. The devil said: "If thou sit on that Throne, thou shalt be the highest maiden and I the most glorious youth beside thee!" But the soul said: "He would be a fool who found the best and yet took the worst!" Then he said: "As thou wilt not give thyself to me, listen! Thou art so holy and I so humble that I will worship thee!" The soul replied: "No grace will be given thee for worshipping a speck of dirt!" Then he showed me marks as of the five wounds on his hands and feet and side and said: "Now seest thou who I am? If thou wilt live by my counsel, I will give thee great honour. If thou tell others of this grace, much good will come of it." The soul was displeased at this fable which she yet heard gladly for it showed her what he was. "Thou dost tell me thou art the son of God," she said. "Then tell me, Who is He who now here as the Son of the living God lies in the hands of the true priest?" Then he made as if to go and she said:

I command thee in the name of Almighty God
That thou now hear me.
I know thy intention:
Were I to tell all men what is in my heart,
It might be well for a time;
Then thou wouldst insist
That the game must stop.
That thou wouldst do
That I might fall into doubt and despair,
Unbelief, impurity and everlasting sorrow.
Thou wouldst also that I pretend to be holy
Thou wicked deceiver! While God stands by me
All thy wiles are vain!

Then he cried: "Alas for thy sorcery! Let me away from thee! I will never more molest thee!"

The other devil given me was a peace-breaker, a master of secret impurity. But God had forbidden him to come near me himself. Instead he sent me as messengers, people who distorted good things and took from my honour as much as they could with words. This devil also came where devout people

were gathered together and spoke to them of evil things in an unseemly way. So that I could not but be troubled. That had never happened to me before.

One night before my first sleep when I was praying, this devil came flying through the air and looked down on sinful earth. He appeared as a giant with a short tail and crooked nose. His head was as big as a barrel and fiery sparks surrounded by black smoke came out of his mouth. He laughed in evil rage with a horrible sound. The soul asked why he laughed, what he sought and what he was trying to do. He said: "I rejoice, that seeing I cannot torment you myself, I find many who, while appearing as angels, are yet happy to torment you for me. I am the guardian of spiritual people and I seek in them the two kinds of weakness which will separate them most quickly from God. The first is secret impurity. . . . The second is hidden hatred in open discord; that sin is useful to me for it has a foundation of long-practised evil and leads to the loss of all holiness." Then the soul spoke: "Thou hast by nature nothing good in thee; why dost thou make this long speech about thy wickedness?" And he said: "God holds me so fast that I can do nothing unless He allows it."

Ah! unblessed creature that I am! I had committed such great sins in my childhood, that had I remained without repentance, I should have had to spend ten years in Purgatory. But now, dear Lord, should I die I will gladly suffer therein for love of Thee!

I say that not of myself,
Love bids me say it.
When I came to the spiritual life
And took leave of the world
I looked at my body—
It was heavily armed against my poor soul
With a plenty of might
And with the full powers of nature.
I saw it was my enemy and saw also
That were I to escape everlasting death
I must utterly conquer self,
And that would be a sore struggle.

Then I looked to the weapons of my soul
And saw that they were the sublime
suffering and death
Of our Lord Jesus Christ . . .
That was my protection.
I must stand steadfastly in great fear.
My youth aimed heavy blows at my body—
Sighing, weeping, confession, fasting, watching
Recollection, discipline, prayer—
These I must constantly practise.

With these weapons of my soul I so painfully conquered the body that for twenty years I was never but tired, ill and weak, first from remorse and sorrow, then from good desires and spiritual effort. Thereafter were many days of bodily illness. But here the mighty love of God struck me so powerfully with its wonders that I could no longer keep silent, although on account of my simpleness I was sorry for it. I exclaimed: "Ah! merciful God! what hast Thou seen in me? Thou knowest I am a fool, a sinner, a poor creature both in body and soul. Such things as these Thou shouldst have shown to the wise. Then wouldst Thou have been praised!" But our Lord was angry against my poor self. "Tell me," He said, "art thou truly Mine?" "Yea, Lord! that I do ask of Thee, that I be truly Thine." "Can I then not do with thee what I will?" "Yea, beloved Lord, and gladly even should I come to naught!" Then our Lord said: "Thou shalt follow Me and trust Me in all things. Thou shalt have a long illness and I will tend thee Myself. And all that is necessary to thee in body and soul I will give thee!"

Then went I, poor trembling wretch that I was, in humble shame to my confessor and told him all this and asked for guidance. He said I should go joyfully forward; God Who had called me would look after me. Then he commanded me to do that for which I often weep for shame when my unworthiness stands clear before my eyes, namely, that I, a poor despised little woman, should write this book out of God's heart and mouth. This book therefore has come lovingly from God and is not drawn from human senses.

3. *How sinners fall away from God. Of three gifts of Wisdom. Of a Stone. Of praise of a maiden who represents Holy Church*

As one soothes a child, so one subdues suffering, so also does our Lord when He says: "He who has nothing good in him can never enter My Kingdom. And he who can never be satisfied with passing things must be satisfied by everlasting hunger. Woe to him who has something to which his heart clings and who sets himself above his fellows. He shall fall away from Me into the bottomless pit."

To this Holy Knowledge answers that God has given us three gifts of true wisdom whereby we can satisfy ourselves and guard against all harm.

The first is priestly wisdom and Christian learning as God has shown me. I saw with the eyes of my eternity in bliss and without effort, a Stone. It was like a great mountain and was of different colours; it tasted sweetly of heavenly herbs. I asked the sweet stone who it was. It said *Ego sum Jesus*. Then I went lovingly out of myself and laid my head on Him. I saw that all darkness was shut out from Him and that inwardly He was filled with everlasting light.

On this Stone stood the most lovely maiden ever seen save for our Lady and she is her playmate. Her feet are adorned by a stone called Jasper: it has such powers that it drives all covetousness from desire: it also imparts pure taste, excites heavenly hunger and wipes away all darkness from the eyes: it is called Christian Faith.

The maiden stood on two feet; one is the bond (with God), the other absolution through Divine power; all Christian priests have these. The maiden holds in her right hand a chalice with red wine which she alone drinks in unspeakable joy. This is the blood of the everlasting Son; it fills her spirit so that she gives us much sound teaching. In her left hand she holds a fiery sword; golden cymbals hang from it which sound so sweetly that all who gladly honour the Holy Trinity must come to them.

I asked the maiden why she held the sword in her left hand and the chalice in her right. She said: "I must threaten till the last day of every human being; then God must strike His

blow. And I must offer Christ's blood with my right hand for Christ is called to honour His Father." The maiden has great power in her hands by which she draws to herself everything God has chosen and throws away all that the devil has given. And Oh! her countenance is so glorious that the more I look on her, the more beautiful she appears. Her eyes overflow with happiness just as the rising sun sends the rosy dawn before it. (Then we come to the description of a crown and a tower.)

The blessed who would live in it
Need not engage fully in battle,
But none may come up there
Save those from whom
Love has taken away their earthly will.
Upon its pinnacles
The crown has many precious stones,
These are those who have already gone
From here to the heavenly Kingdom.
In the heart of this maid
I saw a spring of living water welling up.
To it were carried heathen children
Leprous and blind.
Above the spring stood a very holy man;
None but he might draw water from it.
He was John the Baptist.
He washed the children in the spring
They were cleansed and received their sight.
Then I asked the maiden who she was:
"I am she whom thou lovest
And I am thy playmate!
I am Holy Church.
We have each a bridegroom;
He is the priest of the blessed maids
Who looks so lovingly on them."
The second wisdom is of the natural senses,
With it one can both lose and gain;
Many foolish layfolk and false priests
And perverted spiritual people
Live in this wisdom.

There are never any so holy
That they can fully guard themselves
Against these three.
Their nature is so mischievous
That it perverts everything good.
No one becomes spiritual through these gifts
Except he is willing to be a fool
For love of God.
For pure holy simplicity
Is a mother of true knowledge of God.
What does it avail that a great man
Has much money?
Money buys nothing but hunger and thirst
Contempt and everlasting sorrow of heart.
The third wisdom is of Grace:
It suffices for all the gifts of God.
It is never so rich in its own eyes
That it does not compare itself
To the smallest of creatures.
It does not vex itself because of its adversity
But delights in God's Will alone;
It does not allow that even one virtue
Should be shut out by its door.

4. *Of two different ways, one goes down to Hell the other up to Heaven* [1]

The riches of passing things are as an unfaithful guest;
Holy Poverty bears a precious burden before God.

Self-conceit does not stop to think of the harm it does itself;
Constancy is laden with all virtues.

Stupidity is sufficient to itself alone,
Wisdom can never learn enough.

Anger brings great darkness to the soul,
Holy Gentleness is sure of all grace.

[1] There are twenty-three of these sayings, of unequal value.

Pride will ever be first,
Humility never rests
Till it can serve all creatures.

Empty honour is deaf and blind before God,
Undeserved contempt sanctifies all God's children.

5. *Of our sin and our future fall; of earthly things; of Heaven; how God's gift shall stand openly before our eyes*

Lord, my sin through which I have lost Thee
Stands before mine eyes like the highest mountain
And has long made darkness and distance
Between Thee and me.
Ah! Love above all love
Draw me again to Thee.
  But Lord, future falls
Are ever before my eyes
Like the mouth of a fiery dragon
Eager to swallow me up.
Ah! my only Good, help me now
That I may flow sinless unto Thee.
  Lord, my earthly being stands before me
Like a dusty acre
On which little good has grown.
Ah! sweet Jesus Christ,
Send me now the fruitful rain of Thy humanity,
And the gentle dew of the Holy Spirit,
That I may plead my heart's sorrow.
  Thy everlasting Kingdom
Lies open before my eyes
Like a nuptial feast, a noble wedding
An everlasting banquet. Ah! true lover
Ceaselessly draw to Thee Thy lovesick bride.
All the gifts I have ever received from Thee
Stand before me, a heavy reproach,
For Thy highest gift humbles me to the dust.
  Then God who gives everything answers thus:

"Thy mountain shall be melted away by love,
Thine enemies shall win no victory over thee,
Thine acre has been scorched by a hot sun
Yet its fruit has not been destroyed.
In My Kingdom thou shalt live as a new bride,
There will I greet thee with the kiss of love
And all My Godhead shall sweep through thy soul;
My three-fold vision shall play ceaselessly
In thy two-fold heart.
Where then is now thy mourning?
If thou shouldst pray for a thousand years
I would never give thee cause
For a single sigh!"

6. *No one can disturb God's elect. Real remorse is pardoned by God's Grace and is without Purgatory*

A troubled soul asked me to pray for him. I did so though with fear. God in His mercy heard me and in His own words and His own voice spake thus: "There is no lamb so white or so pure that its wool never becomes stained. No one may disturb My elect, of that I have assured this troubled soul in three things. First that I was compassionate regarding his sin; second that I have given him My Grace, and third that I would never allow unfaithful people to have any power over him."

Then I pled for him thus: "Lord! he still fears that Thou hast not entirely forgiven his sin." And God answered: "That were impossible! To whosoever is sorry for sin I forgive it and whoso yet laments his sin, to him do I give My Grace. Whoso grieves for sin so that he would rather die than sin again, shall after this life be condemned to no further punishment even should he commit daily sins." [1]

7. *How a free spirit speaks to God in utter love*

Lord! because I have been subject to all creatures, Thou hast drawn me up from all things to Thyself. And because I have no earthly treasure, therefore have I no earthly heart. For Thou,

[1] Here we have a parallel with Eckhart, who wrote: "To sin is no sin if we are sorry."

Lord, art my treasure, Thou art my heart,[1] Thou alone art all my good and I am indifferent to all else.

8. *Of the Body of the Lord; of the sick and the forsaken*

That a sick person (one about to leave this life) might not receive the Body of the Lord, seemed to me so strange that I could not believe it or justify it by my senses or my belief, because I thought man could only lose God through sin. So my soul in loving union with our Lord asked Him how that might be. And He answered: "Thou art right! No one can lose Me save through sin; but the body may be deprived through illness of My Body." And in the Holy Trinity I saw this interpretation of His words: When we receive the Body of the Lord, the Godhead unites itself with our sinless soul and the humanity of our Lord is mingled with our sinful body and the Holy Spirit makes His dwelling in our faith. And this holy union we must guard with the greatest care.

12. *How the Bride who is united with God refuses all creaturely comfort and accepts it of God alone; how she sinks under suffering*

Thus speaks the Bride of God who has dwelt in the enclosed sanctuary of the Holy Trinity—"Away from me all ye creatures! Ye pain me and cannot comfort me!" And the creatures ask, "Why?" The Bride says, "My Love has left me while I rested beside him and slept." But the creatures ask, "Can this beautiful world and all your blessings not comfort you?" "Nay," says the Bride, "I see the serpent of falsehood and false wisdom creeping in to all the joy of this world. I see also the hook of covetousness in the bait of ignoble sweetness by which it ensnares many."

"Can even the Kingdom of Heaven not comfort you?" ask the creatures. "Nay! it were dead in itself were the living God not there!" "Now, O Bride, can the saints not comfort thee?"

"Nay! for were they separated from the living Godhead which flows through them, they would weep more bitterly than I for they have risen higher than I and live more deeply in God."

[1] See St. Matthew, vi. 21.

"Can the Son of God not comfort thee?" [1]
Yea! I ask Him when we shall go
Into the flowery meadows of heavenly knowledge
And pray Him fervently,
That He unlock for me
The swirling flood which plays about the Holy Trinity,
For the soul lives on that alone.
If I am to be comforted
According to the merit to which God has raised me,
Then His breath must draw me effortlessly into Himself.
For the sun which plays upon the living Godhead
Irradiates the clear waters of a joyful humanity;
And the sweet desire of the Holy Spirit
Comes to us from both. . . .
Nothing can satisfy me save God alone,
Without Him I am as dead.
Yet would I gladly sacrifice the joy of His presence
Could He be greatly honoured thereby.
For if I, unworthy, cannot praise God with all my might,
Then I send all creatures to the Court of Heaven
And bid them praise God for me,
With all their wisdom, their love,
Their beauty; all their desires,
As they were created, sinless by God,
To sing with all the sweetness of their voices
As they now sing.
Could I but witness this praise
I would sorrow no more.

Neither can I bear that a single consolation be given me save by Love alone. I love my earthly friends in a heavenly fellowship and I love my enemies with a holy longing for their salvation. God has enough of all good things save of intercourse with the soul; of that He can never have enough.

When this wonder and this consolation had continued for eight years God wished to comfort me more mightily, far above my deserts. "Nay, dear Lord! do not raise me up too high!" cried this unworthy soul. "It is even now too much for me here

[1] This is reminiscent of the Song of Solomon, iii. 1.

in the lowest place. Gladly will I stay here to Thy honour." Then the soul fell down below the ill-fated souls who had forfeited their reward, and it seemed good to her so. There our Lord followed her as some others also did, who, so far as they could bear it, had gone to the state of least joy. For God appeared to them all beautiful and glorious, according as they had here been sanctified in love and ennobled in virtue. St. John says, "We shall see God as He is." (1 St. John, iii. 2.) That is true, but the sun shines after the storm and there are many kinds of storms in this world, just as there are many mansions in Heaven. According as I can bear it and see it, so is it with me.

Then our Lord said: "How long wouldst thou stay here?" The Bride answered: "Ah! leave me dear Lord and let me sink further down, to Thy Glory!" Then soul and body came into such gross darkness that I lost light and consciousness and knew no more of God's intimacy; ever-blessed Love also went its way. Then the soul spoke: "Constancy! where art thou? I entrust to thee the mission of love; thou shalt uphold the glory of God in me!" Then this servitor Constancy strengthened her mistress with such holy patience and joyful forbearance that she lived without care. But Unbelief came and surrounded me with such darkness and roared at me in such fury that his voice frightened me and I said to myself, "If thy former grace had been from God He would not so utterly have forsaken thee!"

Then my soul cried: "Where art thou now, O Constancy? Bid true Faith to come to me!" And the heavenly Father spoke to the soul: "Remember what thou didst see and experience when there was nothing between Me and thee!" Then spoke the Son: "Remember what thy body has suffered for My pain." And the Holy Spirit said: "Remember what thou hast written!" Then both soul and body answered with the true faith of Constancy: "As I have praised and loved, enjoyed and known, thus will I go unchanged from here!"

After this came the state of Forsaken-ness of God and so surrounded the soul that it cried: "Welcome blessed Forsaken-ness! Well for me that I was born and that thou, Constancy, shalt now be my waiting-maid, for thou bringest me unaccustomed joy and inconceivable wonders and sweetness beyond what I can bear. But, Lord, Thou must take this sweetness from me and leave me

only Forsaken-ness. Well for me, O faithful Lord, that after the transformation of love I can yet bear it in the palate of my soul." [1]

And here I asked all creatures to praise our Lord in the *Te Deum Laudamus*. But they would not and turned their backs on me. Then my soul was glad and said: "Well for me that ye despise me and turn your backs on me, for that praises our Lord immeasurably!"

Now is God marvellous to me and his Forsaken-ness better even than Himself. That the soul knew full well. For as God was about to comfort her she said: "Remember, O Lord, how lowly I am and withhold Thyself from me!" Then our Lord spoke to me: "Grant me that I may cool the glow of My Godhead, the desire of My humanity and the delight of My Holy Spirit in thee." The soul answered: "Yea, Lord, but only if that is well for Thee alone—and not for me!"

After that the Bride came into such great darkness that sweat and cramp racked her body. She was asked by some if she would be a messenger from them to God. She said: "Pain! I command thee that thou now release me, seeing that thou hast reached thy highest power in me." Then Pain rose from soul and body like a dark cloud and went to God and cried with a loud voice: "Lord! Thou knowest well what I desire!" Our Lord met Pain before the gate of the Kingdom and said: "Welcome, Pain! Thou art the garment I wore on my body upon earth: the contempt of the whole world was My most glorious cloak. But however much I prized thee there, thou canst not enter here. But to the maid who will do two things I will give two things. She must be modest and wise and it would help her if thou wouldst be her messenger; then will I embrace her and take her to my heart in union." Pain spoke thus: "Lord! I make many holy, though I myself am not holy and I nourish many holy bodies though I myself am evil, and I bring many to Heaven, though I may never enter in myself." To this our Lord answered: "Pain! thou wast not born in Heaven, therefore canst thou not enter therein. Moreover, thou wast born out of Lucifer's heart, there thou must return and live for evermore."

Ah! blessed Forsaken-ness of God! how lovingly I am bound to

[1] There seems here to be an omission in the Einsiedeln Codex. Another version gives " for me gall has been changed into honey in the palate of my soul." See Oehl., op. cit.

thee! Thou strengthenest my will in suffering and makest dear to me the long difficult waiting in this poor body. The nearer I come to thee, the greater and more wonderful God appears to me. Ah! Lord! even in the depths of unmixed humility, I cannot sink utterly away from Thee—

In pride I so easily lost Thee—
But now the more deeply I sink
The more sweetly I drink
Of Thee!

13. *The writing of this book is seen, heard and felt in all my members*

I cannot write nor do I wish to write—but I see this book with the eyes of my soul and hear it with the ears of my eternal spirit and feel in every part of my body the power of the Holy Spirit.

14. *Of the Holy Trinity: of the birth and name of Jesus Christ and of the nobility of man*

I saw and see three Persons in the everlasting heights, before the Son of God was conceived in the Virgin Mary. There they were recognized and differentiated by all the holy angels in their Unity and in their names, that they three were One God. But however clear the eyes of the angels, they did not see flesh nor bone nor colour nor the Lord's Name of Jesus. This was miraculously hidden from them in the bosom of the Everlasting Father. They called the Father the Uncreated, Everlasting God and the Son, Wisdom-without-beginning. Both together they called the real Art of Truth.

The angels of the highest rank were those who hovered[1] over the Love of the Godhead in a breath of the Trinity, angels who served and looked on at the wonderful decree by which God became God-and-man. Gabriel alone carried the message and the name of Jesus down to earth and he was given neither flesh nor bone nor blood to take with him. The second Person was from the beginning the everlasting Son, even before He had redeemed mankind. He was always ours and yet was not given to us until Gabriel fulfilled his mission. If this same second

[1] The description of the angels *hanging* or *hovering* over the Godhead was adopted by Eckhart.

Person had come before the mission to redeem us, He would have had a beginning. That was not so. This same second Person became one nature with Adam before he soiled himself through sin. But what broke and changed Adam's nature was not of God, therefore we could and can still return. God preserved Adam's noble, loving nature, therefore He could not withhold Himself from him: He threw Lucifer down to an everlasting dungeon, but He drew Adam back and questioned him and brought him again to the right way. Lucifer had only one nature in God; when he destroyed that he could never return.

Man has full being in the Holy Trinity and God condescended to form him with His own Divine hands. When he lost that most holy work on us, He was constrained in Himself by a threefold desire; He wished to bring us back Himself, with His own feet and hands, that we might again be closely united to Him. If mankind had stayed in Paradise, God would have regarded him as His son and would have greeted his soul and rejoiced in his body. Thus I saw God coming from Heaven into Paradise like a glorious angel. The same nature still compels God to greet us here as friends, with holy fervour, in so far as we are prepared with holy virtues and true innocence.

When I reflect that the Divine nature now has bone, flesh, body and soul then I am raised up with joy above what I deserve. The angel also is formed in some ways after the likeness of the Holy Trinity; yet he is pure spirit. The soul alone lives with its flesh in Heaven and sits by the everlasting Host whom it resembles. There eye meets eye, spirit flows into spirit, hand clasps hand, mouth speaks to mouth, heart greets heart. Thus the Host honours the humble house-wife by His side. And the princes and servitors are the holy angels whom the Host has before His eyes. All the service as well as the praise of the angels is offered to the humble house-wife as well as to the Host. The richer we are here in holy virtues, the greater the rank of those who serve us there.

15. *Pure love has four essentials. If thou give thyself to God, He will give Himself to thee*

Pure love of God has four essentials which never change. The first is growing desire, the second incessant vexations, the

third burning love in soul and body, the fourth constant union combined with strict watchfulness. None can reach this state save he who makes a complete exchange with God. If thou givest God all that thine is, within and without, God will truly give thee all that His is, within and without.

When the blessed hour has passed
In which God has granted the loving soul
His sublime consolation;
Then is the soul so full of delight
That everything seems to it good
Which might hurt a loveless soul.
Art thou displeased? Then it is much to be feared
The devil has anointed thee!

16. *Great love has more than ten parts; a two-fold lament*

This is the nature of great love, it does not flow with tears, it rather burns in the great Fire of Heaven. In this Fire it flows swiftly and yet remains in itself in great stillness. It rises almost up to God, yet remains small in itself. It grasps much and retains little. Ah, most blessed Love! where are those who know thee? They are wholly irradiated in the Holy Trinity, they no longer live in themselves. Such blessed souls can never fall into mortal sin. Why? Because they are so completely surrounded and penetrated by God that the more they are tempted, the stronger they become. Why? Because the longer they struggle and continue to love, the greater God appears to them, the smaller and more sinful they seem to themselves. Why? Because the more holy the love, the greater the anxiety, the more manifold the consolation, the more constant the fear. But the loving soul does not fear with dread, it fears nobly. Of two things I can never lament sufficiently; the first is that God is so forgotten in the world; the second that spiritual people are so imperfect. Therefore there must be many falls, for the perfect never fall.

17. *Of a woman who was gladly at Court and of her devil who brought her seven evils*

A certain woman had dedicated herself
And yet wished to serve at Court.
I prayed for her with all my might,
Both day and night,
For I saw the evil coming to her to be so great
That if it went on she would soon rank
As a friend of the devil.
She loved authority too much
And lived not to the glory of God;
But rather followed the futile practices of
the Court,
And had ever before her eyes
The rank of her lords and ladies.

Then a great devil, fiery, bleeding, black, with claws and horns and glass eyes, came and stood before me. I was not afraid of him but I crossed myself before I went to sleep. He floated over me like a skin full of water and troubled me so much that I asked our Lord for mercy. Then a white angel came to my aid; it came from the fourth choir of angels and was the guardian of the woman. I asked who this fiend was and what he wanted of me; "Ah!" said the lovely angel in a heavenly voice, "he is the worst devil Hell can send; his mission is to bind together in hurtful love the hearts of those who desire to live well. He torments you because you would drive him away from this woman."—"Alas! will he torment me for long?" "Nay! God will show His mercy."

After that the devil came and shot me through with fiery rays which gave me pains of Hell in body and soul. I said to him, "Do whatsoever God allows thee to do!" Then he became weak and said, "Because thou givest thy soul meekly to torment, I lose all my power." Then the soul spoke: "I command thee by the living God that thou tell me thy name and what thy mission is to this woman!" "My name?" he said. "That will I not tell thee for it might do me much harm. Thou must ask it on the last day. I foster in that woman bitter pride, flighty cleverness

and powerful desire. I am wrathful rage and I disturb the hearts of spiritual people."[1]

18. *A spiritual person is like a certain animal in thirty ways*

A sorrowful soul spoke sadly to her Love: "Ah! Lord! For long I have wished for two things which have not yet been granted me. The first is a truly spiritual life. Alas! that has ever been out of my reach. The second is a holy death; to that I look forward with such joy that I lose my sadness."

In answer our Lord showed me an insignificant little animal and said: "Look! Thou art like that little creature!" Then I saw how the creature was formed on an island in the sea, out of slime, and was trying to clean itself between the hot sun and the sea. Also that the sun was the creature's father and the sea its mother and the slime the stuff of which it was made. Thus was Adam made out of poor material by the power of God. This creature symbolized truly spiritual people. When man receives a soul he is conceived by the fiery Godhead; receives in his mother the Divine humanity, and that of which he is made is the Holy Spirit which does away with sinful nature in all things. This creature grows towards the sun as does the spiritual person who has received the spirit of God. That is so noble a state that it germinates and grows till the blessed end of the person. This creature eats nothing but has a large tail full of honey which it sucks daily. It has golden bristles which tinkle so sweetly when it sucks that its heart is fed by the sweet and joyful sound while its body is nourished by the honey.[2] This tail is [symbolic of] the end of spiritual people which they have constantly in mind, sustaining their good works and solid

[1] An instance of the ancient belief that evil spirits will not give their names as they would thereby lose their power (as, for example, *Rumpelstilzchen* in the Fairy Tale).

[2] Mechthild probably did not know of the African Fat-Tailed Gecko, an example of which is in the London Zoo ; it has a tail which acts as a food store. This parable would not be so strange in the thirteenth century when animal symbolism was so largely used by painters and carvers who vied with each other in creating grotesques. Mechthild may be describing some creature she has seen painted or carved on a church stall or even on furniture in everyday use.

virtues, so that they bear their long waiting with fidelity. The golden bristles signify the noble love of God which rings through the loving heart into the soul. Blessed is he who was made man and truly experiences this.

The creature has a constant desire to drink from the sea because of an uncontrollable thirst; this thirst can never be satisfied, yet the creature must always drink of the bitter water and eject it. It is the same with us sinners. When we drink of the muddy waters of the world and use our material senses as the evil spirit advises, alas! then we poison ourselves. If we ever hope to recover, we must forsake self and abjure the world.

The creature has large ears, open towards Heaven; it listens to the songs of the birds, flees wild beasts and fears earthly serpents. Thus also does the loving soul: it consistently flees evil companions, hates false wisdom and its ears are ever open to the wisdom of God.

The creature has a noble nature. It does not wish to stay in the sea where creatures fight and waters rage. It loves purity and so hastens up to the heights for it chooses and finds there the highest good. It ascends joyfully and climbs the highest trees where it rests in love and perfect freedom. Thus also does the loving soul. It knows well that with virtue and good works it must ascend the heights of the heavenly kingdom. So it climbs effortlessly in grace the noblest tree of the holy Godhead; there it clasps the highest branch and is itself clasped in the embrace of the Holy Trinity.

The creature has two sharp horns by which it protects its body with such wisdom that it goes safe from all wild beasts. Ah! soul! couldst thou only do the same! Then wouldst thou drive the devil from thee with Divine Wisdom and live free from every sin.

This creature has two beautiful human eyes from which tears flow for the great mountains where it fain would be. Ah! loving soul! how beautiful are the eyes of thy knowledge, for thou hast looked in the everlasting mirror and thy tears are ready in love; thou art prepared to bear gladly the bitterness of the sea of sin.

This creature has a gentle mouth and a clean tongue but no teeth and can neither growl nor bite. The loving human being

too has a good mouth; it ever teaches and judges gladly and its tongue is controlled and free from harmful words. Neither has it any biting teeth but is ever ready to comfort the sad. It has no anger except against sin and contempt of God, than which no pain hurts it more.

The creature's mouth is wide at the top, but narrow beneath. The widest opening of our mouths is for the inconceivable praise we offer God in common with all creatures, with all our doings at all times. The lower part of our mouths speak all too readily of sinful earth. Alas! for all speaking! . . .

The creature has swift feet but no voice. It is very still in itself. The truly spiritual soul has the same nature; in the height of love it is both swift and still.

The skin and hair of this creature are . . . mean in appearance. It strikes no one by its present beauty, whereas after death, when other creatures see corruption, the skin of this creature becomes so glistening that the highest in the land use it for the richest sables. The peaceful lives of good people, their good habits and their spiritual wisdom, are counted as little while they are alive; whereas after death, when we remember others, we reflect how holy were their lives and how truly they warned us; then we are ashamed that we knew them so little. Their lives are then as rich sables we sinners behold in beauty, and wear gladly in our hearts. . . .

This creature is called in German *Alles Nütze* (*Everything of use*). Blessed is he who is called by this name before God.[1]

19. *The manifold mission of Love*

O blessed Love, whose mission was and is
To unite God and the human soul,
That shall be thy mission without end,
As it was without beginning.
I greet thee Love, only beware
Lest I complain of thee to my glorious Lord:
For should He be too long absent from me
Then would I grow too cold.

[1] The name was probably suggested by St. Paul's words, *To them that love God all things work together for good.* Romans, viii. 28.

Save me from that, O Queen of Love!
Thou who hast led me to God
So that I am blissfully bound to Him.
Ah, Love! help me,
That I may expire in His arms
In which I am now embraced;
Yet for His sake would I gladly suffer
The pains of death in my sinful body.
Love! Thou hast the greatest power
Above all virtues evermore,
For that I thank God,
That thou dost heal the sorrows of my heart.
I have no longer any virtues,
They serve me—yet are truly His.
It were heavier to me than death
That I should do anything good
Without God. All that I say of Love
I dare not take to myself;
Nay! God means thereby all His elect
Now treasured in His heart.
Those whom this concerns know well
That Love makes empty hearts o'erflow,
The more when we must struggle on without assurance,
And all unready for the play of Love.
Now Love, goodnight, for I would sleep.
Alleluia!

20. *Of six virtues of St. Dominic*

On St. Dominic's Day I prayed to our Lord for the Order of Preachers. Our Lord deigned to honour my request by coming Himself and bringing St. Dominic whom I love above all saints. Before I could speak our Lord said: "Dominic, My son, had on earth four things which all Priors should have. First, he had such love for his brethren that he could not bear they should be troubled by things which came from his own desire. Second, he often improved their food out of love . . . that the elder Brethren might not fall by the way. The third thing of which

he gave them an example with holy wisdom was that they should be moderate in their lives, their habits and their needs according to the will of God. The fourth thing was that he was so compassionate that he never burdened his brethren with penances which the Order did not ordain." Our Lord said further: "I will tell you two things more. When Dominic laughed he laughed with real sweetness of the Holy Spirit and when he wept he wept with such fidelity that he thought first of his brethren and set them before My eyes; this he did also for Holy Church."

21. *God loves the Order of Preachers for sixteen things*

Afterwards our Lord spoke thus: "Two things I cherish so dearly in the Order of Preachers that they always rejoice My heart. The first is the holiness of their lives; the second their great service to Holy Church. Added to that they greet My Holy Trinity with seven things, sighing, weeping, living desire, earnest self-conquest, sorrow of exile, true humility, joyful love. They also honour My Three Names with seven outward things; praiseful singing, true preaching, real absolution, compassionate comfort, friendly help, holy example and are also a vigorous body of Christian believers." Our Lord said, moreover, "Their alms which they give to the poor for love of Me are so holy that the sins of the poor who receive them are thereby diminished and the devil can never stay where their alms are eaten. That comes from the holiness of their poverty."

Ah! everlasting spring of the Godhead, from which I and all things proceed, unworthy as I am, I praise Thee, that I too am thus comforted by Thee!

22. *Of the fourfold crown of Brother Henry and the merit of St. Dominic*

One of the Brothers of the Order of Preachers died on Easter Sunday after he had preached, sung Mass and given the people the Body of our Lord. When he had fulfilled all his duties he received Holy Unction and died towards nightfall.

After he was buried a certain person [Mechthild herself] went

to his grave and greeted both soul and body. This she was in the habit of doing on the death of spiritual people, and God prepared a heavenly Festival in her soul. Therein the soul [of the departed] was shown to her embraced by God and in high honour. But she saw plainly that his glory was not yet complete and she asked our Lord how long he would have to remain thus and whether he had suffered no Purgatory. And our Lord said: "He shall remain thus for forty hours, that is seven days and seven nights[?]—

He had laid himself down on God's breast,
In unspeakable joy,
On the spiritual fervour
There prepared for him;
And he was raised up swiftly without suffering
As swiftly as a mother lifts her darling child
From the ground to her knee.
Then he said: "Tell my sister
I will comfort her within fourteen days with God.
And that happened; she died fourteen days later.[1]
Then he invited me to his Festival
When he should receive his reward.
The heavenly host made ready for that
Forming themselves into a splendid procession.
St. Dominic came with a great following,
They were all Preachers and all wore golden crowns
According as they were holy.
St. Dominic brought Brother Henry a crown
Which gleamed and sparkled as brightly
As the sun in its greatest brilliance;
St. Dominic gave him that as a reward from God,
Because he had followed his Holy Pattern so faithfully
In the Order of Preachers.
St. Dominic was above all unspeakably glorious,
He had special merit from every Brother
As his reward.
I saw him robed in threefold dignity;
He bore the white robe of inborn purity;

[1] The copyist has made a mistake ; fourteen and forty are both mentioned, as well as seven days and seven nights.

The green robe of growing knowledge of God
And a robe besprinkled with red
Because he suffered spiritual martyrdom.
Those of the Order have a special sign of merit
Which no one else bears.
A splendid banner is carried before them
And they follow after in order of precedence.
Our Lord sat in His omnipotence
And crowned this brother with threefold merit—
Simple obedience, poverty and modesty.
Then Brother Henry thanked our Lord thus:
"I thank thee Lord that Thou hast found me,
Sustained me, and inclined towards me."
Then he bowed before our Lord
And returned to his brethren.
St. Dominic said: "Welcome dear son!
Enter into the glory of Thy Lord! Alleluia!"
The grace was vouchsafed to me
That I should witness these things,
Because I was exiled from the love of God,
And greatly despised by His friends.

23. *The burial of St. John the Evangelist*

I have truly seen the body of St. John the Evangelist with the eyes of my unworthy soul. He lies in great bliss, above all passing things. . . . His body has so richly received Divine Eternity that he shines as a fiery crystal. He lies lovingly disposed as if asleep in the midst of some heavenly festival. His eyebrows are still brown, his eyes are closed and he lies on his back. Below, above and around him all is radiant and every seven hours the angels come and sing round the body songs of praise such as:—

Holy! Pure!
Simple! Wise!
God his heart's desire!

This song is sweeter than the music of a thousand viols or harps. Between his body and the creation of the heavenly Kingdom there is nothing but a thin dividing wall, thinner than an egg-shell, yet so strong that none can pass through it till the Day of Judgment.

24. *How God receives souls in Heaven*

The Kingdom of Heaven has many beautiful gateways and yet has none. For the gateways are the glorious and various rewards with which God receives each soul and opens the whole of Heaven to the blissful bride of God. He Himself goes down through all the choirs to meet the soul, and the heavenly host follow Him in order according to the greatness of the reward each soul can receive. Thus the soul comes joyfully out of Purgatory or out of exile and many glorious angels follow her. At the gate of Heaven the lovers meet, God and the soul. The noble glance with which God receives her has such power that she can think no more of past sorrows or of any pain.

A simple crown of the Kingdom is placed on her head in the gateway; that is God's will. Therewith He leads her in in honour; therefore is it called the Crown of the Kingdom. Sinners who have forfeited grace but to whom God sends remorse, have no other honour as reward.

God crowns three kinds of people with His fatherly hand, maidens, widows and married people. After He has received them with all honour, He crowns them. The widows and the married couples He crowns sitting in His great Glory; for the maidens He stands up and crowns them as a Mighty Monarch. He greets them inwardly with His living Godhead; He honours them outwardly with His Almighty humanity; He adorns them with the generosity of the Holy Spirit; He also rewards them ceaselessly with His complete Holy Trinity according to their rank and standing in His Kingdom, for all that they bring with them. And He thanks them specially that they willed to come, while they praise Him joyfully that He has delivered them from everlasting death.

25. *How our home is now in Heaven, now in Purgatory, now in Hell*

According as we are here clothed with the virtues and adorned and penetrated by the holy love of God, our present home is already in Heaven. Thus we are open and visible to the blessed, and they praise God and rejoice over us as if we were already

with them. What still lies before us they do not yet see, except that we grow in nobility and earn greater clearness and ascend the heights. That happens from hour to hour to the blessed who are still here. Thus the number of the saints and the joy of the angels is increased. But alas! if we fall daily into great sin our lovely glimpse of Heaven fades away. Then the saints and angels pray our Lord that we may be converted and regain our purity.

Our home is also in Purgatory as soon as we earn it here. That grieves all who are there. Yet they cannot help us for they themselves burn piteously. There are many poor souls in such Purgatory with such sins who cannot know if they will ever be redeemed. Why? Because they would not confess with their lips. But how they are to be saved we have found in another place (iii. 21).

The home of sinners is obviously in Hell. But God's compassion follows them there so that they are there today, but tomorrow perhaps in the company of the angels. Thus our home may be in or out of Heaven, in Purgatory or in unblessed Hell, with whichever place we voluntarily associate ourselves.

26. *Of God's consolation to anxious-minded Brother Baldwin*

A Brother in the Order of Preachers was so overburdened by a high office he held under obedience that he lost all his youthful strength and manly power; yet accepted that with good will. I asked our Lord to have pity on him. He taught me saying: "I have heard and seen all the trouble he suffered and what he read and wrote. All his labours of love will increase My praise before the Company of Heaven. . . . And I will lift up his head and increase all his powers, for I gave them to him not only by nature but also through Grace!"

27. *Of the end of the Order of Preachers; of Anti-Christ, Elias and Enoch (Condensed)*

The Order of Preachers was bitterly assailed by false masters[1] and by jealous sinners. Therefore I begged our Lord to protect

[1] This probably refers to a great denunciation of the Mendicant Orders regarded by some as fore-runners of Anti-Christ.

His honour in the Order. He spoke: "So long as I desire it, no one can destroy it." I asked: "Shall the Order continue to the end of the world?" Our Lord said: "Yes . . . but others like it shall come. They will be poorer in earthly desires and more filled with the fire of the Holy Spirit through the great need in which Holy Church will then be." Then I saw those others and their kind of life. . . .[1]

They had only two garments, the under was white and the upper red, signifying the pure humanity of our Lord and His holy death. Their girdles were made from the bast of an olive tree to signify the compassion they bore to orphaned Christianity. They all go barefoot: when it freezes they wear red shoes with white laces but no stockings. . . . They have no dwellings of their own. They are strangers in every city and suffer many hardships. . . . Each carries a staff; it is coloured white and red; it has a cross-piece one span long and is made of ivory, signifying that the brethren are pure in all things. . . . On one side of the staff is carved the crucifixion; on the other the Ascension. The brethren must have this staff with them everywhere. . . . When they let it out of their hands, they must drive it into the ground, that they may always look on the cross. If the distance they must travel is thirty miles, then . . . every two must take a donkey on which each may ride for a stretch. Their staff must be held erect in their hands as a cross. They must ride that humble beast that they may be like our Lord in humility, also because otherwise their feet would be so sore that they could not make long journeys. . . . They shall not ask for books or clothes. But where bread is not offered, they must humbly ask for it; they shall eat and drink with the people any food they are offered, except only meat. They shall not fast more than Church law ordains and shall seek shelter away from others that they may pray and sleep under a separate roof.

When the people recognize this holy life, they will be so edified thereby that they will gladly supply its needs. The people will wash the hardened feet of the brethren with fervour, and will thank God that they thus travel about ministering to orphaned Christianity as Mary Magdalene did to

[1] Mechthild is probably describing one of the many Brotherhoods of her time.

our Lord. (Their feet shall not be anointed for they are not our Lord.)

Their great Chapter is held twice a year. . . . Whosoever would enter this Order shall have two books of his own; out of the big book he shall preach. The first thing written in the book is *Credo in Deum*; after that it consists of sermons according to Christian faith and teaching. Out of the smaller book the brothers shall offer our Lord the Day Hours.

The first Master who shall lead this life shall be the son of the King of Rome. His name before God is in German Alleluia. The Pope shall first give him his power. . . .[1] Then all high masters shall repair to him . . . they shall not be accepted unless they are strong and have been to High School. . . . The first Master they shall call their Prince. He must always go with four Brothers because the Christian Faith will often be attacked in him. Every fourteen brothers shall have a Master . . . they shall call him their Guardian. . . . Their power is great, for not even a Bishop is their equal. Wherever they go they shall preach, hear confessions, sing Mass and read unchallenged. . . . In Rome there shall be thirty of them after the price for which Christ was betrayed. In Jerusalem shall be most of all, where Jesus suffered death for us. . . .

I also saw their pallets, how they shall lie on straw between two white woollen blankets. . . . Their limbs shall never lie or sit softly for they shall be austere all their days till their martyrdom, as Christ was. But every older Master who from age can no longer do full work . . . shall lie softly and be tenderly cared for, for he can still give much counsel. . . .

This holy life shall continue in great peace for thirty years. In that time it shall so enlighten and teach the Church that no one will turn from Christianity because of ignorance. Then alas! trouble will come, for Anti-Christ will . . . win over earthly

[1] This is a baffling passage. There was at that time a striving after a simple apostolic way of life; the Monasteries offered one example; another was the fusion of Church and State into one ideal way; another that Prince and Priest should be one, which no doubt led M. to her "son of the King of Rome." Her prophecy is recognizable many years later in Dante, who makes her Prince, Dux, heir of the Empire. See Preger for an involved explanation of the name Alleluia. M.'s Prince-Priest may have been drawn from Conradin of Hohenstaufen, put to death in Italy 1268, possibly about the time this was written.

princes with gold and precious stones and with that false cunning so dear to him. . . . These holy Brothers carry their lives in their hands. . . . Because they live in such a holy way, many became martyrs. This so angered Anti-Christ that he laid heavy penalties on all who went to hear the Brothers. . . . Then the messengers of Anti-Christ came and with an iron spear pierced the holy preacher (the Prince) because of his teaching. He must hang and suffer on the spear. . . . Thus the holy man is carried for all the world to see. Then he sang . . . *Credo in unum Deum* and comforted his followers and cried, "Follow me ye holy children of God!" All who then follow him . . . are driven like sheep to where a great river flows; there heads are cut off and their bodies thrown into the river.

Those who will afterwards preach the Christian Faith must be living martyrs and great saints. The power of Anti-Christ is so great that none can be his equal. When the Pope can no longer fight against him he turns to the holy brothers and suffers what they suffer. Then Enoch and Elias come to their aid: they are now in a sweet Paradise and there live in the same bliss and eat the same food which would have been given to Adam had he stayed there. They must in obedience to God avoid the tree from which Adam and Eve ate the apple and broke God's law. I have seen this tree; it is not big and its fruit is outwardly beautiful and rosy red but inwardly by nature very bitter. That signifies the bitter harm of sin which God never wished for man. Because this fruit is so harmful to good people that it is still our poison, God laid His ban on it, for He did not create man for adversity.

In the last days of need after these holy Brothers had for so long comforted the people that no good person remained who had not suffered for God, many Brothers still lived. But their innocent need was so great and their prayer so holy, that God sent them Enoch and Elias to comfort them and lead them out of the wood. Then they began to preach again and prepare themselves for death. These two men who now came out of Paradise were so wise in Divine Truth that they drove Anti-Christ powerfully away. They told him straightly who he was, from what power his signs and wonders came, how he had come from thence and what his end should be. As the misled realized what an

accursed god had been given them because of their greed, and their delight in many kinds of evil, many good men and women who had been turned from the Christian way turned back again.

But the blessed had to suffer martyrdom, for the greatest power on earth was given to Anti-Christ. He caused all who could be recognized as Christians to be gathered together. Boiling cauldrons were made ready on the streets and the Christians were driven towards them. . . . The men were asked to choose whether they would rather have Unbelief and their wives and children, or Christianity and death in the boiling cauldrons. The men spoke: "Ah! dear wife and children! think not of us. But remember that you are Christians and offer your bodies to God: thus we will not be separated!" Then they were bound and flung into the cauldrons.

Now the women and children speak: "Lord Jesus, Son of Mary, for love of Thee we gladly suffer the same pain." A pit was dug, filled with fire and the women and children were thrown in, wood and straw flung over them and they were burned to death.

The angel led Enoch and Elias out of Paradise where the brightness and joy they now felt in their bodies had to be left behind. When they saw the earth they were frightened, as those who first see the ocean and dread how they are to cross it. Then they received earthly form and again became mortal men. They ate honey and figs and drank water mixed with wine. And their spirits were fed by God.

28. *Of the fivefold power of Love*

This book was begun in love and shall also end in love. For there is nothing so wise, nor so holy, nor so beautiful, nor so strong, nor so perfect as love. Thus spoke our Lord: "Speak Father! I will now be silent as Thou wast silent in the mouth of Thy Son when He burned for love of ailing mankind. My humanity trembled at the falseness of the world, for it rewarded Me with a bitter death."

THIS IS THE FIFTH PART OF THE BOOK

This is a mature, scholarly part of Mechthild's work, its dominating theme being repentance as the chief need of the soul.

1. *Of three kinds of repentance*

There are three kinds of repentance on account of which the sinner turns to the Cross which took away our sins from us.

The first is repentance for sin. This is threefold: bitterness of the heart from which the sins have come, shame in the senses which realized the sin, and a true picture of the life the creature has degraded. The heavenly Father reconciles this repentance and the sinning soul and delivers it from the pains of everlasting Hell.

The second repentance is that of confession: it also has three characteristics: diligent effort, steady assurance and victory over all temptation.

The third repentance is that of love. This alone is true to God. To dishonour God hurts such a soul more than its own hurt or sorrow. It would rather go down to Hell with love in its heart than grieve its Beloved by mortal sin. Such loving repentance sanctifies and makes perfect on earth and raises up the soul in honour before God. When the soul is in this state God is dearer to it than it is to itself, and it is heartily sorry for sin.

To the blessed who have these three kinds of repentance there is granted this honour on earth, that God sends His radiant Spirit to shine ceaselessly in their souls, as a ray from the sun shines on a newly gilded shield. The glance which passes between God and the loving soul shines brightly from both and has great power and splendour before all who are in Heaven or Purgatory or Hell; so that the cherubim and seraphim seek intimacy with the soul and wander gently down to it in the same gleaming splendour and unspeakable love.

Such is the noble way of the repentant soul in this poor body, for the angels and the love of the soul are one nature of inborn purity in God, and of the fire of love in the seraphim. Acquired purity, irradiated by the flowing fire of Divine Love, remains in the cherubim; but a burning desire of love comes down to them from the seraphim who are on fire with Love.

Therefore the noble radiance streams down
To reflect love anew.

The angels given us in baptism
May not tend this burning love,
For God has not given them the necessary fervour.
Moreover, they are given us to tend our virtues.

Their presence and our courage sanctify all our activities and drive away the cunning of the devil and his power over our senses. But the fiery splendour which shines from the Holy Trinity into the loving soul, alarms the devils so that they never venture to pass through these holy beams. . . . They can go the way their wickedness points out to them, but where they become aware of a loving soul in human form, they must disappear under the earth. Neither may they pollute the air where the blessed dwell without mortal sin. All the sins they bring to us they must initiate themselves. Therefore we must ascend to God in true Christian Faith: then the devils lose all their power and must flee before us.

2. *Of two kinds of suffering and their uses*

I thank God for all my blessings and I lament over my past life, for God does not send suffering without purpose. So long as the creature can sin, he requires suffering as much as virtue. That suffering is of great use which the soul inflicts on itself according to the will of God and under advice.

But the suffering God Himself sends us through His friends or His enemies is as much more noble and useful as God Himself is nobler than any suffering.

Christ does not redeem us through the agony He voluntarily endured, but rather by teaching us how to serve Him with works and suffering. He redeemed us through the suffering inflicted on His innocence by His enemies and by His piteous death at which no one was His true friend save one woman, Mary, His mother; she was truly and inwardly one with Him and she stood outwardly by Him.

Because faithless people overloaded me with suffering God gave me this comfort: "Now see! No one can escape suffering, for it purifies mankind from hour to hour from their many sins." Alas! then I saw following us a dreadful troop of sins as if all mountains, stones, rain-drops, all grass, trees, leaves and sand

were living beings who sought to crush us so that we might never attain to God. Alas! for the living dust of sin which cannot be described in words; the suffering we bear secretly in our bodies is given us here for that.

The second kind of suffering, bitterness, protects us from future falls, for that pure heart which often trembles before it, carries the spirit of God secretly within itself.

The third, the nobility of suffering, makes us worthy to receive the grace of God, because even though I accept my need and trouble as well as my earthly comfort, with fear and a trembling heart, God with His consolation is ever there.

3. *God will one day weigh all innocent suffering*

On the Last Day Jesus Christ will set before His Father a glorious pair of scales. His holy deeds and innocent suffering will lie therein and against them all the innocent suffering, contempt and sorrow that any have ever suffered for love of Him. Thus a just balance is secured: those who have most in the scales (to weigh against Christ's suffering) will have most cause for joy. . . .

4. *Wondrous Love has many powers. Of fourfold humility. Of seven ornaments of the loving soul*

O wondrous Love of God!
Thou great and holy Might!
Thou dost enlighten the soul and teach the senses,
And givest full power to all virtue.
Well for me, poor fool that I am,
That I ever joyfully saw Thee.

Ah! Love! Thou art full of delight
And to be praised in all Thy works;
That I know in my soul.
All virtues are subject to Thee;
But deepening humility, unstained by pride of spirit,
And inborn or acquired purity,
Are two virtues which must go with love
Though subject to it.

Love wanders through the senses and storms with all virtues on the soul. While love grows in the soul, it rises eagerly up to God and overflows towards the Glory which inclines towards it. Love melts through the soul into the senses, that the body also may have its share, for it is drawn into all things.

Can anyone living in the love of God have evil habits? That I can find nowhere, such great power has the unsullied Love of God. Yet the soul is never so mightily saturated by Divine Love that it is not often tempted by earthly things.

A soul saturated by false things can never receive true love. When love is full-grown in the soul it must rise as far as is possible to human nature, for love has measure in its ordering. Had it not measure, Ah! beloved Lord! many pure hearts would break for very joy!

When the soul walks with love, with eager desire for God in its heart, and when it has come to the Mount of powerful love and blissful knowledge, then it does as pilgrims do who have eagerly climbed a summit: they descend with care lest they fall over a precipice. So is it with the soul. Irradiated by the fire of its long love, overpowered by the embrace of the Holy Trinity, it begins to sink, and to cool—

> As the sun from its highest zenith
> Sinks down into the night,
> Thus also, God knows, is it with the soul
> And with the body.

The richly loving soul sinks down into such profound humility that it is overcome. What God does with it in love is welcome to it because of the noble nature which fills God and the soul with one mind. The soul turns the eye of delight from all things that it may the better win God's praise. It sinks swiftly to the lowest place God has in His power. Ah! how can even I dare to name this place which humility cannot even recognize?

The *first* humility lies outwardly in housing and clothing, that it may be fashioned in a manner befitting spiritual people, yet clean and fresh.

The *second* humility is seen in our bearing towards others, that it be loving in all things. From this God's holy love will grow.

The *third* humility applies to the senses, that all things be fittingly used and ordinately loved.

The *fourth* lies in the soul, that is in a deepening humility which produces much sweet wonder. It chases the soul up into the heavens and draws it down again into the depths. It leads the soul to all creatures and says, "Look! Those are all better than thou art!" and brings it then to a place whence it may sink no deeper, that is under Lucifer's tail. If it would stay there in its humble desire to honour God, that would not be denied it.

So closely is the loving soul bound to humble love that it no longer fears nor is ashamed save in moderation, as one might fear and stand in awe of Heaven.

Yet the poor body must fear and be ashamed of the darkness of its heart and the sickness of its outward senses, seeing that it is not yet transformed by death. But the soul is just as safe in its body as in the Kingdom of Heaven, though not so certain; just as daring but not so strong, just as powerful but not so constant, just as loving but not so joyful, just as gentle but not so rich, just as holy but not yet so sinless, just as content but not yet so complete. This is so only with the soul saturated by humility for love of God.

When it has thus climbed to the highest to which it may attain while still companioned by the body, and has sunk to the lowest depths it can find, then it is full-grown in virtue and in holiness. But it must yet be adorned with suffering in patient waiting.

Thus the soul takes its stand on faithfulness
And looks on all things with wisdom,
It lacks nothing
So long as it may win the praise of God.

5. *Of the Purgatory of a Beguine who because of self-will was not helped by prayer*

Alas, O Sin! so harmful that even man's good works can be injurious if done without guidance—As when one says, I am beyond human guidance! I will live only according to the will of God! Such words always fill me with dread. For no one in any state will properly humble himself so that he may follow Christian counsel with submissive heart.

I found this in a certain woman. She loved our Lord with all her heart and love drove her to such superhuman effort that her health was destroyed and she died. Then I prayed for her according to Christian custom. Following my spirit I saw her spirit which was as bright as the sun. That was because of her pure heart and faithful intention. Yet she was imprisoned in great darkness and longed sore for everlasting light. She was on the ascent and longed to hasten, but the dark night was ever before her. It was self-will without guidance which so sorely hindered this otherwise good woman.

I asked her, "How can I help you?" And she answered, "On earth I did not wish to follow human advice according to Christian ordinance, therefore no human prayer or longing can help me." Then I turned to our Lord and asked Him how a person should come to such suffering who on earth had accepted suffering through love of Him. He said: "Virtues exercised without obedience are less valuable to Me. I Myself came to earth under obedience and I served on earth in utter submission to My Father and to all men; then only did I enter Heaven in complete freedom, but no one followed Me who did likewise. With the desire, prayer and work done here on earth, the soul will be adorned when it comes to Heaven."

THE SOUL.—Then all that is given to us on our way to Heaven is our own. But when we get there, everything is held for the good of all in common. God does that in love to us that other souls may come more quickly to us and help us to praise Him in everlasting glory.

The rightful duration of this Beguine's suffering was seventeen years, but God in His compassion lessened it to seventeen months because she had borne it in heartfelt love. May He help us in the same measure! AMEN.

6. *How the soul praises the Holy Trinity. A Prayer*

Lord Jesus Christ! Thou didst come forth without beginning from the heart of the Eternal Father; Thou Who wast born of the flesh of a pure Virgin and Who art with the Father one Spirit, one Will, one Wisdom, one Might, one Power over all that ever was without end.

O Lord! as I, of all people most unworthy, also came forth spiritually from Thy heart and side, and as I, O Lord, God and man, am united with the Spirit of both, therefore I, a poor, sad being, speak thus:

Lord and heavenly Father, Thou art my heart!
Lord Jesus Christ, Thou art my body!
Lord Holy Spirit, Thou are my breath!
Lord Holy Trinity, Thou art my only refuge
and my everlasting Peace!

7. *How God praises the soul in return*

Thou art a foundation of My Divine Being!
An honour of maidenly constancy,
A flower of great delight,
A vanquisher of evil spirits,
A mirror of eternal contemplation!

8. *How one shall have three children for whom one must pray*

No one knows what comfort or desire or suffering is if he has not experienced them. I seek help for I am in great distress. I have three children for whom I foresee great trouble. The first child stands for those poor sinners who lie in everlasting death; for them there is no other comfort save that they still have their human bodies. Alas! I look on this child with a bleeding heart; I caress it tearfully in my poor soul and carry it to the feet of the Father from whom I received it. I look on this child and pray its faithful Lord Jesus that He may awaken it with the same voice of Divine Compassion with which He awoke Lazarus. To this God answered—

I will change the illness of this child;
But if it would not again fall into this death
It must try to be like Me
In My Beauty and Nobility,
Embraced and penetrated by Joy to all Eternity!
Up then, dear child, thou art healed!

Use the free-will I have given thee
And will never take from thee;
But against that all thy merit will be weighed
And in the beauteous Heaven
Thou shalt become even as the saints
—But alas the child still lies motionless
Of its own wanton will!

My second child stands for those poor souls who suffer in Purgatory; I must give them my heart's blood to drink. If I pray for them because of their great need and see the bitter fate they must suffer for every sin, then I suffer as a mother. Yet it pleases me that for real sin they should suffer pain to honour God.

They bear their sufferings with patience
For they see their faults with open eyes;
They bear their need with chastened wisdom
And drink deeply of their heart's sorrow—
If this child is soon to recover,
Its mother must be faithful and compassionate.

My third child stands for those spiritual people who are not yet perfect. When I look on all my children, I grieve for none so much as for this one, because with its outward senses so sadly taken up with passing things, it is so widely separated from heavenly things that it has lost its good habits and the sweet trust in God by which He had specially drawn it to Himself. It is thus so sadly turned away from the right course that no one can bring it back by words alone. And it greatly abuses fervour, turns away from God's love and judges wrongly all that it sees and hears, so that it appears outwardly wise, while inwardly alas! it is foolish. It is only with the greatest difficulty that this child can ever recover. For it falls first into a self-willed struggle (with truth), then into laziness, then into false comfort, then into mistrust, till finally it falls utterly away from Grace. Thus this poor child falls into a sinful life till its end. It is a matter of grave doubt whither this damaged soul will betake itself.[1]

[1] Many may find the third child a good study of themselves. It is interesting to find M. praying more passionately for the lapsed than for the sinful.

11. *How spiritual names shall be revered. Of the Sisters of Gelas*

Ah! Holy Names! How noble ye are above all earthly names! Therefore Jesus Christ Himself wished to carry His Holy Name with Him throughout His earthly life. All other names . . . lose their value; spiritual names alone shall be exalted according as they were here nobly born. They shall be wondrously exalted by the brethren of Jesus and the sisters of Mary, the first who ever bore spiritual names in such humility.

This is hard on those who here outwardly pose as spiritual, with deep bowings and fine words in order that others may think them inwardly filled by a flood of the Holy Spirit. . . . Alas! it is a great and sudden temptation to whosoever from pride gives ear; he acquires a good reputation without effort, yet has not in his heart the full birth of the Holy Spirit. This lack will be easily recognized by his nearest friends for he will be seen as a growling bear or a roaring lion, whereas he ought to be a lamb in gentleness and a dove in virtue.

In the world the lives of such people are a betrayal, and before God and their neighbour, a harmful lie. Alas! for unholy ambition and desire. How grim is my heart to thee, for thou dost rob my sisters of the inner sweetness of God and His outward love for which they should prepare in the holy resting-place of the Trinity. Thou makest them so hard inwardly and unwilling outwardly, that one does not dare to utter a spiritual word before them for it is at once misunderstood.

Nay! Sister! before all things thou must have breadth of understanding, then only canst thou attain a willing heart and an open soul into which grace may flow. If, without advice, thou make thy need too narrow, then thou wilt never be ready for the height of holy desire, nor the breadth of Divine perception nor the depth of the flowing sweetness of God. It is an eternal reproach and highly unseemly that the bride of a King should play happily in the mud.

Ah! Sister! that thou mayest pray aright, give thyself utterly to God and say: Beloved Bridegroom! Jesus Christ! This hour is Thine alone and that of poor sinners and Holy Church and sorrowful souls—not mine! All the might and power of my

heart I give Thee, O Lord, this day, that Thou for Thine own glory shouldst come to my aid. Give me also, I pray Thee, a right knowledge of who I myself am, then only can I have a right sorrow.

But, dear Sister, when thou goest to thy work cross thyself and say:—

Help me Jesus my heart's desire
That I may lose heart and sense so deep in Thee
That I no more long for earthly things.
Yea! Sister, if thou art wise in thy senses
Covetousness will not attract thee;
And if thou art wise in grace
No evil may betray thee or lead thee astray,
For in the grace which flows down to us here
From the Holy Trinity
Into a heart ever open towards Heaven,
One finds Truth and Discretion in all things.
It is easy to take for granted
That one should be good before the world;
But if the Truth is not there
Then art thou as a poisonous serpent.
Make thy heart crystal clear within
And keep thyself outwardly small
So mayest thou be one with God.

12. *How God answers a Brother as to the writing of this Book*

Master Heinrich![1] You are surprised at the masculine way in which this book is written? I wonder why that surprises *you*? But it grieves *me* to the heart that I, a sinful woman, had so to write. Yet I cannot otherwise describe to anyone the true knowledge and holy, glorious revelations save in these words alone, which seem to me all too poor as against the Eternal Truth. I asked the Everlasting Master what He would say to

[1] This was possibly her own brother, possibly Heinrich von Halle who translated her book into Latin. The fact that here as elsewhere she has to defend her writing shows that there was persecution; also that her "book" was collected and circulated in her lifetime.

you and He answered: "Ask Master Heinrich how it came to pass that the Apostles who first showed such weakness, became strong and fearless after they had received the Holy Ghost? And ask further where Moses was when he saw nothing but God? And ask yet further how it was that Daniel was able to speak (so wisely) in his youth?"

13. *Of the tenfold benefits of the prayer of a good person*

That prayer has great power which a person makes with all his might. It makes a sour heart sweet, a sad heart merry, a poor heart rich, a foolish heart wise, a timid heart brave, a sick heart well, a blind heart full of sight, a cold heart ardent. It draws down the great God into the little heart, it drives the hungry soul up into the fullness of God, it brings together two lovers, God and the soul in a wondrous place where they speak much of love.

Alas for me, unworthy . . .[1] that I cannot die!

15. *Of a good priest's Purgatory*

A good priest died in his own parish. I prayed for him as for others according to Christian custom. My soul saw his soul in great honour though still awaiting heavenly glory. Four angels led him through all obstacles into the first Heaven and played to him on heavenly lyres. That was his Purgatory by which they prepared him for heavenly bliss. I asked him how he had come to receive such special reward. He said: "I loved solitude on earth and feared myself alone in my prayer." Then I said: "But, blessed soul, why dost thou not go at once with these happy angels to Heaven?" And he answered: "The honour I shall receive for my pure ministry is so great that I may not attain to it yet."

16. *It is devilish that man sins*

Some learned people say that it is human to sin. In all temptations of my sinful body, all feelings of my heart, all

[1] Text obscure.

understanding of my senses and all nobility of my soul, I could find none other but that it is devilish that man sins.

For whether the sin is small or great
The devil always keeps company in it.

More than that, wickedness acquired of our own freewill is always more harmful to us than all the rest of our weaknesses such as hunger, thirst, heat, frost, pain, sorrow, longing, sleep, weariness. These are all things which Christ too suffered who became true man for and with us. Moreover, if sins were only human then He too had sinned, for He was true man in the flesh, righteous in wisdom, persevering in virtue, and perfect man in the Holy Spirit. Above all, He was everlasting God in everlasting Truth, and not a sinner. So that if we would be like Him we must live like Him—or else be saved through repentance.[1]

17. *The praise, prayer and greeting of a sinner*

O living God I greet Thee,
Thou art mine before all else.
It is my endless joy
That I may speak freely with Thee.
When my enemies pursue me
Then do I flee to Thine arms,
There to utter all my sorrow
As Thou dost incline Thyself towards me.
Thou knowest well that Thou canst touch
to music
All the strings of my soul;
Ah! that that might now begin
That Thou mightst have bliss!
I am an unworthy bride
Yet art Thou my noble Love:
Therefore I rejoice evermore.

[1] The crucial point here as in all true religion is the soul's instinctive longing for God its Home. This instinct warns it away from sin and calls it home to God. And at the same time it inclines its will to all good.

Remember how Thou canst woo
The pure soul in Thy embrace,
And bring it soon to pass in me—
Unworthy as I am of Thee.
Ah! Lord! lift me up to Thyself
Then shall I be pure and clear—
But if Thou leave me to myself
I must ever remain
In darkness and heaviness.

18. *How God answers*

God answers thus:

My answering greeting
Is a heavenly flood so mighty
That if I gave Myself to thee
In all My Power,
Thy human life were ended!
Therefore, seest thou
I must restrain My Might;
Hide the full glory of My Splendour
And hold thee longer in thy earthly misery.
Till suddenly all thy sweetness
Rises up to the heights of everlasting merit,
And My music shall sound sweetly in thine ears
After the cost of thy faithful love.
Yet will I begin early
To tune My heavenly strings in thy soul
So that thou mayst wait more patiently—
For noble brides and knightly lords
Can only be trained at great cost
After long and careful preparation.[1]

19. *How sin drives humanity in seventeen ways*

Sin drives a person so far from God that he could never return to Him were it not for the great power exerted by the Holy Trinity. Vanity is the first sin which begins to drive man

[1] *i.e.* God's desire is not to overwhelm the soul.

from God and if we do not conquer it, impurity raises its head. If we do not vanquish impurity, then follow one after another covetousness, indolence, lying, perjury, anger, slander, pride, hatred, revenge, despondency, shamelessness, mistaken wisdom and unbelief in which one says, It is not as it is said to be![1]

Alas! such people receive all that comes from God so angrily that one hardly dare say anything to them and what they bring forth themselves is so wrong and mixed with untruths that one cannot find the Holy Spirit in what they say. And if their behaviour is sometimes praiseworthy that is only a false sign.

Ah! perfect soul rejoice
For thou alone art like God
And that is just.
For thou dost drink with divine patience
And without sin, much bitterness.
Thou wilt often be distressed
Because of thine enemies
For though bright perfection shines in
heavenly flowers,
And they bloom happily in solitude
Up on the heights in their noble beauty—
Yet the root of their constancy
Is in the Holy Spirit,
Ever fresh and green.

20. *A praise of God in eight things. Of the offering of sin*

O glorious God, as dew
At dawn, mysterious!
O fruit of Mary's flower!
O flower of circling love
That bore this earthly fruit,
Redeemer, Comforter!
O humbled in the heart
Whose gross pride buffets Thee!
Take daily all I have;

[1] This passage is condensed.

Take, when Thou hast poured in
Thy Love upon my sin,
The sacred overflow—
So back to Thee I go!

21. *Why humanity is rejected and yet loved*

Thus speak the senses of those who have experienced the Truth: Lord! my body is mortified through the changes wrought in it by sin. Therefore Thine enemies have thrust me out of their sight like a body which is corrupt. But my soul is alive in Thee, therefore I am loved by Thy friends. Ah! Lord! Beloved Bridegroom! sweet Jesus Christ! I bless Thee without ceasing in my heart for all earthly things and I pray Thee that Thou preserve me unsullied by them, for be they never so holy, yet would they interfere with my highest allegiance to Thee. That I could not bear, therefore I must wage war on them.

22. *Of seven demands of the Law*

The noblest joy of the senses, the holiest peace of the heart and the most loving lustre of all good works comes from the fact that the creature puts his heart into what he does. Here our Lord speaks and teaches me of seven things the blessed must have, those who would rather submit to the Last Judgment through Jesus Christ than any human judgment. Whosoever has not got these things must stand before the Judge as a hired servant before his master, for all who strive against God's Truth with ready lies, really sell these virtues.

The first demand is righteousness in the present; that is, if I see my friend act wrongly towards my enemy and God's enemy, then I blame my friend and lovingly help my enemy.

The second is compassion in need; if I see my friend and my enemy in equal need, I shall help both equally.

The third is faithfulness in friendship: I will never rebuke my friend except for his unfaithful soul.

The fourth is help in secret need; that we seek and find the stranger, the sick and the prisoner and comfort them with friendly words and prayers and beg them to tell Thee their secret needs that Thou mayest help them.

Alas! that any should ever leave the sick or outcast without tears and sighs and compassion—

This ill becomes spiritual people
And sets them aloof from God
So that they lose His sweet intimacy
And yet will not realize
That they incur His judgment.

The fifth demand is that one should be silent in irritation; that the harsh word which rises from a proud and angry heart should not be spoken; from this one finds endless grace in God.

The sixth is that one shall be filled with truth: that person is full of truth whose heart in his best moments gives way to no fault; who rejoices that God's eye sees right into his heart and has nothing of which to be ashamed even were all men to see into his heart.

The seventh is that one shall be the sworn enemy of lying; we should rebuke lying in everyone and not hide it in ourselves.

These seven virtues we shall practise and achieve
Against the will of our own rebellious flesh,
And against the pull and weakness of the senses,
Otherwise we shall not attain them.
But the nobility of the soul towards all good
Gives us with the gentleness of God's love,
The first counsel:
Our sinful nature neglects
In its ignoble way many a divine day.
When we think of the blessed hours
In which God out of the depths of His heart,
His wisdom and His joyful nature,
Ceaselessly pours forth all good,
And out of His sweet mouth
Spiritually tempers our souls,
—Wisely in the senses, usefully in our bodies—
Then must we be ashamed, outwardly of our evil habits
Inwardly of our faithless hearts.

We must also be ashamed of our senses
That we make such poor use
Of the noble and manifold gifts of God:
That they bring back so little fruit
To that place whence there flowed out on us
The very heart of God!
Alas! for my sinful sufferings!
Goodwill brings all virtue to its rightful end
A task for which the body alone
Has not the power.

23. *Of St. Mary's prayer; of Gabriel's light; of the Child's cloth, etc.*

I saw a maiden at her prayer. Her body was bent to the earth and her spirit had raised itself up to the everlasting Godhead. For before Jesus Christ opened the gates of Heaven with the key of the Holy Cross, there was never anyone so holy that his spirit could rise up with effort, soar with longing and embrace the Holy Trinity with love in the everlasting heights. Therefore the soul of this pure maid could not enter into Heaven since Adam had shot the bolt. (Sin was the bolt.)

Then God bent down and came so close to earth that He comforted His friends and they recognized His will. But the Prophets cried aloud and invited our Lord to come down to earth. Moreover, this maid drew our Lord down with the sweet voice of her soul; and she said in her prayer when she was alone: "Lord God! I rejoice that Thou wilt come in so noble a way and that a maid shall be Thy mother. Lord! I offer myself for that, with my purity and with all that I have from Thee." [1]

Then the angel Gabriel came down in a heavenly light which completely surrounded the maid. The angel had a gleaming garment such as I had never seen on earth. As she saw the light with her bodily eyes, the maid rose up in fear. But as she looked on the angel, his face reflected her own purity. She stood modestly and inclined her ear and hearkened. Then the angel greeted her and announced God's Will to her. His words

[1] Such reconstructions of Gospel history are common in mediaeval writers.

pleased her, touched her heart, filled her senses and her soul burned within her. Yet she asked how this could be and was covered with maidenly shame and divine love. When she was aware of what was to happen, she opened her heart with good will and all her might. Then she knelt down and said: "I give myself to the service of God according to thy word."

Then the whole blessed Trinity, the power of the Godhead, the goodwill of the humanity and the noble docility of the Holy Spirit, entered into the being of her maidenhood and the glowing soul of her goodwill. The Trinity set itself in the open heart of her most pure body and united itself with all it found in her, so that her flesh was their flesh and that He, the perfect Child, grew in her body and she was the true mother of His flesh and remained a stainless virgin. And the longer she carried Him the more lovely, radiant and wise she became. Then she arose and spoke: "Lord and Father! I praise Thee that Thou hast magnified me and that my race shall be great in Heaven and earth."

As the time drew on when other women are sad and move heavily, Mary was lithe and happy. And yet she held within her the truly-formed Son of God. She did not know the time at which God willed to be born of her till she saw Him on her lap on the road and in the night on the way to Bethlehem, that foreign city where she herself was a poor and unsheltered stranger.

Almighty God with His wisdom, the everlasting Son with His human truth, and the Holy Spirit with His innocent sweetness passed through Mary's body in bliss, without effort. It happened as swiftly as the sun suddenly shining on the dew, in loving peace. As Mary looked on her darling Babe she bent her head to His face and said, "Welcome, my sinless Child and my Mighty Lord, for all things are Thine!"

In the receiving of our Lord,
In her carrying of Him,
In His birth and as He lay in the lap of His
mother
Before He came to the Crib—
In all that, the power of the Holy Trinity,

And the blissful glow of Heaven's radiance
in Mary
Were so strong that the spirit of evil
Which fares through all the world
And knows all that happens
In town and country
Could not come so near to Mary
As to perceive the miracle
Of how the Child had come into the world.

Mary took Joseph's rough saddle-cloth
Which the ass had worn under its saddle,
And put to that the upper part of her shift
Under which she had carried our Lord;
(The other part she bound round her body).
In these cloths she wrapped the sublime Saviour
And laid Him in the Crib.
There He wept as a new-born child,
For while they cannot speak
Children cry on need.
Thus also did our Lord
Seeing that in His noble way
He was cradled hard in a cattle-shed
Because of the wickedness of sin.
There He wept over humanity
Hiding all His bliss and power.
Then the maid was sorrowful
And the Child hungry and cold;
The mother had to soothe her Son,
That was His Father's Will
And the pleasure of the Holy Spirit.
In motherly love and modesty
She bent over her weeping Babe
And offered Him her childish breast.
Hear this wonder!
The lovely bloom of her clear eyes,
The spiritual beauty of her young face,
The outflowing sweetness of her pure heart,
The delighted play of her noble soul—

These four were united
According to the will of the Father,
The need of the Son and
The desire of the Holy Spirit,
In her maidenly breast.
And the sweet milk flowed from her pure being;
The Child sucked in human fashion;
His mother rejoiced in holiness;
The angels praised God,
And the shepherds came and sought and found
Our true Redeemer.

I asked Mary where Joseph was.
She said, "He is gone into the town
To buy small fish and common bread
And water to drink."
Then I said, "Ah! Lady!
Thou shouldest eat the finest bread
And drink the noblest wine!"
"Nay!" said she "that is for the rich;
We have none of that in this poor life."
When the strange star shone, Satan came to Bethlehem,
Following swiftly after the Three Kings
And looked angrily on the Child
For highest honour was done Him with rich gifts—
Satan was in great perplexity.
He spoke to himself thus:
"What has happened to thee now, Unblessed?
This may well be the Child
Of whom the Prophets wrote;
Of whom thy master Lucifer
Has often and long commanded
That thou shouldst come to His birth
To make it impure.
Then all the world would be ours in Hell.
But this Child! Conceived and born without sin!
From that I can never recover!

Now I have lost all my art
And must go back to my master
To tell him of this disaster.
For this Child will yet be too powerful for us;
Should He triumph over us
How could we suffer it?
For never was any child born
To whom such honour was shown."
As this nightmare dawned on Lucifer
That fiend of the underworld
Sat and gnashed his teeth
And all Hell was lit up
By the flames of his rage.
Then he said: "Shall a *man* be our judge?
Then we shall have to quake before all men
Who live according to His will!

Away with thee Satan! Take the Princes of the land to help thee and the masters of the Jews and teach them how they must kill this Child in His infancy before He goes to school."

As Satan came to Herod he found likeness to Lucifer in that evil man, hatred, pride and covetousness. In these three ways the great devil entered into Herod's heart and spread himself over Herod's five senses and made the King so eager for murder that he wreaked the devil's will against the Holy Innocents, now honoured saints in the Kingdom of Heaven.

I asked Mary where she had put the offering (of the Kings) as she could not buy a lamb for the sacrifice. She said: "Holy flowing mercy, compassionate love for those in need and willing poverty, have taken my treasure from me. My sacrificial lamb was Jesus Christ, son of God Almighty, born of my very heart, in honour of Whom according to His Father's Will, all the unspotted lambs will be brought and offered according to His Father's intention. He is my true sacrificial lamb. I could have no other.

With the offering brought to my Child
(by the Kings)
I have thought of all those
Whom I found truly in need—

Poor orphan children and pure maids
(Who came to wed that they might not
be stoned)
The poor, the sick and the aged,
They should benefit from it
—For from them God had retained it.

But thirty gold marks were left over after seeing to the needs of these poor, I gave them for the Hunger-cloth,[1] because ordinary people went to it to say their prayers and it carried a deep meaning. The cloth was half black and half white. To the north of the Temple the cloth was black; that signified the long darkness of the Old Covenant. . . ." To the south in the House of Prayer the cloth was pure white. That foretold the chaste purity of the Virgin with which we should all overcome our heart's sorrow. Designs sewn on the white cloth were in gold showing the birds Noah sent out from the ark. Therein the false and greedy were to be seen, those who seek all their consolation here on earth. But there was also sewn on it the pure dove with the green branch which came straight back sinless. . . . Thus should those be marked who come daily to God with new virtues, holding themselves on the straight flight to Heaven in the train of the Holy Spirit.

Along the foot of the cloth where the halves were joined there was a golden selvedge. In the centre was a green border covered with precious stones. That signified the noble tree which bore the Body of our Lord when the gates of Heaven were thrust asunder and the bolt by which Adam had shut them was hammered back. Though few knew their significance, selvedge and border together formed a glorious cross.

On the cross a white sacrificial lamb was sewn, adorned with jewels and pure gold, shining as if on fire. Thus was foretold and here accomplished that the sinless Lamb of God died for love on the high Cross. That was why the dead hunger-cloth fell down with the dead lamb at the crucifixion of our Lord

[1] A large carpet which hung over the Altar during fasts; it had biblical scenes sewn on it and was used in Lent to veil the Cross. In Jerusalem it divided the Choir from the nave, a symbol of the veil of the Temple. Mechthild here identifies the Hunger-cloth with the Jewish veil of the Temple.

(St. Matthew, xxvii. 51), that from that time prayer should be offered to the living Lamb of God.

Mary sewed for her Child Jesus a coat, with such skill that when it became too short or too narrow it could be lengthened and let out. The coat was dark brown, of hard, twisted yarn. Joseph was a carpenter who worked for the poor so that he earned only enough for the needs of his family. Mary span and sewed that she might clothe all three.

As they fled into Egypt God's angels enveloped them in heavenly light so that the devil might not know where the Child went, till He grew up, a young man of thirty years; the devil became aware of Him in the desert and thereafter through many Divine miracles. Then Satan turned to the leaders of the Jews; though outwardly good to look upon they were inwardly wicked. Satan taught them how they should oppose Jesus with false words and should never accept His teaching; thus they might maintain their Jewish law.

Then Satan went to Lucifer and said:
"Alas Master! Our teaching must pass away!
I have found on sinful earth a man
Who alone is stronger and wiser
Than all of us together before the Fall.
For even with all my powers
I cannot contrive to make Him think
One sinful thought."
Then Lucifer ground his teeth like a dog
And bit the hound of Hell and said:
"Thou shalt oppose him with all men!
But—if he is the greatest of all men
He can escape all sin!"
"Nay, Master! we will surely come out of this pass
For I can find many
Who would gladly kill him."
[There is here a break in the context]
Mary, our Lady, spoke in her thought to our Lord
As often as she would
And His Divinity sometimes answered her;
Therefrom she carried her heart's sorrow secretly.

Mary Magdalene was not given that;
When she did not see our Lord
With the eyes of her flesh
She was inconsolable
And suffered grief in her heart.
She burned sore in simple love
Without sublime visions of heavenly things
Till the hour when the Apostles
Received the Holy Ghost:
Then first was her soul wounded by the Godhead.
But our Lady was very still
As our Lord rose so gloriously from the dead;
Yet of all beings, her heart
Possessed the deepest knowledge of God.

24. *Of six children of our Lord God. Of the virtues of St. Dominic and how God honoured his order in four things*

A great King has a son of service to himself and comfort to his subjects, such a praiseworthy son that all his deeds and thoughts serve to enhance the honour of this Father. This great King is our Lord God and heavenly Father who has won by our mother, Holy Church, seven good sons and one lovely daughter.[1]

His first son, our brother, is our Lord Jesus Christ. The honour the heavenly Father has of this Son and the comfort His people find in Him is well known. Also how the heavenly Father has united Himself with this Son and set Him on His right hand and given Him so much power and glory that it is without measure and yet fitting.

The second son represents the holy Apostles who preserved for us our priceless treasure, which was set on a high hill where there was a cross; our enemies pierced our Treasure with five wounds and slew Him.

The third son represents the heroic martyrs who sprinkled the way to Heaven with their blood.

The fourth son represents the steadfast Confessors who gave and taught us pure Truth.

[1] There is no mention of this daughter.

The fifth son is represented by those pure maidens who kept their innocence for love of God: they could intercede with the heavenly Father for us for they bore His likeness in themselves. He wills to have them for Himself alone, dedicated to Him and wearing their wreaths in token of His love. They shall never cover their heads with veils as earthly brides do, for our Lord has set this essential child so honourably in the heavenly Kingdom beside Himself, that all sorrow and loneliness on earth is forgotten.

But then His own people wandered so far from the true Faith and common belief that the heavenly Father took compassion on them and brought forth other two sons by our dear mother Holy Church. And she nurtured those two by the Old Law and the New Law by which she nurtures all God's children. Our Lord said: "No man shall be dedicated to the priesthood who does not know the Old Law and the New Law. For no man may go to Court on one foot or stand long on one foot serving his Lord."

These two sons are the Preachers, the Brothers Minor of whom St. Dominic and St. Francis were the forerunners. Alas! how much of what they fostered has passed away! And the more it passes away the more sick the Orders become. May they survive till a second son is born out of the faithful heart of the eternal Father Who will never desert His children.

St. Dominic regarded his brothers with true devotion, loving regard and holy wisdom. . . . Moreover, he taught the wise that they should temper their knowledge with divine simplicity; to the simple he taught true wisdom; the tempted he helped to bear their sorrows secretly. He taught the young to keep much silence that they might be outwardly modest and inwardly wise. The sick and infirm he comforted with true compassion, caring for all their needs. They rejoiced at the long years he spent among them; his gracious company made their labours light.

In the beginning this Order was pure and simple and therefore full of burning love to God. Pure love of God which He gives to some, is often mocked by foolish people so that they lose a gift in which they might find and embrace divine wisdom. They also extinguish God's burning love for them.

Some of this Order are distressed by the reverence with which they are regarded, for they look on earthly honour as a great

temptation. Yet they cannot deny the spirituality and nobility of soul which the Order has received from God, even while deeming themselves, with shrinking hearts, below all creatures. Such brothers must either accept such reverence, while fearing to disgrace it, . . . or else lay down the burden honourably, for a spiritual heart must have peace, and flower in love to the Holy Trinity.

God has specially honoured those two sons with four things. He has done this because they no longer think of themselves except that they sin not. All their care and labour shall be to the end, said our Lord, that My people may be blessed and holy. The first thing is eagerly to welcome all; the second to give real help in every need; the third to possess the holy wisdom of Divine Truth; the fourth to cherish the power of Holy Church.

That some persecute the Brethren without compassion and without knowledge leads to unhappy things as to which I must be silent.

25. *One thing which is enjoyed in Heaven; it is in seven parts from which seven things follow*

One thing I enjoy above all others in Heaven. It is the noblest of all things and shines most gloriously in the Holy Trinity, it also costs most in this life. And that is, that in poverty, contempt, misery, days of sorrow, spiritual poverty (that most of all), in the demands of obedience, in all kinds of bitterness, inward and outward, one can and will rejoice in praising God from the heart, thanking Him with joy, reaching out to Him in longing and fulfilling His Will in works. In this way both soul and body will be so honoured and praised in Heaven that they will sing and love more sweetly, shine more clearly in joy, live more happily, soar more loftily, be more visibly adorned, have greater spiritual riches, realize more blissfully and absorb more deeply from the Holy Trinity.

Lord God! I ask Thee, how does this praise seem to Thee, which a sad creature without any consolation offers Thee? Hear now what He says:

Such a soul rises up with power;
Its glory is and will be manifold,

For everything that ever was must praise it
Till it comes to the Divine place
Of My Holy Trinity,
And there works such wonders
That it flows right through My Three Persons
And moves and charms and makes for love.
What I desire, the soul itself
Will surely find;
I will not be utterly withdrawn from it;
It must lay itself trustfully
In My Divine arms.
There will I delight Myself with it;
For that reason did I give Myself
Into its power, even as a Child,
Poor, naked, despised, and at last
In Death; that it alone may be—
If it will—
My nearest and dearest companion.
And it shall evermore soar and delight
Soul and body in My Holy Trinity,
Immersed as a fish in the sea.
Where then is all its heaviness
Which it suffered for Me and through Me?
Thus will I give it sweet reparation!

26. *How the Holy Trinity praises itself and sings*

Hear now how the Holy Trinity praises itself for its Wisdom without beginning, its Goodness without end, its everlasting Truth and its absolute Eternity. Hear the sweetest, most lovely voice in which the Holy Trinity itself sings and from which all sweet and holy voices flow which ever sang in Heaven or earth or ever shall to all Eternity.

The Father's voice sings a Hymn of Praise: I am an overflowing stream which no man can exhaust. (Yet man can easily obstruct his own heart with a useless thought, so that the unresting Godhead who ever works without working, cannot flow into it.)

The Son sings thus: I am an ever-returning Abundance which none can receive save in that compassion which has always

flowed and will always flow from God and which comes again in His Son.

The Holy Spirit sings this praise: I am an unconquered power of Truth found in those who accept and praise God for whatsoever He sends them.

And the One Holy Trinity sings thus: I am so strong in My indivisibility that no one can divide Me or break Me to all Eternity.

27. *The heavenly Father received His Son Jesus with twelve words*

After Jesus Christ had come from earthly strife to the Peace of Heaven, His Father received Him with these words:

"Welcome, honoured Son! My hand is in Thy works, My honour in Thy power, My strength in Thy warfare, My praise in Thy victory, My will in Thy return, My miracle in Thy Ascension, My anger at Thy Judgment. The pure Bride Thou bringest Me shall be Thine and shall never be separated from Thee. My Godhead is Thy Crown, Thy humanity My sun. Our one Spirit is one Will, one Counsel, one Power in all things, without beginning and without end. Thy soul is the dearest Bride of our Three Persons."

Ah! how blissfully the soul of Christ plays about the One Holy Trinity, in the same way as beams play from the glorious sun, beams which none can see save those with far-seeing eyes!

28. *Of the seven crowns of Brother Albert*

Wherever genius has wisdom and love, creation bears fruit. No one knows what good he has in him or he would be tempted of the evil one.

I prayed for Brother Albert's soul in love and God showed me his merit. Then I saw seven maidens who held crowns above his head and I wondered much how that could be seeing that he had been a penitent. Then our Lord spoke: "He won these crowns because he took great pains in holding seven maidens to their purity for love of Me: therefore they shall ever adorn his merit and yet shall never touch him, body or soul."

I saw in Heaven that reward, merit and crowns were not all one. Reward followed work, merit followed virtue and crowns

followed love. But the reward is rich according to the number of good works; merit is according to the measure of the virtues, while crowns gleam in the heights according to the radiance of burning love.

Brother Albert said to me that a Brother should die in six years. That was not so. In the seventh year I asked our Lord how that was. He answered: "Brother Albert looked only at the law and not at My choice. I choose for My special friends to be despised without sin and I grant them respite through holy desire to longer life."

When a person glows in love, that is in the truth, and looks into his heart, he finds nothing there, for he desires, more than others, to be utterly despised. And therein desire grows to infinite hunger and brings the person so completely out of self into the will of God, that God is pleased to rescue that person through grace and give him new gifts if he will use them diligently and value them.

29. *If man followed the ordinances of God he would be as an angel*

Whosoever should hold himself straightly in the "pull" which comes from God and follow after the light as he sees it, would come to such bliss and heavenly knowledge that no heart could contain it. Then he would be as an angel, ever lovingly united to God in all things.

When, however, the good man lapses from the way, God sends the devil to tempt him with the worst things, in order to re-awaken him. . . .

Alas! for poor me; that has often happened to me. God has shown me some good thing to do and promised to help me, the which, because of my unworthiness, I did not dare to attempt. Then the devil came to tempt me. . . . He said: "He who has anything good in him is not altogether bad; but whosoever sins loses all shame for if he were ashamed he would sin no more. I am as fickle as a fly and always fall into sin. I spare no man." Only he who arms himself with virtue remains unburdened and he who is firmly established in God, nobly overcomes all his distresses.

30. *Of Twenty Powers of the Love of God*

Dear Love of God! embrace this soul of mine,
For it would grieve me above all sorrow
To be parted from Thee,
Therefore I pray Thee let not my love grow cold,
For my works were all as dead,
Were I not conscious of Thee.
Ah Love! Thou makest pain and need sweet to me,
Thou givest wisdom and comfort to the children
of God.
O bond of Love! Thy hand has power;
It binds both young and old;
Thou makest heavy burdens light,
While little sins to Thee are great.
Thou servest willingly all creatures
For love alone.
Ah! sweet Love of God! should I sleep too long,
Woefully neglecting all good things
Do Thou awaken me and sing;
For the song with which Thou dost touch my soul
Delights me as sweet music.
Ah! Love! Fling me down under Thee,
Gladly would I be vanquished;
Shouldst Thou take my life from me
Therein would I find comfort;
For Thou, most gentle Love of God,
Dost spare me too much
And that I lament ever more.
Love! Thy wondrous greeting fills my heart!
The pain Thou causest me helps me to live without
sin;
Thy steady devotion brings me much sweet sorrow.
Ah! Divine Love! How can I be patient lacking
Thee?
Yet—when Thou dost leave me
It is a high and heavenly courage
Thine absence gives me.

Ah! wondrous Love! happy is she whom Thou
teachest
For it is a joyful humility
Which begs Thee to turn from the soul![1]

Ah Love! how ever small Thou findest her
Who seekest Thee with might in all things
And diligently pursues Thee;
Bidding Thee with the eagerness of love
To flee from her—
Yet there are many who call Thee with their
voices
And turn from Thee in their works.
But Thy going and coming, O Love,
Are equally welcome to the well-ordered soul:
Thou hast achieved that which God began in us
With heartfelt love.
Thy noble clearness which stands as a mirror
Between God and the pure soul,
Awakens burning love in the maid
For Jesus her dear Love . . .
Thy holy compassion
Causes the devils much distress:
Thy sweet peace
Brings gentle feelings and pure habits.
Thy holy sufficiency leads free spirits
To willing poverty.
Love! Thy true perfection
Does not willingly complain
Of either misfortune or heavy labours.

31. *Of the powers of love: how no creature may fully express the soul's longing for God*

Ah Love! how broad is Thy light in the soul! How fiery Thy gleam: how inconceivable Thy glory: how manifold Thy wisdom: how swift Thy bounty: how powerful Thy grasp: how perfect Thy being: how gentle Thy flow: how great Thy riches: how faithful Thy work and how holy Thy discernment!

[1] See iv. 12.

As Thou dost penetrate the soul with all these, Thou dost raise it up to fly with the wings of a dove (i.e. the virtues), to long with the eagerness of an eagle, thus to follow Thy fiery radiance up to Heaven, for all temporal things seem to it cold and tasteless.

Thus speaks the voice of Truth: "Lord! the longing I have to follow Thee, the wisdom I receive in the flight of love, the union I grasp in Thy will, the constancy I receive from Thy gifts, the sweet memories as I think of Thee and the repentant love I have from Thee are in themselves so rich and before Thy Divine eyes so great, that if Thou didst not know it,—not all grains of sand, drops of water could tell it nor yet all grass, meadows, stone and wood, all creatures, fish, fowl, flying and creeping things, devils, heathens, Jews and all Thine enemies, not even all Thy friends, men, angels, saints—nay, if all could speak and cry without ceasing till the Last Day, truly they could not tell Thee half the intensity of my longing, the extent of my suffering, the hunting of my heart, and the uplifting of my soul to taste of Thy healing, to be at one with Thee for evermore."[1]

Ah Mary, Mother of God! how was it with thee, when thou didst begin in thy Son to make known the love which a truly united soul, without falseness, has to the everlasting Godhead and the touch with which He woos the soul? Ah Mary! thou mightest indeed grow weary and thy Son had to become powerless, for the fiery power of Divine Love far transcends all human might.

32. *Of the noble end of Sister Mechthild* [2]

I am forced to write these words
As to which I would gladly have kept silent,
For I fear greatly the power of vainglory,
But I fear yet more the judgement of God
Should I, His little creature, keep silence.

Longing, fear and sorrow of heart I have borne secretly from childhood that I might attain a good end. Now in my last days God has shown me four bands of maidens and angels coming down from Heaven in procession. The maidens signified the

[1] This derives from the *Song of Solomon.*

[2] This title was, of course, not by Mechthild but added by a copyist.

virtues with which someone had served God, the angels signified the pure life with which that person had followed God.

Our Lord and His noble mother
Followed the blissful procession,
Till those at its head stood beside the person.
The way was peaceful and all around it
The air was brighter than sunshine
Because of the radiance of the blessed saints,
Who came out from the Joy of God.

The soul said: "Lord! this way rejoices me far beyond any merit of mine but I still have a great dread as to the way in which my soul shall pass from my body." Then the Lord said: "It shall be thus: I will draw My breath and thy soul shall come to Me as a needle to a magnet."

On both sides of the procession was a troop of devils . . . yet I feared none of them. They struck and clawed each other as if demented: therefore the soul rejoiced that she saw our Lord before her. She asked Him the reason for that and He said: "Thy joy comes from the perfect certainty thou now hast, that not all these devils can ever separate thee from Me."

33. *How small sins prevent perfection: how the devil comes to the soul in them*

What hinders spiritual people most of all from full perfection is that they pay so little heed to small sins. I tell you truly, that when I refrain from a smile which would hurt no one, or cherish some sourness in my heart, or feel impatient at my own pain, my soul becomes so dark and my senses so dull and my heart so cold, that I must weep and lament piteously, long greatly and humbly make confession of my lack of virtue. Then only does grace come again to my soul and I creep back like a beaten dog to the kitchen.

Moreover, if I have not noticed and altered some fault in me, there seems at once to be a stain on my soul. Then I know not what to do. The devil who stokes the fires of Purgatory in which this sin shall be burned away, at once sees his own likeness in me. Then I begin to quake for I am alone, though my soul was set free from dread when I received the gift of contemplation.

So I fall to the ground and say a *Miserere mei Deus* or a *Pater Noster*. Then I come back at once to my sweet Paradise from which the stain had driven me.

34. *Of five new saints sent because of wicked people. How God will wash Christianity in His own blood*

I wonder much about the nobility which surrounds holiness and the weakness which afflicts humanity. That St. Elizabeth,[1] for instance, so quickly became holy. . . . This was explained to me by our Lord Who said: "It is the function of a messenger to be swift. Elizabeth is and was a messenger I sent to unsanctified women who sat in castles and were so steeped in impurity, puffed up with pride and eaten up by vanity, that by rights they should have been cast down into the abyss. But many women have now followed St. Elizabeth's example according as they could and would.

"I sent St. Dominic to unbelievers as a messenger, to the ignorant as a teacher, to the sad as a comforter. I sent St. Francis also as a messenger to covetous priests and proud laymen. But St. Peter, the new martyr,[2] is a messenger of blood, for false Christianity is sadly enslaved. All say they are pure and before My very eyes they are false. They say they love Me but they love their bodies far more. Whosoever will abide with Me may comfort himself with St. Peter as to this earthly life. Hidden sin finally comes to open need."

Then I, poor wretch, was so bold in my prayer as to lift corrupt Christianity in the arms of my soul and hold it up in lamentation. Our Lord said, "Let be! 'Tis too heavy for thee!"

Nay, sweet Lord!
I will lift it up
And bear it to Thy feet
With Thine own arms
Which bore it on the Cross!
And God let me have my will,
That so I might find rest.

[1] St. Elizabeth of Thüringen, 1207-1231, was sanctified in 1235.

[2] Peter Martyr, born 1205 at Verona, joined the Dominican Order, preached against the false teaching of the Katharists in Lombardy and Tuscany. Suffered martyrdom 1252.

But this poor Christendom when it appeared before the Lord seemed to me as a poor maid. I looked at her and saw our Lord also look at her. And I was bitterly ashamed of her. The Lord said: "Is it seemly that I take this poor maid to me as my bride? To love her without end? To take her in My kingly arms and look on her with My Divine eyes? For she is half-blind in understanding and crippled in her hands which do no good works. She is lame in the feet of her desire for she thinks seldom and idly of Me. She is unhealthy in her skin, unclean and impure." Then the poor spirit spoke: "What counsel can I give her?" And our Lord said: "I will wash her in My own blood and I will protect all the blessed who are truly innocent and take them secretly to me in a holy death."[1] Our Lord said further: "Sister Jutta von Sangershausen[2] I sent as a messenger to the heathen with her holy prayer and her good example." He also said: "I now send this book to all spiritual people both good and bad for if the pillars (of the Church) fall, the work cannot stand. I tell thee truly My heart's blood which in the latter days I shall shed again, is written in this book."

Of the three sheddings of blood our Lord told me the following: "The first shedding of blood was of Abel and the Holy Innocents, also the blood of John the Baptist and all those who shed their blood before the Crucifixion; that was Christ's blood for they suffered a holy death for love of Him. The second shedding of blood was that of the heavenly Father which Christ shed out of His sinless heart. The third shedding for the Christian Faith (which shall be before the last Day) is the blood of the Holy Spirit, for without the devotion of the Holy Spirit no good deed could ever have been accomplished. The martyrs' blood, for the sake of Christ, gives participation and courage; the Father's blood in Christ gives redemption and faith; the last blood in the Holy Spirit gives glory and honour."[3]

[1] At a time when certain sects were persecuted and many put to death.

[2] Jutta lost her husband in a Crusade in 1260 and, after settling her children in religious houses, worked among the lepers in Prussia till her death four years later.

[3] An echo from the teaching of Joachim of Flora.

35. *How Sister Mechthild thanks and praises God and prays for three kinds of people and for herself*

Ah merciful Father, God in Heaven!
Draw my soul flowingly and untroubled to Thee,
And do Thou, O Lord, flow towards me
With all the Joy that is Thine.
Thus the soul loves to offer Thee praise
For all Thy goodness.
Ah! and draw me Lord
By the power of Thy Holy Trinity
Into the sweet stream of love;
That so in praising Thee I may turn
All Thy merciful gifts
To good account.
Let me ask nothing, sweet Lord, of Thee
That Thou wouldst not give me
To Thy Praise!

Ah Father of all good! I, a poor sinner, thank Thee for all Thy faithfulness, with my suffering body, my outcast soul, my sinful heart, my sorrowful senses and with my whole being, so despised in this world. For these, O Father, alone are mine and nothing else, with Thy dear Son Jesus Christ and in fellowship with all creatures. All these were unstained before the Fall and when they return shall be reinstated to the highest they will and may.

With these I praise Thee this day, for the true protection Thou hast shown to my poor body and my outcast soul. I thank Thee for all the merciful gifts Thou has been pleased to give me. With all creatures I would praise Thee in and for all things which have flowed unspotted from Thy generous heart. But with all these, O Love above all love, I pray Thee to glorify Thyself by a real transformation and conversion in those poor sinners who today lie in mortal sin. I pray Thee for all suffering souls who through our sins have gone to Purgatory; may we carefully guard ourselves from such sins. I pray Thee for the salvation, protection and perfecting of Thy Holy Spirit, in all those by name who through Thy love have helped me

to bear my misery of body and soul. I pray Thee through Thy Son Jesus, that Thou wilt change the suffering of my spiritual poverty and turn the gall of bitterness to honey in the palate of my soul. I pray Thee for the eternal honour of the Christian Faith that Thou protect us from all false ways with Thy Divine Wisdom. And strengthen, O Lord, our spirits that they may rest in Thy Holy Trinity.

I pray Thee for all who persecute Christians, that they may yet come to know Thee openly before all men. I pray Thee for true stirrings with discernment in false people in ruling positions, and for compassion and forbearance towards the innocent. I pray Thee, Eternal Consoler, that Thou wouldst comfort all sorrowing souls who must this day part with fear from their bodies, that Thou, their Preserver, wouldst keep them safe and give them everlasting life. I pray Thee for spiritual clearness, constancy and strong upholding of Divine Truth in all things, and for all those who possess spiritual power through Thy love. I pray Thee for true thankfulness at all times, for all Thy gifts which help those who through love for Thee carry heavy burdens.

I ask Thee, holy God, for a compassionate view of my useless life, for union with Thee in my soul, for the sacrament of Thy Holy Body to help me on my way, that at the end it may be the last food of soul and body. I also pray Thee, for my last hour, the painful parting of my soul from my sinful body, that Thou wouldst then incline Thyself to me; that all my enemies may part sadly from me and that I, according to Thy sweet will and my desire, may see Thee without ceasing; that the eyes of my soul may rest on Thy Godhead and that Thy sweet love from out Thy Divine Breast may sweep through my soul.

Per Dominum nostrum Jesum Christum filium tuum. Amen.

THIS IS THE SIXTH PART OF THE BOOK

In this part the practical Christianity of the Cloister takes an important place; Mechthild was probably superior of the Convent by this time. This is the last part of her book as collected by Heinrich of Halle and circulated during her lifetime. She was now ailing and thought her end was near. Though practical affairs demand much of her attention, her visionary experiences are never far away; here as always she is in close companionship with God whom she personifies as Love.

1. *How a Prior or Prioress or other Superior should act towards subordinates*

Great danger lies in power. So that when someone says, "Thou art now Superior!" God alone knows what temptations beset thee. Therefore thou must bow thyself to the earth and make thy *Venien* (prostrations) with deep humility: then go at once to thy prayer and may God comfort thee. Thus will thy heart be turned to the holy love of God in such a way that thou wilt have special love for each brother or sister under thy charge, in all their needs. Thou shall be lovingly cheerful or deeply earnest with thy subordinates; compassionate regarding their work, sending them forth with loving words, preaching boldly, hearing confessions if God has called thee thereto in this world; so wilt thou be a redeemer and helper to all poor sinners in the same way as Christ was the Redeemer of all men and came down from the high Palace of the Holy Trinity to this muddy world. Therefore shalt thou speak thus to each Brother or Sister with the deep humility of thy pure heart:—

Beloved! I, unworthy
Of merit, am thy servant;
I am not thy master
Power is made for service!
Go forth in God's true love.
Suffer? I too suffer!
Wound? And I have wounded!
Merit God's praise? I sing!
Now I send thee forward
In God's name, as Jesus
Went out seeking lost sheep
Till He died of loving.
Love of God teach thee too
To be kind and useful,
Take with thee my prayers,
Take my soul's desire,
Take my sinful tears,
God in mercy home thee
Brimmed with love and goodness
Home thee safe to me. AMEN.

Thus shalt thou comfort thy brethren
As they go forth, and rejoice with them
When they return.
Thou shalt go daily to the guest-house
And act according to the loving-kindness of God,
Giving His young disciples
All the help in thy power.
Yea! thou thyself shalt wash their feet;
Then art thou most truly Superior
When serving in humility.
Thou shalt not stay too long with guests
For thou must diligently order the Convent;
The guests shall not keep long watches
For that is a sacred thing.
Thou shalt go daily to the sick-house
And heal the sick with comforting words of God,
And cheer them gently with earthly joys
For God is rich above all price.
It is good to cherish cleanliness in the sick
To be merry and laugh with them
In a godly manner:
Carry their secret needs privily in thy heart
And truly and lovingly discover their secret sorrows;
If thou thus stand truly by them,
Then will the love of God flow sweetly
Into thine own soul.
Thou shalt also go to the kitchen
To make sure that the needful provision is good;
That neither thy meanness nor the cook's laziness
May rob the Lord of sweet music in Choir;
For no hungry priest may sing sweetly
Nor study deeply,
Thus might our Lord lack the service
Which is His due.

In Chapter thou shalt rule with sweet reason and judge faults in the same manner. Thou must beware that thou dost not follow thine own will against that of thy subordinates, for great discord might result therefrom. Beware also of proud thoughts

which do alas! come into the heart under the semblance of good will and say to thee, "Yes! thou *art* truly Superior and mayest do what seems good to thee!" Nay! dear creature! Thereby thou wouldst break the holy peace of God. Thou shalt speak thus with holy submission and loving joy, "Dear Brother or Sister! how would this please thee?" And then, according as their judgment seems good to thee, thou must rule.

When the brethren or sisters of thy Convent do thee honour, thou shalt fear inwardly and keep a sharp guard on thy senses but outwardly behave with quiet composure. Thou shalt receive all complaints with compassion and give advice faithfully. If thy brethren or sisters wish to build great edifices, thou shalt turn their desires to holy things and say: "Yes! we *will* build a glorious Palace for the Holy Trinity in our souls, with the timbers of Holy Scripture and the stones of noble virtues. The first stone of the Palace wherein the eternal God shall woo His bride according to His Almighty Will and desire, shall be deep humility which goes well with a sweet sufficiency of earthly things; for covetous pride and empty vanity never dare then to spread themselves, as when we build as worldly men and women. We must rather build as heavenly princes on earth. Thus at the Last Day we will sit beside Jesus as the Apostles did. Dear Brothers! we will build our heavenly home with divine joy and our earthly school with cares, for we have no certainty of life after tomorrow."

Thou shalt have an eagle eye to mark the conduct of those under thee, lovingly, not in irritation. If thou find any secretly tempted, stand by them with all thy love, then God will lead them to be open with thee.

To those holy Brothers who have a mission I would say this true word which I saw in the Holy Trinity while in my poor prayer. When a person prays in Christian faith with such a humble heart that he cannot bear any creature to be lower than himself, and with such a selfless soul that all things are as nothing to him in his prayer save God alone, then he is a god-like god with the heavenly Father. Yet such a person thinks how small and mean he is in himself and fears for himself so greatly in the sweet embrace of God that nothing is of any value to him save the glory of God. When the person prays in real need

through some definite necessity with the same love with which he prayed before, then he is a human god with Christ. All that one asks and works for without need is dead before God. But when through love of God and not for any earthly reward someone teaches the ignorant, converts the sinner, consoles the sad or brings the doubtful back to God, then he is a spiritual god with the Holy Spirit.

That man is indeed blessed who does all things praiseworthy to God and possible to man; if he does them in love to the glory of God and with the full strength of his heart, then he is a complete person with the Holy Trinity. But the dust of sin which falls on us unnoticed is as quickly burned away by the fire of love, as the eyes of the soul are touched by the Godhead with sighing and desire which no creature may withstand. As soon as the soul begins to rise, the dust of sin falls away and the soul is a god with God, for what God wills the soul wills, otherwise they could not be united in perfect union.

Dear Friend! be sure that during the day or night you find an hour to give to our Lord God, praying to Him without hindrance. For the heavenly gift with which God loves to greet and teach His elect is by nature noble and delicate, and flows sweetly when the everlasting God bends down to the loving soul. For He is so sore wounded by her love that He gave up everything for thirty years that He might take her in His arms and caress her. If thou but think of this, how couldst thou against His thirty years refuse Him one hour?

When I, the poorest of the poor, go to my prayer, I adorn myself with my unworthiness and clothe myself with the mud which I myself am. I shoe myself with the precious time I have lost all my days and I gird myself with the suffering I have deserved. Then I throw around me the cloak of wickedness of which I am full. I put on my head a crown of the secret sins I have committed against God. After that I take in my hand a mirror of true knowledge and see myself therein as I am, so that I see nothing but alas! and alas!

But I am happier in these clothes than I could be if I had every earthly gift, even though I am often sad and impatient, for I would rather be clothed with hell and crowned by all devils than be without my sin.

Alas! how often the thief of instability comes and takes from us these garments with which we are satisfied and makes us appear sinless while yet in our sin. Then we are robbed by empty honour, cast down by pride and more naked than the naked. How bitterly we are then shamed before God and His friends and before all creatures! If we would overcome our shame with honour, then we must clothe ourselves again with ourselves. Thus attired I go to seek Jesus my sweet Lord and I find Him in no other thing so truly as in my sins though they are heavy and great. One must go to Him gladly with powerful desire, shame of sin, flowing love and humble fear; then the uncleanness of sin vanishes before His Divine eyes and He shines so lovingly on the soul that it overflows with heartfelt love. For the soul loses all its sin and sorrow when He teaches it His will. Then it begins to taste His sweetness and He begins to greet it with His Godhead so that the power of the Holy Trinity flows through soul and body and they receive true wisdom. Then our Lord begins to woo the soul so that it is overcome. He tempers His love because He knows the powers of the soul better than it does itself. It gives Him faithful trust and He gives it the grace of full knowledge. The soul begins truly to taste Him through His Holy will: if the soul will then guard against the ignoble desires of the flesh and the eager longing for earthly things, then it may love completely and win for God manifold praise in all things.

Now, dear friend, there are still two things before which thou must be on thy guard with holy diligence, for they never bear holy fruit. The first is that a man or woman devoted to good works and practices may do them in order that he or she may be chosen as Superior. This is a grief to my soul. Should such persons really come to power their lack of virtue will increase so much that none of those who chose them for the best will be comforted. Their honours will become a reproach and their false virtues will turn into vices. The second thing to guard against is, if someone without sin is laudably chosen and then becomes so changed that he will never wish to relinquish his office. That is a sign of many false virtues. Even if he is good and praiseworthy in his office, he must ever fear and humble himself.

Any honest woman or good man who would have liked to speak with me and after my death cannot do so, should read this little book.[1]

2. *Of the Rule of a Canon; how he should comport himself. This came from God*

We should greet people with the Divine succour of the Holy Spirit and thank Him for the gifts of His compassion in them. But we should also give thanks with all creatures to the Heavenly Father for the gifts which He daily pours out of the Holy Trinity into the hearts of sinners.—That the eagle is able to soar is no thanks to the owl!

I prayed for a certain man at his request.[2] This is the holy answer of God: "His desire is to sink into a humble life; the gift I gave him is great and his will is holy. Therefore he must remain in the office in which he now is." God, the High-Pope of Heaven, has sent him this rule; He shall pray more and more without ceasing according to priestly rule. Thereto I will give him My Divine sweetness which he must contemplate in the solitude of his heart. When he is tempted he must call Me powerfully and I will hasten to help him. He shall utterly pay his debt and shall keep his expenses small. He shall have no one in his service through mastery or hire but shall have trusty messengers in need. He shall not be anxious about his relatives but should one of them wish to follow him (in the priesthood) he shall help him. He shall clothe himself more modestly than he now does; moreover, he shall wear a hair-shirt next his skin to guard against the softness he has accepted in the flesh. He shall sleep on a straw pallet between two woollen blankets and shall have two pillows under his head. During the day he shall put a seemly cover on his bed which shall then stand open and free as it always stands. A mat shall lie before his bed and a bed-block. Thus, with humbled heart he shall be an example against evil living. He shall also keep two rods beside his bed to discipline himself when he awakes. . . .

[1] Mechthild begins to speak of her death. She is now probably only 53, and ailing; she was yet to live over thirty years.

[2] According to a marginal note this was a Canon of Magdeburg who later became Dean.

After this I asked: "Lord! how shall he keep himself without sin in earthly honour?" Our Lord said: "He shall hold himself always in fear like a mouse that sits in a trap and awaits its death. The lower part of this trap is temporal honour, the upper part My Almighty Power." Our Lord gave this interpretation: "He who longs deeply to enjoy Me to the full shall at all times and in all things tremble before the lure of the flesh, for the heart plays with secret bliss. Therefore when he eats he shall eat sparingly; when he sleeps he shall be chaste and alone with Me. When he is in the world he shall be as still as a mouse in his heart. When he confesses he shall be open and sincere and obedient in carrying out the counsel of his confessor."

3. *God gives mastery. How goats become lambs* [1]

That this man was chosen Deacon was God's Will, for God Himself has spoken thus, "Therefore have I set him from one chair to another that there may be food for the goats." This is the interpretation: That God calls the Cathedral clergy goats is because they reek of impurity regarding Eternal Truth, before His Holy Trinity. . . . Our Lord was asked how these goats should become lambs. He spoke thus: "If they will eat the fodder which Master Dietrich [2] has laid in the manger for them, that is holy penitence and faithful counsel in confession, they may become lambs, that is lambs with horns." The horn signifies spiritual power which they shall use to the glory of God. They must become strong and serve God faithfully for He says, "I myself will help to expiate the sin of these men with joy!"

4. *Of Discretion and Fear whereby the senses are protected from earthly things*

Alas for me, poor wretch, I lament before God that I am now worse than I was thirty years ago. For those who then helped me to bear my homeless life, did not after all effect so much—if only my body was to recover! Therefore I must always set

[1] Marginal note: *De predicto Canonico Megdeburg.*

[2] Dietrich, one of Mechthild's champions against her "enemies." He was attached to the Cathedral of Magdeburg.

two guards between my soul and all earthly things that they may not tempt my body more than my poor need requires. . . . One guard is Prudence who orders all things needful according to the will of God, so that the human heart sits lightly to all earthly things; so much so that if it loses them, all its heart is so light, its soul so free and its senses so untroubled, that all is well with it in God, as if its dearest friend had taken its heaviest burden from it. . . .

My other guard is Holy Fear which, through the wisdom of God, provides that my soul does not smile on earthly gifts given me. It receives them rather as a temptation, fearing covetousness or vain honour. For those darken the souls of many laudable persons in the spiritual life; they so completely lose the light of discretion, the fire of love and the touch of God's sweetness, peace and compassion, that they hardly recognize them.

Our Lord spoke thus: "They speak in fine parables; they say they only want to love earthly things and draw many possessions to themselves, in order to love Me better. But they serve themselves more than they serve Me. He who seeks his own comfort and happiness belongs to himself alone." But everyone ought to be a Christ to himself so that God lives in him and not himself. To the holy man who lives utterly in God, it is all one whatsoever God sends him. For God with His power sometimes casts a man into holy poverty in the same way as He cast His beloved Son down from Heaven onto the highway and into the Crib. In the same way also our Lord drives His chosen friends far from all earthly comfort that they may hunger for heavenly comfort. A truly holy person fears earthly comfort more than earthly need. Why? Because his home is in Heaven, his prison in this world. Therefore our Lord said:

"Whosoever knows and loves the nobleness of My freedom cannot bear to love Me alone in Myself; He must love Me also in the creatures, though I remain ever nearest to his soul."

5. *Of Love and Longing; the beauty of creatures gives knowledge with sorrow*

The first knowledge God granted me after His touch of love and flow of desire came to me with sadness. Whenever I saw

anything beautiful or dear to me, I began to sigh, to weep, to think, to lament and to speak thus to all things: "Ah! No! Beware! This is not thy Love who has greeted thy heart, enlightened thy senses and so wonderfully captured thy soul! But this manifold delight in earthly things cannot drive thee from thy Love. Moreover, in the nobility of creatures, in their beauty and usefulness, I will love God—and not myself!"

6. *In the last days thou shalt have love, longing, fear and a threefold repentance*

I asked our Lord how I should conduct myself in the last days of my life. And he said: "Thou shalt do in thy last days as in thy first. Thou shalt hold thyself in love and longing, repentance and fear, for these four things were the beginning of thy life, therefore they must also be the end!" Then I said: "Dear Lord, what of the two things which are the foundation and crown of heavenly blessedness, Christian Faith and absolute Trust?" Our Lord said: "Thy Faith has become knowledge and thy longing has been changed into full assurance." I saw these interpretations in His words and knew them also in my heart. My threefold repentance lay in three things.

I repent of sin most of all; that comes from love. But I lost the pain of repentance in the fellowship of love. I repent of all human sin; I am like a sick person who longs for things he cannot have, or at least seldom. My heart laments over that and my soul chases in its yearning as a huntsman after his prey. Our Lord said, "If one cannot capture wild animals any other way, one drives them into the water. If a sinner cannot be converted any other way, he is driven by the prayers of good people into the tears of their hearts."

I lament over all the good deeds I have needlessly neglected through my love of the flesh. Our Lord said, "One cannot build a house without a site; one cannot receive reward in Heaven without good deeds." But then, through His heartfelt love our Lord speaks thus to each soul—"Take, beloved, this manifold merit thou thyself hast earned, that God may speak this word in truth to the honour and love of the soul"—as if He Himself were not the ground of its blessedness that it may receive full honour

in body and soul. Therefore our Lord in His love thinks so tenderly of our works, our poverty, the sufferings we bear here in love, that He, so far as befits His Godhead, magnanimously ignores His righteousness. That I have grasped from the multitude of the gifts of God.

7. *Our own wills can withstand (the devil's) barbed hooks. The good soul comes swiftly to God*

In my community there is a spiritual person through whom I suffer much owing to her bad habits, and because she will follow me in nothing. I deplored this before God and wondered much why it should be. Our Lord spoke: "See how it happened!" Then I saw that a special devil was hanging on to the person and dragging her back from everything good. I said, "Who gave thee power to treat God with contempt through this person?" And the devil answered, "No one gave me power save her own pride."

I understood from these words that the devil followed all spiritual people who allowed him so to do, with contemptuous mockery. . . . Then I asked, "Who can help this poor creature that she may be rescued from thee?" Forced thereto by God the devil answered, "Nothing can help her save her own will. God has given her the power to change her ways. Should she do so I would have to hasten away from her." Then I said, "I ask thee in the name of Eternal Truth, what is thy name?" The devil said, "I am called Barbed-hook and the troop you see behind me are my fellows in the same calling as myself. They are in number as many as those we find who will not follow their faithful Master in good things."

On this my soul was so swiftly in God that it soared up without effort and found itself in the Holy Trinity as a child finds itself under its mother's cloak and lays its head on her breast. Then my soul spoke with the might and voice of all creatures: "Beloved! have pity on my necessity regarding this person that Thou transform her sin in Thy mercy!" "Nay!" said our Lord, "she is not worthy of My mercy. But I will send her sickness of body that she may become halt and no more able to walk in sinful ways. I will also make her dumb so that she can utter no sinful words. She shall also become blind that she may be

ashamed to see vanity. But what any do to her then is also done to Me!" And truly, fourteen days later, that came to pass! Alleluia!

9. *Whoso honours the saints is honoured in return by the saints who comfort them in death*

That we honour the saints of happy memory with all devout intentions we may have for them on the day God honoured them by a holy end,—that gives them such joy that they often appear to us now with all the sovereignty they have won by their merit.

I saw this clearly on the day of St. Mary Magdalene when we honoured God with Hymns of Praise because of the great reward she had received from Him. She floated down into the Choir after the Hymns and looked into the eyes of every singer and said, "All those who honour my end, to their end will I come and honour them in return. According as they have merited and received grace, so will I honour them." Four great Archangels led her between them and the small angels were in number beyond human reckoning. I asked her what the Archangels were called and she said: "The first is Power, the second Desire, the third Goodwill, the fourth Constancy. For with those four virtues I have conquered the sorrow of my heart. Therefore God gave them to me as a reward, both as attendants and crowns. Of other saints is it also thus." Our Lord said: "If one blows on the tiniest spark it gives heat and light in the Fire of Heaven where the radiant saints abide."

10. *Prayer, Mass, the Word of God; the lives of good people; fasting and watching; redeeming souls from Purgatory*

I prayed for a soul whose body had been killed in a sinful life. Our Lord spoke thus: "Seven years fasting and watching would be as a drop of rain to a great fire. Even thirty years would not save him for he lost his life in foolish pride thirty years before his time; these years he must make good to Me." The soul said: "Ah Lord! may he not still merit Thy goodness?" God said: "When two people fight, the weakest must lose. I will be the weakest though I am Almighty. Thirty hundred Masses are his

atonement for he never heard a full Mass and then only for some consideration of his own. THE SOUL.—"Lord! What saved him?" GOD.—"When He heard My Word he sighed; I rewarded him for that, for at the end of his life he sighed again on account of his sins." THE SOUL.—"Lord! If his mother's brother who was a good man and had much toil and trouble from his youth up to his grey hairs—if he offered all that for his nephew and for love of Thee. . . . Wouldst Thou then set his soul free?" GOD.—"Yes! Were I thus entreated I would grant all that is asked." THE SOUL.—"Lord! If this good man gave his good works for the poor soul, what would happen to him then?"

Then God let me see the blessed soul
(As could not have happened before
Owing to his guilty suffering
Which my soul could not have borne)—
There he was, more beautiful than the sun,
Soaring in happiness
High above all earthly trouble.
He spoke happily and was full of joy—
"Tell my friends, if the earth were pure gold,
And the bright sun therein
Should shine without ceasing
Day and night, and added thereto
The sweet air of the meadows
Was full of flowers and luscious fruit—
Even then I would not be an hour therein!
—So blissful is this life!"

And that even though he had not yet entered the Eternal Heaven!

11. *Of the death of a scholar and priest*

Thus spoke our Lord: "I tell thee . . . that this man's death is a holy death for he will never more commit mortal sin on earth." Then he was seen as a priest and stood on a red marble pillar and preached to the people thus: *Venite benedicti patris mei! Come unto me all ye blessed and go from me all ye wicked!* Thus it was seen and known that all preachers preach and teach us from these two commands.

12. *How thou shalt conduct thyself in fourteen things*

When thou prayest, make thyself small
With great humility;
When thou makest thy confession,
Be truthful.
As thou eatest, be moderate;
As thou sleepest, modest;
When alone, be faithful;
When with others, wise;
When taught good habits, follow them;
When thy bad habits are rebuked, be patient;
When thou doest any good, think ill of thyself;
When thou doest evil, at once seek mercy;
When thou art vain, fear thyself;
When sad, have great comfort in God;
When thou workest with thy hands, work swiftly,
So shalt thou drive away evil thoughts.

13. *How spiritual people through blindness guard themselves against love*

Ah dear Jesus! God of Heaven! I must ask Thee of one thing which I can no longer bear because of the great blindness I see in it; namely, that spiritual people guard themselves against Divine fervour. Thus, when it pleases the Divine Heart of God to look with love on a soul, so that a little spark lights on the cold soul and sets it on fire, the heart begins to burn and the soul to melt and the eyes to fill with tears—thus our Lord seeks to make an earthly being heavenly that others may follow, love and know God in him. Then the human senses speak thus: "Nay! I can be of more use in outward things!" Even certain Religious speak thus who are very wise. To this our Lord answered:

My Godhead came to earth,
My humanity accomplished the work;
My Godhead went to the Cross,
My humanity suffered death;

My Godhead rose from death
And led humanity into Heaven.
All who drive Me from them
Shall be driven from Me.
What can man do of himself?
Nothing but sin!
For even humanity could bring nothing to pass
Save what My Godhead had fore-ordained.
Humanity speaks: Lord! it would be wise
To spare the body in which Thy Divine breath
From out the Holy Trinity
Floated so sweetly down
And pulsed so powerfully through the soul—
For if the body should lose its power
Man would become unfruitful.

Then our Lord said: "The King's banquet shall not be set forth in vain before man has satisfied his earthly need. My special grace brings man special merit in body and soul. It teaches the simple and comforts the wise. It also gives eternal praise and endless honour to the deep and infinite Source out of which it springs, when it flows back with its rich fruit as it flowed forth from Me."

The grace which God ceaselessly gives to man with power and foresight, is in itself so noble and comes with such friendship from God, that the creature no longer commits even a small sin, which with all temporal things would separate him from God. Alas! ignoble soul! how canst thou bear to turn God away from thee before thou hast drawn blessing from Him according to His Will, seeing that His highest joy is hidden in thee? Wouldst thou know how thou shouldst use the Holy Gift of God according to His Will?

Yea! It will itself teach thee
If it is welcome to thee?
Thou shalt receive it with outward virtues
And inward desire.
Thou shalt keep it in humble fear,
To serve thee in all things.

Only give it time and place in thee
It asks nothing more.
It will fuse thee so deep in God
That thou wilt recognize His Will
So long as thou dost follow
His loving confidences to thee;
And know at what time and in what way
Thou shalt work for sinners
And for those in Purgatory,
And see the need of every man
Alive or dead.
When thou hast accomplished this
Inwardly according to God's pleasure
And the power of thy soul
(For it becomes weary in itself
Imprisoned in its mortal frame!)
Then after these revelations the soul will say
"Lord! flee from me now inwardly
And stand by me outwardly
That all my doings may be
Subject to thy gifts
For I gladly accept
All trouble and sorrow."

14. *Those who lament in suffering lack six things*

Whoso laments the hindrances of suffering,
Is blind in knowledge,
Or has lost the virtue of patience,
Or grown cold in love,
Or wearied in virtue,
Or dull in the senses
And dumb in good words.

Therefore our Lord spoke thus: "Man will not accept sickness and will not be despised. Whereon then am I to build up his honour?" "But Lord, if a man is sick and despised, wherewith can he build up honour?" Our Lord said: "If he is sick he should honour, serve and love Me, with joyful patience. If he

is despised, he should love Me and be biddable. If preachers and confessors are overwhelmed by their calling so that they cannot properly practise it, and yet have a holy will, that is no hindrance to their blessedness, rather a radiance to their glory!"

15. *Of the sufferings of Enoch and Elias; of the Preaching Brothers; of Anti-Christ*

O Mighty Love of God! Thou hast laid such sweet distress on me that my soul is wearied in wondering. When I reflect that my body will be wiped out by death, that I will no longer be able to suffer nor to praise my beloved Jesus, then I am so sad that were it possible I would gladly live till the Last Day. I am forced to that by true love which is of God alone and has nothing of mine. On that our Lord spoke thus: "If thou are about to die, repent of all thy days however holy thou mayst be." "Ah Lord! I pray Thee that my longing may not die even when I can no longer do anything with my body!" Our Lord said: "Thy longing shall live; it cannot die for it is eternal. If it waits for Me thus till the Last Day, then soul and body will come together again. I will unite them and they will praise Me without end as they have served Me from the beginning; for since the days of Adam thou didst long to be, through love of Me. I say even more, thy being shall continue to the end of all human beings."

Ah! my Beloved!
Who shall be the last human being
To whom my life shall pass?
For if spiritual people live
Their lives will be precious
At the end of the world.

And our Lord said: "Enoch shall be the last man to live the spiritual life." After that God showed me again the end of the world when the last Preaching Brothers shall suffer martyrdom. By their hair, which they never cut[1] according to the special will of God, Anti-Christ commanded that they should be hung

[1] A sign of freedom, free-will, i.e. one will with the will of God.

on a tree. There they hung and died nobly, for their hearts burned as much inwardly with the sweet fire of Heaven as their bodies suffered outwardly in their extremity. Therefore, between the consolation of the Holy Spirit and the sufferings of their poor bodies their souls were freed without horror of pain.

Elias and Enoch wandered from India to the sea, each followed by a great band who were all Christians and fled to them from Anti-Christ. They were all put to death as we might kill mad dogs in the street. . . . Others followed them who were secretly Christian for they knew well they could escape unbelief in no other way. Elias was put to death first; he was bound and nailed to a high cross by his hands.

That they did to him through grim hatred,
Because he always spoke of the saints
And of what happened to Christ.
They did not allow Elias to die
Till after long torment,
That he might abjure Christian teaching
And turn to Anti-Christ.
But he was so firm in his trust in God
That he uttered no cry.
Holy Church upheld him
Three days and three nights
Till his soul escaped from his body.
At his end I saw the heavenly Father
Receive his soul with the human hands of
His Son;
He said: "Beloved! thine hour has come"—
And in one heavenly moment
God took him.

Anti-Christ did not allow that he who trusted in God should be buried, for that unblessed being wished the Christians to abjure their faith. But therein he was baulked; for all who saw the body were moved towards Christian belief so strongly that they prayed to the body: they were so full of joy in the presence of that holy body that they forgot the sufferings of death and all earthly cares.

But Enoch still lived,
For it pleased Anti-Christ
To discover all the wisdom
Enoch had learned from God,
So that Anti-Christ could openly declare it
Along with his own false teaching;
For if only he could draw Enoch to himself
All the world and great honour would be his.

In that way many of the wicked were drawn to Anti-Christ and he attacked Enoch in furious words. Then for the first time Enoch told him the truth—

Thou art the bane of the whole world
Sent from God through the evil of wickedness
And the holiness of good.
Thou knowest the Ancient Law
As well as the New Law;
Now see how it shall be with thee.
Hitherto thou hast carefully chosen
But according to the law thou art lost!
That thou canst read for thyself;
Thou hast not created either earth or Heaven,
Hast not given the angels eternal life,
Hast not created man
Neither soul nor body.
Thou hast never given any creature
His natural body—
How then couldst thou be God?
Thy work is all done in lying and false cunning;
But the everlasting Truth is Jesus Christ
Who is an everlasting God with His Father.

Then Anti-Christ spoke with fury—
" How dare thou name my enemy before me
An enemy to whom thou dost ascribe
More honour than mine!
I have no patience with thee!
I will rid the world of thee!—
Take him and pour boiling pitch in his mouth;
Strangle him and thus silence mine enemy.

If I wished to hear his words
I would gladly leave him longer in torment.
Hang him after death
High above all murderers
So that all who see him
May abjure Christianity.
He has spoken against my honour
But none will dare to hold his belief;
I have long foreseen this
And it shall come to pass
As I have said."

Then Enoch prayed this holy prayer in his heart:

Eternal Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
Everlasting Undivided God;
I thank Thee that long ago
Thou didst choose me,
And I praise Thee in these torments.
I pray for Thy sheep and mine,
Left without a shepherd;
Guard them specially O Lord,
And comfort them secretly.
And now O Lord, receive my soul—
For my body I have no affection.

The answer God will then give him and with which He will thank him for his prayer is here written as I saw it in the Holy Trinity:

Beloved son, come swiftly to Me
For I am truly in thee.
As for thy friends for whom thou hast prayed Me
Thou thyself shalt baptize their children
For I will quickly deliver them from Anti-Christ,
Seeing that they remained Christian
In their hearts. And I will guard them
From all doubt.
Come, dear Friend, I await thee
And My heart goes out to meet thee!

16. *How the Soul of our Lord dwells in the Holy Trinity and of its mission*

When I awake in the night
I reflect on my powers,
Whether I, poor creature, am worthy to rise
And pray for unfaithful Church
Which gives my Beloved so much sorrow.
Sometimes He draws me by another way,
Without bridge or steps,
So that I am constrained to follow
Naked, barefoot and stripped of earthly things.
  Who can urge humanity so gently?
Who so gently compel the soul?
Who so highly enlighten the senses
As God Who created us
And does such mighty things with us?
  Thus I thought one night of the Holy Trinity
With sweet effortless flowing of soul.
Then unasked I saw in the heights
The whole blessed Trinity
And the soul of our Lord Jesus Christ.
  His soul dwells constant, above all merit
In the Holy Trinity.
Therein it is embraced and wonderfully wrought,
Shining gloriously above all creaturely beauty
Through the Three Holy Persons.
    Then I longed with great humility
To do what is done at Court—
To speak with the soul of our Lord
In His honour,
For it seemed to me
That it worked wondrous things.

Then I soared so near Him that I greeted Him thus: Blessed be Thou, Beloved! What wonders Thou workest in this everlasting mirror in which all the blessed are so gloriously seen! Thou hast sweet labour in joyful activity. Then His soul spoke to me unworthy:

My reflection! Thou art welcome,
For I am a soul as thou art
And have carried the burden of all souls
In My sinless body.
That is My office.
I ceaselessly move this infinite Godhead,
And thus ever remind the heavenly Father
Of the endless love He bears to human souls.
I also greet My Divine humanity
And thank Him for My blessedness
And remind Him how He Himself was an earthly being,
So that He may think of the place whence He came.
How great and noble is this human sibship with Him
Which does not allow humanity to be lost;
For no one was conceived or born of his own will,
Therefore hast thou overcome all thy need without sin;
Therefore I incline the humanity of God
To special compassion,
That He should reflect how sick humanity is;
How it was not created without enemies
But must ever fight as an armed man whose eyes are blindfold—
Such is the dark nature
In which humanity is bound.

Think, noble Son of God,
How sorrowful I was on earth in Thee
And stand yet in fatherly fashion
By all men who bear My likeness
For I am Thy Soul!
I must also urge the Holy Spirit to His task
For He must bring all the blessedness of Heaven
To the people of earth.
Shouldst Thou then, O God,
Drive home the bolts of justice,

Locking the gates of Heaven
That sinners might not enter in;
Then would I turn to Jesus Thy dear Son
Who through Thy mighty power
Holds in His human hands
The key of Heaven.
That key was forged in the land of the Jews.
But when Jesus turns it
The veriest outcast then can enter in
To the house of Thy Love.

This is the heavenly Father's answer:

My soul cannot suffer
That I drive sinners from Me;
Therefore I follow after many for long,
Until I grasp them firmly
And hold them tightly
That none can take them from Me.

Now the Soul of our Lord speaks thus:

This is My merit, thus am I adorned;
The Godhead is My crown
His humanity My reward.
The Holy Spirit has enveloped Me
And so joyfully penetrated Me
That no creature can resemble or attain to Me.
In this Holy Trinity
I thus bear ceaselessly from hour to hour
All earthly sinners that God may not allow them
To fall into the everlasting abyss.
But the Virgin in whose body I took refuge
As I came out from the holy Godhead
In the humanity of her Son—
This maid protects all pure souls
And laments for the tempted
Who repent with fear:
Here before the Holy Trinity
The judgment lies in her hands.

17. *How God regards sinners as converted*

Our Lord speaks thus: "It is a fathomless mystery that God looks on sinners as converted men, and that is right; for in order to serve God, man must hasten to Me and not look back and I will carry all burdens borne for love of Me."

18. *Thou shalt examine thy heart at all times*

Look into thy heart at all times
With the truth of the Holy Spirit,
Then will untruth be grievous to thee;
For lying drives away Divine love
And confirms in the soul concealed sources
Of anger and wrath.

19. *Of good will which one cannot bring to good works*

I have suffered much
Because I could not bring good will to good works.
That made me unstable and powerless,
And as no one ventured to advise me
I did not dare to go against my nature.
For since the time when God let me fall
From the heights of bliss
Down to my own discretion,
I was so bewildered
That I could find no end in things,
Seeing that Mighty Love had hitherto drawn me
With its flames of fire.
Now it had flung me into a bottomless morass
Where I could find no foothold—
Yet that was all I suffered.
I could not call it pain
For I would gladly have been
In the very lowest place,
Cast out like a mad dog,
A being without friends, banned, unknown,
With poor people in a strange land.

Now I would not be without obedience,
For holy humble obedience
Is of all virtues the corner-stone.
Good will which the good soul has
But which it cannot bring to good deeds,
Is like a bright and lovely flower
With sweet scent but no fruit.
Then God comforted me thus:
Good life will pluck eternal joys from good will,
As flowers which for His eternal marriage
God will weave into the wreaths of His elect,
Those who were here quietly faithful to Him
With manifold good-will, although as yet
They could not bring it to good works.
Ah! merciful God! stretch out to me
Thy Fatherly hand,
And lead me to the land of Thy love;
For alas! I have long lost all happiness
And fain would win it back with Thee—
For ease of body and consolation of senses
Must be received with humble fear
If one would be in Perfect Truth.

20. *This Book has come from three gifts. God gives suffering but also consolation*

The gift which is written in this book
Was given me in three ways;
At first most tenderly,
Then in greatest secrecy,
Now with much suffering.
But therein will I gladly stay
Rather than in the other two.
For the tenderness and holiness of God
Are eternal and of themselves noble;
But in the world alas!
They are looked on as something so strange
That those who truly know them
Are afraid to take them.

I too fear this bliss more than anything,
Because Christ suffered such sharp need
In this world.

But the nature of love is such that it overflows at first in sweetness, then it becomes rich in understanding, thirdly it abounds in desolation. Thou art rightly baffled, the more alas, that true love of God is often weakened by the false attraction of vain honour, the advances of pride, the madness of anger, and the wide-spread desire for earthly things, so that it is crippled in all its parts. That always happens in the beginning and is inherent in human nature. Moreover, no one carries Heaven in his heart save he who has detached himself from all comfort and all the gifts of this world. Because earthly happiness has separated us from God, we must needs make our way back to Him through suffering. He cannot spare us that, and we for our part would not be without it. May He give us His joy in everything we do, or leave, or suffer.

21. *How the evil priesthood shall be put down: and of the younger preachers*

Alas! O crown of Holy Church, how dim art thou become! Thy precious stones have fallen (the rulers and holy doctors) because thou dost wound and injure holy Christian Faith. Thy gold is dimmed in the filth of evil desires; thou art become poor, thou hast no true love, thy purity is burned up in the consuming fire of greed; thy humility is sunk in the swamp of thy flesh; thy truth is brought to nought by the lies of this world; the flowers of all the virtues have fallen from thee. Alas! for the fallen crown of the priesthood! How art thou bowed down! For thee there remains nothing but ruin, for thou makest war upon God and upon His chosen friends. Therefore will God humble thee; His vengeance will come upon thee on a day that thou knowest not. For thus saith the Lord: "I will touch the heart of the Pope of Rome with great grief and in this grief will I lament to him that the shepherds of My sheep from Jerusalem have become wolves and murderers: for before My eyes they slay the white lambs; and the older sheep are

sick and feeble for they may not graze on the health-giving feed of the high pastures, that is Divine Love and holy learning. If any one is ignorant of the way to Hell, let him look at the depraved priesthood . . . hastening without let to the nether regions.

"Therefore is there need that the younger brethren come, for when the mantle is old it is also cold. Therefore must I give my bride, Holy Church, a new mantle; this shall be the younger brethren, as has been written (iv. 27). If thou, son Pope, shouldst bring this to pass, thy days may be lengthened. For that the Popes before thee lived short lives[1] was because they did not fulfil My holy Will."

Thus I saw the Pope at his prayers and God thus speaking to him.

22. *Of seven things, five in Heaven, two on earth*[2]

For seven things I must glorify God. Should it be possible, grant me, Lord, that I may never forget Thee on earth. Five things one finds in Heaven, two must stay here on earth. The first is the harm done by my sins and my neglect of good works I might well have done. The second is that I wait ceaselessly for Thee, if Thou wouldst only tell me in what way Thou wilt grant me a good end. The third is the fiery longing I have for Thee. The fourth, the burning and extinguishing of love in me through Thee. The fifth the first glance of thy Divine countenance towards me. That alas! could never happen on earth according to my desire, therefore my soul often sings Alas and Alas! The sixth I hardly dare name, I become speechless as I recognize it. I never heard it named on earth—and that is the rippling tide of love which flows secretly from God into the soul and draws it mightily back into its Source.

[1] Gardner, op. cit., gives the Latin version, p. 278. He writes, "The Pope (if not the ideal *Papa angelico* of mediaeval dream, is perhaps the saintly Dominican Innocent V. who reigned only six months" (1276). See also Dante, *Paradiso*, xxvii.

[2] This chapter is repeated, vii. 45, with verbal differences, the chief being that the fourth thing is *un*extinguishable love, probably a copyist's error. This is all discussed by Hans Neumann in *Problemata Mechthildiana*, Vol. 82, p. 147, *et seq.* See Bibliography, p. xxxvii.

What the bliss between these two then is, how both find their blessedness in it, none can tell. For each has a special part; what has been expended here will be given back there—

This is the heavenly love of God
Which here begins in little ways
And there comes never to an end.

The seventh, one can hardly express in words but one can experience it in Christian Faith, how great it is, how high, how wide, how blissful, how glorious, how happy, how full of Eternal Joy. Well for him who can ever dwell therein—the happy countenance full of delight, the holy revelations, the sweet, longing, hungry love which flows evermore into the soul from the overflowing Love of God. Even then the soul retains its sweet hunger and yet lives without care.

23. *How God speaks to the soul in three states* [1]

In the first state the devil often speaks to the soul; in the other two he cannot do so. The first state is in the human senses. It is open to God, to devils and to all creatures to enter into the senses and speak to the soul as they please. The second state in which God speaks to the soul is in the soul. None can enter here save God alone. But when God speaks in the soul, that takes place without the knowledge of the senses and with great, powerful and swift union between God and the soul. The senses cannot perceive this blissful intercourse. Thus they become so humble that they cannot suffer any creature to be more humble. —[MS. obscure.] Shall man humble himself under the devil? Yes! so much so that it may seem to him his life has shown contempt of God, because in his daily sins he has often drawn the likeness of the devil on his own soul and has even made deep wounds in it by mortal sins.

The soul which is caught up into the Holy Spirit cannot stay

[1] Mechthild may have based this chapter on St. Bernard or on Hugh of St. Victor (1097-1141), whose work was doubtless known at Helfde. Yet Mechthild's *States* are not copied from anyone; here as always she is individual. Though the mystics use the same words, they often refer to different states. See Evelyn Underhill, *Mysticism*, p. 309.

at such a height, it must always humble itself before all earthly comfort and any delight in such comfort; but the soul caught in its own pride inclines eagerly to earthly things.

The third state in which God speaks to the soul is Heaven, when He draws the soul up with the generosity of His Will and sets it there to enjoy His wondrous works.

26. *Thoughts of death and a long life are good*

I ponder much and reflect in my human senses how wonderful my soul is. For when I think of death, my soul rejoices so greatly at the thought of going forth from this earthly life, that my body soars in a supernatural peace beyond words; and my senses recognize the marvels which attend the passing hence of the soul; so that I would most gladly die at the time foreseen by God. At the same time I would gladly live till the last great day and in my heart I long for the days of the martyrs that I might have shed my blood for Jesus whom I love. That I dare to say I love God is because a special gift forces me to do so. For when my burdens and sufferings are held before me, my soul begins to burn in the fire of true love of God in such blissful sweetness, that even my body soars in divine bliss. But my senses still continue to lament and pray for all who have injured or maligned me, that God would keep them from sin.

28. *When thou art about to die, take leave of ten things*

When I am about to die, I take leave of all from which I must part. I take leave of Holy Church; I thank God that I was called to be a Christian and have come to real Christian belief. Were I to remain longer here I would try to help Holy Church which lies in many sins.

I take leave of all poor souls now in Purgatory. Were I to be longer here I would gladly help to expiate their sins and I thank God that they will find mercy.

I take leave of all those in Hell and thank God that He exercises His righteousness on them. Were I to be longer here I would ever wish them well.

I take leave of all sinners who lie in mortal sin. I thank God that I am not one of them. Were I to be longer here I would gladly carry their burden before God.

I take leave of all penitents working out their penance. I thank God that I am one of them. Were I to be longer here I would always love them.

I take leave of all my enemies. I thank God that I have not been vanquished by them. Were I to be longer here I would lay myself under their feet.

I take leave of all earthly things. I lament before God that I never used them according to His holy ordinances.

I take leave of all my dear friends. I thank God and them that they have been my help in need. Were I to be longer here I should ever be ashamed of the lack of virtue they must have seen in me.

I take leave of all my wickedness. I lament before God that I have so greatly spoiled His holy gift to my soul, so that there was never so small a sin, but would be seen in my soul in Heaven. Even though the sin were expiated, the stain remains. Lord Jesus! I lament it to Thee, for Thou dost bear the shame thereof.

I take leave of my suffering body. I thank God that He has preserved me in many things from many sins. Even were I to remain longer here the sins of the body are so manifold that I could never be quite free of them.

29. *Of Ten characteristics of the Divine Fire and of the nobility of God*

An unworthy creature thought simply about the nobility of God. Then God showed him in his senses and the eyes of his soul, a Fire which burned ceaselessly in the heights above all things. It had burned without beginning and would burn without end. This Fire is the everlasting God Who has retained in Himself Eternal Life from which all things proceed. The sparks which have blown away from the Fire are the holy angels.[1]

[1] Reminiscent of the *Paradiso*, xxxi. 22 : xxviii, xxx. Also of St. Catherine of Genoa on Purgatory.

The beams of the Fire are the saints of God for their lives cast many lovely lights on Christianity. The coals of the Fire still glow; they are the just who here burn in heavenly love and enlighten by their good example: as they were chilled by sin they now warm themselves at the glowing coals. The crackling sparks which are reduced to ashes and come to nothing are the bodies of the blessed, who in the grave still await their heavenly reward. The Lord of the Fire is still to come, Jesus Christ to whom the Father entrusted the first Redemption and the last Judgment. On the Last Day He shall make a glorious chalice for the heavenly Father out of the sparks of the Fire; from this chalice the Father will on the day of His Eternal Marriage drink all the holiness which, with His Beloved Son, He has poured into our souls and our human senses.

Yea! I shall drink from thee
And Thou shalt drink from me
All the good God has preserved in us.
Blessed is he who is so firmly established here
That he may never spill out
What God has poured into him.

The smoke of the Fire is made of all earthly things which man uses with wrongful delight. However beautiful to our eyes, however pleasant to our hearts, they yet carry in them much hidden bitterness. For they disappear as smoke and blind the eyes of the highest, till the tears run.

The comfort of the Fire is the joy our souls receive inwardly from God, with such holy warmth from the Divine Fire, that we too burn with it and are so sustained by virtues that we are not extinguished. The bitterness of the Fire is the word God shall speak on the Last Day, *Depart from Me ye cursed into everlasting fire!* (St. Matthew, xxv. 41). The radiance of the Fire is the glowing aspect of the Divine countenance of the Holy Trinity, which shall so illumine our souls and bodies that we may then see and recognize the marvellous blessedness we cannot even name here.

These things have come out of the Fire and flow into it again according to God's ordinance in everlasting praise.

Wouldst thou know my meaning?
Lie down in the Fire
See and taste the Flowing
Godhead through thy being;
Feel the Holy Spirit
Moving and compelling
Thee within the Flowing
Fire and Light of God.

30. *Pure Love has four things*

Pure love of God has these things in it: first, that the soul is one with God whatsoever should happen to it without sin; for that we fervently thank God. The second thing is that we must make proper use of the gifts we have from God in body and soul. The third thing is that we live purely and in good habits without sin. The fourth, that we practise all virtues. Alas! if only I had had them and had perfected them truly in all things! That I would have regarded as the highest contemplation of which I have ever heard. For of what use are lofty words without works of mercy? Of what use is it to love God if we are grim and forbidding to our neighbours? Thou sayest perhaps, "If God gave me something to do, I would gladly do it!" Then listen! the virtues are half a gift from God, half belong to ourselves. So that when God gives us understanding we must cultivate and use the virtues.

31. *How God formed the soul out of blessedness and suffering. How God resembles a cell*

I wrote in one part of this book (i. 44) that God is my Father by nature. Thou dost not understand that and sayest, "All that God has done in us is by Grace and not by nature." Thou art right and I too am right. Listen to a parable: However good a man's eyes may be, he cannot see much over a mile away; however sharp his senses, he cannot grasp supernatural things, except through faith, and he gropes about like a blind person. Now the loving soul who loves all that God loves and hates all that God hates, has an eye which God has enlightened. With

that eye the soul sees how the Godhead has fashioned our nature in the soul. He has so enfolded the soul in Himself and poured His own Divine nature into it, that it can say nothing save that He, in closest union with it, is more than a Father.[1]

The body receives its merit from the Son in brotherly fellowship, as a reward for its labours. The Son of God Himself laboured in heartfelt love because of our need, in poverty, suffering and contempt until His holy death. The Holy Spirit too worked His work, as thou sayest, by His Grace in all the gifts we have ever received. This work is threefold, yet one undivided God has wrought it in us. . . .

Where was God before He created all things? He was in Himself and all things were present and open to Him as they are today. How was our Lord God set there? Everything was enclosed in God just as in a cell [2] without lock or door. The lower part of the cell is a bottomless prison below every abyss. The upper part is a height above all other heights. The circumference of the cell is inconceivable. God had not yet become the Creator; when He did create all things, the cell was opened up. God is complete in Himself and will ever remain complete. When He became Creator, all creatures became manifest in themselves; man, in order to love, enjoy and know God and be obedient to Him; birds and beasts to know their own nature. . . .

Now listen! What we know is as nothing, if we do not love God properly in all things, as He has created all things in orderly love and as He Himself has commanded and taught us.

32. *How we are to become like God, the Virgin Mary and the angels*

In so far as we love compassion and practise constancy, so far do we resemble the heavenly Father who practises these things ceaselessly in us.

[1] I.e., that man, through the mediation of redemption, is by Grace what God is by nature.

This chapter is an answer to criticism, when Mechthild was widely known and widely misunderstood.

[2] The word is *Klote*: the meaning evidently an enclosed space.

In so far as we here suffer poverty, ignominy and contempt, so far do we resemble the Son of the true God.

In so far as we here pour out compassion and mercy with all the tenderness of our hearts in giving to the poor and dedicating our bodies to the service of the sick, so far do we resemble the Holy Spirit who is a compassionate out-pouring of the Father and the Son.

In so far as we are true and modest in holy simplicity, so far do we resemble the Holy Trinity who together is one true God, who created and wrought all His works in orderly fashion as He still does.

In so far as we are pure in all purity, humble in all submission, willing to serve in all holiness, free of all evil, so far do we resemble our beloved Lady, St. Mary, who was so ennobled by these virtues that she was maid and mother as well as Queen over all creatures.

In so far as we are kind, loving and peaceable, so far do we resemble the angels who do nothing vexatious.

In so far as we live a holy life in exile and unconsoled hardship, so far do we resemble John the Baptist who is exalted over many saints.

In so far as we are eager for God's praise, God-given knowledge, and a realization of God's Will, so far do we resemble the Prophets and holy Fathers who conquered themselves with great virtue in God.

In so far as we learn wisdom and spread it abroad for others and stand fast with God in every necessity, so far do we resemble the holy Apostles who gave themselves even unto death.

In so far as we have patience in all our need and our faith is strong unto death, so far do we resemble the holy martyrs who for us sprinkled the way to Heaven with their blood.

In so far as we constantly bear in our hearts the needs of Holy Church, both the living and the dead, so far do we resemble the holy confessors who watched with many labours and heard many confessions with anxious care.

In so far as we struggle and overcome and hold our honour high, so far do we resemble those holy maidens who did not lose the victory.

In so far as we repent of our sins and do holy penance for

them, so far do we resemble those who after sin earned great honour.

In so far as we practise something of all the virtues, so far do we resemble God and all His saints who have followed Him with joy.

33. *Of a severe Chapter; how a pilgrim came to it and appeared as a great Lord*

A certain person went about for long with (the judgment of) a severe Chapter vexing his heart.[1] He contemplated his faults and the dishonour he had done God. Then he cast out of his heart all sensible desire and resolved to bear suffering patiently for love of God. He also cast out all inordinate love of friends or relations and accepted the contempt his enemies showed him. He cast away all riches and honour in which the sinful world rejoices and lived in all poverty possible to him, under obedience.

Into that Chapter came Jesus Christ as a poor pilgrim. And the spirit of the person was so illumined that he recognized our Lord and said, "Ah! dear Pilgrim! Whence comest Thou?" And he answered, "I come from Jerusalem. There I was sore wounded, there I suffered contempt, poverty and pain. All that I have brought to thee!" "I thank Thee for it, beloved Lord; I too have felt these many a day!" Then our Lord took a simple crown and put it on the person's head and said, "This is the crown of poverty, contempt and pain; it shall be further adorned by My likeness." Then the pilgrim went his way. The person was sorrowful and said, "Alas for my dear pilgrim! When I would gladly have spoken more with Him!"

Then she [2] looked up to the heights and saw the pilgrim. He was as a mighty lord and was surrounded by heavenly glory and said, "I bless thee and greet thee! My Peace be with thee for ever more. AMEN."

[1] Probably a monastic Chapter of Faults.

[2] This sudden change to the feminine pronoun probably divulges that the "person" is Mechthild herself. She often uses a masculine pronoun, when the story she tells is really about herself.

34. *Whoso despises the world shall be honoured in eight things*

A voice was heard and these words were spoken:

Behold she cometh whom the world hath despised:
She has banished lying and loved the Truth,
And blessed it.
She shall be received with all honour,
Stablished in the truth,
Blessed without end,
Clothed in all beauty,
Crowned with merit.
She shall be set on the throne
Of the everlasting Kingdom;
Greeted by all tongues
Loaded with all gifts
Rejoiced by all manner of treasure.

35. *How a holy soul speaks to her body on the Last Day*

Up Beloved!
Recover from all thy sufferings,
Thy sorrow and ignominy,
Thy sadness, thy banishment,
Thy heaviness and thy labours.
The morning star has risen
With the birth of our Lady and her life.
The sun has shone brightly
Because God has become man,
Because of His work and His Ascension.
The moon shall ever shine
As constant as we in life eternal
Shall stand fast for ever.
Once all my hope lay in thee,
Now all thy consolation rests on me.
Had I not returned
Thou hadst never been lifted
Out of these ashes.
Eternal day has dawned on us
Now shall we receive our reward!

36. *That John the Baptist sang the Mass of the poor maid is to be understood as spiritual knowledge of the soul* [1]

No one can grasp Divine gifts with human senses, therefore those persons err who do not keep an open spirit to supernatural Truth. What can be seen with human eyes, heard by human ears and spoken by the human tongue, is as different from the Truth revealed to the loving soul as a wax candle to the full sun.

That John the Baptist sang the Mass of the poor maid is not to be understood after the flesh, but spiritually, for the soul alone saw and recognized and rejoiced in it. The body had only as much of it as it could grasp with its natural senses; therefore the words had to be humanly intelligible.

My Pharisee says of my account, "John the Baptist was a layman!" Now the holiest of holies in the Mass is the Body of God. John the Baptist touched the Son of the same God with humble, trembling fear in the great merit of his holy life, so that the Baptist heard the voice of the heavenly Father, understood His words and recognized the Holy Spirit in both. John the Baptist also openly preached the holy Christian Faith to all people and pointed with his finger to the true Son of God there present: *Ecce Agnus Dei!*

No Pope nor Bishop nor Priest could speak the Word of God as John the Baptist spoke it, save in our supernatural Christian Faith which cannot be grasped by the senses. Was he then a layman? Instruct me ye blind! Your lies and your hatred will not be forgiven without suffering!

37. *Thou shalt praise, lament and pray for twelve things. A Prayer*

Blessed be Thou, Beloved Lord Jesus Christ. . . . I know truly that Thou art here present, true God and true man. I pray to Thee this day as my God and my Lord, my Creator and Re-

[1] This chapter is Mechthild's defence against accusations made against her because of her vision of John the Baptist (ii. 4). It was sought to reproach her with heretical ideas.

deemer, loved above all, worthiest of all honour today and forever.

Lord and heavenly Father, I lament before Thy Holy Trinity that I have sinned before Thine eyes without fear or shame. Alas! help me now with Thy favour; my heart is dark with the habit of sin. Do Thou, Lord, purify my heart from all earthly loves and pour the fullness of Thy heavenly flood into my dusty soul, in which I grieve for the ignominy Thou didst suffer and for my miserable sins.

Lord! I thank Thee for all the mercies Thou hast given and dost still give us and will to all Eternity. I pray Thee, heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, that in Thy mercy Thou wilt cleanse me from all my sins and protect me from all misdoing and bless me with all virtues in life everlasting.

I pray Thee, Lord Jesus Christ, through Thy holy death and the grievous need Thy body suffered on the Cross, that with the eyes of Thy Divine Compassion . . . Thou wouldst look with mercy on my need and my approaching death. Give me, Lord, as it draws near, Thy Holy Body that I may receive Thee with true Christian Faith and heartfelt love, that Thy Holy Body may be and remain the last food of my body and the everlasting bread of my poor soul. I pray Thee further that Thou comfort my soul with Thyself and deliver me from all my enemies. Do Thou receive my soul in Thy fatherly hands and bring me in Joy out of this exile into Thy blessed Fatherland, that I with all holy souls . . . may bless and praise Thee. Grant this to me, Lord Jesus, and to all those who through Thy love have been kind and true to me and do Thou also help all who, against Thy command, have been untrue or unkind, and all true Christian believers.

I pray Thee, Lord, for Thine own Glory, that Thou wouldst ever give us Christians a Head in the Chair of Rome full of all Christian virtues by whom Holy Church may grow in love, be redeemed from all sin and blessed with all virtues; that Thou Lord, with Thine Almighty hand, wilt protect and give peace and freedom to Jerusalem and to all cities and countries suffering under unrighteous powers. . . .

With all the Saints I pray Thee for Christian peace and the needful fruits of the earth for this and all Christian lands.

I pray Thee that Thou preserve Thy friends in Thy service and convert Thine enemies and prevent their evil doings.

I pray Thee, King of all honour and Crown of all Princes, for the Princes of this and all Christian lands, that Thou mayst unite them with Thy Holy Spirit, that they undertake no sinful warfare against Thy will and their own blessedness. . . .

I pray Thee for all Christian souls who must this day part from their bodies, that Thou . . . wilt be their keeper and Judge in everlasting compassion. Ah dear Lord! have mercy on the souls of my father and mother and on all souls in Purgatory. Redeem them this day . . . *Requiescat in Pace.*

I pray Thee for my Community, that Thou give us all the graces which will purify and sanctify our lives to Thy praise and the help of Holy Church. Accept, O Lord, this prayer and my remorse and keep me in Thy grace. AMEN.

38. *No one may disturb God's Heaven*

Ah Lord! how long must I stay here on earth in this mortal body like a post or a target at which people throw stones or shoot, those who have long assailed my honour with their evil cunning? Hear now the answer I was given:

"No one is so cunning in his aim or so furious in his rage that he can disturb or harm My Heaven! For I dwell in it. Moreover, they who today draw Me to them for shelter and tomorrow banish Me—they resemble the nether regions! Of the building of which I am the foundation, I will also remain the key-stone."

Ah Lord! who will help me so to order my ways, that even should I slip I will not fall. Fear shall hold me up! The will of God will lead me!

39. *Of God's reflection in our Lady and of her power*

O! O! O! Three Persons have one name in one undivided God! They move blissfully towards Mary's joyful countenance in a stream of light, undivided, in full flood, in merciful giving and with the radiance of heavenly glory. They touch her heart with such an inexpressible greeting that she shines and glows

and the sublime reflection of the Holy Trinity is seen in her face—

Further still it flows and fills
Every humble, loving heart
Till it reflects the radiance
Of the Holy Trinity.

In this reflection our Lady may well pause. Moreover, if she would pray she can do so in humility, for God, in His love, became man in her humility. That is no longer necessary to her in Heaven save in so far as she acknowledges God's power over her and over all the saints who follow her example.

Our Lady's face is irradiated by all the gifts she has received from God and which she has preserved unsullied. She is also adorned with all virtues in perfection. She is crowned with merit. And thus, in all her perfection, she flows back to God.

How our Lady delights the Holy Trinity and how God unites Himself with her above all others is unspeakable; moreover, in so much as they were united here, so much union our Lady there enjoys, so much grace God pours into her above all other saints. She has power over all devils to ward them off from humanity. Therefore we gladly offer her an *Ave Maria*, that she may remember us here.

40. *How temptations of the world and a good end prove us*

No one knows how firm he stands till he is assailed by temptations of the flesh.

No one knows how strong he is till he is attacked by the wickedness of the world.

No one knows how good he may be till he comes to a good end.

41. *Of the reflection of God in men and angels*

Ye would that I should write further and I cannot. Joy, honour, clearness, trust and truth are all so far beyond me that I am speechless; I can only speak of what I know.

A mirror was seen in Heaven before each soul and body;

therein gleamed the reflection of the Holy Trinity and gave truth and insight into all the virtues the body had practised, and all the gifts the soul had received on earth. From the mirror there shone the sublime reflection of each person in the High Majesty from which it had flowed forth.

The reflection of the angels is fiery and full of love for they have great affection for our blessedness. They serve us without effort and their reward increases as long as the world exists. True love of God has the same power in the angels as in human beings. That we must laboriously serve with works is because we are sinners.

42. *Sister Mechthild writes thus on a slip of paper to her (own) brother B. of the Order of Preachers*

The greatest joy in Heaven is the Will of God. When un-will becomes will, Joy breaks into the anxious human heart. A spiritual person must do penance if he despises a gift which comes from God. Gifts of suffering we must receive with joy; gifts of consolation with fear; thus we can make use of everything which comes our way.

Dear lad! Be united with God and rejoice in His Will!

43. *This book flowed from God* [1]

The writing in this book flowed out of the living Godhead into the heart of Sister Mechthild. It is here truly set down as it flowed into her heart from God and was written down by her own hands. *Deo gratias.*

[1] This epilogue was probably written by Heinrich of Halle, who put Mechthild's sheets together.

THIS IS THE SEVENTH PART OF THE BOOK

Though most of this part was written at Helfde—much of it dictated, as Mechthild became blind soon after she went there—some loose sheets from an earlier period have crept in. The first chapter here, for instance, belongs to her earlier symbolic style.

1. *Of the Crown of our Lord Jesus Christ which He shall receive on the Last Day*

The heavenly Father in His Divine Wisdom has kept many unspeakable gifts wherewith to adorn His elect on the Last Day and chiefly His only-begotten Son Jesus Christ, our Redeemer. For Him the heavenly Father has prepared a crown adorned with such glorious art that all the masters who ever were or may be, could not describe its brightness or manifold glories. This crown was seen by the spiritual eyes of a loving soul in Eternity and she recognized by whom it was created.

What is Eternity? It is the uncreated wisdom of the everlasting Godhead which has neither beginning nor end.

The crown has three arches; the first is that of the patriarchs, the second that of the prophets, the third that of Holy Church. The crown is formed of and decorated by the figures of all the blessed who shall be in God's Kingdom on the Last Day. But their merit will be ordered according to their works. The first arch of the crown is irradiated by the precious stones of holy fervour and good works which the patriarchs brought to fruition. This arch is also decorated with human figures, soul and body. The first figure is St. Stephen and with him all the martyrs who shed their blood for the Christian Faith: there also are St. Peter and all God's Apostles, as well as all the blessed who followed their teaching. Married folk who followed God in good works are shown with their children.

The second arch of the crown is adorned by all the Popes and spiritual Fathers to whom God entrusted His flock. This arch is decorated with spiritual power and adorned by the flower of Christian learning.

The third arch is formed by the noble humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ and beside Him His fair mother Mary with all her maidens who shall follow the Lamb. St. John the Baptist is close to the Lamb with all those who became Christians at his hands. The arch of the crown is decorated by the creation of all creatures according to the love and will the Creator had for them, for He made all things according to His Will. The crown

is embellished with knightly shields of holy Christian Faith. The whole Empire will be shown on the crown down to the poorest peasants who are worthy according as they served God. The crown shall also show many glorious figures who suffered in the time of Anti-Christ, such as Enoch and Elias and many holy martyrs before them, adorned by the holiness of their lives and dedicated by their faithfulness unto death.

The crown will be coloured by the blood of the Lamb and illumined and gilded by the mighty love which broke the sweet heart of Jesus. Our heavenly Father made this crown, Jesus Christ earned it and the Holy Spirit fashioned and forged it in His glowing love and brought it to perfection with the noble art of the Holy Trinity that it might befit the honour of our Redeemer; and also that the heavenly Father might receive more Joy from His only-begotten Son. That must be! For although the everlasting, uncreated Godhead alone has all Joy and bliss in itself and ever shall have, yet is it specially fitting that God should look with joy on His Eternal Son and all those who follow Him.

When Jesus Christ has made His Last Judgment and celebrated His Last Supper, He will receive this crown in great honour from His Father, and with Him those who in soul and body come to the everlasting marriage, with their works. Then will every soul and body see its merit in the crown.

The crown is wrought on earth at a heavy price, not of silver or gold nor of precious stones, but of human labour, tears, sweat and blood, with all the virtues, and at the last a painful death. The angels are not seen on the crown because they are not human. But they must praise God with heavenly songs around the crown.

The first choir sings thus: We praise Thee, O Lord, for Thy glorious law through which all those represented on the crown have come. The second choir sings: We praise Thee Lord, with the faith of Abraham and the burning desires and prophecies of all the prophets. The third choir: We praise Thee for the wisdom and devotion of all Thine Apostles. The fourth choir: We praise Thee for the blood and patience of all Thy martyrs. The fifth choir: We praise Thee for the holy prayer and Christian teaching of all baptists and confessors. The sixth

choir: We praise Thee for the remorse and constancy of Thy widows. The seventh choir: We parise Thee for the purity of all holy maidens. The eighth choir: We praise Thee for the fruit of Thy holy Virgin mother. The ninth choir: We praise Thee for Thy holy death, Thy glorious Resurrection, the great outflowing of all gifts and all good by which Thou hast raised us up and made us worthy of Thy favour. We praise Thee Lord, with Thy fiery Love through which Thou hast united us with Thyself.

Above the crown floats the most beautiful banner ever seen in this Kingdom. It represents the Holy Cross on which Christ suffered. The Cross has four ends; the foot of it is adorned with Joy brighter than the sun. At the right side, under the Cross, pillars are erected, stained by the blood of the Lamb, adorned by the nails with which our Lord was pierced. Above on the cross-bar hangs the most glorious Royal Crown of Thorns—

> The thorns have budded and blossomed,
> Lilies and roses inter-twine,
> Blissful and bright as Heaven.

This is the banner of the crown with which Jesus Christ won the victory and ascended living to His Father. Immediately after the Last Day, at the everlasting marriage when God has made all things new, this crown will be displayed and will soar above the head of our Lord's humanity in honour and praise of the Holy Trinity to the joy of all the blessed for evermore.

The humanity of our Lord is a comprehensible picture of His everlasting Godhead, in order that we may grasp the Godhead with the humanity, realize the Holy Trinity, embrace and greet the incomprehensible Godhead which neither Heaven nor earth, Hell nor Purgatory can ever grasp or withstand. The everlasting Godhead shines and glows and makes all the blessed here present to Him eager for love; so that they rejoice and praise for evermore without labour or sorrow. The humanity of our Lord greets, rejoices and loves His own flesh and blood without ceasing. For though flesh and blood are now no more, the sibship is so great that He must specially love human nature.

Here too the Spirit shafts
Such heavenly floods of light
On all the Blest that they
Filled and enchanted, sing
For joy, and laugh and leap
In ordered dance. They flow
And swim and fly and climb
From tieréd choir to choir
Still upward through the heights.
A mirror there they find,
Read there the will and work
Writ, of the Trinity,
Read how they have been wrought
Body and soul and so
Forever will remain,
See there within the flesh
Like a bright wick, englazed
The soul God's finger lit
To give her liberty,
And joy and power and love,
To make her crystal, like
As maybe, to Himself.
So where they will they fly
Like thought a thousand miles,
Yet never reach the bounds
Of Heaven, nor the corners
Of its bright streets, not gold
O finer far, not gems
But their eternal parts.

And now comes the end of the crown:—

And there I saw the great Artificer
Even the Holy Spirit
Forging the Crown of God,
Forging till Judgment Day:
And ever as He worked
Rejoicing in all things
Men do for love of God,
Or suffer, for His love.

Hammering those things to flowers
Of gold upon the crown.
O who will help me (Mechthild)
That I thereon may lie
A tiny flower, as small
As the eyebrights which are infants
Soon as born, departed.

If this description is too long it is because I have found such happiness in the crown. Yet I have told much in few words.

This I must say: How long wilt thou cry out against me, O miserable world! Thou must really hold thy peace, as I must now hold my peace about what is dearest to my heart.

2. *How on All Souls' Day someone prayed for all souls in general*

As on All Souls' Day I prayed with Holy Church for all souls who were working out their penance in Purgatory, I became aware of a Purgatory like an oven, black outside, flaming within. I looked in and saw how souls stood in the flames and burned like bundles of straw. Then someone like a great angel stood by me and I asked why souls had to struggle to get out, seeing that prayer from good people did come to them. Some did get out, others could not. Then he whom I asked answered, "While still on earth, they would not come to the help of those in need." Then my soul had compassion on their efforts and I saw their power and merit and cried to Heaven, "O God! might I go down to them and suffer with them that they might the sooner come to Thee?" Then it appeared that our Lord was the angel who stood by me. He said, "If thou wilt go in, I will go in with thee." Then He took hold of the human spirit and led it inside and as it went in with our Lord it felt no pain. It asked how many souls there were. Our Lord said: "Thou canst not count them but these are they for whom thou didst pray when they were on earth."

Then I found one for whom I used to pray thirty years[1] before and I would have loosed him but owing to my insignificance I did not dare to ask so great a Lord for so great a thing. But I said, "Ah dear Lord! wouldst Thou not release them?"

[1] See iii. 17.

Then all at once they rose up, a great multitude, full of joy, whiter than snow and soared away towards Paradise in sweet and pure delight. Therein they rested in joy. As they raised themselves out of the fire they sang the whole Psalm *Laudate pueri Dominum.* Then they sang, "We praise Thee, O Lord, for the greatness of Thy goodness and Thy merciful kindness and the faithfulness of Thy help." Our Lord still stood by the fire holding the human spirit. Then it said:

Ah Lord! Thou knowest what I long for.
That I might sink down at Thy feet,
There to thank Thee.
Then our Lord released the soul
And it sank down and thanked Him again
That it had been allowed to see
The great honour granted these poor souls
by God.
The soul found on the feet of our Lord
The rosy wounds of our redemption.
And begged, "Lord! give me Thy blessing!"
Our Lord said, "I bless thee with My wounds."
May that be so to me
And to all friends of God
And my friends.
But alas! this did not happen to me,
On account of my works—
I hold holy Church much more worthy
Than anything of my own.

3. *How necessary it is to look ever humbly into one's heart* [1]

I know no one so good that he has not need to look ceaselessly into and test and know his heart, what is therein; and also often to find fault with all he does, which must be done with humility. God's voice taught me this because I never did anything so well that I could not have done it better. My weaknesses reproved me thus: "Ah wretched creature! how long wilt

[1] The ageing nun looks back on her life.

thou hide thy useless habits in thy five senses? Our childhood was foolish, our youth troubled; how we conquered it is known only to God. Alas! now in my old age I find much to chide, for it can produce no shining works and is cold and without grace. It is powerless, now that it no longer has youth to help it to bear the fiery love of God. It is also impatient, for little ills afflict it much which in youth it hardly noticed. Yet a good old age is full of patient waiting and trusts in God alone."

Seven years ago a troubled old soul lamented these weaknesses to our Lord. God answered thus: "Thy childhood was a companion of My Holy Spirit; thy youth was a bride of My humanity, in thine old age thou art a humble house-wife of My Godhead."

Alas dear Lord! what use is it that the dog barks? While the owner sleeps the thief breaks into the house! But the prayer of a pure heart sometimes awakes such sleeping sinners. Alas, poor sinner! how sorely art thou to be pitied! For thou art a self-slayer, a danger to all good. The good man has a great advantage for when he sees how another sins and falls he looks quickly to himself that he may not fall into such a pass. Thus the good man benefits from evil things that good may follow them. But the wicked man becomes more wicked when he sees evil works and examples; he now despises good works and good people; his own perverted wisdom pleases him best.

My good school-master, who taught me—simple and stupid as I am—how to write this book, taught me also this: Whatsoever a person does, if he is not genuine, do not trust him. I know an enemy who, if one does not forbid him to enter, destroys God's truth in the heart. If one gives him a chance he writes false wisdom in the heart which makes it say to itself, "I am by nature weak and bad!" But for that reason thou canst not honourably crave forgiveness from God. Through grace thou must become strong and good. "But I have no grace!" Then thou must call on the God of grace to grant thee grace with humble tears, steadfast prayer and holy desire. Thus the worm of evil must die. Thou must do violence to thyself so that no suffering and no power can gain mastery over thee; thus the worm of evil is done away. If we would overcome and drive away our anger and all our imperfections, with God's help, then

we must secretly stifle our sinful temptations and show ourselves outwardly full of holy joy.

Alas poor creatures! as long as we storm about in anger we have nothing good in us. When we come to ourselves again we must be heartily ashamed of our faults; ashamed that anger has so undermined our strength and perverted our senses, that the precious time in which we should have served God is lost to us, which will perhaps do us everlasting harm. Alas! what remorse I feel for tears shed in pride and anger, from which the soul becomes so dark that for the time being the creature can do no good thing.

But tears of remorse are so holy that if a sinner would but shed them for all his sins and then remain steadfast, he would never come to everlasting hell. As for the small daily sins a good person has in himself and which he will not be able to leave off as long as he lives, were he to die without confession and without penitence, however holy he might be, he must suffer a bitter Purgatory. For, compassionate as God is, He is also just towards sin and anger.

My advice to myself is that we must live humbly, in Love; we shall never become good in darkness—Humility and Love live happily together.

4. *Of the rod of the Lord*

Not long after I came to the Convent I suffered a painful illness so that my attendants grieved over me. Then I spoke to our Lord: "What wilt Thou with this suffering?" And He said: "All thy ways are measured, thy footsteps counted, thy life sanctified, thine end shall be joyful for My Kingdom is very near thee." And I said: "Lord! why is my life sanctified seeing that I can do so little good?" And our Lord said: "Thereby is thy life sanctified that My rod has never left thy back!"

Te Deum laudamus! that God is so good!

5. *Why the Convent was troubled at one time*

(The Convent) shall secretly do good to those who come in need. I will not have it that such help be withheld from any: that is to say that every person in his proper office shall compassionately do good to such as he knows require it.

6. *Of the Chapter and how the creature shall regard and bewail his breaches of conduct*

Whosoever has this knowledge of herself, let her weep and lament with me. While God's elect children often receive His Body with deep devotion, I must go with a burning conscience to my Chapter![1] There unworthiness censures me, indolence convicts me, the inconstancy of my nature reproves my changeableness, the wretchedness of my useless life distresses me and lastly holy fear scourges me so that I creep like a little worm into the earth and hide myself under the grass of the many omissions of my whole life. There I remain and cry aloud to Heaven, "Ah merciful God! grant that I may this day share in some measure the graces Thine elect have received!" Our Lord answered thus: "Take two gold coins of equal weight and buy something with them; if they are of equal value they are equally good."

Alas beloved Lord! How can my wretchedness equal Thy goodness! for I am nothing; I am not what I fain would be to Thy honour. I have nothing which would seem good to Thee and I cleave to nothing in the world which could comfort my soul. Therefore am I undone and become worse than I was before. I am not yet what I have so long desired to be!

Our Lord spoke thus: "With good will and holy desire thou canst make good if thou wilt!"

7. *How man is united to God at all times*

That man is ever united to God is heavenly bliss beyond all earthly joy. How can we attain to this? Desire must ever accompany all that we do and if our work is undertaken in Christian faith and tested by the wisdom of God so that it is never useless, then we live with our Lord God in all our works, thanks to all He has wrought on earth through love of us. Thus we are united with Him even in earthly works, through heavenly love. Thereby we will be spiritually enlightened and will praise our Lord God for all the gifts He has ever given us, in our bodies, our friends, our relations in all earthly joys we could

[1] Here Mechthild means her own conscience.

wish for. If we thank Him for all such earthly gifts then we are united with Him in sweet love and humble thankfulness.

Therefore we should imprint all God's gifts in our hearts; then our Lord will be full of love; our senses will be opened and our souls so clear that we will see into the wisdom of God as a man may see his face in a clear mirror. Thus we may recognize God's will in all our doings, honour and love Him in sorrowful as in joyful gifts, and rejoice in all that happens to us, save sin alone. Sin we must hate and bewail for it is accursed. Thus we shall be united already on earth with the saints in Heaven for the will of God is their greatest joy in Heaven. . . .

I do not know how the devil became aware that God had given me this knowledge in the night and that I was thus in union with Him in great joy. The devil came to me and spoke confidentially for he wished to outwit me. I heard his voice with my bodily ears and I saw a creature with my spiritual eyes, black, miry, like a horrible man. Yet I was not afraid of him for when God's gift lives in the soul and wrestles in the senses, the body cannot fear. But when the body is busied with needful work and the devil then comes, the body experiences such pain in his presence, that I have never felt greater on earth.

Then the devil said to me, "I dreamt in the night that I had become very rich." (He wished me to think that my holy union with God had been nothing but an empty dream.) But the soul as mistress spoke inwardly and said, "Thou art not truthful!" Then the devil said, "I must be on my guard as long as God lives." The soul replied, "Thou art learned, tell me, what should I do?" The devil prevaricated and said, "Thou shalt rejoice and bear this great thing in thy heart" (knowledge of God's gifts). THE SOUL.—"Alas! I am not yet so humble that I can creep through the needle's eye of all my enemies up to the heavenly gates of my eternal Home." THE DEVIL.—"Thou art bewitched!" THE SOUL.—"In thy words I recognize falseness, ambition, pride and doubt. Were a wall of steel to rise around me right up into the clouds above, yet could my heart never be secure or free because of my enemies." Then he stood and quaked before me. Alas! how full of falsehood he seemed to be! Finally, he tossed his head and sprang angrily away.

8. *How man shall seek God*

When God sometimes seems to shun man, the soul turns to Him and speaks: "Lord! my pain is deeper than Hell, my sorrow more bitter than the world, my fear greater than the mountains, my longing higher than the stars. In all these I can nowhere find Thee!"

In such distress the soul became aware of the presence of her Love beside her in the guise of a youth of unspeakable beauty. And she would have hid herself; instead she fell down at His feet and kissed His wounds; they were so sweet that she forgot all her pain and was no longer aware of her old age. Then she thought, "Ah! how gladly thou wouldst see His face even though thou must then renounce His wounds. How gladly thou wouldst hear His words and His longing!"

Then she stood up clad and adorned in unwavering courage. And He said, "Welcome beloved!" As He spoke she realized that every soul whom God in His mercy serves is dearest to Him. Then He said, "I must protect thee from inordinate desire, both thine and Mine!" She said, "My desire for Thee is unspeakable!" Then He said, "Take this maiden's crown." And the crown came from Him and was set on her head and shone as if pure gold. The crown was twofold and was the crown of love. Then our Lord said, "This crown shall be seen of all the company of Heaven." Then she asked, "Lord! Wilt Thou tomorrow, after I have received Thy Holy Body, receive my soul?" "Nay," said He, "Thou shalt be yet richer through suffering." "Lord! what can I do here in this convent?" He answered, "Thou shalt enlighten and teach and shalt stay here in great honour." Then she thought, "Now art thou here alone with our Lord." But while she thus thought, she saw two angels standing beside her, gloriously apparelled. Then she said, "How can I now hide myself?" But the angels said, "We will bring thee from suffering to suffering, from virtue to virtue, from knowledge to knowledge, from love to Love."

That such a sinful mouth must and shall utter these words is hard to me, but I dare not refrain, before God. And because of obedience to human frailty and fear of God, I must remember them all my days.

10. *This happened during a time of great trouble*

I prayed to our Lord in time of war for the many sins of the world and He answered: "Sin reeks in my nostrils from the depths of the earth up to the heights of Heaven. Were that possible, it would have driven Me out. Sin has once already driven Me out. I came down humbly and served the world till My death. But that can never happen again. Now I have sometimes to build up My righteousness through sin." Then I said: "Dear Lord! what can we poor creatures do now?" And He answered: "Ye shall humble yourselves under the threatening hand of Almighty God and fear Him in all your works. I will yet redeem My friends from all necessity. Corporate prayer moves My heart, that I will show in very deed. I delight in the prayer of spiritual people who pray in love from the heart. *Adjutorium nostrum in nomine Domini. Laudate dominum omnes gentes. Gloria patri. Regnum mundi. Eructavit cor meum. Quem vidi. Gloria patri, etc.*[1]

Lord, heavenly Father! receive the service and praise of Thy sorrowing children and save Thy people from their present need. Loose us from all our bonds save only the bond of love which must never be taken from us!

11. *How our Lord was seen as a working man*

Our Lord showed me in a parable what He has fulfilled and still fulfils in me. I saw a poor man raise himself from the ground. He was dressed as a working man in poor linen clothes. He had a crowbar in his hand on which there lay a burden as big as the earth. I said, "Good man! What art thou lifting?" He said, "I am lifting thy sufferings. Turn thy will towards suffering! Lift it up and carry it!" Then I said, "Lord! I am so poor that I have nothing." Then He said, "Thus did I teach My disciples when I said *Blessed are the poor in spirit*, for when a person would fain do something and has not the power, that is spiritual poverty."

THE SOUL.—"Lord! Is it Thou? Turn Thy face to me that I may know Thee!" Then He said: "Learn to know Me

[1] Antiphons and Psalms of the Office of Holy Virgins.

inwardly!" THE SOUL.—"Lord! if I saw Thee among a thousand, yet would I know Thee!" Then my heart tempted me inwardly to a small dissimulation, but I did not trust myself to say to Him, "Thou art the Lord!" I said: "Lord! this burden is too heavy for me!" And He said, "I will clasp it so close to Myself that thou canst easily bear it. Follow Me and see how I hung before My heavenly Father on the Cross and endured!" Then I said, "Lord, give me Thy blessing." He answered, "I bless thee without ceasing. Thy sufferings shall give thee good counsel." And I replied, "May this help all those who gladly bear suffering for Thee!"

12. *How vanity and temptation are to be withstood*

As soon as anyone thinks well of himself, vanity springs out of the corner of the heart with sinful vigour and spreads itself all over the five senses. Then the person must constrain his nature and beat upon his heart in humble fear and sign himself with the Holy Cross; thus the temptation is done away as if it had never been. This I, poor creature, have often found in myself. One must act in the same way towards evil thoughts passing through and distracting the soul. They, too, vanish through the power of the Holy Cross when the person is truly sorry for them.

13. *How our Lord was seen as a pilgrim*

I, poor and unworthy, renounce all self-will and say only what I have heard and seen in God. One night I saw our Lord standing in the guise of a pilgrim and it seemed as though He had wandered through all Christendom. I fell down at His feet and said, "Dear Pilgrim! whence comest Thou?" And He answered, "From Jerusalem (by which He meant Holy Church). I have been driven out of My refuge. The heathen knew Me not, the Jews did not want Me, the Christians strove against Me." Then I pled for the Church. Our Lord made courteous excuses for it but lamented how He had been despised for it, how much He had done for it from the beginning, how much He had suffered for it, how He looked daily for some place on which He could pour out His Grace. He lamented yet more and said,

"People drive Me out of My refuge in their hearts with their self-will and when I can find no resting-place in them, I abandon them to their obstinacy; when they die, I judge them as I find them then." Then I pled for our Community, "Dear Lord, let it not perish! I will set a light in their Churchyard by which they may learn to know themselves."

14. *Of God's choice and blessing*

On another night as I was at my prayers in longing and distress because of my nothingness, I became aware of our Lord. He stood in the Churchyard and had the whole community ranged before Him in order as they had entered it. He spoke to them: "I have chosen you. If ye choose Me, I will give you something." I asked: "Lord! what wilt Thou give them?" He answered: "I will make them bright mirrors on earth so that all who see them will recognize the life they live. But in Heaven I will make them radiant mirrors so that all who see them will know that I have chosen them." Then He stretched out His hand and blessed them and said: "I bless you with Myself: choose Me in all your thoughts." Those who thus desired Him only, were those blessed ones who rightly praised Him. Then I said: "They will ask me how I came to see Thee?" And He answered: "There are some among them who know Me."

16. *How someone longed and prayed*

There was one who amid the mercies of God and amid much suffering longed continually that God would release her soul in a holy end. Our Lord said: "Await My Will!" But the soul said: "Dear Lord! I cannot cease from longing, so gladly would I be with Thee." Then our Lord said: "Before the world was I longed for thee; I long for thee and thou for Me. When two burning desires come together then is love perfected!"

17. *How Understanding and Conscience speak together*

UNDERSTANDING

How is it that however much people despise thee and cause thee pain, thou still standest firm in God?

CONSCIENCE

Thou hast said a true word. Whoso loses all comfort must have a humble heart.

UNDERSTANDING

Thou hast such a noble mirror that I have often looked in it. The reflection must surely be that of the living Son of God with all His works; else thou couldst not be so wise.

CONSCIENCE

When I look at myself in that mirror (a blank in the MS.) I am both glad and sorry; glad because the love of God flows in to me, sorry because I am so lacking in good works.

UNDERSTANDING

But surely thou wouldst rather have God's Will and God's Glory in all things, than thine own needs of body and soul? Thou art both the devil's Hell and God's Heaven! What then could compare with thee?

CONSCIENCE

All that I have from God, He has only lent me to heighten His Praise and Glory and for my joy. Should I ever have to give it back to Him I would surely need His Grace.

UNDERSTANDING

Thou art sore vexed by the sins of the world! And the imperfections of spiritual people cause thee much grief. But thou canst do what thou wilt! Thou canst fare forth to Heaven or Hell or the long pains of Purgatory. That is a heavy responsibility!

CONSCIENCE

Ah Understanding! I do not lament because I suffer reluctant and difficult days. I grieve over the sin of the world in the same way as I grieve over the suffering of love which purifies the body from sin and sanctifies the soul in God. Therefore we will joyfully keep His commands.

UNDERSTANDING

Good-living wealthy people in the world offer God their goods and their alms; spiritual people offer in His service their flesh and blood. Above all they offer Him their obedience and their own wills. That which weighs more must be worth more.

CONSCIENCE

But that is not enough! If we would enjoy God in the heights we must have the crown of humility and clearness, inborn or acquired purity, and above all things, the height of love. This same blissful garment (temperament) is worn by the Holy Trinity: the Father the height of love; the Son pure, humble innocence which He shares with all His elect; the Holy Spirit burning love for us and all our good works.

UNDERSTANDING

Yea, truly, Conscience, Perseverance in good works is love in action. We cannot do without that if we would possess the highest honour with God both here and in His everlasting Kingdom. Blessed are they who even here are diligent in such ways!

19. *A Greeting to our Lady in the form of a Litany*

I greet thee Lady, Beloved Mary, that thou art
A joy to the Holy Trinity,
The beginning of all our blessedness
The companion of the holy angels here and in the Kingdom of God,
I greet thee Lady, Beloved Mary, that thou art
A flower of the patriarchs,
A hope of the prophets,
A white lily of humble maids,—
Remember how the salutation of the angel Gabriel
Came to thee! And greet my soul
On the Last Day and bring me with unclouded joy
Out of this misery to the happy land
Of thy dear Child
That there I may find rest.
I greet thee Lady, Beloved Mary, that thou art
A wise teacher of the Apostles,
A rose of the martyrs,
A gift of Confessors,
A helper of widows,
An honour of all the saints of thy dear Child.

Pray for me that I in all my doings
May be sanctified so far as may be
For me unworthy,
Mary Beloved Queen.
I greet thee Lady, Beloved Mary, that thou art
A refuge for sinners,
A strong helper for the perplexed,
A comforter to Holy Church,
A dread to evil spirits,
Who are driven away before thee;
Drive them also far from me
That they may never delight themselves in me
But that I may ever be constant
In thy service.

20. *How we should offer a Hail Mary to our Lady*

Be greeted, Queen of Heaven, Mother of God and our beloved Lady! Receive this day a Hail Mary to the praise and glory of that wonderful moment when Father, Son and Holy Spirit looked joyfully into the young face of the Virgin Mother, frank, open and full of blessedness.

Ah! Lady! I think of that
In all my longings, all my prayers,
All my sufferings, all my need,
All my heart's sorrow and the honour
Of my soul at my latter end.
When I wend my way from this sad world,
That must all be offered ceaselessly
To thy motherly care,
Thy maidenly honour,
Thy joyful goodness.
I add thereto all who with me
Are thy friends and mine
In the name of Almighty God,
Mary Beloved, Queen of Heaven.

21. *How the heart shall be examined before going to the table of the Lord*

Ye ask teaching from me when I myself am unlearned! What you desire ye will find a thousandfold in your books.

When I, a poor sinner, go to receive the Body of the Lord, I examine my soul in the mirror of my sins. There I see truly how I have lived, how I am now living and how I am going to live. In this mirror I see nothing but alas and alas! Then I cast my eyes on the ground and lament and weep, for the Eternal, Incomprehensible God is so good that He will even bend down to enter the muddy pool of my heart. Then I reflect it were more just that my body should be dragged to the gallows as a thief who has stolen from her rightful master the precious treasure of Clearness which God gave me in holy baptism—

That we must sadly lament
All the days of our life
Since we have so often darkened
The clearness Thou gavest us.
Father, we beg Thy forgiveness.
If a sinner confess not sin
And turns against confession,
He shall not receive
The Body of the Lord.
But now I go on in Hope,
Thanking my God who made me
That I might receive the Body of Christ.
Now I go to the Table rejoicing
To receive the slain Lamb
Who chose to endure the Cross
Five times wounded and torn.
Well for us these things have happened!
Beholding His holy sorrows
I, so unworthy, weep.

O make your souls a cradle
And lay the Beloved there
With joyful and loving hearts
Offering Him praise and glory.

Who endured a bed with the kine.
Therefore we bow before Him
Sense and spirit and say
Lord! Beloved! I thank Thee,
Give me Thy treasure that I
May sojourn in innocence.

Where then, Lord, shall I rest Thee,
All my soul is Thy house
Enter, O enter in!
It is a house of sorrow
That I had forgotten,
Remembering only Thy woe.
O rest then upon my sorrow,
My coverlet of longing,
Pillow Thy head on my grief!

I have been too proud, now forgive me,
Now I accept Thy pain.
Now I renounce my pride,
And ask a favour of Thee
Asking Thee for my soul's joy
To give me those sinners who lie
Yonder in mortal sin.

Now my sorrow and Thine
Have rested in peace together
Now is our love made whole.
O Guest! raised from the dead
Keep me close to Thyself
In consolation and bliss.
What more can our love say?
Now that Thou art houseled
In the house of my sorrow?
Risen from the dead
Thou comest in to me,
Comfort me, O my Beloved,
And hold me in Thy Presence
In continual joy.

And allow me to pay the price
Of those sinners in Purgatory
The price must not hurt Another.

Now Lord in Thine ascending
Having given Thyself to me
Spare me not too much!
In all ways I must die for love
That is all my desire.
Give me and take from me
What Thou wilt, but leave me this,
In loving, to die of love! AMEN.

25. *Of the Greeting of the Holy Trinity*

Though I am poor in virtue,
Small in spiritual stature,
May I or dare I venture
To greet those heights of crystal,
Bliss, nobility, wisdom,
Uniting the Trinity?
All things that are or shall be,
Flow from those cloudless heights,
Ever afresh I must enter
Into that flood. But how?
I must kneel for I am guilty,
I must struggle being idle,
Run, for diligence fails me,
Fly, dove-winged and soar
In all things beyond myself.
But then when I am wearied
Return to the flood again.
What my welcome is now
Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard—
Trinitas, Tibi, Gloria!

26. *How one should flee to God in temptation*

Lord Jesus Christ, I, poor creature,
Flee Thee yet long for Thy help
For my enemies pursue me.

Lord God, I implore Thee
For they would separate me from Thee.
Give me not into their power
But keep me pure in Thee.
Thou who hast redeemed me by Thy death,
Be now my help and comfort;
Let me not fall into destruction
Thou who didst will to die for me!
Lord Jesus Christ! I seek Thy help,
Awaken my soul from the sleep of indolence,
Enlighten my senses from the darkness of my flesh,
Give me Thy guidance,
And direct my ways unto Thee without sin
So far as possible to mankind.
For Thine eyes see all my deficiencies.
Holy Mary, Mother of God, Queen of Heaven,
Be thou my helper for alas I am guilty,
Help me to find mercy in Thy dear Child!
Mother of all purity
I pour forth all my sorrows unto thee!
Salve Regina.

27. *How a spiritual person should turn his heart from the world*

When a spiritual person sees his dearest friends and relations richly apparelled and adorned according to the ways of the world, then he must be armed by the Holy Spirit lest he should think: So mightest thou also be! Because on that thought his heart will become so dark and his senses so unprepared for God and his spirit so languorous towards prayer and his soul so outcast, that he will inwardly resemble his worldly friends more than a spiritual person:

If he would stand well with God,
There must be a struggle,
And his conscience which is still a lantern
Of the Holy Spirit, will be troubled;
For the conscience is lit no longer
If it lacks the light of the Spirit.

If that light has burnt out in the lantern
The beauty of the lantern can be no more seen.
Thus is it with a spiritual person
To whom all worldly display
Is as horror in his heart;
Yet if he keeps his lantern filled,
Its light will not go out;
But if his heart stands open to the world
Then is his lantern broken;
For the bitter north wind of covetousness
Blows from our friends and relations
Who lament our need and poverty;
While they sink in the muddy pool of the world
And are drowned in their sins.
Then our light is extinguished
And yet we have not the world!
Then comes the south wind
Of false delight in the world
Which seems so beautiful
But has yet much bitter pain;
If this should please us
We walk to our everlasting hurt.
Of that we must beware
For there is no sin so small
That it is not an eternal blot
On our souls. Why? Because no sin
Was ever so changed into holiness
That it were not better
Never to have been committed.
Therefore if we would stand well with God
We must stand prayerfully before Him
In fear. For that which we have given Him
We can never take back again
Without hurt to ourselves.
The fish looks eagerly at the red fly
With which the fisherman will take him;
But it does not see the hook—
So is it with the poison of the world
Its danger is not realized.

If thou wilt truly turn from it
Look at thy Bridegroom! Lord of all worlds
How gloriously robed He stands there—
In priestly robes, blood red,
Ebony black, scourged, bound to a pillar,
There through love for thee
He received many sharp wounds.
Let them enter thy heart
Then wilt thou gladly forgo
The lure of the world.
If thou wouldst follow Him with holy thoughts
Look up! See how He hung on the Cross
Lifted up on high
For all the world to see
His body flecked with blood.
This garment of His
Shall be the treasure of thy heart,
His kingly eyes everflowing with tears,
His sweet heart pierced for love.
Now hear the voice
Which teaches thee the love of God—
How the hammers of the smiths
Drove in the nails
Through His hands and feet on the Cross.
Think too of the wound of the spear
Which pierced His side to the heart,
And tell Him all thy sins
So wilt thou come to know God.
See the sharp crown of thorns
He wore on His head,
And seek to earn His Grace
He will give thee enough of all blessedness!
Thank Him that He willed to die
Through His great love for thee
And let no one deceive thee,
So mayst thou be a Queen in His Kingdom for ever—
Shouldst thou attain thereto
So wilt thou overcome with joy
All the sorrows of the world.

28. *Of need in time of War* [1]

I was commanded to pray very earnestly for the need there now is in Saxony and Thuringia. As I gave myself to prayer with praise and longing, our Lord would not receive me but kept solemn silence. I had to endure that for seventeen days in patient waiting. Then I said: "Ah dear Lord! when will the appointed hour come when Thou wilt that I pray for this need?" Then He appeared to me and said:

"Those who now suffer grievous need
Are like the early promise of the dawn
In its first blush of beauty—
But the sun of everlasting light
Shall rise for them
And bring them everlasting joy after this need.
Thereby shall they be sanctified
And illumined as the sun
When it reaches its zenith
And rides high in the sky.
Some there are in this army
Now in need and fear
Whom I allow to be captured and slain,
That they may come to Me.
Those who caused the war
Are evil in themselves
And dreadful in their works.
When they even dared to take sacred things
From My Churches,
I knew that everlasting death must follow.
Those who rob in the streets
Would be robbers and evil men
Even were there no war;
But thus the wicked
Make the blessed good!
Therefore must God love His own in suffering
If He can win them no other way."

[1] This chapter probably dates from 1270 when dissolution of the Alliance of Rhineland provinces led to widespread disorder.

Thus He spoke to me of the devout.
When the war will end
I know not. But I know I must still
Welcome the friends of God with delight:
I also know that whatsoever they suffer
God will never forsake them
For He is their help and comfort
In every need.

Therefore we must fight and suffer gladly
That later we may shine before Him.

29. *Of a certain Teaching*

If thou wouldst give thy heart utterly to God
Thou must have three things:
Fear of all sin,
Readiness for all virtue
Steadfastness in all good.
Thus canst thou bring thy life to a good end.
If thou but set thyself to do this
Then canst thou bear with ease
All thy sorrows;
Pray purely and serve God diligently
Then shalt thou be rich in joy.

31. *A Plaint*

This is the plaint of the loving soul
Who can no longer bear her loneliness;
She must share it with all the friends of God[1]
That they also may delight
In the service of love.

[1] This may refer to the *Friends of God*, mystics who sprang up here and there in the Upper Rhinelands and in Bavaria, each founding a spiritual family from which the love of God radiated out on the world. Their greatest period was the beginning of the fourteenth century, but the movement had begun in Mechthild's day. See Evelyn Underhill, *Mysticism*, p. 464, 12th ed.

Sick for love and ill in body,
Suffering pain and grievous need
Makes the way to my dear Lord
Too long indeed.
Love! how can I suffer thine absence?
I am yet far distant from Thee
If Thou wilt not receive my complaint
Then must I sink down in sorrow
And pray and suffer secretly and openly.
Thou knowest well, dear Lord,
How gladly I would be with Thee!

OUR LORD

When I come I come greatly.
Never was any adversity so sore
That I cannot heal it.
Thou must learn more patiently, to wait
To bear suffering more lightly,
Ere I bring thee to My Father;
That thus thou mayst be
Well-pleasing to us.
Gladly do I still hear
The voice of thy love!

THE SOUL

However dark our human senses grow
Yet we awaken Divine Love in our hearts
With our plaint here below.

32. *How the works of good people shine beside the works of our Lord*

See in the following how the works of good men shall glow and shine in heavenly glory.

In so far as we have been innocent here, so far will God's holiness shine in our innocence.

In so far as we do good works here, so far will the works of God shine and glow in our works.

In so far as we here cleave with fervour to God, so far will God's fervour multiply and shine through ours.

In so far as we here thankfully accept our sufferings and bear them patiently, so far will the sufferings of God enlighten and shine through our sufferings.

In so far as we have diligently practised the virtues here, so far will God's holy virtues light and shine in ours in manifold honour, ever more and more.

In so far as we here burn with love and shed forth the light of a holy life, so far will the love of God burn in and irradiate our souls and bodies without ceasing, never to be extinguished.

These reflections shine and radiate from the eternal Godhead.
These good works we have received from God's holy humanity,
And brought to pass through the power of the Holy Spirit.
Thus all our lives and works flow back again into the Holy Trinity,
There we shall see clearly how we stand with God here.
In so far as we live here in God's love,
So far shall we soar in bliss in the heavenly heights,
So far will the power of love be given us in reward,
That we may be able to use all our wills in action,
But in order to be recognized by the saints there as we have been here
We must here have been their friends. AMEN.

33. *Of the spiritual draught*

I am ill and I long deeply
For the health-giving draught
Which Jesus Christ Himself drank
When as God and man He came to the Crib.
The draught was ready for Him there
And He drank of it so deeply
That He was on fire with love
And instilled into all the virtues
His heart's sorrow.
He always gave virtue,
His goodness never failed.

This health-giving draught pleases me
The draught of suffering-for-the-love-of-God.
Suffering is bitter so we add a herb to it—
Glad-suffering: and a second called Patience-in-suffering:
These too are bitter and so we add another herb
Holy Fervour: that makes Patience sweet
As well as everything we do;
It helps us to wait long in suffering
For our everlasting life and our salvation.
But waiting too is bitter
And we add another herb, Unwearied Joy!

Ah dear Lord! wouldst Thou but give me this draught
I should live unwearied with Joy in suffering.
Then would I give up for a time the joys of Heaven
Much as I long for them.
Now must Thou Lord, of Thy dear will
Give this draught to me and all
Who ask it through Thy Love!

34. *Of Spiritual Food*

After the bitter draught light diet is necessary. Aspiring desire, deepening humility and overflowing love are as three maidens who lead the soul up to God in Heaven. There it sees its Love and says, "Lord! I grieve that Thou art so sore troubled by those dearest to Thee on earth, the Christians. I grieve that Thy friends are so greatly hindered by Thine enemies."

OUR LORD.—Those who have real goodness in them turn everything which happens to them to the Glory of God, save sin alone. Therefore suffering claims first place. It is of first importance that when man is not comforted by God's Will, He is yet patient. That would not be so if man were comforted according to his own will, for God's Will is clear and perfect, while man's will is sorely entangled with the flesh. All who inwardly love fervently, become outwardly still, for outward

activity hinders the inward working of the spirit. What the spirit then sings inwardly sounds sweeter far than any earthly song.

Patience sings most sweetly of all, more sweetly even than the angelic choirs, for as the angels feel no suffering, they can have no patience. This we have through the humanity of our Lord, as well as all the honour by which God honours us on earth and to which we shall be exalted in Heaven. Through the noble works of our Lord and His holy sufferings, our Christian works and our willing suffering are ennobled and sanctified because our dear Lord was baptized in them.

Ah Lord! help us that our holy striving may never rest, that our deepening humility may never raise itself up through pride, but that the flowing, burning love of God may be our Purgatory here, wherein all our sins may be washed away.

36. *Of a Spiritual Convent*

I asked God to let me know whether it was His will that I should write no more. Why? Because I know I am still as small and unworthy as I was thirty years ago when I began to write. Then our Lord showed me in His hand a little sack and said: "I have here some healing roots." I said: "Lord! I know not such roots!" And He answered: "Thou wilt know them when thou see-est them. With them one can heal the sick, strengthen the strong, awaken the dead and sanctify the good." And then I saw a Spiritual Convent founded on the virtues.

The *Abbess* is true love
Who has much sanctified sense
With which she rules the community
In body and soul to the honour of God.
She gives her Sisters much holy teaching
Of the Will of God
Whereby her own soul is set free.
The *Chaplain-of-love* is Divine humility
So utterly subject to love
That Pride has to stand aside.
The *Prioress* is the holy Peace of God;

Patience is added to her goodwill
That she may teach the community with
Divine Wisdom. . . .
The *Sub-Prioress* is Loving-kindness:
She gathers together the little ones
And imbues them with godliness;
Their misdoings must not long darken their
minds,
For by them God increases human goodness.
The *Chapter* shall have four things—
Revelations of holiness in worship;
Gentleness in ruling, for that is harmful to sin,
Glorifies God and makes for Joy.
It shall guard against vain glory,
Be helpful to others, serving them diligently
For which God will reward it.
Hope is the *Chantress*
Filled with holy, humble devotion,
So that even temerity of heart
In singing before God,
Sounds so sweetly that He loves the melody
Sung from the heart. . . .
Wisdom is the *Schoolmistress*
Who with goodwill
So diligently instructs the ignorant
That the Convent is thereby sanctified and
honoured.
The *Cellarer* overflows with help to all
And fulfils her office with joy.
Thereby she wins Divine gifts of holiness . . .
God's sweetest gifts flow into her heart
As into those of all who help her.
Gentleness is the *Steward*
Always happily doing good;
She gives what she has not
Which wins her special gifts from God.
Those to whom she gives thank God with holy fervour
Which fills their hearts
Like noble wine in a pure vessel.

The *Infirmarian* is Compassion
Ever eager to give unwearied service to the sick . . .
God gives her as reward
That she always serves gladly
And when she needs help
It comes from Him.
Watchfulness is the *Portress*
Filled with holy desire
To do whatever she is bidden.
Thus nothing she does is ever lost
And she comes quickly to God
When she would pray;
There He is with her in holy stillness
To soothe her heart's sorrow
When things go heavily—
But holy Obedience under whom she works with joy
Reconciles all things.
Holy Custom is the *Disciplinarian*
Who ever burns in heavenly freedom
Like a candle which never goes out:
Thus we should gently bear all our sorrows
Till we come to a holy end.
The *Provost* is Divine Obedience
All the virtues are subject to him,
Thus the Convent abides in God.
Whosoever will betake herself there
Shall ever live in Divine Joy
Here and in Life Everlasting—
Blessed are they who dwell therein!

37. *Of the everlasting marriage of the Holy Trinity*

Whoso will prepare himself in true love
For the heavenly marriage of the Holy Trinity
Must always begin thus:
He must follow and serve the heavenly Father
Without ceasing, in holy fear
And deep humility in all things.

He must follow and serve the Son
In suffering with patience
And willing poverty in holy works.
He must follow and serve the Holy Spirit
In holy hope, beyond all words
With pure and gentle heart,
That his goodness may be felt.

The loving maidens
Shall follow the Son of the pure Maid,
The noble Youth Jesus Christ
Who is still as full of love
As He was at eighteen years.
Therefore is He most to be loved;
"Fairer than the children of men"
To the maids who follow Him
With tender delight in the flowery meadow
Of their pure conscience.
There He plucks for them
The flowers of all the virtues
Which they weave into noble wreaths
To be carried at the everlasting marriage.

After the noble rites have taken place
At which Christ Himself will serve,
A great Dance of Praise begins
At which each body and soul wears the
wreath of the virtues
They have perfected here
With much holy prayer.
Thus they follow the Lamb in unspeakable bliss,
From bliss to love, from love to joy,
From joy to clearness, clearness to power,
From power to the highest heights
Before the eyes of the heavenly Father.
Then He greets His only-begotten Son
As well as many pure brides
Who have come with Him—

"Ah! Beloved Son! What Thou art, that am I
And what they are delights me.

Rejoice evermore, beloved brides!
Rejoice in My everlasting clearness
And lament but softly of pain and sorrow:
My holy angels shall serve you,
My saints shall honour you,
The mother of My Son's humanity
Shall receive you with praise,
You who are her companions.
Rejoice beloved brides!
My Son shall embrace you,
My Godhead shall permeate you,
My Holy Spirit shall lead you ever further
In blissful delight
According to your will.
What more could you wish for?
I Myself will love you!
Those who are not maidens
May witness this marriage
And take part in it so far as they can.

I heard and saw all this with the eyes of my soul in one short hour, then I became again a speck of dust and ashes as I always had been.[1]

38. *How a spiritual person shall bewail and acknowledge his sins to God every day*

I, a sinful creature,
Bewail and acknowledge to God
All the sins of which I am guilty in His sight,
All the good works I have neglected.
I acknowledge and bewail sins committed
Before I knew what sin was,
And I lament what are worse,
Sins I committed knowingly
With anger, idleness and vanity.
Lord have mercy upon me,
For I am truly sorry for them,

[1] Chapters 37, 38 and 39 probably belong to an earlier period as the reader will gather from the earlier style which Mechthild no longer uses.

And give me Thy full assurance
That Thou hast forgiven me all—
Otherwise I could no longer live in joy,
  Jesus, my Beloved!
Let me come to Thee
In true remorse and heartfelt love
And let my love never grow cold;
But let me feel Thy love
In my heart, my soul, my senses
And all my members—
Then my love can never grow cold.

39. *How the devils hunt and fight each other when one loving soul departs from this world*

Happy is that good man
Born to follow God with all the virtues
He may bring to perfection.
Through love his soul is set free
And at the last holy angels come
To receive the pure soul
Into heavenly bliss,
With unspeakable love.
They lead him thither with joy
And bring him with praise to God.
  But the enemies from Hell
Find their work taken from them.
They came with rage and hatred,
Now as they see their will frustrated—
How they slay and hunt each other,
Bite and gnaw and howl and cry
For they fear the dread punishment
They will receive from their masters,
Because one soul has been lost to them.
  And so they scold each other
"Accursed! It was thy fault!"
"Silence comrade! I never found her really impatient!
When I shot evil thoughts at her
Remorse was at once her companion!

That whispering to confessors
Robs us of all honour;
Were that door only closed
We should have many more companions!
How dare we now come to Court?
Alas! Master! What hast thou assigned to us?
To send us after such a soul!
We could find no great sin in her
I often tempted her sore
Then she wept!
My comrades and I could not make her fall.
She banished me with tears and sighs;
She singed my hair and claws:
I could nowhere come near her;
Her obedience was so great
That she was taken right away from us.
That is our greatest reproach;
All her good works burned within her
In godly love, for she did them all
With good will."
Then their master spoke:
"Ye have come damaged to Court;
I had given that soul into your charge!
The punishment I give you for your failure
Will never be taken from you.
You shall not live with people in the world
As I should like to do
Were the honour granted me;
Now you must live here with me in Hell
That shall be your penance.
I will send forth greater masters
To blind the understanding of good people.
If we could only destroy the zeal they have
for God
Then we should begin our conquest!
Their young would follow
And thus our race would be increased.
If one of the souls which burn so brightly
In the love of God, were only mine,

I would crown myself with her
And thus reward myself for all my labours
And softly lament the sorrows of my heart."

SOUL

Cease from your mean desires,
You long for what never happened to you
And never will!
All the blessed who in Christianity
Truly love God in their hearts
Are so saturated and permeated by love
That they illumine all their works
With holy virtue and burning love.
Thou knowest well it will not help thee
That thou didst try so hard
To companion them—
They can hardly wait to praise God!
However much thou artfully tempt them,
They are always ready with praise!

The growling and raging, biting and gnawing
Which now went on in the bands of demons
Is indescribable.
Ah! Lord God! We thank Thee!
Grant us a holy end!
One of the joys of a holy soul
Is to see and know that the devils, her enemies,
Thus fight each other and have their penance
in Hell.
For they have caused her such suffering
That she gladly escapes from them
To wear the everlasting crown
Because of the suffering they caused her.

40. *The loving soul speaks thus to her Lord*

Were all the world mine
And were it pure gold
And could I by desire
Ever stay here, the noblest, loveliest
Richest Queen—

All that were worthless to me!
Far rather would I see
Christ my beloved Lord
In heavenly glory—
Alas! what they suffer who have to wait long
For His coming!

41. *How a Preaching Brother was seen*

Forty years ago I knew a certain Religious. Spiritual people were then still simple and full of the fire of love. He grew in spirituality and devotion and openly did much holy work for our Lord. He has now passed on. I prayed to our Lord for his soul, that if he had committed any sin, God would forgive him. Then I saw a Brightness made ready for him by God; yet I did not see him in it and that distressed my soul. As I prayed for him a second time I found him in a fiery cloud. He asked me for something. I spoke earnestly to our Lord, "Ah! dear Lord! grant that I may repay evil by good!"[1] Then the brother rose up in a cloud and said, "O Lord! How great is Thy power! How righteous Thy Truth!" And I asked him, "How is it with thee?" And he answered, "As thou see-est." And I said, "Why hast thou this suffering?" And he said, "Souls who falsely appeared to be holy, complained to me of those who were sinless. I believed them and had a sinful mistrust of the sinless. Therefore have I this suffering." (Ah! had I still a sigh left, he should not suffer on my account, though he had forgotten himself a little regarding me.)

I prayed for him a third time and then he passed away into bliss. Our Lord met him and said: "That thy way after death was long and difficult was the fault of evil people. Thou hast followed Me obediently and served Me faithfully, therefore shalt thou wear crowns of Righteousness and Truth." Then he soared radiantly away up beyond the eight choirs and touched the ninth; after that I saw him no more. If untruthful people had not carried evil tales to him he would have passed without suffering into everlasting joy. That he trusted them was to his own hurt.

[1] This priest had spoken ill of Mechthild.

42. *Of the honey draught*

Lord God; close now Thy treasured gift
By a holy end,
And raise it up that it may be
In Heaven and earth a praise to Thee.
Then a voice said
"Thou shalt receive from Me
A honey draught which comes from many woods
And I will make it free
That others also
May enjoy it."

43. *Of the Simplicity of Love*

Those who would know much but love little
Ever remain at the beginning of a good life.
Therefore we should ever carry awe in our hearts
If we would inwardly please God.
For simple love even with little knowledge
Work great things within.
Holy simplicity is the way to all wisdom:
It shows the wise they are but fools,
For when simplicity of heart
Lives in the wisdom of the senses
Much holiness comes to the human soul.

46. *How the soul offers itself in spiritual poverty*

Here the soul offers itself to go forth to God in spiritual poverty, everlasting love and longing. It speaks thus: The long waiting is forgotten, in the future it seems possible that God and the soul may be united, never more to be separated. When I think of that my heart is full of Joy!

Ah dear Lord! how still is now Thy silence!
I thank Thee evermore
That Thou hast shunned me so long;
Thou must evermore be praised
That Thy will be done—not mine.

Now I hold fast to Thine own words
Which I have heard in Christian teaching
"Whosoever loves Me
Him will I love and My Father will love him
And we will come unto him
And make our abode in him" (John xiv. 23)
How blessed am I dear Lord
Because of Thy merciful goodness!
Thou wilt never go back on Thy word.
Then our Lord spake:
"When the time of thy waiting is over
And I come to fetch thee
And give thee heavenly gifts,
Then I come swiftly
For My Eternity awaits thee.
I will yet unfold it
And will raise the soul from the bleeding earth
For nothing could be more dear to Me."
Eternal love of God dwells in the soul;
Passing love of earthly things dwell in the flesh
And the five senses have the power to choose
To which they will turn.

47. *Of a sin that is worse than all other sins*

I have heard of a certain sin. I thank God that I do not know it for it seems to me of all sins the worst, for it is the height of unbelief. I grieve over it with body and soul and all my five senses from the depth of my heart, and I thank Jesus Christ the living Son of God that it never entered my heart. This sin did not originate with Christian people but the vile enemy has deceived simple people through it. They would fain be so holy as to draw themselves up into the eternal Godhead and pass by the eternal holy humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ. If they are really infected by such pride they fall into everlasting damnation. They would be the holiest of the holy! They scorn the Word of God where it deals with the humanity of our Lord.

Ah poorest of the poor! didst thou truly know the everlasting Godhead, then of necessity thou must also know the Eternal

manhood which soars in the everlasting Godhead. Thou must also know the Holy Spirit Who enlightens the heart of the Christian and pours sweetness above sweetness into his soul. He also teaches the human senses better than all other teachers for He speaks humbly. . . . (Text indecipherable.)

48. *How Love was seen with her maidens*

In the night I spoke thus to our Lord: "Lord! I live in a country called Exile. That is this world. For all that is in it can neither comfort nor please me save suffering alone. Therein I have a house called Suffering; that is the body in which my soul is imprisoned. This house is old and small and dark. (One shall understand this spiritually.) In this house I have a bed called Restlessness for all things trouble me which do not belong to God. Before my bed I have a chair called Hardship; in it I hear of strange sins of which I never was guilty. In front of the Chair I have a table, Unwillingness, because I find so little real spiritual life among spiritual people. On the table lies a cloth; it is clean and is called Poverty and has much spiritual good in it. If it were rightly used it would be very dear to the heart. Love of riches is the thief of poverty. Food is put on the table; it is called Bitterness of Sin, but also willing work. The drink is called Scant Praise because alas! I have so few good works to my credit.

I saw all this dimly within me. Then the love of God was revealed to me in the form of a queenly maid of noble presence, fair skin and with the rosy bloom of youth. She had with her many virtues: they were her handmaidens and were come to serve me if I wished them. She put them gladly at my service. Her crown was brighter than gold, her robe was like green sendal (a rich silky material).

As I looked at her closely, my dark house became lighted up, so that I could see everything in it and everything that had ever happened there. And as I looked at the maid I found I knew her well for she had often been my dear companion. But I will not write of that for it is all written in this book (iv. 3).

Then I said: "Ah beloved Maid! thou art a thousand times greater than I! Yet thou dost serve me with as great honour as

if I were more than an Empress!" She replied: "When I found thee full of desire to renounce earthly things, I wished not only to serve thee but to be thy constant attendant for I longed for one pure heart who for love of God had loosed itself from all earthly things. . . ." Then I said: "Dear Maid! seeing that thou hast served this poor little woman so long, it is only right that I should reward thy maidens honourably. I have already given thee in return all that I ever had or might have, on earth." Then she said—

"I have gathered it all up
And will give it back to thee
With great honour." Then I said
"Love! I know not what more I can give thee?
Wouldst thou have my soul
I will gladly give it!"
And she said, "That have I long desired;
Now hast thou given me the uttermost—
But speak also to my maidens
That they serve thee diligently.
Then may I stay by thee
In that true love of God
Which I myself am."[1]

So the soul spoke to the first maid:
Remorse! come here to me
And bring me holy tears
To wash away my sins.
Humility! Drive pride and vanity away;
As soon as they see thee
They must quickly flee.
Gentleness! sit under my cloak
Then friendship will be ready for me.
Ah! noble *Obedience*!
I put myself in all my doings
Under thee! Thou shalt never leave me
That so in everything I do
I may keep Divine Truth without falsehood—
That well becomes the friends of God.

[1] In margin, *Deus caritas est.*

Compassion! stay by me
That I may diligently serve the sick
And bear the cost both in my goods
And my body.
Purity! I offer thee my virgin cloak
That it may be purer and fairer
For my dear bridegroom Jesus Christ
Who is ever by me.
Patience! I have much power
In silence and suffering,
But do thou take from me
The might of my temptations;
That they may do me no harm.
Come to me *Holiness*!
Kiss the mouth of my soul
And dwell in the depths of my heart
Then will I ever be in health.
I pray thee *Hope*
That thou bind up the wounds
Which love has caused me,
That I may ever retain the blessing of God
Whatever befall me.
Ah noble, holy, *Christian Faith*!
Do thou ever enlighten the eyes of my soul!
That I may truly know
Where I have gone wrong
In Christian things.
I commend my work and my senses to thee.
Dear *Watchfulness*!
Stand by me at all times
That I may be free of evil.
Moderation! be ever with me
That I may be always ready
For God's service.
Contentment! thou art my dear handmaid,
I love and prize thee much;

Thou makest my hard bed soft
My coarse food tempting
And the power thou givest me in poverty
Comes from the goodness of God.
Peace and Stillness I could not do without!
Ye must be with me in all my ways. . . .
Wisdom is ever beside Love
And is mistress of all maidens.
She guards what Love gives
And makes what man teaches or reads
Of use to him.
Undeserved contempt has special virtue
But is willingly unpraised . . .

Now am I rich in maidens
Yet there are two I will not forget—
Fear and *Constancy* must be ever by me
That all my maidens
May invoke their help.
I thank thee dear Love of God, my Queen
That thou hast brought me so many helpers
On my difficult way to Heaven.

49. *Of a lay-brother*

A lay-brother of the Order of Preachers was killed by lightning. Much prayer was offered for his soul that if anything in it remained unconfessed, it might be forgiven him. Then his soul was shown to the person who prayed for him. There he was, all beautiful, in heavenly bliss without suffering. That was because, as he said: "I was humble in my works, watchful in my senses and friendly in my ways, therefore I have no suffering." THE SOUL.—"Then why didst thou not go at once to heaven?" He said, "I must first receive divine knowledge and heavenly love for these I had not yet on earth." Then the soul asked, "Why hast thou that little mark on thy face?" He answered, "I was stern with those who did not do as I wished and that remains unchanged." THE SOUL.—"How can one remove that mark from thee?" Then he said, "If only I had a sigh!" Then

that which owing to his sudden death could not be given him by a mortal, was at that moment granted him. He rejoiced and said, "Now it is gone!" THE SOUL.—"Why dost thou wear a crown when thou art not yet come to Heaven?" And he said, "I had an unusual death, therefore God gave me a crown."

53. *Of the prison of spiritual people*

My heart is full of pity for the troubles of this community in which I am. I spoke in the night in the desert of my heart to our Lord: "Lord! How does this prison please Thee?" And He said: "I Myself am imprisoned in it!" In the following words His meaning was made plain to me:—

OUR LORD SPEAKS

I fasted with them in the wilderness.
I was tempted with them of the devil.
I laboured with them all My days in needful work.
I was betrayed with them through hatred.
I was sold in Faith with them, as they offered themselves to Me in God's service.
I was falsely sought out with them.
I was seized in anger with them.
I was taken through envy with them.
I was bound in obedience with them.
I was mocked in contempt with them.
I was buffeted with them in spite of My innocence (therefore false accusations need not grieve them).
I was dragged before the judge with them, like a guilty thief. (They must remember that in Chapter and in confession.)
I was scourged with them (as they scourge themselves they should think of Me).
I carried My Cross with them (when their burdens are too heavy they should think of Mine).
I was nailed on the Cross with them (that they might suffer gladly and gladly bear all their troubles).
I gave up My Spirit to My Father with them (they should thus commit themselves to Me in all their needs).
I died a holy death with them (thus shall all their bonds be loosed).

I was buried in an earthly tomb with them (thus shall they be and remain, pure from all earthly things).

I rose from the dead (as they also shall rise from death and from all their wants that so they may receive heavenly clearness in their souls).

I ascended into Heaven in My Divine Power (thither they shall follow Me in the power and fear of God).

May ye ever know and do all that. Whosoever is not yet in that way, may God bring it to pass in his soul.

55. *A Friend writes to a Friend. A Letter*

Because thou lovest God above thy human might and with all the power of thy soul; because thou dost acknowledge Him with all the wisdom of thy soul; because thou hast received His gifts with great and holy thankfulness—therefore I write thee this letter.

Great is the overflow of Divine Love which is never still but ever ceaselessly and tirelessly pours forth, so that our little vessel is filled to the brim and overflows. If we do not choke the channel with self-will, God's gifts continue to flow and overflow.

Lord! Thou art full, and fillest us also with Thy gifts. Thou art great and we are small, how then shall we become like Thee? Lord! Thou hast given much to us and we must also give to others. Even though we are as a small vessel, yet Thou hast filled it. And a small vessel can be emptied into a larger one till it too becomes full. The larger vessel is the plenitude of grace which God receives from our works. We alas! are so small that a little word of God or of Holy Scripture so utterly fills us that we can hold no more. Then we empty this gift into the large vessel which is God. How can we do this? We must pour out what we have received with holy desire on sinners, that they may be cleansed. But now the vessel is full again! Therefore we pour it out on the imperfections of spiritual people that they may fight more boldly and become and remain more perfect. Again the little vessel is filled. Again we pour it out, on the needs of poor souls who suffer in Purgatory, that God in His mercy may release them from their manifold need. Or else we sprinkle with Divine compassion the needs of Holy Church

for she lies in many sins. God loved us from the beginning; He has laboured for us from the beginning and has suffered greatly for us. If we would be like Him we must give it all back to Him.

Our Lord spake thus to a certain person: "Give me all that thine is and I will give thee all that Mine is!" This exchange of love which we give to God is sweet indeed. The exchange of work is alas! often very burdensome for us, for that which love has inwardly enjoyed, the creature must sometimes learn to do without outwardly. If one asks how difficult that is, I could never explain it with human understanding. Our Lord suffered much for us even unto death. But a little pain of ours seems to us very great; this I despise in myself and lament before God that I have so few virtues. Love makes suffering sweeter than tongue can tell and if we would be like God, we must win many battles. The thoughts of God and of the loving soul mingle together as air is transfused by sunshine. In that sweet union the sun melts the frost and overcomes the darkness so imperceptibly that we cannot realize it is all the same sun. Thus is it with Divine Love. May God give us and keep us all in this Love. AMEN.

56. *How God touches His friends with suffering*

When man has sorrow
Of which he does not know the cause
And yet is aware of little sins
Our Lord says to him
"I have touched thee!
In the same way in which
My Father let me be touched on earth.
In those whom I there draw to Myself.
That causes much suffering.
But my friends should know truly
That the more I draw them
The nearer they come to Me.
When man makes a conquest over self
So that suffering and consolation weigh equally,
Then will I raise him to blessedness
And let him taste Eternal Life."

57. *A little of Paradise*

This was shown to me and I saw how Paradise was made. There is no limit to its length or breadth. First I came to a place which was between this world and the beginning of Paradise. There I saw trees and leaves, clover and grass but no weeds. Some trees bore apples but most of them only fragrant leaves. Swiftly flowing streams ran through this Paradise and warm winds blew from south to north. In the waters earthly sweetness was mingled with heavenly bliss. The air was sweet beyond expression. But there were neither beasts nor birds for God had commanded it should be for human beings alone that they might live at peace therein.[1]

Then I saw two men therein, Enoch and Elias. Enoch sat and Elias lay on the ground in inward fervour. I asked Enoch how they lived according to their human nature. He said, "We eat a few apples and drink a little water that the body may be kept alive, but the greatest thing here is the power of God." I asked him how they came there. He answered, "I know not how I came till I found myself sitting here." I asked about his prayer. "Faith and Hope, we pray in them." I asked how he was, if he was ever troubled. And he said, "All is well with me, I have no sorrow." I asked, "Dost thou not fear for the strife that shall come upon the earth?" He said, "God will arm me with His power that I can withstand the onslaught." I asked, "Dost thou pray for the Church?" He said, "I pray that God will loose it from sin and bring it into His Kingdom."

Then Elias rose up and his face shone with heavenly radiance; his hair was white as wool. Both were poorly clad as men who went about with pilgrims' staves begging their bread. I asked Elias how he prayed for the Church. "I pray with compassion, humbly, faithfully and obediently." I asked, "Dost thou also pray for souls?" And he said, "Yes! the more I pray the more their suffering is lessened. (A blank in the MS.) As I

[1] For many of us this would be a lonely Paradise and surely for Mechthild too. In Chapter 4, Book vi., she wrote: *Whosoever knows and loves Me in the nobleness of My freedom cannot bear to love Me alone in Myself; he must love me also in the creatures though I remain ever nearest his soul.* See Underhill, *Mysticism*, p. 206.

pray their suffering goes." I asked, "Will they be redeemed from their suffering?" And he said, "Yes, many of them." I asked, "Why did God bring you here?" And he said, "That we may help the Church and God before the Last Day."

I saw a twofold Paradise; I have spoken of the earthly part. The heavenly Paradise is above and protects the earthly Paradise from all adversity. The souls are in the highest part, those who did not need to go to Purgatory and yet were not ready for the Kingdom of God—

They soar in bliss
As the air in the sun.
Lordship and honour, rewards and crowns
They have not yet,
Till they enter the Kingdom.
If all earth passed away
And the earthly Paradise was no more,
After God had fulfilled His law
The heavenly Paradise too would pass away.
All who would come to God
Shall live in one mansion
But there will be no sick-house any more
For whoso comes to God's Kingdom
Is free of all sickness.
Praised be Jesus Christ
Who has given us His Kingdom!

58. *Of St. Gabriel.* (*A Prayer*)

Holy Angel Gabriel, remember me!
I commend to thee the mission of my longing;
Say to Christ my dear Lord
That I am ill for love of Him.
If I am ever to recover,
He Himself must be my Physician.
Tell Him in secret
That I can no longer bear
The wounds He has given me
Unanointed and unbound.

For He has wounded me
Nigh unto death.
If He leaves me unanointed
I can never recover.
—Were all hills healing ointment,
All waters healing draughts,
All flowers and trees healing unguents—
Even with all that,
I could never recover.
He must lay Himself
In the wounds of my soul.
Holy angel Gabriel, remember me!
I commend to thee this errand of love;
May this love-letter awaken the senses
Of whosoever would love God
That he may follow Him!

59. *How the message came before God*

My spirit has rightly understood the Truth!
My message has come to God!
The answer which shall come to me
Is so great, so infinite, so powerful
So crystal-clear, manifold and blissful,
That I hardly dare receive it
While still an earthly being.
First I must part for a little
From this poor life.
That I may no longer be held by it.
Of the answer I must speak swiftly and softly
For I would not that any
Should speak openly of it—
I saw St. Gabriel in great glory
Standing before God in Heaven
As I, poor creature, was about to receive
the message.
He was clad in robes of fiery love
In reward that he had carried his message
So nobly above.

Love played radiantly on his face
Penetrated by the embrace of the Godhead;
His words I could neither hear nor understand
For I am still but a fool on this earth.

60. *How the Child was seen*

In the night on which the Son of God was born the Child was seen in poor clothes, wrapped in swaddling bands. The Child lay alone on the hard straw before two animals. I said to His mother, "Ah dear Lady! How long must thy Child lie thus alone? When wilt thou take Him on thy knee?" She answered that she never let the Child out of her sight; then she stretched out her hand to Him and said, "He shall lie seven hours by night and day on this straw. His heavenly Father wills it so." Then I saw that it pleased the heavenly Father thus. I prayed the Child for all who had asked me to pray for them. A voice spoke from the Child though it did not move its lips: "If they keep Me in mind, I will keep them in My Grace. I have nothing to give them save My Body and everlasting life." In the Crib the Child lay on the hard straw. His heavenly Father willed it so.

61. *How one shall prepare oneself for God*

When a bird remains long on the ground it thereby weakens its wings and its feathers grow heavy. Then it rises, flaps its wings and swings itself up till it takes the air and glides into flight. The longer it flies, the more blissfully it soars, refreshing itself, hardly alighting on the earth to rest. So is it with the soul: the wings of love have taken from it the desire for earthly things. We must prepare ourselves in the same way if we wish to come to God. We must rise on wings of longing up to Him. We must exercise our virtues and lift up our good works with love. If we do not leave off, we will at last attain to the very heart of God.

Ah! longing love!
Thou callest with sweet voices
To the ears of Thy Lord;
Thy need of repentance is small
Rejoice then and cease not to call
For He will yet turn to thee with joy.

Ah! waning love!
Thou sufferest much sweet need,
Thy misery great indeed,
How canst thou win Jesus?
He goes too far ahead,
Thou chose Him, sin instead
And now hast lost thyself in Him;
Therefore must suffer grievous pain
Till thou renew thyself in Him again.

Ah! perfect love!
Thou strainest sore my senses and my heart
That I too soon alas! from thee must part;
Since longing for thee cannot gain Thee,
Love in sorrow still must pain me.

Ah! powerful love!
Thou keepest careful watch,
Thou meanest all things well,
Our every care distresses thee;
Thy hope and faith are great indeed,
Thou soon shalt vanquish all thy need.

Ah! wisest love!
Thou keepest holy order
In which thou dost praise
And acknowledge God,
Bringing His will in all things to fruition;
If thou dost this in faith
So mayst thou rest in God
Therein will I rejoice.

62. *How the maidens serve their lady the Queen*

This was revealed to a certain person in her spirit: I saw a way which went from the east where the sun rises to the west where it sets. All those of goodwill to God walked in this way. They walked through the valley but with unequal speed, as pilgrims who had left all they loved in order to seek the best which is God. Some turned back to joys they had left behind and never reached their goal. Some rested on the grass of many

desires and among the flowers of vanity; these were a long time on the way. They will later find the rod of a bitter Purgatory very sore, even if they live without mortal sin.

Our Lord answered all this and said: "Some walk with good will and holy works and are yet so full of bad habits and make themselves so unpleasant that they are hardly to be borne; of such My judgement is deferred. They should humbly seek My compassion, then they would retain their good works and the bitterness of their hearts would be done away; thus they might come to themselves. For whoso seeks My compassion cannot abide darkness."

One went alone in this way. That was because earthly well-being could give his soul no comfort. Then he saw two figures in front of him. One went to the left, the other to the right. He asked who they were and what they were doing. He on the left said:

I am God's righteousness,
God's judgement was given to me
Because Adam sinned in Paradise.
My sentence was long and heavy
But now this maiden who goes with me
Has become my companion:
Compassion is her name;
All who seek and call upon her steadfastly
Conquer the sorrow of their hearts.
She is very perfect;
She has taken my righteousness from me.
Where trouble comes to man
And he flees to her in remorse
She lays her gentle hand on what is crooked
While I stand by powerless and dumb
And cannot withstand her.
That has all come to pass
Through the Son of God
Who by His compassion
Has taken from me my strict righteousness.
Compassion comforts the sad,
Heals the wounds and gladdens the hearts
Of all who come to her;

She has taken much power away from me.
She loves me and I love her
We shall always be together
Till the Last Day
When Justice will again be mine.
God's justice and God's righteousness
Are not the same.
Justice judges sin brought before it
Which shows no remorse;
Righteousness is a holy life
Which God has given to all His friends
As He preserves it in Himself
For He is just in all His ways;
He knows what we are doing
Therefore we must be open with Him.

God's Compassion, His Son's holy Righteousness which He Himself practised in His life on earth, and the gift of the Holy Spirit in both, were followed in the way by a glorious company. . . . I asked who they were, and on what mission they were bent. They said:

We are noble maidens
And serve God to His glory
In the beloved Queen He has chosen above all—
That is the human soul and body.
We serve our Lady the Queen,
That she may be able with all diligence
And all her senses
To fulfil the will of her Lord
In Christian seemliness,
That she may never be found at fault.
"But Wisdom, how canst thou serve
With thy sister Discretion?"
"We teach our lady the Queen
To recognize evil from good
With holy wisdom and humility
That she may reflect what now is
And what yet may be.
Thus she finds joy in all things.

"And thou, Truth, how canst thou serve
at Court
With thy sister Holiness?"
I serve my Lord and my Queen
With all fidelity, that in all her need
She may ever be true to her Lord;
Thus she remains sure and free
Ever holy within,
Subject in all things to her Lord,
And therefore ever outwardly to be praised.
"And thou Humility, how canst thou serve
With Gentleness thy sister?"
I teach my Queen
Ever to love and fulfil
The will of My Lord
And to love all His gifts from the heart,
Thus she can rest on holy content
And banish all sorrow with joy.
"And now Mercy: how canst thou serve
With thy sister Obedience?"
I teach my lady the Queen
That in her eager love of God
Her prayer shall be gentle
For the evil and the good,
The living and the dead.
The treasure is great and manifold;
It all comes back unharmed into her lap
If she will do the will of her Lord,
Then in all her works she brings forth
Holy Obedience, and thus remains God's Queen.
"And lastly Strength, how canst thou serve
With thy sister Constancy?"
I teach my lady to be strong
In all her difficulties
So that she may ever stay in her Kingdom;
So long as she is steadfast
She will ever be free in her Lord.

The number of these maidens is above human counting, for

all things a good person does, outwardly and inwardly in God, possess all the virtues. With these maidens there walked a great lord, like a holy and all-powerful bishop. He was Christian Faith, radiant within and burning with Divine Love. He served his Queen with all these virtues. Up in the heights there soared a maiden who was like a golden eagle. She was surrounded by a heavenly host and she shone and taught and trained all these maidens to serve their lady the Queen. This Love lives in Christian Faith and abides in the Palace of the Queen.

That is her office;
That she brings love to love
God to the soul and the soul to God
Therefore is she in the first commandment.

63. *God's Will is as a Prince in all beings*

Ever longing in the soul
Ever suffering in the body,
Ever pain in the senses
Ever hope in the heart in Jesus alone—
Those who have given themselves utterly to God
Know well what I mean.
For two days and two nights
I was in such great distress
That I hoped my end had come.
Then I thanked God with all my power
For His gifts and asked Him
To take me to Himself
If that was His Will.—
"Yea, Lord, but if Thy praise
Might be increased thereby
Then will I gladly stay in this poor body
For Thy Love's sake.
Lord! I have lived so many years, so many days
In which I never gave Thee so costly a gift.
May Thy will be done, not mine
For I am not my own
But belong utterly to Thee!"

Then I saw in the distant heights a company of saints, as if they would come to my end. Who they were I could not make out, for all about me there shone a powerful light from the midst of them which made it seem as if I too was among them. This was high in the west at sunset. From the north many evil spirits had come and they stayed beside me for they wished to witness my judgement. They had fought and wounded each other and looked cowed like beaten dogs. They stretched out their necks towards me but I was not afraid of them, I rejoiced!

Then I realized that they must have come
To honour God
But as He had taken from His friends
All their troubles,
The evil spirits must go back to Hell
With their burdens
  Meanwhile I saw a change in my body,
And saw that I must remain a little longer
In this bitter outcast life.
But I was sure and free without fear or pain.
Alas! Alas! Alas! that I might not remain in death
Through God's goodness! Now was I sad in spirit!
Had I now had human might and divine love
I might at last have begun to serve God;
That I have always longed
To bring to a good end—
    And now I will!

64. *How God serves mankind.* (*A prayer*)

Thus speaks a beggar woman in her prayer to God:

Lord! I thank Thee that since in Thy love Thou hast taken from me all earthly riches, Thou now clothest and feedest me through the goodness of others, so that everything which might clothe my heart in pride of possession, is no more known to me.

Lord! I thank Thee that since Thou hast taken from me the sight of my eyes, Thou servest me through the eyes of others.

Lord! I thank Thee that since Thou hast taken from me the power of my hands . . . and the power of my heart, Thou now servest me with the hands and hearts of others.

Lord! I pray Thee for them. Reward them here on earth with Thy Divine Love that they may faithfully serve and please Thee with all virtues till they come to a happy end.

I pray for all those with pure hearts
Who gave up all for love of God.
They are all arch-beggars
And on the Last Day
Will be judged by Jesus our Redeemer.
Lord! all that I lament before Thee
I pray Thee to change in me and in all sinners.
All that I ask I pray Thee to grant
To me and all imperfect spiritual people
For Thine own glory.
Lord! Thy praise shall never be silent in my heart
Whatever I do or leave undone or suffer. AMEN.

65. *How God decks the soul with suffering*

When maidens are always clothed according to the will of their Bridegroom, they need nothing but the Bridal-gown; that is to say they are rich in pain, illness, days of sadness, temptation and the many kinds of suffering we find in sinful Christianity. These are the wedding-garments of the loving soul.

But the working clothes are fasting, watching, discipline, confession, sighing, weeping, praying, fear of sin and the hard discipline of the senses and the body in and for God. But along with these a lively hope, a ceaseless loving longing and a heart which ever prays in all its doings. These are the working clothes of good people. When we are sick we wear our wedding garments, but when we are well we wear our working clothes. Thus the suffering body speaks to the outcast soul:

When wilt thou soar on the wings of thy longing
To the blissful heights, to Jesus Thine everlasting Love?
Thank him there, O soul, for me
And pray that poor and unworthy as I am
In His mercy He may be mine:

For He came to this poor earth
And took our human nature upon Him.
Pray Him that He keep me free from sin
In His bright favour
Till He gives me a holy end
When thou, dear soul, must part from me!

SOUL

Ah! beloved prison
In which I have been bound,
I thank thee for all
In which thou hast followed me.
Though I have often been troubled by thee,
Yet didst thou oft come to my aid.
All thy need will yet be taken from thee
At the last Day—
Therefore we will lament no more,
But will be filled with gladness
For all that God has done to us both.
Now let us only stand fast
In sweet hope!

Obedience is a holy bond:
It binds the soul to God,
The body to Jesus,
The five senses to the Holy Spirit.
The longer it binds
The more the soul loves,
The less the body thinks of itself,
The humbler its work before God,
And before all those of good will.

Explicit Liber.